

HOW DO MEN NEGOTIATE A MASCULINE IDENTITY IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS?

BY

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Declaration

I, NelisiweNkomonde, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work and that all sources used or cited are acknowledged by means of complete references. This dissertation was conducted under the supervision of Professor Graham Lindegger. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate how men negotiate a masculine identity in different contexts, using Dialogical Self Theory. As a first step, it was important to explore whether or not men do perform their masculinity differently in various contexts. Only once this was done, did the research move into investigating the methods used by men to negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity.

Using a qualitative design, six men, between the ages of 18 and 50, were interviewed. All the participants were either married or in a long-term relationship, and all the participants were employed. This purposeful selection of the participants allowed for comparisons of performances of masculinity at work, with friends and with the spouse/girlfriend.

The results revealed that the participants do indeed perform multiple versions of masculinity or take up various masculine “I-positions” in different contexts. The findings also show that men use a variety of strategies to negotiate a sense of masculine identity based on multiple I-positions. Dialogical self theory is employed to understand this phenomenon.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate how men negotiate a masculine identity in different contexts. In order to investigate this, it was important to establish whether or not men perform their masculinity differently in various contexts. If that were found to be the case, it was important to understand how men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of their masculinity, in different contexts.

Theoretically, the masculine identity was viewed through the lens of the Dialogical Self Theory which argues that an individual's identity is made up of multiple I-positions which are performed differently in various contexts. These I-positions all work together to form an organized repertoire. The I has the ability to move from one position to another in response to changes in space, situation and time (Hermans, 2003). Therefore, from a Dialogical Self Theory understanding, a man has multiple masculine I-positions that are performed differently in various contexts. For example, I-as-father will be associated with specific behaviors and performed in a different space and to a different audience than I-as-C.E.O. Each masculine I-position is therefore understood to be linked to a particular time and space, with its own experiences.

The argument that a man exhibits multiple performances of masculinity depending on the social and spatial contexts is supported by understandings of masculinity that argue for multiple masculinities as opposed to a fixed and essential masculinity that all men 'do' (Chadwick, 2007). These explanations of masculinity argue that the construction of masculine identities is based on social and cultural values of what a man should be. Therefore, masculinity should not be viewed as fixed and the same for all men, instead, there are multiple masculinities that are culturally specific (Connell, 1995). Taking this argument even further, Beynon (2002) argues that masculinity is not only performed differently by men of different cultures, but a single man can perform his masculinity differently, depending on the time, the space and the audience.

Men who were either married or in a long-term relationship were specifically sampled in order to investigate whether or not masculinity was performed differently when at work, at home or with friends. Purposive sampling was used and by default, all the participants were black. The data for this study was gathered using semi-structured interviews. The transcribed interviews were analyzed through a thematic analysis.

1.2 Rationale for this study

How a man constructs his masculine identity can be argued to not only influence the way he sees himself, but also influences how he views and treats others (Mac An Ghail,1996). Furthermore, establishing one's gender identity is central to establishing one's overall identity (Lawler, 2008). The construction and performance of a man's masculine identity is a somewhat complex process as it is not only influenced by biological factors, but also hugely influenced by cultural and social masculine ideals (Connell, 2003). Adding to this complex process, it is argued that different social situations call for different aspects of a man's masculinity (Beynon, 2007). If establishing one's masculine identity is so important, it is equally important to understand how men construct a masculine identity under such complex circumstances.

As mentioned above, how a man constructs his masculine identity has an effect on how he treats other people, particularly women (Mac An Ghail, 1994). Hegemonic versions of masculinity are primarily maintained, as Connell (1995) argues, by the marginalization of women and other men. This marginalization has a direct impact on the power differences between men and women (Mac An Ghail, 1994) which have been used to explain behaviors such as domestic violence and the unprotected sex in males (Mac An Ghail,1994).

1.3 Aims of the study

The study aimed to answer two central questions:

- 1) Do men perform masculinity differently in various contexts?

Based on masculinity theory and the Dialogical Self Theory, the literature would seem to suggest that men do perform masculinity differently in various contexts. Interviews were

conducted on male participants to establish if this is in fact the case among the selected sample. The participants were asked questions to determine whether or not they were different men when at work, when they are with their spouses/girlfriends or when they are with their male friends.

2) How do men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity?

How this question was answered depended on whether or not the participants presented multiple masculine selves. The aim here was to investigate exactly whether and how men maintain some unified sense of masculine identity based on multiple, diverse performances.

1.4. The structure of the dissertation

The second chapter of this dissertation, following this introduction, entails a review of literature that is relevant to the area of interest. The literature review is made up of three sections: the first section discussed masculinity theory, the section looks at the Dialogical Self Theory and the last section integrates the Dialogical Self Theory into the understanding of masculinity.

Chapter three will describe and discuss the methodology employed in conducting this research. This section of the thesis will cover the theory behind the methodology, the sampling and sampling technique used. The methods of data collection and data analysis will also be discussed. Lastly, the chapter will look at how rigour was established and maintained throughout the research.

Chapter four presents the results generated from the analyzed interviews. The results will be presented in two sections that address the two questions asked by this research paper: 1) Do men perform their masculinity differently in various contexts, and 2) How do men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple, parallel selves.

The fifth chapter, the discussion chapter, discussed the results presented in the previous chapter. For purposes of clarity, the discussion chapter will be presented in a structure similar to the results chapter. Furthermore, recommendations for further research will be presented.

The last chapter will conclude the dissertation, giving a summary of the arguments made by each chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will be presented in three sections. The first section will be an in-depth discussion on the theories of masculinity. The second section will focus on the Dialogical Self Theory. The third and final section of this chapter will provide a link between masculinity as a male identity and the Dialogical Self Theory – demonstrating the construction and performance of masculine I-positions.

2.2 Theories of masculinity

The study of masculinity and masculine identity is by no means new to Psychology. Numerous theories and approaches have been developed and used to understand and explain masculinity. In order to understand the premises that the more contemporary theories and understandings of masculinity have been built on, it would be useful to briefly discuss the earlier theories of masculinity.

Included among these approaches of masculinity is the essentialist view of masculinity. The essentialist view suggests that there are unchanging masculine characteristics that define men and distinguish them from women. This results in a fixed, universal and uniform masculinity (Kriel, 2003). One particular form of the essentialist view is the biological approach to masculinity which emphasizes the biological differences between men and women, namely, genetic inheritances, hormonal differences as well as the effects of testosterone (Kriel, 2003). In terms of both these approaches to masculinity, masculinity is understood and viewed in isolation from the social and cultural context that surrounds the individual (Kriel, 2003).

According to the psychoanalytic perspective, a male's gender identity is largely determined by the phallic stage of Freud's stages of psychosexual development (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). During this stage of development the boy develops sexual feelings for his own mother. The boy then starts to view his father as a rival for his mother's love and attention. At this point, the boy

realizes that his feelings for his mother are taboo, as incest is greatly frowned upon in society. It is because of this realization that the boy starts to fear that he will be castrated by his father as punishment for his incestuous desires. In order to avoid castration, the young boy then represses these desires and identifies with his father, thus redirecting all his sexual feelings to other, more acceptable females. When the young boy identifies with his father he begins to internalize the masculine values and standards set by his father (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). Furthermore, the psychoanalytic approach argues that when a child is born, he/she is born with a set of sexual and aggressive drives that are neither homosexual nor heterosexual. Masculinity, therefore, is understood to be an outcome of how the parents handle these drives as the child is raised (Kriel, 2003). As a counter argument to the psychoanalytic approach, some authors have argued that a young boy does not really turn away from femininity as a result of his fear of castration as the theory suggests. The reason that the boy does this is because the young boy realizes that by being masculine or by being a 'man', he becomes a member of the most powerful group in society. Therefore, psychoanalytic theories "are predicted upon, rather than account, for the existence of male power privilege" (Edley & Wetherell, 1996, p.100).

The social relations perspective, on the other hand, views masculinity as a set of practices that are the outcomes of how men are positioned within various social structures, for example, work. So, if men are aggressive, violent or oppressive, this is simply a result of how society positions men within their mode of economic production (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). Therefore, "capitalism draws men into a network of social relations that encourage sets of behaviors [that] we would recognize as typically masculine" (Edley & Wetherell, 1996, p.103). The social relations perspective has been critiqued for viewing men as simple slaves to circumstance as if they do not have a choice but to be oppressive because that is the way they have been positioned. Other theorists, particularly cultural theorists, have argued that men are quite active in their practice of masculinity (Edley & Wetherell, 1996).

2.2.1 The construction of masculinity and the social and cultural context

With regards to the development of an individual identity, authors such as Davis, Thomas & Sewalish (2006) have argued that identity formation is not just an internal process, but rather a process that is greatly influenced by acculturation and socialization. Therefore, what society values about gender and sex roles plays a huge role in shaping the kinds of behaviors that individuals feel are appropriate for their specific genders. Identity thus emerges from the many social exchanges that an individual experiences within different social contexts (D' Augelli, 1994, in Davis et al. 2006).

According to authors such as Connell (1995), Morrell (2001) and Edley & Wetherell (1996), what Davis et al (2006) has argued for above is especially true for the formation of a masculine identity. These authors, among others, have all argued for the importance of culture and the social context in the construction and performance of masculine identities. The argument here is that each culture or each society has its own ideas and values about men and masculinity. This means that the men (and women) in a particular society have a shared understanding with regards to how men should be, how they should behave, dress and relate to women. Therefore, different societies and cultures may have their own, different ideas about what it means to be a man (Edley & Wetherell, 1996). This argument is in direct contrast to the essentialist view of masculinity which is based on the premise that there is a single masculinity that all men 'do' (Chadwick, 2007). The cultural and social argument of masculinity also argues against the social relations perspective. Unlike the latter perspective, cultural and social understandings argue that men are not simply products or slaves of their culture or social environment, but men are both products and producers of culture and its ideologies (Edley & Wetherell, 1996).

Pleck, Sonenstein and Ku (1993, in Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001, p. 232) argue that masculinity is "the extent to which men believe that it is important to adhere to culturally defined standards of masculine behaviour." This understanding of masculinity reinforces that masculinity is socially, culturally and historically constructed rather than being universal, biologically based and having a standard set of characteristics that all men share (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001). Accordingly, what men value to be masculine has been largely informed by

their specific cultures and social contexts, therefore highlighting the major roles played by cultural ideals in the construction of masculinity.

Kriel (2003) adds that masculinity is defined by the specific norms, values and accepted practices of masculinity in a particular society. Various definitions of masculinity are sustained within a particular society by numerous social institutions. In his study of young, black boys from a South African school, Bhana (2005, in Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005) found that the masculine identities presented by the participants reached back to their families and the social location of these families played a major role in how these masculinities were formed. Furthermore, how these participants performed and constructed their masculinity identities depended on the available cultural resources at their disposal.

It is in light of this social, cultural and historical construction of masculinity that Connell (2000, p.13) argues that masculinities can never be fixed because they are not “homogenous, simple states of being.” Instead, masculinity is a dynamic, fluid and adaptable construct and constantly evolves in relation to the social and cultural context. Quite clearly, according to this understanding of masculinity which takes into consideration the cultural and social context in the construction and performance of masculine identities, masculinity can only be interpreted, enacted and experienced in ways that are significantly culture specific (Beynon, 2002).

Connell (2000) also argues for more than one kind of masculinity within the same social context. Masculinity is constructed by individuals in response to the social environment in which they are in. Various social interactions produce multiple masculinities. Therefore, even within the same social setting, masculinity will not mean the same thing for all men (Coles, 2009). It is therefore quite possible to find various forms of masculinity co-existing within the same social setting such as schools, hospitals and prisons (Beynon, 2002). One can conclude from the evidence provided above that masculinity has many, often ambiguous meanings which are context specific and often change due to changes in the cultural and social contexts.

At the center of the argument for multiple masculinities is the concept of hegemonic masculinity. According to Connell (1995), within every cultural and social context, masculine identities are hierarchically structured around hegemonic understandings. Hegemonic

masculinity, according to Connell (1995, in Beynon, 2002, p.50), “defines [the] successful ways of being a man in particular places at a specific time.” In addition, Edley and Wetherell (1998, in Lindegger & Quayle, 2009) define hegemonic masculinity as an “ideal or set of prescriptive social norms, symbolically represented [and] a crucial part of the texture of many routine, mundane, social and disciplinary activities of men.” Therefore, hegemonic masculinity is informed by the norms of a particular society that dictate what a ‘real’ man should be at any given time or place. These norms and values of behavior are then placed at the center of the identity work of the men within that society. Most importantly, the concept of hegemonic masculinity means that different masculinities are not equal, this means that at one time or another, one form of masculinity will be culturally exalted above all others (Coles, 2009).

The presence of a hegemonic masculinity means that other forms of masculinity, including homosexuality, are considered to be inferior, they are subordinated and marginalized (van Hoven & Horschelmann, 2005). These ‘inferior’ masculinities are marginalized because of age, ethnicity, sexuality or ability (Coles, 2009). This marginalization of so-called inferior masculinities and women legitimizes and is legitimized by hegemonic masculinity (van Hoven & Horschelmann, 2005). It is because of the power that comes from the subordination of women that many men attempt to conform to the gender ideals laid out by hegemonic masculinity. This is what Connell (2003, in Bushell, 2008) calls the patriarchal dividend – the advantages of patriarchy that men gain by conforming to hegemonic standards. Men therefore, measure their own masculinity as well as those of other men against the masculine standards set out by hegemonic ideals (Bushell, 2009). Hegemonic masculinity is regulated and maintained by social institutions and peer groups who either accept or reject men based on their performance of masculinity (Blackbeard, 2005, in Bushell, 2008). Therefore, men either construct their masculine identities in line with the dominant, hegemonic standards or choose to reject the dominating standards of masculinity (Lindegger & Durrheim, 2001). It is important to note, at this point, that hegemonic masculinities do not remain unchallenged or unchanged by both men and women. Dominating forms of masculinity are always susceptible to challenges from subordinated masculinities and femininities (Coles, 2009).

Thus, in an attempt to define masculinity while taking into consideration cultural and social factors, Whitehead and Barrett (2001, p.5) provide the following definition of masculinity: “[masculinities are] those behaviors, languages and practices, existing in specific cultural and organizational locations, which are commonly associated with males and thus culturally defined as not being feminine.” In addition, Buchbinder (1994, in van Hoven & Horschelmann, 2005) understand masculinity to represent various aspects of how men behave and what they do or say to be acknowledged as men.

