

A hermeneutic exploration of men's narratives of manhood

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ABSTRACT

Manhood is a construction which must be 'achieved' by men and boys (Gilmore, 1990). A male child must learn to perform these constructions early in life, and then sustain this performance throughout life (Gilmore, 1990; Hurley, 2004). Booth (2012) argues that manhood is a subjective concept particular to each man's unique set of identifications. This includes the influences of various contexts upon these life performances. Within South African historical and cultural contexts, the impact of apartheid upon manhood has to be acknowledged (Vandello, Bosson, Burnaford & Weaver, 2010; Morrell, 2001 & 2005). This study qualitatively takes a look into what manhood is perceived to mean, within various social contexts.

A hermeneutic methodology is utilised within a poststructuralist framework to unpack the meaning and unique identifications of each participant interview. The data findings emphasise that there are multiple modes of manhood, which are enacted by different men as well as by the same men within different situations. Gender identity is therefore significantly flexible in principle although it is formed into specific categories under certain historical and cultural conditions (Barker, 2012). Manhood in South Africa can therefore be understood to be influenced by different historical and cultural elements. South African men may live within a conflictual space between historical and cultural discourses of manhood as well as western discourses of manhood.

Key Words: manhood, masculinity, meaning, social construction, hermeneutics

DECLARATION

I, Jade Brown, student number: 200703716, hereby declare that I am the sole author of this mini-dissertation.

No part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication.

To the best of my knowledge, my thesis does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights. Any idea, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people that I have included will be fully referenced and acknowledged.

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my father, Ritchie Brown, my curiosity and attempt of understanding manhood began with you.

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Firstly I would like to thank my heavenly father; all things are possible in and through You.

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“The words of the mouth are deep waters” Proverbs 18:4 (NIV Bible)

“It always seems impossible until it is done” Nelson Mandela

If -

BY RUDYARD KIPLING

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:
If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew

To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—**you'll be a Man**, my son!

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Brief Overview

In South Africa, manhood is in a 'crisis'. There has been an increased struggle to define a contemporary manhood. From the change in political history to the rise of feminism, male dominance, patriarchy and purpose have been questioned (Aurasteah, 2012). This is evidenced by the high rates of violence, sexual and domestic abuse perpetrated by men (Morrell, 2001 & 2005). Reflective of how wider society understands and represents manhood are statements such as "man up", "cowboys don't cry" and "act like a man". Thus, respect as a man is gained through actions proving these utterances. In light of these concepts, this study aims to examine the concept of masculinity in an attempt to contribute towards an understanding of manhood within a South African context. Additionally, this study aims to provide depth and understanding regarding how specific individuals make meaning of manhood.

This study explores the subjective descriptions of manhood of a small group of men in the Eastern Cape. Much attention will be given to the subjectivity of the participants' descriptions, exploring their unique ideas on the notions of manhood. This study serves to highlight the fact that the construct of manhood has various meanings attached to it. These meanings are influenced by environmental surroundings and are immersed in different cultures and social settings. As stated by Stoltenberg (2003 p. xi), "I believe that a radical investigation of gender – a look at it by its roots – can be done with everyday language about everyday experience".

Qualitative interviews with five men from a small city in the Eastern Cape will be conducted. Thereby privileging and preserving the participant's subjectivities and willingness to speak in depth about their personal understanding and experience of manhood (Hunter, Friend,

Murphy, Rollins, Williams-Wheeler & Laughinghouse, 2006). This will be done through the utilisation of a hermeneutic approach. This involves the interpretation of the participant interviews at various levels; namely, the interpretation of text and meaning. The interview involves a short video clip and questions relating to the content of the clip. These questions include deconstructing what the participant related to in the clip and what stories or images are stimulated by the clip. The questions lead to the participants own definition of manhood and if the participant understands manhood as innate or influenced more through nurture. These questions then lead towards gaining understanding if the participants view of manhood changes over time. Although the interview questions were structured in this way they were also open to any other direction the participant may go.

Defining Manhood

The very definition of 'manhood' is problematic due to its varied and diverse descriptions. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2009) defines 'manhood' in terms of the progress from boyhood to adulthood, and ultimately becoming a man. It goes further to say that 'manhood' can also be considered being human and relating to mankind. The progression from boy to man may involve life experience; this includes culture, family relationships and personality.

Manhood appears to be related to public demonstrations of maleness that may seem strange or dangerous. Examples of this behaviour could be found in the sporting arena, such as wrestling or boxing. Men are also required to go through certain social milestones, where circumcision is such an example. This can occur within different cultural contexts at specific or non-specific times of a man's life. Thus, the descriptions of manhood are more related to typical gender *performance* within different *cultural settings* (Vandello, Bosson, Burnaford &

Weaver, 2010). As argued by Booth (2012), there is no objective definition for the term; rather, it is a subjective concept particular to each man's unique set of identifications.

Although the conceptualisation of 'man', is generally associated with the male body, attention needs to be focused upon behavioural expectations within particular cultures (Booth, 2012). Whilst numerous studies have examined the nature of masculinity (referring to masculine gender identity), scholars seldom seek to determine the meaning of the term 'manhood'. More qualitative studies are therefore necessary to take into account what manhood is perceived to mean, within various social and cultural contexts.

Anthropologist David Gilmore (1990) suggests that manhood is a social construction which must be 'achieved' by men and boys. This emphasises that one does not reach adulthood and then decide to enact upon cultural constructions of manhood. Rather, a male child must learn to perform these constructions early in life and then sustain this performance throughout his life (Gilmore, 1990; Hurley, 2004). For example, if a young boy, who is crying, may be told that "boys don't cry" or that "only sissies cry". These constructions are thus affected by contextual influences and will affect how men experience and understand the concept of "being a man" (Vandello, et al, 2010; Morrell, 2001 & 2005). From this perspective, manhood can be defined more as providing "social proof" through their social actions and discourses rather than simply having physical or biological indications of being a man. In contrast, the concept 'womanhood' takes on very different meanings. Womanhood is described more in terms of enduring traits such as being an uncomplaining wife or nurturing child-bearer (Vandello, et al, 2010).

A Poststructuralist Approach

The purpose of this study is to explore hermeneutically the descriptions of 'manhood' of five research participants. A poststructuralist framework works well with the qualitative,

hermeneutic methodology used for this study. The choice to conduct a qualitative study and analyse qualitative data is one that fits with the mode of inquiry within this framework (Henning, 2004). This inquiry directs the researcher to the utilisation of certain research methods and tools. Henning (2004) describes the process in the mid-20th century whereby a movement instigates a shift from positivist research. This movement is more towards interpretation and understanding of meaning. The role of the researcher evolves more towards co-authoring meaning.

As a general principle, poststructuralist theories are based on structuralism's philosophy of language and anthropology (New Catholic Encyclopaedia, 2013). The varying poststructuralists however differ in their approaches in that some continue historically and others hermeneutically. Some theorists base their work on discourse analysis, and others integrate critical theory and psychoanalysis. Since this is a hermeneutic study, language is considered the site from which to gain understanding, the starting point from which to develop interpretation.

Kopano Ratele (2006) is inspired by Frantz Fanon's writings on language and culture. Ratele (2006) suggests that language does not only pre-exist us as humans but it creates the world we are born into. He understands language as a form of social action, it has performative qualities. This leads him to understand that through discursive processes we as humans organise our worlds into various groups. From this organising of our worlds we possess natural attributes and identities (Ratele, 2006).

Jacques Derrida is a celebrated advocate of poststructuralist thought. His most famous theory of deconstruction was inspired by what Heidegger labelled "destruction" (questioning) of philosophy's traditions (New Catholic Encyclopaedia, 2013). Derrida's notion of deconstruction appears to lean on the proposition that a text consists of an "unconscious". Material from the unconscious element of a text usually reveals itself if it is analysed and carefully read through. Derrida considered language as the place where the suppressed is

released. Deconstruction is therefore a process whereby one finds the fractures in thinking and self-understanding (Knafo, 2004, New Catholic Encyclopaedia, 2013).

Hermeneutics is used as a tool for deconstruction in this study based on Derrida's (1972) questioning of traditional themes to find what evades conceptual notions within philosophical texts. Common criticisms of Post structuralism are aimed at the argument that the world consists of persons as subjects interrelating with each other. Therefore, to understand truth by means of semantics will only lead to self-contradiction. An ideal epistemological theory could actually still be wrong. All paradigms with different understandings of truth may have flaws but may still be seen as stepping stones to growth and understanding of humanity (Thomas, 2002).

The Role of Language

One's ideas, problems and qualities are products of culture and history and have been created over time, within particular contexts (Thomas, 2002; Barker, 2012). Language is viewed as central to the process of meaning-making. Language provides a meeting place from which human identity and understanding can continually reform. The use of language therefore plays an important role in shaping life. People's words and actions influence how they relate to each other and also contribute to shaping life (Thomas, 2002; Barker, 2012). A poststructuralist would approach the notion of 'manhood' as being socially constructed.

The notion that language shapes life, contributes to the enquiry about the concept of identity. Manhood is related to masculine identity and within this framework, it can be conceptualised as an action or performance rather than the existence of a deep structure of self-hood or an automatic inner-self (Hjorth, 2009; Barker, 2012). Dennen (2009) suggests that this identity performance is often with an audience in mind. The use of hermeneutics in conjunction with

the poststructuralist framework may allow for the uncovering of the performative aspects and potential audiences within the descriptions of manhood of the participants.

From the poststructuralist perspective language is generally viewed as the major construction site of the person. This means that the way a person is within the world; is the way their experiences and identity are all constructed through language and discourse (Burr, 1997; Barker, 2012). A shift is caused in the psychological focus from within the individual person into the social realm. Identity and manhood therefore comes to be understood through and within the social realm created through language (Burr 1997).

One's experience of one's self is only given structure and meaning by language, and these meanings are constantly changing and sought after, then "our experience is potentially open to an infinite number of possible meanings" (Burr, 1997, p43). It is my experience that the reviewed literature and the interviews with the participants, made these possibilities become more evident. This study therefore creates the space for the description of new possibilities of meaning in relation to 'manhood'.

The Importance of This Study

This study aims to address the idea that manhood is in a 'crisis' within South Africa. The crisis is perhaps related to possible confusion in identity constructions and performance. Within contemporary Western culture, an increased number of men possess a "problematic masculinity" (Barker, 2012). This may involve traditional values of masculinity no longer aiding men. Such traditional values may relate to strength, stoicism, control, power, independence etc. Within these traditional values, relationships could be seen as devalued, as well as domestic activity and emotions, which could be considered feminine. The crisis may arise from the contradictions of these traditional notions of manhood and that which is required in order to live a content life within contemporary society (Barker, 2012).

It is expected that the exploration of the subjective constructions of manhood may reveal hegemonic understandings of manhood as well as the conflicting requirements of today's society and contribute towards a greater understanding of manhood within South Africa.

In order to explore subjective constructions of manhood for specific men in this study, it is important to assess what is said about manhood within the literary world. Chapter 2, the literature review, provides a guideline of what to expect from the participant constructions based on current literature on manhood. The literature review is followed by an explanation of the aims, rationale and methodology for this study in chapter 3. In chapter 4 the data which was gathered through individual interviews is analysed and discussed. Chapter 5 summarises conclusions of the various chapters and the value of the research is also reviewed in terms of where it succeeded and failed therefore tracing the process of the entire study.

Conclusion

The introduction chapter has presented the fundamental elements of this study. The starting point of this study is the observation that manhood is in a crisis. The crisis as discussed entails confusion in relation to masculine identity. The confusion according to the literature reviewed appears to be directly related to the conflict between traditional notions and current social ideals of manhood.

In this study a further engagement is with the South African context of manhood. Through the Poststructuralist framework and hermeneutic methodology manhood is explored in relation to individual subjectivities of manhood. It is hoped that this study will provide further enlightenment and clarification to the corpus of literature dealing with the crisis of manhood.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The aim of this literature review is to examine the meaning of manhood which will be used as a point of reference when examining the subjective understandings of the participants of this study. In this chapter is a focus on how manhood is described in different contexts and constructed within the social realm. Attention will be given to current academic research exploring various understandings of manhood, particularly within the South African context. In order to gain a wider social understanding of manhood some pop culture literature is also explored. It is important to note that in this study the terms 'manhood' and 'masculinity' may be used interchangeably.

By examining literary descriptions of manhood, the nature-nurture debate will be touched upon. This will help to determine whether manhood is considered an innate phenomenon or whether it is formed and shaped through socialisation. Attention will be given to themes involving: heterosexuality, power, aggression and technical performance (Ghaill, 1994). Subsequently, the debate that sex is constructed through nature (biology) and gender through nurture (history, culture, family) will also be considered (Hurley, 2007; Barker, 2012, Ratele, 2014).

From the early 1990's, there has been a period of decline in academic literature pertaining to manhood and men's identity. Aurasteah (2012) postulates that this decline is reflective of Western society's increasing struggle with defining masculinity and understanding manhood. Since women have become more liberated from patriarchy through feminist activism, men's dominance and purpose has been affected and challenged. In current research of the contemporary social world, there has been a spark of growing interest into manhood and

masculinity. This interest is sparked by the understanding that masculinity is not an unchanging notion given by nature (Barker, 2012).

Men and Masculine roles

Much has been written about men and masculine roles associated with manhood within scholarly and popular commercialised studies. Investigations into the origins and affirmation of gender roles indicate that factors such as parents and schooling not only reflect dominant sexual ideology, but that they also actively produce gender and heterosexual divisions and meanings constructed within gender identity. Gender, as a learned behaviour, is initially developed within the home environment (Ghaill, 1994; Pearson & Van Horn, 2004). Additionally, factors such as political changes, vast cultural and racial divisions also influence gender roles and identity (Morrell, 2001; Barker, 2012). These contextual factors are of pivotal importance within the historical and present landscape of South Africa (Morrell, 2005).

The growing research of manhood in contemporary society involves three central areas: the first looks into cultural representations of manhood, the second looks into the character of men's lives through their lived experience and the third investigates the kind of problems that men may encounter within contemporary society (Barker, 2012). These three elements of discussion will be discussed in each of the headings below starting with an exploration of Western ideals and narrowing down to a South African context.

Various Western Theories Explaining Manhood

Walby (1990) reflects on Talcott Parsons' argument that gender relations are conceptualised in terms of sex roles in which men in the family perform the instrumental role whilst women

perform a more expressive role. It makes them different but equal. However, Parsons' theory does not deal with social change and social inequalities, whereby men and women's roles are related more to dominance and subordination rather than being equal but different. Arguably, traditional domestic division of labour is becoming redundant, as women are spending less time on household chores and more time on paid employment whilst men are increasingly involving themselves in traditional family functions such as housework and child care (Walby, 1990; Whitehead, 2002).

Sex role theorists, Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2003), argue that men and women are conditioned into individual sets of appropriate behaviour through socialisation. For males, living up to a gender role is challenging due to the level of social expectations they experience. Characteristics including: strength, power, and sexual competence serve to be the basis of manhood. Due to the contradiction between the ideal 'role' and the lived experience, men are likely to experience failures in this regard (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). Upholding these ideals means to renounce unattained emotional needs and to appear self-reliant. These ideals can be considered early psychic wounds from punishments or disapproval for failure to portray the masculine ideals (Bergman, 1995; O'Neil, 1981; Pollack, 1992, 2006).

Discourses widely shaping the general public's conceptions of manhood include books such as "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus" (Gray, 1992). In the book, attempts to differentiate men and women are elaborated upon. The self-help book, describes men valuing power, competency, efficiency and achievement, as they allegedly do things to prove themselves and develop their power and skills. Their sense of self is defined through their ability to achieve results. They experience fulfilment primarily through success and accomplishment, autonomy therefore adds to a sense of manhood. Gray also notes that currently men seem to be becoming more overtly nurturing and loving (1992).

Allan and Barbara Pease (2008) use the 'evolution' argument by describing men as having evolved from hunters and protectors, and that their bodies and brains have had to adapt to their specific functions and roles. This would be why they are physically taller and stronger than women. They are also influenced through social conditioning, for example, boys are dressed in blue and encouraged to play sport or play with cars and soldiers. When people speak to little boys, they use utterances such as "you are so strong" or "boys don't cry". From this background, men derive their own personal descriptions of manhood. It could mean that manhood begins when a child is born male, but the way they are treated and addressed shapes their identity. They are given a life script of how to be as men. It is therefore a possibility that they do have a choice in how to engage with the script. Pease and Pease (2008) therefore suggest that differences in men around the world could be related to personality, upbringing and culture.

In a study with young and adolescent boys, Pollack (1998, p. xxiv) argues that society places a "gender straightjacket" on boys and men. Society judges the actions of boys against outdated ideas of masculinity about what it requires for boys to become men. Boys are encouraged to disconnect emotionally (Pollack, 1998). This break is seen to be essential for a boy to become a man. As a result of the break, boys mask their vulnerabilities and emotions, often developing low self-esteem. They also mask parts of their true selves, whereby factors such as connections with individuals are often neglected. Pollack (1998) argues that genuine connections with family, friends and others allow boys to enter manhood in their own individual way.

Goldberg (1976) explores how perpetuating stereotypes of manhood and ideas of what men should do or how they should act may be harmful towards men's identities. Men are raised by parents, socialised and conditioned in society and are encouraged by women to play the multifaceted role of being strong and silent, the breadwinner, the parent, the lover and

husband (Goldberg, 1976). These seemingly impossible or arguably contradictory demands contribute towards how men see themselves.

Specific studies on manhood – less traditional viewpoints of Western Society

United States of America

In a study of Latino men in America, conducted by Hurtado and Sinha (2008), it was noted that participants were aware of how their ethnicity could define aspects of their manhood. They were aware of the differences in social groups and that there could be different categories of 'man'. Environmental factors are greatly influential, such as the kind of home one grows up in, the neighbourhood and witnessing violence against women. Therefore race, class and ethnicity can interact to produce complicated group specific experiences of the social world.

In a study of the transition to manhood of a group of African American men, statistics indicated that these men have the “lowest life expectancy and have the highest age-adjusted death rates for homicide, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, cerebrovascular accidents, and malignant neoplasms compared to men and women from other racial/ethnic groups” (Bhamal, Kennedy, Jones, Lee-Johnson, Morris, Caldwell, Brown, Houston, Meeks, Vargas, Franco, Razzak & Brown, 2011.p.153).

The interconnected contextual factors that affect life choices and have a direct and indirect effect on men's health may be injurious for the transition to manhood. The transition may coincide with the transition to adulthood which includes physical, psychosocial and cognitive development. As young men enter adulthood and become more self-sufficient and are required to make decisions about their lives such as pursuing higher education, achieving

financial security and exploring new interpersonal roles and relationships. An important element of manhood therefore becomes independence. If they adopt traditional understandings of manhood they will therefore accept the denial of weakness, dismissing any need for help, maintaining physical and emotional control as well as displaying aggressive behaviour and physical dominance (Bhamal et al., 2011).

According to Bhamal et al (2011) the transition period from boyhood to manhood can be considered a vulnerable time. This is attributed to the environment and social surroundings that restrict and influence the decisions that young African American men make. More traditional or dominant ideas of manhood, which are derived from their surroundings are usually adopted and take them on a life course toward unhealthy risk taking behaviour. Four themes around manhood emerged: struggles; social support and inspiration; the role of sports; and views on lifestyles within a particular environment.

Violi and Joyce (1998) conducted research in an attempt to provide a framework for assisting young men in becoming more self-reliant. This framework illustrated how communities, families and churches can work together in helping young African American men in urban communities cope with feelings of alienation and develop self-reliance. A similar programme has been developed by Richard Rohr, Franciscan priest and founder of the Centre for Action and Contemplation (www.cac.org). He offers men a spiritual experience and initiation into manhood. Further to this, he offers Christian principles geared towards a manhood initiation retreat.

United Kingdom (UK) and Europe

Traditional familial structures alongside conceptions of fatherhood are changing. In the United Kingdom, this includes; the rise in divorce rates, the rise of single women parents, and the rise in absent fathers after divorce (Whitehead, 2002). As noted by Holter (2007), the changing conditions of work also serve to undermine the traditional male breadwinner

role. In a study by Ranson (2001), the increased number of women in the work force has resulted in men having to redefine their roles within the family. They are required to be increasingly involved and connected with their children.

