

**A CRITIQUE OF SEX AND POWER WITHIN THE WOMANIST LIBERATION
THEOLOGY: HUMAN DIGNITY- RELATIONSHIP PERSPECTIVE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Pumla Mtshiselwa undersigned, declare that, **A CRITIQUE OF SEX AND POWER WITHIN THE WOMANIST LIBERATION THEOLOGY: HUMAN DIGNITY-RELATIONSHIP PERSPECTIVE** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature.....

Date.....

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SUMMARY

“The power of sex to dominate and the ability of power to obtain sex in order to dominate” is at the crux of the researchers’ investigation. The researcher problematizes the usage of power for the attainment of sexual favours. At the heart of this research is the question, what is at the root of the exploitation and “sexifying” of power by either the granter or the recipients of sexual favours. The researcher utilises various lenses in exploring the research problem. Such lenses include a social lens which zooms in at the social power possessed by men over women in society and a theological lens which zooms in on the domination of men over women in scripture.

In an attempt to explore the subject at hand, the author explores the role of patriarchy, unequal opportunities between men and women and poverty as some of the primary proponents for those who offer themselves as sex objects to those in power. In most cases, it is women who are at the suffering end of poverty; it is also women who are forced to use their bodies for sex, this, therefore, means that women are doubly oppressed. Part of the socialised “sexual oppression” of women is the notion that women were created for marriage, work, labour and the pleasure of men. Anthropologically, men and women are the crown of creation and are worthy of dignity. It is, therefore, a necessity for women to reclaim their dignity.

The researcher is aware of the complex nature of sex which varies from negative to positive experiences depending on the individual. In a society that views sex as a commodity and is permissive in its perception of sex, in a society that has a high rate of pornography, swinging and swapping. The researcher probes the “humanising” of sex so that it is not just a physical activity but an intimate act of love and affection. The principles for the above involves viewing sex as personal and relational; sex as exclusive and unique; sex as fruitful and productive; sex and selfless and sacrificial and an acknowledgement of sex as multi-dimensional.

Though the writer comes from a religious background and is the Wesleyan tradition, though she converses with a faith community in Eersterust as part of her quantitative

research; she does not evade confronting the reality of the bible as a document flawed with patriarchy, clothed in culture and set in a particular context.

The author who is Wesleyan draws from this rich heritage and compares the times of John Wesley which were characterised by, “Champagne, dice or a neighbour’s spouse” to the South African context. She utilises the Wesleyan quadrilateral to draw these parallels.

All these findings led the author to the conclusion that conversations, training, safe space and capacitating of those in power, those abusing power, those attracted to power must be held for the restoration of human dignity with particular reference to women. The church remains a powerful and efficient platform for the above. The Church can no longer evade her role in rectifying the damage caused by patriarchy as assumedly condoned by the bible. The church can no longer evader her role in the restoration of human dignity.

KEYWORDS

Sex; Power; Patriarchy; Human dignity; Women; Abuse; Liberation; dominance;
Wesleyan; Culture; Vagina; Spirituality

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Orientation

There is a link between sex and power. Those who are in positions of power, be it in the business arena, politics and even religion, have adopted the lifestyle of promiscuity and wrongful usage of power to gain sexual favours. One cannot deny that there are also women in power who use their position to solicit sex from young men, locally known as “Ben 10’s,” a cartoon character whose youth is emphasised to satirise the amorous relationship they have with older women. However, a great amount of these sex scandals committed by those in power can be largely attributed to men.

The researcher will focus on those in positions of power. I will look at the South African context in terms of the recent political sex scandals, I will also briefly look at the sex scandals of the powerful internationally, in business and in the religious sphere thus drawing attention to the intricate dimensions of this matter. I will explore the dynamics of power and its attractiveness from the standpoint of women. Part of my research will involve exploring ‘sexuality’ as a God-given gift and a look into ‘sexual spirituality’ which has been lost.

1.1.2. The approach in the Research Study

This research study will look at the following theories: the Liberation theory, Women liberation theory, Augustine’s theory of concupiscence, the Wesleyan quadrilateral, which includes, Scripture, reason, tradition and experience. The approach of this study is that of a young Black South African Zulu and a Christian woman who is a mother of three girls.

1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

The researcher wishes to draw attention to the root issues which have a direct and indirect impact on the abuse of sex, the oppression of women and the undermining of human dignity, all due to the power given and /or assumed by the male species. The crux of the problem explored lies with century engraved patriarchy at various levels of our existence. Noteworthy is the definition of patriarchy by Elizabeth Stuart and Adrian Thatcher who look at it from a social lens stating that 'patriarchy refers to the social power of men over women.' Furthermore, patriarchy can be looked at from a theological lens where one observes the domination of men over women in scripture, church, history, doctrine, liturgy, theology, priesthood, ministry and Church order. (Stuart and Thatcher 1997:10). It is clear that the stage for male domination was set many centuries ago and that patriarchy has become a norm just like the male-dominated society we have lived in overtime. I, therefore, propose that by virtue of being male, the man has been granted power over women by history, tradition, theology and culture. The manifestation of this power is seen in many ways but for the purpose of this paper, we will focus on the manifestation being visible in the area of sexual domination of the male species over the female species.

Stuart and Thatcher maintain that it is Babylonian influence during the *Exile* which caused dualism between the body and soul. Consequently, this dualism had an impact on the perception held by the Hebrews of the female body. Suddenly there was a shift from sexuality and the body as both a singular gift from God, to women's bodies being the property of men. (Stuart and Thatcher 1997:91). The perception of a woman's body as the property of a man gave lee-way for two things to happen: either for the body of a woman to be protected_or to be used consensually or non-consensually for the pleasure of man. This gave rise to the ever-escalating statistics of rape and abuse of women by those in power (in this instance all men.)

According to Statistics SA, which conducted quantitative research on rape in South Africa, the following finding are noteworthy. "2, 1% of women aged 16 years or more across population groups (N=337 000) reported that they had been sexually abused at least once between the beginning of 1993 and March 1998 (www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-03/Report-03-10).

Among those who had been sexually abused, 82,3% (N=277000) described the event as rape. One must note that the above-recorded abuses occurred in a span of 5 years and one wonders if the rape and/or abuse of women have stopped and decreased over the past few years.

(On the flip side of the coin, women are forced by many other aspects of life to seek sexual relationships so as to provide for their families. Research shows that women seduce men to survive the challenges of everyday struggles so that they can feed their families. Society has a tendency to be judgemental and chooses to ignore the fact that women sometimes suffer double oppression ie poverty and male dominion. According to a Statistics South Africa survey conducted in the year 2008/2009, females were poorer than males. 27,3% of females live in poverty compared to 25,2% of males. (www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-03/Report-03-10).

What is the voice of the woman in the face of patriarchy which has been embedded in societal norms over centuries? How do women find strategies to respond to these age-old shackles in place since time immemorial?

1.2.1. Research aims

Aim 1: To create awareness of the human dignity violating factors of sex and power for the liberation of women in this generation and in the generations to come.

Aim 2: To help women to “self-liberate” by making them aware of their desire to please through sex.

Aim 3: To reawaken and revive the sacredness and spirituality of sex and make this an important part of the Churches’ agenda.

Aim 4: To develop a training program on sex and power with the aim of facilitating workshops and discussion groups in Church communities.

1.2.2 Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a proposition made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation (Pearsall 2002:700). It is provisional speculation that will guide the investigation of the present study. The main question of this research study is the power of sex to dominate and the ability of power to obtain sex by all means in order to dominate. The researcher also seeks to ask the question: What role does sex and power play in the oppression of women and in undermining human dignity?

1.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The METHOD that will be utilised for the research study is that of Qualitative research. This form of research is “primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypothesis for potential quantitative research.” www.snapsurveys.com. In exploring the topic, I will seek to establish the underlying factors behind sex and power and how these factors impact human dignity. I will attempt to bring to the forefront matters promoting and/or hindering women liberation. Qualitative research will provide the necessary insight into the topic.

Quantitative research according to snap surveys is, used to quantify the research problem by way of generating numerical data that can be transformed into useable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, defined variables- and it generalises results from a larger sample population. www.snapsurveys.com. As qualitative research may naturally lead one to quantitative research, I will conduct surveys, collect data and evaluate the findings of qualitative research so as to gauge the objective for my research and to further highlight the attitudes and actions which lead one to problematise sex and power within women liberation theology from a human dignity perspective.

1.3.1 Literature Study

Relevant literature in the investigation is explored so as to gain important insights from the findings of other researchers. However, we should remember that there are very

limited resources in this subject matter within the church circles. Hence, the interview and observation are employed alongside literature study. On the subject matter at hand, CITY PRESS 28 July 2013 10:00 reads as follows: “Democratic South Africa is developing an attitude to the sex lives of men in power that is decidedly more French than British”.

Traditionally, the French have not cared much about the sex lives of their politicians and, in fact, considered a healthy libido as a qualifying factor for higher office. However, in Britain, a sex scandal could be the end of a political career. In South Africa, where multiple-partner relationships are very common, there is often a live-and-let-live (or at least a live-and-turn-a-blind-eye) attitude to the sex scandals of politicians. Most recently, former Communications Minister, Ms Dina Pule was axed from the government for being in a high-profile love affair with a married man – though it is likely she was fired not for this, but because her boyfriend received favours allegedly owing to his ministerial proximity. President Jacob Zuma also had a baby out of wedlock with Sonono Khoza at the start of his presidency, for which he apologised to the nation. While our key Aids-prevention strategy is “Abstain. Be Faithful. Condomise”, our official attitude to extramarital or multi-partner sex by our politicians seems more credible on paper than in practice. Today, we report another sex scandal. The courts will determine whether a key South African leader is guilty of a sex crime or whether he is the victim of extortion. Either way, he would not be in this position if he hadn’t had a casual sexual relationship. Zwelinzima Vavi, union federation Cosatu’s general secretary, has an established reputation for being an anti-corruption crusader and a voice of reason. His name and reputation are besmirched now, and his career hangs in the balance. It raises the spectre of the rape case against Zuma when he was ANC deputy president. Acquitted of rape, he still engaged in unprotected and extramarital sex with a woman young enough to be his daughter. That episode in our history was as painful as the case facing Vavi is likely to be. In New York, where former US congressman Anthony Weiner is running for mayor, the tide has turned against him. Again caught texting lewd images of himself, the public consensus appears to be that Weiner must take Carlos Danger, his alter ego, to bed and forget politics. In France, the sex scandal involving the former International Monetary Fund boss Dominique Strauss-Kahn has also changed that society’s mores. Is it time for South Africans to think again about sex and politics?

The article above published by City Press on the 28th of July 2013 proves to be very helpful in contextualizing the research topic. “Is it time for South Africans to think again about sex and politics?”

My reply is affirmative and my research seeks to engage in such a process. The article sites other international figures that also have used sex as indulgence and a symbol for their power. This for me depicts that this is a masculinity issue, hence it is so prevalent in most political circles. It is also a feminist issue because it poses the questions: what is it that leads women to these sexual activities? Is it the desire to be associated with those deemed “powerful?” Is it lack of empowerment, education and poverty that leads disadvantaged women to this web? What do women in power do with their sexual power when they have wealth and status to buy their way through life, do they do the same to “powerless” men?

Other scholars perceive power as a “capacity or ability to do something, to have an effect on something-power to achieve what an individual or group set out to do.” (Ehrensperger 2009:17) The above statement becomes relevant to my research especially in cases where the sexual act is claimed to be rape by the victim as was the case with the Jacob Zuma sex scandal. Ehrensperger continues to explore the dynamics of power by drawing from the research of other scholars. He maintains that “Power to and power with” is the most liberating form of power for both engendered humanities.

However, she also pays attention to transformative power as Proposed by Wartenberg and this is liberative to women. To imply that women are just victims of “powerful men” would be an injustice that implies that women are incapable of making their own moral choices and decisions and this on its own is not liberative to women. If the sexual act is consensual then I rest my argument. If however, these engagements are rape and extramarital affairs performed by those in power, then the research of this subject matter is further motivated because it is a call for justice and human dignity in the context of relationships.

Sexuality is an intrinsic part of a human-divine nature. Krondorfer (2009:38) speaks about the necessity of a shift from viewing sexuality as incidental to the experience of God to viewing sexuality as vital to our divine-human experience. Therefore any

violation of our sexuality is on its own an act against our human-divine nature. On the matter at hand, how does the escalating exercise of “Casual sex” challenge theologians? Loader (2013:109) brings in the concept of management in his book, “Making sense of sex” He suggests that there is a need to manage sexual passions. In my perspective, this is an idea over and above theologies on sexuality, which can be offered as a tool to curb the problem. The idea of managing sexual passions can also be utilized in a broader sense i.e. to deal with the escalation of rape and women abuse. Sexual passions are a reality and need to be controlled as they may lead to the breakup of families and marriages and a further increase of HIV. The management of sexual passions will lead individuals and moreover, the Church to develop a spirituality of sex and power which seeks to liberate women and restore the human dignity of both men and women.

Sex cannot be demonised but passions must be managed. According to Rigby, the theologian Augustine maintains that concupiscence is “loving that which is good or beautiful but rather, as the result of primordial sin, the disorder of concupiscence causes us to love that which is good in such ways that we are diverted from a higher good, hence to sin.” In light of this theory, sex is good and beautiful when enjoyed for higher good but can be destructive when enjoyed selfishly and with an aim to control and dominate. (Rigby 2015:83). Augustine maintains that the sinful nature of sex is not in itself and in its enjoyment, but it is in submitting our will to the imperfect use of intercourse (2015:86) Therefore, demonising sex would not be helpful for our study. This study seeks not to demonise intercourse, but to observe the power which it possesses. According to Rigby, Augustine proposes the term, “Enlightened sexuality, (2015:101). He invites us to consider his context which had sex scandals, nudity and the escalating amounts of pornographic images.

Current South Africa does not depend on physical delivery of sinful and sexual images, but the images are as close as a click away as these are readily available for view and download from the internet. The use of nudity and the promotion of irresponsible sexual engagements through media and entertainment further escalates my topic of investigation as justice and human dignity issue, especially since women’s dignity, is violated on these websites. Therefore, I am in agreement with Augustine, our century deems itself as sexually enlightened and awakened because it has

forsaken orthodoxy in reference to sexual behaviour, but in reality, there has been a swing to the extreme and this swing offers very little or no human dignity. (Rigby 2015:104).

Radcliffe, Basset and Fassin (2007:51), explore a model of looking at sexuality. They utilise the Eucharist and deem it as helpful at developing ethics of sexuality (Radcliffe, Basset and Fassin, 2007:51). The body of Christ symbolically shared through bread in the Eucharist becomes a means of communicating a deeper meaning (2007:56).P56. Christ gives his body as a gift, and this presses us to move from seeing the body as a possession to be acquired to viewing it with dignity and respect to the one who bears it. This shift of perception in itself has the ability to liberate many a woman who has felt perceived and treated as a possession to be acquired and discarded as and when it suits a person in power, in this case, a man. Furthermore, the perception of the body as a gift instead of a possession challenges how an individual carries and uses their bodies sexually because it challenges one to look at their bodies as one with their spirit, therefore disrespect to the body is disrespect to the whole being.

They furthermore problematise the dichotomy of the West which sees the body and soul as different entities. Stuart and Thatcher (1997: 90) further state that this dualism between body and spirit did not exist in ancient Hebrew theology but a gender dualism existed, where the woman was perceived as a property of men be it the father then the husband (Stuart and Thatcher, 1997: 90). This dichotomy has meant that the body has been deemed as merely a package for something which is higher and greater i.e. the soul (Radcliffe, Basset and Fassin 2007: 53). I fully agree with the authors for this is the major cause of problems in the matters of abuse of sex, the disrespect of sexual intimacy and the many problems arising from the abuse of sex e.g. rape, AIDS, and sexual abuse. Furthermore, the dichotomy has caused many individuals to disrespect their bodies and focus on their “spiritual welfare,” and this in itself presents a problem. Radcliffe, Basset and Fassin further state that as human beings we are highly communicative beings and therefore sexual intercourse has a deeper meaning than just the pleasure it creates. “It becomes a fundamental expression of how we are in communion with one another” (2007:55).

Stuart and Thatcher trace the history of sexual intercourse in the Christian tradition. In reference to sex, they note that in the Christian context, there is an expectation for sex to occur within the boundaries of marriage and with the purpose of creation as alluded to in genesis (1997:18) This in itself is problematic for it gives the impression that there is and should be no sex taking place outside the boundaries of marriage. This leaves no room for sex as merely for pleasure. The notion of sex for pleasure was and is still perceived as a consequence of the fall (1997:18). Viewing this tradition which has been held for centuries, one cannot help but ask, has the scorn on sexual activity out of marriage led to this act being perceived as a taboo to the extent that little theological guidance has been given to those engaged in sexual activity thus opening them up to superstitions and culturally influenced misconceptions on the expected behaviour of the feminine and masculine? (I have my reservations for the terms masculine and feminine as they imply that women are completely soft and men are all things hard. Where is the middle ground? God Himself is not either-or.).

1.3.2 Qualitative Research Methods

A wide scope of publications has been produced on sex, power, women liberation and human dignity. I intend to hold this material together and critique the use of sex for power and power for sex. What can Psychology and sociology reveal as the underlying contribution to my research topic? How do culture and context influence the use of sex and power?

1.3.3 Interviews

Interviews will be conducted by the researcher to establish why the rising phenomena of linking sex to power are so dominant. The researcher will also seek to establish the perception of both the male and female species of themselves and of the other with regards to sex and power and gauge how such perceptions have been influenced by socialisation. The interviews will be conducted across cultural, race, gender and age boundaries. These will be conducted formally i.e. in the context of a structured interview and informally i.e. in the context of conversations. The researcher also aims at using her own faith community to do interviews i.e. the context of the MCSA in

Eersterust Pretoria. It is in the context of this faith community that the quadrilateral will come into effect. The researcher will also interview people who hold offices of power and establish whether their social standing has played a role in their relationships in the light of the topic at hand.

1.3.4 Observation

In this study, one of the tools of research that I will employ is that of observation. Looking through the lens of a researcher and aware of my spectacle and perceptions, biases and stereotypes, I seek to collate data: qualitative and quantitative and analyse this data in a manner that the data speaks for itself thus presenting legitimate evidence for my research problem. I also seek to be very observant of human behaviour including in my own relationships and interaction with people at work and home so as to observe the problem play at in theatre of life.

1.3.5 Documents Analysis

The researcher will engage in the study of statistical documents to analyse the severity of the research problem. The researcher will also analyse material published in the press on those in power and their "sex scandals." The researcher will also analyse academic articles and publications in the fields of theology, psychology and anthropology.

1.3.6 Population

The population for this study are people in South Africa, specifically Christians within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa where the qualitative research will be conducted. In this study, the researcher will not restrict her research within the boundaries of her own race group or her own ethnic group but will seek to get varied opinions within the Wesleyan tradition thus the utilisation of the Wesleyan quadrilateral would be beneficial to the study. The findings of this study will be collated into a training guide on sex and power to be presented to the synod of the Limpopo district in the

MCSA as requested of the researcher after an evident need and mandate for the researcher to compile such a study and conduct such training for the people called Methodist in the Limpopo district.

1.4 VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

In a time of increase of women abuse and rape, a time of escalating sexual abuse of even children and the elderly, the necessity and validity of this study cannot be denied. This study does not simply look at the material that already exists in this field but it pushes the researcher through quantitative research to look at the context in South Africa with regards to the abuse of power, the liberation of women and the search for human dignity for all. The study is valid in the discourse of sex education in the Christian Church and seeks to explore new ways of approaching what was once a taboo in a new light that is life-giving and holistic so as to curb abuse. The researcher aims to make a contribution and to get the academia up to date with regards to the topic at hand.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

CHAPTER 1: This chapter will introduce the topic of the research, it's orientation and necessity to the thesis. This chapter will also contain the problem statement, research aims, research methodology and population to be explored.

CHAPTER 2: The researcher will draw the links between sex and power using examples from her context to create such connections. The researcher will also establish her understanding of power and how it is used and or abused in the arena of sexuality.

CHAPTER 3: The researcher will, through qualitative research, explore the field of sex. The researcher will utilise the Wesleyan quadrilateral of Scripture, tradition,

reason and experience together with the research of theologians in this area to understand the current context in dialogue with the written material.

CHAPTER 4: The researcher will provide empirical evidence on the effects of abuse of sexual power on women and children. The researcher will also seek to probe the causes and impact on human dignity that the abuse of sexual power creates not only in women but also in men.

CHAPTER 5: The last chapter will present an overview of the previous chapters. It will further present research findings based on research aims. Recommendations on finding based on the aims of the research study will be made as well as recommendations for future projects. The Gosa Theology will be introduced as contextual theology to manage power in sexual relationships.

1.6 SUMMARY

The dissertation will address the use and misuse of sex for power and power for sex. This use and misuse of power are evident when women use sexual relationships to climb to political power or when men use political or economic power to gain sexual favours. The researcher argued that sex is also created by God for unity, recreation and procreation. Sex needs to nourish the relationship within marriage and bring joy and pleasure for the couples who are involved in sexual activity, as well as bring life to other human beings.

The researcher will explore liberative ways of looking at sex thus impacting the liberation of women and restoration of human dignity of men and women. The researcher will also speak of a theology of looking at sex which is restorative and liberative.