2.2.2 Masculinity in time space

Authors such as Ouzgane & Morrell (2005), Beynon (2002) and Horroks (1999) take the argument of a socially and culturally constructed masculinity even further by arguing that the expression of a masculine identity is not just different in different cultures, but a man’s identity takes on a different form depending on the time, the place and the audience. Silberschmidt (2005, in Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005) holds the view that masculinity is composed of different elements, identities and behaviors that are not always coherent. These elements, identities and behaviors compete, contradict and undermine each other, thus allowing masculinity to be performed differently in different times, different spaces and under different circumstances (Beynon, 2002). Masculinity, therefore, has multiple meanings which change as the time, place and cultural context changes. Horroks (1994) supports this view as he argues that there is uniqueness in each and every man in a variety of contexts. Men are understood to adopt different positions of masculinity and perform these differently in different contexts and for different audiences (Lindegger, unpublished). If the construction of masculinity is cultural (as established above), then it can be understood that men step in and inhabit masculinity (at times temporarily) as a ‘cultural space’ depending on the setting he finds himself in (Beynon, 2002). As a man changes his status and geographical location (home to work to different city), his enactment of being masculine changes as well (Beynon, 2002). Therefore, the way in which a man acts with his spouse can be argued to be different to how he may behave with his children, his colleagues and the members of his sports team (Horroks, 1994). The understanding of a masculine identity as being displayed differently across time and space is termed by Beynon (2002) as a *hybridized* masculinity or a *bricolage* masculinity which results in a sort of ‘channel hopping’ across masculine identities depending on the situation and audience. From these arguments, it is clear that a man lives a number of unique and possibly conflicting masculinities, on a regular basis: a man is different in different situations.

2.3 The Dialogical Self Theory

The idea of an identity changing across time and space and the self being embedded in the cultural context resonates highly with the Dialogical Self Theory. According to the Dialogical Self Theory, the self is made up of a multiplicity of so-called I-positions which work together to form an organized repertoire (Hermans, 2003). Central to the Dialogical Self Theory is the notion of dialogue (between I-positions) and the existence of a relationship between the self and the 'other'. A degree of differentiation between the self and the other is present from the time a child is born. As soon as the child is born and meets with the mother for the first time (face to face), the mother will get to know the infant by touching, looking and talking to the baby. When their eyes meet, the infant will usually follow the mother's gaze. Once the infant becomes more alert, it will start to move to the rhythm of the mother's speech, which encourages the mother to continue talking (Hermans, 1993). At first, as the baby sucks, it will take pauses independent of whether or not the mother responds. Eventually, the sucking will create some kind of rhythm, with pauses in-between. The mother will then begin to structure her speech around this rhythm. The mother will speak and then wait the length of a conversational pause and listen to an imaginal response from the baby before she continues talking. After a while, the baby will fill the pauses with its babbling. The more the mother responds to this babbling, the more the baby will do it. In this way, the mother and child are involved in some kind of conversational turn-taking which Hermans (1993) calls a pseudo dialogue. This interaction is termed a pseudo dialogue as the baby is still too young to engage in real dialogue, but their 'conversational' turn-taking makes them appear as real communicative interactants (Hermans, 1993). Once the child learns to talk, they begin to converse with an imaginal interlocutor. During these conversations, they rehearse prior conversations and even direct their own actions (Hermans, 1993).

Soon after that, the child begins to recognize themselves as a "separate self" from the other. This recognition of themselves as a separate self, does not however, make the child completely autonomous. Once the baby recognizes themselves as separated from the other, they develop an awareness of their 'personal space' and 'self-boundary' structures. At this point, the baby

also realizes that a stranger could interfere with their personal space. This realization causes the child to fear strangers and develop what has been called “stranger anxiety.” This stranger anxiety demonstrates the child’s awareness of their social world, as well as an early differentiation between the self and other (Hermans, 1993). As part of a child’s recognition of themselves as a separate self, the child begins to use pronouns to identify themselves and to differentiate themselves from others. Words such as “I” and “me” are used, with “mine” being used to reinforce or define self-boundaries (Hermans, 1993).

Early role playing plays an important role in the development of I-positions. The child will start off by pretending that they are someone else, they will then progress to playing reverse roles. The pronouns will shift as the roles change. The policeman who was “I” at one moment will become “you” in the next moment. By moving from one role to another and shifting pronouns accordingly, children are able to experience different, even contrasting, I-positions and experience them in their mutuality (Hermans, 1993). The more people that fill the child’s world and the more fairytales and television programs get introduced to the child, the more the child’s world get injected with a variety of positions. Some of these positions only dwell in fantasy (e.g. snow white), some are found in real life (e.g. policeman) and some live partly on the interface of both (e.g. stories of good and bad parents). The child then finds themselves in a world with a variety of positions. As the child’s imagination, memory and role playing abilities increase, the child is then able to imagine themselves in one of these positions and can even move from one position to another. In doing so, the child gets to know each position and is also familiar with the relationships between positions (Hermans, 1993). Imaginal dialogues that began in childhood continue through adult life where we find individuals communicating with their conscience, their reflection in the mirror or even their pets. As people grow, their imagination allows them to bring the ‘other’ inside the self. The other becomes a constitutive part of the self, playing an important part in the everyday life of the individual (Hermans, 2008). Therefore, the voices of those who make up the social world of the individual enter the self and form positions in the self which at times unite, and even oppose one another (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Since the self is part of the world, the more heterogeneous and multiple the world becomes, the more multiple and heterogeneous the self becomes.

Therefore, the differences between the people in our social world result in differences in the self, where some parts are found to be dominant over others (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Moreover, even the power struggles between the collective voices in the individual's community appear as power struggles between positions in the self (Hermans, 2008). The different positions are intertwined in the mind just as the mind is intertwined with the minds of other people (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Added to that, according to the Dialogical Self Theory, culture functions as a social position in the self. These collective, cultural voices then become "expressions of embodied and historically situated selves that are constantly involved in dialogical relationships with other voices" (Hermans, 2001, pg. 272). It is therefore very important, that when attempting to understand the functioning of the self, one analyses the dialogical relationships between the different positions and between these positions and other positions in the self (Hermans, 2001).

The concept of positions and positioning implies three things about the individual. Firstly, as a verb, positioning implies the individual taking his/her place in a field of social relationships. Secondly, the individual can actively place themselves in a relationship with someone else or with themselves. Lastly, a person may also be positioned in certain relationships or situations by other people (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

These positions are both internal and external. Internal positions are positions that the individual feels are part of themselves, for example, I-as-a good father, I-as-colleague. External positions are formed by those people or objects in the environment that the individual feels are important to one or more of their internal positions (Hermans, 2001). All positions, whether internal or external, are called I-positions, because they are part of the self that extends itself to the environment. Therefore, there is a constant encountering and a mutual transaction between external and internal positions (Hermans, 2001). The relations between positions are explained by Hermans (2001, p. 254) in the following quote:

...a position always implies relations, that is, internal-external (e.g. as a father I'm invited by my children), internal relations (e.g. as a father I disagree with myself as ambitious worker) and external relations (e.g. my children and my friend get on together quite well)

These internal and external I-positions are always involved in a continuous process of negotiation and interchange amongst themselves (Hermans, 2008). The I assigns a voice to each position in order to create dialogical relationships between positions, thus facilitating the process of negotiation and interchange. The dialogues between I-positions are characterized by a process of question and answer where the positions may agree or disagree with one another (Hermans, 2008). As Kahn, Holmes and Brett (2011) explain, the dialogues between the various I-positions represent the ways in which the self understands and negotiates with the world. The self is thus made up of multiple I-positions that “accompany and expose one another in multiple ways” (Hermans, 2001, p.245).

2.3.1 I-positions in time and space

The I has the ability to move from one position to another in line with changes in the time, the situation and the audience (e.g. moving from I as father to I as C.E.O). The I swings between different, often opposing, positions. Movement between positions depends on cultural and spatial changes (Hermans, 2003). New situations, therefore, can lead to the expression of new positions. Therefore, each I-position has its own place in a particular time and space, thereby gaining its own experiences. These experiences make up part of the dialogue between the I-positions (Hermans, 2008).

According to Hermans and Kempen (1993), if the self is defined as a multiplicity of I-positions that dominate in different social contexts, the community explicitly approves or disapproves of some of these positions and the way in which the individual functions in them. Therefore, the self is not just organized by the individual, but by the social environment as well. Voices from family members, cultural values and standards all become a very important part of the formation of the self that is later performed in school, work settings and social relationships. This is because family members and cultural values can all form external positions that are relevant to the functioning and existence of the internal positions (Hermans, 2003). I-positions are thus historical expressions, reinforced by cultural voices that are involved in dialogical relationships with other voices (Hermans, 2003). The influence of the community in the

formation of the self is expressed more effectively in the following quote by Hermans and Kempen (1993, p.73):

[With regards to the] Influence of the community on the organization of the self, we will argue that dialogues, as they organize the contact among people, have the capacity to make some positions more dominant than others. Dominance, as an intrinsic feature of the dialogue, not only organizes but restricts the multiplicity of possible positions in the process of socialization.

From this understanding of the self and identity, one can conclude that an individual has many I-positions, derived from different social contexts that make up the individual's self. When one talks of I-positions, they assume an inclusive unity-multiplicity structure. The first part of this opposition, the unity, talks of a continuous I that moves from one position to another. Multiplicity, on the other hand, talks of discontinuity between the opposing positions. With unity and multiplicity, neither is more important than the other, they complement each other. If the concept of multiplicity is understood to be the different voices within the self, then it is the dialogue between those voices that bring out the unity of the I or self (Hermans, 2008).

2.3.2 Negotiation between I-positions

The dialogue between the I-positions is often asymmetrical because of the different assumptions that each voiced I-position carries. Also, because each I-position has its own subjective experiences and beliefs, the dialogue may lead to conflicts between positions (Hermans, 2003). The conflict between two or more positions often pushes the individual into different, often opposing directions. The conflict between opposing positions within the system leads to a period of instability (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010), where there may be interruptions of one voice over another when one position may be more influential than another (Hermans, 2008). This period of conflict and instability is made less intense when one position is made to dominate the system more permanently, or when two agreeing positions are combined (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). The individual then needs to negotiate between these conflicting I-positions in order to make sense of the various aspects of their lives (Hermans, 2001).

According to Hermans and Kempen (1993), if all the I-positions that make up the self were to be entirely autonomous, it would be near impossible to approach them as a whole, or to have any consistent sense of self. If the different positions were to exist and function entirely autonomously, the individual would end up with a completely fragmented self as can be found in 'multiple personalities'. It is because of this reason that it is impossible for the individual to live out all the I-positions at the same time, but to make any of the positions actual at any given time, the rest must be more or less suppressed (Hermans, 2001). Whether internal or external, positions may, given the situation, be silenced and marginalized (Hermans, 2008). As Hermans and Kempen (1993, p. 80) explain:

The mere existence of a multiplicity of positions could easily suggest a fragmented individual wondering in a jungle, moving from one position to another without any meta-view of the self as a whole. When, moreover, one of the positions in the self is very dominant, other positions belonging to the realm of possibilities of the self are neglected or even suppressed, and are, therefore, prevented from playing an active role in the synthesis of the self.

Suppressed or subjugated I-positions or positions that are not in current use do not disappear entirely from the system, they are simply 'silenced' for some time (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). These positions are silenced by being moved into the background of the system (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007), and can be brought back into prominence as a result of situational changes or fluctuations in the self (Hermans & Herman-Konopka, 2010).

The power differences and the conflict between the I-positions represent the power struggles in the social environment because the social environment forms part of the self (Hermans, 2008).

As discussed above, the individual needs to negotiate between the conflicting I-positions in order to navigate and make sense of the different aspects and situations in their lives and in order to maintain some consistent sense of self. However, according to the Dialogical Self Theory, the tension between the different I-positions is never resolved in any way, even with the negotiation process (Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Instead, the conflict is *clarified* by giving each of the conflicting positions its own meaning in comparison to the other positions

(Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Even with the tension, the positions still function together to build an identity (Kahn, et al. 2011). The challenge is to manage the conflict through an ongoing dialogical process (Hermans, 2001). In as much as the conflict between positions brings tension and instability, self-conflict can be beneficial to the functioning of the individual. This is because the conflict often results in productive self-dialogue and self-exploration (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). It is important to understand that conflict in itself is neither adaptive nor maladaptive, but rather, “it is the nature of the conflict and the answer it receives from the self that makes it adaptive or maladaptive” (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010, p. 122).

The uncertainty caused by the conflict between I-positions can be reduced by allowing one powerful position to dominate the entire repertoire. Quite often, it is the internal positions which correspond with the individual’s religious, cultural and/or ethnic group that are allowed exclusive dominance (Hermans & Herman-Konopka, 2010). There are various ways in which a powerful position can be made to dominate the system. Firstly, a new situation in the environment can lead to the introduction of a new I-position. This causes the reorganization of the self. Therefore, whether or not the self is open to new positions depends on the existing organization of the repertoire (Hermans, 2001). Secondly, positions that had been previously suppressed into the background of the system can be pushed forward due to changes in the situation (Hermans, 2001). Thirdly, two or more positions that support each other or that have common purposes can co-operate to form a new subsystem in the self. It is also possible, however, that positions which oppose each other, later find some way of working together and form a coalition (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007). It is very important to note at this point that since all positions are bound to a particular time and space, which I-positions form a coalition depends on the situation that the individual finds themselves in.