Muslim Societies

Samuel (2011) explores the role of men in Muslim societies. They, too, are faced with women becoming more assertive and challenging their masculine roles. For example the position of power and authority men traditionally have over women. The social changes in the world seem to be breaking down common understandings of manhood which leads towards a more gender equal and caring man. This change seems to be filtering through and even affecting the rigid Islamic male identity.

Indian Subcontinent

Qayum and Ray (2010) researched male servants in Kolkata. Similar to Muslim societies the Indian men have very rigid ideas of a male patriarchal identity that still prevails today. In Kolkata, more males are becoming or working as servants, thus losing their patriarchal position. Some consider themselves to be failed patriarchs as they do not fall within the norm of the dominant authoritative man. Arguably, this could be regarded as reflective of similar changes worldwide.

Manhood in South Africa

Throughout these studies discussed above, the common theme is the worldwide transformation and change occurring in manhood. A number of studies have emphasised the importance to further study, explore and define current manhood in context specific situations (Morrell, 2001). Within South Africa, a context arguably marked by transformation and change, defining manhood becomes increasingly vital. Kopano Ratele (2008)

investigates how the political and psychosocial inter-penetrate in the lives of African men. This will be elaborated upon in the discussion below.

Post-apartheid

Morrell (1998) discusses the gender transformations in South Africa, particularly with regards to the end of Apartheid. During Apartheid, there were different ideals for manhood within different racial and cultural groups. One common aspect was that each fought to protect their families and their race. In the past, violence and heroism may have been pivotal in the struggle towards power, liberation, law enforcement and rebellion. In a study by Langa and Eagle (2008), it is suggested that the militarised masculinity created in young men within townships was abruptly abandoned at the start of democratic South Africa leaving men feeling rejected and alienated. This militarised masculine identity contained constructions for men to be “strong, brave, tough, fearless, aggressive, and violent” (Langa & Eagle, 2008, p. 152). Those who did not participate were constructed as lesser men. As soon as Apartheid ended, these men were expected to cast aside their militarised roles. Langa and Eagle (2008) conducted their study on these ex-combatants whose identities became confused due to the trauma of the battle and the transition to democracy. They found that a need for intervention existed to assist them to develop different identities.

Conway (2003) explains that when young white males entered military training, their manhood was constructed as being superior to black men. White males therefore constructed their identities around maintaining their positions of power and reinforcing black male powerlessness. This displays the great conflict between black and white men’s constructions of manhood during apartheid. It raises unanswered questions about the repercussions of this past construction in today’s society, 21 years later.

Newer blends of masculinity in South Africa value pride, patience, restraint, decisiveness, cool-headed courage and endurance (Hemson, 2001; Wardorp, 2001). With the post-

Apartheid changes in men's masculine identities, urban and rural African descriptions increasingly merged with Western media and popular culture. However, many traditional constructions and understandings of manhood do remain present (Mager, Blake & Sheffer, 2001; Field, 2001; Xaba, 2001).

Black Traditional rites of passage

South Africa is a country with a wide variety of cultures. The importance of following certain rites of passage is upheld in South Africa (and other African countries). These rites of passage include circumcision rituals, commonly termed "initiation". For the majority of South African men to consider themselves as men and not boys, it is imperative to complete the initiation process which occurs within traditional initiation schools. It is common for most black South African boys to 'go to the bush' when they turn 18 years old, which may vary according to different ethnic groups. The Ndebele, isiXhosa, Southern Sotho and Tswana ethnic groups usually enter the initiation process at 18 years of age. The Swati, Northern Sotho and Tsonga ethnic groups have the flexibility to enter from 12 to 17 years of age. The Venda group is the only group who allows boys to enter the process before turning 12 (Peltzer, Banyini, Simbayi & Kalichman, 2009).

During the process of initiation, boys are isolated from their families and learn the important aspects of manhood. This period lasts approximately two months. While away from their families, these boys are mentored by older men who impart wisdom and teach the principles of manhood. These instructors teach the boys in a "secret language" on a number of topics. These topics may include: kinship values, male adult responsibilities, how to recite their clan praises and more. In order to understand male identity, one also has to understand the need for male bonding. This entails the wisdom of the instructors or the 'father' being interchanged by the judgement of the peer group. In this instance, it would be those who are circumcision

peers. The bonding therefore seems to occur on multiple levels (Van Vuuren & De Jongh, 1999).

Currently, the initiation process has become a danger for some of these young boys as many have suffered from infections and others have even died as a result of unsafe circumcision practices (Peltzer, Nqeketo, Petros & Kanta, 2008). The cultural passage to manhood must therefore be considered imperative, especially considering that young boys willingly risk their lives with parental consent.

Common rites of passage

Common conceptualisations of masculinity within most South African cultural groups emphasise being employed and earning potential (Elliot, 2003). This conceptualisation poses a threat to South African men's self-esteem as there is a high level of unemployment. Providing financially and supporting one's family is traditionally an important aspect of being a man in South Africa. Within South Africa, the high unemployment rate is likely to have serious implications for men's self-conceptions.

Kleinfeld (2009) seeks to explore how certain aspects such as education and socio-economic conditions affect manhood and womanhood differently. Women are experiencing increased access to tertiary education and pursuing careers outside the home. Arguably, a cause of concern is that the number of men accessing these same institutions is decreasing, especially among men with a lower socio-economic background. These men may not earn the degrees or level of education that would allow them to earn a good living, to marry or be eligible for highly educated women.

Morrell (2001) discusses the diversity of masculinity in South Africa and focuses on stereotypes. Since present, government policies have reduced some of the inequalities that have separated men and women, resulting in men having to renegotiate their position around women. In the Western world there is an effort to include men and masculinities in

stereotypically female-orientated gender work. There is a focus on issues such as violence, fathering and peace. In South Africa, there is a focus on the population growth, unsafe sex and HIV/AIDS but with little focus on issues of manhood. There is much to be done on the topic of manhood in relation to meaning and masculine identity. Morrell (2001, p. 6) describes the situation in South Africa as being in a 'crisis of masculinity'. Men lose their jobs due to the rise of women in the workplace which leads to a generation of children growing up without fathers as providers. Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford and Weaver (2008) have noted that these challenges result in the need for validation and seeking other avenues to 'prove' oneself as a man. This often results in increased levels of aggressive behaviour and anger (Morrell, 2001). Morrell (2005) suggests that there is a reaction to this 'crisis of masculinity' which has stimulated a movement which brings men together for mutual support. Additionally presenting common issues to the media and policy makers in order to assist men with the challenges they experience.

Dominance and 'Manhood'

Dominance can be understood in different ways when relating to manhood. It may be related to social and cultural pressure to perform and conform to gender-appropriate behaviour. Within this context dominance can be understood as asserting control and power over others. Building upon this, Gear (2010) argues that within South Africa, these social and cultural pressures result in violence being increasingly utilised as a concept of manhood. He notes that manhood is shaped by race, class, age and sexuality. This emphasises that inequalities, as evidenced within the South African context, also affect concepts of manhood and levels of violence.

Nemoto (2008) defines three different types of manhood: hegemonic, subordinate and marginalised. Hegemonic manhood can be defined (Connell, 1995, p. 21) as "the

configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women". Men who go against the norms of dominant hegemonic masculinity fall into the category of subordinate or marginalised masculinity. Gay men and academics are viewed as subordinate due to their perceived associations with femininity. Marginalised men have been marginalised in history with relation to race and class (Lusher & Robins, 2010).

Hegemony and manhood

Within countries such as South Africa, male customs traditionally place emphasis upon values including: courage, inner direction, certain forms of aggression, autonomy, mastery, technological skill, group solidarity, and adventure and toughness in mind and body. Within the field of social science, many have sought to link this with the concept of hegemony. Although difficult to define, hegemony can be regarded as how the majority of the population organise customs and social institutions. Therefore a hegemonic manhood would entail characteristics attributed to men by the majority of the population through social customs and institutions. Through practices, such as the media, these customs are made to seem natural and normal, but have greater encouragement toward domination and patriarchy (Donaldson, 1993). Ratele (2008) defines hegemonic masculinity in terms of "a mesh of social practices productive of gender-based hierarchies" (p.516). He suggests that these social practices include violence which supports these hierarchies, specifically the unequal relations between male and female groups. Within South Africa, the literature concerning manhood predominantly focuses on patriarchy. As noted by Gear (2010), the bulk of psychological, economic and political power is freely given to men, particularly to middleclass white heterosexual men. Men from other groups, although considered

marginalised or subordinate, are also granted various forms of power (Miller, 1986; Jordan, Walker & Hartling, 2004).

Heterosexuality and homophobia may also be part of the foundation of hegemonic masculinity. Any understanding of its nature and meaning is grounded on the feminist perception that any relationship between men and women can be considered oppressive (Donaldson, 1993). A critical element of hegemonic masculinity is that women exist mainly as potential sexual objects for men while men are refuted as sexual objects for other men. Women provide heterosexual men with sexual validation. Men compete with each other for this validation. This opinion is a common assumption of hegemonic, patriarchal masculinity (Donaldson, 1993).

Other Factors affecting manhood

Mankowski & Maton (2010) identifies a huge gap or blindness with regard to maleness or manhood whereby scripts of being male are inundated with power and aggression. The script also comes with the stigma that most masculinity is perceived as oppressive. This serves to perpetuate the focus on male violence and oppression, while reducing the emphasis upon connection and individuality.

The literature reviewed thus far offers different descriptions of manhood and certain themes have become evident. These themes include patriarchy, oppression and dominance and are emphasised or perpetuated by factors such as the media and social influence and the role of the home environment, particularly the mother and father. The roles will be further elaborated upon below.

The Role of the Media on the construction of Manhood

Ricciardelli, Clow and White (2010) examine how masculinity is portrayed in the media and that it is in a worldwide state of transformation. Media serves to create an ideal 'male identity' which is generally unrealistic or unattainable for the male public. The ideal male identity found in the media contributed towards the development of 'metrosexual masculinity'. Metrosexual masculinity is argued to be a new form of masculinity which is neither aggressive nor authoritative over women, children or other men. It is also more concerned with a certain dress sense and grooming (Ricciardelli, Cow & White, 2010). This masculinity is very different to the rough hard working man, the one that would hunt and protect and with little concern about his physical appearance.

One aspect of masculine identity entails body image. There are studies which look into the effects of media on masculine body image. A study by Olivardo, Harrison, Borowiecki and Cohane (2004) suggests that many American men display body dissatisfaction to the extent that it is closely related to depression, certain eating disorders, and the use of performance-enhancing substances as well as low self-esteem. Another study by Hargreaves and Tiggerman (2006) reveals the opposite, i.e. that many boys believe their body image is not influenced by the media and consider being concerned with body image as gay or feminine. The conflicting reports of these two studies may be revealing of the crisis manhood finds itself in today.

Holter (2007) states that changes related to masculine identity are merely in the beginning phases and that larger changes are underway. Frosh (1997, p. 3) describes manhood as, "if this entity of which we might once have been so confident, this dominant force in the world, appears to have no substance to hold it together, no definite and permanent reality". Feminists and other academics oppose dominant ideas or stereotypes of masculinity because of its oppressing nature. However, they fail to provide an alternative or acknowledge that manliness, like femininity, is an important aspect of how men exist in the

world. Therefore, looking at how individual men experience and create meaning of their masculine identities or manhood would be beneficial for them and others in the world.

The Role of Social influence on the Construction of Manhood

The social influence on male identity begins as soon as a male child is born and continues throughout life. Money and Tucker (1975), as cited in Tepper (1999, p. 42) mention that the way gender roles are learned are very similar to how language is learned, “that we are hardwired for speech, but not programmed”. Building upon this, Bem (1993, p. 2) noted that “a cultural connection is thereby forged between sex and virtually every other aspect of human experience”.

There are many who hold essentialist beliefs that gender exists as a quality or trait within individuals. Manhood would be considered as internal and persistent, not shaped by interactions of daily life (McNeill, 2007). Roy and Dyson (2010) challenge this view by noting that manhood is a subjective experience. Men, therefore, have a choice as to what kind of ‘man’ they would like to be. They influence their own meanings of manhood and live it out the way they would like to. Each person or man in this case is brought up in a unique setting with unique parents and a unique culmination of life events. Manhood can be considered as an individual choice of how to live that which men have learned through their unique life circumstances. They can adopt descriptions of manhood for themselves which may just be a personal decision at the end of the day.

Mankowski & Maton (2010) identify a huge gap or blindness with regard to maleness or manhood. They note that research and theory has up until now focused on feminism, on how women are oppressed and how men oppress them. It is vital to begin asking the questions of how maleness is currently being experienced, within various contexts.

The Role of Mothering on the Construction of Manhood

According to Talbot and Quale (2010), contextual disparity plays a role in the production of hegemonic masculinity. To analyse masculinity from women's perspectives may yield insightful information with regard to the contribution that women possibly make to the construction and maintenance of masculine ideals and identity frames. These contributions may restrict or limit men's identities and so call for more critical research. Where academic discourse on masculinity contributes to the problematizing of men in general, Talbot and Quale (2010) have paid attention to women's voices, therefore exploring a necessary avenue in deconstructing manhood.

Pollack (1998) explores mothers' roles in raising boys to be men and how mothers help boys to become men. He explores the power of mothers in alleviating certain confusions for boys. For boys, mothers are the earliest influence and teachers of masculinity. They teach boys how to integrate societal contradictions, making boys stronger emotionally and psychologically, allowing them to carry these characteristics into adulthood. A loving mother would therefore be paramount in developing the self-esteem and strength of character required in manhood. The contradiction is that society expects men to act as though they are tough. Yet, at the same time, they are chastised for not being sensitive or caring enough.

Boys with absent mothers are at a disadvantage as they lack a certain freedom and confidence in becoming independent men (Pollack, 1998). Mothers are important in creating the ability to form close, loving attachments. Many mothers were brought up in an era of feminism and may have embraced ideals of equality. They may have fought for their own voices to be heard as well as for the right to work, or to assert themselves, which will have an effect on the way they raise their sons. Mothers who are confused about their own sexuality and gender identity may give mixed signals to their male children in the grooming of their manhood (Pollack, 1998).

The Role of Fathering on the Construction of manhood

There are different aspects of the father-son relationship that could affect the journey to manhood. Firstly, fathers who are absent, or have had absent fathers themselves can repeat the emotional distance they have experienced in their childhood (Pollack 1998). Mothers act as “gatekeepers” (Pollack, 1998, p. 125) to absent fathers by taking on a more nurturing role with regard to their sons. Mothers may, in some cases, not allow the nurturing role of fathers and unintentionally rob fathers from playing more meaningful roles. Secondly, when a son is born in the home and the father then disappears by going to work to provide for his son’s needs (Pollack, 1998, p. 127), he leaves the mother to the “nurturing” role, resulting in what is termed “nest fathering”. “Nest fathering” hinders the relationship between father and son and maintains an emotional distance which ultimately adds to what sons learn about what it means to be a man. The third factor is the “macho father” (Pollack, 1998, p.128). Such a father teaches his son, from an early age to be strong, tough and independent. He therefore fathers according to all the myths and stereotypes of manhood he knows. Men also carry, in their memories, ‘wounds’ regarding their own fathers and if they consider changing their own ways of fathering, these old wounds may need to be explored.

Morrell (2005) suggests that it is important to distinguish between the biological connection of a father to his child and the fatherhood role. He emphasises the importance of reliability, love, availability, support and dependability as part of the fathering role more than a biological connection. This shift may add value to the understanding and purpose of fatherhood and therefore manhood.

Robert Lewis (2007), in his book “Raising a modern day knight” explores his concerns of a feminist culture which strips men of their maleness. He explains that this culture constructs manhood as more of a problem which has ultimately resulted in a masculine identity crisis. Since men are in this crisis how do they raise their sons to be men? Lewis embarked on a journey of discovery attempting to uncover a clear definition of manhood and the ceremony

of entering manhood. He accounts much of the moral decline and chaos of society to the state manhood finds itself to be in.

Morrell (2005) explores the influence that greater father involvement can have in the context of South Africa. He suggests that fatherhood can be a goal that would improve society as well as gender relations. He goes further to explain that there are benefits when males appreciate their fathers or the role of fathering; which benefits society as well. He concludes that “when fatherhood is woven as a desirable feature into the fabric of masculinity, everybody benefits” (Morrell, 2005 p. 86).

Conclusion

‘Manhood’ has been explored in different ways, with different descriptions and different understandings. Most prevalent is the idea that manhood is usually described in terms of traits such as strength (both physical and emotional), aggression or violence, competence, being unemotional and dominant (especially over females). Other traits of manhood include the role of ‘provider’ and ‘protector’ of their families and the drive towards fulfilling a need to prove themselves socially. These traits coincide with what is understood as hegemonic masculinity. Constructions of manhood for all cultures and races during apartheid fitted this hegemonic frame, albeit with a conflicting direction of power and aggression. The transition to democracy left all men in South Africa with the task of reconstructing their masculine identities and integrating as one nation of men. With this also came the liberation of the oppression of women by patriarchy, which left men to abdicate these roles as well.

The argument is raised that manhood is a ‘social’ construct and carries various meanings attributed to it. Meaning is influenced by environmental surroundings and submerged in different cultures and social influences. The effects of being raised by single mothers or unemotional fathers have also been discussed, as well as the influence of mothering and

fathering as important factors. What parents regard as good and acceptable concerning manhood are influential for young boys as well as men who are constantly negotiating their sense of meaning around manhood.

Manhood has no single fixed description. This study will further add to the exploration of this term and what it means. Listening to men's experiences will shed some light on this transition. The interviews conducted will therefore provide insight directly from the lives of five different men. They will contribute to the greater understanding of manhood through their real life experiences and how they were influenced and formed by the wider community.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Orientation

Utilising a post structuralism framework, this research explores descriptions of manhood. This qualitative study, analyses the relevant data with a combined hermeneutic approach and thematic analysis. The first step entails organising the content of the participant interviews into emerging themes. The second step involves taking a closer look into individual interviews and how each participant creates a sense meaning of manhood. Analysis of the data then allows for in depth discussion in relation to the literature reviewed. It is anticipated that this process will not only emphasise, but also privilege the voices of the men in the study.

Utilising Qualitative Research

The term 'qualitative' refers to a comprehensive methodological approach to the study of social action. The term is usually used to refer to an assortment of methods and techniques which share a common logic (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p.270). Qualitative research is generally understood to take its point of departure from an insider perspective. The descriptions of 'manhood' are explored from the insider perspectives of the participants. The process is inductive, with the researcher being the primary instrument conducting the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p.270). The researcher's goal is to describe or gain understanding rather than to predict or explain what the term 'manhood' means for the participants. The data collection was therefore conducted within the participant's natural setting. Additionally, the focus was on the personal experiences of the participants, rather than working toward a specific outcome. The participant's perspective was emphasised with a primary concern for in-depth descriptions and understandings of their experience (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Shefer, Boonzaier and Kiguwa (2006) argue that within qualitative research, interpretation and the role of the researcher play a pivotal role. The interpretation involves a focus upon “human experience” and is used to describe in greater depth the descriptions of manhood. Since hermeneutics is primarily “the study of the interpretation of texts” (Kvale, 1996, p. 46), it will be used as a way of interpreting the participant interviews.

According to Lyons and Coyle (2007), a key factor in qualitative research is context. The intricacy and flexibility of context involves the exclusive intrinsically defined content of the lived experience of the participants and all factors involved (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This study attempts to explore the contexts regarding the descriptions of manhood for each participant.

It is vital to acknowledge the influence of historical, social and cultural contexts. This affects the meaning-making processes, in this case in relation to manhood. Historical and cultural context are also very important with regard to the post structuralist framework of this study (Barker, 2012). Qualitative interpretations are constructed by the researcher. It is therefore important for the researcher to acknowledge the position from which they would approach interpretation. This position is understood to be influenced by gender, class, race, as well as culture and ethnic environments. In other approaches bias is regarded as an element which needs reducing and avoidance. Within this approach, it is considered that one cannot be removed from the contexts within which one studies. Consistent with the post structuralist framework, the researcher is called to examine their role and impact on the study. The researcher therefore engages with the recorded data in a reflexive manner and with great respect (Shefer et al., 2006).

Aims and Rationale for This Research

A significant aim of this qualitative study is to utilise the data collected in order to provide additional research onto the already standing body of literature regarding 'manhood'. This contribution assists in providing further understanding of manhood. There is also an expected level of insight based on the 'lived experience' of the participants related to their understanding of manhood.

