Contemporary Partnership Patterns among the Zulu population: Perceptions of University of KwaZulu- Natal Students

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
MASTERS OF POPULATION STUDIES

SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

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2019

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Declaration

I, Sindisiwe Ngobese (Student number 214571008), declare that the thesis titled: Contemporary Partnership Patterns among the Zulu ethnic group: Perceptions of University of KwaZulu-Natal students is my original study

1.   This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

2.   The graphs and other information entailed have been acknowledged.

3.   This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

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Abstract

The Zulu ethnic group is grappling with the contestations between tradition and modernity, where it is hard to find families that are purely traditional or completely modernized. The hybrid of the two is more prevalent, particularly in urban settings. Meekers (1992) asserts that most African countries have not completely abandoned traditional practices despite modernization taking place, hence marriage is one of the family formation types that persist among Africans. Marriage among the Zulu population involves numerous compulsory stages with negotiations being required for customary marriage. These stages consist of: *Lobola, which involves* negotiations of the bride price; *Umembeso, where* the groom's family brings gifts for the bride's family; *Umbondo*, where the bride's family brings groceries to the groom's family; wedding/*umshado, which is* the actual wedding day; and *Umabo, where* the bride's family gives gifts to the groom's family after the wedding (Anarldo, 2011). All stages are very significant and are all perceived as an integral part of the marriage as a union. In light of this, this study explores the perception of the marriage process among the Zulu university students who are living in a modern space but are also bound by some aspect of their culture. Not many studies have explored how the marriage process may influence changes in partnership patterns, including but not limited to cohabitation and staying single. This study utilizes a qualitative approach to exploring partnership patterns within the selected sub-population. In-depth interviews were conducted among twenty (20) postgraduate students from the age 25 and above with an equal gender split. Findings revealed that marriage is not a priority for the Zulu postgraduate students. Rather, the focus is on education and accumulation of resources before marriage. The findings reveal the relationship between the marriage process and the contemporary partnership pattern; that the Zulu process is a valued process that plays a huge role in ensuring the couple becomes one unit. However, there are still negative connotations attached to the process which inhibit marriage, leaving people with no choice but to pursue other types of partnership patterns such as singleness, living apart together and cohabiting. Although cohabitation is culturally unacceptable, the stigma is slowly eroding in that there are circumstances where cohabiting is acceptable.

Key words: partnerships patterns, marriage, cohabitation, Zulu marriage process

Dedication

I dedicate this study to my late family, my mother, Zanele Ngobese, my father, Patrick Mkhize and my two brothers Thulani and Sphiwe Ngobese. May your beautiful souls rest in peace!

Acknowledgements

Thank you to God, the Almighty, for His showers of blessings throughout my research and strength to complete the research successfully. I would like to express my gratitude to the following people who played a major role in the success of the study.

Mrs. N. Nzimande, my supervisor, for giving me the opportunity to research and providing invaluable guidance throughout this research. Your motivation has deeply inspired me. It was a great privilege to study under your guidance. UKZN for giving me the opportunity to study at a prestigious institution, now I can truly say "I was here" and I have left my footprints on the sands of time. Participants who have sacrificed their time, this study would have not been completed without you I am extremely grateful.

Aunt Gugu Ngobese for emphasizing the importance of education at a very young age and endless support, Nonhlanhla Gigaba, thank you for calls asking about progress, Mamkhulu Fakazile, thank you for your encouragement, my personal alarm and guilt tripping when I am lazy to do my research (Lala Qhawe wovuka siya kwi graduation) your support have motivated me to work harder. Without you unceasing support I would not have completed this study you are the best mother anyone could ever ask for, I love you. Amanda and Smangele Ngobese, thank you for ensuring that my needs were well take care of while I was at res, your support does not go unnoticed. Silondile, thank you for giving advice and encouragement even when I am starting to doubt my capabilities and for giving me your desertion for reference, I am grateful. Lusanda sosha and Anele, thank you for making me laugh and allowing me to distress by teasing and irritating you.

Aunt Sindi (gogoh) Sis Tabby, sis Fezile and the entire Malishe family I appreciate your prayers from the first day till today. My Nieces, Wenzile and Awande, thank you for always asking about the progress and promising that I will finish one day, you are the sweetest nieces in the whole universe. Bhut Ntandazo, thank you for your undying support, I would not have done this without your support. Thank you for always coming through for me. To Cathy Sutherland, thank you so much for your assistance, I truly appreciate you. To my friends and colleagues - Danita, thank you for your support, thank you for always having my back Thunder buddy , Pretty, Zama, Zamo, Siyabonga, Thulisile Londi ,Gcina and Njabulo. Sphile and Thandaza Thank you my besties for calls and support although we live far from each other I love you both very much . Finally, my thanks go to all the people who have supported me to complete the research work directly or indirectly.