Other people, however, can choose to organize their lives around a limited number of positions which they regard as most valuable as opposed to allowing for the monological dominance of one powerful I-position. This dialogical dominance allows for agreement and disagreement, support and critical dialogue between positions (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

As part of the dialogical dominance in the repertoire, the individual will typically organize the system in a way that will allow two or more positions to dominate. This type of dominance will manifest itself in the form of a coalition between two or more positions. In a coalition, a dominant position is assigned a 'helper' or 'companion' and together, the positions work as a stabilizing force within the self (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Not all coalitions add to the successful functioning of the self, the pairing of 'undesirable' positions can lead to maladaptive coalitions. In these cases, the undesirable position can be removed from the maladaptive coalition and either suppressed or combined with another, desirable position to form a new coalition. Therefore, any I-position, as well as all behavior associated with it, can be changed by including it in another coalition, thereby making that position more desirable or positive (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). The breaking up of old coalitions and the forming of new ones – which leads to a change in behavior – is only possible if, “the other members of the coalition are different enough, in history and purpose, from the adopted position and dominant enough to determine the behavior of the coalition as a whole” (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010, p. 153). Quite interestingly, there are some positions which are more prone to coalitions than others, for example, I as enjoyer of life (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

At times, when there is conflict between two incompatible I-positions, a third position is formed, which reconciles the conflict between the opposing I-positions. The third position has a strong unifying influence on the self (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) provide the case of Rosanne to illustrate how the third position can be formed and used. Rosanne was, at the time, 25 years old, actively lesbian, with a strong Catholic value system, living with her parents. Her internal conflict centered around two of her prominent I-positions, herself as Catholic daughter and herself as a lesbian. Knowing the church's (and her parent's) view on homosexuality, Rosanne formed a third position which mitigated the conflict between the two opposing I-positions: I as missionary. Rosanne had a surprising view of other gay people, she viewed them as 'lost souls' because many of them came from broken homes and therefore needed guidance. Rosanne then felt that it was her duty, as a missionary, to save and guide these lost souls. This third position allowed Rosanne to

be part of the gay community, while at the same time doing 'good', which was line with her Christian values. Most of the energy that was spent on the two opposing positions could now be invested into the third position (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

Another type of I-position that played a unifying role in the repertoire is the meta-position. A meta-position moves above a range of I-positions which are to be considered for a particular situation (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Apart from serving a unifying role by bringing together different or opposing I-positions in order to make their mutual linkages clear, the meta-position has a variety of other functions as well. It also serves an executive function which handles the relevant decision making within the system, with regards to specific positions and desired behaviors. The meta-position serves a liberating function as well in that it allows for innovation in the system by stopping all habitual behavior which may result from well-established positions. Furthermore, meta-positions also determine the importance of certain positions for future development as well as facilitate a space in which opposing and agreeing positions can engage in dialogue (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) warn against seeing the meta-position as a limitless control center which has a 'God's eye-view' of the self. Instead, they argue that a meta-position is a 'committee' of positions that oversee the processes that take place within the system. Within this committee, some positions may be more influential than others in the decision-making process, but contributions from all positions are nevertheless heard. Furthermore, it is very important to note that the meta-position is itself influenced by internal and external positions that are activated at the moment of self-examination. And, just like any other position, new meta-positions can be formed as a result of changes in the situation or time (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

2.3.3 The desire for unification and stability

The basic human needs for stability, safety and self-maintenance, often cause the individual to desire and strive for a stable and continuous self that is the same across time and space, despite identifying with others in the environment. Therefore, the self is often reduced to just one position (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). In certain instances, an individual will almost always 'return' to familiar positions in order to allow themselves the safety of an ordered, continuous and stable self (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Returning to familiar positions, however, denies the self its fundamental characteristic of alterity. Alterity refers to the multiplicity of the other in the self. The individual needs to acknowledge that the other has many 'sides' which may lead to uncertainty. This uncertainty needs to be tolerated by the individual. However, it is not always easy for the individual to accept this alterity, as the innovation that it brings may conflict with the individual's experience of their favorite I-positions. It is important that one comes to terms with the uncertainty and multiplicity of the self, because, according to Hermans and Kempen (1993), the final unification or the 'sameness' of the self is just an illusion. Dialogue ensures that there will always be multiplicity and a separateness of positions, which allows for dominance of some positions over others. Therefore, the individual needs to balance their need for a stable and unified identity on the one hand, and multiplicity and variation that arises from internal dialogue on the other (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

2.4 Dialogical Self Theory and masculinity

Looking at all the theories of masculinity that were presented earlier in section 2.1, it seems as though, with regards to the construction and performance of masculinity, the Dialogical Self Theory is supported by theories that argue the presence of multiple masculinities that are socially and culturally constructed. As was demonstrated in section 2.1.2 above, the socio-cultural construction of masculinity, as opposed to an essentialist view of masculinity, can be used to argue that a man performs his masculine identity differently in different times, spaces and under different circumstances (Beynon, 2002). According to Connell (2003) masculinities change over time and space, this gives men the opportunity to display multiple masculinities

that are context specific. Whitehead (2005, in Anderson, 2008, p. 58) elaborates on this argument:

A man may come into conflict with another man as 'a man' and that such a threat may invoke a sense of being a man, while under other circumstances other aspects of a man's life may be more important to him (such as being a parent or an employee).

The different performances of masculinity in various times and spaces can be understood in Dialogical Self Theory terms. The male individual may occupy various masculine I-positions in relation to different social contexts (Blackbeard & Lindegger, 2007). As Hermans (2003; 2008) explains, new situations can lead to new positions dominating in the self, thereby giving each position its own place in a particular time and space. Therefore, it can be argued that when at home with his children, a man may occupy the masculine I-position of I-as-father, at work he may occupy I-as-manager and while with his spouse, I-as-lover may be performed.

2.4.1 Negotiation between masculine I-positions

The various I-positions in the self are often in conflict or may contradict one another. Furthermore, a man would need to negotiate between these conflicting masculine I-positions in order to make sense of the various aspects of his life (Hermans, 2001). In addition, the conflict between the different I-positions needs to be managed in order to form a self that aids adaptation to the social environment (Hermans, 2001). Based on the Dialogical Self Theory, it can be argued that in order to establish a masculine identity, a man would have to negotiate between different voices to find a I-position which would best allow him to adapt to the social environment he finds himself in at any given time (Hermans, 2001). This argument is supported by Kahn et al. (2011, p. 50) as they state that:

The different voices and I-positions serve to help adapt to different social contexts...Ultimately, what allows for a shared sense of...identity is the allowance of a process of negotiation and fluidity among them.

In their study of dialogical masculinities, Kahn et al. (2011) discovered that men use one of the following I-positions of masculinity in the process of negotiating a masculine identity.

First I-position: I as Authentic Definer

With this I-position, a man constructs his masculine identity based on how he views himself as opposed to building his masculine identity on what everyone else expects from him. With this identity, the men are mostly concerned about being honest with themselves, regardless of the consequences (Kahn et al. 2011). This position requires a sense of being real and true to oneself and is therefore not concerned with any socially constructed gender category. The participants in the study reported that this I-position helps them to negotiate the demands of society and family and their understanding of themselves (Kahn et al. 2011). The socio-cultural voices that influence this I-position are often teachers, mentors, peers and anybody who encourages a construction of the self that is independent of any social expectations and constraints (Kahn et al. 2011). The I as Authentic Definer is in conflict with the following position:

Second Position: I as Alternative Use of Dominance (I as balanced).

Kahn et al. (2011) calls this position a hybrid position as it takes on the powerful, socio-cultural voice of hegemonic masculinity, but then combines it with the unique experiences of the individual. This is an “in-between” identity as the stereotypical characteristics of hegemonic masculinity are embraced but still performed in doubtful ways. Many of the participants in this study described this I-position as ‘balanced’ – it involves maintaining a balance between the behaviors required by hegemonic masculinity with less-intense characteristics. Socio-cultural voices that do the talking in this I-position are fathers, in particular. The media was also found to contribute to this I-position, as well as other diverse ways of masculine expression, other choices available to men and the breakdown of traditional masculine values (Kahn et al. 2011). As mentioned above, there is tension between this I-position and the I-as-Authentic Definer. The latter rejects any construction of masculinity linked with hegemony, while the I-as-Alternative use of Dominance takes up and makes use of socio-cultural definitions of masculinity (Kahn et al. 2011).

Third Position: I as Marginalized Outsider (I as different)

This I-position is a rejection of all the characteristics and behaviors which the individual associates with masculinity (Kahn et al. 2011). Men who identify with this I-position do the opposite of what is required by hegemony. The participants who used the I-as-Marginalized Outsider reported that their constructions of masculinity were influenced by any negative masculine experiences they had – usually with absent or neglectful fathers or past involvement in gangs (Kahn et al. 2011). These negative experiences lead to the rejection of stereotypical masculine behaviors, values and attitudes. Men use this I-position as a self-protection device as it distances them from the harmful effects of masculinity (Kahn et al. 2011). Parents, teachers and mentors usually supply the socio-cultural voices for this I-position. The I-as-Marginalized Outsider is in conflict with the I-as-Alternative use of Dominance. The I-as-Marginalized Outsider rejects the masculinity that is embraced by the I-as-Alternative use of Dominance (Kahn et al. 2011).

Fourth Position: I as Empowered Advocate (I as driven community member)

This I-position experiences masculinity as a call to action. Masculinity is constructed as a call towards accomplishing a communal goal. It is believed that in this construction, a man must be confident in his decision making and driven to reach attainable and ethical goals (Kahn et al. 2011). A construction of a masculine identity as empowered advocate means not only being aware of social ills but also working to make a difference in the community. Caring for others is an important characteristic of this I-position. Religion is the dominant voice in this I-position as it encourages hope, morality and optimism during trying times (Kahn et al. 2011). Broader cultural voices also seem to show themselves in this position. These cultural voices provide motivation towards social consciousness (Kahn et al. 2011). The I-as-Marginalized Outsider provides the most tension for this I-position. As already discussed, the I-as-Marginalized Outsider is built around a rejection of masculinity and pulling away from the dominant masculine identity. The I-as-Empowered Advocate on the other hand, embraces the characteristics of masculinity that are linked to shared interests and caring for others (Kahn et al. 2011).

Lindegger (unpublished) conducted a study investigating how men establish solutions to the conflicts between different masculine I-positions and how they negotiate a solution for their masculine identity. Several masculine identities were identified as solutions to the multiple I-positions of masculinity.

The first group of solutions is based on the dominance of the hegemonic masculinity position. The first of these is the “typical hegemonic solution” (Lindegger, unpublished). With this solution, the young men in the study identified with hegemonic masculinity. They performed and defended hegemonic masculinity publically (Lindegger, unpublished). The second solution, the “fragile hegemonic solution”, involved predominantly taking up the hegemonic masculinity position but being aware of the problems and the limitations of the hegemonic masculinity position. This solution is quite similar to the I-as-Alternative use of Dominance position discussed above in the study by Kahn (et al. 2011) as both these positions involve an embracing of hegemonic masculinity but at the same time being aware of the problems that follow this position. The third and last of these solutions is the ambivalent hegemonic solution. According to (Lindegger, unpublished), this identity presents itself as hegemonic masculinity in public but takes up a non-hegemonic position in private or away from other men.

The second group of solutions is based on the dominance of a non-hegemonic solution. The first solution in this group is the “subtle hegemonic solution”. With this solution, men take up a dominant non-hegemonic or anti-hegemonic identity, but may also subtly reveal characteristics of the hegemonic position. (Lindegger, unpublished) argues that this may be seen as a safer position as it allows an alternative position to be seen by the public but still being informed by a hegemonic position. The second solution that can be found is the “principled solution”. This identity is the exact opposite of hegemonic masculinity, being based on a non-hegemonic position that is performed publically and privately. This identity may also be informed by pro-feminist and human-rights values. The third position is the alternative solution. The participants who took up this position reported having no principled non-identification with hegemonic masculinity, but, according to (Lindegger, unpublished), take up this masculine position for identity reasons.

The last group of solutions is based on a mixture of hegemonic and non-hegemonic positions. The first of these solutions is the “globalized solution” whereby men take up the dominant global position in public while expressing more traditional positions privately (Lindegger, unpublished). The participants in this study revealed that they often switch between the two positions depending on the time and space. Men may choose to take up this global position as it may be more acceptable by the community (Lindegger, unpublished). Other participants used the “walled solution” which involved taking up partially hegemonic and partially non-hegemonic positions privately and publically. They saw themselves as separated from hegemonic masculinity and having characteristics that legitimated their non-hegemonic behavior. The third position, the “nested solution”, is a mixture of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinity. As (Lindegger, unpublished, p. 4) put it, “The public hegemonic position makes the private non-hegemonic position more acceptable. The non-hegemonic position is hidden inside the public hegemonic position.” Men who may identify with this position are aware of the relative power of hegemonic standards and therefore use them strategically. The fourth solution is the “sanitized solution”. With this position, the men sanitize the harmful effects of hegemonic masculinity in order to make the solutions softer or desirable. Furthermore, “there is still a privileging of with collective, hegemonic versions of masculinity. But the unsafe risky aspects are removed through another safer collective position, for example, soccer players” (Lindegger, unpublished, p. 5). The last solution is the diversified “pragmatic solution”. In this solution, men take up multiple masculine identities that are performed differently in different times, spaces and for different audiences. Some of these multiple positions may be hegemonic or non-hegemonic (Lindegger, unpublished).

Research by Allen (2005) has demonstrated how often, when an individual tries to maintain the dominant I-position in discourse, the suppressed positions may ‘slip up’ and present themselves. This is most apparent when people do identity work – when people use talk to present a particular identity or construct themselves in a certain way. In her research into how young men manage their masculinity in focus groups, Allen (2005) found that even those young men that presented a staunch, traditional masculinity in all contexts often ‘slipped up’ and presented ‘softer’ masculine selves, especially when talking about romance and emotional

attachment. This, according to Allen (2005), demonstrated fluidity in the young men's masculine identities, the participants seemed to project multiple masculine selves that were under constant modification throughout the conversation. Most of the young men moved from an identity of a confident sexual predator to being an inexperienced romantic, and then back to being a sexual predator at any given moment in the discussion. One young man for example, "expressed his fears of sexual inadequacy and declare[d] his sexual potency in the same breath" Allen (2005, p.54).

2.5. Critical Summary and Conclusion

There are many views, understandings and conceptualizations relating to the construction and performance of masculinity. Some of these understandings focus solely on the biological make-up of men and argue that masculinity is the result of the genetic inheritances and the hormonal compositions of men. Other perspectives, such as the psychoanalytic approach, focus on the psychosexual development of boys and the relationship between the boy and his father. Fear of castration and the identification with the father then determines the boy's masculinity. The social relations perspective, on the other hand, argues that the behaviors exhibited by men are a result of how men are positioned by their society within society's mode of economic production.

However, viewing masculinity through the lens of the Dialogical Self Theory allows us to view masculinity as having multiple faces that are performed differently according to changes in time, space and the audience. If one understands masculinity to have multiple performances that are tied to different social contexts, then one would have to reject essentialist theories of masculinity that explain masculinity in isolation from the social and cultural context (Kriel, 2003). Dialogical Self Theory differs from the psychoanalytic approach in that the psychoanalytic approach focuses primarily on the development of masculinity in relation to parents, and fails to take account of multiple versions of masculinity. The social relations perspective has been argued to treat men as passive objects in their performances of masculinity as masculinity is viewed as an outcome of how men are *positioned* within various

social structures, whereas according to the Dialogical Self Theory, men are not only positioned, but they also position themselves in relationships with other people. Arguing for a multiplicity of masculinities that are performed differently in various contexts is consistent with understandings of masculinity that argue that masculine identities are not only different in different cultures and societies, but that a man is also unique in each context (Horrocks, 1994).

To date only two studies have been conducted using Dialogical Self Theory. Similarly, Lindegger (unpublished) found that men construct certain masculine 'solutions' in order to settle the conflict that arises between opposing masculine I-positions. However, there is need for more research testing the validity of the application of Dialogical Self Theory to masculinity and its construction, with particular attention to how men negotiate the performance of multiple masculinities in the construction and maintenance of a masculine identity.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will, firstly, provide a detailed explanation of the design of the study. Following that, the procedures by which the study was carried out will be explained in terms of the sample and sampling techniques, data collection and data analysis techniques. Finally, this chapter will discuss the various methods used in this research to achieve rigour and quality of the findings.

3.2 Research Design

This research project was aimed at investigating how men negotiate a masculine identity in different contexts. Answering this research question relied heavily on uncovering the participants' subjective views and experiences of masculine practices as well as the subjective ways in which they negotiate their masculine identities. As a result of this focus on obtaining the subjective and contextual views of the participants, a qualitative research design was most suitable for this study as it "help[s] to study human behavior from the perspective of the social actors themselves" (Babbie & Mouton, 2005, p. 270). It was important in this research study, to understand how the participants experienced masculinity in their everyday lives and how they dealt with the possibly conflicting expressions of masculinity that they may come across on a regular basis. Using a qualitative design enabled the researcher to give a much more balanced and fair account of their social and personal lives from the view points of the people who live those lives every day (Neuman, 2000).