In order to explore the descriptions of manhood from the men participating in this study, open-ended inductive questions found in qualitative studies are used (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). In order to obtain, report and interpret the subjective descriptions of manhood by participants the interviews were recorded and transcribed (Lyons & Coyle, 2007).

Through a Hermeneutic framework, the researchers' goals include:

- To stimulate subjective descriptions of 'manhood' from the participants of the study;
- To interpret and gain insight into how these descriptions of manhood came to be for each participant (i.e. through their history and culture);
- To attempt to interpret and deconstruct the descriptions of manhood while preserving the essence of the narratives of each participant.

Research Setting

The sample for this study consists of 5 individual men from the population of a small city in the Eastern Cape. The participants were selected through non-probability purposive and convenience sampling. This was largely due to ease of accessibility and will be discussed in greater detail in the methodology chapter.

The participants were accessed from three different locations in the city; each location was the work place of the various participants. The participants were of different ages, races and socio-economic backgrounds to provide a cross section of data and discourse. The interviews were conducted within the participant's natural setting (own environments) as to provide for their comfort.

Data Collection

Data was collected through individual interviews conducted with five volunteer participants from the population of the city. The participants have been selected using non-probability purposive and convenience sampling. Non-probability sampling holds that not every population component has a chance to be selected (Blaikie, 2003). Ease of accessibility was the main influence in the decision to use this type of sampling. The participants were accessed from their work place and were of different ages, races and socio-economic backgrounds. Each participant description is unique. Participant identities remain confidential throughout the research findings, they have been given pseudonyms.

The following table consists of contextualising information of each participant. The table is used to broaden the reader's understanding of the participants and to show how participants were influenced by these factors in process of making meaning with regards to their understanding of manhood.

Table 1: Characteristics of participants [please note: pseudonyms have been used]

Pseudonym:	Approximate Age:	Race:	Other contextualising factors:
Ryan	Mid 40's	'coloured'	Ryan has been through tertiary education. He is married with four children.
Allen	Mid 40's	'white'	Allen lived in England for most of his childhood but has been living in South Africa for most of his adulthood. He is not married and is a carer for his elderly parents.
Sihle	Early 20's	'black'	Sihle is single. He is studying towards completing his tertiary training. He also works fulltime.
Khapelo	Mid 30's	'black'	Khapelo has received very little formal education. He maintains stable employment and is the sole care-giver to his son.
Alex	Late 20's	'white'	Alex has completed tertiary education and is in a fast growing career. He was engaged to be married at the time of the interview.

Similar open-ended questions were prepared and put forward to each participant. In order to orientate the participants to the idea of manhood the same video clip was played for each one. The content of the clip is about a small group of men sitting around a table having a casual conversation about when they first knew they had become 'men'. See appendices for the transcription of the video clip (Appendix 1) and interview questions (Appendix 2).

A voice recording device was used to record each interview in order to make certain that all important information was captured (Smith, 2003). After the interviews were conducted and recorded, they were transcribed using a computer and printed. The recording was replayed several times in order to provide an 'adequate' written copy (Crossley, 2000).

Ethical Considerations

The academic value of this study is bound up with the ethical and academic principles on which this study is based. Ethically sound research was deemed to be beneficial to the research participants, the researcher, the institution and the field of psychology as well as the greater society (Allan, 2008). The topic of manhood is relevant to all members of our continually changing society. To stimulate a greater understanding of manhood at the level of the participant, as well as in the case of literature, produces greater understanding within a South African context. This study is much needed in a society where constructions of manhood are constantly changing.

The dignity of the research participants is held with utmost importance. The chosen methodology and ethical considerations protect the participants from humiliation and consider their values, interests and autonomy (Allan, 2008). To compound this level of respect for the participants, the researcher also holds these principals as personal values.

Informed Consent

Letters were sent to the potential participants explaining the research process, including confidentiality and signed consent. Informed consent was obtained from the participants for the interviews to take place and be recorded, recognising that the interviews are used as data for the study (see appendices for letter to participants and consent form). Some of the research was conducted on business premises; consent was therefore obtained from the business owners.

Voluntary Participation

A letter sent out to potential participants explained the research process and included the interview questions. These letters requested that participants volunteers and informed them that no compensation or reward was offered. All participants voluntarily agreed to the interview process as well as for the interviews to be used as data for this study.

Confidentiality

For confidentiality purposes participant's identities have been protected with the use of pseudonyms throughout the study. Information related to personal identity, residence and employment have been omitted or made to be very vague in order to protect participant identities. Only basic information such as gender, race and approximate age has been used as part of the study which contextualises each participant description. The recorded and transcribed data have been stored in a locked cabinet.

Psychological Safety and Well-being

All participants were informed in the consent form of their right to withhold any aspect of any content of the interview if they felt any discomfort with it being used. This was therefore to ensure the psychological wellbeing of the participants.

The interview process simultaneously offered the participants a space to reflect on their lives and share their experiences which could be considered therapeutic and beneficial for the participants. They were informed that if they experienced any discomfort they could be referred for psychological support.

Feedback

The participants played an important role in this study and were promised a copy of the report at the completion of the research, accompanied by a letter of appreciation for their involvement.

Intellectual Property Rights

The researcher has tried her utmost not to infringe on intellectual property rights and to plagiarise other researcher's work. All literary contributions were referenced as stated in the attached declaration. Otherwise all the interviews and interpretations were the researcher's own work to the best of her knowledge. .

Decision Making

Every decision made by the researcher was made through ethical consideration of each participant in order to do justice to their descriptions of manhood. With this comes the responsibility of the researcher to remain reflexive (Shefer et al., 2006). Decision making was greatly affected by the methodology and theoretical framework, researcher presuppositions and ethical considerations. Since there has been much time pressure on the production of this study many decisions have been made considering time. Time has therefore influenced the choice around convenience sampling, the number of interview participants and the use of thematic analysis.

Data Analysis

A qualitative study of this nature requires the researcher to remain open to new and unanticipated data. It is also important to be aware of one's own possible presuppositions and these have therefore been noted. Researcher presuppositions are a necessary part of the process (Kvale, 1983). The researcher becomes a co-author through the interpretation of the data.

Once interviews were recorded using the recording device and transcribed, the data was analysed. The model used for this analysis is hermeneutic in principle utilizing thematic analysis as a tool to organise the initial stage of the analysis.

Thematic analysis is used to identify themes running through the data. It was used as it is a tool that is systematic and yet flexible enough to be used within different research models (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The aim of the analysis is to highlight the meanings of manhood within the descriptions provided by the interview data. Hermeneutics therefore provides a focus on the meaning within the text and thematic analysis provides a systematic way of approaching the data.

Hermeneutic Principles

The word 'hermeneutics' is still close to its roots and is used to refer to interpretation and the clarification of meaning (Kelly, 1994). This process of interpretation involves gaining an understanding of theoretical knowledge of the topic through the use of relevant literature (Kvale, 1996). Schleiermacher, as noted in de Man (1983) was the pioneer of secular hermeneutics he stressed that those interpreting text needed to have an understanding of the text. Understanding, as is evidenced in this study involves acquiring knowledge of the historical and psychological or cultural context of the text. Understanding would also arise through the consideration of current literature.

The hermeneutic approach is closely related to the phenomenological approach. Phenomenologists focus on how human beings engage with the process of making sense of

their lives. Phenomenology therefore takes into account that “we continuously interpret, create, and give meaning to, define, justify and rationalize our actions” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 28).

Hermeneutic phenomenology was piloted by Paul Ricoeur, and is concerned with the phenomenology of interpretation. It is more limited by the questions it asks and is more perspectival. Hermeneutic phenomenology seeks to determine subjective understandings and interpretations of human action (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The researcher is therefore concerned with comprehensive explorations of the personal, lived experience of the individual participants (Lyons & Coyle, 2007).

To understand Ricoeur's work on hermeneutics, it is important to recognize his conception of man. Ricoeur considered man as a being composed by language. It is in and through language that man expresses himself and manifests his being. Man also relates with other beings by means of language and also to him/herself through language. It is an ideal route to understanding one's self. Ricoeur focuses on words that are advantaged and symbolic (Itao, 2010, p.17). Hermeneutics therefore fits snugly with in the post structural frame work of this study.

Ricoeur defines interpretation as the work of thought which entails deciphering the hidden meaning in the apparent meaning, in unfolding the levels of meaning implied in the literal meaning of symbols (Itao, 2010).

People take in information both from verbal and non-verbal sources. They internally interpret this information, and in telling us as researchers their interpretations, we in turn go through the same process of taking in information and then reproducing what we heard, and how we heard it. Through this process a new interpretation is produced. The readers of our research will also engage in the same process. This process can be seen as meaning making, and our tasks as researchers is to try and understand or best capture the different meaning in

what people say, live and experience. It is inevitable for us to make interpretations, but the aim of using this paradigm is that the voices of the researcher and the participants will be heard (Itao, 2010).

Researcher presuppositions

The first aspect that may affect the researcher's viewpoint is gender as gender is the cornerstone of this study. As a woman it is important to keep in mind the already existing personal understanding of men and manhood. There may be existing understandings of being a woman that would colour what is being read in the data and affect the interpretation. A second aspect to consider is the researcher's age, being a young woman in her mid-20's, may have its own effects on interpretation. The importance for the above observations can be found in Stoltenberg's (2003) postulation that men wear manhood masks; that perhaps men communicate more truthfully when they are NOT in the presence of women.

Since South Africa is a country that has come through many racial dilemma's the presence and awareness of race still remains. The participants and researcher have diverse cultural backgrounds and are from different race groups. Another important factor could be the holding of religious viewpoints of certain moral and spiritual values which could be influential in interpretation. As researcher I am aware of subscribing to the Christian religion. It is important to consider the aspects of gender, age, race and religion as they have inevitably played their part in the interview process and contributed to the analysis and discussion of this study. According to Kvale (1983) a researcher cannot get out of the custom of understanding that he resides in. By making these presuppositions explicit, the researcher is always aware of their influences on the interpretation process.

The hermeneutic circling movement through the analysis process has been both frustrating and incredibly insightful. Learning through the literature and the personal experiences of the

participants has created a space for new understanding of manhood. It allowed new nuances to enrich already existing understandings (Kvale, 1983).

Main presuppositions for this particular study

The main presuppositions in exploring the participant data are greatly affected by hegemonic views of masculinity. These contain stereotypes of how men should behave (Goldberg, 1976; Pollack, 1933, 1992, 2006; Allan & Barbara Pease, 2008; Gray, 1992; Bergman, 1995; O'Neil, 1981).

These stereotypes involve men being conditioned by society, their families as well as women to play the role of breadwinner, lover, parent, and husband. These include expectations to be emotionally strong and silent (Goldberg, 1976). It also includes considering that constructions of gender are birthed through the home environment (Ghaill, 1994; Pearson & Van Horn, 2004; Morrell, 2005; Hurley, 2007). The home environment therefore includes various relationships with family members.

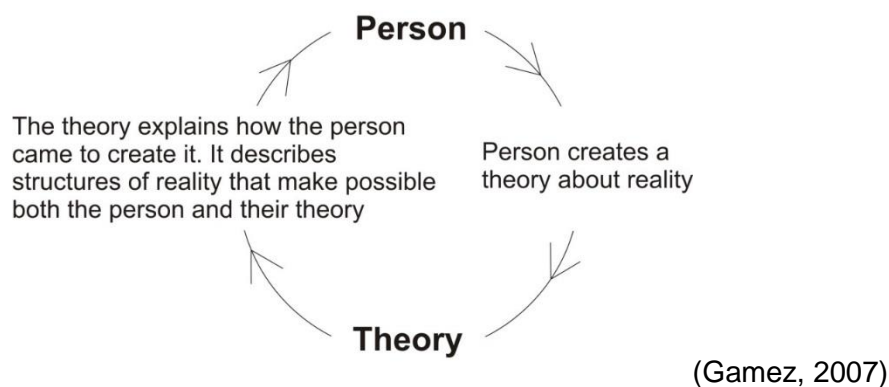
Since this is a South African study it is important to consider the post-Apartheid context (Mager et al., 2001; Field 2001; Xaba, 2001). Traditional constructions of manhood for Black South African men may include a prescribed initiation process in the progression from boyhood to manhood (Peltzer, Nqeketo, Petros & Kanta, 2008). Newer blends of manhood in South Africa contain constructions of pride, patience, restraint, decisiveness, cool-headed courage and endurance (Hemson, 2001; Wardorp, 2001). Most cultural groups in South Africa emphasize employment and earning potential as important (Elliot, 2003). This emphasis affects men's self-esteem due to the high level of unemployment in South Africa.

There is an expectation to see similar themes to arise from the participant interviews. A danger was always that the study could get lost in being theme orientated. With that awareness I always strove to keep the study person orientated and to value the personal meanings offered by participants (Kvale, 1983).

The Hermeneutic Circle

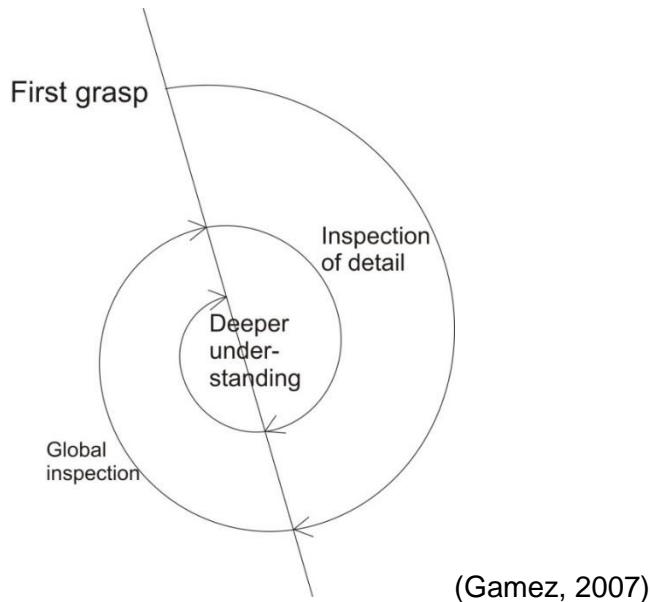
Martin Heidegger (1927) developed the concept of the hermeneutic circle. He considers that reality is situated in the in-depth experience of the everyday existence of individuals. There are "fore-structures" of understanding that allow external phenomena to be interpreted in a preliminary way. Neither the whole text nor any individual part can be understood without reference to one another, hence, this creates a circle. The hermeneutic circle is valuable for this study as it stresses that the meaning of a text must be found within its cultural, historical, and literary context. The basic structure and function of the hermeneutic circle is utilized. The following diagrams by Gamez (2007) clearly explain in its simplest form, the hermeneutic circle:

Diagram 1: Hermeneutic Circle 1



This diagram explains the way in which to approach interpretation of text. Understanding the text as a whole is established by reference to its individual parts. The understanding of each individual part is by reference to the whole. Therefore it is the researcher's understanding that the participants in this study would have created a personal theory of manhood; which is constructed through different influences in their lives including history and culture (Heidegger, 1927; Gamez, 2007). By deconstructing each participant's theory on manhood, how it came to be, is "revealed".

Diagram 2: Hermeneutic Circle 2



The first grasp entails the first reading of the interviews, noticing the basic themes emerging from the participant interviews. This would also entail gaining a 'self-understanding' of the participant (Kvale, 1983). Re-reading participant interviews entails looking deeper into what is being said. This re-reading provides an opportunity for interpretation. The re-reading also provides a 'common sense' view that takes contextual aspects into account (Kvale, 1983). Stepping back to look at what literature has said in relation to what the participants have said provides a global view of the theories of manhood put forward by the participants in relation to the literature reviewed (Gamez, 2007). The global view is captured in the discussion chapter of this study.

Thematic analysis

The thematic analysis can be defined as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79). This method has been used to extract the descriptions of manhood from each participant interview for analysis. Thematic

analysis has been used as the first step of the hermeneutic circle. In this way the themes extracted through thematic analysis become the text to be explored through the hermeneutic lens. Exploring the text in this way allows for comparison of the various men's viewpoints or narratives of manhood.

Terms that need defining for this method include "data item" and "data extract" (Braun & Clarke, 2006. p. 79). 'Data item' refers to each individual portion of data collected, in this case it would include the data extracted for analysis from one participant interview. Combined they make up the 'data set'. The 'data extract' refers to an individual coded piece of data that has been extracted from a data item. Within this study data extracts are sentences from specific interviews that have been coded as a means of identifying where they come from.

Thematic analysis allows for identifying themes for each participant relating to descriptions of manhood. A 'theme' is considered meaningful from within the data set in relation to the research question. Themes within this study can be understood as various descriptions of manhood (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This first stage of analysis is not a passive process of watching themes emerge from the text. It is an active process of co-authoring meaning relating to manhood.

The type of thematic analysis used for this study is inductive. This means that the data is coded without attempting to fit it into a prescribed coding frame. The themes rely on the data provided by the participants (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The data has been read and organised into various themes, which are various descriptions of manhood.

The entire analysis involves a progression from simple descriptions, where the data has merely been organized and summarized, towards interpretation. There is an attempt to theorize the significance of the themes and their broader meanings and implications (Patton, 1990), in relation to previous literature.

Process of thematic analysis

The thematic analysis process follows various phases, although it is important to understand that there is a back and forth movement between the various phases. The **first phase** is a process of familiarization with the data. From the interview to the transcription to the reading and re-reading of the data, familiarization takes place. The **second phase** of the thematic analysis process involves generating initial codes. The broader themes are generated directly from the data content in order to honour the words of the participants. As familiarity is developed with the data, codes are constructed which identify specific trends found in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The **third phase** of the process involves the identification of themes; these would be the various trends in the descriptions of manhood for each participant. Once the themes have been identified and named, they need to be defined; therefore the **fourth phase** is defining the themes. By defining the various themes, it becomes possible to group them into different categories of meaning. This categorisation is based on the researcher's interpretations of the data, therefore sub-themes can be formed. The **final phase** of the thematic analysis involves re-viewing, defining and naming themes. At this stage of the analysis the data is reviewed in order to account for an accurate reflection of the data with regard to codes and themes. In rereading the data any codes that were missed can then be added to the themes identified. As the data is organised the reader should be able to get a sense of the meaning of each theme for each participant (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Coding and organising the data

The coding can be described as breaking down data into meaningful portions and labelling them. By joining these meaningful pieces, themes are created (Terre Blanche and Durrheim 1999).

A tool called 'thematic networks' will then be applied as it enables a precise organisation of textual data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Although instructions are prescribed on how to use it for data excavation, for the purpose of this study, only the thematic network diagram will be used for organisation and presentation of the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

Extracting themes and organising them into codes entails the following procedure:

Basic themes:

The lowest-order premises evident in the text are identified and are labelled Basic Themes. These consist of data extracts (raw data in the form of sentences) from the participant interviews.

Each basic theme is represented by the letter "L" and a number. These are codes for the basic themes (quotes) in order to find them within the full transcriptions of the interview. The letter "L" with its number represents the line number of the quote (data extract) within the specific data item (participant interview). Each basic theme is a description of manhood within a specific data item.

Organising themes:

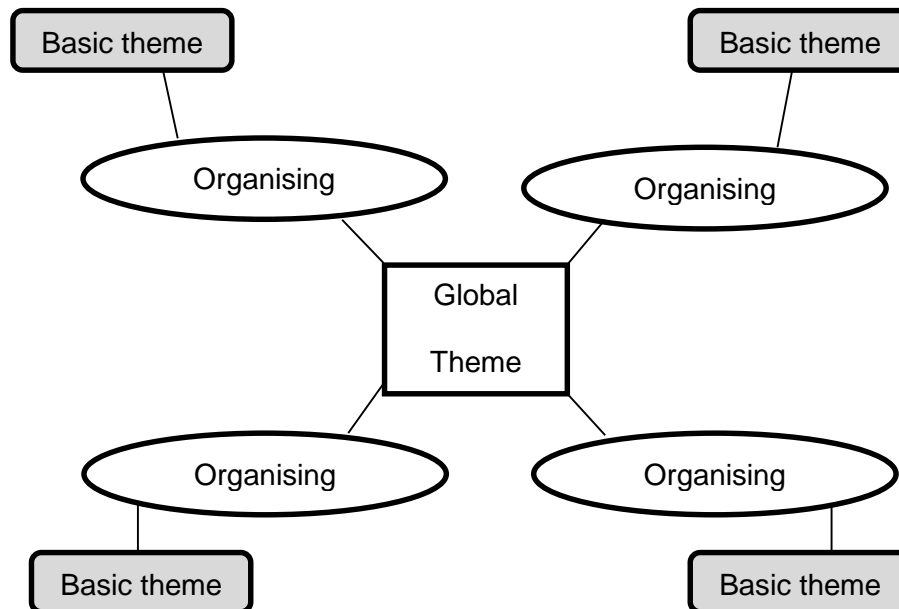
Categories of basic themes which are similar are grouped together in order to summarize more abstract principles, and called Organising Themes.