List of Acronyms

AIDS – Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

DoHA – Department of Home Affairs

EU – European Union

HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HIV/AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

LAT – Living Apart Together

NIDS – National Income Dynamics Survey

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OHS – October Household Survey

OPH – One Person Household

SASAS – South African Social Attitudes Survey

STATS SA – Statistics South Africa

USA – United States of America

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The decline in marriage rates and subsequent shift in partnership patterns have become global phenomena, as the world fully adapts to modernization (Sassler and Schoen, 1999). Cohen (2013) confirms that between the years 1980 and 2000, 89% of the world's population were in countries undergoing a decline in marriage rates. Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos (2015) further affirms the complexity of partnership patterns around the world, where partnerships such as marriage are slowly eroding and new forms of patterns, such as cohabitation and living together apart, are rising to be the more dominant forms of partnership patterns. The decline in the marriage rates has been further observed in countries where marriage has been an integral part of the society. Africa is among the countries where marriage has been recognized as a sacred institution (Garenne, 2016). Statistics such as the above substantiate that South Africa is among the countries experiencing declines in marriage at a very fast rate as compared to other African countries. The decline is accompanied by a rapid increase in the mean age at first marriage from 25.03 to 27.8 years for women in OECD countries (OECD Family Database, 2015). Statistics South Africa (2012) concurs that the mean age at marriage in South Africa is 30 and 34 years for females and males respectively. This increase on average at first marriage in South Africa shows that the significance of marriage is slowly eroding. Furthermore, there are disparities in the decline of marriage rates among racial groups. De Haas (1987) asserts that although marriage decline is a universal phenomenon, the decline among the Black population in South Africa is higher as compared to the White population.

The decline of marriage and the shift of partnership patterns is more marked in KwaZulu-Natal, which carries a large bulk of the Zulu ethnic group population. Figures in 2008 indicated that only 3 out of 10 Zulu adult speakers residing in KwaZulu-Natal, which is regarded as a home for Zulu people, were or had been married (Posel and Casale, 2009). The rate at which marriage is declining in KwaZulu-Natal is faster than that of the national rate (Posel, Rudwick and Casale, 2011). A study conducted using the National Data survey on marriage rates among African women affirmed the drastic decline in the KwaZulu-Natal province, as it declined from 31% in 1995 in 12% to 2008 while the national rate moved from 38% to 24% (Hosegood, 2013). Marriage for Africans is not the same as for other races, as it is defined as a process

where each stage is characterized by rituals and phases that are considered crucial (Meekers, 1992). Further, it involves several payments and ceremonies whereas for other races, the marriage process does not involve numerous ceremonies.

According to Kyalo (2012), as South Africa is moving towards modernization, the institution of marriage continues to face challenges. The Zulu ethnic group is currently grappling with contestations between tradition and modernity. They often find themselves caught between the two worlds where tradition is considered important on certain aspects, which at times competes with modernization. Hence marriage is one of the family formation types that persists among the Zulu ethnic group. Bearing in mind all being said, marriage among the Zulu population involves numerous compulsory stages with negotiations required for the customary marriage. Hence, Meekers (1992) affirms that most African countries have not completely abandoned traditional practices despite modernization taking place. These stages consist of, *Lobola*, which involves negotiations of the bride price; *Umembeso, where* the groom's family brings gifts for the bride's family; *Umbondo*, where the bride's family brings groceries to the groom's family; wedding/*umshado,* which is the actual wedding day; and *Umabo* (traditional wedding) where the bride's family gives gifts to the groom's family after the wedding (Anarldo, 2011). All stages are very significant and are all perceived as an integral part of the marriage process. The payment of lobola is the most common practice in Southern Africa and it has different names depending on the ethnic group (Posel and Rudwick, 2011).

The Zulu ethnic group is culturally entrenched and most likely to reside in the KwaZulu-Natal, which is among the most voluminous population density in South Africa. There are issues where other forms of partnership patterns such as cohabitation do not align with cultural practices, and as such are not fully embraced because of their deviation from the norm. Therefore, understanding the marriage process within this ethnic group will therefore give a clear view of how modernization has impacted partnership patterns (Hosegood et al., 2009).