CHAPTER 2

SEX AND POWER WITHIN HUMAN DIGNITY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Prevailing to this research study will be a dialogue on the usage of the two concepts namely, sex and power within human dignity in contemporary society. The whole chapter will revolve around these concepts, their definitions, their usage and their interplay within this research study. In this chapter, the researcher will postulate the facts on how sex and power influence the lives of human beings. The whole discussion will circulate around the main research problem: "The power of sex to dominate, the ability of power to obtain sex by all means in order to dominate. It will be very important to start this discussion from the definitions and clarification of important concepts so that the readers of this research study can have a clear direction from the beginning of this chapter.

2.2 DEFINITION AND CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

It is of paramount importance to investigate the definition, clarification and development of the following concepts: sex, sexuality, power and human dignity so that this chapter must have grounded on the understanding of concepts used in this research study. There is always a connection amongst these concepts since they are the components of the human being. The researcher will start with sex and sexuality, how these concepts were used and how did people behave towards sex and sexuality throughout history. Furthermore, power and human dignity with their relationship to sex and sexuality will be discussed.

2.2.1 Notion of Sex and sexuality

The researcher is aware that, whenever one enters into a discussion about sex and sexuality, one is bound to be controversial. Human beings experience their sexuality in various ways, some positive and beneficial, others negative and damaging. Experiences such as these cannot but influence our discussion on the subject. Moreover, different people approach discussions of the subject from a variety of viewpoints, both religious and secular (Kretzschmar, 2001:1)¹. The discussion in this research study is moving from the negative experience of sex to the positive and beneficial part of sexual activity.

The vertex for this section is the creation of humanity as the crown of creation and the image of God, in this sense the theological framework is anthropology with special reference to renewal and consummation. Moving from the vertex that Human beings are the authentic image of God and human beings are sexual beings, it is important for this research study to build our definition around authentic sexuality as against the misuse or abuse of sex for ulterior motives. The investigation for authentic sexuality often starts with an attempt to understand how human beings are behaving as sexual beings. In order to achieve authentic sexuality, it depends more on understanding how God created human beings to be sexual beings. How human beings behave sexually certainly influences how human beings define human-self as sexual beings and vice versa (Balswick and Balswick, 2007:213). They further indicate that:

However, an understanding of what it means to be created as sexual persons in God's image involves much more than a simple assent to or an ability to live according to specified behavioural standards. Sexuality includes such factors as biology, gender, emotions, thoughts, behaviours, attitudes, and values. Authentic human sexuality is not something that just develops naturally.

Balswick and Balswick (2007)² attempt to illustrate that human sexuality are multi-dimensional as human beings are multi-dimensional. According to Salzman and Lawler (2012:50), sex is multidimensional in the sense that it is physical, emotional,

¹ Kretzschmar, L, 2001. *Sexual Ethics – study guide of CGM302T*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

² Balswick, J, O, and Balswick, J, K, 2007. *The family: A Christian perspective on the contemporary home*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic

psychological, spiritual and relational. When one participates in sexual activity the whole person needs to be involved, the physical being, spiritual being, emotional being and relational being. Sexuality is humanity in the sense that sexuality is multi-dimensional and the human being is also multi-dimensional. Sexuality physically is the physical union and joining of bodies to form oneness of the physical bodies. This union occurs in four phases according to Salzman & Lawler (2012:51) namely, excitement, Plateau, the climax and the resolution phase. Physical sexuality refers to attraction or allure that is built from emotions that are released whether negative or positive whenever human beings who are male and female or people with same-sex who are in love, are in contact with one another sexually. Physiological sexuality refers to the deep psychological connections of the couple in an intimate manner. Salzman and Lawler maintain that the making of love with another person is an affirmation and acceptance of the other unconditionally (2012:53). This affirmation is experienced in the beginning stages of the relationship through physical intercourse but over time, it develops to even deeper than intercourse as the couple begin to meet each other's psychological needs without necessarily any sexual intercourse (2012:54). The spiritual dimension of sexuality affords one the opportunity to experience the unity of the Trinity, there is a spiritual dimension to sexuality as one experiences the other as a gift to themselves (Salzman & Lawler 2012:57). Relationally, sexuality is grounded in a relationship. There is no healthy sexuality without a relationship in one form or another (2012:58).

It is imperative for the definition of sexuality to be multi-dimensional thus equating sexuality to a human being who is multi-dimensional. The understanding of sexuality is therefore multidimensional just as humans are multidimensional in nature. Modise (2016:56) indicates that:

A human being is being approached as a differentiated but integrated wholesome singular and irreplaceable human being. The equilibrium of wellness and well-being within the ambit of the approach of this paper has been achieved through differentiation and interchange of fields of experience. In this paper, the emphasis will be on certain aspects of human beings and fields of experience such as (1) faith, belief and trust, (2) thinking and conceptualising, (3) feelings and emotion, (4) verbalising and speaking, (5) production (performance) of artefacts and constructs (performances), (6) experience of justness as the setting of proportions, (7) social and relational experience, and (8) education and training.

Sexuality as a human activity also involves the eight aspects and field of experience like any other human activity. Sexuality has the dimension of faith, belief and trust (1), whenever one is involved in the sexual activity he or she has faith, belief and trust in that person he or she is involved with. Sexuality involves the thinking and conceptualisation (2) hence there is always the salvation period before the actual activity. The person conceptualised what is going to happen even before the activity. There are always feelings and emotions (3) towards the actual performance of authentic sexuality. There is always the moment of negotiation for authentic sexuality as against unauthentic sexuality like rape or date rape (verbalising and speaking) (4). The performance of a sexual activity that produces life (procreation) and construction of relationship (unity) (5). Sexuality has to display justice to both partners and asks the questions: was it justified to enter into such an activity, and what justifies the performance? (6). Sexual activity creates the experience of social and relationship (recreation or pleasure of being together) (7). Finally, this activity needs to be nurtured and maintained, the only best way to nurture and maintain it is to be more enlightened and trained in the right direction towards nurturing this relationship. Practices such as marriage preparation, marriage counselling, and marriage enrichment are invaluable in supporting relationships for the restoration of human dignity.

Balswick and Balswick (2007:213) define sex as the product of God's design even though it is tainted by the fallen nature of human beings. Furthermore, they indicate that, in a multitude of ways, this good gift of sex has become perverted and warped in the human being's world. The perverted nature of sexuality is portrayed by the inauthentic sexuality inherent in humans and further shaped by the interplay of societal attitudes, beliefs, cultural structures and biological factors. The multi-dimensional approach of the definition of sex and sexuality is the premise within which the researcher will argue in this research study. The premise is of creation, renewal and consummation (hope for the future).

Kretzschmar (2001:10) emphasised that there is a distinction between sex and sexuality. When the term sex is used, it is generally referring to genital sexual activity with the intention of procreation, union and recreation (pleasure or sexual release). This activity is generally of an erotic and genital in nature and involves sexual arousal

and intercourse. Sexuality, however, is a more complex and extensive-term and does not necessarily include genital sexual activity. Sexuality refers to a basic element of what it means to be human and refers to human being's understanding and relationships with other human beings, which may not necessarily include genital sexual activity. Sexuality refers to the longing for human relationships, whether these relationships are expressed within or outside of marriage. Sexuality involves at least two vital elements of human personality and experience, the issue of identity, how human beings perceive themselves, and the issue of relationship, how human beings relate to other human beings (and also how human beings relate to God). Sex, then, refers to the biological function of sexual intercourse, whereas sexuality is intimately linked to how human beings relate to human self and each other and how human being express and experience affection, warmth, closeness and care for each other. The latter is often referred to as affective (emotional) sexuality (Kretzschmar, 2001:10).

Heimbach speaks of Biblical principles to shape moral sex. These I view as vital for the restoration and promotion of human dignity and liberation of women in the arena of sexual relations. He offers the following which is related to sex as a multi-dimensional phenomenon:

- Sex must be personal and relational
- Sex must be exclusive and unique
- Sex must be fruitful and productive
- Sex must be selfless and sacrificial
- Sex must be complex and multidimensional

I will now proceed to offer my views on the Biblical principles to shape moral sex in the light of human dignity and liberation of women and also in dialogue with (Heimbach 2004:155-173).

2.2.2 Sex must be personal and relational

Heimbach (2004: 155) maintains that God created sex to be enjoyed by people in a relationship and not by things. This is particularly liberating to women who are often

traded and treated as sexual objects, women are often raped and sexually abused for the pleasure of the male species. If sex is to be viewed as something personal, then consent and a relationship will then be seen as a norm for sexual activity instead of access as when and when the dominating species, please.

“Rape Crisis, “ September 2015 states that in 2014/2015 there were a total of 53 617 sexual offences reported to the South African Police Services (SAPS). However, the Rape crisis cautions us that these statistics may not be accurate as most victims do not report rape due to various factors amongst them being the fear of the perpetrator.

Vogelman & Lewis (1993) maintains that “Violence against women is virtually a universal phenomenon, and it is widespread, common and deeply entrenched in most societies. Rape, which is one of the most conspicuous forms of this violence, has reached epidemic proportions in South Africa. It occurs in all spheres of society and all women are potential victims. Women's fear of rape has begun to affect their basic day to day decisions and reduce their quality of life.” Sex has not always been treated as personal and relational.

However, Heimbach’s view on the personal nature of sex begs one to ask whether sex toys, which are viewed by users as an act of taking back their sexual power, can be deemed as personal, does it get more personal than pleasing ones ’self? His views also fail to deal with our context where the practice of sex working is on the increase and is deemed by defenders as liberating to women.

2.2.3 Sex must be exclusive, unique and multidimensional

Heimbach (2004:158) maintains that the relational value of sex is of far greater importance than the sensual pleasure obtained. According to him, God created sex as something to be enjoyed in a relationship where both parties will feel valued and respected. A sexual partner is therefore not to be treated as a sexual object or as a tool as this goes against the created purpose of sex. Any sex, therefore, that is not

exclusive and does not stem from a relationship is twisted and goes against the intended purpose of sex.

The Basis for Heimbach's conviction on the exclusivity of sex is founded on the assumption that all sex happens within the marriage covenant. This is far from the reality of our times.

One is led to question the conviction of Heimbach on the exclusivity of sex. He maintains that according to the Bible, sex was to be exclusive and be between one man and one woman, quoting Matthew 19:6, "Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate." This, of course, is a text that is problematic on its own for it connotes that the only man has the ability, by sleeping with a married woman to break a marriage covenant. This is further supported by Paul in Romans 7:2-3, "A married woman is bound by law to her husband whilst he lives but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage...She will be called an adulterer if she lies with another man whilst her husband lives." This text as used by Heimbach to support monogamy is one that is fraught with sexism and one I refuse to use as it makes a woman a spectator of her own sexuality.

The Bible does not prove a sensible document in this debate as it is intrinsically a patriarchal document, it cannot be read in isolation of its context and has been used to oppress women. The Bible itself is contradictory on matters of sex and monogamy and yet it has been used many times to control especially women's' sexual activity.

Vorjack (2009) mentions just some of the marriage covenants found in the Bible, proving once again how it is dangerous to trust just the Bible in the current discourse.

1. Polygynous Marriage- Where a man has more than one wife
2. Levirate Marriage-A widow who is sonless becomes the responsibility of a brother-in-law who takes her as his wife and impregnates her in order to bear a male heir (Genesis 38:6-10)
3. A man, a woman and her property — a female slave (Gen. 16:1-6) and Jacob (Gen. 30:4-5).
4. A man, one or more wives, and some concubines
5. A male soldier and a female prisoner of war Deuteronomy 21:11-14 describes the process.

6. A male rapist and his victim- Deuteronomy 22:28-29 describes how an unmarried woman who had been raped must marry her attacker.
7. A male and female slave
8. Monogamous, heterosexual marriage

Sex must be unique and special and must be shared exclusively at that moment and time by those two individuals. This has become the norm in society and the norm for a civil union but we cannot be oblivious to polygamy and polyandry. Neither can we shut our eyes from the existence of open relationships, swapping and swinging which the couple agrees together to embark on. Ongoing conversation and space for dialogue need to be created to discuss the aforementioned sexual engagements instead of hiding behind the Bible as the guide to exclusive sexual relations. Reality is that the ideal as presented by the Bible is not practised or accepted by many.

Human beings exist as multidimensional beings. According to Heimbach, we have the spiritual life, the physical life and the emotional life (2004: 167). In most instances, we pay attention to that which nurtures the spiritual life be it meditation or prayer or religious activity but then there is a disconnect between what we deem as the physical life, the spiritual and the emotional and yet each affects the other because we are one being. Sexual activity (Physical) must lead to a place of serenity, joy and positive inner energy (emotional) which leads to the appreciation of the God-given gift of sexuality (Spiritual). That is the complexity of sex and it is to be understood well if human dignity is to be upheld.

2.2.4 Sex must be fruitful and productive

Heimbach asserts that sex must be productive and produce offspring's so that communities and tribes can grow whilst he does not condemn childless sex because it produces faith. The only thing I deem as something that sex must produce is the feeling of intimacy, the joy of a deepened fellowship and companionship and the exploration of ones' sexual desires and joys. Any other pressure placed on sex is placed by biology and religion. The reality is, there are many couples with no children

and many couples who have sex but do not desire to have children. There are also homosexual couples who cannot bear children of their own. The fact is, the reality of the 21st century with regards to this discourse is very diverse.

The critical point in terms of sex as being productive is that the body of a woman was or is controlled by the male in the patriarchal society. The woman is not expected to talk of sexuality like the researcher is doing in this research study. A woman's sexuality is only for procreation and to satisfy her husband. She, therefore, becomes the object of recreation or pleasure. Traditional sex roles and socialisation teach women that their bodies are asexual, they should not engage in sex for pleasure but only for the sake of childbearing and motherhood, and men are the only sexual beings and so men may engage in sex for the pleasure of it (Sharath Souseelya, 2017:57). The woman's physical existence does not lie under her control. The woman needs to pour her love out to her children and to concentrate all her physical desire on marriage and on her husband. Even in this relationship, it is not her well-being but invariably male's that counts. The good wife is still the one who, as depicted in the folklore, carries her bedridden husband to the brothel house because he so desires or as an alternative, behaves like a prostitute in bed if he so desires. The common denominator here is a denial of the woman's subjectivity, self-respect, and self-determination (Sharath Souseelya, 2017:57). The fruitfulness and productiveness of sex carry a lot of sacrifices from the woman's side rather than from the man's side. In the next section, the focus will be on the selfless and sacrificial part of sexual activity.

2.2.5 Sex must be selfless and sacrificial

According to Sharath Souseelya (2017:57), It is expected and admirable for an ideal woman to silently hand over her body to the husband for all kinds of violence, torture for his sexual gratification, and ultimately, harassment, which makes her an ideal woman. In this case, the woman sacrifices her human dignity in an imbalanced sexual relationship constructed by the patriarchal society. The selflessness and sacrifice in a sexual activity need to be upheld in an equal and dignified manner. Hence the researcher maintains that sex that upholds human dignity must be selfless and

sacrificial. Each must seek ways to please the other without compromising their comfort. The desire should be to please the other. However, one asks, what boundaries are there to this selfless engagement and what if the man expects, forces practices what makes the woman uncomfortable in the exercise of his sexual pleasure?

There are mainly two ways that a man's organ is utilised during intercourse i.e. oral sex or penetration and yet there are various things that can be done with a woman's body, there is anal sex, vaginal penetration, sex on the bust area. Again a woman is subject to abuse in these areas by the partner should she not be willing to engage in some practices. Women in some African cultures are taught to please a man no matter what the cost, no matter what discomfort she feels or else he will seek pleasure elsewhere and it will be the woman's fault. For the liberation of women, selfless and sacrificial sex must be from both parties of the sexual relationship and respect should be displayed towards one another. Sacrificial sex must stem from a place of desiring to please a partner with the knowledge that I too will be pleased and not from a place of fear of being replaced. The restoration of human dignity involves women's deliberate effort in unchaining themselves of all that was not God's intended design for sex. This action involves learning to speak.

2.2.6 Learning to speak

In the context of a relationship, women have become passive recipients of a man's whims. He determines when they should have sex and many women struggle to initiate sex or to speak about their sexual desires and therefore they become spectators in the event.

Metro FM airs a daily show entitled, "Ask a man." In this show, two gentlemen and a lady receive calls from women desiring to ask questions on sex and relationships related matters. I tuned into the show and listened to a question from a young lady who wanted to know when to engage in sexual activity with a guy she has just met. "Can I have sex on the first date or would this be deemed as too easy thus cheap or should I wait for thirty days or so and play hard to get thus be seen as virtuous?" was her question. After several discussions of the best route to follow, the female co-

presenter of the show said the following to her, “Why are you giving away your sexual power, why are you afraid of what he will say or do if you gave it up on the same day? Why can’t you have sex and move on if you want to, it’s your body to do as you wish? If he does not please you, tell him or move on”

This show and the questions posed once again exposed to me that women are most often passengers who struggle to communicate when they would like to have sex, how they would like to have sex and what pleases them. For dignity to be upheld, women cannot remain passengers on their own sexual journey afraid of being judged and giving away their power. Women need to unlearn to not speak. “She must learn again to speak, starting with I, starting with We, starting as the infant does, with her own true hunger and pleasure and rage” (Fischer 1988:8).

2.3 SEX WITHIN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Human sexuality is intensely exaggerated by predominant societal attitudes. The profound attitude in the United States America (USA) has improved throughout history. The USA past time is often regarded as a time when sexuality was repressed within contemporary society (Balswick and Balswick, 2007:214). However, Heimbach however (2004:29) proposes that something new is happening to the picture of Sex in society. He cites an example from his own context in the USA where the former President, Bill Clinton had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky who was at that time an intern (2004:29). Already, one can note in this scandal the dynamics of power that were at play between the President of the USA and an intern whom he had sexual relations with. It was not just sex but it was power at play. Furthermore, Heimbach problematises the fact that on being found out, Bill Clinton refused to resign as President of the USA and wanted to maintain his position as the first citizen of the nation despite questionable moral behaviour. It is from this incident and refusal that Heimbach derives his conclusion that contemporary Society’s view on sex is permissive (2004:30).

Permissiveness in sexuality is not something that we are unfamiliar within the South African Context. There is commodification of sex, (from sex being sold in street corners) to sex being offered for material and financial benefits, attitudes on sex are

permissive. The amount of pornography being downloaded and viewed in South Africa is shocking. "Behaviour once thought shameful, is flaunted with pride and praised as daring and courageous." (Heimbach, 2004:14). Included in this behaviour is societies' permissive view on same-sex relations, pornography, swinging, swapping, same-sex relationships, pre-marital sex, incest, promiscuity, open relationships, ideas on marriage and divorce. Anything is acceptable, as long as the individual is happy. The behaviour and reaction of society throughout history have been influenced by the ideology of the influential classes. Balswick and Balswick (2007:214) indicate that:

The puritans have traditionally been blamed for some of the uptightness of past generations. By the standards of seventeenth-century European culture, however, the Puritans had quite a healthy view of sexuality. They did, of course, hold to a standard of celibacy for the unmarried and monogamy for married people, but advocate a wholesome sexual expression in the marriage relationship. An example comes from the Groton church in 1675. When a husband announced that he would abstain from having sexual relations with his wife for a year as personal penance for disobeying God, the church leaders pronounced that he had no right to deny his wife her rights to sexual fulfilment. Sexual expression between spouses was regarded as good, natural, and desirable and therefore not be withheld. this is in accord with 1 Corinthians 7:1-5.

This historical period provides society with a perception that sexual activity should not be withheld for married couples and celibacy upheld for the unmarried people only. No-one had the right abstain from sexual relation with his wife or her husband and even obedience to God could not be a reason to abstain during this period. The behaviour and attitude of the society determined the way sexual activity should take place in marriage and it governed the conduct of unmarried people as well. The same attitude also prevailed in the traditional African society where sex was used for a social purpose. African people did not allow any reason for the withholding of sexual activity for the wife by her husband. Mbiti (1969:147) indicates:

In cases where the husband is forced by circumstances to live away from his wife, it may also be arranged by the individuals concerned, and with passive understanding of the community, that a friend (normally of the 'brother' relationship) may go to his wife and have sexual intercourse with her as may be convenient, partly to satisfy her sexual urge and thus preventing her 'going about' with anybody, and partly to fertilize her and raise children for the absent father.

The African people encouraged sexual relationship for the married couples and discouraged it for unmarried people within the society.

There was a shift from free sexual activity within the marriage relationship and celibacy for unmarried people to more restrictions on sexual activity during the Victorian era. Balswick and Balswick (2007:214) contend that:

The Victorians, on the contrary, held many sexual taboos, so it may be more valid to blame some negative attitudes toward sex on them. The Victorian philosophy was to repress anything that appeared to be sexual. For example, not only were people required to cover their arms and legs in public, but even the legs of the living-room sofa and chairs were covered with little skirts. Bare legs on furniture were considered a symbol of sexual immodesty.

The Victorian taboos are also similar to the African attitude toward sexual activity. In both cultures, there was the avoidance of exposing sexual organs or the physical parts of the body that were related to sexual organs. On the matter of nakedness, Mbiti (1969:146) argues in the same vein as Balswick and Balswick (2007). He argues that, for many African people, genitals and buttocks are parts of the body must be carefully covered. Their lack of covering constitutes nakedness in the eyes of traditional African people (Mbiti, 1969:146).

The Victorians made a clear distinction between sexual desire and love. A virtuous man was encouraged to marry a woman because he had pure thoughts, which meant no sexual desire. Husbands were instructed that if they really loved their wives, they would refrain from having sex with them too often, for even in marriage sexual relationships were considered degrading to women (Balswick and Balswick, 2007:214). The same sentiments are shared by Oden (2012) in his book "God and providence: John Wesley's Teaching." Oden maintains that the unwarranted love of the world may appear in the falsehoods of the good gift of sexuality. Fixating human beings love on beloved human creatures whilst not possessing a pure heart grounded in lasting covenant love, degrades the fellow human into an immediate object of fleeting pleasure for oneself. Wesley would admonish spouses not to put a husband or a wife in the place of God, because human beings are created in the image of God, this image gives them the dignity as human beings (Oden, 2012:196).