Global themes:

Organising themes are further summarised into super-ordinate themes that encapsulate the principal description of manhood from each data set and called Global Themes. The global themes reflect what the researcher has found to be the essence of the content of each data item.

The coded themes are represented using web-like maps, thematic networks, which depict the prominent themes at each of the three levels. Diagram 3 below depicts an example of a thematic network.

Diagram 3: Example of a Thematic Network



These diagrams have been very useful in the analysis, especially in the representation of the data. Developing such a network begins with basic themes and operating inwards toward a global theme (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The network therefore reflects a hermeneutic circle.

The analysis chapter is structured in a way that it initially looks at the broader themes identified in each interview. These themes are captured and represented with a thematic network. Thereafter the each participant interview is analysed in greater depth, considering the historical and cultural influences in their meaning making processes.

Conclusion

The methodology chapter has provided the basic structure of the analysis, providing insight into the manner in which the research data has been handled. There are various stages of

analysis mentioned. The process pays careful attention to privilege the voices of the men in the study. This is done through the qualitative and hermeneutic nature of the analysis. The Hermeneutic analysis which follows in the next chapter starts by organising the data into a thematic network and then to interpret the data according to the guidance of Heidegger's hermeneutic circle. The various quotes are gathered into themes which are then bound into a major theme for each participant. Ricoeur's phenomenological hermeneutics is used for interpretation and clarification of meaning with regard to each theme. Interpretation is based on the understanding that the meaning of manhood is expressed through language. The participants spoken and transcribed words lead the interpretation. The interpretation can be seen in the organising of the themes and discussion of the context from which the themes arose. The analysis chapter is a long chapter looking closely at what each participant has said in relation to manhood, each narrative has been organised into themes.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter entails the analysis of each participant interview at various levels. Each begins with an introduction of a particular participant. This is followed by the diagrammatic representation of findings from the initial reading of the data. The diagram, or rather, thematic network, displays the circular process of a hermeneutic circle. The exterior circle of the thematic network comprises of the basic themes, and contains codes used to locate the transcribed data. The middle circle comprises of the organising themes and contains the various themes extracted. The inner square comprises of the global theme which contains the main theme extracted from the interview data. The re-reading of the data then follows, which entails the deconstruction and interpretation of the various themes, examining what the participants have said. Each of the five interview analyses are to follow.

Reflection

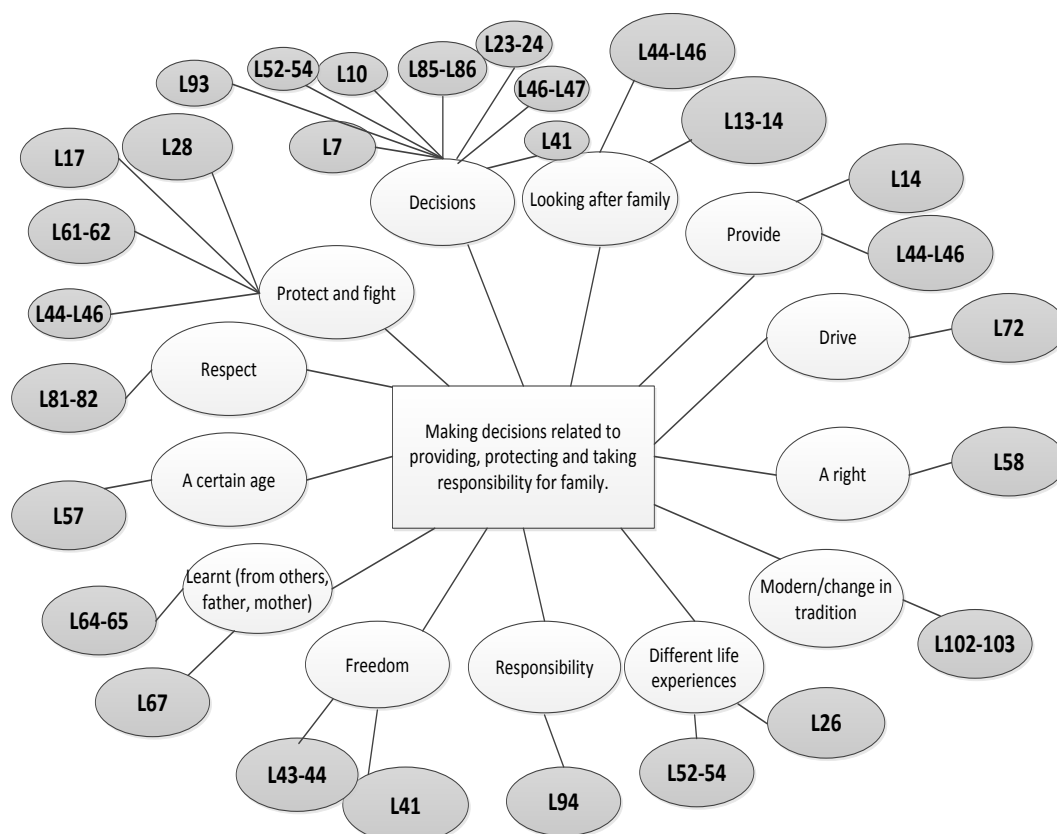
What I found interesting in the unfolding of this study was experiencing the movement each participant made between different discourses of manhood. In listening to them I became more aware of my own movement between different gendered discourses and its effects on my identity and my engagement with other people. It reminded me of a conversation I had with my grandmother about washing the dishes. I clearly remember my grandmother's response to my protest against washing the dishes. She said "while girls wash the dishes it's the boy's job to wash the car". I realise the power of how gender constructions are reinforced by many experiences and people during the course of one's life.

Individual interview analysis 1 – Ryan

Ryan is middle aged and of “coloured” race. He is married, has four children and lives with his family. Ryan lives his life according to Christian values and makes church a priority. Both Ryan and his wife are employed and are both, therefore, responsible for the financial contributions towards their home. Three of Ryan’s children were pursuing tertiary education and his youngest child was in high school at the time of the interview. Ryan’s first language is Afrikaans, though he has a good command of the English language. The interview was conducted in English.

Initial Reading:

Through the initial reading of Ryan’s interview transcription, the central theme comprised of making decisions regarding provision, protection and responsibility for his family. This can be seen in the thematic network below:



Re-reading:

Ryan's experience of becoming a man:

A Certain Age

Ryan grew up without his father and lived in a boarding school facility from the age of 13. Through this experience, he felt "thrust" (L5) early into manhood. By age 15, Ryan knew he had entered manhood:

"Some say 21 some said 17, so from mine I would say 15; I had to make my own decisions" (L7-8)

Making his own decisions marked his transition into manhood. He was away from his mother, though she was not absent:

"My mother was always there, but I had to **fight** for myself" (L8-9)

Perhaps the need for independent decision-making was related to survival as he felt he had to fight for himself. Ryan was a teenager when he lived away from home; being away from home also offered Ryan a sense of freedom.

Freedom

Becoming a man included certain allowances. Such an allowance:

"It's a bit of freedom from the idea of while you still staying under my roof, you still abide by the rules that I set." (L51-52)

As a child living under his mother's roof, Ryan had to abide by her rules. Once he started attending boarding school, he was no longer under his mother's roof. There may have been a double-bind for Ryan as on one hand, he experienced the freedom to rule his own life, although this also came with certain responsibilities. His mother's home may have provided a sense of safety and security. Leaving home to go to boarding school therefore left Ryan in

a place of freedom as well as giving him the responsibility to make his own decisions as an adult.

Decisions

Making his own decisions and decisions for others became a significant part of manhood since Ryan was his own resource for survival:

“For manhood, you’ve got to make up your own decisions...am I going to go to school? Am I not going to go to school today? Am I going to follow these guys by smoking? Am I going to do this by drinking?” (L23-24)

These decisions seem to be understood as moral responsibilities. Ryan describes independent decision making as a ‘rite’ (L27) in manhood. Leaving home allowed Ryan to participate in this rite of passage.

Ryan described a memory from his childhood in relation to decision making:

“...having my younger sister staying with at the hostel. You see now, I had to make decisions that would affect her... I had to protect her and look after... When we leave the house it was my responsibility to look after her, you know... I had to solve her problems for her” (L30-38)

Ryan’s experience of being thrust into manhood, making decisions, taking responsibility and solving problems entailed taking on a parental role:

“I almost had to be a father figure, when she needed something you know, I had to be there” (L40-41)

The importance of decision-making seemed to affect Ryan in the sense that he had to make decisions for his own life and on behalf of his sister. He had to be responsible for himself and her and therefore the transition was from a carefree child to a responsible parent. Perhaps

this reveals how children are constructed in society. In single-parent families children may have to take on parental roles in order to assist their single parent. A child of the same gender as the absent parent may therefore have to take on those gendered parental roles.

Responsibility

The experience of taking on a fathering role and being thrust into manhood means that he understands manhood in terms of making decisions and taking responsibility for himself and others. This role was cemented when he got married and had children:

“when you have a family, it’s obviously your responsibility to look after them, to feed them, to clothe them, to make sure they know what is right and wrong and to provide for them. That’s also one different aspect to manhood” (L15-17)

Ryan uses the word ‘obvious’ in relation to a man taking responsibility for his family. This may display his awareness of a societal expectation placed on men to be responsible for their families.

Ryan clarifies that there are different kinds of manhood which entail different responsibility:

“But the one I’m talking about is from the age of 15. It is different from the one when you get married and stuff like that. From the age of 15, you stayed in a hostel, you’ve got lots of guys that stay in one hostel. You’ve actually got to fight for yourself, grow up quick” (L17-20)

Manhood at age 15 entailed the responsibility “to fight” for his wellbeing. Once a man gets married, he enters a different type of manhood which entails providing for his family.

Provision

Provision is also considered an aspect of a hegemonic understanding of manhood (Elliot, 2003). It is interesting that his mother most likely fulfilled these 'hegemonic' manly responsibilities. He therefore learned certain aspects of manhood from his mother.

The responsibilities Ryan has to take on when entering manhood are greatly influenced by the decisions he faced in relation to family wellbeing and provision. To illustrate:

“when you have a family, it’s obviously your responsibility to look after them, to feed them, to clothe them, to make sure they know what is right and wrong and to provide for them, that’s also one different aspect to manhood” (L15-17)

“But the one I’m talking about is from the age of 15. It is different from the one when you get married and stuff like that.” (L17-20)

“I almost had to be a father figure, when she needed something you know. I had to be there” (L40-41)

Looking after Family

Ryan has rules for himself as a man:

“If you married and you’ve got a family, you’ve got to protect your family, provide for your family, look after your family, and be the father in the house. If you not married, it might be just you making the right decisions in life and follow your own path.” (L53-56)

This is a strong theme running through the interview. The experience of the interview was that Ryan found his role as father and husband very significant as a man. By Ryan looking after his family, he makes decisions regarding provision, morality as well as protection.

Protection

In similar relation to the theme of provision, protection is also considered a hegemonic construction of manhood. By considering his role as father and husband as important aspects of manhood, Ryan seems to live out more traditional hegemonic constructions of manhood. He does however explain that within South Africa, culture affects the way manhood is perceived and experienced. To illustrate:

“When you have a family, it’s obviously your responsibility to look after them, to feed them, to clothe them, to make sure they know what is right and wrong and to provide for them.” (L15-17)

“I almost had to be a father figure, when she needed something you know, I had to be there.” (L40-41)

Different life experiences (a South African perspective)

Ryan explained that in certain cultures, there are rituals and exact processes to manhood:

“In the African community, once you get circumcised you’ve been classified as a man.” (L59-60)

Ryan explains that within his culture, which originates from the coloured community, there is no exact process. The major factor in the process is that...

“It’s entirely up to you or your family situation.” (L63)

The home situation can offer protection for a boy to stay as long as he can. It could also cause a boy to feel unhappy in which case he would desire to move out and make his own decisions.

He seems to paint an understanding that entering manhood could be a choice. Perhaps he, however, did not have much of a choice, hence his experience of being thrust early into

manhood. The family situation and contextual factors therefore provide a learning environment for boys entering manhood.

Manhood is learned

Ryan views manhood as something that one is not merely born with:

“Look I wouldn’t think it’s [from my side/opinion] something you were born with”

His experience has taught him that manhood is entered through a process of learning. Boys, therefore, reach a certain age where they have learned those aspects which guide them as they enter into manhood. He provides a description of certain sites of learning:

“I suppose you learn it in a family environment, looking up at your father and see how he goes about his life...If you come out of a house with lots of problems, you think if you don’t respect a woman then why should I respect a woman?...If you look at your peers, how they get treated, it’s all a whole lot of different aspects that make you the man that you want to be” (L77-82)

The family is the learning ground for manhood. A father’s behaviour is therefore significant in teaching a boy how to be a man. Though Ryan does not give specific details of what he learned from his father, perhaps he learned to offer certain attributes to his own family that he did not receive. Friends are also important in this learning process. Ultimately, he seems to see manhood as a construction created through observation and choice:

“...you put it together the way you want to, that’s why you find out that you get some guys that comes out of a very respected house...and don’t turn out to be respected because maybe they don’t have that drive to stand for what they believe in” (L85-87)

Ryan reveals a new factor; he mentions an inner-drive that enables one to stand for their beliefs. The presence of this drive would enable a man to choose the way in which he constructs his own manhood.

A Drive

Ryan's inner-drive has been developed through his childhood experiences of difficulty:

“...the person that's got a drive comes out of a very broken house that doesn't want to go through the same thing or doesn't want his kids to go through the same thing... when he gets married, he will actually look after the people” (L87-92).

Ryan therefore learned from his own family situation. His inner drive strives to afford his family that which he did not have access to as a child.

Conclusion

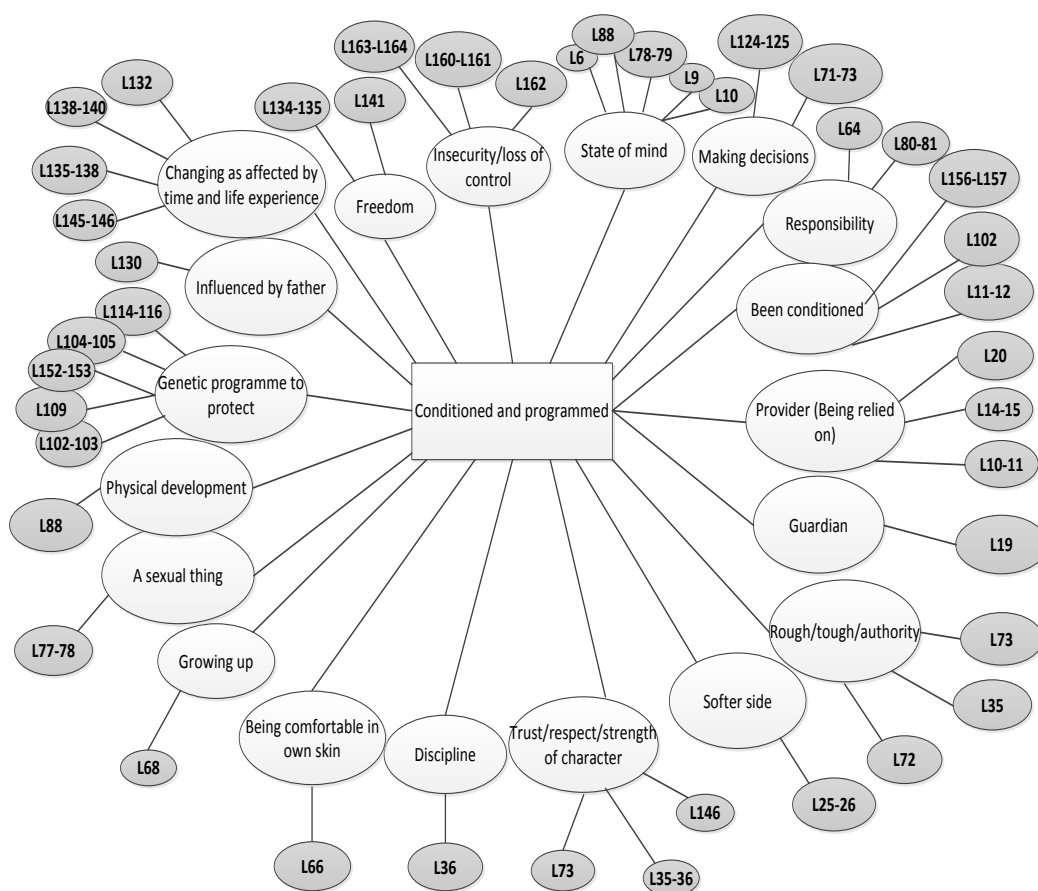
Ryan offered up deep insights into his own process of manhood. He felt thrust into manhood at the young age of 15 when he realised he had to take on certain responsibilities for his own wellbeing. Responsibility entailed much decision-making within different life contexts and phases. His decisions have been greatly influenced by his inner-drive to provide for, protect and look after his family's needs. Ryan's inner-drive was developed through difficult childhood experiences; his longing for a responsible, decision-making father who looked after all his needs.

Individual interview analysis 2 - Allen

Allen is a middle-aged white male. He is unmarried and has no children. Allen spent most of his childhood growing up in the UK. He has lived in South Africa for many years. Allen provides care and support for his elderly parents who reside with him. Gaining insight from Allen's unique experience offers much value to this study.

Initial reading:

Many themes were extracted from the interview data during the initial read. The most common theme speaks of men being conditioned and programmed by society. This entails Allen's focus on men being socially conditioned and genetically programmed to act in certain masculine ways. Allen believes manhood to be a product of both nature and nurture. Below is a diagram of the initial themes extracted.



Re-reading:

Allen's understanding of manhood

A State of mind

Allen's response to the video clip was that he did not relate to any of the content in the clip and he offered his personal understanding of manhood:

“...usually manhood is a state of mind...when you stop being the one who is receiving the support but you are the one who is providing the support, that's how I see it” (L6-8)

Allen understands manhood as moving from one state of mind into another. He went from the receiver of support to the provider of support.

Provider: being relied on

This shift occurred when Allen became the provider of support to his parents. Provision is also considered a hegemonic description of manhood and was also mentioned in the analysis of the first interview. Even though Allen does not have children or a wife, being a provider is still an important aspect of manhood for him.

He believed manhood to not only entail being a provider, but also to be a guardian.

Guardian

“...the man is supposed to be the guardian and provider, because that's what we are all raised to believe.” (L19-20)

To be a man therefore entails being relied on in terms of provision and protection. These roles entail making certain kinds of decisions.

Making Decisions

Allen describes decision-making as:

“Taking right in the real world and making decisions about what type of man to be” (L10-11).

He also relates decision-making to being a provider and being relied on:

“You are the one who is going to be relied upon, that is what we have been conditioned to be” (L11-12)

Allen introduces the idea of being conditioned into the role of provider as a man.

Being Conditioned

Allen relates much of the decision-making and provision involved in manhood to being conditioned by society and family. He describes a process of leaving childhood and “taking right” in the real world, deciding what to do-perhaps related to a career, values, beliefs and position in society. He compares his own perspective to what he has noticed in South Africa:

“Well, in South Africa, the stereotype is that the man is the provider in the home and the woman is supposed to play second fiddle. In my home, I was brought up different. Being English, a woman is an equal partner, but somebody is to take the lead somewhere along the line in a situation” (L14-17).

Provision, in this context, has a stereotypical patriarchal meaning with women taking a subordinate role. Previously, Allen mentioned that he is a provider of support in his home. He understands provision in his personal context as different to the stereotypical understanding of provider.

People are therefore ‘conditioned’ into different gender roles:

“They are also conditioned from a younger age that this is a man’s job; this is your role, and this is a woman’s place. To me, it wasn’t totally that. I was brought up in an

English home where mom did as much as dad...we lived on a farm, so there was a sharing of responsibilities...I just grew up there knowing that it's equal right. Mom took more decisions than dad sometimes" (L47-53).