Qualitative research helps to understand thought and behavior rather than to merely explain it (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). As important as it is to ultimately explain how the participants negotiate a masculine identity, this explanation will only be made possible with the initial understanding of how the participants construct, understand and experience masculine identities and practices. This is important in qualitative research because the phenomenon

under study needs to be made sense of in terms of the meanings that people bring to such phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

According to Babbie & Mouton (2005), qualitative research makes use of the concrete, everyday language of the participants themselves; this will create an atmosphere which makes it easier for the participants to comfortably and more effectively express their views. The use of everyday language will further enable the research to stay true to the meaning of the participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2005).

3.3 Sampling

The sample in this research study was selected using non-probability purposive sampling. Non-probability sampling is used in qualitative research because the focus is on finding cases that enhance what other researchers learn about the processes of social life in a specific context (Neuman, 2000). In purposive sampling, the participants are selected with a specific purpose in mind (Neuman, 2000), thus participants who are most relevant to the research question are sampled (Silverman, 2000). Therefore, selection of the participants is not left to chance, rather, individuals are selected because they are fitting examples of the experience or phenomenon being studied (Polkinghorne, 2005). It is for this reason that specific participants were selected according to the specific parameters needed to answer the research question. The sample for this study needed to be made up of male participants, who were either married or in long-term, committed relationships. The participants also had to be working. These specific participants were chosen as they operated in the contexts that are the focus of this study: work, home and with friends. Choosing specific participants was therefore done in order to enrich the phenomenon under study (Polkinghorne, 2005). Participants were selected purposively because they contained rich information and therefore added to the quality of the data that was collected. More specifically, the study made use of the maximum variation method of sampling. Maximum variation sampling ensures that there is as much variety in the sample as there is needed for the purposes of the study. Hence, the sampling method allowed for the different contexts of interest to be available in the sample. This form of purposive sampling captures and

describes “the central themes or principal outcomes that cut across a great deal of participant or program variation” (Patton, 1990, p. 172). Making use of maximum variation sampling will allow the results to reflect both the unique details of each participant’s identity as well as any shared patterns that may emerge from the descriptions of identity formation. Posters were placed around the Scottsville area, asking for males who are above the age of eighteen and were either married and working or in a long-term committed relationship. Other participants were obtained through referrals from other participants.

3.4 Sample

According to Patton (1990, p. 165), “Qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of data about a much smaller number of people and cases.” It is for this reason that a small sample of six participants was used. A smaller sample permitted the studying of masculine identity formation among men to be done in great depth and detail. In order to study how men negotiate a masculine identity in different contexts, it was important that some of the contexts that men might operate in on a daily basis be made the focus of this study. The contexts of interest were namely, the home (made up of the wife or girlfriend), at work and with friends. These contexts informed the selection of participants for the study. The sample consisted of men who were working and married or working and in a long-term relationship. This sample allowed for detailed comparisons among the various contexts of interest. Furthermore, because each man operated in two or more contexts, each participant was able to provide information on his various I-positions informed by the contexts of interest. The variation in the different contexts that the different men operated in provided different I-positions and different ways of negotiating a masculine identity, which was of great interest in the study. The participants were all above the age of eighteen. The details of each participant are outlined in the table below:

Pseudonyms	Status	Age	Working?
Nhlanhla	Living with the mother of his child	28 years	Civil Engineer
Senzo	Committed relationship	23 years	Counseling Psychologist Intern
Cyril	Married	50's	Police Officer
Bheki	Married	49 years	Police Officer: Station Commander
Sipho	Living with the mother of his child	28 years	Employee at the Department of Sports and Recreation
Jacob	Committed relationship	27 years	Employee at the Department of Sports and Recreation

Table 1: Participant Demographics

3.5 Data Collection

The data was collected using one-on-one interviews with the participants. A semi-structured interview schedule was used. One-on-one interviews permit for more detailed data where the participants feel more comfortable to share as there is no one else in the room as there would be in a focus group setting (Neuman, 2000). As Polkinghorne (2005) explains, the aim in conducting a research interview is to gain rich information that will add to the focus of the study, from the participant. The interview was guided by a list of prompts prepared before the interview. The use of open-ended questions that are based on the central themes of the study allows the interviewer to compare information across cases. This would not be possible if an unstructured interview was used to collect data. It is also important that as much as there are predetermined questions to guide the interview, the interviewer is still advised to be flexible enough to respond to each participant's responses. Furthermore, the use of open-ended

questions encourages the participant to add to their account of the experience (Knox & Burkard, 2009). Semi-structured interviews yield data that is far more detailed than structured interviews. As opposed to approaching the data collection process with a set of predetermined categories, which may limit the information gathered, semi-structured interviews attempt to understand the phenomenon from the participants without imposing any categories (to a certain extent) (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Further questions were asked, depending on the specific responses from certain participants. Therefore, the list of questions that were asked was not exactly the same for each participant, as the sequence of the questioning varied slightly for each participant. By request from two of the participants, two interviews were conducted in Zulu and then translated into English during transcription. The translation was done by the researcher who conducted the interview and is fluent in both isiZulu and English. Each participant was given a pseudonym to protect their identity.

The interviews were conducted in various venues. Due to the fact that all the participants were working during the day and only available during working hours, the interviews were conducted in each participant's place of work. A quiet room or office was found where the interview could be conducted in privacy.

3.6 Data analysis

The data was analyzed using a combination of deductive and inductive thematic analyses. Deductively, the analysis was theory driven and analyzed from the point of view of the Dialogical Self Theory. A deductive thematic analysis was chosen as it allows for a thick description of a particular aspect of the data as opposed to a description of the entire data set (Braun & Clark, 2006), therefore making it easy to answer the specific questions of the project. At the same time, however, the data was coded without trying to fit into strictly within the researcher's pre-conceived ideas.

Admittedly some authors have criticized thematic analysis, arguing that it is an 'anything goes' approach and that it does not necessarily constitute analysis (Antaki, Billig, Edwards & Potter,

2003). However, Braun and Clark (2006) argue that the flexibility of thematic analysis can provide a rich and detailed account of the data. Thematic analysis does not just identify and report patterns found in the data, most importantly, thematic analysis also interprets the various aspects of the phenomenon under study. Furthermore, thematic analysis offers a more accessible form of analysis.

The data was also analyzed on a semantic, surface level. The relevant themes in the data were identified, and no attempt was made to look beyond what the participants had said. According to Patton (1990), thematic analysis on a semantic level starts with a description of the data, to show how the patterns in the data are organized, and then moves onto interpretation, where the significant themes are theorized. This step was done in relation to previous research findings in the area of masculinity and Dialogical Self Theory.

3.7 Establishing rigour

The fundamental criterion of all qualitative research is trustworthiness, that is, the certainty that the findings are worth taking account of (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, in Ulin, Robinson, Tolley & McNeill, 2002). Four criteria have been established to judge the trustworthiness of qualitative findings: confirmability, dependability, credibility and transferability (Ulin et al. 2002). The procedures undertaken to ensure these four criteria will be explained below.

3.7.1 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the ability to confirm that the researcher has been able to maintain – throughout the research process – a distinction between their own personal values and the values of the participants (Ulin et al. 2002). In order to contribute to the confirmability of the findings, the researcher needs to apply reflexivity to the research. Reflexivity involves the awareness and documentation of the researcher's own contribution to the construction of knowledge and meaning throughout the research process (Breuer, Mruck & Roth, 2002). Furthermore, the effect that the researcher's sex, social class and professional status (among other things) had on the data need to be acknowledged and discussed (Mays & Pope, 2000). Therefore, in order to apply reflexivity to the data, the researcher in this study has documented

their role in the responses and construction of meaning during the data collection phase of the research. For a detailed explanation of the researcher's role in this phase, see chapter 5, section 5.5.

3.7.2 Dependability

Dependability in qualitative research refers to the consistency of the research process and the extent to which careful attention has been paid to the rules and conventions of qualitative methodology throughout the research process (Ulin et al. 2002). According to Ulin et al. (2002), in order for the research to be dependable, the research questions need to be clear and also logically connected to the design and purpose of the research. Special care was taken to ensure that the questions asked by this current research were clear and further lent themselves to the kind of data the research aimed to obtain. Secondly, the methodology that was used in this research was appropriate for the question that the research aimed to investigate.

In order to further ensure that the findings of this research were dependable, all the data extracts that were supplied in the results chapter did not only include the responses from the participants, but included the researcher's questions as well, which gave an indication of how the responses were obtained from the participants.

3.7.3 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which one can be confident about the truth of the findings (Ulin et al. 2002). Ulin et al. (2002) suggest that in order to increase the credibility of the research findings, the research report needs to be taken back to the participants for them to check the accuracy of the findings. However, this research project took the view of Silverman (2005) with regards to respondent validation who argues that respondent validation is a flawed method. The reason for this is that feedback from participants cannot be directly used to validate or refute the researcher's observations because participants do not have a privileged status as commentators on their actions or words. Therefore, for this research project, the findings were not taken back to the participants for validation.

According to Silverman (2005), one of the biggest threats to the credibility of qualitative findings is the problem of anecdotalism – when the findings only depend on a few well-chosen examples that support the argument that the researcher aims to make. Therefore, following the advice of Silverman (2005), anecdotalism was avoided using the following methods: The refutability principle and comprehensive data treatment.

According to the refutability principle, the qualitative researcher needs to, as much as possible, refute their initial assumptions about the data in an effort to achieve objectivity. Therefore, special care was taken in the attempt to refute apparent relations between observations in the data in order to avoid jumping to easy conclusions because the data seems to lead in an interesting direction.

Secondly, Silverman (2005) argues that when conducting qualitative research, all cases of data need to be incorporated in the analysis, even those that may refute initial findings, i.e. deviant cases. That is, generalizations need to apply to every piece of data that has been collected. All the interviews conducted for this research project were analyzed and extracts from each interview were included in the results. Special care was also taken to ensure that cases that had initially seemed to go against the direction of the rest of the evidence were also included and discussed in the results.

Silverman (2005) also advises that if tabulations are to be used, these should have a theoretical rationale behind them. This step was not taken in this research as no tabulations were required.

3.7.4 Transferability

This final criterion of transferability, according to Ulin et al. (2002), refers to the goal of producing data that is conceptually representative of the people in a specific context and can also be conceptually applied to other contexts. Therefore, in order to ensure transferability, and as Ulin et al. (2002) advised, this research project has been clear about the context of the study, the study population and the circumstances under which the data has been collected. This will make it easier for another individual who may wish to apply this research elsewhere as

the details of the research and the methods of generating the information have been well-documented.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

The two main questions that this research question paper aimed to answer or to investigate are: 1) Do men perform masculinity differently in various contexts? And if evidence is found to support that the men in this study perform masculinity differently in various contexts, the next question to ask is: 2) How do men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity?

This chapter will start off by presenting evidence gathered from the interviews with the participants that demonstrates that these men perform masculinity differently when they are among their male friends, at work and at home with their wives, girlfriends or fiancés. The next section of this chapter will present evidence that demonstrates how these men negotiate a masculine identity based on the multiple parallel selves presented in the first section of the chapter.

4.2. **Do men perform masculinity differently in various contexts?**

When asked about the kind of men that they are when they are with their friends, spouses or at work, many of the participants presented a masculine identity that is performed differently, depending on the context. The participants who presented varying masculine identities demonstrated identities that either varied by space (where they are) or by the audience (who they are with). Not all of the participants, however, presented a varying masculine identity. Some of the participants in this study attempted to present themselves as stable and unified. These cases will be discussed further in this chapter.

Among the participants who presented a masculine identity that is performed differently in various contexts was Cyril, a black male, in his early 50's, with three wives and thirteen children. In the interview, Cyril constructed himself as a traditional, Zulu man who through his masculinity fulfills his cultural ideals of what it means to be a man. Cyril presented a different

masculine identity when he was at work from when he is at home. When talking about the kind of man he is with his friends, a different masculinity was presented to the interviewer. The extract below demonstrates Cyril's multiple masculine I-positions:

I: Do you think that you are- there are different sides to your manhood depending on where you are, for example at work, are you a different man at work, are you a different man at home, are you a different man with your friends

P: Yes

I: [Ok

P: If] you are a man you always differ

I: [Ok what do you mean by that

P: Here at work] here at work you are controlled by rules, policies and all that sh- and all that stuff↓ in- at home it's me who applies, who practice, who give the policies and the way to go about in the- at home. Err when- if you are with the friends it's also another different story because in most cases if you are with your friends you normally err change the situation, the situation as it is during that particular time because even the friends are not the same (.1) if you are with the Christian friends you ca- you can't behave as if you are (.2) maybe (.4) you know (pause)

...

P: You know if you are with friends (unclear) actually if you with friends it err it normally goes according to the situation or environment you are [in

...

P: the home as a home you know, sometimes there's something tha-that you can- at times you can allow when you are with your friends you know like for instance in my- at home there at Dadla's no one is allowed to drink alcohol but if I'm with my friends I'm used to buy- I'm used to pay the alcohol for my friends you know

In the extract above, Cyril presents three different masculine I-positions. At work, Cyril positions himself as having to follow the rules and policies set by someone else, thus having to be in control of others. By using the word "controlled" which has the negative connotation of being forced to do something, as opposed to using "follow", for example, Cyril presents himself as a man who does not appreciate or even like the fact that he has to live under someone else's control. This resentment of having to live by someone else's rules is further revealed in "shi..."

When talking about his masculinity at home, Cyril presents a masculinity where he is control and practices his authority: he is the head of the household. This is in direct contrast to the man that he is at work. What is interesting is that when presenting the different sides of his masculinity, he immediately associates masculinity with control and authority. So clearly, for this participant, what distinguishes I-as-father/husband from I-as-employee is the authority that he has at home as the one who makes all the rules, compared with being controlled by someone else at work.

When the context of his friends comes into the discussion, Cyril says: *“it’s also another different story”*. This reveals that he lives out a different masculine narrative when he is with his friends, compared to being at home or at work. Furthermore, Cyril’s masculinity also differs according to the kinds of friends that he is around at a given time. From his statement: *“because even the friends are not the same (.1) if you are with the Christian friends you ca- you can’t behave as if you are (.2) maybe (.4) you know (pause),”* it can be safely assumed that being in the presence of his Christian friends requires him to behave in a certain way, possibly displaying his Christian values. It seems that for Cyril, his masculinity varies by the situation or the environment that he may find himself in. This is especially revealed in the following lines of the extract: *“You know if you are with friends (unclear) actually if you with friends it err it normally goes according to the situation or environment you are [in.”*

Similarly, Bheki, a 49 year old married police-station commander, demonstrates a contrast between I-as-father/husband and I-as-colleague:

I: Ok. Uhm now, so you- you are married, right, so would you say you are a different man here at work as opposed to at home with your wife

P: Yes I am

I: How are you different

P: err (.3) my wife needs her time, so when I’m at home I must be a father, I must be a family man. Err ama-interests- the interests of the family are different from what my employer needs (.) and err i-communication (the communication) also is different err 18here [communication

I: mmh]

P: is restricted to colleague relationship, but at home I must talk to my wife like my wife, °my kids°

In the above extract, Bheki presents himself as a different man at home as he is at work. His performance of masculinity is determined by the interests of the audience and how he should communicate with them. His family demands a different version of his masculinity than the version that is required at work. For this participant, I-as-husband means speaking to his wife differently as he would his colleagues, whom he may need to discipline and give orders to since he is the station commander at the police station where he works.