During this period a young woman with any sexual desire was declared unreasonable. In 1867 the surgeon general of the US declared that nine out of ten of decent women do not feel the slightest pleasure (recreation) in sexual intercourse. There was an opinion that the more a woman yielded to the animal passion of her husband, the more

he would lose respect for that woman. The contradiction between sexual desire and love led to the dual arrangement, a man had his sexual needs met by a bad woman but would marry only a good woman (Balswick and Balswick, 2007:214-215). This attitude would promote extra-marital sexual relationship or in the worse cases of prostitution so that men can meet their sexual desires with bad women and marry good women.

The first half of the twentieth century, especially the 1920s saw a shift from a more strict sexual attitude to a more relaxed sexual attitude. During this period, the attitude steered towards an age of permissiveness with affection. It was now perfectly acceptable to engage in sex, provided both people felt affection for each other. During this period the society was highly obsessed and preoccupied with sex. Women were reduced from multiple facets of womanhood to a single dimension, women were perceived as sexual objects. The so-called Playboy had a great appeal for insecure men who were terrified at the thought of relating to a multidimensional woman. They were instructed how to dress, what music to play, how to mix a drink, and when to turn the light off. In brief, the message was how to get the woman into bed and emerge free of any emotional attachment. Something was radically wrong with a society so obsessed with sex (Balswick and Balswick, 2007:215).

In the 1980s a slight reaction and attitude were resultant from the sexual overexposure of the previous periods. A tendency towards new virginity emerged. The attitude goes back to the puritans' attitude and behaviour towards sex. The Christian young people made a pledge of celibacy before their parents and God with a "promise ring" representing their determination to maintain the chastity until their wedding night. Women began to question what they had bought into with their newfound sexual freedom; many felt their deeper desire for emotional intimacy had been completely sabotaged. University and college students started to demonstrate against abuse of sex, by wearing long red buttons declaring "No" to casual sex. There was no audience on television for sex shows. Sex had lost its appeal as a surprise as well as incentive and people began to rebel against the use of sex for entertainment purposes and recreation. Many took a second look at how sexual freedom challenged sexual relationships (Balswick and Balswick, 2007:215 - 216).

The shift as described by Balswick and Balswick (2007) is more of the parabola movement where the attitude moved from a lower to a higher point then dropped to a lower point again. The attitude of the 1920s emerged again in the 2000s where there was freedom of sex and society became more obsessed about sex like in the 1920s. The researcher has focused on how sex and sexuality were perceived by Western societies throughout history. It is crucial that we have an African perspective on sex and sexuality in the next section of this research study.

In African societies, one enters into sexual activity as a responsible person after thorough training on his or her responsibility and obligations on sexual activities. Mbiti (1969:121) indicates:

Another great significance of the rites (Initiation and Puberty rites) is to introduce the candidates to adult life: they are now allowed to share in the full privileges and duties of the community. They enter into the state of responsibility: they inherit new rights, and new obligations are expected of them by society. This incorporation into adult life also introduces them to the life of the living-dead as well as the life of those yet to be born. The initiation rites prepare young people in matters of sexual life, marriage, procreation and family responsibilities.

In an African context, no one enters into sexual relationships without proper training. The African understanding of the utilisation of sex is multi-dimensional in nature. Sex is not used for biological purposes alone, it has religious and social significance.

The overexposure to sex which is prevailing in the African context is a worrying factor hence the researcher is concerned about the Church's teachings and doctrines regarding sex education and Church doctrine.

Whereas in years gone by, people used to look to the church for guidance on matters of sex, the Church is now more divided than ever on matters of sex. Sex has become a divisive topic. Denominations statements on sex have become more and more unclear, self-contradicting and ambiguous.

2.4. THE ORIGIN OF SEXUALITY

The words: 'woman' and 'female' are derogatory in nature when referring to women as they suggest that she is a womb, an ovary, a female and that is what defines her and therefore this imprisons her to her sex (Parshley & de Beauvoir 1983:35).

Mary Webster defines the female as the sex that produces eggs, she further mentions that a female is designed with a hollow into which a corresponding male part fits. Words associated with a female are gentleness and femininity. Webster defines a male person as one who produces spermatozoa which fertilise the egg of a female. Words synonymous to male are Masculine, manly.

The biological definition and naming of the human is problematic as its very nature limits and imprisons both species to their sexuality. This biological definition further deepens the dilemma of women as not only being a womb but one who must bear and produce offspring. She is like a socket, a recipient, designed for the pleasure of Man and also for receiving his organ and his sperm for the bearing of an offspring who will carry his name. Balswick and Balswick (2007:213) state that:

One becomes a sexual being through a multi-dimensional developmental process. It is evident from social-science research that human sexuality is partly a reflection of the culture within which a person is socialized. We are taught to respond sexually to certain objects and symbols in our environment, and this influences how we define ourselves sexually. Our sexuality is also a product of biological, psychological, and experiential factors. We must resist the temptation to give a simplistic explanation of sexuality, one that relies only on either sociocultural or biological explanations.

It is a fact that human sexuality emerges as part of an interactive development process between biological and sociocultural factors. The interactive development process of sexuality has a bearing on the life of the person at a later stage, for example, the roles of subordination and dominance which are learnt through this process.

These engendered roles of subordination and dominance are roles that are learnt through the process of socialisation. No one grows up with an engendered perspective on life or knowing how they are expected to act as a female or a male but this is learnt behaviour. Parshley and de Beauvoir (1983:297) argues that there is no difference in attitudes between a girl child and a boy child in the 1st four years of their lives and they are treated equally and the same by adults (1983:297). However, as they grow, things begin to change. From both sexes being spoilt with kisses and hugs and adoration,

things change. The boy receives less and fewer kisses and hugs but the girl child receives attention and affection, she is beautified with neat hair and pink ribbons and all things dainty and pretty but the boy is denied this privilege. He is told that. “a man doesn’t ask to be kissed...A man doesn’t look at himself in mirrors... A man doesn’t cry. He is urged to be a little man.” (Parshley & de Beauvoir 1983:298). Is it any wonder then that most women have to relearn survival? Relearn independence and to acknowledge that she is not just a pretty face and relearn her emotional intelligence? Women often have to choose between having a high profile career or maintaining a healthy relationship with a man. In most cases, she is deemed incapable of doing both. It is not a surprise that men see themselves as the dominating sex who must “take care” of the poor fragile woman who is often viewed as disillusioned, unclear of what she wants and whose yes” is a ‘no’ and whose ‘no’ is a ‘yes’.

2.5. BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

In the introduction to his book, “Sex and religion in the Bible,” Carmichael cautions us on going to the narratives of the Bible for answers on sexuality. This, the views would be a profound error (2010: ix). His position is one that I fully support. The Biblical stories recorded in the Bible are examples from people’s lives but also come clothed with the culture of that time and the author’s perspective including stereotypes and biases. The Bible can prove to be problematic especially when approached from opposite ends of the scale of the sexual debates of the 21st Century. The Biblical narrative should be understood from its premise and context.

2.5.1 Sexuality in the Old Testament

Despite interpretation controversies and debates on accuracy and factuality of the creation story as recorded in the book of Genesis, it would be worth our while to look at the record of the events of creation from the Author’s perspective no matter how illogical they may seem. Therefore, according to Genesis 1:28, the main task of human sexuality and expression of such is for the purpose of procreation. Both Christianity and Judaism view this text as laying down our duty which is to ‘procreate’ (Carmichael, 2010:2) with the female being an extension of a man and subservient to him. God made man in his image and woman was made in the image of the man.

If one is to hold a literal view of scripture, then one would come to the conclusion that any expression of sexuality that does not create the ground for procreation is against what humans stand for. The notion that Sexuality must lead to procreation poses problems for those who are unable to bear children. Does the Bible have any room for sex without the purpose of procreation?

Carmichael, however, also deviates from the traditional understanding of Genesis 1:28 and says that the text is not a command to procreate but it is a blessing. He equates the phrase, "Be fruitful and multiply," to the pronouncement of the statement, "Have a nice day," to someone. This is not a command or duty but a blessing which will naturally lead someone to desire to be in the act of procreation (2010:2) There is more to Genesis 8 than what meets the eye especially since it has often been used as the foundation for debates on sexual orientation, identity, the purpose of sex and the role of women as child bearers. The emancipation of sex from procreation is groundbreaking when it comes to the expression of sexuality in the 21st Century.

Sexuality in the Old Testament has to be understood within the context of the Hebrew people as a covenant people of God. According to Cosby, the following rules of God pertaining to sex were crucial for a blessed life as children of God (1984:10). Cosby asserts that the starting place for understanding Biblical sexuality is the book of Deuteronomy as it provides the foundation for biblical sexuality (1984:8). One must be mindful that the society reflected in Deuteronomy was a patriarchal, male-dominated society, where women were viewed as the property of men. A female was under the control of her father; her brother or her husband. Deuteronomy makes no mention of a woman divorcing her husband but makes provision for a man divorcing a woman (Cosby 1984:11). Thus power was granted by a male God to a man to keep or discard of his wife as he saw fit but never the other way around. It is clear that a woman was a secondary member of the community. Cosby further states that sexual activity in the book of Deuteronomy was restricted between husband and wife. He, however, notes something that is still noteworthy in this day and age and that is the fact that there was hardly any mention of the man's virginity in the book of Deuteronomy whilst the virginity of a woman is always a point of discussion. This attitude still prevails till this day and it grants power to men to take advantage of women because their virginity will never be in question. For example, The "Umkhosi womhlanga," translated "the reed dance"

where maidens come out in numbers and are checked for their virginity. The maidens themselves see this as an honour. Never is the virginity of a man under question.

Never is the virginity of a man under question when they come of age and go to the Xhosa 'coming of age' ceremony, "uMeluko." Yet in the Zulu culture, a girl's virginity is under question when she goes to, "uMemulo," the coming of age ceremony. Never is the virginity of a man under question when there are Lobola negotiation and the number of cows' payable for a woman are determined by various factors, amongst them being whether she is a virgin or not, how many children she has. Women live in fear of being found out on their sexual activity whilst men are seen as strong and mighty when they are promiscuous shaming the very same women that are would have taken advantage of without commitment to.

2.6. SEXUAL WHOLENESS IN A BROKEN WORLD

There is a sense in which sexual wholeness must be sought as the current permissive view of sex not only dehumanises women but is also an insult to God the creator.

It would be naive to assume that sexual wholeness in a broken world can occur without the internal liberation of women. There is a sense in which focus needs to be paid on women who have been used as toys for sex so that they may be liberated emotionally, spiritually and institutionally, this means that women need to be empowered and liberated from all patriarchal sexual behaviour.

Ruether proposes that for the liberation of women to take place, there must be an awareness from women on their 'authentic self' which is defined independently from the male species. For this to happen, there has to be a layer by layer stripping off of false consciousness. This is necessary for the restoration of dignity and vital for the

restoration of the wholeness of women and consequently the restoration of sexual wholeness (Ruether,1983:259).

2.6.1 Women in employment and position of power in a patriarchal society

Sharath Souseelya (2017:57) postulates that marriage perceives and implies that female bodies are meant to work. They are expected to be burdened with household duties without rest. This female condition is viewed by men as representing the perfect and ideal woman. Moreover, the work that a woman does in the house is never considered as real work. A woman in most instances has no control over her labour, she may work an 8 to 4 job like the man and yet must return home to make the home comfortable for the man. This entails cooking, cleaning, washing, taking care of the children and whatever needs the man has. There is an expectation for self-sacrifice to the service of man. Furthermore, she has to make sure that the man is sexually satisfied as she has been taught that if she does not satisfy his sexual appetite, he will be at liberty to cheat and it will be her fault. All she labours for sexually, physically, mentally is directed at pleasing the male in her life. For the wholeness of women and transformative sexuality to occur, women must learn to be selfish. Too much of a woman's life is controlled by the desire to slave and labour for the male.

The irony of women's existence is evident in their often mundane existence from time immemorial to today where women have spent years labouring in the home, carrying and raising children. This has left women feeling trapped and subordinate. It is very significant when Ruether uses the imagery of the rape of the earth and its people when speaking of the exploitation of women. The same women who are raped and abused are the same utilised to extract the earth's resources, the rape of the earth (Ruether 1983:263). Those who work in factories behind the scenes in the clothing, textile, electronics and food industries are often women. The raped are used to extract and rape the best off the land and they never gain anything but a meagre salary, it is the few in power who are usually males who gain. Women must be free to utilise the land whilst nurturing it and this liberates them to be themselves.

The subordination of women due to their biological being, cultural expectations and socialisation in highly engendered communities has led to the view that women are

not worthy to be in any position of power. This has meant that patriarchy as socialised by culture, and tradition has infiltrated into even the professional sphere where there is a distinction between which positions are worthy of a man and which are of minimal responsibility and are worthy of a woman.

Zandile, a teacher and headmistress in a school makes the following statement on women in leadership and in power, “For a female, in most cases, if we take leadership positions it’s because we need to prove a point... to show that we are capable and to show that we can actually think and for males it’s as if they want to maintain that it’s them who should be in power. In any case, it is their right to be up there and females down there...” (Harper 2005:50).

The undermining of women is evident in the political scene where women are given lower positions of ward councillor and member of Parliament. It is almost as if there is an unspoken code of conduct and a barrier that says women cannot be in the highest positions. This, of course, is camouflaged by many counter-arguments on the suitability of the candidacy of women when the real issue is the fact that it’s about the sex of the prospective candidate.

The undermining of women is evident even in the church where denomination such as the Roman Catholic Church struggles to ordain women into the office of clergy. The Methodist Church of Southern Africa has ordained women for the past forty years and yet there has only been one female District Bishop in those forty years. There is something about power in the hands of women than men are uncomfortable with. When women are placed in positions of leadership and power, they are watched with the strictest of conditions and any mistake they make is sarcastically viewed as that of a “Typical woman, that is why they should not be given power.”

2.7. POWER IN RELATION TO SEX

Harper (2005:124) defines power as an inclusive action. Power is not excluded to formal institutions and structures but it is everywhere. It can be found in the everyday experience of human beings. The exercise of power needs to extend into every space in our society. This power has an impact on the way in which human beings relate to

each other and to the environment. In the light of the above definition of power, the way women relate with one another and the way women and men relate to one another compels us to explore the subject of power and the distribution and utilisation of power for the purpose of women liberation.

Isherwood and Stuart (1998:23)³ indicate that female desire has been dictated by both male desire and male fear. The manner in which bodies of women are used, abused and are 'supposed to be,' carries a political agenda, which is a sexual power agenda. The sexual power agenda was brilliantly highlighted in the 90s by illustrating how women have been co-opted into their own oppression through sexuality. Jackson (1994:185) illustrates how traditional views of sexuality, that is, the 'missionary sexual position' during intercourse, has a dominance agenda. Furthermore, she claims that the art of love was about securing the consent of the woman to male dominance and submission and eroticising it as natural. In her research, she highlighted how women have to be 'educated' into submission by being taught how to behave and what to feel during sexual intercourse. Furthermore, Jackson (1994:168) she cites a well-known sexologist, who advised that when a woman says 'no', it is only modesty and it is the man's job through his physical or mental power to overcome the woman. Furthermore, she counselled that it was normal to have sex even when a woman was protesting as this was merely conscious resistance while her unconscious instinct would be to want intercourse. The same argument of the 'missionary position' during sex as the most natural, was pursued by many churches as it combines the male desire to conquer with the female desire to be conquered. Males wish to possess women and women are grateful to the males for doing so (Jackson, 1994:168). This was the generally accepted norm in the society, that male desire needed to be satisfied in all instances, even when women are not in a position to participate willingly in such activities. The women who resist this norm were perceived as unnatural and placed in dysfunctional categories, frigid, lesbian, spinster and prude. Does going against the norm entail labels and abnormality? When women allow being aroused by men it meant that they acknowledged being conquered which is the natural and normal way to be. Orgasm overcomes the final barriers of resistance and so the 'unnatural' woman tries to avoid it (Isherwood and Stuart, 1998:24). Jackson (1994:175) argue in the same vein:

³ Isherwood, L and Stuart, E. 1998. *Introducing Body Theology*. Sheffield: Sheffield academic Press Ltd

Her instinct to dominate is stronger than her sex hunger; she wants, while being subjected, to remain unconquered...poor woman; she does not know that it is precisely by renouncing the strongest element of her personality that she preserves the essence of femininity.

Women have always been stripped off their power. Men have socially had the liberty to be robust in character, dominating and strong while girls from a young age, are encouraged to be timid, polite and reserved. In whatever sphere or arena of their life that a man goes to, he can exude his dominating, driven and robust, persona. Women juggle their emotions, juggle their persona, juggle their priorities in order to be accepted in society, work and home. This takes away woman power in the world of politics, economy, education, social and ecclesiological spheres. For example, at home, a woman is a mother and a nurturer. She runs around sacrificing her own comfort for the well-being of her husband and her children. At work, if she is in a managerial position, her persona changes, she takes charge and may even be afraid and uncertain at times because it is after all difficult to separate her home and work persona. With her in-laws, no matter how liberated she is, no matter how educated she is, she becomes someone totally different. Her worth is weighed by the level of, "respect" displayed to her in-laws. Note that this respect is not the normally expected courtesy but it includes obedience to anything and everything without negotiation as expected by the in-laws who have after all paid a dowry for her. Therefore, women are powerless and owned by their partners through marriage.

Sharath Souseelya (2017:56) postulates that the female body is fabricated with the notion of ideal womanhood. It not solely controls a woman's normal bodily appetite but also monitors her role, identity, space, mobility, growth, reproducibility and sexuality. The notion of ideal womanhood subjects a woman to several levels of control: self-control of the senses and desires, which would mean self-control over every kind of bodily appetite, generating the ability to suffer and sacrifice. The concept of an ideal woman that self-regulates is visible in the roles of wife and mother. The institution of marriage promotes the impression that a woman's body is the property of man. In the patriarchal society, for example, Indian and African societies, the husband and wife relationship is visible as that of an owner and servant. Almost all religions of patriarchal culture reinforce the view of man's complete ownership of the woman's body through marriage. Their expected control of woman's womb means the subjugation of her person. From a person, she becomes property to be bought and sold, passed on from

her father to her husband for the price of two oxen ploughs (Ruether 1983:261). The husband is the custodian of her body, she, however, needs to be careful of the way she dresses, behaves, and generates life. In brief what a woman does with her body is decided by male norms (Sharath Souseelya, 2017:56).

Isherwood and Stuart (1998:25) postulate that the sexologists in the early part of the 20th century were interested in educating the vagina and by so doing naturalising the claims they made about sex, power, dominance and at times, violence. A few Sexologists of that time acknowledged the existence and the potential of the clitoris. It was generally felt that it had a role in sexual intercourse. This role was inconsequential for white women. Sexism and racism are once again convenient partners in the debates about what is natural. The more mature sexual response was from the vagina, an idea that Freud developed in his theory pondering on the nature of women. Sherwood and Stuart argue that the clitoris was differently located in white and black women explained why the more infantile, wild and animalistic responses of black women during sexual intercourse; would be quite unsuitable for a well brought up white lady (Sherwood and Stuart, 1998:25). This might be the influence of the Victorian culture in terms of sexual activities for women, and the good training of the African initiation school that teach women how to behave during sexual activities.

Sexual activism for women is the sign of power or counter-power of men. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:25) argue that in the 20th-century women were encouraged to be more active sexually instead of being sex objects. They should even initiate sexual activities. Jeffreys (1990:3) argues in the opposite direction from Isherwood and Stuart (1998:25) when he reminds us that the sexual revolution has not freed women. For the reason, what is defined as 'liberated' still carries a male and patriarchal agenda. She sees sexual revolution with some regret since the sexual revolution masks the dominance agenda that was so blatant in the 1950s. Freudian therapists and others in the 1950s were quite clear that once a woman acknowledged she was conquered through intercourse she would no longer nag or attempt to assert her will in domestic affairs (Jeffreys, 1990:3). Furthermore, research and common sense also teach us that the majority of women do not find it a turn-on to be degraded and abused. What is greatly worrying about the sexual revolution is that it has simply made women more available on male terms. One's position in society is conveyed via body exploration.

Women are still being encouraged to learn the age-old patriarchal narrative: be fucked, be joyful and be silent about their feelings. Feminist sexual practice not only requires a critique of the way that sex is used in a patriarchal society but also needs a commitment to exploring a model of mutuality between equals. Men and women have to find ways to make mutuality sexy in order to replace the eroticisation of female domination and in so doing overcome the alienation people suffer from people self (Isherwood and Stuart,1998:25).

In history, the escape from the male power and dominance was seen through gender transformation specifically from female to lesbianism in the 1970s. Lesbianism, therefore, has a political motive which is to escape from the patriarchal society' pressure. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:25) indicate that many feminists in the 1970s became political lesbians. Jeffreys the author of the book '*The Lesbian heresy*' (1994) maintains that they understood the danger involved in the patriarchal construction of sexuality and attempted to place themselves outside patriarchal construction. Jeffreys (1994) observes how the good days of lesbian feminism are in decline due to patriarchal pressure on this group of people. Younger lesbians have left the political idealism of their fore-sisters and bought into the male construction of sexuality as dominance or submission which is mainly prevalent in the male gay environment. Lesbians were coopted into the dominant myth without its obvious societal benefits. The role-playing is not of the revolutionary, where the butch lesbian was not a heterosexual replica but a woman who took responsibility in the world around her. A major responsibility was to give sexual pleasure to women. In the 1950s, having the courage to arouse another woman was regarded as a political act. It was a way of being outside the sexual boundaries and prescriptions of power, to hear a woman through her body, to take notice of female desire. Further, it was a challenge to traditional understanding since the butch, while the sexual aggressor in terms of being the one who made the running sexually, was concerned with her partner's pleasure more than with her own pleasure. The political system of the day made it difficult for the couple in this relationship to survive economically. Since the female was the one who would provide economically since the butch often found it hard to be employed. Taking notice of female desire in this way was and still be revolutionary (Isherwood and Stuart,1998:25).