He notes that conditioning for gender roles occurs in the home environment, with parents being most influential.

A rough/tough/authoritarian side and a softer side

Allen theorises that although men have a softer side, traditional manhood is under threat. Therefore, men are acting rough and tough in response:

"It's actually one that's traditionally now being based down. Men are feeling threatened now, let's be honest, they are. If you look at them, the way they carry on, then they are supposed to be rough and tough and don't want to show the softer side." (L23-26).

Perhaps this is his personal experience, although he did say that he doesn't believe in hiding his softer side (L28).

Insecurity/loss of control

Allen describes the threat that manhood has experienced:

"We've been socially conditioned, I mean also you look at the media; we are being bombarded with...the 70's...woman played second fiddle. Now you got her being the boss in the movie... she is now in control. You see how society has changed." (L155-159).

The threat is the liberation of women from the time of patriarchy. Power and control have shifted from men to women:

“And men, in a way, are threatened because now they are not totally in control. It’s a certain amount of insecurity...The influence is that men are threatened...They think they will become servants. You know, we are brought up believing that men are masters. But I don’t believe that, it’s a partnership” (L159-163).

Allen explains that men are socially conditioned to believe they are ‘masters’. The changing times with the influence of feminism and women liberation has pushed men into a position of insecurity. Men therefore act out of insecurity and no longer power and control. He does however mention that his personal belief is that men and women are a partnership. He does however seem to display a contrast in his beliefs, perhaps displaying confusion between different influential discourses.

Discipline

The interview also came to a place where Allen gave his perspective on giving children hidings as a means of discipline. He described discipline as follows:

“It goes back to one thing when you look at the bringing up of a child. Authority is, how can I put it? Trust and respect is built out of the way you deal [the way a parent uses their authority can build trust and respect], but what you do have with the discipline there has to be always the potential of knowing there’s a consequence.” (L 34-37).

Discipline assists in building certain characteristics of manhood, namely trust and respect. Parental or other authority assists in building these characteristics through discipline practices. Therefore, the manner in which discipline consequences are dealt with affects the building of these characteristics.

Trust and respect - strength of character

It seems that depending on how discipline is received as a child, a child is able to build on characteristics of integrity such as trust and respect.

Responsibility

Allen reflected on the discussion in the video clip relating to when one enters manhood:

“That question of when did you feel you became one (a man), I think I was about 17 or 18, when I finished school, but I had already started taking responsibilities earlier. So, I mean, it was just a matter of progression. Plus, I had to go do my two years” (L55-58).

Allen’s experience included the progression of leaving school, taking responsibilities and doing his two years in the army.

“I think that was when the switch went in my family’s eyes, when I came out, because I went in as my dad would see it as a son, and I came out as a man. For him, that was the switch, [and that] was because I went for my two years in the army. To me, I was already [a man] before I went in. By then, I was already taking responsibility for my life” (L60-64)

The experience of completing his two years in the army is symbolic of when he entered manhood. Allen does however mention that he was taking responsibility before this. Therefore, he felt he was a man when he started taking responsibility and this was at age 17 or 18.

Being comfortable in your own skin

Allen explores another important aspect of manhood:

“...who you are, being comfortable in your own skin” (L66)

He brings up the concept of identity. Being comfortable in one's own skin might imply an acceptance of this identity.

“Yes, for me, it's what it is, it's growing up, but then it's also one that can be flipped the other way. For a girl, when is she a woman as well as when can she takes responsibility for her own actions. And also being able to sleep at night with yourself, knowing that you have made the right decisions, and not always having the fear of somebody. [It means] being able to stand your ground and speak up on what you believe in” (L68-73).

Allen explains being comfortable in his own skin as assuming responsibility, being able to sleep with the decisions one has made as well as being able to speak up on personal beliefs. He describes this as “growing up”.

Growing up

He describes the transition into manhood as growing up and taking responsibility. He mentions that this process could be similar for women entering womanhood. This is arguably an attempt to demonstrate his view of women as equals. Being interviewed by a woman, Allen may have felt this inclusion necessary. He seemed very aware of gender difference. It is interesting to consider the historical landscape when he entered manhood as there was much racial awareness and discrimination. Growing up in England may have allowed him to escape much of the influence of the apartheid regime.

Growing up also entails no fear in consciously making a stand for his personal beliefs. This personal stand also needs to be vocal and loud, as he indicates:

“Speak up for what you believe in” (L73).

A sexual thing

Allen made mention that young men view manhood as merely a sexual thing:

“Just being a person... I’ve greyed the area about being that [a man]...you’ve got the youngsters who think manhood is...they see it as a sexual thing” (L76-78).

Having ‘greyed’ the area of manhood, Allen may be tangled between traditional views and contemporary views of manhood. It seems Allen tries to take a very neutral non-offensive stance on manhood. He further explains his view:

“I see it as a mind thing, as a psychological thing, which is to stand your ground and go out there to become a person, and if you are to go find a partner, that’s the path you go. But you’ve also got to be a man and be responsible for yourself, before you can go do that” (L78-82).

Allen does not agree with manhood being a sexual thing. This is, as he terms it, ‘a grey area’ for him. He describes finding a partner as a possible path to take in manhood, but that one should only enter that path if able to be responsible. He therefore speaks of a sexual relationship with much respect and disapproves of young men treating them differently:

“There are so many youngsters who go out there, think they are a man because they have hair in the right area. And then start a family way too young, at 25 and their lives are stuffed because they’ve got two kids and then they in a trap, and they never grow up” (L82-85).

Physical development

His reference to “hair in the right area” may refer back to younger males thinking manhood is a sexually-determined condition. It could refer to puberty, indicating the important element of physical development.

Allen may be taking a stand for what he believes in. He lives out his view; he is a single man, taking care of his elderly parents, making the right decisions for his own life. He mentions

mental growth as an accompaniment to physical growth, although there are some cases where men never grow up:

“...the problem with that is the, well it’s been proven, lack of discipline with the youngsters these days, so they never grow up” (L88-90).

He makes reference to the family environment as influencing both physical and mental growth:

“But also your manhood and who you are comes from your family, and your surroundings, and also the strength of the leader that’s in your family. Every family needs a leader of some sort, whether it is mom or the dad, an uncle or an aunt or somebody, but somebody’s got to be the leader to put down the values” (L94-98).

The source of discipline, structure and guidance or the lack thereof comes through the leader of a family. He believes every family needs a leader. He is not specific about whether the family leader should be a man or woman.

A genetic programme to protect

Although the family environment provides the space for learning, Allen introduced the idea that manhood also entails genetic programming. Here he explains:

“I think it’s something we’ve learned in a way, but men do have a genetic program to protect...that’s why we are physically bigger... We’re the hunter-gatherer sort of thing, you protect the nest, the woman stays at home in the nest, but society has changed, we have moved on.” (L102-106)

Allen explains what seems to be a more traditional or hegemonic understanding of manhood. If women were equal, surely they could also protect? He further explains women in relation to men:

“At the end of the day, they always want to come home and have you cuddle and protect them and they want that safety...even if she is independent. It’s because you have emotions...you have hormones in you that are programmed to nurture, therefore you need a nurture nest...we have all been grown up and all been programmed with this. You [the woman] stay at home, look after the kids, the hunter [man], goes and kills the boar to bring the food in... that is from a primal thing” (L108-116).

Allen describes manhood in terms of physical development, including hormones and genetics. It therefore seems clear that Allen has an understanding of manhood as a social conditioning as well as primal in nature, indicative of moving between discourses. He reverts back to societal changes:

“But in society today, things have changed, the woman goes out and works and earns as well...the old way of man “said” and it was his point of view. It doesn’t work for me...Maybe it’s not the right avenue... but I want a second opinion before I make a decision” (L116-122).

Father as major influence

The foundation of his understanding of manhood is his father, a more stereotyped, hegemonic manhood. As he observed constructions of manhood from others and greater social influences, his views began to change. When asked what has changed in his life, Allen goes back to the role reversal between him and his parents (L133-137). Here he explains the following:

“Over the years it has. My dad is a bit old stereotyped; when you were younger you under your old man’s influence, you look at them to guide you. As you get older, you look at life around you and things. What’s important to you five years ago is not important to you now because your life changes” (L128-131).

Freedom

Allen went through a phase in his life where manhood meant freedom and fun:

“Late 20’s and early 30’s, I went out and partied and let my hair down because up until then I had studied, done my degree, done the army and all that, so everything was structured and I had a bit of freedom because I moved out and had my own place... I wasn’t wild as a teenager, it caught up to me, then I went off the rails a little bit and had a bit of fun” (L138-142).

Changes as affected by time and life experience

Allen went through many different phases in his life which affected how he understood manhood. He grew up within a British culture and currently lives within a South African culture:

“Now that I’m down here (SA), you know now I’m the responsible one and my outlook in life has changed, but also your environment around you at the time can influence how you believe and also your strength of character...the strength of who you project when you are in a group of people. Some people say manhood is also... looking after your family; you are the provider” (L142-147).

Allen’s descriptions seem to embody a movement between discourses. He mentions the environmental influences on his beliefs, his strength and how he portrays himself to the environment in return.

Conclusion

The interview with Allen displays the power of various environmental influences. Allen moves between discourses, some of which are contradictory. This movement arguably indicates a

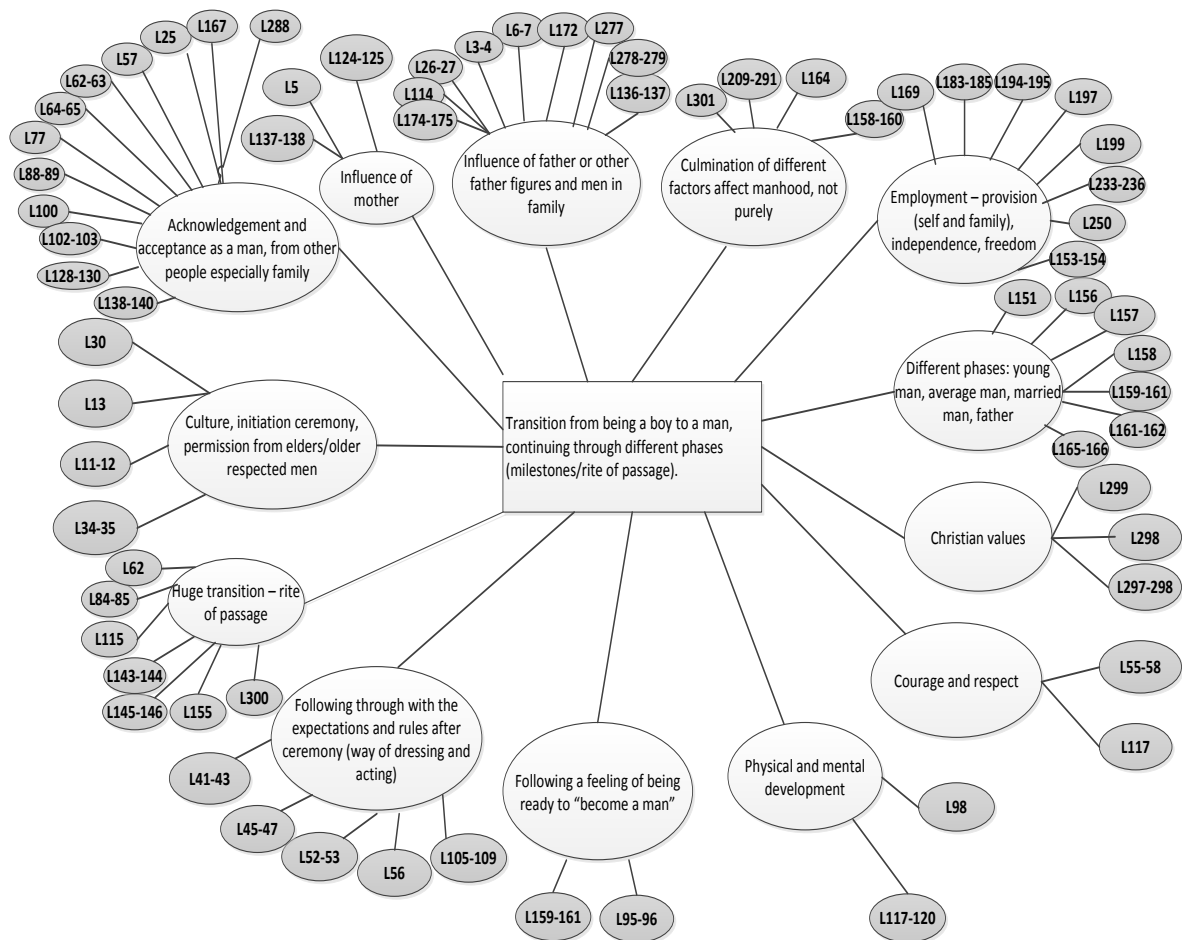
preservation of these different understandings within their contexts. Being interviewed by a female may have also influenced this movement, Allen being conscientious of not being offensive to women. He gives a clear understanding that manhood is affected by many contextual aspects. Much of the Allen's understanding of manhood relates to various forms of social conditioning and physiological hard-wiring to think and behave in certain ways.

Individual interview analysis 3 – Sihle

Sihle is a Xhosa man in his early twenties. His relationship status at the time of the interview was single. He plays a supportive role in his family, both financially and emotionally. His family consists of his mother and two younger siblings. Sihle revealed much of his personal and cultural journey to manhood, exploring also his current position within his journey. Some of the information shared by Sihle may be considered privileged as Sihle reveals his experience of the cultural initiation process into manhood. He explains that it is uncommon for a man to share their experiences of this process, especially with a woman. There is therefore much appreciation for the insight Sihle has shared.

Initial reading:

Through the initial reading of the interview transcription, certain themes were identified. The global theme identified relates to different rites of passage to manhood. Since Sihle is from the Xhosa culture, this is an important disclosure and entails various aspects. The themes are diagrammatically displayed below:



Re-reading:

Sihle's understanding of manhood

Influenced by father or other father figures within his family

Sihle explained that he identified with the man in the clip who spoke of growing up without a father. In the absence of Sihle's father, he took up the role of the man in the house at an appropriate age. He was encouraged to do this by his uncles and older cousins, who were male role models in his life (L5-8).

Culture, Initiation ceremony, permission from elders or respected men

Sihle refers to the cultural process of initiation into manhood. This process involves various rituals, including circumcision:

“Well that’s quite a story, you see like in the Xhosa culture, you have to go through initiation in order to become a man” (L11).

Without going through this process, he could not consider himself a man. He explains the process as best he can without giving away too much of what is not meant to be discussed with women:

“...you have to first ask for permission to go through it. So at that point of my life... 19, ya 18... I felt that I was ready to become a man... I asked my uncle, I asked my grandpa, I asked my mother if it was ok for me to go through initiation... and they all decided ok... there are some boys who just go without getting permission...after I went to initiation, that’s when I thought, ok, I was a man and everybody else also accepted that I was a man” (L12-21).

Sihle emphasises the importance of gaining permission from his family members, which is an important aspect of the traditional process. When entering manhood, he describes a feeling of acceptance from others.

Acknowledgement and acceptance

Some boys pursue acceptance through entering the process prematurely:

“...they are looking for that acceptance...Like, from other men and other women and even kids. They’ve got that wolf pack mentality [that] they need to join the elite group...where all the men are” (L24-29).

Acceptance is therefore a benefit of becoming a man. The acceptance entails a sense of belonging and elitism. He describes the seriousness of the process:

“...it’s not something you play around with”

Following his feeling of being ready to become a man/enter manhood

Sihle described following a feeling that he was ready to enter manhood. This feeling was confirmed for him by family and others. Many people noticed certain characteristics in him before the initiation process, such as him being described as:

“... [A] serious guy” (L43).

Following through with the expectations and rules after the ceremony

After the initiation process, there are meant to be evident changes in behaviour:

“I knew, ok, I can’t dress a certain way because of restrictions of what I can wear” (L47).

Sihle explains these restrictions:

“For the first year...you can’t really wear shorts, and when you wearing your cap and all that you can’t run around. Walk around with your hands in your pocket, don’t turn around, and eat standing up. Some of these things sound outrageous... when there’s a ceremony going on, you have to stay amongst the men. So you think ok, that section is where the men eat and that’s where all the boys eat” (L49-59).

These restrictions are described as being necessary for the first year of ‘manhood’. He lists clothing restrictions, and behaviour restrictions. There is also a separation between boys and men. Perhaps this is what makes manhood seem mysterious and appealing to boys. The separation also displays the ‘elitism’ Sihle mentioned. These restrictions and processes are not shared with boys before they go through initiation themselves.

A huge transition – rite of passage

Sihle said that when he got permission from his mother, he was both “excited and scared” because he saw the process as a “huge transition” (L66). He describes giving away all his old ‘boyish’ clothes and possessions:

“...when you about to go through the initiation, you have to give all your boyish possessions away. ...so it’s like you are reborn as a man. So all my clothes and that I had to give to my brother and my friends who were still boys, then you get new clothes from other people” (L111-115).

He compares the process to being reborn - getting rid of the past and stepping into a new way of life. He received more respect from others after the process:

“...respect from everyone, the teachers even...and even now, it’s been two years, there’s like a prefix, you can’t really call them by their real name, you have to say “DA” and their name. But even my juniors, they still use that prefix for me, it’s a sign of respect, they feel that they can’t call me by my name and I’m at a point where I’m not used of hearing my real name” (L68-75).

Sihle seems to want to earn the respected prefix for his name; He does not want others to be forced into respecting him. He suggests that he has earned it by mentioning that some of his friends who are not Xhosa also address him by the name “Da Sihle” (L77-78). The respect and acceptance he experiences due to the initiation process makes it worthwhile (L90). He mentions a rumour amongst boys suggesting that being a man makes it easier to “get more girls” (L94).

Physical and mental development

He spoke of changes he experienced as well as changes others noticed:

“People say that I look more matured (physically) and mentally...I’ve got a young brother and a niece. My relationship with them, when I came out, they looked like

they were afraid of me. I didn't like that...because they are more family...I told them I've become a man and it will mean you'll have to show some respect for me but I'm still the same guy" (L103-110).

After the traditional initiation process Sihle's family relationships had to adjust to the changes of his transition to manhood. He the transition has been enlightening for him:

"I've been enlightened since I became a man...I think a boy won't really know what a man is until he has gone through the process...there's always room to grow. When I see my elders I still aspire to be like them." (L151-157)

The process has therefore entailed both physical and mental transition.

Courage and respect

The images that came to Sihle's mind when thinking about manhood:

"I think about my uncle, I think of all the men in my family...the first things that came into my mind. I think about courage and respect, all the things that define a man. We've all been programmed to think of a man like something like that...But it takes someone with true values and that's been raised up properly to be a real man" (L120-128).

Two important elements Sihle learned from his male role models are courage and respect. He generalises this to all men being programmed to think of manhood in relation to these terms. Sihle does, however, differentiate that only men who have been raised properly with true values can become 'real men'. Although Sihle acknowledges his uncles, he was raised by his mother.

Influence of his mother

Sihle emphasised the importance of being recognised by his mother as a man:

“...when your mother recognises that you are a man, that’s when you become a man. My definition would be when others accept you as a man. You can try to be a man but when you see other people accepting you, then that is when you are a man” (L135-137).

Sihle places great emphasis on requiring acceptance from his mother. Without this, he would not consider himself a man. The true evidence of entering manhood is revealed through the acknowledgment and acceptance from others. He compares this to graduating from school:

“...those values that your parents, your mother drills into you, that’s like a learning process. When you get to a point, they recognise you. It’s like school, you study for 12 years and in grade 12, you graduate and everyone else recognises, ok, you’re a man now” (L142-148).

Different phases of manhood:

“I’d rather say 21. I still think of myself as a young man. So, maybe it will when I get to my 30s, I’ll say, ok, I’m like an average man now...28, that’s the point where I don’t think I’m ready to be a father for example. Because I think a father is a type of a man, because right now, I’m still a young man. I’ve still got a lot to learn to become a man and all that. When I get to a milestone of 28 or 30, that’s when, ok, I’m ready to get married, ready to become a man” (L163-172).

He mentions different phases of manhood; a young man, an average man, married man and a father. Sihle entered ‘young’ manhood at age 21 years old. By reaching certain age milestones and entering new phases of life, one enters different phases of manhood.

