

THE GENDER STRAIGHTJACKET:  
A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN  
ADOLESCENT MALES' COGNITIVE SCHEMATA FOR MASCULINITY AND  
GENDER ROLES

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

A surge of “masculinity in crisis” discourse suggests that men are primarily responsible for lawlessness, social mayhem, violence and other forms of psycho- and socio-pathology. This crisis is attributed, in part, to hegemonic models of masculinity which restrict men to certain modes of behaviour and specific roles in society. This study investigates the content of a group of South African adolescent males’ cognitive schemata for masculinity and gender roles. A qualitative mode of enquiry was used to identify the beliefs held by participants about manhood and gender roles. The findings of this study affirm that a hegemonic model of masculinity exists in the sub-culture of South African society represented by the participants and suggests that hegemonic masculinity in South Africa is both restrictive and damaging to men and society.

### **Key terms:**

Crisis in masculinity; Hegemonic masculinity; Gender roles; Adolescent males; Cognitive schemata; Beliefs; Gender differences; Gender discrimination; Interpersonal relationships; Gendered work; Emotional expression; Initiation; Male body; Sport and exercise; Father-son relationships; Sexual orientation.

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## DECLARATION

I declare that, *The gender straightjacket: A qualitative investigation of a group of South African adolescent males' cognitive schemata for masculinity and gender roles*, is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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