For Butler (1990) a lesbian is not a woman since a woman, is defined by patriarchy, which is a binary opposition to the man. A lesbian wishes no relation with a man and therefore is placed outside the narrow definitions of sex and gender, refusing to be the 'other'. A lesbian is in a place where she can create a new reality if she understands her radical potential. The radical lesbian identity is although lost in normative sexual domination. The power imbalance that such categories suggest, bears no resemblance to feminist ideals. For patriarchy to exist at all cost, there must be an unequal power relation. The child learns this pattern in the home and the wife has it reinforced in the marital bed. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:27) postulates:

We are, it seems, made susceptible to patriarchy at our mother's knee, in the bosom of our Christian families and in our most intimate acts. It is this susceptibility that lesbian feminism felt could immunize us against and it is this lost chance that Jeffreys and others mourn when they view the introduction of patriarchal patterns into the lesbian lifestyle. Empowerment experienced through intimate equality they felt could just change the world. Of course, not all women adopt lesbianism as a political stance.

Most feminists do understand that there is no penetration that takes place in isolation. Each occurs in a system of relationships that is male supremacy. As no individual woman can be liberated under male supremacy, so no act of penetration can escape its function and its symbolic power (Griffin, Hester, Rai and Rosneil, 1994). This shifts the discussion to the power of penetration.

The power of penis and penetration is evident in English law. Whenever one doubts the symbolic power of the penis and penetration, one only has to look at British law and popular culture. It is stated that it is only penetration by a penis that makes a woman an adulteress. Rape can only be defined by penetration no matter how violent or awful the sexual assault may be. The power of the penis and penetration is so huge that the act consummates marriages in Christianity. Penetration makes a man feel powerful and mature. The ability to penetrate makes the boy into a man, with all the attendant privileges. The power they feel can turn men into rapists (Isherwood and Stuart, 1998:27). Furthermore, they indicate that:

The language that describes penetration also gives a hint as to its symbolic function. A woman is fucked, screwed, poked, taken, had, given one. This is not the language of equality. When such a fleeting act holds so much power, to define it needs to be critiqued.

Women need to remain wild and free, to be undomesticated by the power inherent in phallogocentric sex. For women to achieve this freedom and wildness they have to find a place of strength in themselves, a place that is called virginity. The virgin is never captured or subdued. Women need to utilise the power they have to overcome the male dominance within the patriarchal society.

Ruether brings to light the subjugation of the womb (Ruether 1983: 260). Women have been raised to be passive to the extent that it is viewed as an abnormality for a woman to choose her own sexual partner. As previously mentioned, she is expected to stay a virgin until she is handed over to her husband by her father and in most cases at a wedding ceremony officiated by a man. In the Zulu culture, during the *lobola* negotiations, a mother is paid handsomely for keeping her daughter pure for her husband. This incentive is desirable and yet it makes sure that the pattern of control over a woman's womb is passed down from generation to generation without fail, by mothers who believe that they are doing their best whilst they are perpetuating control over women and the expression of their sexuality. Control over her body and decisions around her body must be stripped. Ruether further problematises the scriptural notion that women were created from a man's rib, to serve him and be his helper (Ruether 1983:260).

These arguments from Isherwood and Stuart (1998) and others were built on body politics which leads to body theology or body religion which sheds light on how to bring equal power to men and women who have sexual intercourse. Body politics exposes the underlying power games at work in sexuality and society and by so doing have become a source of inspiration and liberation for many who are still in the dark about this power game. Sharath Souseelya (2017:63) provides counter-power from a woman's perspective. This counter-power is to free themselves from the patriarchal domination and power game. She indicates that the feminist needs to assess the female body as a site of agency and transformation despite the patriarchal socio-cultural context. It is the duty of the woman to repel the patriarchal construction of the female body and redefine her body by the standards of self-assertion and dignity. Women must emphasise the importance of critical awareness of self as a form for resistance to patriarchal power. Theoretically, this approach has drawn from Foucault. Critical awareness not only enacted resistance but also reconstructed the self.

Similarly, the idea of critical awareness in suggesting a 'revisioning of femininity' as a way towards a more positive body image. Furthermore, women must be courageous to reclaim their right as living human beings rather than objects to be controlled by powerful men in a patriarchal society. Women need to develop the courage to deconstruct the ideologies of virginity, chastity, motherhood, and widowhood, which deny their natural bodily appetite and identity, which form the inherent part of their organic entity. Women need to refuse to be mere vessels that carry children, and reclaim their womb and relocate the barren bodies. Women should thus seek to discover the ascription of sacredness in the rituals which construct the natural bodily processes of women which are often deemed as impure, disorderly, and abnormal. This is possible only when women become agencies for their transformation and they exercise power from within.

The power referred to is the power-from within, which is the power of the ability to engage. It is creative, and hence it is an effective and transforming power without being as controlling power as the patriarchal power. This is the power that women should exercise to reclaim their bodies. Discovering this power is possible within the Christian religion that is not corrupted by the socio-cultural context. There is a necessity to view Christianity as an incarnational religion that claims to set captives free, that tells humankind that it is a religion of liberation. Yet we are conscious that Christianity often underpins many of the restrictive practices that body politics expose. In some cases, Christianity has been the instigator of these practices because of its dualistic vision of the world. This religion self contradicts as it emphasises human dignity as all human beings are created in the image of God whilst being the instigator of oppression. The next section will explore human dignity in relation to sex and power with contemporary society.

2.8. THE NOTION OF HUMAN DIGNITY IN RELATION TO SEXUALITY

Human beings, before becoming sexual beings, should have dignity. Hence it is important to define and clarify the concept of human dignity before the researcher engages with the definition of sex and power. Human dignity is a concept that has captured the attention of theologians, philosophers, scholars and jurists alike. It is the

concept used mainly when handling difficult issues of marginalised human beings. Defining human dignity without defining what the human being is, will not serve the purpose of this research study. Panagopoulos (2016:75) defines the human being as the constitution of the expression of God's image. In this sense, we draw the dignity of human beings from the dignity of human beings as the crown of creation in the image of God. Since the ancient era, thinkers from a wide variety of interdisciplinary fields have explored the notion of human dignity, its ramifications, and its effects on civilised society and church. Even though theologians and scholars have participated in this discourse with increased attention in recent times, the notion of the role of human dignity within society and church circles is still an under-explored topic.

Claassens, Swartz and Hansen (2013:7) indicate that the belief that human dignity belongs to all people regardless of factors such as skin colour, gender, social status, physical or mental capabilities and sexual orientation constitutes a basic element of religious belief that can be recovered and employed in order to move the dialogue away from the achievement or usefulness value in assessing human worth. The fact that dignity is seemingly becoming a more 'vital and vibrant' precept, means the time has arrived to explore what is meant by human dignity and, more significantly, whether and/or how this meaning can be imported into the church and societal structure that deals with sex and power in a democratic South Africa.

Kavanaugh (1970:82) declares that the fact of being human creates a desire to propel the structures, values and demands that make freedom possible. Being human therefore compels everybody to enhance that freedom. It will be of substantial value to this study, to relate people to the sexuality of human beings. Viewing the challenges of sexuality as intrinsic to the nature of humanity and acceptance of these challenges as God's plan is of value. Furthermore, Fillmore (1931:158) indicates that the human being is a part of the creative process of expressing the divine ideal. When a human being knows himself or herself as the perfect offspring of a divine mind, he/she then expresses the perfection of the creation of God. It is therefore of paramount importance to define what a human being is? A Human being is the image of God, the perfect God. This definition includes women as human beings who are the image of God.

Furthermore, any action or decision a church, social club or society or individual can take regarding the sexuality of women, their sexual activity or relationships, or the sex-power game, should bear in mind that what is at stake is the question of human dignity. In the early world, the term *Dignitas* (dignity) signified a person's place and part in the society. One's value as a human being was determined by the status of one's *Dignitas* or social position. When the concept *Dignitas* was analysed by early Christian thinkers, its meaning altered fundamentally. Dignity was now viewed as something that fits equally to all since it is not based on someone's social standing, but on the fact that he or she is an object of God's love and concern (Brand 2013:71–72). Furthermore, Brand (2013) argues that, by contrast, many theologians have postulated that dependence and vulnerability as such, are not to be regarded as undignified, and can even be viewed as reflective expressions of human dignity. In order to understand dependence and weakness, people should not value it for its own sake, but for its function within a broader and dynamic context of relationality. The church or society does not grant dignity on its members and on every child of God but is called merely to recognise, celebrate, proclaim and act according to that dignity. The responsibility of the church is to recognise and respect the dignity that is already and always there from God. It is God who bestows his dignity upon human beings because they are his very own created beings. Wolterstorff (2008) even claims that the most renowned theistic rationale for human dignity, namely, that humans are created in the image of God, is an insufficient basis for human dignity. This is the condition, because the *imago Dei* concept has, for some, the ideal functioning of a perfect human being with various capacities in mind. He maintains that human dignity finds its strongest and most adequate basis in the love of God. He utilises Augustine's identification of three types of love to describe divine love which is the foundation of human dignity. Human dignity is something that is given to all humanity by God, and the church and the world need to recognise what is already given by God. In this sense, the respect for sex and sexual activity as human capacity is for all humanity regardless of their physical appearance, challenges and gender. Sex is a gift from God that needs to be recognised as such, when a human beings enters into sexual activity he/she must realise that participants in this activity are the image of God, one participant should see the other one as the image of God and love that person as he or she loves God. Sexual activity is a dignified act because human beings who participate in this activity are human beings with human dignity. The next section will focus on John Wesley's

view of sex and sexuality in his theology as well as his teachings in the Methodist Church. The researcher will start with a brief history of John Wesley.

2.9 JOHN WESLEY'S POINT OF VIEW ON HOLINESS AND THE WHOLENESS OF HUMAN LIFE

The period in which John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, lived was from 17 June 1703 – 2 March 1791 in England. He came from a family of fifteen children and grew up to become an Anglican cleric. He is the founder of Methodism which started as a movement and has become a large Church within the protestant family. This large church within the protestant church and patriarchal society have also influenced the interpretation of scripture and the traditions of the church.

2.9.1 The life of entertainment during the time of John Wesley

During his time, John Wesley saw entertainment in four dimensions, wine, gambling, music and adultery, hence he used this notion: "Champagne, Dice, Music, or your Neighbour's Spouse." These were a way of life during John Wesley's time. The reason the researcher chooses to utilise a Wesleyan perspective in this research study is because of his theology of Scriptural-sociological holiness, which called for scriptural holiness and social holiness. His context is also worth our exploration as it holds significant similarities to our context. It is within a context of great economic challenges, great exploitation of the poor, a huge gap between the haves and the have nots, a context of shallow religion and empty spirituality and a - context of immorality, lack of dignity for human life where Wesley emerges and speaks on holiness and calls on people to evaluate their sexual practices and behaviour using the quadrilateral which consists of Scripture, tradition, reason and experience. This theological model was certainly appropriate in Wesleyan times. These times were characterised by **"Champagne, Dice, Music, or your Neighbour's Spouse"** *John Wesley and sanctification* (<http://www.victorshepherd.on.ca/Wesley> accessed on 23 March 2017 at 09:00).

Note that the neighbour's spouse is posed as the last resort for self-entertainment and there is nothing that exceeds this. It seems that a person would seek entertainment and fulfilment through champagne first and drown themselves in alcohol in search of pleasure. Alcoholism was rife at this time. Failure to find satisfaction in alcohol would lead one to a grade higher and entertainment would be sought in through gambling. The poorest of the poor lost their hard-earned earnings in gambling and if that did not satisfy them, then the neighbour's spouse offered the highest ecstasy for the thrill-seeking person. This, of course, suggests that the abuse of sex and the usage of power to acquire sex were rife. It would be naïve to only blame the male counterpart as this was a mutually constructed scenario.

On the matter of champagne, dice or your partner's spouse, there are parallels between our context and Wesley's context hence the usage of the quadrilateral for the purposes of this research. The problem of "champagne" or alcoholism in South Africa is increasing and with it results in many socio-economic and relational problems. According to an update from the World Health Organisation, after tracking alcohol consumption over 194 countries, South Africa is ranked in the top 20 of drinking nations in the world. South Africa is also the third-highest drinking nation in Africa. *South Africa alcohol consumption vs the world.* (<https://businesstech.co.za> Accessed 23 March 2017 at 13:05).

The problem of compulsive gambling in South Africa is also on the rise. This problem has even led to an increase in suicide attempts by gamblers. It is estimated that 22% of problem gamblers have attempted suicide and 52% are already thinking of taking their lives at the time of seeking help. "*Montecasino death highlights high suicide risk amongst problem gamblers.*" (<http://www.timeslive.co.za>. Accessed on 10 March 2017). The social ills during Wesley's time correspond with our current times in South Africa and are just the highlights that sometimes contribute to sexual activity or abuse.

The phenomena of spouses cheating, adultery and infidelity of spouses are evident in the rising rate of divorce. According to Business Tech, "53 per cent of marriages are solemnised at the department of home affairs (where 75 per cent end up in divorce); 30 per cent are religious (20 per cent end up in divorce); 17 per cent are unspecified

(4.3 per cent end up in divorce). (*8 things you probably didn't know about divorce in South Africa*) (<https://businesstech.co.za> Accessed 25 March 2017).

The rising rate of fractured families and single parenting in South Africa can also be the direct or indirect result of promiscuity. It is estimated that only 33 per cent of children in South Africa live with both their parents. The rise of services such as cheating spouse investigators, cell phone spy software, track and trace and many other investigative services including the popular TV show, "cheaters" are all signs that our times are filled with sexual entertainment which may or may not be an abuse of power.

2.9.2 The quadrilateral

John Wesley once stated that "Christianity is essentially a social religion and that to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it...When I say this is essentially a social religion, I mean not only that it cannot subsist so well, but that it cannot subsist at all, without society-without living and conversing with other men." "*The Sermons of John Wesley - Sermon 24 Upon Our Lord's Sermon On The Mount: Discourse Four.*" (<http://wesley.nnu.edu/> Accessed on 24 March 2017 at 13:38)

This quote from John Wesley bears testament to his theology, a firm theology grounded in scripture whilst being an expression of "Heart-religion." (Thorsen, 1990:15). Wesley's theological ideas, grounded in scripture, were cognizant of his context and yet significant in his context and social reality. Even though he believed in scriptural religion, he was very much for holistic theological reflection. It is for the above reason that his theological approach implored Scripture, tradition, reason and experience as a methodology.

It is a point to note that Wesley did not coin his approach as a methodology or name it as the quadrilateral but that it was a modern approach and summary of his tools that led to the coinage of the term, "Wesleyan quadrilateral." It was Outler in the 1960s who coined the term. (Thorsen, 1990: 21). Wesley was simply allowing a process of theological reflection and did not expect that the quadrilateral would become a geometrical formula that would limit our theological reflection and understanding.

Noteworthy is the fact that the quadrilateral is not absolute but is simply a method. The method originates from the Greek word *Methodos* broken down as such: (*Meta*, “After, “and *hodos*, “road, or way” (Thorsen, 1990:31). One is convinced that the Methodology is simply a method, a way, a road to get to a particular destination. There are many other Methodologies which could have been utilised for the purpose of this study. As in any Methodology, there are points of dialogue which may lead the user of the methodology to a point of critiquing and even affirming of the tool. Let us now turn our attention to the quadrilateral in relation to the topic of sex and power in light of women liberation. Is the quadrilateral helpful and liberative to women on this particular matter? Let us explore what each step of the quadrilateral means in relation to sex, power and women liberation.

2.9.3 Scripture

Thorsen (1990:77) argues that Scripture was considered by John Wesley as the primary source of religious authority (Thorsen, 1990:77). It is crucial that we operate from this premise in our attempt to understand and utilise the quadrilateral. All his theological ideas were not intended to go in direct contradiction and violation of Scripture. There is a temptation for the user of this methodology to make reason, experience and even tradition supreme over Scripture. This was not Wesley’s intention. Scripture was revealed truth and in no ways is the quadrilateral intended to reduce the truth of scripture. Tradition, reason and experience are meant to enhance the revelation of scripture. In a letter to James Hervey, Wesley wrote, “I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the holy scriptures” (Thorsen, 1990:127). In addition, Wesley wrote, “All scripture is inspired by God -The Spirit of God not only once inspired those who wrote it but continually inspires and supernaturally assists, those that read it with earnest prayer. Hence it is profitable for doctrine, for the instruction of the ignorant, for the reproof or conviction of them that are in error or sin, for the correction or amendment of whatever is amiss, and for instructing or training up children of God in all righteousness. (Thorsen, 1990: 129).

Wesley was not oblivious to the flawed nature of scripture resultant from translation and canonisation and yet he chose to focus on the content of the gospel is the salvation of human beings as critical in his reading and usage of scripture. It may seem like an easy task to forget the complexities of scripture but in light of the liberation of

women, the flawed nature of scripture cannot be brushed aside. Amongst the problems posed by scripture to the task of the liberation of women are the following:

- Scripture is a document loaded with power and yet unreliable

Douglas maintains that sexuality in scripture has and continues to be in evolution. Pre-Christian Hebrew life showed little tendency toward perceiving the body as an impediment to spirituality. Sexuality apparently was appreciated as a gift from the living God of justice (Douglas, 1999:25). With the influence of Greek culture, Christianity emphasised duality more than unity. There were Body and Spirit and an emphasis on the spirit more than the body. This has down the centuries, contributed to the lack of respect and sanctity for the human body because the spirit is the component of worship and body temporal. The point that I am illustrating here is that the Bible is loaded with power and yet cannot be trusted. It is clothed with the culture of the Greco-Roman world and is fraught with ambiguities that are dependent on the interpreter. Modise (1999:13) argues that feminist theologians feel that the priority given to males in Scriptures, promotes male-domination, exploitation and oppression of women. Since God had revealed Himself in the scripture in the masculine gender, radical feminists argued that this is a clear indication that the Bible teaches that women should be submissive to and dependent on men. These concepts of submission and dependence create a serious challenge for women of the present dispensation (Modise, 1999:13). It is unreliable in the sense that its truth is subjective and dependent on the interpreter. That is very dangerous because it is often used as a tool to oppress especially women.

- A Man's world

The Bible is perceived as the patriarchal source. Though argued that God is Spirit, the dominant view is that God is male. Growing up with religious pictures and symbols at home and at Church constantly reminded me of the maleness of God. "God is male" and he is worshipped. Therefore an unuttered theme in the Bible is that all that is male is supreme and must be worshipped. Without going into hermeneutical tools, the creation myth of Genesis 2 continues to be taught and preached at the foundation phase of one's faith and at weddings. The story remains a myth and yet due to the fact

that it is contained in the Bible, it has come to form the basis of many young women's understanding of themselves in relation to man. The summary of this story is that women were created as helpers to men. This understanding of oneself is oppressive to women.

The perspective of the feminists on the scriptures is very critical and almost rejecting if, not quarter accepting the truth of the Bible due to the misuse of this inspired word of God by a patriarchal society. Sharath Souseelya (2017:63) indicates that the Scriptures were corrupted by the patriarchal control over knowledge and power. The conventional perception was formed by the one-sided interpretations of the scripture on the notion of the female body. This kind of interpretations of the scripture is not surprising, because the Bible is always utilised as a tool to support patriarchal violence and abuse. In fact, the Bible itself is the product of a patriarchal culture and expressed in androcentric language. The Bible was born and bred in a land of patriarchy and abounded in male imagery and language. It ignores the experiences of women, sustains women's powerlessness, and insists on the silence of women even in the circumstances of terror, extreme violence, abuse, discrimination, and marginalisation. The Bible socialises women to be silent, to adjust and accept the second position which will turn into violence and harassment within normal family relations or even in the larger work and social contexts (Sharath Souseelya, 2017:63). In most cases, the churches do not read, interpret and preach the full gospel from Scripture. An over-emphasising reconciliation (salvation) over against other sense-making from the scripture makes the bible problematic and subject to the reader's interpretation and application. According to Van Niekerk (2006:373) many churches including the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and their theological advocates:

“One-sidedly emphasizes either a quarter, half, three-quarters or, rarely, a full gospel:

- A quarter-version of the foursome Gospel message amounts to an exclusive emphasising of either Jesus Christ (reconciliation) of the Holy Spirit (renewal) or God the creator (creation) or God the fulfiller of everything (consummation), or
- a half-version of the foursome Gospel message amounts to an exclusive emphasising of either creation (nature) and reconciliation (grace, re-creation), or reconciliation (Word = Jesus Christ) and renewal (Spirit), or renewal (Spirit) and reconciliation (Word = Jesus Christ), or reconciliation (Jesus Christ) and consummation (Apocalyptic/prophetic future events), or renewal (Spirit) and consummation (apocalyptic/prophetic future events), or

- a three-quarter version of the foursome Gospel message amounts to an exclusive emphasising of any three of the foursome grand acts of God, or
- a full gospel message is seldom encountered in the church-centred divine or semi-divine churches and the deliberations of their theologicistic spokespersons.”