Being a young man entails learning about how to behave as a man through the initiation and the rules after the ceremony. He describes young men as:

“Still wet behind the ears” (L176).

Employment: provision, independence and freedom

Although Sihle is a young man, he has reached a new level of manhood which has been greatly affected by entering employment:

“I also felt I reached a new level of manhood when I got this job here last year. When I started earning a salary, I started helping out with the house and all that” (L194-196).

He mentions his new job in relation to experiencing a new level of manhood. He was then able to contribute financially to his family. He also mentions that having a job has enabled him to study and get a degree in IT. He then relays a story of a male in his family who is a similar age and still depends on his parents. Sihle strongly believes:

“When a man wants money, he needs to get a job; he needs to provide for himself” (L205-206).

He describes manhood in terms of provision and independence, a level of responsibility as a man as well as a level of freedom:

“You should look at going to a phase when you start becoming independent” (L211).

“...right now, I’m free, I can do anything I want to” (L179).

On the theme of provision, Sihle introduces the cultural topic of “Lobola”. This process involves the groom and his family providing the bride’s family with financial endowment or other compensation for the bride. It is perhaps similar to a dowry. Traditionally, the groom’s family negotiates this price with the bride’s parents. He would offer this to his bride whether she is Xhosa or not:

“...the process of *lobola* is to show respect to the parents of the girl you are marrying...you are basically showing that you have the means to provide for her” (L257-270).

Having the means to provide for himself and his family is therefore a very important aspect of manhood and seems to stretch through all phases of manhood.

Changing times – adaptation

Sihle offers an explanation regarding changes experienced in society:

“Times have changed from back then because back then, the man would have to go to work and the woman would stay home with the kids...It's not a challenge, it's an adaptation. If a man, from back then, has to marry a woman that is independent, it would be a challenge to him but I have been raised in the 21st century and have seen how things have changed. So I am adapted to it” (L276-281).

Drawing from the literature, urban and rural understandings of manhood have merged with more Westernised perspectives (Mager et al., 2001; Field, 2001; Xaba, 2001). Sihle displays an awareness of the integration of these ideals and his flexibility to adapt.

A culmination of different factors affects manhood – Christian values

Sihle explained that although his culture has a certain process to follow, his Christian values are that which he holds onto to make him a man. Again, he emphasises the values instilled by his mother who raised him:

“I'm also a Christian - that also affects the type of man I am. My mother is very religious, that's how my mother raised me. If I had to compare, I would say I am more Christian than Xhosa. The way I see the whole transition is that it was just a rite of passage that I had to go through. I have also learned from other cultures. It's not just a definition that I got from one place” (L321-326).

Manhood for Sihle therefore seems to be an integration of various influences, some more significant than others.

Conclusion

Sihle seems to understand manhood as an integration of various influences. He mentioned being influenced by specific male role models. His religious family values play a big role in his construction of what it means to be a good man, and they are greatly influenced by his mother. The cultural initiation process and acceptance from others played a key role in Sihle being able to view himself as man.

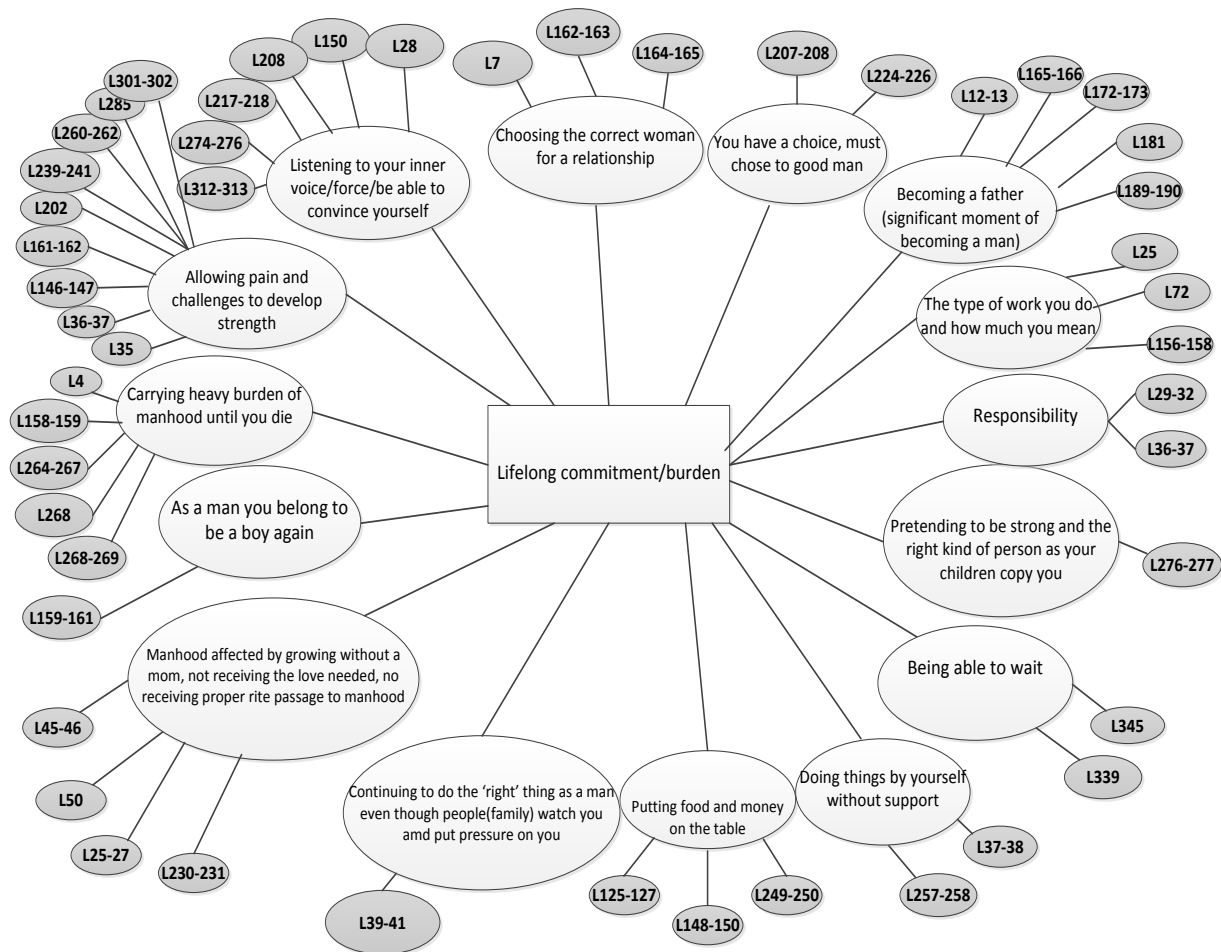
Individual interview analysis 4 – Khapelo

Khapelo is a middle-aged Xhosa man. He displayed much openness and honesty with regard to his life story. The structure of this interview appears to be more of a narrative of Khapelo's life in relation to manhood. His first language is not English. Once transcribed, it becomes more difficult to interpret the meanings of what he has said. He grew up in a rural community and therefore speaks with a particular dialect. Although the interview is considered to have been meaningful, it could have been more so if conducted in his home language, an important lesson learned.

Khapelo has not completed formal education. He displays a deep form of wisdom that may have been acquired through the experiences of his life. The meaning constructions that he offers come as a gift to this research. Having said that, it is also important to acknowledge the trials through which he has passed in order to offer this.

Initial reading:

The global theme identified in Khapelo's interview transcription relates to the lifelong commitment he has to manhood. This seems to entail pushing through certain burdens that come with the territory. Khapelo is from the Xhosa culture which forms an important part of his understanding of manhood. The various themes identified can be found in the diagram below:



Re-reading:

Khapelo's understanding of manhood

Choosing the correct woman for a relationship

Khapelo begins with the unfolding of issues related to romantic relationships in relation to manhood. Through his life experiences, he has learned that there are consequences of entering a relationship for the wrong reasons:

"...sometimes you just start a relationship in the wrong way, because we didn't check, we didn't build a good relationship when we start the relationship. We just go in and then in the middle, that will break and that will also give you a problem. Then you end up having a baby without mother" (L7-11).

One of these consequences entails the women leaving the relationship and leaving the child with the man. Khapelo mentions this as it is his personal experience:

“...then you have to raise that baby by yourself” (L13).

Becoming a father

One particular moment when Khapelo felt he was a man is revealed in the following statement:

“When the girl came to me to tell me she is pregnant” (L198).

“But you don't know how to be a man until you facing the challenges. Sometimes I like the challenges because they make you strong... so to be a man to me is you have to tell yourself now is a new start” (L221-230).

Khapelo viewed becoming a father as a new start to manhood. He pushed himself to do the right thing, to take responsibility for his son. The reality of having to raise his child on his own changed Khapelo's life. This is revealed in the following statement:

“Even from grade R, I took that boy with me. Before I go to work, I take him to crèche. Since now that [his] mom never know where that boy is now. She never even visit, and then, he was born on the 1st of May 1999 (his birthday), then I saw her, I told her your boy needs something, maybe you could buy him a cake or something” (L17-21).

Khapelo describes his routine, dropping his son off at school and going to work. He explained an experience of asking the mother of his son for a birthday cake but to no avail. He later explains that his son's mother was receiving a monetary grant from the government for the care of the child, but was not using it for that purpose. He attempted getting the police involved but also to no avail. Included in his struggles, his job of gardening does not sustain their lives satisfactorily (L23-27). Khapelo has taken on a mothering and fathering role for his

son. His battle however, sounds similar to the common stories of single mothers not receiving assistance from the fathers of their children.

Listening to your inner voice - be able to convince yourself

Khapelo shares the extent to his difficulty in raising his son on his own:

“You don’t know how you can handle the day, sometimes you just thinking, what if I’m sitting down, because it seems like nothing what I’m doing. Because you just think today or next month you want to do your own things, but there’s something inside forcing you. You have to do this, not your own things because now you are [both the] mother, [and]...father” (L27-31).

On some days, his life seems particularly difficult to cope with. As a result, he reaches a point of wanting to give up. He mentions that there is an inner force that pushes him not to give up. There is great responsibility in being both a mother and a father. The inner voice is closely related to the responsibility towards his son; this empowers or motivates him not to give up.

Khapelo acknowledges the influence of people, place and time on the learning of manhood. He describes making the wrong decisions as a result of not listening to intuition:

“Ya, so where you doing things and you not listening to yourself, you are doing things wrong and you can’t see the good way of getting out of here” (L246-247).

For Khapelo, this philosophy could apply to any situation. Self-awareness and listening to one’s intuition is important as a man.

Pretending to be strong – being the right kind of person because children copy you

There is a deep inner battle that that Khapelo faces:

“Because sometimes you have lots of things in your head, you just acting wrong with your boy but you just have to pretend like you are the right person. Because they going to learn the wrong things, you know what I’m saying? So ya, it is difficult for me to be a man” (L32-35).

When Khapelo goes through stressful times, he realises that he has to pretend to be ‘the right person’. Being the ‘right’ person may entail acting in a moral way or acting confident in his parenting role. He displays a conscious awareness of his own behaviour and his ability to teach his son ‘wrong things’ [wrong behaviours]. Perhaps being a man entails being able to deal with these challenges without revealing how difficult they really are:

“To be a man, I think you have to be strong, to just waiting for any challenge. The first thing you have to think; now you are [a] father” (L37-38).

Khapelo’s role as a father is his key motivation to remain strong during life challenges:

“Because firstly, if anything comes here in your house, you have to handle by yourself because you are a man” (L38-41).

The ability to do this on his own is also an essential aspect of being a man and being strong. Arguably this could be attributed to the lack of be because there is no assistance. It may be though, that Khapelo believes that facing challenges independently is an important part of manhood. Another aspect of his dilemma includes the following:

“...lot of people watching how you coping, how you doing things, now you taking the wrong lane. So you are a man, you don’t think about them, just do what you think is right” (L41-45).

He expresses how he feels as though people are observing his behaviour as a man. Perhaps this is a sense of performance pressure with regards to the role of being a man or

father. Part of his difficulty may be his awareness of difficulties in meeting the expectations of manhood and/or fatherhood.

Growing up without a mom – not receiving the love required and not receiving the proper rite of passage

Khapelo suggests that in order to be a man, he had to withstand the suffering entailed in growing up without his mother:

“To be a man, I saw the suffering, because I grew up without my mom. My mom was married to another man” (L48-49).

Perhaps for cultural reasons and circumstantial reasons, his mother could not enter her marriage having had a child outside of the marriage. For Khapelo not growing up with his mother is a significant aspect which contributes to the construction of his understanding of manhood.

The significant aspects of Khapelo’s life as man involve the confusion experienced in his childhood concerning his biological mother and father. He was kept secret from his mother’s husband and was not allowed to know his father because he was also involved in another marriage. Most of his hurt stemmed from not being able to visit his mother. He explains her reasoning for keeping the secret of his existence:

“Those days, women they keep secret because they want their relationship to stay in a good way because when they break up, nobody can fix it” (L56-58).

He would have to phone his mother to find out if her husband was home. When he was not at home, Khapelo would have to rush to get to her in order to spend some time with her. He explains further:

“Then I just go there, having a talk with my mom. Then I must worry; I mustn’t take so long even if I know how much I miss my mom... So for me, it was difficult, the way I grew up” (L61-64).

He found this ordeal very hard to cope with. One could also view Khapelo’s childhood actions as brave. He took a very active role in making sure he made contact with his mother. This was to perhaps ensure that he had access to some form of mothering.

Khapelo was raised by his extended family. He felt that not having his mother with him meant that others in the family treated him differently. This also meant that he did not have the same opportunities as the other children he grew up with. He describes this as a stop sign in his life, which kept him from enjoying certain aspects of life (L77-80):

“I didn't have a chance to go to school. Nobody supported me and I just gave up and go to work trying to make me a man” (L83).

Khapelo entered manhood in order to escape childhood. The sadness in his words is evident. This was the beginning of the burden of manhood.

No support – Doing things by himself

Acquiring work assisted Khapelo in becoming a man. In this regard, work enabled him to buy a goat for the traditional initiation ceremony into manhood. His family did not fully support him. His family also did not assist when the appropriate time for family assistance arose in the ceremony. Instead, he went to his employer to ask for assistance with purchasing the second goat which is traditionally meant to be bought by the family (L103-106).

He felt like his family threw him away and forgot about him. This left him ‘alone’ through the process of entering manhood. He gives an account of being hungry and physically weak during the initiation process, and his family did not arrive to care for him (L94-102). Despite

all of this, Khapelo completed the cultural process into manhood. This enabled him to be seen as a man by his family and the greater community.

Khapelo described his family as “those people” (L109). Such an expression may display his feelings of detachment, anger and hurt. This may also contribute towards feelings of being ‘alone’ in his journey through manhood.

Khapelo talks about the unfolding of his life in adulthood. When he started working, he would feel obliged to give up his pay as his family requested (L113-118). He was fed up with the way in which his family spent his money. He eventually moved out of the house and kept moving further and further from his family:

“I just running away...starting again with the new place there working for a new boss where they do not know where I am” (L122-125).

The type of work you do and how much you mean (worth)

Moving evolved into running away from his family. While running from his family, he worked for a man whom he felt treated him in the same way his family did:

“I was working for a rich man. He's got two boys, you know the go-karts, they drive those things and also the cars for racing but...he pays me R30.00 a day. But tell me there is a change. It is the same as I was on the farm, is no change as I thought now I am in town, is going to be a change. So just working four years...and sitting out in the room and the back and working on weekends, Saturday half-day. Nobody I know there, so I just go out in the street, to go outside and just see people and then when it's late, comeback in again” (L125-135).

Khapelo perceives his family and his boss as contributing little worth or value to his personhood and his hard work. The experience he had with his boss may be related to the colonial and unfair history of South Africa. These experiences may have affected his view of

his worth or value as a man. A more appropriate word to use in exploring his feelings of unfairness is 'dignity'. His feeling of being treated unfairly was validated by a potential employer (L153):

"She asked me, how much I get paid, I tell her, and she says why is that, I say I don't know. She says no, me I am going to pay you R80 per day. Do you see how much different that is?" (L151-154).

Putting food and money on the table

Visiting his family came with expectations of provision:

"I was supposed to go see my family on the weekend...you know when you go home and bring something. When you are a man, you can't just put your hands in your pocket; you must come with something, putting something on the table" (L147-150).

Khapelo described the process of applying for a grant to assist him in raising his son and putting food on the table (L164-168). The eventual realisation of this pursuit made him feel happy. Even with this one goal being realised, there are still however, other internal goals or desires he wishes he could attain:

"But still, a lot of things on my insides, I just want to see myself there... but so ya. To be a man, you have to be strong...who can put something on the table. These kids are so small, they don't know how...so if you're going to do this [give up] how can they copy you? So you just force yourself you just go, [no matter] how things are going" (L168-176).

At times Khapelo experiences periods of great pressure to provide for his son. With these difficult feelings and thoughts, he must remain strong as a man. Strength also entails continuing going to work to be a provider.

Carrying the heavy burden of manhood until death – commitment

Khapelo describes how appealing it seems from the outside to be a man, but on the inside it is a difficult adjustment. When one is a boy, there are no responsibilities to take care of and from this he makes an interesting comparison between manhood and marriage:

“When you're a man, you're changing your life. Being a man is something like to be married. When you aren't married, you look at every woman, but when you are married, you have to see that woman you chose; I just have to focus on her. That is how to be a man; your whole self is changed to try and focus on her. This is what I am now, it is what I have to be strong for” (L187-191).

Manhood, for Khapelo, is a huge life transition and entails much character. Being faithful and not looking at other women, during marriage may also be considered a moral and ethical obligation. For Khapelo, manhood is a similar commitment.

Allowing pain and challenges to develop strength – character

Khapelo expanded on the challenges he has faced entering manhood. He mentioned his sister not needing him or wanting to be a sister to him after their mother died. He could not understand this and longed for his sister to be there for him and support him:

“It doesn't matter if the father is not there; so why can't you not give me the love I need? Like when the days are very hard for me, being there for me...I just tell myself, ag, is fine, I can handle what I can handle” (L262-265).

As noted through Khapelo's life story, he has endured many unfair experiences. Khapelo observed his younger cousin go to 'the bush' (cultural initiation into manhood) before him. Though they both worked, Khapelo had to spend his money on what was needed in the home while his cousin could spend as he pleased. He reflects on his childhood:

“Sometimes you are in the wrong family...it would be better if I weren't born. The way I live, it is not good for me. Sometimes you're just crying and crying thinking, how far I

have to go but how do I go there when things are going like this. But then all those things they gave me a power to stand up, you know?" (L171-175).

Khapelo chose to use his difficult and painful childhood experiences as constructive life lessons. Perhaps this is where he developed the ability to be strong as a man:

"At the age of ten, we wake up early in the morning in the cold, fetch water to fill up the buckets in the house while the moms are sleeping, and have to cook before school, and then cook supper after school...When you are in there, its pain, and then you couldn't see how to get out of it. But one day when you standing out, you just look at the back...I learned a few things while there was pain" (L290-298).

He sums up his theory on using pain to grow as a man:

"So that's how to be a man. Lots of challenges, but you have to see which one is right for you...This time I have to do things like this, ya, it's very difficult to be a man. That why the other men are running away, not to be a father...I have to know I'm going to handle this until I die....you have something on your shoulder, you can't take it out, until you die. It's the only way you leave your name" (L298-307).

This commitment to manhood entails leaving a legacy after death. This legacy entails being a man of character and strength.

Choosing to be a good man

When Khapelo was a child, he perceived manhood in a certain way:

"When you are a child...sometimes you see a good man, doing things right like they have everything, [and] you don't have anything" (L312-315).

Khapelo looked up to men who were considered as good role models. Being a good man entails the ability to change certain things about your character (L320-324). Khapelo

changed the way his son may have experienced childhood by taking the responsibility to raise him. He not only provides financially, by paying for education and other general expenses but makes sure he portrays strength and morality. He mentions that being a good man also entails being aware of other people's influences and staying away from the wrong people.

Being able to wait

Khapelo believes in patience, or waiting. This is related to his experience of being in an unhappy relationship and not leaving for the sake of the other person. Being a good man would entail the sort of character to do things differently, such as waiting before getting into a relationship (L364-371). He acknowledges that waiting, in itself, is also a challenge (L380-388).