As much as both Cyril and Bheki present a masculine identity that is performed differently, their performances of masculinity are informed by different things. Cyril presents a masculine identity that emphasizes control and authority and that varies according to the situation. Bheki, on the other hand, presents a varying masculine identity that depends on or is informed by what the audience, i.e. his family or co-workers, demand of him.

Like Cyril and Bheki above, Jacob (27 years, committed relationship), presents a masculinity that differs depending on whether he is with his friends, at work or with his girlfriend:

I: Now do you think that there are different sides to your manhood depending on where you are, let's just say maybe when you are with your friends you are a different man perhaps, when you are here at work you are a different man and when you are with your girlfriend you are a different (.) man

P: (.2) ja

I: Ok, how are you when you are with your friends

...

P: obviously] if I'm with my friends we talk about any[thing

I: Ok]

P: There-there's no limits to what we can talk about, especially me, when I'm with my friends, our conversations are mostly characterized by deba[tes

I: Oh ok]

P: ja but at the end of the day our goal is to reach common ground, but err (.2) j:a the way things are when I'm with my [friends

I: mmh]

P: we talk about anything, and when I'm here at work- I would never do what I do with my friends here at [work

I: ja]

P: I have to be more professional here at [work

I: mmmh]

P: and then, with the person I'm in a relationship with, it's different, on another [level

...

P: (.4) it's different because I'm not free, I can't maybe answer my phone freely-

I: When you're with the person you're in a relationship with ↑

P: my girlfriend will ask me who just called me but my friends don't ask me [that

I: Ok]

P: so you find that, ja- at one stage I've even told a girl that I enjoy the company of my friends more than I do the company of my girlfriend- she bores me

When talking about his friends, Jacob stresses that he is able to talk about “anything” when he is with them. By doing so, Jacob gives the impression that he is free and comfortable when he is with his friends. This free and comfortable masculinity that Jacob performs when he is with his friends does not seem to be the same masculinity performed when he is at work or when he is with his girlfriend. According to Jacob, what makes him a different man at work than he is with his friends is that there are things that he cannot talk about when he is at work, as he is expected to be “more professional” there. However, the major difference in his performance of masculinity comes when Jacob is with his girlfriend. It is interesting that as much as Jacob says that he has to be more professional at work, he never says that he is not “free”. He only says this when he is talking about his girlfriend. Jacob says that he is not free when he is with his girlfriend due to the fact that he has to explain himself when his phone rings, for instance, whereas his friends never ask that of him. It seems as though Jacob feels that when he is with his girlfriend he is forced to be something that he is not – a man that he does not enjoy being,

as reflected in the following lines: “P: so you find that, ja- at one stage I’ve even told a girl that I enjoy the company of my friends more than I do the company of my girlfriend- she bores me”

The issue of having to pretend that he is a certain type of man when he is with his girlfriend is also apparent in the following extract:

I: Now whic-which- let’s say I follow you for one day, I see you here at work, I see you with the person you’re in a relationship with, I see you with your friends (.1) would I see- would (His name) be a little different throughout or- which “man” or side of your manhood do you identify with more, the man you are with your friends, or the man you are with your girlfriend or the man you are here at work

P: When I’m with my friends coz >most of the time< the rest is fake. You’ll find that with my your girlfriend- normally most of the time people end up living according to other people’s standards you see

I: Oh ok

P: When I’m with my friends- for example, when you get to my place you will find that I’m untidy, but then just because she’s coming over I’ll try to appear clean- when my friends come over I don’t care, they come over and I tell them that “Hey guys, you can also see for yourself” so that’s what is different

From the above extract, it is clear that Jacob performs another version of masculinity when he is with his girlfriend, one that he considers to be “fake”, where he tries hard to appear to be something that he is not, i.e. tidy. It is also clear that he is not worried about showing his untidy side to his friends because he is comfortable enough with them to show them his true nature. That is why he feels that he is ‘real’ when he is with them, and “fake” with everybody else.

Unlike the first two participants, Nhlanhla (black, 28, living with the mother of his child), does not immediately present himself as having a varying masculine identity. In fact, according to Nhlanhla, the man that he is when he is with his friends is very similar to the man that he is when he is alone with his girlfriend. In this way, Nhlanhla, attempts to present a stable self. However, with closer inspection of his words, it is clear that Nhlanhla does perform a different version of his masculinity when he is with his friends to when he is with his girlfriend.

Nhlanhla (black, 28, living with the mother of his child):

I: =ok so tell me there what man are you with your male friends↓

P: I mean we-we go down personal with the guys so we talk about anything and everything personal stuff we joke a lot and we discuss a lot o:fguy? thingsyou know girl talk what makes them tick

I: Ok so are there things you would-you wouldn't do in front of your friends

P: (.2) j:::a <it depends> it depends I think there are things I wouldn't do in front of my friends↓humiliating stuff as you know they get to tease you a bit and stuff like [that

I: Ok so you got the friends part and then with your girlfriend are you a different man there

...

P: err I'm-I'm very similar to what I am with my friends coz err that's where I'm relaxed and also get down and personal I'm off-guard you know I don't feel that I need to be the man but I just ac-act the part of being the man basically I-I'm what I'm trying to say I'm very? Relaxed around [her

I: ok]

P: I loosen up you know

It is evident from the first part of the above extract that Nhlanhla demonstrates an interesting contrast of being guarded, but personal when he is with his friends. In the presence of his friends, Nhlanhla presents a close, personal relationship where they talk about everything, but at the same time, there are things that he would not do in front of his friends because his friends would tease him. Furthermore, when his friends are around, Nhlanhla seems to perform a masculinity that is arguably a typical, heterosexual masculinity that is characterized by talking about women, discussing what women like.

What is most interesting in this extract is what Nhlanhla continues to say further down the extract. Nhlanhla attempts to present a stable, unchanging masculine identity that remains the same, regardless of the type of audience around him. However, further down the extract, it is evident that his masculinity does change, especially when he is with his girlfriend, away from his friends. Nhlanhla also creates the impression that among his friends, he needs to adopt a specific kind of masculinity, whatever is considered the hegemonic standard among the group.

According to what he says, Nhlanhla feels that he “needs to be the man.” Nhlanhla performs this expected masculinity possibly to avoid being teased by his male friends, implying a possible vulnerability when he is among the group.

A different man is presented when he is with his girlfriend, alone. Nhlanhla presents himself as being “off-guard” with his girlfriend and being “relaxed when he is around her. By saying this, Nhlanhla implies that he is not relaxed when he is around his friends. Nhlanhla goes on to add that “I just act the part of being a man”, giving the impression that he takes on the role of a certain kind of man when he is with his girlfriend without feeling ‘pressured’ to do so. It can be argued, at this point, that Nhlanhla does perform different versions of his masculinity, depending on whether he is with his friends or alone with his girlfriend, even though he attempts to preserve an image of stability and consistency.

As much as the findings demonstrate that the participants discussed above do have multiple masculine I-positions, there is also evidence that I, as the interviewer, have co-constructed these participants as being different in varying situations through the type of questions that were asked. Questions such as *“Do you think that you – there are different sides to your manhood depending on where you are ...”* and *“...would you say that you are a different man here at work as opposed to at home with your wife”* already set up a situation where the participants are ‘allowed’ to be different.

The next two participants, when asked about their performances of masculinity in different contexts, attempted to present themselves as having a stable masculinity that is performed in the same way in all situations, times and spaces, even more so than Nhlanhla (above). However, as much as these participants attempted to present a stable, unchanging masculine identity, there was evidence from their interviews of multiple I-positions that are situated in time and space.

Senzo, a 23 year old Christian man, is one such participant:

I: Ok. S::o just thinking about the different contexts that you might find yourself in, there's work, there's home- are you in a relation[ship

P: yes]

I: and then with the relationship. With those three different contexts, home, with you- with the person you're in a relationship with and work do you find that you are the same man in all three

P: (.6) I think I'm the same man in all three

I: °ok°

P: How I express it may be slightly tweaked according to the situation

I: mmh

P: but I feel like I'm the same man in all three. Even calling myself a ma:n that's still something I'm growing into=

With this participant, he firstly presents a masculine identity that is performed the same way at work, with his friends and with his girlfriend. However, by going on to say that this 'man' that he is expressed in slightly different ways according to the situation, he is implying that his masculinity varies according to the situation. In his presentation of his masculinity, Senzo contrasts mostly with Cyril and Bheki. Unlike those two participants, Senzo's presentation of his masculine identity is more stable, only differing slightly. Cyril and Bheki, on the other hand, make no attempt to present a consistent identity, rather presenting an identity that differs greatly in various contexts. Senzo goes onto reiterate that he is the same man in all three contexts. It can be argued that what the participant is trying to do here is to present one, unified self that is not performed differently in various contexts because this is the impression that he wants to give as he comes across as a stable person.

Sipho (28 years, working, in a long-term relationship with the mother of his child) in the extract below, also attempts to present a stable, consistent self:

I: Ok, do you think that there are different sides to your manhood, depending on where you are, for example, when you are with your friends are you different as opposed to when you are with your girlfriend then here at work

P: (.3) no

I: Do you think you're the same

P: Me, I'm the same person, like-like here at work, I wouldn't say that when you get here I will treat you like an [outsider

I: mmmh]

In response to whether he thinks he is the same man in all three situations, Siphso refers to himself as a person as opposed to saying that he is the same *man*. It seems as though Siphso does not separate his identity as a man from his other identities. For example, as a man, he is not any different from what he is as an employee or a friend.

Siphso does, however, go on to indicate that he does perform his masculinity differently depending on the audience around him:

*I: Ok (.1) now would you say that you're a cultural man, black man, Christian man, (hhh)
↑modern man, traditional man. If you were to give yourself a label, what would it be*

P: ↑eyi, I don't know, >it's just that I> when I'm with a certain group of people, I be with them for that time

Once again, it can be argued that the participant initially denies that he performs his masculinity differently in an attempt to create an impression of a self that is unified and stable. Possibly, though, the only reason why Siphso changed his initial argument in the above extract is because the question was now worded differently.

4.3. How do men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity?

As demonstrated in the first section of this chapter, some of the participants readily presented multiple masculine I-positions that are performed differently in various contexts. The other participants, however, attempted to present a stable, continuous masculine identity by claiming that they were the same men in all contexts. Evidence to the contrary was however found, suggesting that these participants also perform their masculinity differently in various contexts. This evidence includes presentations of different types of masculinity when the participants were talking about situations where different audiences were involved. All the participants in

this study negotiated a masculine identity based on these multiple voices in various ways. For some of the participants, negotiating a masculine identity involved the dominance of one powerful I-position and the subjugation or silencing of other positions in all contexts. Other participants ran parallel, opposing masculine I-positions in different situations. In situations where two different audiences were combined in the same space, at the same time, the opposing I-positions would have to be performed simultaneously. This situation caused conflict between the two I-positions as the positions were quite irreconcilable and could not be performed in the same space. This meant that these participants had to find a way to deal with the conflict. All these 'solutions' will be discussed below.

4.3.1 The Monological dominance solution

With the monological dominance solution, the participants all had one powerful position that dominated the system in all contexts. This dominating I-position was either based on strong religious values, strong cultural values or even strong personal belief systems. This monological dominance meant that even in the presence of multiple I-positions, one powerful I-position will dominate, therefore reducing or completely eliminating the conflict between I-positions. Each of those participants who organized their systems around the monological dominance of one position had their own, specific, dominating I-positions. These dominating I-positions are explained below.

4.3.1.1 The Christian man

Senzo (23 years, Christian, long-term girlfriend) illustrates this solution well. His strong Christian beliefs privileged the Christian voice which then dominated in different spaces. Senzo was well aware of his other I-positions, but allowed the Christian position to be in control of the system. Evidence of this can be found in the extract below:

P: So the reason why I feel that I can be healthy in being masculine is because it is not about me, God gives me direction about what it means to be a man and that it isn't extreme uhm on one-if I had to put it on a [dichotomy

I: mmh]

P: just to make it simple, on one end there's definitely the whole protective, [achieving=

I: mmh]

P: =it's a very wild kind of dangerous thing uhm a man that's adventurous doing sorts of things, but on the one end as well there's a great nurturance and a great humility to it, a person that's teachable, a person that's very loving at the same time

...

I: mmh]

P: like in my experience uhm ↑I call myself a Christian man now but I find myself in a cr- in a conversation or in a kind of situation where people may be expecting me to behave in a black man type of way

I: °ok°

P: uhm (.1) it's a-it's a-it's a case of me having to remember what it is that I really [am

I: ok]

P: I'm black, yes, but which one is more important, which one matters the most, do I rea:lly define myself as a black man or is a case that I'm a Christian man and my blackness has to adhere and submit to my Christianity

I: °Ok° does it always happen like that or does sometimes the Christianity submit to the black man in you

P: (.2) so far it hasn't happened

It is evident from the above extract that Senzo places great importance on the Christian position, therefore making this particular position powerful enough to dominate the entire system in all contexts. However, even with the dominating strength of the Christian masculine I-position, the performance of this position can vary slightly. For Senzo, in the extract below, it is evident that there can be variations in how the Christian man is performed, taking into consideration the space that he finds himself in and the audience that is around him.

I: Ok so do feel you have a handle on the Christian side dominating all the other sides in all situations

P: (.3) my experience has been quite consistent uhm so far. But like for example, if I go home right uhm and- my friends don't believe the same thing that I believe and so (.2)

like >we'll hang<uhm and we'll talk and relax. Now I'm not like I'm not- I like-I like Heinekens

....

P: if we just sitting having some beers and just talking guy stuff and especially in the conversations that I have with them ↑ because they are not saved, they talk about different things, they think in different [ways

I: ja, mmh]

P: things that are important to them are different and so tha-that's another side of my-my masculinity (unclear)

I: Do you also talk like they talk in that situation

P: (.6) we may be talking about the same topics uhm (.) but I try not to talk the way they talk (.1) about things coz I mean ho-how they talk expresses what they believe so I still try talk how it is that I believe

I: Ok

P: In those conversations without making people feel isolated or [weireded out

The extract above demonstrates how, even though Senzo performs his Christian I-position around his friends, it is not performed with an intensity that would isolate his non-Christian friends. He expresses his beliefs without making his non-Christian friends “weireded out”, or at least Senzo attempts to do so, as evidenced by the continued use of the word “try”.