This is the case with the handling of women or females as human beings, the under-emphasis of creation or anthropology in the theology of churches it creates space for the society to misuse the Bible due to sectional reading of the Bible. In addressing this problem while dealing with the scripture as John Wesley has intended in his quadrilateral method, it will be important to note how feminists intend to approach the Bible. Sharath Souseelya (2017:64) suggests the following ways:

- Rereading the scripture: The scripture has to be reread based on the concept of “Liberation” considering the neglected voices and experiences of women.
- Reinterpreting of the scripture: the reinterpretations should not be limited to a fixed written text. Scripture has to be interpreted in terms of the present socio-cultural, and political struggles.
- Re-telling the stories: it is one of the strategies that give voice to women and which re-creates their dialogues. Understanding the boundaries of the text can be told many times in different ways depending on the situation. Women can be the narrators of the text and the stories reclaim women as subjects with their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- Inclusive language: Androcentric language and images, including metaphors of a masculine God, can be re-shaped and replaced by inclusive language and images. The liturgies of androcentric language have to be changed into that of inclusive language.
- Indigenous traditions: Adapting the feminine image of the Divine from indigenous traditions will help to overcome the one-sided and androcentric portrayal of the divine.
- Unbiased Sermons: the sermons should be preached with stress on equality, peace, and liberation.
- Formation of holistic theology: A new holistic theology has to be formed that deconstructs the myths that humiliate and marginalize the female body on the basis of patriarchal values.

- Participation of women: A greater opportunity for women's leadership and participation at all levels and in decision-making on the structure and life of the church and society should be provided.

The points highlighted above will assist the oppressor and the oppressed to approach the scriptures from the same level and equal standing as equal images of God. The approach to sex and power should be viewed from the same lenses and equal footing because the understanding of the scriptures should be derived from the experiences of the male and the female.

However, Wesley did not feel enslaved to scripture or viewed it as authoritarian (Thorsen, 1990: 77). In fact, the usage of other tools such as tradition, reason, and experience attest to the fact that other sources could be utilised to get to a fuller understanding of the truth of God. At the same time, one needs to critically discuss other sources without forgetting that all spheres of life are corrupted by the patriarchal influences from the Graeco-Roman philosophies.

2.9.4 Tradition

For Wesley, the Wesleyan movement did not shoot out as an isolated occurrence or discovery. There was no solo religion but is stemmed from a long line of Christian tradition dating back to the apostles and Church fathers. As part of our discourse one is forced to ask the question, "What happened to the church Mothers and female apostles? Why is our theology shaped mainly by males? He understood Christian tradition in the following manner: Old religion, Religion of the Bible, Religion of the primitive Church, Religion of the Church of England and Methodism" (Thorsen, 1990: 153).

Therefore Wesley had a deep respect and belief in the doctrines passed down to his generation. He had a deep respect for the writings, doctrines and testimonies of the primitive Church and ignored these in his interpretation of scripture and life. He was part of this great tradition and this was evident in his refusal to separate from the Church of England of which he died a member of.

His reverence for the great tradition he belonged to caused him to be very theologically flexible, tolerant and open-minded because he believed that God has continued to reveal Himself in Church tradition throughout the ages. His tolerance and ability to accommodate traditions different to his very own and yet maintain the integrity of his doctrine is admirable and is one that the 21st-century church which is booming with new traditions daily can adopt. He viewed his very liberal theology as very unique and yet essential for ecumenism. (Thorsen, 1990:160). Wynkoop suggests that our very approach to Wesley may be problematic; we approach Wesley expecting to find a static set of rules and principles whilst Wesley was very flexible in his theology. He held on to the traditional truth and one is led to believe that this truth was never rigid to such an extent that it was falsified by his context. (Wynkoop, 1972:66).

The problem with tradition is, it can be primitive, and very narrow. Church traditions, for example, cannot always be transported intergenerationally without context. Traditions are also not always true but are a pattern of behaviour and thought which have been exercised over and over again to the extent that they seem like truth. Depending on the distribution of power, traditions can be shaped by the powerful and when carried down and indoctrinated as truth, they can be very oppressive. When one speaks of tradition, one is speaking of the way the church is doing its things and thinking as influenced by scripture. It is already alluded to in the previous paragraphs that, the scriptures were corrupted by the patriarchal socio-cultural context. Sharath Souseelya (2017:61) indicates:

The ecclesial view and Christian tradition of the theology of the body are very paradoxical. Throughout the history of Christianity, the female body is viewed as inferior, a source of sin and a threat to man's spirituality. Christianity under the philosophical dualism negated the body as something low while exalting the soul as high. This theology views the female body as a dangerous source of uncleanness and the "arsonists of sacred places" It is also considered as the entity competing with God in winning souls of men. With this was connected to the whole interpretation of the story of Genesis wherein the woman becomes the tempting Eve, deflecting man from his spiritual pursuit. This stage led to the emergence of a body-denying theology.

Tradition is always built on the interpretation of Scriptures. It built the church tradition, hence the researcher questions the appearance of the women in the history of the church. The interpretation of scriptures as explained above by Sharath Souseelya

(2017) has a bearing on the tradition of the church. The Biblical interpreters shape the tradition of the church and also shape the image of women in theology in patriarchal terms and denounce women in strong terms as wicked and inferior. One of the prominent beliefs of medieval Christianity was the promotion that women are responsible for Sin in the world. They are a continuing source of sin in the world since women seduce men away from the “heights” of mind and spirit to a low concern for physical satisfaction and pleasure. The medieval Christian philosophers and theologians like Thomas Aquinas propagated the idea that women are more sensual than men and more oriented toward the functions and the appetite of human the body. Aquinas formulated his argument based on Greek ideas and added that women are “defective human beings.” As a result, the fear of women and their power to cause lust and sin in men permeated theology. The female body was equated with insatiable sexuality and identified as the source of irrational demonic temptation. At a particular point in time in Christian history, women were kept out of public gaze because the very sight of the woman’s body would arouse in men lust, causing discord, violence, adultery, and revenge (Sharath Souseelya, 2017:61-62). Hence Wesley was concerned about adultery (neighbour’s spouse) because the medieval Christian thinking had also affected his thinking and his thinking has shaped his tradition which in one way or the other has impacted on the exclusion of women from ministry and leadership in the church for a very long time in the history of the church.

2.9.5 Reason

Wesley believed that religion and reason go hand in hand. (Thorsen, 1990:169). His understanding and usage of reason as a theological tool for interpretation was deeply founded in the doctrine of creation. Wesley believed that Human beings were created in the image of God, though having fallen, they still possessed the God-image and are image-bearers.

Human beings, therefore, unlike all other innate and inanimate beings are able to reason and deduce their own conclusion after consideration of posed facts. This God-bearer, therefore, is able to reason and possess free will, which is the ability to choose between wrong and right and having no interference from God to follow a particular

route or follow a course of action. Human beings have been endowed with the power to reason and think logically.

Human beings are therefore not just physical but they are personal beings. They are able to relate to their environment be it positively or negatively and they are able to formulate an opinion on other individuals and surroundings. This makes them dynamic and rational beings because of they the ability to formulate an opinion, which may at one stage or another change. (Wynkoop, 1972: 81). Being fully aware of the God-bearing nature of the human being and ability to reason, Wesley was also aware of humanity's inability to live out this Godly nature at times. He was aware of the sinful nature of human beings. Our reasoning does not remain untarnished by the sinful nature in us. Our reasoning is also shaped by our socialisation and social constructs. Most times we become what we are exposed to.

2.9.6 Experience

Wesley called his religious methodology, "Experimental," meaning that the relationship between religion and experience could not be ignored. (Thorsen, 1990: 202). Wesley guarded against the threat of conforming to traditional religion that had no "heart religion" and connection to people's experiences hence he opted for experimental religion. Scripture offers various narratives on the lives of people in the Biblical world but these mean nothing if people do not have an experience of this divine truth and revelation of God through the Holy Spirit. According to Thorsen, this experiential religion contains empirical knowledge which involves observations, facts, concrete situations. Experiential knowledge involves insights and/or information derived from personal or interpersonal experiences (1990:204). However, Wesley was aware of the limited nature of experience. No one can understand another person's internal experience and therefore experience ought to be tested against scripture.

For a woman seeking liberation from the power play of an abusive sexual relationship, the experience is everything. In fact, her experience does not even need to be validated by scripture because of the unreliability of scripture as previously stated. Does this methodology, when applied to the matter of liberation of women, nullify women's experiences or does it liberate women?

2.9.7 The quadrilateral as transformational

What is the use of theological reflection if it does not lead to transformation? The methodology utilised by Wesley was very powerful but begs the question: What social change did it perform during its times? What are the limits to which we can push the Church, the State and the public in terms of socio-political and economic matters whilst utilising this methodology?

It is a point to note that Wesley was very conservative in his view of the State. He believed that the state and the King were chosen by God and that their authority should not be challenged. Although He had a methodology, he made very little use for it because he would not oppose the State. He believed that the State's power was derived from God and is absolute and unquestionable. This made it easier for him to take sides with the existing order. (Marquardt, 1992:133).

If we are to be Wesleyan to the core then this understanding of the State will not prove helpful at all. In fact, it needs to be eradicated especially when it comes to the subject of sex and power. Responsible theology that leads to ethical citizenship must be allowed to shape public discourse. One does not need to be reminded of the abuse of sexual power performed by members of Parliament, including the President himself in the South African context. Is this the so-called 'God-given authority' or ought we to protest?

Another relevant example for my argument is to be found in law which regulates the age of consent in South Africa. "In South Africa, a person is considered to be a child, when he or she is under the age of 18. However, the Sexual Offences Act does allow consensual sex for persons 16 and older." This is according to, "*Ages of consent to sex in South Africa.*" (<http://www.wikigender.org> accessed on 24 March 2017 at 13:50).

Various debates on the above have taken place and yet there has been no amendment to the act. The problem is the contradiction. How is one considered an adult-only at the age of 18 and yet between 16 years and 18 years they are considered adult enough to make a decision around their sexual activity? In dealing with the above, the quadrilateral for theologians and scholars must seek to balance out

exploration of this law and not as in Wesley's time, be silenced by the notion that the State is a divine institution. Mine is not to argue the place of the State in God's order but I maintain that all God created beings are subject to interrogation and reflection and if they do not serve the greater good of society then they are to be opposed and unmasked for false spirituality which favours those in power at the expense of the oppressed and voiceless.

The quadrilateral must be commended though in that it can be used in behavioural science and it also allows for personal reflection which leads to personal transformation. Marquardt holds that Wesley's preaching was mainly focused at the individual's renewal in sanctification and justification, (1992:136). Wesley did not believe in opposing the State. He did not believe that society can be changed by rules and laws but the only personal transformation from individuals could change society. Therefore, as much as I am for a theology which challenges government policy, I am also in support of theology that calls for personal transformation through reflection. The degeneration of sexual ethics can therefore also be rectified by individuals who want to see personal change and regeneration. Langford asserts that Wesleyan theology demands ethical behaviour and holiness finds expression through our ethics. (Langford, 1983:267). Christian theology, therefore, challenges one's sexual ethics. This study, however, is not aimed at only those who are Christians. The quadrilateral can be utilised to analyse and evaluate all behavioural patterns thus leading to social change. Transformation using the quadrilateral as a tool, therefore, requires deliberate reflection and a commitment to transformation. This may too be a risk in itself because the human being is naturally inclined to be biased. This biaseness could mean that one of the four aspects of the quadrilateral will be more emphasised than the other when reflecting on one's sexual conduct.

The examples I am about to cite stem primarily from a Black and African tradition because this is the perspective from which I write. For example, a person who has been raised in a tradition which promotes irresponsible sexual activity under the banner of proving one's manhood or the notion of satisfying more women or the notion of being more sexually desirable as a woman through having multiple sexual partners is more prone to lean on this social norm or social tradition than they implore upon scripture, reason and experience. African tradition, for example, has maintained that

a chief of a tribe or clan may have as many wives as he pleases. This displays his dominance, wealth and power. It is also African tradition and belief that a woman must be married and have children in order to deserve respect and earn her dignity in society otherwise she is viewed merely as one would view a child. These are traditions which fuel the problem of sex and power and must be tackled through a methodology which offers some form of accommodation.

The yardstick must be able to respond to questions such as:

- What traditions is Wesley speaking of? Do these include my cultural traditions and norms? If not, who has placed Christian tradition above the traditions of my forefathers?
- What Scripture is he referring to? Does it not include oral traditions passed down from generation to generation through African Folklore? What if the orally transmitted messages on “Mvelinqangi, Modimo. Qamata” have been lost through transmission or come from a totally different cultural era that they cause more oppression on women?
- What experience is he referring to? What if I enjoy having multiple sex partners and in my experience do not necessarily view it a bad thing? What if I enjoy being in a polygamous marriage and it eases my load and even liberates me as a woman in that I am not obligated to have sex every day of the week as someone else can perform that task as I do not feel as if I am created for man’s pleasure?
- What reason is he referring to? My reasoning could be teleological or deontological. What is the yardstick for right and wrong in the quadrilateral? I suppose our times are much more complicated than those of Wesley and this is not a clear cut scenario that we can cut and paste to 21st Century Africa. It is also noteworthy that Wesley was simply starting a movement of “renewing the face of his times,” he was not starting a Church nor did he aim to start a geometric formula through the tools of Scripture, tradition, reason and experience; one ought to read him in that light.

2.10 SUMMARY

The preceding chapter has brought to the light, the development of the concept of sex and sexuality. The premise is anthropological as human beings are image-bearers of God. Sexuality, therefore, is a gift granted by the God whose image we bear and who created us as sexual beings.

The topic of sexuality is one that is broad and multidimensional. Sexuality poses physical, spiritual, emotional and relational dimensions and failure to view it within this light does not do justice to the topic of our study. It is a complex subject that comes packaged with undertones of power abuse especially within a context of patriarchy. This patriarchal society has led women to be silent in terms of their sexuality and sexual experiences. Women have become passive passengers and spectators to their own sexual power often dictated by men to regulate their lives. There is a necessity therefore for women to reclaim their sexual voice and sexual power.

Society has over the ages created the norms around sexuality and over centuries we have seen various shifts in understanding and expressions of sexuality. There have been shifts from norms of sex within the boundaries of marriage to permissiveness, from repression to expression, from celibacy and strict attitudes to a relaxed attitude and even exposure. Part of women's' claim to their voice and sexual power has been portrayed in the refusal to be restricted to the accepted norm of sexual expression. In some cases, women have opted for the lesbian lifestyle as a way of expressing their sexual control.

The researcher who is of Wesleyan tradition then utilises the Wesleyan quadrilateral as a tool for further exploration of the topic of sexuality. She, however, cautions against having a methodology that provides no form of transformational power for society. The quadrilateral must provide power to liberate women and restore human dignity in the topic of sexuality. In the next chapter, the researcher will focus on the research method to control data.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on sex and power within human dignity in contemporary society. The chapter gave the definition and clarification of concepts as well as discussion on sex, sexuality, power and human dignity. The present chapter will focus on the research design and the research methodology used in this research study. In this section, data collection, handling of data, validity, reliability of data and the ethical consideration of the research will also be explained in depth. The research design of the current investigation will be clearly infused and fully elaborated on throughout different sections and discussions of this chapter.

3.2. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This section will focus on the concept of empirical research, research design and the selection of population and sampling of the present study. It explains how the researcher has selected her population and sample for this research study.

Research design is a complete strategy used to attack the central research problem. It is a part of the proceedings on answering the research question. It provides the overall structure for the procedures that the researcher follows, the information that the researcher collects and the information analysis that the researcher conducted (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001:91). Bogdan and Biklen (2007:54) refer to “research design” as the researcher’s plan of how to proceed with the study to gain an understanding of some groups or some phenomenon in its natural setting. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:30), a research design describes the procedures for conducting the study. It furthermore includes the time of the research participants who will provide information in the research, and it also conditions data that will be obtained.

The research design and paradigm of this study are basically interpretive. Ary et al. (2006:463) state that an interpretive study uses qualitative data collected through a variety of techniques, involving interviews, observations and documents analysis. The interpretive study also provides rich descriptive accounts targeted at understanding a

phenomenon, process, or a particular point of view from the perspective of those involved. The central purpose of the basic interpretive study is to understand the world or the experience of another field. In this research study, the researcher will focus on the interpretation of the behaviour and reaction of the female to sex and power within the violation of their human rights.

3.2.1. The concept of socio-theological research

According to Leedy and Ormrod (1985:4) and Briggs and Coleman (2007:14-15) research is a systematic process of collecting, analysing information and critical enquiry which aims to contribute towards the advancement of knowledge in the field of study, in this instance, knowledge in systematic theology in the doctrine of anthropology and femininity theology. The inquiry holds certain principles and aims to contribute towards the construction of theory as carefully and accurately as possible to develop knowledge for and of society. Empirical research, as stated by Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006:19) is the application of the scientific approach to the study of the socio-theological phenomenon.

Academic research is a method or a technique where researchers acquire dependable information about the academic process. The ultimate goal is to discover general principles or interpretations of behaviour that researchers can utilise to explain, predict and control events in socio-theological situations. The definition implies that the research undertaken will make the information known to others which were not known before the study was undertaken. Hence Leedy and Ormrod (2001) state that research as a systematic process aims at the cumulative understanding of the phenomenon about concerns and interests of the researcher. Its main purpose is to discover responses to meaningful questions by applying scientific procedures. In this study, the researcher intends to increase the knowledge of theologians and the community of faith about the interplay of power and sex in modern communities as is discussed in chapter two.

3.3. THE RESEARCH METHOD

Creswell and Garrett (2008:321) state that current researchers have a wide range of methods to address complex, interdisciplinary research problems effectively and efficiently. The methods now include “mixed method” research, quantitative and

qualitative research methods to enhance better understanding of the research questions. Quantitative research relies on the collection of numerical data; qualitative research relies on the collection of narrative data, while the mixed research involves the mixing of both quantitative and qualitative inputs, approaches, and paradigm characteristics.

In this study, the researcher chose to conduct a qualitative research method, because the aim of the study is not to quantify objective data but to co-construct new realities in a collective procedure with the participants of the study. Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right. Moreover, qualitative research operates in a complex historical field that crosscuts five historical moments. These five moments simultaneously operate in the present and can be described as the traditional (1900-1950), modernistic (1950-1970), blurred genres (1970-1986), the crisis of representation (1986-1990) and postmodern or present moments (1990-present). The postmodern moment is characterised by a new sensibility that doubts all previous paradigms. For the purpose of this study, qualitative research is described as a multi-perspective approach to social interaction, aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting and reconstructing interaction in terms of the meaning that the subjects attach to it.

3.3.1. Qualitative research approach

A research paradigm is a perspective based on a set of assumptions, concepts, values and practices that are held by a community of researchers (Johnson and Christensen, 2004:29). Hence, Johnson and Christensen (2004:359) define qualitative research as research relying primarily on the collection of non-numerical data such as words and pictures. It relies on the inductive mode of the scientific method, and the major objective of this type of research is exploration or discovery (Ary et al., 2006:450). As the qualitative paradigm in its broadest sense refers to research that elicits participants' accounts of meanings, experience and perceptions, it also produces descriptive information in the participant's own written and spoken words. In this case, it involved identified voluntary women's beliefs and values, which underlie their attitude towards sex and power in the contemporary society in general and in Eersterust community in particular, as the research population.

Qualitative research is based on constructivist philosophy that assumes reality as multi-layered, interactive and a shared social experience interpreted by individuals. Qualitative researchers believe that reality is a social construction, that is, individuals or groups derive or ascribe meanings to specific entities, such as events, persons, processes, or objects. People form constructions in order to make sense of these entities and re-organise these constructions as viewpoints, perceptions, and belief systems (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:396).

In short, people's perceptions are what they consider "real" to them and what directs their actions, thoughts and feelings towards other people or objects. Hence, qualitative researchers seek to interpret human actions, institutions, events, objects and customs. The ultimate aim is to portray a complex pattern of what is being studied in sufficient depth and detail so that someone who has not experienced it can understand it (Ary et al., 2006:450).

It is important to note that qualitative research is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participants' perspective. This understanding is acquired by analysing the contexts of the participants and by narrating participants' meanings for these situations and events. Participants' meanings include their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions (Ary et al., 2006:451; McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:396 and Shurink, 1998:243). The researchers in qualitative research become "immersed" in the situation and the phenomenon studied. They assume an interactive social role in which they record observations and interactions with participants. The social role differs from a neutral stance to an active participatory role, depending on the selected research approach. The researchers collected data over a prolonged time at a site and from individuals (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:396).

The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research situation. It provides information about the "human" side of a situation, that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions and relationships of individuals.

This study is concerned with the meaning of people to attach and attribute to things in their everyday lives. Hence, a qualitative research methodology will be employed for this study to explore and gain an in-depth understanding of participants.

3.3.2 Qualitative research data collection techniques

Qualitative research depends on multi-method strategies to collect and collaborate data. Hence, interviews and observations are primary data collection techniques in qualitative research. Qualitative research is interactive face-to-face research, which requires relatively extensive time to systematically observe, interview and record processes as they occur naturally (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:428 and Ary et al., 2006:474). Qualitative researchers study participants' perspectives through interactive strategies. Each qualitative strategy is particularly suited for obtaining a specific type of data (Ary et al, 2006:474):

- Observation is appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviours in their usual contexts;
- Interviewing is optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences; and
- Document analysis is to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under study.

For this particular study, interviewing will be used as the primary data collection strategy as well as observation and analysis of documents to verify and corroborate collected data.