Conclusion

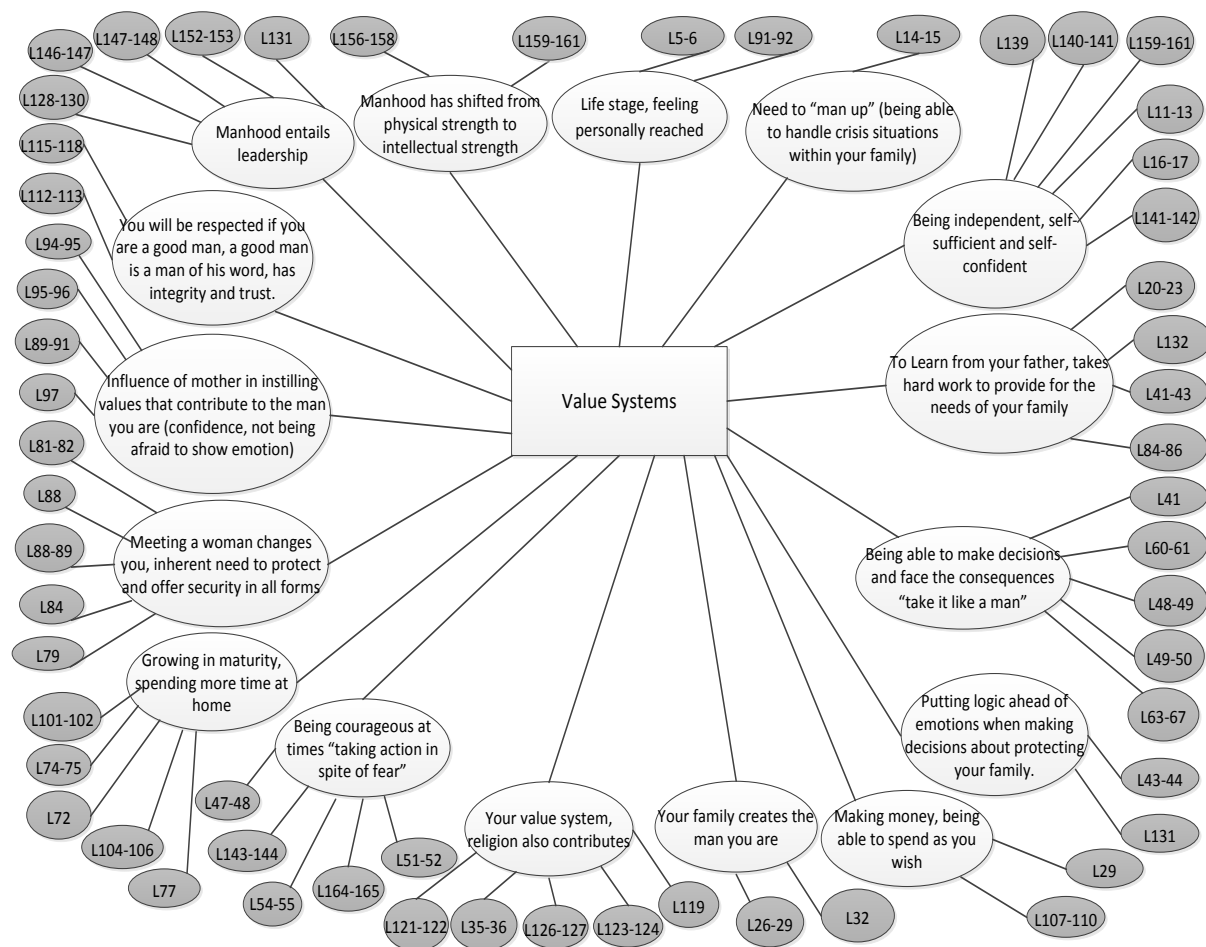
Khapelo's understanding of manhood entails being strong and patient. He experienced much hardship and difficulty but he remains resilient as he chooses to process his experiences as lessons.

Individual interview analysis 5 – Alex

Alex is a white male in his late 20's. At the time of the interview, he was engaged to be married. Alex worked in a large corporate environment and seemed to be working his way up the corporate ladder. He shared many personal experiences, although he spoke in a way that seemed to keep his emotion at bay. The manner in which he spoke was therefore more logical than emotional in comparison to some of the other participant interviews.

Initial reading:

The first reading of this interview revealed many themes, as can be seen in the diagram below. The global theme identified revealed that Alex considered manhood to be closely connected to value systems. His family, especially his father, were considered very strong influences in his understanding of manhood.



Re-reading:

Alex's understanding of manhood

A life stage – personal feeling

“It is more around when you feel you are... it's a personal thing...you've got to that stage in your life” (L6-8).

Alex describes this life stage as not merely one defining moment but, rather, a gradual transition. The stage he reached was one where he was able to be self-supportive:

“So I'm standing on my own 2 feet now. I'm independent and can look after myself, so that was a big step” (L15-17).

The need to 'man up' (handle family crises)

Although Alex spoke of a gradual process to manhood, he also does mention a single defining moment:

“I went through a family trauma and I sort of had to “man up”. There was an emergency...when I sat back and reflected on it, I thought I handled it like a responsible adult. That was sort of like a self-confidence thing. I feel like a man now, like I'm my own person” (L18-23).

This one event facilitated a process for Alex to 'man up'; to rise to the occasion and do what was necessary. Through that experience, he attained greater self-confidence and was able to acknowledge himself as a man.

Learning from his father (hard work to provide for a family)

When considering manhood, one of images that came to Alex's mind was his father:

“Probably my father, I think it's about the provider. My father worked two jobs, so my brother, sister and I were all sporty and we always had sporting equipment and tours...I remember him working very hard to provide for us and that to me is a very manly thing. If you can provide for your family and give them what they need and [do] what you say you're going to [do], that is part of it [manhood].”(L26-31)

Through his childhood, he observed his father, he learned the importance of provision. To be self-sufficient enables one to be a provider for their family and therefore boosts manly confidence (L33).

Being independent, self-sufficient and confident

Alex introduces the idea that manly confidence relates to independent decision making, thus moving away from family involvement and opinion:

“So when you are self-sufficient, to me it is - I can make that decision now - I'm not asking anything from you any more, I'm not living under your roof anymore...if I want to take my money and spend it in a certain way, as an example, [then] I can” (L34-39).

The ‘stage’ previously mentioned is similar to a transition into adulthood. Adulthood and manhood therefore require independence and the ability to provide. Confidence in this ability and no longer requiring the guidance of one's parents is a significant part of the process.

Family creates the type of man you become

He describes how family has influenced the type of man he has become:

“They create the man you are to a large degree...If they give you lots of responsibility as a young child...that's why I say it's not really an age thing. It's around the way you are brought up, even your value system to a large degree. I say that all influences when a person thinks they are a man” (L42-47).

Alex explains that families create value systems that are passed on to their children. The responsibilities one receives as a child can therefore be internalised and carried out into adulthood and subsequently into manhood. For Alex, his family's value system has been transmitted into his manhood. Two values he has learned are responsibility and provision:

“A big part of it is obviously providing for your family. Not only financially, but also emotionally - all the needs. To have fun with your kids, whatever is required, you must be able to provide and be that” (L53-55).

Putting logic ahead of emotion when it comes to protecting family

Provision, as a man, therefore encompasses all the family's needs. Being able to provide in this way also entails providing the family with protection:

“But often chose the logical, not the emotional decision...He must protect and make the hard decision to be able to protect your family and to protect yourself in that sense” (L56-58).

Therefore, Alex's value system of manhood upholds the provision and protection of one's family. This includes decision-making and the ability to be strong for one's family.

Being courageous – taking action in spite of fear

He describes the necessity of being courageous as a man:

“It's also like being courageous at times, like the definition I've heard – taking action in spite of fear...I'm a man even when I'm scared to make a decision; to do something when I know it's the right thing to do, I must be able to do it. That's me being a man - taking accountability; taking responsibility for whatever I've got to do” (L61-65).

For Alex, being a man is about the way one engages with fear. The right way to engage with fear is to be courageous; a man needs to take action in spite of fear. Perhaps this is what he means by having to 'man up' in the face of a traumatic situation. He describes this as follows:

"It's a nice sense of achievement, and the next time you face it, you know what it's about and you are more equipped to handle it" (L72-73).

Being able to make decisions and face consequences – 'take it like a man'

Being able to be courageous when the occasion arises produces a feeling of achievement for Alex. A major achievement is being able to make independent decisions. He provides an example of when he noticed this:

"...my younger brother, he's about two or three years younger than me. At one stage, he had to phone me before he made any decisions – about work, about studies – he'd also phone my dad, and slowly but surely he stopped phoning me. He would tell me he's made this decision or he's done this...He's starting to become a man now; you've found who you are and making decisions you feel are right for your life" (L74-80).

Alex's brother stopped phoning for guidance on decisions and began making decisions on his own. This independence and perhaps, taking charge, is what Alex sees as manhood. He offers further insight:

"But at the same time, you must be able to take [accept] the consequences. For example if you are going to make an investment...If you put it in a car, and you write that thing off, you're not going to get that money back...so you must be prepared to "take it like a man"" (L82-87).

Growing in maturity – spending more time at home

Being courageous and making decisions also entails accepting consequences 'like a man'. Responsible decisions entail avoiding harmful consequences. He further describes this as "maturing":

"...when you get older, you do feel more mature. You mature without realising it. I hate (Name of a dance club) now and at one stage I loved it. So I couldn't have a hang-over now. I did it regularly when I first started working. You do change, mature, and on weekends, I spend in my house, fixing or gardening" (L92-96).

Alex mentions a change in his behaviour through maturing. When he was younger, he enjoyed partying and as he matured, he began to enjoy doing things at home.

Meeting a woman changes you

Part of Alex's maturing included meeting a woman and embracing the changes that came in developing a relationship with her:

"From a guy's perspective, a lot of that changes when he meets a girl. If I look at my group of friends, even myself, when I met my girlfriend and that started getting really serious, that changed for some reason as well. That's also an inherent thing. It just sort of happens" (L98-104).

Alex introduces the idea that when a man meets a woman and is serious about her, he changes certain aspects of his life. He believes this to be inherent:

"...it's around that protective, that natural instinct and you have to provide. If I'm by myself, then who am I providing for? If you have a woman in your life... you want to provide for that person" (L106-108).

Alex accounts the desire to provide for and protect one's partner as an inherent instinct. He further explains this natural instinct:

“Security, in all sense of the word, you don't want them to get hurt in any way. It brings about that change in you, and then it happens gradually” (L110-112).

Alex has been describing a movement from childhood into adulthood and highlights that which he considers as important aspects of manhood. He has described stages of this transition.

A mother's influence – instilling values, confidence, not being afraid to show emotions

“I find I'm closer to my mom now than when I was in my mid-twenties. I didn't think about family that much and now I find myself thinking about it more – spending time with my mom and things like that. So I don't know if that's an age thing or just a stage in your life that you go through” (L112-115).

At the maturing stage, family becomes very important. As a child Alex's mother also had a great influence in shaping his personal understanding of manhood:

“She always said ‘don't be shy to cry, to show your emotion’. My mom is very nurturing and she always encouraged that. Maybe it was more around - don't be afraid to be yourself - it does contribute to that confidence side to it” (L117-121).

Considering some of the literature reviewed, it is commonly understood that parents teach boys not to cry, but rather to be strong and not show emotion. Alex had a different experience; his mother taught him to cry if he wanted and not to be afraid to be himself. This is, therefore, a value Alex has carried into his manhood.

About age

Alex describes a shift in how he viewed manhood as he grew older:

“...at one stage it was all about age, I wanted to be 18, 21, 25. When I got to 25 I stopped thinking about it.” (L124-125)

The reason for wanting to be older when Alex was a teenager is described as follows:

“I was always the youngest in my standard, my friends were always older – they could watch a 16 (age restricted) movie and I couldn’t. In matric, a lot of them started going to (Names of dance clubs) on the weekends but I couldn’t because I wasn’t 18. When I started working, I was the youngest and I knew the least in front of anyone. I wanted to be 30, because then I’d be in it for 10 years and know something and not be so under-confident anymore. Work was around wanting to be respected by my colleagues, so I needed to be older and have more experience” (L127-134).

You will be respected if you are a good man – a man of his word has integrity and is trustworthy

Alex described his childhood difficulties around being younger than his friends which continued into his work life. He desired to be older and wiser in what he was doing in order to grow in confidence. He also had a great desire to be respected more. Respect, therefore, became a big part of manhood for Alex:

“If you’re a good man, respect has a big part in terms that you respect others and the way you respect people and you get that back, and the type of man you are” (L136-138).

Alex describes respect in terms of being a “good man”. Respecting others displays the type of man one is. He further explains that it is important for a good man to do what he said he would:

“If I say I love you and not going to hurt you then I need to do that. In the work environment, if I promise I’m going to get a deadline done, then I must be a man of my word. Around integrity and trustworthiness, people will trust you. Religious beliefs come into that as well – are you taking your family to church etc.” (L140-145).

To be a good man entails honesty, loyalty, integrity and trustworthiness. Alex also mentions religion and how a good man would, for example, take his family to church. .

Your value system – influenced by religion

Alex explains that religion is part of his value system:

“I’m a believer but I’m not a practising [believer]. I don’t know how to put it. I have a Christian value system still in me; I was brought up that way. I think a lot of those value systems talk to manhood, well a good man. So if I wanted to be a good man, I should follow that set of values” (L150-154).

His value system is based on Christian values. Following these values would make Alex consider himself as a good man:

“I think protecting and providing. In the Christian beliefs, the man is the head of the house, but I don’t know if I buy into that to be honest with you” (L157-159).

Alex strongly agrees with the values of protecting and providing for his family. He questions whether the man should be the head of his home:

“My fiancé basically runs the house...If you are the head of the household, same as a head of department (HoD) you take the *brand* of it. If people complain to you, you must take it...If I’m the head of the household I need to make sure there is a household. Yes, we work and contribute equally, [but] if there is an intruder in the house then I must get up. If the kids need something, I must do that, make sure everything is provided for” (L159-165).

Protection and provision are therefore seen as taking the role of 'head' of the home. He does however note that he believes the role of a man is not higher than a woman (L167-168).

Manhood entails leadership

Alex describes the importance of leadership in his concept of manhood:

"I watch a lot of war movies, so the real man is the leader, the one leading the platoon; he is running ahead towards the enemy – Brave Heart, which is maybe a cliché type of thing. I translate that into everything - home, work – being a manager I must lead the team – that talks to me as a man" (L182-185).

To be a man therefore entails being a leader - facing danger courageously and protecting his family. He finds himself taking the lead naturally in everyday situations such as, for example, braaing the meat and organising the weekends away (L189-190).

A shift in manhood – from physical strength to intellectual strength

Alex also explained the shift in manhood from 'old days' to current times. He describes a shift from the ideal man being a warrior of physical strength to the ideal man being intellectually strong. The ideal man of current times therefore uses his intellectual strength to provide for and protect his family:

"In this day and age, to be a good man you need to find the best way of providing for your family and for yourself. Maybe it's intellectual now. For me to be a good man and a good husband I need to be able to make the right decisions...Well, it is a different kind of strength, so maybe strength is that underlying thing which goes back to courage and protection" (L193-204).

Conclusion

Alex mentions a number of values, as well as characteristics such as provision, protection, courage, decision-making, independence and leadership. Alex has been influenced by his family as well as society's changing expectations of manhood. These all form part of his value system of manhood. Important aspects of Alex's value system are based on values of Christianity.

Common themes:

Common themes from the data are: (1) Making provision, (2) Making decisions, (3) Protection, (4) Responsibility, (5) Fathering and being fathered, (6) New times – a shift in the meaning of manhood, (7) The influence of mothers, (8) Being a partner or husband and (9) Being a good man.

(1) Making provision

The theme of making provision has appeared in all five participant interviews. When considering traditional hegemonic constructions of manhood a word closely related to provision is “breadwinner” (Goldberg, 1976). The word breadwinner may have been prominent in a time where patriarchy was a dominant way of life. This expectation of men to be providers may be carried through the families of society, keeping men accountable as providers.

Four of the men interviewed mentioned making provision for their families as an integral aspect of their manhood. The youngest man mentioned provision in terms of self-sufficiency. For all of the participants the most common understanding of provision was financial. Khapelo described this as ‘putting something on the table’. Each man fell within different earning capacities yet each associated their work and the money they earned with provision.

Making provision could therefore be a role performance in aid of social acceptance as a man.

(2) Making Decisions

Closely related to making provision, was the theme of decision making, which also appeared in all five participant interviews. Decision making was described in terms of moving from childhood into adulthood and gaining independence for most participants. Decision making is considered important for those with a family as the man's decisions affect his family's wellbeing. In most cases decision making was closely related to provision, protection and responsibility. All of which also fall within a hegemonic framework of manhood (Morrell, 1998).

(3) Protection

Protection was mentioned by most of the participants in the context of protecting self and loved ones. Allen made reference to men being physically stronger than women as well as being genetically programmed to protect. Allen and Alex understood protection in relation to instinctual drives influenced by roles played in primal times. Peace and Peace (2008) in their pop culture writing explore this notion of men having evolved from hunters and protectors in primitive times. Alex provided the imagery of 'Brave Heart' a war hero fighting against all odds for the safety of his nation.

Some men may attempt to preserve this value of protecting their women and children like a 'Brave Heart' character would. It may be influential to consider this in further research and potentially looking at males who enhance their bodies to appear stronger and more capable. There are studies on men who are dissatisfied with their bodily image and go to extremes of taking illegal substances to enhance their bodily appearance of strength (Olivardia, Harrison, Borowiecki & Cohane, 2004).

(4) Responsibility

The theme of responsibility was found in all of the participant interviews. Each described the process of entering manhood and early adulthood as taking responsibility for their lives as individuals. Responsibility was also described in terms of their responsibility to their families, which entailed provision, protection and decision making. Entering manhood entailed a certain level of responsibility to self and entering marriage entailed a new level of responsibility to another, entering fatherhood entailed yet another level of responsibility.

(5) Fathering and being fathered

Most of the men mentioned the influence of their fathers, whether present or not. Those who had absent fathers made decisions about their manhood based on this absence. Ryan decided he would give his children what he did not have; he therefore lives with great conviction to be present in his family's life. Alex described memories of his father working two jobs to enable his children freedom to play sport at school. Although manhood has moved away from patriarchy, hegemonic constructions of provision and protection are carried through masculine role models. These constructions may be transforming as social expectations shift.

Since this is a psychological study it is imperative to consider what the psychological implications are for men without fathers. Pollack (1998) mentioned a possibility that boys may grow up to reproduce the same emotional or physical distance they experienced from their fathers. Boys growing up without fathers are also greatly influenced their mother's constructions of manhood. Pollack (2005) suggests that mothers may even rob fathers and sons of experiencing a more nurturing manhood as they may not allow fathers to be nurturing. As men play out their masculine roles of providing, their dedication may lead them

to spending less time at home and more time at work. Fathers may over emphasise and teach their sons how to be strong, tough and independent men, as “macho” as possible.

If men are to consider changing their understandings of manhood they may need to consider the possible ‘wounds’ in their memories of their own fathers manhood (Pollack, 2005). Perhaps a starting point in addressing the early wounds of manhood may be an acknowledgement of the damage done by many in problematizing men instead of offering remedy to problematic constructions (Lewis, 2007).

Building upon Morrell’s (2005) suggestion, if fathers are affirmed in characteristics such as reliability, love, availability, support and dependability, fathering offers an opportunity that could be beneficial to the greater society. If males appreciate their fathers or the role of fathering there could be remedy to some of society’s issues (Morrell, 2005).

(6) New times – a shift in the meaning of manhood

Some participants spoke of the ‘old days’ where men were dominant in character and held a higher social status compared to women. Allen mentioned that in current times women have taken charge, he described this as causing insecurity in men. Ryan said that as times change and become more modern, men have to adjust to these changes. Alex mentioned a transformation from brute strength to intellectual strength, as current times are all about information. Sihle spoke of old traditional times where men would not pay Lobola for a wife more educated than them. Sihle, Alex, Ryan and Allen made spoke of old times and having to change with the times.