By allowing the Christian masculine position to dominate, even with the variation in its performance, Senzo gives himself the security of a stable, unified self that he was demonstrated to present in the previous section of this chapter.

Another factor that made the Christian position powerful enough to dominate in all contexts was that each audience was in its own separate space. This therefore, reduces all conflict between I-positions associated with certain people or spaces. For Senzo, as much as the Christian man dominated in all contexts, there were slight variations in its performance, as discussed above. As a result of these variations, when his friends and his girlfriend are present in the same spaces, this causes some conflict between I-as-a Christian friend and I-as-a Christian boyfriend:

I: And just-have you-have you ever found yourself in a situation where >two parts of your masculinity if I could say were called on at the same time< maybe yo:u were with your girlfriend and friends or home and friends or any two parts of your masculinity were called on at the same time

P: (.1) ja

I: How did you deal with that

P: (.5) you try not-it's about accepting yourself

I: Ok fist tell me about the situation in which-

P: Ok uhm like my girlfriend doesn't drink right, never has, doesn't-not interested and she knows that I like heinies

I: Ok

P: She-she said that she would have had a problem with me enjoying a drink but she doesn't really she's like sh-she loves me and uhm and she's ok with me [drinking

I: mmm]

P: uhm but I don't drink to get wasted or anything like that I just to chill once in a while usually when I go home so during Christmas, there's a Christmas lunch that [we have

I: mmh]

P: So I'll bring her over to meet my friends we have a Christmas lunch my friend's mom's, we have a get-together, it's an annual thing, she's there[↑] so I'm eating and there's [heinies as well

*I:
laughter]*

P: So I'm very comfortable and she's fine with it but it's both

I: Ja

P: I'm still her guy=

I: ja

P: = but I'm busy there having a drink with my friends and she's there as well. So it's- you have these two things living together

It seems that for Senzo, it can be argued that because of the variations in how he performs his masculinity with his girlfriend and how he performs his masculinity with his friends, conflict arises when the two audiences are combined in the same space, at the same time. The

difference in the performance of these I-positions, namely, I-as-Christian friend and I-as-Christian boyfriend, centers around Senzo's drinking of alcohol. Therefore, in order to deal with the conflict between these two I-positions, a third position is formed: I-as-slight drinker. This new position allows Senzo to still consume alcohol as he does with his friends, while at the same time not offending his girlfriend by consuming too much alcohol and getting drunk. It must be made clear at this point that Senzo still remains Christian, the Christian man still dominates. The only difference is that in this case, a new position has been formed to respond to a specific situation. The formation of this third position may also possibly explain why Senzo presented himself as being the same in all contexts, with slight variations. This is because this third position of I-as-slight drinker gives Senzo the illusion of being the same as he gets to behave the same way as he does with his friends while not being completely alien to his girlfriend. Added to that, the third position of I-as-slight drinker may give Senzo the illusion that he is still a devout non-drinking Christian. However, the quote does reveal that, despite his claim of consistency and non-variation, Senzo does perform his masculinity differently in various contexts.

4.3.1.2 The empowered non-hegemonic identity

The empowered non-hegemonic solution involves the adoption and performance of non-traditional, non-hegemonic masculine characteristics both publically and in private. Masculine characteristics that are considered stereotypically or hegemonically masculine by the individual are rejected. This non-hegemonic identity is empowered because the individual proudly takes up these non-hegemonic characteristics and in no way feels marginalized or non-masculine. Therefore, this non-hegemonic masculine identity dominates in all contexts, whether at home, at work or among friends.

Sipho (28 years, lives with his girlfriend) organizes his system around the monological dominance of a non-hegemonic masculine identity. For Sipho, what makes this position powerful enough to dominate the entire system is that this position is based on his strong personal beliefs. It can be argued that Sipho's rejection of traditional masculine characteristics

is a result of being raised by his mother and grandmother in the absence of his father. Possibly, the absence of a male individual to model traditional or hegemonic masculine behaviors has lead Sipho to attach himself to the non-hegemonic masculine characteristics, modeled by his mother and grandmother. Sipho actively rejected stereotypically hegemonic masculine characteristics such as the use of violence to solve conflicts,

by the wrong things, I mean people who are violent and all those things. What I can say is that even though violence may happen but I'm usually calm about things, I give myself time to think things through first. Ja, i-i do get (.1)angry yes, but I usually speak to the person first and tell them that I don't like what they have done, ja

Having multiple sexual partners,

I: Ok uh:m, so would you say that if I can follow you for one day, see you, at home, then chilling with your friends, then at work then with your girlfriend, would I see the exactsame person exactly in all situations, you wouldn't differ, in any way

P: Ja, it's just that what sometimes happens, you know, there's uhm there's you know, what can I say, let me make you an example (.3) I came here and they were showing all these girls to me and I kept on saying "No, I'm cool, I have my girlfriend" and they still do that now and I just look at them, so that's why I say when I leave here I'll be the same person

And the man being the head of the household:

I: Now, but the kind of man you are now, are you following tradition or religion or you're mixing the two or are you a modern man who believes in women and 50/50 and all those things or traditional in the sense that you will be the head of the household

P: NO, I believe that, I-I can say that the 50/50 you are talking about, I don't know how to put it, I usually tell a woman that they stand on their own two feet and not rely on another [person

I: Ok]

P: coz you never know what tomorrow has in store. ↑I can walk out of here knowing that I'm the head of the household and the next thing I get knocked by a car or get shot and die, what do you do [then

I: mmh]

P: after that

The difference between Siphos and Senzo is that for Siphos, the various masculine positions in his system are apparently never in conflict with one another. This was the case even though two different audiences were present in the same space:

I: Now uhm ↑ many men say that maybe when they are with their wives or their girlfriends they use words like- calling each other baby, honey and things like that but when there are friends around they don't use those words in front of the friends. Would you also do that, or would you still use those words even though your friends are around

P: I can use those words coz that's my girlfriend and they know her, she's- she's my love and they know that so why would I be scared in front of them coz they know her

It is evident from the above extract that unlike Nhlanhla (see 4.1) who does not use pet names with his girlfriend around his male friends out of fear of being teased by them, Siphos finds no problem in rejecting this arguably stereotypically male characteristic even in the presence of his male friends. Therefore, once again, allowing for the monological dominance of his non-hegemonic masculine identity. It could also be argued that the presence of influential women in Siphos's life in the absence of his father empowered Siphos to reject hegemonic stereotypes of masculinity.

4.3.1.3 The hegemonic masculine identity

Unlike the empowered non-hegemonic masculine identity, the participants who presented the hegemonic masculine identity based their masculine identity on hegemonic masculine characteristics that were performed and defended both in the presence of other people and in private. Therefore, even in the presence of multiple masculine I-positions, dominance was given to a single, powerful hegemonic masculine identity to dominate in all contexts.

Cyril (50's, 3 wives, police officer) presented a traditional, Zulu masculinity which was strongly influenced by the teachings of his parents and ancestors. This traditional, Zulu masculine identity involved certain hegemonic masculine behaviors such as making the rules at home and being the head of the household:

P: If ↑ you are home you need to be strict, you're supposed to put la:ws because ↑ you

know at home it's a matter of mana[ging

I: alright]

P: the home as a home you know...

For Cyril, what makes this hegemonic position powerful enough to dominate the entire system is that it is embedded in strong and unquestioned cultural values that have been passed on to him by his elders:

P: -You know with me it can't be like that because even if (unclear) you can go there, you'll find most of my neighbour- my neighbour come and ask some things, "How are you managing to do this" the answer is simple (.2) I stand by what I taught, by my elders, so I'll never ever change. ↑ even my-my-my kids, I've got thirteen kids, four of them are in the university, but they know that you can't do this and this and this and this. Like for instance, all the female kids here, my daughters in the house at home are not allowed to wear trousers, but even if you go anywhere, e-even here in town, I-I used to buy them the trousers, but within the gates, <they know that they can't>. While they reach that stage, thirteen, fourteen years, trousers are out within the- within the yard

For Jacob (27 years, in a committed relationship), it was not so much the Zulu culture that influenced his hegemonic masculine identity, thus making it powerful. Instead, what makes his hegemonic masculine identity so powerful is that it is highly influenced by the culture of the environment he grew up in:

I: Ok, now, is-is being- as you said you don't do all these romantic things, is that because you're an African man, is that why you don't do them

P: It's because of my upbringing, I grew up in the township, you see

I: Ok

P: So in the township a lot of the these romantic things of buying flowers, a::nd having a bubble bath with your girlfriend, we don't do that you see

I: ok

P: So, as I said, I don't- ↑ fine I'm educated, I went to varsity but where I come from is still in me coz even when I leave here today, I'm going to the [township

I: ja]

P: So that's the life I'm used to

It is also evident from the above extract that because of his dominating masculine I-position, which is influenced by his township upbringing, Jacob rejects all masculine characteristics that can possibly be viewed as soft, i.e. being a romantic man. In the extract, Jacob says “we don’t do that” possibly referring to township men who do not practice such acts as taking bubble baths with their girlfriends. By saying this, Jacob is normalizing his hegemonic behavior, demonstrating that his behavior is acceptable within that particular township culture.

With regards to Cyril, as much as he had presented multiple I-positions, depending on whether he was at home, at work or with friends (see 4.1), there is still no conflict between these positions, especially in the context of his friends and the context of work. In both these contexts, being a traditional, Zulu man still dominated, allowing Cyril to perform certain hegemonic masculine characteristics in both these situations. Even in the situation where his friends and his family were in the same space, the traditional Zulu man could still dominate, thereby eliminating any possible conflict.

I: Now, what happens then if for example you are with your friends and your wife, then what do you do then because at home you say no alcohol but with friends you buy them alcohol, so what do you do in that situation when both those groups are together

P: You know that’s why I said if you can remember- if you can recall I said I’m a traditionalist, you know with me- with me in my house, I’ve got about ten different [houses

I: ok]

P: so if my friends are visiting me at my house, at home we sit separately and my wife and kids sit in another house then my wife[↑] serv-serves us with that alcohol as well taking from the fridge or wherever but no one is allowed to practice alcohol in the yard

In the above extract, Cyril positions himself as head of the household which is in line with his traditional, Zulu masculine identity. This position allows Cyril, firstly, to separate the two audiences by placing them in different houses. As a traditional Zulu man, Cyril is allowed to have many wives, thus the many houses in the same yard. Furthermore, according to traditional Zulu culture, women never sit among males during gatherings. Cyril’s traditional Zulu I-position also allows him to make the rules. This means that Cyril can allow his friends, and himself (“serves us”), to drink alcohol in the yard and even order his wife to serve them alcohol

even though one of the rules that he enforces is that no one is allowed to drink alcohol in the yard. Therefore, the dominance of the traditional Zulu masculine identity allows Cyril to prevent any conflict situations that could arise when two different audiences are combined in the same space, by simply making new rules and placing the two audiences in different houses.

4.4.2. The Ambivalent masculine solution

The ambivalent masculine solution involves performing two parallel masculine identities in two different spaces and in parallel with one another. One version of masculinity can be performed in public (especially around other men), while the other version of masculinity is performed privately. Therefore, the individual will alternate two masculine I-positions in different spaces, with neither being more dominant. This solution is different from the solutions explained in section 4.2.1 where the solutions involve the performance of the same masculine position in private and in public.

Nhlanhla, a 23 year old male in a long-term relationship with the mother of his child, performs a hegemonic version of masculinity among his male friends and a non-hegemonic version of masculinity when he is alone with his girlfriend:

I: Ok (.) uhm? (.1) was there ever a situation where you found yourself in conflict as to which side you should show <maybe> possibly you're with your girlfriend and your friends or your friends are at work where all these situations gave you a bit of [a-

P: err jauhm I gue-I think that comes in wh-when you have to combine the [two=

I: mm]

P: = parties like your girlfriend and the friends you know normally when you're with your girlfriend y-you're very soft very you know there's a certain manner of speaking that you use with her you know like pet names an:d mostly guys will tease you about that so when you're sitting in the same environment with your friends and your girlfriend and then you tend to slip up and maybe call her a certain pet name or maybe she calls you a pet name and then the guys pick it up and then it's an issue

I: Ok s-so there which man will you then be the one you are with your girlfriend? or the one you are with your friends

P: uh:m basically there's not very much of a big difference as I [said

I: ok]

P: mentioned earlier on with the man I am with my friends and with my girlfriend it's just that maybe topics uhm may [vary

I: no pet names-

P: ja we try [to

I: laughter]

P: keep that away

It is evident from the above extract the Nhlanhla attempts to keep his softer, romantic side in private, away from his male friends, therefore alternating between two opposing positions in different spaces. Unlike Cyril and Jacob, for example, Nhlanhla organizes his repertoire around a dialogical dominance, with two different I-positions dominating in two separate contexts.

From the above extract we also see that in the situation whereby Nhlanhla is simultaneously confronted by two opposing I-positions (being in the same space with his girlfriend and friends), tension between the two I-positions arises. In order to deal with this conflict, Nhlanhla privileges one I-position over another. Nhlanhla chooses not to use any pet names around his friends, thereby privileging the 'macho' masculine position over the softer, romantic position.

By saying that pet names may "*slip up*" (line 93) in front of his friends, Nhlanhla once again shows us that he is always on-guard around his friends to present the masculinity that is expected, always careful not to display the wrong version of masculinity.

Nhlanhla goes on to once again attempt to present a masculine identity that is unchanging and stable. However, it is clear from the entire extract that his masculinity is not unchanging and stable, it is performed differently in various contexts.

For Bheki (49, married), his ambivalent masculine identity revolves around versions of masculinity that are endorsed by his African culture versus those that may be against it as opposed to alternating between versions of masculinity endorsed by his friends and those that

are against what the friends may want, like Nhlanhla. As much as having his wife come to his workplace did not necessarily create a problem for Bheki:

P: He-e (no) except to say I feel proud when she comes here err I become happy, my colleagues know wife, why in particular because mmh (.) ever since I started to grow [up

I: mmh]

P: in my work post we had never been fortunate to stay toge[ther

I: oh]

P: so now when she visits me I'm happy, in fact it's what I become happy about more than anything

I: Ok

P: because my colleagues most of the time they end up knowing me, I also like them to know my wife (unclear)

However, as an African man, kissing his wife was strictly performed in private spaces with just him and his wife:

I: Ok, uhm (.1) if, for example, you are with your wife and with maybe someone you socialize with, a friend, what kind of a man are you there (.hhh) do you treat your wife any differently from- when-when there are other people around maybe friends, people 35 you socialize with as opposed to when you are at home

P: Do I treat my wife different in their pre[sence?