3.3.3. Interviewing

The interview is a research technique that can be used to collect data on the subject in the research study. The Interview is a method used to obtain information from a face-to-face situation. It is prepared where the investigation concerns the matter of a personal nature. The interview ensures that the respondent understands what is required. In this way, the interviewer is able to stimulate and encourage the respondent. The interview strategy according to Ary et al. (2006:480) is one of the most widely used methods to gather qualitative data on subjects' opinions, beliefs and feelings about the situation in their own words. Interviews provide information that cannot be obtained through observation or can be used to verify the observation.

Briggs and Coleman (2007:208) share a similar definition and view on interviews as a preferred tactic to explore people's views and report findings in and as near as reasonable in their own words. The interview technique is therefore ideal for acquiring information that is personal and complex. The researcher is therefore required to establish rapport with the subject. The use of interviews according to Cohen et al. (2007:349) marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulating data, as somehow external to individuals, and moves towards regarding knowledge as generated between human beings, often through conversation. They regard knowledge as interaction with individuals.

The interview means a direct method of collecting information in a face-to-face situation and an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. The interchange is between the participant who has experiences and the researcher who acquires knowledge and experience in order to provide findings to a research question. The most important feature of this research method is the sharing of power between researcher and subjects in order to construct meaning. Reflexive conversations make it possible for subjects to become participants and to expand the number of interpretations appropriate to postmodern epistemology. Reflexive conversations include the researcher as an active participant of the research, rather than as an observing expert. In several respects, knowledge produced in an interview comes close to post-modernistic conceptions of knowledge as conversational, narrative, linguistic, contextual and inter-relational.

Furthermore, the interview is a flexible tool for data collection because it allows the interviewer to make adjustments as the situation requires. It enables the interviewers and interviewees to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regard situations from their point of view.

The interviews are usually divided into two broad categories, namely, structured and unstructured interviews. In the structured interview, the researcher takes the lead in the interview schedule and types of questions asked, while, in the unstructured interview, the researcher conducts the interview without preconceived ideas.

An interview according to Ary et al., (2006:480) has the following advantages:

- Provides insight on participants' perspectives on the subject of study;
- Provides the meaning of events as they unfold for the people involved in the research study; and
- Provides in-depth information for the investigation.

One disadvantage of an interview as a data-gathering strategy is that the interviewees may not be willing to share information or may even offer false information. An Interview also requires a great deal of time to conduct and later to transcribe the audio or the notes (Ary et al., 2006:480).

Qualitative research interviews are usually more probing. Hence, each participant will be asked the same set of questions, but with some latitude in the sequence of the questions. All the interviewees will be made aware that their responses will be used for research purpose of this study only, and that the research report will be made available to them to scrutinise.

For this study, the structured interview strategy will be used to collect data. This will involve open-ended questions asked to respondents and responses recorded. Open-ended questions have advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of open-ended questions are: they impose no restrictions on the respondents' response, could be used when the researcher is uncertain or has limited knowledge on the subject matter, are used where a wide range of opinions are expected, to find out which information are the respondents prepared to divulge. They help to get more detail, and more deep-rooted motives and unveils sensitive behaviours. The disadvantages are: They are time-consuming. Interviewers have to write down responses, thus writing may interrupt the interviewing process. Writing of responses accurately is another issue; they may not produce more specific responses, some responses are vague, and may be difficult to analyse.

The interview guide will include four main questions with sub-questions for participants. These main questions are based on the research questions in chapter one of this research study.

The researcher will also ask the participants about their biography in order to establish contact and best understanding of the interviewees. Short biographic details of participants to be interviewed will be given in chapter four.

3.3.4. Observation

Observation is regarded as the most powerful, flexible, and 'real' data collection strategy because it is not dependent on the respondent's personal views but seeks explicit evidence through the eyes of the observer directly or through a camera lens. It is a holistic approach concerning the observation of 'everyday' events and the description and construction of meaning (Briggs and Coleman, 2007:237).

Cohen et al., (2007:396) indicates that the distinctive feature of observation is that it offers a researcher the opportunity to gather "live" data from naturally occurring situations. It is characterised as non-interventionistic, where the researcher does not seek to manipulate the situation or subjects, does not pose questions for the subjects, nor does she deliberately create new provocations.

The researcher, when observing the site or events of study, is either relatively an outsider or in the case of ethnography (Type of qualitative inquiry that involves an in-depth study of an intact cultural group in a natural setting), a participant. The primary advantage of conducting observations is flexibility. The researcher can easily shift focus as new information comes to light. Recording events may be problematic as well. Written notes are often insufficient to capture the richness of what one is observing. From information obtained through observation, the researcher constructs a complex yet integrated picture of how people spend their time (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:158 &195).

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:40-41) observation is an "interactive technique of "participating" to some degree in naturally occurring situations over an extended time and 'writing' extensive field notes to describe what occurs". The researcher does not collect data to answer a specific hypothesis; rather explanations are inductively derived from the field notes. Observation can be made using a naturalistic approach (participant observation) or a formal approach (systematic

observation). In the former, the researcher is drawn as a participant in specific events and context either overtly or covertly. In the later stage, the researcher is non-participatory and often uses systematic observation strategies as a means of gathering data (Briggs and Coleman, 2007:240). McMillan and Schumacher (2001:41) also state structured observation is a particular kind of data-gathering, in which the researcher directly observes and systematically records the resulting observation. The researcher has pre-determined, specific categories of behaviour that will be recorded.

For the purpose of this research study, both participant and systematic observation techniques will be used to observe the sex-power behaviour of women and men involved in this research study.

During this study, the researcher will be on site for a direct, eyewitness account of the actions and settings on the street of Pretoria for observing the behaviour and attitude of women on the street who are sex workers.

The opportunities of being inside and recording through field notes, rather than outside of the group's context and activity, provides a rich understanding of the context. They are coupled with the observer's insights and understanding. Furthermore, it provides a more comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon under study.

3.3.5. Documents analysis

Document analysis according to Briggs and Coleman (2007:281) is a form of qualitative research that requires the researcher to locate, collect, collate, interpret, analyse empirical data, and draw conclusions that either describes, interprets or explains what has occurred. In terms of data collection, this involves transferring significant quotations from documents to a field notebook.

The term 'document' according to Ary et al (2006:482) refers to a wide range of written, physical, and visual material, including what other authors may term 'artefacts'. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:451) artefacts are tangible manifestations that describe peoples' experiences, knowledge, actions and values in the form of personal documents (such as diaries and letters), official documents (such

as memos, minutes, working documents and proposals) and objects (such as symbols and values).

The documentary analysis allows for sufficient data to be collected for researchers to be able to:

- identify the significant features of a particular event;
- establish a plausible interpretation and explanations of data;
- test for the credibility and validity of these interpretations; and
- construct an argument based on these interpretations.

For the purpose of this study, the following mandatory newspapers, and dairies of the participant will be analysed.

3.4. Qualitative data analysis techniques

Data analysis according to Bogdan and Biklen (2007:159) means a process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that the researcher accumulated to present findings. Data analysis involves working with data, organising data, breaking data into manageable units, coding data and searching for patterns. In short, it is making sense of data in terms of the participants' definition of the situation, by noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.

Johnson and Christensen (2004:500) further state that data analysis in a qualitative research study. Qualitative researchers alternate between data collection (e.g., interviews, observations and documents) and data analysis (creating meaning from raw data). It means data analysis in qualitative research is done concurrently or simultaneously with data collection through an interpretative, recursive, and dynamic process (Ary et al., 2006:490).

This enables the researcher to focus and shape the research study as it proceeds. It also enables the researcher to develop a successively deeper understanding of their research topic and to guide each round of data collection.

In this study, analysing data will be managed by breaking down data into three key stages, namely, (1) familiarisation and organisation, (2) coding, and (3) summarising data (Ary et al., 2006:490).

3.4.1. Familiarisation and organisation of data

Analysing data according to Ary et al (2006:490) first and foremost involves the familiarisation and organisation of data which is the essential step to coding. The researcher will familiarise herself with collected data by re-reading notes and transcripts, reviewing documents and listening repeatedly to audiotapes.

The Transcription of data, according to Johnson and Christensen (2004:502), is the process of transforming data from interviews or field notes, into typed text. A completed transcription will be read repeatedly and notes will be written on the margins of the transcript indicating key ideas to familiarise oneself with.

In organising data, the researcher will start with creating a list of data sources (name of participants coded to conceal their identities). Each page of the transcript will be marked to indicate the page number, kind and source of the data. For example, the first page (1) of field notes from observing (O) at the Francis Baard Street (P/FB-1).

3.4.2. Coding data

According to Johnson and Christensen (2004:502) coding and recoding is the process of marking segments of text data with symbols and labels for assigning units of meaning to descriptive information compiled during the study.

The researcher will read and reread the transcription and look for units of meanings, phrases, sentences, behaviour patterns, and events that seem to appear regularly and important. The researcher will then assign a code to identify that particular unit. After coding all data, the researcher will place all units which have the same coding together. For example, a coding interview will be as follows: Narrative from an interview with a participant in Pretoria Eersterust (PE) by the researcher (R).

3.4.3 Summarising data

Once the researcher has sorted data into categories, according to Ary et al. (2006:499), the researcher will examine all entries with the same code and then merge these categories into patterns by finding links among them.

The researcher is investigating the sex and power within human dignity. She will then code the data into categories of research questions as mentioned in chapter one of this research study.

3.3.5 Selection and sampling of the population

Selection and sampling processes are utilised to determine the target group the researcher is going to investigate. The selection focuses on the larger population to be investigated whilst sampling involves choosing a small subset from the larger population.

The first step in the research design is to choose the population that would participate in the study. Factors such as expenses, time, size and accessibility must be taken into consideration when determining the population for the study. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:169) regard a population as a group of elements or cases, whether individual, objects, or events, that conforms to specific criteria and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research study. Even if it were possible, it is not necessary to collect data from everyone in a population in order to get valid findings.

The population for this study are people in South Africa, specifically Christians within the MCSA which is where the qualitative research will be conducted. In this study, the researcher will not restrict her research within the boundaries of her own race group or her own ethnic group but will seek to get varied opinions within the Wesleyan tradition which explains the utilisation of the Wesleyan quadrilateral as a tool together with the cycle for mission praxis. The findings of this study will be collated into a training guide on sex and power to be presented to the synod of the Limpopo district in the MCSA as requested. The researcher was mandated after an evident need to compile such a study and conduct training for the people called Methodist in the Limpopo district.

The qualitative study according to Cohen et al. (2007:146) stands or falls not only on the appropriateness of the methodology and instruments used in the study but also on the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted. In qualitative research, only a sample of a population is selected for any given study.

The study's research objectives and the characteristics of the population (such as size and diversity) determine which and how many interviewees are to be selected. A sample is selected from a larger group of persons, identified as the population from whom data will be collected.

Purposeful sampling, as a dominant strategy in the qualitative approach, has been adopted for this particular study. Purposeful sampling according to Ary et al. (2006:472) in contrast to probabilistic sampling, seeks to select information-rich cases which can be studied in depth. The researcher selects particular subjects from the population that will be representative and provides maximum insight and understanding about the research questions. Information-rich cases are those from which the researcher can learn a great deal about issues of investigation.

3.5. VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

The validity of measurement is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. A test is valid if it measures what it purports to measure. Validity is a degree to which a test is capable of achieving particular aims. The instrument will be valid if it is capable of achieving the aims of this research study. Validity in research is concerned with soundness and the effectiveness of the measuring instrument (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001:31).

Earlier versions of validity according to Cohen et al (2007:132) and Ary et al. (2006:243) were based on the view that it was a demonstration that a particular data-gathering instrument measured what it was supposed to measure. The focus of recent views of validity is not on the instrument itself but on the interpretation and the meaning of the scores derived from the instrument.

The term 'validity' according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407) means the degree to which scientific explanations of the phenomenon match the realities of the world. The explanations about observed phenomenon approximate what is reality and truth, and the degree to which the explanations are accurate. These comprise the validity of the study. In other words, the validity of qualitative designs is the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher. The researcher and the participants agree on the description or the composition of the events, especially the meanings of these events. If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless.

In qualitative research according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407), validity rests primarily within the honesty, depth, richness, scope of data collection and data analysis techniques. It means that if the above processes are adhered to from the beginning of the study, validity will be enhanced.

The strategies advocated by Johnson and Christensen (2004:249-256) and McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407-410) to enhance validity in qualitative research are participant review, mechanically recorded data, persistent fieldwork, participant verbatim language, multiple researchers, member checking, low-inference descriptors and triangulation. For this study, the researcher will use the following strategies to enhance validity.

3.5.1. Mechanically recorded data

A digital and video camera will be used to record some observations and all interviews conducted to enhance the validity by providing accurate and relatively complete records. The main interviews and several scenes will also be recorded in the field notebook. Professional transcripts will be made and due to cost considerations, some transcripts will be transcribed by the researcher.

3.4.2. Low-inference descriptors

Concrete, precise descriptions from field notes and interview elaborations will be the hallmark of this study to identify patterns in data. It means that during the interviews, descriptions will be literal and must be understood by the participants. This will ensure

accuracy between the meanings of the interviewees and the researcher's perceptions of those meanings.

3.5.2 Participant review

The researcher will ask the participants to review and verify the transcript of what was heard and seen during the interviews, observations and analysis of documents. The participants will further be asked to modify some of the information or interpretations of the transcript. Then, the data obtained from each school will be analysed for the comprehensive integration of the findings.

3.5.4 Triangulation strategies

Triangulation allows for cross-validation among data sources and data collection strategies, time periods, and theoretical schemes (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:478). To find regularities, the researcher compares different sources, situations and methods to see whether the same pattern keeps recurring.

For this study, verbal clarifications will be triangulated by written references, three data collection methods namely observation, interviewing and analysis of documents are used. This reliance on corroboration amongst different methods will serve to enhance the validity of this investigation.

3.6. RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

Reliability of measurement instrument is the extent to which it yields consistent results when the characteristics being measured remain unchanged throughout (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001:99). Reliability is the ability of a test to achieve similar results under similar conditions. Reliability of a measuring instrument is the degree of consistency with which it measures. Reliability deals with matters of accuracy. Reliability refers to consistency with which an instrument produces equivalent scores.

According to Cohen et al (2007:146), the meaning of reliability differs in qualitative and quantitative research. Reliability in quantitative research is essentially a synonym for dependability, consistency and replicability over time. On the contrary, reliability in qualitative research is regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, i.e. a degree of

accuracy and comprehensiveness of the coverage of the investigation process. Reliability in qualitative research requires and embraces the truth and neutrality of the setting been observed.

These elements of reliability will be taken into consideration during this investigation. The multiple data collection and data analysis methods used will enable the researcher to record the actual, natural and comprehensive meaning of settings and eliminate any researcher bias. Thereby, it will make the findings more accurate and reliable.

3.7. RESEARCH ETHICS

Whenever human beings are the focus of the investigation, researchers must look closely at the ethical implications of what researchers are proposing to do. Most ethical issues in research fall into one of the four categories namely: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty with professional colleagues (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001:107). Research ethics, according to Johnson and Christensen (2004:94), are principles and guidelines that help researchers to uphold the data researcher's regard as valuable. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:420) state that the qualitative researcher needs to be sensitive to ethical principles because of their research topic, face-to-face interactive data collection process, emergent design and reciprocity with participants.

Emergent designs require that ethical principles be considered throughout all phases of planning and data collection. Most ethical situations require the researcher to determine situational priorities, which involve discussions with participants. Ethical guidelines include, but are not limited to, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and privacy.

3.7.1. Informed consent and permission

Qualitative research necessitates obtaining the consent, the co-operation and the permission of the subjects who are to assist in the investigation in the institutions providing research facilities (Cohen et al. (2007:52). Informed consent according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:421) is regarded as a dialogue and procedure in which individuals choose whether to participate after being informed of the purpose of

the study and facts that would influence their decisions. Informed consent encourages the free choice of participation. Before a participant can participate in a research study, the researcher must give the prospective participant a description of all the features of the study that might reasonably influence his or her willingness to participate.

The principle of informed consent, according to Johnson and Christensen (2004:105) refers to the fact that a participant, once given the pertinent information, is competent and legally free of the desire of others to make a decision as to whether to participate in a given research study.

For this study, the researcher consulted each participant in this research study and requested her consent. Identified participants have confirmed and indicated willingness to participate in the study (See Annexure C as the consent letter sent to participants in this study).

3.7.2. Anonymity and confidentiality

In general, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:108), McMillan and Schumacher (2001:421) and Cohen et al (2007:64) any research study should respect the participants' right to privacy and confidentiality. Under no circumstances should a research report be presented in such a way that others become aware of how a particular participant has responded or behaved. There is a strong feeling among researchers that settings and participants should not be identifiable in print. A researcher must keep the nature and quality of the participants' performance strictly confidential. If any particular person's behaviour is described in depth in the report, he or she should be given a pseudonym to assure anonymity. The emphasis on the need for confidentiality of participants' identities and the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity. The principal means of ensuring anonymity is by not using the names of the participants or any other personal means of identification. Johnson and Christensen (2004:112) state that anonymity and confidentiality are important to avoid connecting the participant with any information that would be embarrassing or harmful.

Participants in this study were given full assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Other than identifying factors such as gender, race and general location of the

participants, no personally identifiable information was divulged. Each participant was assigned and identified by a code letter.

3.7.3. Voluntary participation

Voluntarism entails applying the principle of informed consent and thus ensuring that participants freely choose to take part or not in the investigation and guarantees that exposure to risk is undertaken knowingly and voluntarily (Cohen et al., 2007:52). In this study, each participating individual was requested to be interviewed and each willingly confirmed to be interviewed. All participating individuals were fully informed of the purpose of the study in advance and given an option to discontinue their participation, for any reason whatsoever, at any time during the process.

3.7.4. Competency and relationship with participants

According to Cohen et al. (2007:52) competence implies that responsible, mature individuals and skilled individual participation in the interviews. The researcher has to ensure that she does not engage individuals incapable of making decisions because of immaturity. The researcher has passed her module in theological research and she is a facilitator in the training centre for the Methodist church in Pretoria. Therefore, the researcher possesses a high level of competency and skill in undertaking this research study.

3.8. SUMMARY

This chapter focused on empirical research. The chapter included and stated the context of the research problem, design, and methods. Qualitative research was explicitly stated, described, and discussed. This chapter also indicated the research design employed to collect and analyse data. As indicated in the design, this study is interpretive, measures to account and ensures the reliability and validity of data.

The next chapter will focus on data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results as discussions of empirical investigation.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research methods and design, while the current chapter will focus on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research data collected from the site. Furthermore, throughout the study, the researcher has critiqued sex and power within the womanist liberation theology and in relation to human dignity. The empirical research conducted over a period of three months to yield the results that will be presented, analysed and interpreted. The strategy employed was multi-pronged. It entailed collecting of data, interviews and observation. All these were aimed at unearthing whether there is a relationship between sex and power, how this relationship has been used or abused, how it affects human dignity and how women can be liberated in the process.

4.2. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH DATA

Research data will be presented, analysed and interpreted based on the literature study conducted in chapter two of this research study. In this chapter, the researcher aims to check the correlation between the literature study and the current behaviour of human beings with a specific focus on the discourse on women, sex and power. The researcher has arranged her questions in three categories namely: questions that deals with sex and power in particular; those that deal with sex, church and Biblical teaching and finally those that focus on personal, cultural and societal issues. It is within the above-mentioned contexts that the researcher utilised the questions listed below in her investigation. The researcher will now present the semi-structured set of questions that will be used to unearth the truth about sex and power in the investigative centre which is Eesterust near Mamelodi in the East of Pretoria.

4.2.1 The informal interview questions list

The questions were structured according to the aims of this research study, to elicit the information from the subjects. These questions need to be asked to verify the literature truth from the participants in this study. The questions are grouped into three categories as mentioned above. The first category is questions that investigate the awareness of people of the interplay between sex and power within church and society:

FIRST CATEGORY QUESTIONS	
1.	What is your understanding of sex and power in general terms?
2.	Can power be used for sexual benefits? if yes, explain the relationship between power and sex.
3.	Patriarchy refers to the social power of men over women. Would you say that we still live in patriarchal times? Elaborate on your answer.
4.	Do you think women possess sufficient power to manipulate others? If so, do women also abuse their power for sexual benefits?
5.	According to statistics, there has been a rise in sexual violence cases. There were 30 069 rape cases in the period April to December 2016. Do you think that this is a power issue?
6.	What role does socialisation play in the power dynamics between men and women?
7.	The media has covered some stories of the “powerful” involved in sex scandals. Can you recall the Zwelinzima Vavi scandal and the Malusi Gigaba scandal? What is your opinion on these political sex scandals with regards to the topic at hand?

The second category is based on sex, church and biblical teaching in relation to the impact they have on the use or misuse of power for sexual activity in the patriarchal society. In a patriarchal society, the scriptures were interpreted out of context and transported from the Israelites’ context into the current context without negotiation with socio-politico-cultural-economic perspective. The following question will explore the participants’ understanding of the impact of the Israelites’ context on their context.

SECOND CATEGORY QUESTIONS	
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8	The biblical narrative promotes sex that happens within the confines of a marriage relationship between one man and one woman. Is this ideal a reality in your context?
9	Has the church waked up to the reality that the biblical ideal is not a reality?
10	Does the church provide theological and ethical guidance with regards to sex enjoyed outside of marriage and the biblical norm?
11	In what ways would you regard yourself: a person in power or with power? (This could be financial power, leadership-related, social status-related, academic status-related or political related power?)
12	Has your power afforded you any privileges and favours from those considered to be your equals or subordinates?

The third category is based on personal, cultural and societal behaviour. The questions below will explore the personal, cultural and societal behaviour of participants as a population sample.