Many studies identified in the literature review mentioned various changes experienced throughout the world in relation to manhood. Statistics in the UK reveal a rise in divorce rates

and therefore rise in absent fathers. Changes in the work place have also resulted in men losing their role as breadwinners (Whitehead, 2002; Holter, 2007). Other studies revealed that women even in Muslim countries are challenging masculine dominant roles (Samuel, 2011). From the South African perspective change began with the political changes from the Apartheid regime. Being a country with many diverse cultures each may have had a different cultural manhood (Morrell, 1998; Langa & Eagle, 2008). If the participants have a conception of an 'old man' it would be interesting to do further research on what actually is the 'new man'.

This theme seems to correspond to what Morrell (2001) considers a transforming manhood. The transformation entails traditional divisions of labour or hegemonic constructions of manhood becoming redundant. Women spend more time at work (accessing greater positions of power) and men become increasingly involved in the nurturing of their families (Walby, 1990; Whitehead, 2002).

(7) The influence of mothers

Mothering played a major role in the lives of each participant. As a boy, Khapelo described longing for his mother and how this affected his process into manhood. Ryan, Sihle and Alex shared the important values their mother taught them and how they internalised these values as part of their masculine identity.

Talbot and Quale (2010) suggest that analysing manhood from a women's perspective may offer unique insights into the contribution women make to the reproduction of masculine ideals. Pollack (1998) postulated that boys with absent mothers are at a disadvantage. He believed that mothers assist in developing the ability to form close, loving attachments. Many mothers were brought up in an era of feminism, and may have embraced ideals of

equality. They are therefore able to teach their sons from their own battle with gender equality.

(8) Being a partner or husband

Khapelo began his interview with describing the importance of choosing the right woman to be in a relationship with. He was convinced that the wrong woman could be detrimental to his manhood. The other four participants described manly roles in relation marriage. Alex described experiencing an instinct to protect the woman in his life; this instinct has grown as they have grown towards marriage. Ryan and Sihle described entering a new level of manhood when entering marriage and being a husband. Goldberg (1976) suggests that men are socialised and conditioned as well as encouraged by women to be a strong and silent breadwinner, parent, husband and lover. Perhaps all these factors encourage the 'instinct' described by Alex.

(9) Being a good man

Each participant made reference to certain qualities of being a 'good man'. Being a good man may be considered more of an ideal identity. The participants have portrayed their masculine identities as a striving toward the goal of being a good man. They therefore strive to fulfil the values learned from their parents and others in society. A good man performs the values and roles entailed in making provision, protection and making decisions for the wellbeing and growth of self and those called. These values and roles would therefore come from the socialization, conditioning and encouragement from society to be as Goldberg (1976) says a strong and silent breadwinner, parent, husband and lover.

Conclusion

This chapter has reflected the movement between discourses for each participant through their interviews on manhood. Themes were generated from each interview while maintaining

the essence of the participant's narratives of manhood. Even though each participant had an individual network of themes there were also common themes which appeared throughout the various interviews. These themes include: (1) Making provision, (2) Making decisions, (3) Protection, (4) Responsibility, (5) Fathering and being fathered, (6) New times – a shift in the meaning of manhood, (7) The influence of mothers, (8) Being a partner or husband and (9) Being a good man. The following chapter explores an integration of all the previous chapters including this one as well as a way forward regarding this research on manhood.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes”

Marcel Proust

Brief overview

Analysing the data through the hermeneutic process has yielded the insights that are discussed below. Each person’s story reveals unique constructions of manhood. Each story adds to the understanding around the meaning making processes related to manhood. This study has inspired curiosity about “manhood” which I have attempted to address in the literature review and data analysis.

In the first phase of the analysis the thematic networks revealed surface themes found in each interview. The second phase of the analysis required a more in-depth engagement with each interview. Each theme was discussed using responses from the particular interview. These discussions highlighted the discourses that constructed manhood from the varied cultural and family environments and greater society. Manhood can therefore be considered in terms of an identity performance and each man has revealed an array of constructed “manhoods”.

Performing masculinity

The study was conducted within the Poststructuralist framework which views language as the primary tool in the construction of a person’s identity. Manhood can be considered a sense of identity for men. It is constructed within various social realms through discourse and language. Manhood can therefore be conceptualised as a performance, rather than an existence of a deep innate inner-self (Hjorth, 2009; Barker, 2012).

Each man's story has revealed various constructions of meaning and each has displayed a variety of performances of manhood. In considering the literature review, most prevalent masculine performances include aggression, competence, being unemotional and dominant -especially over females (O'Neil, 1981; Gray, 1992; Pollack, 1992, 2006; Donaldson, 1993; Ghaill, 1994; Connell, 1995; Bergman, 1995; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Nemoto, 2008; Gear, 2010; Mankowski & Maton, 2010). These were examples of hegemonic performances of manhood. Most of the studies and theories reviewed also included the performance of the role of provider and protector, e.g. the roles of father and husband. My explanation for the performance is that men do it to acquire social acceptance (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Pollack, 1992, 1998, 2006).

Constructions of manhood, for all cultures, are greatly influenced by the social realm. Considering the historical landscape of South Africa, the apartheid regime was a social realm of many constructions. The change to democracy left all men in South Africa with the task of reconstructing their masculine identities. Additional societal changes, such as the liberation of women from patriarchy also need to be considered. The literature reviewed, particularly emphasises the idea that the family home is a significant site of meaning construction (Ghaill, 1994, Pearson & Van Horn, 2004). This was reflected by the men in this study, whereby each participant described manhood as being moulded in their home environments through family relationships and early adulthood experiences. Though their experiences are considered subjective and unique, there are some themes that can be interpreted as being common among all or most participants. These are: (1) Making provision, (2) Making decisions, (3) Protection, (4) Responsibility, (5) Fathering and being fathered, (6) New times – a shift in the meaning of manhood, (7) The influence of mothers, (8) Being a partner or husband and (9) Being a good man.

The historical and cultural context of South Africa

The meeting places of these common themes are connected to culture, history and general discourse of the time. The contextual factors of manhood for these men may contain keys that unlock greater understanding of how masculine identities are formed over the course of men's lives (Morrell, 2005). Allen experienced being in the Army, leaving his parents and later in his life finding the roles reversed as he cares for his elderly parents. Ryan experienced boarding school and having to take certain responsibility for his life before he became an adult. Sihle went through initiation school and received guidance from older men. Alex experienced a family crisis and his actions in handling the situation gave him courage to continue his journey through manhood. Khapelo experienced many disappointments and difficulty, he learnt about endurance and strength. These narratives have great meaning to each man in their personal journey, yet there are similarities in their constructions of manhood.

Speaking to men with different backgrounds and different ages has stimulated a curiosity for further research related to the effects of South African history on manhood. Further research could focus on the effects of Apartheid on constructions of manhood for different race groups of men including the consideration that all race groups may also conform to constructions of a generalised South African manhood.

As previously discussed, the data reflected the importance of the family home upon the concept of manhood. However, during the Apartheid regime the racially divided workplace gave men different experiences and models for manhood. Migrant labourers only saw their wives and children sporadically. These kinds of situations are likely to have affected their relationships with their families and the way their families conceived of the concept of manhood (Morrell, 2005). It thus, becomes vital that the impact of such contexts upon manhood be acknowledged and examined further.

Manhood is created within the social realm through discourse and language and therefore it is possible to understand that there are multiple modes of manhood. Though there are common themes explored, each participant operates within and performs unique modes of manhood. South Africa holds a vast social landscape and is therefore affected by many discourses. Each discourse shaped through history and culture and reproduced through language.

Masculine identities have changed since the Apartheid. Rural African descriptions have merged with Western ideals of manhood (Mager et al., 2001; Field 2001; Xaba, 2001). The participants Sihle and Khapelo, although of the same culture, presented different understandings of manhood. Sihle, the younger man, mentioned the changing traditions in rituals and cultural beliefs regarding manhood. Khapelo grew up in a rural settlement and did not have the full support of his family during the initiation process. Sihle grew up in the city and had positive male role models and a supportive mother. These two men grew up in different socio-economic environments, affected by the same culture yet they had different cultural experiences.

On the other side of Apartheid white males had to enter military training in the army, they would have been influenced to construct a manhood of superiority over other races of men and all women (Conway, 2003). Since every man has different cultural and family backgrounds some may have struggled with these constructions and not enjoyed their compulsory stint in the army. Perhaps these constructions are still in some ways reproduced in society, through father son relationships and other social influences. In the interview with Allen, he mentioned feeling like a man after his 2 years in the army; it may have been helpful to deconstruct what he learned about being a man during his time in the army. Perhaps the masculine discourse of the army may conflict with the discourse of manhood in which he

currently lives. He referred to the rise of women to positions of power as threatening and causing a sense of insecurity.

Manhood in South Africa can therefore be understood to be influenced by different historical and cultural elements. It is important to consider the affects that the Apartheid regime had on constructions of manhood, thus acknowledging the fact that men of different race and culture may have had different experiences. Some of the discourses generated during that time in South African history may still be alive and carried through culture and family relations. South African men may experience confusion between historical and cultural discourses of manhood as well as western discourses of manhood. This study stimulates the desire to hear more voices on the topic of manhood within the South African context. Further research and discussions could be influential in both academic and therapeutic contexts.

Moving from a crisis of manhood towards new possibilities

Since manhood is created within the social realm through discourse and language it is possible to understand that there are multiple manhoods (Barker, 2012). Morrell (2005) writes about the model of the 'new man' within the South African context. The model focuses on domestic responsibility, tolerance, democracy, peace, introspection and sensitivity. This model has been generated in the context of the developed world. Since South Africa is a developing country with many parts still poorly resourced it is questionable as to how this model could thrive. Morrell (2005) suggests that perhaps models of masculinity which value protection, responsibility, provision, communal loyalty and wisdom may be more suitable and sustainable in a country such as South Africa. Reflecting on the five interviews conducted and the common themes described, the latter model for a South African manhood seems more fitting. Morrell's suggested model accounts for constructions, such as protection and provision. As demonstrated in both the literature review and the data collected, these constructions already exist within South African men today. Thus, to renegotiate these

existing constructions may be more helpful than proposing a new manhood all together. Kopano (2008) suggests that in addressing issues such as gender based violence; men are beginning to challenge notions of masculinity. These notions could be considered as restrictions or barriers to greater involvement as fathers and can be considered a threat to the safety of intimate partners or other family members. By challenging dominant constructs of masculinity new construction may emerge and dominant constructs are destabilised.

Morrell's model places increased value on family life with the assumption that families will in turn increasingly value the presence of men in the family. This is evidenced internationally by organisations such as "The fatherhood project". This project to increase the involvement of men in their children's lives (Morrell, 2005). All five participants mentioned their families as important factors of their manhood, their parents during childhood as well as their role as parents and husbands during adulthood. The involvement discussed above is an indication of an area that could benefit from further research in South Africa. Research focusing on family relationships, especially father-son relationships may be of great value. The participants described personally experiencing the benefits of having present fathers as well as the handicaps of having an absent father. The role that father's play has been emphasised in this research as it can be very influential in shaping manhood in South Africa. The role can also be a springboard for interventions and a means of remedy for the manhood crisis described in previous chapters (Morrell, 2005; Pollack, 1998).

An insight that has emerged from this study is that greater research is needed within South Africa with regard to manhood especially in relation to fathering. Most of the participants seemed to have placed great importance on their role as a father and what they learned from their own fathers. Many South Africans grow up in fatherless homes; the high rates of crime and violence in South Africa may be related to fatherlessness (Morrell, 2005). Studies oriented to hearing the voices of fathers who leave their families may provide useful

information into the condition of masculine identity in South Africa. Additionally, studies geared to hear the voices of young boys and grown men who have experienced abandonment from their fathers could also be useful. Hearing these voices may be helpful in the creation of interventions for troubled fathers as well as young men without fathers. Through understanding manhood as constructed through language within a society, social and individual interventions may emerge and become possible within various settings.

Common conceptualisations of manhood within South Africa emphasise employment and earning potential. The high level of unemployment in South Africa may therefore pose a threat to the self-esteem of South African men (Elliot, 2003). Most of the participants mention the importance of employment especially in relation to provision. Khapelo provided insight into the depth of the struggle or difficulty this value has on his life as man. He described resilience in the face of these difficulties and an inner force that encourages him to persevere. He directly relates his inner motivations to being a man, being strong and fulfilling his duties as a man.

Some of the participants mentioned their schooling experiences as contributing to their meaning constructions of manhood. Morrell (2005) suggests that the schooling system offers prime opportunity to engage with young people on the question of masculinity. Schooling is of particular significance in South Africa as it is compulsory until age 16. Khapelo spoke about not completing primary school and that his employment and hard work is to ensure that his son receives an education. Ryan shared how his experience in boarding school greatly affected his understanding of manhood. Alex mentioned how his idea of manhood changed as he went through school and then through to university; these influences led him to believe that independence is an important aspect of manhood. Schools are therefore a training ground for manhood and provide even greater opportunity to intervene in the crisis and confusion of manhood.

The different types of manhood that Nemoto (2008) and Connell (1995) write about: hegemonic, subordinate and marginalised, are consistent with the themes encountered in this study. The history of South Africa may have left men in South Africa with a predisposition to these three types of manhood. Khapelo may have an experience of a marginalised manhood, feeling as though others are always taking advantage of him. The threat that Allen experienced with women 'taking the lead' may indicate a fear of entering a subordinate manhood. There is some indication that perhaps men in current times are experiencing an internal conflict between different constructions of manhood and this may therefore be at the heart of the manhood crisis.

Insights have emerged with regard to potential intervention for the crisis of manhood experienced in South Africa and potentially around the world. Re-evaluating the way manhood is understood in the world. Manhood could be viewed through fresh eyes by not painting all men with the same brush. The understanding of the confusion involved in the changing social constructions of manhood and this study has provided a starting point for intervening in social issues in South Africa such as violence, domestic abuse, gangsters, drug and alcohol abuse, absent fathers as well as others not mentioned. If more psychological interventions entailed community, group or individual discussions and negotiations around the meaning of manhood, this could contribute to more understanding of manhood and allow for further intervention for those who are troubled.

It is clear that family relationships, school environments and other social influences have been pivotal in the participants' meaning constructions of manhood. In line with contemporary research it is clear that cultural representations, lived experience and problems encountered in society is the place to engage with constructions of manhood. An endeavour to intervene

in what may be a masculine identity crisis experienced by many men therefore opens up new possibilities for manhood.

It has been the purpose of this study to honour the voices of each participant. The themes that emerged for each participant have presented useful and insightful meaning around the constructions of manhood. Of particular importance is the unfolding of conflicts between hegemonic and contemporary constructions of manhood within each participant interview. One participant shared about his mother teaching him the importance of not being afraid to show emotion although in the interview he seemed to speak in a way to keep emotion at bay. The participants allowed for a 'behind the scenes' look into manhood, it became clear that manhood like any part of one's identity is a subjective experience as well as a discursive performance.

This study created the space for the description of new possibilities of meaning in relation to manhood. Each participant offered unique perspectives of manhood created through their lived experience. Ryan provided great insight into the importance of family responsibility. Allen offered insight into how men have been socially conditioned to behave in certain ways. He made the movement between traditional and more contemporary views of manhood come alive. Sihle explained the cultural initiation process into manhood combined with his Christian beliefs and western values. Khapelo poured out the soul of manhood, resilience in the face of uncertainty and discouragement. He provided an understanding that manhood can be seen as a lifelong commitment which may entail many burdens. . The theme of being a 'good man', that many of the participants mentioned, perhaps reveals the performative nature of manhood.

Concluding remarks

The poststructuralist framework of this study has provided the ability to consider manhood as a construct of language and discourse within various social realms. Manhood can therefore be understood as varying across time and space (Barker, 2012; Connell, 1995). The cultural differences that exist between men suggest that there is no real shared, universal, cross-cultural category of man. There are rather multiple modes of manhood, which are enacted by different men as well as by the same men within different situations. Gender identity is therefore significantly flexible in principle although it is formed into specific categories under certain historical and cultural conditions (Barker, 2012). Each participant's construction of manhood can therefore be considered as subjective and unique even though there were common themes that emerged from the various interviews.

The literature review provided this study with a guideline from which to begin to understand the workings of manhood. The literature reviewed explored common descriptions of manhood around the world as well as how they came to be. Very importantly the literary review provided a glimpse into the current state of the South African perspective of manhood.

The phenomenological hermeneutic method of enquiry enabled the deconstruction of each participant's interview. The process yielded rich descriptions of manhood, confirming the existence of multiple modes of manhood. Some of the emergent themes and therefore constructions included: making provision, making decisions, protection, responsibility, fathering and being fathered, new times, the influence of mothers, being a husband and lastly being a good man.

This study has therefore been a pursuit of greater understanding of the individual experience of manhood. The individual experiences analysed have provided themes of hegemonic constructions of manhood consistent with the literature reviewed. The emergent themes may be considered hegemonic as they are influenced by historical and cultural discourse. Each participant experienced these common themes in unique ways and therefore manhood can

be considered a subjective experience for them. Their life stories and experiences have been intertwined with their masculine identities; they may however experience the pull of various discourses of manhood.

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APPENDIX 1

Transcription of Video Clip

Setting: A group of five male friends sitting around a table having a conversation. Only four of the men participate in the conversation, the fifth listens intently.

Man1 (Adam): When did you first think of yourself as a man? (Poses this question to his friends)

Man2 (David): What?

Man1 (Adam): No, No, No. I mean, when did you first think, "I'm a man now?"

Man3 (Shane): Ha, ha. Come on, you can't be serious. We are not talking about this.

Man1 (Adam): No, just humour me for a second. Think about it.

Man2 (David): Maybe when I moved out, or when I turned 21. I don't know.

Man1 (Adam): So when you were legal?

Man2 (David): Yeah

Man1 (Adam): What about you, Shane?

Man3 (Shane): I don't know. I mean, when I got my licence or my first job. I mean, what does it matter?

Man1 (Adam): Javi?

Man4 (Javier): When my father told me I was. When I was 17, he had to leave for three months to do a job. He told me that he thought of me as a man. He wanted me to take care of the family.

APPENDIX 2

Interview Questions

1. In this short video clip is there anything in particular that you relate to?
 - a. What are they?
 - b. Could you elaborate on them a bit on how they relate to you?
2. When you hear the word 'manhood' what are some of the images, words or stories that come to mind?
3. If you had to come up with your own definition for manhood, what would it be?
4. Do you consider manhood as being something you were born with or something you have learned or been taught? (please explain)
5. Do you think your concept of manhood has changed in any way over the years?
 - a. What do you think has been constant and what do you think has changed?
6. Questions arising from the conversations in order to elicit further explanation.

APPENDIX 3

Letter to participants:

Dear Participant

This letter is to request your participation in a research study, conducted by a Psychology Masters student from Fort Hare University.

The purpose of this study is to find out the subjective descriptions of 'manhood' for those who participate in this research. The participants will therefore provide their own descriptions of manhood, and this will be compared to how other studies have described manhood.

The participants will be asked to join the researcher in an interview of an hour long, where the researcher will have prepared a few questions that will be used to facilitate a discussion around the participant's descriptions of manhood.

This study is completely voluntary and if the participant feels uncomfortable to the extent that they wish to disengage from the process, they are free to make that choice.

The participants will also be requested to fill in an informed consent form for the protection of the rights of participant as well as the researcher.

If you would like to volunteer or for more information please contact Jade Brown on jadesbrown@gmail.com. Please find attached to this letter a copy of the interview questions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter as well as possibly deciding to volunteer as a participant.

Jade Brown

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX 4

Informed Consent

I, hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the following:

- I understand what the research I am participating is about i.e. this study considers what 'manhood' means to me, my personal understanding of manhood;
- My participation involves a face to face interview approximately an hour in length, where I will relate my experience through a discussion regarding several semi-structured questions
- The risks i.e. the possibility of feeling exposed or vulnerable for having shared my experience and the benefits i.e. gaining a deeper self-understanding as a result of participating in the research have been explained;
- The researcher has advised that if I feel vulnerable as a result of participating in the study, that I have the choice of discontinuing the interview;
- I will be presented under a pseudonym in the research report;
- I have been informed that the interview will be audio recorded and transcribed to be used as informative data in the research report;
- The researcher will provide me with feedback and a copy of the report once compiled;
- The research is being supervised by Prof Dirk Odendaal, I can contact him on 043 704 7107, should I wish to query anything or make a complaint;
- I will not be financially compensated for my time or participation in the study;
- I voluntarily participate in this research project and can at any time withdraw my participation (including requesting that interview recordings and transcripts be destroyed).

Signed at on thisday of2012

Signature of Participant.