I: ja, in their presence] (.1) do you not do certain things or not say certain things

P: Ok. Ja, I would say it's different

I: How is it different

P: For example I think this has got something to do with myup[bringing

I: mmmh]

P: or maybe the upbringing of Africans

I: Ok

P: (clears throat) When I'm with my wife I'm with a person that we are err in an affair

I: mmh

P: err so the way I am (.2) there are things that I will do to her whe-when it's two when it's me and [her

I: mmh]

P: which I can't do when other people are around especially (.2) If I want to kiss, I don't kiss, for example, I'm making an example, I want to do that when I'm at home, not even in the presence of ki-of the kids

It is clear from the above extract that similar to Nhlanhla, Bheki is running two quite irreconcilable versions of masculinity, alternating between public versions and private versions of his masculinity. Similar to Nhlanhla, in the situation where his wife and his colleagues were in the same space, Bheki chooses not to kiss his wife in their presence, as kissing her in public would be going against his cultural beliefs as an African man. In doing so, Bheki privileges one version of masculinity over another.

4.5. Conclusion

The first part of this chapter discussed whether or not the participants in this study performed their masculinity differently in various contexts. Extracts from the interviews with the participants demonstrated that some of the participants performed different versions of masculinity when they were with their friends, to when they were at work and to when they were with their wives or girlfriends. Evidence was also given which demonstrated that not all of the participants admitted having multiple masculine positions even though they had provided evidence to the contrary. This then set the stage for the next part of the chapter. Once it was established that the participants performed their masculinity differently depending on where they were and who they were with, the results for the second question were presented: How do men negotiate a masculine identity in various contexts? The findings suggested that men negotiate a masculine identity based on either the dominance of a single, powerful masculine I-position or by alternating between two opposing masculine I-positions in different contexts.

Furthermore, for some of the participants, their multiple masculine I-positions were found to not be in conflict with one another, therefore there was no need to find a solution to the conflict. However, for other participants, positions were found to be in conflict with one another, especially in situations where different audiences were found in the same space. Those participants whose positions were found to be in conflict, developed various ways to reduce the conflict between I-positions.

Chapter 5

Discussion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of this study in relation to the aims of the study as well as previous findings in this field. The findings will be discussed in a way that attempts to explain and understand the phenomenon under study. The discussion will be done in two sections, parallel to the results chapter. The first part of the chapter will answer the first question asked by this research paper: Do men perform masculinity differently in various contexts? This will be followed by a discussion of the findings to the second question: How do men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of their masculinity?

5.2. Do men perform masculinity differently in various contexts?

The findings of this research project suggest that men do perform masculinity differently in various spaces and contexts. Some of the participants in the study presented a masculine identity that was performed differently if they were with their friends, spouses or girlfriends, if they are at work or other social spaces. Cyril, for example, presented, specifically, two different performances of his masculinity. At work, he presented himself as a man who is controlled by the rules and policies set by his superiors. At home, on the other hand, Cyril presented himself as the head of the household – making the rules and managing the home. Similarly, Bheki presented different versions of masculinity when he compared the man he is at work and the man he is at home. According to Bheki, he was a different man home because the ‘interests’ of the family are different to those of his colleagues. By comparison, three of the participants in this study, Nhlanhla, Siphon and Senzo, all claimed to have a stable and consistent masculine identity, which did not vary by context or audience. They claimed this by stating that they were the same men in all contexts and that their masculinity did not change, regardless of who they were with. However, closer inspection of their responses to certain questions showed that

these participants also, in some way, performed their masculinities differently in various contexts.

5.2.2 A Dialogical Self Theory perspective

In order to understand the multiplicity of I-positions, it is important to first understand how the self is constructed. According to the Dialogical Self Theory, the self is a multiplicity of positions constructed through dialogue. Dialogical Self Therapy attempts to bridge the assumption about a stable and continuous sense of “I” with a multiplicity of enactments of this “I” in multiple positions taken up in particular spaces at particular times, hence the concept of “I-position”.

The dialogical self is based on the assumption that there is always a relationship between the self and the other. Differentiation between the self and the other is present from birth onwards. When a child is born and meets with the mother face-to-face, as much as they are seeing each other for the first time, both mother and child communicate and converse in some way. The mother interacts with the child by touching her baby and gazing into its eyes. The baby will then follow the mother’s gaze. After some time, the mother will start talking to the baby, while the infant moves to the rhythm of the mother’s speech (Hermans, 1993). From this point, the mother-child interaction moves to a form of conversational turn-taking. When the mother speaks to her baby, she will usually pause at some points in her speech and listen for an imaginal response from the baby before she continues. Later on, the infant will begin to fill those pauses with some babbling. The more the mother responds to this babbling, the more the baby babbles. Hermans (1993) calls this type of mother-child interaction a pseudo dialogue as the child is still too young to respond to real dialogue, but the turn-taking from both mother and child make them appear as real communicative interactants. When the child reaches the age of two, they begin to converse with an imaginal interlocutor. In this case, the child uses language to rehearse prior conversations or even to direct their own actions (e.g. “I am putting my shoes on”) (Hermans, 1993). Once the child recognizes themselves as a separate self, they begin to use words such as “I” and “Me” to express the fact that they are separate from the “other” (Hermans, 1993). Around about the age of 2 to 3 years when the child engages in role play, they begin to not only play the role of a particular character, they can play reverse roles as

well. As the roles shift, the pronouns used for each role shift as well. The teacher that was “you” the one moment becomes the “I” the next moment. According to Hermans (1993, pg. 69), by reversing roles and shifting pronouns, the child takes on “different and contrasting I-positions and experience[s] these positions in their mutuality.” The introduction of fairytales, television programs and more people into the child’s life, provides the child with a variety of possible positions, some of which can be found in real life (e.g. policeman), some of which can only be found in fantasy (e.g. the fairy-god mother), and some of these positions can be found on the interface between real life and fantasy (.g. stories about good or bad parents). With the development of the imagination, memory and the ability to role play, the child can imagine themselves in these positions and can also shift from one position to another. In doing so, the child gets to know the positions in their mutuality and the relationships between positions (Hermans, 1993).

Imagination, therefore, allows the individual to bring other people inside the self, where they are constitutive of the self and contribute to the creation of meaning. At that point, the other-in-the-self becomes an essential part of the individual’s everyday life (Hermans, 2008). Therefore, the voices that make up the social world of the individual enter the self and form positions that unite and oppose each other at times (Hermans & Hermans-Kempen, 2010).

The dialogue between various I-positions gives rise to symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships between positions. In the dialogical relationships within the self, one voice may be louder and more powerful than other voices, therefore dominating the self-system at that particular time. The dominance relations and power struggles between voices/positions in the community of the self, appear as dominating relations and power struggles between different positions in the self (Hermans, 2008). Therefore, the dialogue between I-positions and the relative ‘loudness’ of some I-positions may mean that either one position dominates the system at all times and in all situations, or different positions dominate in different situations. Each voiced I-position carries its own assumptions, experiences and beliefs. These different assumptions, experiences and beliefs may, at times, cause conflicts between positions (Hermans, 2003). Added to that, the various I-positions can either agree or disagree with one

another, they can either unite or oppose each other. Therefore, depending on whether the positions agree or disagree, there may or may not be conflict within the self-system (Hermans, 2003). This was the case for the participants in the study, where some experienced conflict between their masculine I-positions and others experienced no conflict. Senzo, for example, expressed conflict between himself as a boyfriend and himself as a friend when the two audiences were combined in the same space. Siphon, on the other hand, experienced no conflict between his various masculine I-positions. In this study, it was found that in order to reduce or eliminate the conflict between opposing I-positions at a given time, the participants would either develop a third position (Senzo) or privilege one of the positions and temporarily suspend the others (Nhlanhla and Bheki). These 'solutions' will be discussed in detail in the next section of this chapter. Suspended I-positions are never removed from the self-system, they are simply moved to the background and are accessed if the time, space and audience require it (Hermans, 2003). According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010), the conflict between I-positions can be made less intense when one position is given permanent dominance over all the other positions or when two positions combine in agreement.

According to the Dialogical Self Theory, the self has the ability to move from one position to another in accordance with changes in time and space. Therefore, the I is always bound to a particular position in time and space (Hermans, 2001). The positions that make up the self are both internal and external. Positions which are internal are those positions which the individual feels are part of themselves, for example, I as husband. External positions, on the other hand, are those people in the external environment that the individual feels are important to one or more of their internal positions, for example, my wife accesses my position as husband (Hermans, 2001). As the self goes through various situations, changes in time and space and encounters different audiences, there is a constant interaction between internal and external positions. Therefore, any I-position implies a relation between internal and external I-positions. That is, I as father (internal position) is brought on by my children (external position) (Hermans, 2003). The moving from one masculine I-position to another is therefore an expression of various masculine I-positions that dominate in different social contexts.

These findings are supported by Horroks (1994) who argues that because of the uniqueness of each context, a man will act differently when with his spouse to how he behaves around his colleagues and to how he is with his children. As Connell (2000) argues, masculinity is constructed in response to the social environment in which a man may find himself in. This can then contribute various elements to a man's masculine identity because different environments are made up of different people and different situations. These different elements are then understood to contradict and compete with one another which leads to masculinity being performed differently in different spaces and under different circumstances (Beynon, 2002). As discussed in chapter 3, this changing of masculine behaviors is what Beynon (2002) calls a bricolage masculinity – where male individuals 'channel hop' from one masculine identity to another, depending on the time, space and the audience.

As observed in the previous chapter, some of the participants attempted to present a stable, unchanging self by saying that they were the same men in all contexts. Even though evidence was found that demonstrated that these participants did in fact perform various masculinities in different contexts, Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) provides a good explanation as to why these participants tried to present stable and continuous identities. According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010), because humans have the basic need for stability, safety and self-maintenance, they often desire identities that are stable and continuous across time and space. Therefore, in order to give themselves the feeling of a stable and continuous self, certain individuals will always 'return' to familiar positions which make them feel safe. However, according to Hermans and Kempen (1993), there will never be a 'sameness' of the self across time and space because the dialogue within the system ensures a multiplicity of positions which come with the relative dominance of some positions over others.

5.3. How do men negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity?

The participants in this study employed various methods in order to negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple masculine I-positions. For four of the participants, their method was to allow one, powerful I-position to dominate the entire system in all contexts: Monological

dominance. For Senzo, it was the Christian man who dominated. However, a new position was formed to reduce conflict between two opposing positions which came as a result of the variation in his performance of the dominating position. Siphon allowed his empowered non-hegemonic masculine positions to dominate in all contexts. Siphon experienced no conflict in his identity as a man. Cyril gave dominance to his traditional Zulu masculinity, while Jacob gave dominance to his township man I-position. Nhlanhla and Bheki differed from the above participants as they alternated between two opposing I-positions which dominated in different spaces. Nhlanhla alternated between hegemonic versus non-hegemonic versions of masculinity, depending on whether he was with his friends or alone with his girlfriend. Bheki alternated between cultural and non-cultural versions of masculinity, which depended on whether he was in a public space or a private space. Both these participants privileged one version or over another when two different audiences were combined in the same space.

5.3.1 The monological dominance solution

Monological dominance, according to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010), refers to the domination of a single, powerful position in the system over all other positions. This means that, for the participants who used this solution to negotiate a masculine identity, only one masculine I-position would dominate in all contexts. With multiple I-positions, a certain level of uncertainty can arise in the system. In order to deal with the uncertainty that comes with having multiple I-positions, the individual can give all authority to a powerful I-position to 'lead' the self, subjugating or denying all other positions. Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) explain monological dominance in terms of how people typically behave in times of confusion or uncertainty. Often, when a person does not know which action to take, they may turn to a person of great wisdom whom they trust, such as a guru, a priest or a traditional leader. The dominating position functions as a guru or priest in the self. And, as Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) further explain, it is usually those internal positions that are strongly tied to an individual's religious, cultural or ethnic group that are given exclusive dominance. This was the case for some of the participants in the study. For Senzo, exclusive dominance was given to a masculine I-position which was based on strong religious values. Siphon based his non-

hegemonic masculine I-position on strong personal values informed by those closest to him. Cyril was able to give exclusive dominance to his traditional Zulu masculinity as it was highly influenced by strong cultural values. Also, what made Jacob's hegemonic masculinity powerful enough to dominate the entire system exclusively is that it was informed by his strong township roots.

Even though Senzo, Siphon, Cyril and Jacob all negotiated a masculine identity by giving exclusive dominance to one powerful masculine position, each participant gave exclusive dominance to a different type of masculine position, informed by different values.

5.3.1.1 The Christian man and the third position

Senzo (23, long-term relationship) allowed for the monological dominance of the Christian male position. Therefore, in all contexts, his Christian side dominated. From the data that Senzo provided, it was also evident that he performed his Christian male position differently depending on the kind of audience that he was around. For example, because he knew that his friends did not share his faith, he still spoke and behaved like a Christian around them but not in a way that would isolate his friends. This variation in the performance of his dominating I-position caused a level of tension when two different audiences were combined in the same space at the same time. Because Senzo was known to drink beer when he is around his friends, but was not much of a beer drinker around his girlfriend, he developed a third position to deal with the conflict when both his girlfriend and his friends were in the same space. I-as-slight drinker was formed. This new I-position allowed Senzo to still drink as he usually does with his friends, but not offend his girlfriend by drinking too much beer and getting drunk. According to Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010), a third position has a strong unifying influence on the self during times of conflict as it reconciles the tension between two opposing I-positions. As much as there may have been conflict between himself as a Christian friend and himself as a Christian boyfriend, Senzo still remained a Christian man, the Christian side still dominated. In the case of the formation of a third position, all the energy that was spent on the opposing positions is redirected onto the third position (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010).

5.3.1.2 The empowered non-hegemonic identity

The construction of an empowered non-hegemonic masculine identity is based on the rejection of any masculine characteristics, behaviors, values and attitudes that the individual considers to be hegemonic. It involves defining oneself in terms of unconventional or alternative masculine characteristics (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). It can also be argued that the individual who adopts this empowered non-hegemonic identity views hegemonic masculinity as harmful and therefore distances himself from these harmful effects. In this case, the empowered non-hegemonic identity would serve as a protective feature against the harmful effects of hegemonic masculinity (Kahn, et al, 2011). As was the case for Sipho, Kahn et al. (2011) found that the young men in their study that adopted this identity often spoke in ways that separated themselves from others, using words such as 'different' and 'odd'. However, in their research, Kahn et al. (2011) found that participants who adopted this non-hegemonic identity were marginalized by others (or at least felt they were) because of their rejection of hegemonic masculinity. This was not the case in this study. Sipho felt empowered in his performance of non-hegemonic masculinity. What makes this position empowered is that the individual actively positions himself as non-hegemonic and therefore does not feel marginalized in any way. According to Kahn et al. (2011), males with an empowered non-hegemonic masculine identity perform these alternative masculine characteristics whether or not they are in the presence of other men. That means that whether the participants are being husbands/boyfriends, friends or as colleagues, they would never perform their masculinity in stereotypical, hegemonic ways. Lindegger (unpublished) terms this masculine identity the *principled solution*. According to Lindegger (unpublished), this solution appears as just one position – the non-hegemonic position. What enables non-hegemonic men to sustain this position are their ties to very strong and specific value systems, for example, human rights and pro-feminist values. Kahn et al. (2011) have argued that negative masculine experiences can influence men to reject hegemonic masculinity. These negative masculine experiences include past gang involvement, or growing up without a father. Interestingly, Sipho (28 years, lives with his girlfriend) who organized his system around a strong non-hegemonic position, has been raised by his mother and grandmother in the absence of his father. The absence of a masculine role model and being

surrounded by females could have lead Siphso to reject stereotypical masculine behaviors and base his masculine identity on strong feminist values. Such stereotypical behaviors that are rejected include the use of violence and having multiple sexual partners.