THIRD CATEGORY QUESTIONS	
13	How does culture influence and shape your thinking on relationships, marriage and sex?
14	Is virginity testing oppressive or liberative to women?
15	Why do you think the virginity of men is never discussed?
16	Is the church proactive and reactive when it comes to issues of sexual power or does the church turn a blind eye to these matters?
17	How can the church use its influence and voice to speak on sexual ethics, the liberation of women and dignity for all?

The questions above were deemed fit by the researcher to tackle the concern about sex, power, the liberation of women and restoration of human dignity. These questions are meant to elicit more insight on the topic at hand. They further provide a theological and systematic study with attention to theological anthropology and ecclesiology (faith communities) whilst assisting in discovering context-based strategies which address the problem. The questions above were used for interviewing and stimulation of

discussion on the topic of this research study. In the next section, the researcher will present data from the interview.

4.3 Data from interviews

It has alluded in chapter 3 already that, interviews according to Ary et al. (2006:480) are used to collect qualitative information on subjects' opinions, beliefs and feelings about a particular phenomenon in the interviewee's own words (verbatim). Thus, the interview was a preferred tool to explore the participants' views on sex and power in relation to human dignity in the Eesterust neighbourhood, the investigative centre for this research study. Information collected from the interviewees was summarized and categorised according to the order of the questions above. Data gathered from interviews was summarised and categorised in the line with the four research aims as stated in section 1:3 in chapter one of this research study.

4.3.1 Women's views on sex and power within church and society

The argument of this research study in chapter one and two revolves around sex and power within the church and society. Therefore, it was very vital to explore what is the understanding, feelings, and views of women about these challenges in church and society. This category of questioning is based on section 2.7 in chapter two of this research study. Interviewees were asked seven questions to explore their understanding, feelings, and views of women on sex and power.

The following is an account of the narrative from Interviews with various individuals from (PE) by (R) on power and sex. A small group of participants were randomly selected, who comprised four women from various socio-economic backgrounds. The researcher was very careful about the diversity of the participants engaged in the interview through random selection.

In response to question one, the four participants in this study illustrated that they have understood the term 'power', even though they could not relate that power to sexual use and misuse. Their verbatim responses bear witness to this fact: **Participant A (Nonto)**, states that *"Simply put, it is the ability to enforce your will on another*

individual. Various instruments like money, sex, and physical force can be used to enforce your will on others.”

Participant B (Heather) indicates: *“Any person with looks, charisma, money or apparent material assets has the power to do good or to abuse. It’s rather a superficial trait that society has “bought” into.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states that: *“In general, to me, power is the ability to use what you have to make a significant contribution to a particular sphere. Leave the world around you a little better than you found it and make a difference...”*

Participant D (Thando), indicates: *“The ability to influence the behaviour of the other and/or the course of events.”*

Based on the responses, the researcher may draw the conclusion that there is a clear understanding of what power is and what it can achieve. The most significant words mentioned that demonstrated a clear thread and pattern of understanding of the concept of ‘power’ were words like: *influence, shape, behavioural control, mind control, conscious or subconscious influence, charisma, material possessions, enforcement of ones will*. Ehrensperger (2009:17) is clear in her understanding of power when she states that, other scholars perceive power as a capacity or ability to do something, to have an effect on something: the power to achieve what an individual or group set out to do (Ehrensperger 2009:17). Ehrensperger’s definition (2009:17) corresponds with the understanding of the participants in this research study. The only challenge is that participants did not reflect on sex as part of the question but only focused on power. There is a tendency that participants either do not understand the relationship between sex and power or participants are shy to speak about sex to strangers or in public. This is one of the challenges to the researcher as the aim of this research study was to empower women in all walks of life to be free to speak about sex and power.

In response to question two, the four participants in this study illustrate that there is a link between sex and power. Power can be used to acquire sex or sex can be used to acquire power or to disempower others. The verbatim responses bear witness to that: **Participant A (Nonto)**, states: *“Yes there is a link. The act of sexual intercourse in itself is sometimes used as a tool for acquiring power. There is also the aspect of those who are in powerful positions in society who tend to be in a better position to negotiate sex. The power that one has, be it economic, physical or social, enables one to better negotiate sex. But of course, this mainly applies to men and not to women.”*

Participant B (Heather), indicates: *“Yes people who have power sometimes use it for sex”*

Participant C (Charmaine), Charmaine states: *“Power often bids loneliness! Being alone on that hot chair (be it comfortable) opens space to be vulnerable. What I mean is that it restricts one’s reasoning. It restricts your reaching out in empathy and freezes your emotional being because you are looking at retaining this that took you to power. The immature subdue their desolate acquired power by sex. The abuse of authority and opportunities drives others to lure sex to the vulnerable or to those who would do anything to reach a certain step.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“Yes”*

Based on these responses above, the researcher may draw a conclusion that power creates loneliness because it isolates people from themselves and their emotions and sometimes from others. It also may cause an emotional vacuum in that, one is unable to empathise with others and powerful people are oftentimes in a state where they see all relationships in life as transactions. People in power, therefore, may see others as possessions and trophies to be acquired. It is, however, noteworthy that power is usually ascribed to those who are physically stronger (in most cases males) and it leads to them attempting to live up to an imagined role of a macho superhuman who has no consideration for other people’s needs except theirs. Women are seldom viewed as powerful and may have to work harder to gain a fraction of the respect, command and power compared to their male counterparts. The subordination of women due to their biological attributes, cultural expectations and socialisation in highly engendered communities has led to the view that women are not worthy to be in any positions of power. One participant did, however, respond by saying that power is the ability to change the world for the better. She deemed power as the ability to make a difference. Power, when used responsibly, can bring transformative and liberative benefits. Power can lead the power to acquire sex through coercion forcing the vulnerable to submit to unreasonable demands which in turn force the victims to also desire to acquire the same power in return. Van Leeuwen (1993:121) indicates that patriarchy is androcentric and male-centred, men are the carriers of authority and power and they deprive women of any authority or power. In a patriarchal society, men are powerful and women are inferior, defective and less fully human. Hull (1998:97) and Reuther (1983:61) share the same sentiments that, patriarchy fosters

discrimination and abuses human rights, it is found where society is father-ruled and where it reinforces the subordination of women, as well as where weak and marginalised groups are held subordinate to the rich and powerful. Hence, power creates loneliness because it isolates people from themselves and their emotions and sometimes from others.

In response to question three, the four participants in this study illustrate that the three out of four interviewees agreed that, patriarchy is still alive in the present era of democracy and so-called non-racial society, but one of the participants attaches race as the factor that sustains patriarchy in society. She responded by saying that as a white woman, she had no experience of patriarchy

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“Yes, the world we live in is highly patriarchal. There are certain advantages that society affords men simply because they possess a penis. There is no better place that is an example of the patriarchy of our world than the Church. The vast majority of congregants in churches are women and yet leadership roles are almost exclusively the domain of men. In sports, we know that there’s more money for male athletes than there is for females.”*

Participant B (Heather), indicates: *“As a white English female, no, I do not experience this.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), Charmaine states: *“Just like racism, patriarchy is still there and will forever be. For a woman to be equal to a man, they have to prove themselves first, they have to work harder than men, they still have to earn less than their male counterparts. A smart woman will know her place, will do and reach higher places and there would still be a buzz about how she reached it. People (both men and women) misunderstand and often abuse the word “submit” to curtail a woman’s progress in a misconstrued biblical lie. We need to understand culture and tradition and know that they can shift.”*

Participant D (Thando), Thando states: *“Yes we do, socially accepted norms still favour men.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that the general view, with regards to patriarchy, is that we live in a man's world. Patriarchy was even compared to the many biases that we live amongst e.g.: racism, ethnicism etc. In the home and work environment, women have to work extra hard to get half the respect and recognition that, a man receives. In the work environment, there are still women who earn less than their male counterparts. This perpetuates patriarchal attitudes which socialise people into believing that women are less worthy. Therefore, most socially accepted norms favour men. The patriarchal climate of our world strips women of their God-given power as image-bearers of God. It is culturally and even ecclesiastically acceptable for men to display traits of arrogance (deemed as strength and a backbone); traits of selfishness (hunter by nature); and traits of aggression (so clearly visible through women abuse but deemed as a territorial trait). Patriarchy and patriarchy-climatised-socialisation do indeed entail the conditioning of women to being the subordinate in her very nature. This may be to counteract that which men have become. If this is the case, then there needs to be a discovery and a new definition of who a woman is. She cannot be defined just in relation to man. Women do not have to seek permission for displaying sexual appetite, power, dominance. A complete picture of a balanced being must, in fact, display a juggle between what has been deemed as femininity and masculinity.

Worthy of mention is the response from a white female who spoke from personal experience stating that she had not experienced any discrimination as a woman and therefore patriarchy did not affect her. There were two possible interpretations of her experience: patriarchy has become so deeply entrenched that she is not even aware of it. It has become a norm and an internalised oppression for women. The other possibility is that the experience of women depending on their culture, traditions and even race vary. What may be further perpetuated by culture for a black woman may not be experienced by a white person. Bhasin (1993:3-9) confirms that patriarchy is a system in which women experience discrimination, subordination, violence, exploitation and oppression by men. In a patriarchal society, women are treated as inferior in all aspects of their lives; men control women's reproductive power, their sexuality, their mobility and even their economic resources. In reacting to the question of patriarchy and race Walby (1989:214) states that patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Although

there are many patriarchal forms and practices, patriarchy is not a universal notion because the different forms of patriarchy depend upon the interaction of patriarchal structures in different times and places. Hence, the white participant cannot experience patriarchy within her life as a white woman, while white males exercise patriarchal relations within waged labour for black women.

Patriarchy even exists in the church where a majority of congregants are women and yet leadership positions are held mainly by men. In the MCSA there are 12 Bishops and of the 12 not one of them is a woman and that speaks volumes of our attitude, respect and recognition of women.

In response to question four, the four participants in this study illustrate that women do have power and the power they possess they imitate men in the usage of power against other women. One of the participants agrees with Isherwood and Staut that vagina is the organ of power in chapter two of this research study. They equally agree that women also misuse their power to acquire sex and pleasure in life. The verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), Nonto states: “ *Generally, there is no social advantage that society bestows upon women. Having said that, I am not saying that women are powerless creatures. At a more simplistic view, women possess the power by having the virtue of having a vagina in a highly sexualised world, all things become heteronormative, of course. There is also the power of agency that women possess.*”

Participant (Heather), Heather said, “ *Yes, I am sure some do, to gain position and money but also falsely to demean and dominate men. Women in power also use this power to abuse and oppress other women instead of helping them climb the ladder.*”

Participant C (Charmaine), Charmaine states: “ *Yes, to both questions. There are women who want to be men when they are in power and I believe one does not have to imitate men, God gave us subtle but powerful characters. Let’s use them as is and do not succumb to the timid, to the insecure. Know who you are in the power that God has given you.*”

Participant D (Thando) Thando states: *“Yes, women tend to use sex appeal as currency to either initiate relationships or manipulate partners within relationships.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that women do have power and the responses from the interviewees correlate with the information drawn from the literature study in chapter two. Noteworthy is the view that some participants held that women abuse power too in church and society. Women struggle to support and encourage each other and when one is given the privilege of leadership they in many instances utilise this opportunity to oppress others. Not only is this clear when women are in positions of power but it also manifests itself when women who are wealthy use their money to acquire sex from men who are not considered their equals due to social status etc.

A concept of the “power of the vagina” was interrogated as well as it became apparent that women use their bodies to access sexual pleasure as well as controlling and manipulating men. The notion that women have no power would be an insult to their dignity whether they are deemed ethical or unethical. Men in most cases have the financial muscle that women want and women have “vagina power” that men want. Sex, therefore, becomes a currency that women use to get what they want and yet it defeats the purpose of their struggles because in most instances they are left feeling empty and guilty.

In response to question five, the four participants in this study illustrated that women in this research were not sure whether rape was an issue of power or social upbringing of males in the patriarchal society where women were considered objects of sexual pleasure. There are two concepts that are at play in this context: power and socialisation as the factors that influence rape. The verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), Nonto states: *“Yes, rape is never about erections but about power. It is a way of exercising physical force to get your will. In a world where we understand masculinity as being “In power” it only follows that men will seek to gain power through rape in order to gain masculinity.”*

Participant B (Heather), indicates: *“Not all of it, I think people have lost sight of the value of their fellow humans and think it is okay to treat them with disrespect and cruelty.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), Charmaine states: *“I believe a fraction is related to that but more of who we are is based on the way you grew up. The context of family, community and belief systems then and now.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“It is both a power and socialisation issue. Power in that men is physically stronger than women and socialisation in that many men are brought up to believe that women are there for them to do with as they please.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw a conclusion that rape does seek to control and force one's will upon the other. It is cruel and self-centred and though it can be suffered by both males and females, it is generally women who experience this form of abuse. The participants brought to light that sexual violence cannot be viewed in isolation. There are many contributing factors such as upbringing, values, context and family. In some cases, women become silent victims of their experiences and this further perpetuates the culture of silence and even normalises the sexual abuse of women. There is also the element of a power game, where most insecure men use sex as the vehicle to boost their insecurity and low self-esteem.

Isherwood and Stuart (1998:23) confirm what participants have said in their responses about sex and power which is in fact rape. They indicate that the art of love was about securing the consent of the female partner to male dominance and female submission by eroticising it as natural. Women need to be educated into submission by being taught how to behave and what to feel during coitus. It is also advised a female partner may say no, but that is only modesty and it is the male partner's duty to overcome the female partner. It was fine to have sex even when the women were protesting as this was merely conscious resistance while her unconscious instinct would be to want intercourse. This was illustrated in the 'missionary position' that sex is natural as it combined the male desire to conquer with female desire to be conquered. The male wished to possess her and the female was grateful to him for doing so (Isherwood and Stuart, 1998:23). This constructed attitude from time immemorial has encouraged the rape of women because men perceived women as persons that want sex even if they are not in a relationship with them giving licence to conquer them even by force. Hence participants viewed rape as power-play rather than a consequence of attraction.

In response to question six, four participants in this study claimed that socialisation plays a vital role in the power dynamics between men and women, the way society speaks about women emphasizing their weakness and men in terms of their strength. If a boy throws a weak ball in a cricket match, the comment will be that he throws like 'a girl'. Socialisation is the process of learning to behave in a way that is acceptable to one's society. It is behaviour learnt from childhood through exposure to particular norms and values, observations of behaviour and influence from others on what it means to be female or male in defined contexts. The verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: " That seems like gender socialisation in my book. We are but the sum of a socialisation experience. Mostly, we continue the gendered roles that we have been socialised to perform. Socialisation is the foundation of our gendered identities."

Participant B (Heather), indicates: " Unfortunately, we still teach youngsters gender norms. Pink for girls and blue for boys along with the correct toys. It leaves no space for gender or sexual orientation that may be different."

Participant C (Charmaine), said, "It is an expectation of society and a person based on a context of the community. Behavioural studies show different roles played by different people in peoples lives. Women often wrestle with acceptance or conformity rather than knowing who they are and what they possess. Our values are often linked to socialisation. It brings to our attention our attitude, stigma and internalisation of self."

Participant D (Thando), states: "Men are brought up to believe that they are better than women, that women should serve them. That they are born for greatness and that women are born for child-bearing, rearing and home-making.

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw a conclusion that the participants problematized a gender-centred process of socialisation. Boys and girls are brought up in different moulds and must fit into the socially acceptable moulds. From a young age, girl children games indicate that girls are born to rear children. When children play, girls will most often be found with a doll and a boy would be prone to playing with whatever their adventurous heart desires. This sets the stage for all forms of self-perceptions for women and men. It is clear from this process that men are raised to believe that they are the superior of the sexes. Worthy of observation is

the growing discomfort with regards to socialization. Whereas it was mainly women who found discomfort in the process as it stifled them, more and more men find discomfort in engendered roles. The scope of sexuality is very wide today, more and more people are open to the exploration of other sexualities and this challenges us to move away from engendering individuals. Millet (1968:33) argues in support of participants of this research study that, the current society, like all other historical civilizations, is patriarchal in nature. This fact is evident at once if one remembers that the military, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance, in short, every avenue of power, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands (Millet 1968:33). When one lives in such a society, socialization impacts one's behaviour and attitude towards life.

In response to question seven, the four participants in this study alluded to the fact that media also promotes male power, while portraying women as victims of this power. Conversely, women also play in the hands of the powerful for their own gain of power or revenge over men. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: “ As Kissinger said, power is a great aphrodisiac. Powerful men tend to expect everyone around them to do their bidding and one aspect of their dominance is through sex. Powerful men become narcissistic and crave even more power. Women are also drawn to men who exude power and magnetism.”

Participant B (Heather), states: “In both cases, the media portrayed women as victims. My view is that these women were using their bodies to acquire some form of power for themselves.”

Participant C (Charmaine), states: “I am afraid to say that I think too many vindictive and power-hungry women claim sexual misconduct or even encourage such relationships just to gain power and revenge over men.”

Participant D (Thando), said, “This makes me think of the cold shower! Two words, understand your vulnerability and stop being a toady. No one will take advantage of a smart woman unless you allow them.”

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that power and position of influence have often created entitlement from those who hold these positions. However, women are not just spectators or victims to this power game but women may be instigators as they too want to be associated with power and receive

monetary favours or status for being able to win a powerful person. However, women do not realise that there are many who are at the mercy of the powerful. The matter is no longer about conquering and having sexual power over the powerful but rather problematising the fact that powerful have minimised the power of the vagina.

The responses to seven questions on the first category of questions, which address the relationship between sex and power were presented and interpreted as they are recorded above. It was realised through the engagement with the seven questions that there is a correlation between sex and power. The final analysis is that both men and women are powerful depending on the assets they both possess. Men in the patriarchal society may have economic, political and cultural power, while women possess the vaginal power to influence men to submit to women. If these powers are misused by one party, then it is possibly due to lack of knowledge on how women and men are powerful on each other. The next category is on sex, church tradition and Biblical teaching.

4.3.2 Women's views on sex, church tradition and Biblical teaching within church and society

The argument of this research study in chapter one and two revolves around sex and power within the church and society. Church tradition and fundamental interpretation of the Bible have played a vital role in the shaping of the mindset of the patriarchal society, sex and power. Hence, it was very vital to explore what is the understanding, feelings, and views of women about sex, church tradition and Biblical teaching within church and society. This investigation is based on section 2.5 and 2.9 in chapter two of this research study. The biblical narrative, supported by church teachings promotes sex that happens within the confines of a marriage relationship between one man and one woman. Five questions were asked to the interviewees to explore the understanding, feelings, and views about the impact of church tradition and biblical teaching on sex and power.

In response to question eight, the four participants in this study demonstrated that there are divided feelings about what the Bible teaches and what is actually happening in church and society. Two of the participants felt that the current society does not adhere to biblical teachings in terms of sex and power. The other two felt that biblical

teachings should be emphasised to create a safe space for sexual activities. Here are the responses verbatim:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“No, this used to be the ideal but society has changed so much. Sex before marriage has become the norm as has to live together in an adulterous relationship.”*

Participant B (Heather), indicates: *“No, sex happens between groups of people, between women, between men. Sex has many varieties than those that are considered biblical.”*

Participant C Charmaine), states: *“Yes, it still creates a safe and emotionally stable relationship.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“ I believe that the teaching of the bible is ideal and can only be taught from the early stages of life. As it is now, one needs to be realistic of who and where they are today in terms of socialisation.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that the church, school and home used to be the primary places where socialisation occurred. These voices were influenced primarily by the Christian understanding of life. With the emergence and growth of other faiths, cultures, traditions, and changing times, there has been an emergence of many voices which challenge long-standing practices. Sex before marriage is popular culture. The emergence of social media has meant that people are exposed to pornography, sex is in our faces every day because we live in a highly sexualised society. Sex after marriage remains an ideal and not a reality. The radical feminists do not trust the Bible as it is, in its written form, Schneiders (1991:52) and Japinga (1999:43) question the patriarchal Bible claiming that the Bible is literally the word of human beings about their experience of God. The Bible is a narrative about God, filtered through humans, reflecting the assumptions, attitudes and behavioural patterns of its culture during which it was written. Human understanding, being imperfect, implies that biblical writings cannot meet contemporary standards of justice and equality and therefore, the Bible cannot respond to the contemporary questions specifically on human sexuality, sex and power. Hence, it is so difficult to find a unanimous response to this question, for the simple reason that, females do not trust the contents of the Bible, because of its interpretation by males and church practices that favour the former.

In response to question nine, the four participants in this study claim that there are no clear responses to this question. As for question eight, participants are not sure, whether they can argue against biblical teachings. The “Yes” and “No” responses from the participants illustrate that church and society are not sure about the correlation between biblical teachings and the realities of life. The verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“The church is complacent. The church turns a blind eye and deaf ear to the fact that very few people within its ranks uphold the biblical mandate of sexual holiness.”*

Participant B (Heather) states: *“ Yes and no. My experience has been that the church recognises reality but has not yet bothered itself to respond to that reality.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“No, just look at those who serve in the church to see.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“On the contrary, the church still believes that this can happen because it is a place of hope.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that there is a tendency that even those who serve in the church are involved in sexual misconduct, therefore, it becomes more easy to turn a blind eye to these acts of misconduct. The church recognises reality but the seems not to have the capacity to handle these matters competently. These challenges go as far back into John Wesley’s era, as illustrated by the notion: "Champagne, Dice, Music, or your Neighbour's Spouse." The phenomena of spouses cheating, adultery and infidelity of spouses are evident in the rising rate of divorce even in the church. According to business tech, “53 per cent of marriages are solemnised at the department of home affairs (where 75 per cent end up in divorce); 30 per cent are religious (20 per cent end up divorced); 17 per cent are unspecified (4.3 per cent end up divorced). (*8 things you probably didn’t know about divorce in South Africa*)” (<https://businesstech.co.za> Accessed 25 March 2017). One of the participants indicated that there is a sign of hope as the church is an agent of hope and cannot give up on the biblical ideal of sex after marriage.

In response to question ten, the four participants in this study claimed that that, there is a lacuna in terms of theological and ethical guidance with regards to sex outside marriage. They encouraged sex within marriage. Sex and sexuality are still considered taboo in church and society. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“To some extent. Sex and sexualities continue to be considered taboo subjects within the church. ” The lack of information and misinformation are rife.”*

Participant B (Heather), says: *“No.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“ Not that I have heard of”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“They offer different kinds of seminars around this topic.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that there is very little provision for teaching and training given to those who engage in sexual activities before marriage. There is a denial that is creating a huge gap in our rhetoric on sex and this does not help us in the liberation of women. The little that is happening can be seen in unstructured and haphazard seminars with nothing concrete.

In response to question eleven, three of the participants indicate that they have power or there are in positions of power. They have highlighted that they can even handle that power or set agendas for their lives, as well as influencing decisions about their lives. One indicated that she did not have power at all. The verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“I do have some power. I determine what information people have access to and to some extent help to shape the agenda, discourse and narrative.”*

Participant B (Heather), states: *“I am a person in power because I manage to shift my position from what people will say about my flaws and shortcomings. No one is perfect. I do not need approval, I simply recognise my strengths, talents and positive qualities and apply those to where I reign.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“Well, given that I am in leadership, some counterparts consider me to have certain proximity to those in power.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“Not at all”*

Based on the response above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that all human beings possess some form of power either political, economic, class or vaginal. Human beings have power over themselves and over other human beings. They also have the power that they are aware of and perceived power. Heather uses an

interesting word in her response. She speaks of “reign.” This choice of the word already creates an impression of her self-understanding. She perceives herself as “reigning” almost like a demi-God or a monarch in the spaces where she exercises influence. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:18) indicate that males who came under their power were believed to lose their rationality, spirituality and masculinity. The Church fathers, while perceiving women as inferior, also feared them. Women’s bodies were thought to possess all kinds of power. This power to corrupt had to be tightly controlled if women were to approach holiness. A woman’s world was very confined and many women were advised to remain indoors. Hence, women in this research study indicate that they possess power despite the societies they are living in.

In response to question twelve, three of the four the participants indicated that their power did not afford them privileges or favours even though but they controlled their power and thought of it to be at the same level with other people. One indicated that her power has afforded her privilege and favours because of her social status in the society. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“Not really “*

Participant B (Heather), states: *“It has, people, take and listen to my opinion because of my social standing”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“No”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“I normally bring myself back to the equation and condemn any abuse of power.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that power grants one privilege and sometimes the privileged do not perceive themselves as privileged because it is a norm that they have lived with over time. In South Africa, even skin colour entitles one to certain privileges, favours and respect. Social standing entitles one to privileges. Some participants were oblivious to this fact.

4.3.3 Women’s views on personal, cultural and societal behaviour of people in society

The argument of this research study in chapter one and two revolves around sex and power within the church and society. In this section of the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data are viewed from personal, cultural and societal behaviour in

society. The researcher will test participants on the impact of personal, cultural and societal behaviour of people in the society on sex and power. Interviewees were asked five questions to explore their understanding, feelings, and views about the impact of personal, cultural and societal behaviour of people in society.

In response to question thirteen, the four participants claimed that there is a common agreement that culture influences and shapes human beings' thinking on relationships, marriage and sex. Specific cultures have an impact on the norms and values of a community. People use symbols and language that are part of a culture, to think and to shape their thinking. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“Culture defines our norms which are the expectations and rules that guide our behaviour. We are encultured through what we hear, see and are taught. This is the process of socialisation and all this becomes our frame of reference that shapes not just our thinking about our activities as well.”*

Participant B (Heather), states: *“I think it’s a popular culture that shapes our thinking on relationships and sex.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“I think we more than we are aware of”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“Understanding the inquisitive context, taking responsibility on self and the community at large brings lasting implications on how we come to decisions on such.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that there is a recognition of popularist culture as the shaper of our discourse on sex. Even deeply cultured and traditional societies struggle when it comes to dealing with sex because the younger generations are influenced by popular culture. Marriage and sex in the patriarchal society are thought of along the line of patriarchal lines when wives should be submissive to their husbands and should be sworn to love and care for them and husbands need not reciprocate if the submission is not manifest.

In response to question fourteen, the four participants in this study concurred that virginity testing is oppressive, humiliating, unkind and demeaning. The right to privacy

of women is not respected by the community that practises virginity testing. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *"It is oppressive"*

Participant B (Heather), states: *" Oppressive and a bit invasive of one's sensitive privacy."*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *"It is humiliating, unkind and demeaning"*

Participant D (Thando), states: *"Oppressive."*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that, in the rites of passage in the African culture, the focus is to get the girl child ready for her next life of marriage which is seen as a progression in life that makes her an adult. Virginity testing is done to ensure that she is presented perfectly to her husband. There are no questions about the male's virginity; in fact, there is no term used to describe such an investigation. The term "virginity testing" is centred on monitoring women's sexual activities. Virginity testing is not under discussion for men because masculinity is linked to the amount of dominance and sex that one has over women. As is alluded to above, culture plays a vital role in thinking and practice in society. This is one of the practices that are influenced by patriarchy. Phiri (2004:141) agreed that virginity testing is oppressive, humiliating and dehumanizing for the girls. Virginity testing is an abuse of children's rights according to the Gender Commission and the Human rights commission. Virginity testing is a form of violence against women because it is equated with female genital mutilation. Virginity testing is dehumanising for girls because of the manner and place where it is performed, sometimes in an open public venue like a stadium. The issue taking off clothes and in whose company is a cultural issue. For example, while people who are influenced by Western culture find it easy to take off all or some of their clothes at a beach, those whose lives are influenced by African traditional culture find it difficult. At some time, in terms of the performance of African rituals, African indigenous people do not have difficulty in taking off all their clothes in public. Furthermore, she argued that the infidelity of a husband is not questioned, because it is culturally acceptable for a married man to have children outside of marriage. Thus, while the girls who go for virginity testing are protected from HIV/AIDS while young, there is no guarantee for the same protection when they get

married to adulterous men as long as culture turns a blind eye to the infidelity of these men. Unfortunately, it does not train boys to be responsible for their sexuality (Phiri, 2004:141). Therefore, virginity testing is oppressive, dehumanising and discriminating for girls.

In response to question fifteen, the four participants in this study concurred that being sexually active from an early stage of manhood up to its late stages is perceived as the measurement of manhood. The more one performs sexual acts, the more one is respected in the community. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), No response

Participant B (Heather), states: “ *Because an active libido and numerous sexual conquests have for a long time been used to define masculinities and manhood.*”

Participant C (Charmaine), states: “ *Because the idea of masculinity is tied to the amount of sex one has. The more sex one gets, the manlier one is thought to be. That’s the view that the world around us holds. Therefore, one is not a man until one has sex.*”

Participant D (Thando), states: “ *Because a sexually active man is ‘the dude’ whilst a woman is ‘a tart’. Such Hypocrisy!*”

Based on the responses, the researcher may draw the conclusion that the issue of testing the virginity of a man is one that has never been explored. Men, from a young age, are encouraged to be the “hunter” and women “the prey” when it comes to sex. Therefore, engaging in sexual activity becomes a quest for manhood and is applauded. That a woman must preserve herself, remains a popular view, but how do women preserve themselves in a time when all that men seek from women is not companionship, friendship and equality but to undress and tame them through sexual conquests? Isherwood and Stuart (1998:27) confirm that sexual activity makes a man ‘a real man’ with power. The ability to penetrate a girl transforms a boy into a man, with all its attendant privileges and power. The same drunkenness with power can turn men into rapists.

In response to question sixteen, the four participants in this study agreed that the church is not proactive, but reactive. The church does not create a safe space to discuss human sexuality. The cultural taboos and fundamental interpretation of the

Bible prevent the church from opening up discussions on human sexuality. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto) states: *“The church is reactive and most of her solutions involve sweeping everything under the carpet under the guise of not hanging dirty linen in the open.”*

Participant (Heather), states: *“I am of the view that the Church has not been able to engage on human sexuality and thus all the nuances of sexuality render the church stuck. The church needs to talk about sex in all its dimensions.”*

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“Never heard a word of this in the MCSA in the many years I have been a member. No proactive measures.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“The church is not loud enough.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that the church is mildly reactive and not proactive on human sexuality issues despite the fact that John Calvin and John Wesley took this matter very seriously and they acted whenever it was necessary. There is a need for the church to “clean her own shoes” and to “get her house in order” so as to be prophetic on this matter. The church remains mildly reactive and little is done to educate and socialise an alternate culture that goes against popular culture.

In response to question seventeen, the four participants had convergent views that the church needs to be proactive, firstly, by using the pulpit effectively to teach and liberate its members. Secondly, the church needed to run workshops on human sexuality; to develop programmes on sex and human sexuality just as the church did with HIV/AIDS. The church must be proactive and vocal on this matter. These verbatim responses bear witness to that:

Participant A (Nonto), states: *“Firstly the church needs to view sexuality as God-given. Secondly, the church needs to start conversations and teachings about sexuality.”*

Participant B (Heather), states: *“This cannot happen because the discourse around human sexuality has not yet begun within our church. There’s a need to begin the discourse and maybe in the process, the church will find its voice on sexual ethics.”*

There is some lip-service that is being paid to the liberation of women. The church wants to sound correct in that regard but my experience is that the liberation of women is not at the top of the agenda for the church.”

Participant C (Charmaine), states: *“Through programmes aimed at safeguarding young people and teaching young boys dignity and respect for women.”*

Participant D (Thando), states: *“The church needs to stop counting words and be intentional and proactive.”*

Based on the responses above, the researcher may draw the conclusion that the conversation must begin with openly speaking about sex, power and human dignity. There is a need for the church to be co-workers with God in the restoration of human dignity and especially that of women. The church needs to revisit the Scriptural reading with a different eye to develop a new theology, which is more proactive than reactive. Sharath Souseelya (2017:64) suggests that the church should do the following to be more active in redressing the inequality of the past:

- Re-reading Scripture: Scripture has to be re-read based on the concept of “Liberation” considering the neglected voices and experiences of women.
- Re-interpretation of scripture: the reinterpretations should not be limited to a fixed written text. Scripture has to be interpreted in terms of the present socio-cultural, and political struggles.
- Re-telling the stories: it is one of the strategies that give voice to women and to re-create their dialogues. Understanding the boundaries of the text which can be told many times in different ways depending on the situation. Women can be the narrators of texts so that the stories reclaim women as subjects with their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
- Inclusive language: Androcentric language and images, including metaphors of a masculine God, can be reshaped and replaced by inclusive language and images. The liturgies of androcentric language have to be changed into that of inclusive language.
- Indigenous traditions: Adapting the feminine image of the Divine from indigenous traditions will help to overcome the one-sided and androcentric portrayal of the Divine.
- Unbiased Sermons: the sermons should be preached with stress on equality, peace, and liberation.

- Formation of a holistic theology: A new holistic theology has to be formed that deconstructs the myths that humiliate and marginalize the female body on the basis of patriarchal values.
- Participation of women: A greater opportunity for women's leadership and participation at all levels and in the decision-making of the structure and life of the church and society should be provided.

This work can begin in our youth groups and confirmation classes so that the youth becomes aware of their sexual power as they grow.

4.4 Observation data

The involvement of the researcher as a minister of Word and Sacraments has offered her an opportunity to observe the MCSA as a facilitator on church training programmes in Eersterus, the investigative centre.

The first observation is that the church still perceives sex as taboo, and the church cannot talk about sex in public. Hence, it was difficult to find a sufficient number of participants for this research study. About 90 per cent of the intended population for interview were hesitant to participate in this study because sex is viewed as a private subject. Secondly, the researcher has observed that the private nature of sex and sexuality leads to a 'private morality' or lack thereof which runs the risk of thus increasing the abuse of power since the weaker party has no recourse on injustices or abuses perpetrated by the stronger party. Interviewees seemed uncomfortable on the onset at the mention of my topic of study as well as my research intentions as exemplified by little giggles, blushes and an uneasy shifting of positions on the subject. Thirdly, the researcher observed in church gatherings and specifically during the women's retreats that women were more prone to associating with men than they were with other women. For example, as women testified, they would always and most often mention how a certain male Minister influenced and changed their lives. Seldom where other women mentioned as having been either role models or having played a significant role in their spiritual growth. Fourthly, it was observed that power is often ascribed to the gender of a person. This became a glaring reality when my retreat group welcomed the various speakers. In the case where the speaker was female,

there would be a moderate welcome through song and dance but in the case where the speaker was male, there would be excitement, exaggerated dancing and rejoicing at his welcome. These observations enabled the researcher to understand the mindset of the group. Fifthly, the researcher observed that it is within an environment where people meet on a regular basis with common interests that the idea of sexual experimentation increases.

The manner which most humans deem the highest and deepest level of communication is therefore sex. Naturally one turns to those that they worship with for this association, hence places of worship become spaces of sexual encounters. Furthermore, they idolise the most powerful of the pack...the male minister and therefore one finds women throwing themselves at ministers because of a hunger for power and control over him and power through association.

4.5. SUMMARY

In the preceding chapter, the researcher has engaged in presenting, analysing and interpreting the collected and collated data. During the period of empirical research, the researcher has interviewed individuals and has been involved in the observation of human behaviour. In the three categories of questions that were posed to the sampling group, the researcher sums up the following:

There was an awareness of the “Power of power” Which has the ability to be used for construction or deconstruction especially in reference to women. However, this awareness was blurred with regards to some participants. One is therefore brought to the conclusion that the understanding of power is shaped by personal experiences. It is possible that the shyness and the evasion of the real issues pertaining to sex and power are resultant from the negative experiences of the participants.

The dynamics of power in society have been outlined by the interviewees in their responses. The dynamics involve isolation, be it self assumed or imposed. The dynamics further involve a long-standing entrenchment and enablement of a patriarchal society that has thrived like cancer to the detriment of women and the oppressed. Such cancer is depicted in women abuse, women exploitation, rape,

virginity testing and raising the girl child like a “glove” that must fit snugly in the “hand” of marriage.

The participant's responses to the questions relating to sex, church tradition and biblical teachings were not surprising. The church, the world of the Bible and church tradition have commonly been viewed as aliens to the current reality and context of women as it is the same institution and its literature that continues to reinforce the oppression of women. The disconnect between reality and the Biblical ideal is a glaring reality in the responses given by the interviewees. This, therefore, necessitates an awakening to our present-day context and a clear awareness that sex does not happen only within the confines of marriage. What if sex happens within marriage and yet there is no love and intimacy? What if the sex that happens outside of marriage is full of depth and intimacy? Such questions must continue to be part of our discourse as we seek to liberate sex for the liberation of women. Some though continued to maintain that sex is within the confines of marriage. The researcher deems the contrasting views as acceptable as one person's truth is not necessarily the next person's truth.

Women continue to have an opinion on personal, cultural and societal behaviour of individuals. This was evident in the interviewees' engagement with this category of questions. The general expression was that culture has a major influence on peoples' behaviour in relationships and marriages. One can probe further and say that culture may even have a larger influence than religion on how people think of sex and engage in sexual behaviour. Popular sex culture which is very permissive and leans to the side of the one in power, should not exempt from scrutiny.

The preceding chapter has not only derived data from women on the topic of study but it has taken this research from being an academic study to an engagement with lives, bodies and minds in their own contextual reality, influenced by scripture, tradition, reason and experience.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will present an overview of the previous chapters. She will further present research findings based on the aims of empirical research. Recommendations on the findings based on the aims of the research study will be made, as well as recommendations for a proposed training model to empower church people on sex and power. Recommendations will be made in combination with views from the literature review as well as the viewpoints of participants in this study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

In chapter one section 1.1, the researcher gave an orientation on how this research study will develop towards its ultimate aim. In this section, the direction and the background of this research study are highlighted. The challenges facing the church and society about sex and power were briefly discussed. The approach to the study was part of this section. Section 1.3 of chapter 1 was directed by the problem statement of the research study. The research question and aims were developed from the research problem. The research methods were discussed in section 1.5, following qualitative research methodology. The population and sample of the study were described in chapter one, together with the validity of the study.

In chapter two, the definition and clarification of concepts were discussed. The intensive discussion on the literature review around sex and power was handled in this chapter to check what other researchers have written about sex and power. This chapter laid the foundation for chapter four on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. The researcher has thoroughly discussed sex within contemporary society in section 2.3 of this chapter. The researcher has related sex and sexuality to the contextual situation in the church and society throughout this chapter.

In chapter three, the qualitative research design was described in detail. The researcher has stated the research method in this chapter and explained how she is going to control her study following this research method. In this chapter researcher also indicated the research design employed for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data.

5. 3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This study provides a description of how sex and power are related, as well as how power can be used to gain sex or sex used to gain power. As not much research has been done locally in churches about sex and power, this study provides valuable insight on how sex can be used to gain power or power used to gain sex in church and society.

5.3.1 Findings based on the first aim of the research study

Aim 1: To create awareness of the human dignity violating factors of sex and power for the liberation of women in this generation and in the generations to come. The following findings from the literature study were observed:

- There is interplay between sex and power, meaning powers like status, economic, political, cultural and patriarchal power can be used to gain sex from females in our contemporary society and church. This is almost an exclusively male domain as is mentioned throughout chapter two.
- Sex can be used to gain power and control by females over males as is stated by Isherwood and Stuart (1998), where they speak of the power of vagina and its control over the male species.
- There has been a shift of perceptions throughout history in terms of sex and sexuality.
- There is a correlation between the Victorian period, the biblical period and the African period in terms of the perception of sex as taboo and controlled by males in a patriarchal society.

- The use or misuse of sex in church and society has a negative impact on the dignity of women.
- The Wesleyan quadrilateral has an influence on the whole life of the Methodist understanding of life including sex and sexuality.
- Women can liberate themselves from the mental games of the patriarchal society, by rereading the Scriptures from different traditions, experience and reasoning.

5.3.2 Findings based on the second aim of the research study

Aim 2: To help women “self-liberate” by making them aware of their desire to please through sex. The following findings from the literature study were observed:

- That women can have control over their bodies with regards to sexual activities and that they have the power that can overpower males.
- Those women, just like men, are created with dignity as the image of God.

5.3.3 Findings based on the third aim of the research study

Aim 3: To reawaken and revive the sacredness and spirituality of sex and make this an important part of the Churches’ agenda. The following findings from the literature study were observed:

- There is very little attention given to sex education in the church and society.
- That sex is also the creation of God, it needs to be respected and used for the purpose it was created for.

The above finding led the researcher to recommendations for this research study. In the next section, the researcher will discuss the recommendations together with the motivation for these recommendations.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this research study will be done in relation to the research aims. The researcher will also come up with recommendations for future research projects. The researcher will also give motives for each recommendation made in this study. Based on the findings mentioned above, the following recommendations are made:

5.4.1 Recommendations based on the findings of the first aim of the study

It is recommended that:

- women should behold workshops and be trained on the understanding of sex and power inside and outside relationships. The workshops and Training will aim at empowering women to know their position as human beings within and outside the sexual relationship as the image of God.
- Women should be empowered to know and demonstrate that they are equal partners within marriage and sexual relationships.
- Men must be made aware of their position as equal beings to women who are also images of God and to treat women with respect and dignity as women treat them.

Motivation

If women are empowered on sex and power, they will be in a better position to make sound decisions based on their consciousness as human beings not objects to be controlled and used. They will demonstrate that they are not inferior beings to men.

5.4.2 Recommendation based on the findings of the second aim of the study

It is recommended that:

- Women should establish support groups that can discuss the power women have as human beings against men, and how to use that power effectively to liberate themselves but not to misuse it against men as is alluded to in the interviews of the participants.
- The church must provide safe space for women to externalised problems that weaken them, and rebuild their self-esteem that is destroyed by the patriarchal society.

Motivation:

Women will be motivated to take their position in church and society as victors, not victims of circumstances.

5.4.3 Recommendations based on the findings of the third aim of the study

It is recommended that:

- There must be in-service training ministers of the Word and Sacrament on theological training based on the contextual reading of the Bible in relation to human sexuality.
- Ministers of the Word and Sacraments are to create a safe space for dialogue on sex and power in church service and conferences.
- The church is to emphasise sex education for young and senior members.

Motivation:

Education will deconstruct the constructed ideology that, sex and human sexuality are evil and cannot be discussed in public even in church spaces. It will empower ministers and members on sex and power, consequently reducing sexual crime and violence.

5.4.4 Recommendations for this research study

The researcher recommended the “Gosa theology” as the response to the challenges that are discussed in this research study. Gosa theology is a theology that liberates women and men equally. It is a theology of stewardship: stewardship is the management of the household, while a steward is a manager, one who is faithful, diligent, has impeccable integrity and honesty, and is skillfully competent. Gosa theology is Methodist contextual theology, the theology of taking care of the other.

Therefore, Gosa theology is theology that, reminds human beings, that the areas of their vocation and work belong to God and when they are placed in a position of privilege and power, they are placed there not to abuse this power, but to be the embodiment of God Himself, to exercise power as Godself would in that situation. In the context of this research study, Gosa theology will teach human beings to take care of one another as images of God. This recommendation will be taken further for future studies.

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