Because of the domination of the strong non-hegemonic position, Siphso did not experience any conflict between positions. As Lindegger (unpublished) explains it, this type of monological dominance of a non-hegemonic masculine identity appears as one position, hence the apparent lack of conflict within the system.

5.3.1.3 The Hegemonic masculine identity

Participants who presented this masculine identity had completely embraced hegemonic masculine characteristics. These hegemonic behaviors were performed and defended in public and in private. This means that whether the participants were positioned as friend, as husband or as co-worker, they always expressed hegemonic masculine characteristics. According to Connell(2003, in Bushell, 2009), some men often conform to the gender ideals set out by hegemonic masculinity because of the power they get from the subordination of women and other non-hegemonic masculinities. In this way, these men reap the benefits of patriarchy enjoyed by men who conform to hegemonic standards. Cyril (50's, married), as head of the household, having three wives and making rules at home that he did not have to follow, is a good example of what Connell explains above because he seems to enjoy the power and advantages of patriarchy afforded to him by hegemonic standards of masculinity. Cyril's hegemonic masculine identity was based on strong traditional Zulu values. It is because of these values that Cyril's traditional Zulu masculinity was powerful enough to dominate the entire system in all contexts. For Jacob (27 years, in a committed relationship), his powerful hegemonic masculinity was based on strong township values from where he grew up. For both these participants, whether it is a traditional Zulu masculinity or traditional township masculinity, their identity is characterized by the performance of hegemonic masculine characteristics. These characteristics include being the head of the family and making the rules at home and being a tough, macho, and unromantic man. According to Lindegger

(unpublished), adopting a hegemonic solution causes individuals to lose the ability to negotiate risks or vulnerability, leading to many risk behaviors.

5.3.2 The Ambivalent masculine identity

What makes this masculine identity ambivalent is that it involves the performance of certain versions of masculinity (especially hegemonic) in public, more especially in the presence of other men, while restricting the performance of other versions of masculinity to private spaces. Therefore, this masculine identity involves alternating between two opposing or irreconcilable versions of masculinity, where each version dominates in a different space. The ambivalent masculine identity reflects the conflict between the collective and possibly hegemonic positions that dominate in public spaces and the individual, non-hegemonic positions that dominates in private spaces (Lindegger, unpublished). Depending on whether the participants are in the presence of other men or not, they would either behave in a conventional, hegemonic manner, or express 'softer' more alternative behaviors. This was especially the case when it came to being romantic with their wives or girlfriends when their male friends were around, for example, kissing their wives or by using pet names with their girlfriends. The presence of a hegemonic masculinity in society means that other forms of masculinity, including homosexuality, are seen to be inferior and are therefore marginalized (van Hoven & Horschelman, 2005). These hegemonic standards of masculinity are regulated by social institutions and peers who can either accept or reject men based on their performance of masculinity (Blackbeard, 2005, in Bushell, 2009). In the case of Nhlanhla, for example, his (male) friends regulated and maintained hegemonic masculinity by teasing him if he happened to call his girlfriend "baby" or "honey" when they were around. It can be argued that in this case, using pet names was outside the hegemonic standards maintained by the group. The data revealed that as much as the participants did not have a problem with being a husband or a boyfriend in the presence of their male friends, they did however, have a problem with being seen as romantic or soft by their friends. Nhlanhla alternated between versions of masculinity that are favored by his friends and those that are not— he only used pet names with his

girlfriend when they were alone and avoided using these names when his male friends were around to avoid being teased by them for that. Kahn et al. (2011) found similar results whereby the participants often expressed feeling pressured by parents and peers to meet hegemonic standards. In Bheki's case, he alternated between versions of masculinity that were endorsed by his African culture and those that were not by refusing to kiss his wife in public as that kind of behaviour would go against his culture as an African man. As a result of alternating between two opposing masculine positions in different spaces, having two opposing audience in the same space and at the same time created a conflicting situation for both Nhlanhla and Bheki. The solution to the conflict for both these participants was to privilege on version of masculinity over another. Nhlanhla privileged the macho version of masculinity in order to avoid getting teased by refusing to use pet names with his girlfriend when his friends were around. Bheki privileged his African masculinity by never kissing his wife in public.

For Bheki, Cyril and Jacob, culture plays a huge role in their performance of masculinity. Cyril described himself as a traditional Zulu man, his performance of masculinity was informed by the teachings of his parents, grandparents and ancestors who were great proponents of the Zulu culture and what it means to be a man within that culture. Similarly, Bheki refused to kiss his wife in public due to the fact that it was not how he was brought up as an African. For Jacob, having bubble baths and being romantic are behaviors that go against his township culture, and so he refused to do it. With regards to culture and the self, the Dialogical Self Theory argues that cultures, whether they be Zulu or African, are collective voices that function as social positions within the self (Hermans, 2001). These collective voices are "expressions of embodied and historically situated selves" that are involved in dialogues with other positions in the self (Hermans, 2001, pg. 272).

5.4. Conclusion

The findings of this study were discussed in relation to the aims of this project as well as in relation to previous findings in this field. The findings suggested that all the participants in the study, although in varying degrees, performed their masculinity differently in various contexts. Several authors of masculinity would argue this to be true within the larger context of males, stating that in each social context, a man will behave differently (Beynon, 2002; Horrocks, 1994). The Dialogical Self Theory explains these multiple performances of masculinity as the self moving from one position to another in accordance with changes in time and space (Hermans, 2001). However, not all of the participants admitted to having multiple masculine I-positions, even though later in the interview, these participants expressed a difference in their performances of masculinity. Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) explain that individuals may present a stable and continuous self because as humans, we all have the basic need for safety, stability and self-maintenance. Having a stable and unchanging self gives certain individuals that feeling of safety.

Two distinct methods were found to be used by the participants in this study to negotiate a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity. Some of the participants allowed for the monological dominance of one, powerful masculine I-position. This meant that in all contexts and spaces, only one position dominates. Dominating I-positions were found to be based on religious values, cultural values, traditional values or strong personal beliefs. The remaining participants negotiated a masculine identity by alternating between two opposing positions in different spaces. Therefore, a different position would dominate if they were in public and another position would dominate if they were in a private space. Although not all of the participants experienced conflict between their various masculine I-positions, some participants did express some conflict between opposing positions. Conflict often arose in situations where two audiences that accessed different positions, were combined in the same space. In these cases, the participants developed a third position to respond to the conflict situation and remove the conflict between opposing positions. For other participants, the best way to deal with the conflict between positions was to privilege one position over another.

5.5. Limitations of the study

The first limitation of this study is that the sample only consisted of black men and it could also be argued to be too small. Due to the time constraints placed on this project and the limited availability of working participants who can only be interviewed at certain times, only six participants could be obtained. Furthermore, certain interviews were shorter than others because some participants requested to have shorter interviews due to their working hours. Moreover, because some participants were recruited through referrals from other people, by default, all of the participants in this study were black. These limitations could have impacted on the amount of data collected as well as the type of information received.

Secondly, due to some of the questions asked during the interviews, the interviewer may have co-constructed the participants as different in certain contexts. Questions such as: *“Would you say that you are different man here at work as opposed to at home with your wife,”* that was asked one of the participants, could be viewed as leading and therefore providing a situation where the participant is ‘allowed’ to be different. This type of questioning may have influenced the direction in which many of the participants answered.

As several authors on qualitative research argue, the presence of the researcher or the interviewer is vital in the qualitative research process as it has an influence on the kind of data that is gathered through the research process (Silverman, 2000; Ulin, et al. 2002). Admittedly, certain characteristics of the researcher, such as the researcher’s sex (female), the perceived social status of the researcher (a master’s student) and the perceived gender politics at play during the interviews had an effect on the data gathered through the interviews. Furthermore, with the interview itself being one kind of social situation and the interviewer as one particular type of audience, it can be argued that the participants were performing certain versions of masculinity (or of themselves generally) during the interviews.

It is the view of the researcher (who was also the interviewer), that the interviewer’s social status as a master’s student did not have any negative effect on the participants. Not only is

there no evidence that suggests that the participants felt inferior in relation to the interviewer in any way, but the participants were themselves well educated and had very good jobs. On the contrary, some of the findings suggest that the participants saw a masters student (who is also a woman) interviewing them as evidence that the participants were experts on being a man (something the interviewer evidently knew little about) and were being interviewed on the basis of this expertise. Therefore, it could be argued that the men who participated in this study at times performed an 'I-as-expert man' version of their masculinity. This is evidenced by Senzo, for example, who repeated phrases such as "as a guy" or emphasized how different being a man is to being a woman throughout the interview:

I: Try and tell anything-something about your experiences of being a man

P: Ok, uhm (.) it's different to being a wom[an]

...

I: err, what does that come with (.2) what does being a Christian man mean

P: As a guy, even that is different to what it is for a woman. To be loving as a guy it's different

Social desirability may also have been at work in the study. The fact that the participants were being interviewed by a woman could have led them to present themselves in an excessively favorable light. This could possibly be another reason Siphosaid that he does not have a problem with calling his calling words such as "baby" or "honey" when his male friends are around:

I: Now uhm ↑ many men say that maybe when they are with their wives or their girlfriends they use words like- calling each other baby, honey and things like that but when there are friends around they don't use those words in front of the friends. Would you also do that, or would you still use those words even though you friends are around

P: I can use those words coz that's my girlfriend and they know her, she's- she's my love and they know that so why would I be scared in front of them coz they know her

On the other hand, the participants may have used the fact that the interviewer was a woman to set the 'record straight' about women, as if to treat the interviewer as a representative of all women. During his interview Jacob, for instance, mentioned several times how he felt that women expected him to be something that he is not and how 'disappointing' women were:

I: Ja, nowadays, you, now, nowadays how does an African man treat and view women

P: (.) ok, me personally, I'm only gonna speak for [myself

I: mmmh]

P: I respect women, it's just that they disappoint sometimes

I: How do they disappoint

P: eish, I don't think that's something that you can record here but ja

Taking the principle of reflexivity into consideration, it can be argued that some of the responses given by the participants may have been different if the participants had been interviewed by a man, for example. Therefore, the data gathered and the conclusions reached in this research need to be understood within the specific context of this research. Further, it is recognized that all interviews are co-constructed by interviewers, so that responses of the participants to male interviewers would probably have been different to female interviewers.

5.6. Suggestions for future research

In response to the limitations of this study as explained above, future research into this area should use a larger sample, but one that still allows for an in-depth exploration of the questions at hand. In addition, the questions used in the interview guide should not be leading or suggest a preferable answer in any way.

The present research study used only black men as research participants. Future studies might use a more diversified sample to investigate the potential impact of culture on the performance and the negotiation of a masculine identity. This research has focused primarily on younger men. Future research could usefully consider the implications of different developmental stages on the performance of masculinity and the construction of masculine identity.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate how men negotiate a masculine identity in different contexts, using the theoretical framework of the Dialogical Self Theory.

According to the Dialogical Self Theory, the self consists of multiple I-positions that are involved in dialogue with each other across different social contexts. Each I-position is located in a particular time and space, with its own experiences and beliefs, and is performed with a particular audience. The self has the ability to move from one position to another in accordance with changes in the situation, the time and the audience. Social and cultural voices are 'brought' into the self and form various I-positions. Therefore, the self is not just organized by the individual, but by the social environment as well. In this study, the Dialogical Self Theory was applied to masculine identity construction, to investigate how masculine identity constructed and whether this identity is performed differently in various contexts.

Based on the findings of this research and the arguments made in the second chapter, masculinity is performed differently in various contexts. The masculine identity is not stable and consistent in all contexts, instead, there are multiple versions of masculinity that are tied to specific audiences, spaces and times. A discontinuous and unstable self was argued to go against the biological human needs for safety and security. It is for this reason that people, like many of the participants in this study, may at times attempt to present a stable and continuous self that is the same in all contexts. However, according to the Dialogical Self Theory, the self will never be consistent and unified in all contexts.

Furthermore, the findings suggested that the negotiation of a masculine identity based on multiple performances of masculinity involved organizing the self around one, dominating position or organizing the self around opposing positions that dominate in different contexts.

In addition, the Dialogical Self Theory provided an explanation as to why men are different in various contexts: it is because men are positioned and position themselves in relationships with other people in the social world, thus allowing various audiences, spaces and times to access different versions of the masculine identity. Men then negotiate these various performances by organizing the self in ways that best fit their needs. With the Dialogical Self Theory, one is able to understand and explain the multiple performances of masculinity and the negotiation of a masculine identity as a healthy expression of an inconsistent self that has various I-positions that have their own experiences and are located in various times and spaces.

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Appendix 1

Informed Consent Form



The aim of this study is to investigate how men negotiate a masculine identity in different contexts. The study will be conducted among males who are between the ages of 21 and 40.

Part1:

I _____, hereby agree to participate in the research project conducted by NelisiweNkomonde. I am fully aware of the fact that the research project is part of the requirements of the researcher's psychology masters degree. Contact details of researcher:

073 798 8785

206524078@ukzn.ac.za

Should there be any questions regarding this current study, please feel free to contact my supervisor, Prof. G. Lindegger, at:

0332605335 or

lindegger@ukzn.ac.za

I am aware of, and agree to the following conditions:

- Participation in this research project is strictly voluntary.
- My name, or any other identifying information will not be used. A pseudonym will be assigned to me for identification purposes.
- I am above the age of 18.
- I can withdraw at any stage of the study without suffering any penalties.
- I am not obliged to divulge any information that I am uncomfortable sharing.
- The data generated from this study will be kept securely, in a locked cabinet that only the researcher will have access to.
- Any details that may identify me will be stored separately from the data.

Signature

Date

Part 2:

I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded.

I hereby consent to the audio recording of the procedures.

Signature

Date

Part 3:

I consent/do not consent to the usage of the results and data generated from this study in further research. The data will be archived in the School of Psychology.

Signature

Date

Appendix 2

Interview Schedule (Guiding questions)

1. Tell me about your experiences of being a man.
2. If I had to ask you to tell me about your masculinity, how would you respond?
3. Do you think that there are different sides to being a man, depending on the situation?
4. Are there times when these sides are in conflict with one another?
5. Are there situations when you feel less competent as a man?
6. Are there situations where you feel conflicted between different forms of your masculine identity?
7. Give me an example of a day when you experienced different situations that made you show different parts of your masculine identity.
8. Did you identify with any one part more than the other parts?
9. So which 'man' would you say you are?