1.2 Problem statement

There have been a considerable number of studies to understand the excessive decline of marriage, where attainment of education by women and their participation in the labor force is identified as a contributing factor towards the decline of marriage (Palamuleni,2010; Sabbah-Karkaby and Stier, 2017; Shirahase 2000). These improvements have played a huge role and have affected the decision-making towards partnership patterns. Moreover, migration systems and apartheid policies have influenced the change in partnerships. According to this argument,

disparities in marriage rates among the race groups are interrelated to the apartheid policies that destroyed family structures through a migratory labor system (Hosegood et al., 2009). This system disturbed the family unit as men worked far from their homes, especially those who worked in the mines, and therefore no spaces were created for family formation occurrence. Furthermore, lobola has been recognized as a contributing factor to complex partnership patterns and the decline of marriage rates among the Zulu ethnic group (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). The commercialization of lobola has moreover been identified as the contributing influence toward the excessive decline of marriage among the Zulu ethnic group, more especially with the stagnant economic system and low paying jobs (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). It should be noted that *lobolo* is not marriage itself but is still part of the marriage process. For the Zulu ethnic group, lobola is only the beginning of the long process that should be completed before one is considered married. Considering the above, this study explores perception of the marriage process among the Zulu university students who are living in a modern space but are also bound by some aspect of their culture.

The study looks specifically at the marriage process undertaken by the Zulu ethnic group and how it contributes to contemporary partnership patterns. Additionally, the study explores how the marriage processes may influence changes in partnership patterns, including but not limited to cohabitation and staying single. Examining these stages, therefore, would provide a clear understating of the role that the marriage process plays among young and educated Zulu women and men in decision making regarding marriage. It will further explore the link between the marriage process and changing partnership patterns such as cohabitation, high divorce rates and the presently declining marriage rates. This study is not suggesting that the marriage process is the only motivation for the changing partnership patterns. However, the study looks specifically at the perception of marriage process undertaken by the Zulu ethnic group and how it contributes to contemporary partnership patterns; and whether there are any other reasons beside marriage process that also contribute to the changing partnership patterns amongst the Zulu ethnic group

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to explore the partnership patterns among the Zulu population. The partnership patterns are investigated in relation to the marriage process of the Zulu population. Various studies conducted have looked at the role played by educational attainment to the decline of marriage. Therefore, this makes a university setting an interesting space to

explore perceptions on contemporary partnership patterns and the role played by the marriage process towards current partnership patterns among university students.

1.3.1. Objectives of the study

The main objectives are as follows:

- To understand partnership patterns among Zulu-speaking university Postgraduate students
- To understand Zulu-speaking university Postgraduate students' perceptions of Zulu marriage process.
- To explore the relationship between the marriage process and other partnership patterns within the Zulu culture.

1.3.2. Research questions

The main research question of this study is:

What are the contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population?

The underlying research questions of the study are:

- How are the partnership patterns among Zulu-speaking university students perceived?
- What are the perceptions of Zulu marriage as a process among Zulu-speaking university students?
- To what extent is the relationship between the marriage process and other partnership patterns within the Zulu culture perceived?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study aims at contributing to the body of knowledge concerning the decline of marriage rates and the understanding of contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group. Quantitative studies have previously been conducted but have been limited to identifying types of partnership patterns together with trends and differentials. However, there has been very little qualitative research, particularly in the post-apartheid period, which has investigated contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group. This study seeks to contribute qualitatively to the body of literature. Qualitative study gives space to fully explore if people are ticking the right boxes and further explains the reasons behind opting for such partnership

patterns. Researching contemporary partnership patterns will provide some indication of what kind of population is expected in the society in the future. Partnership patterns play a significant role in determining the fertility rate as well as impacting other aspects such as single parenting and absent fathers. Therefore, in understanding population dynamics, it is crucial to understand such aspects.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation

The paper comprises of five sections. Chapter one introduces the background of the study and outlines the objectives and significance of the study. Chapter two is in two sections, the literature review and the theoretical framework. Literature review delineate on the trends and current debates conducted related to partnership patterns. Chapter two further provides the theoretical framework which provides a justification for the study conducted. Chapter three includes the research methodology utilized, sampling, data collection, ethical considerations and study limitations. Chapter four includes the findings of the study which are then analysed based on related themes. The last chapter, chapter five, deliberates on findings, and further outlines limitations, recommendations and the overall conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Family structures are drastically changing around the world and scholars have provided different explanations to understanding contemporary partnership patterns (Hosegood et al., 2009). People are now diverting from partnership patterns previously considered significant such as marriage, to others such as cohabitation, divorce or singleness. Studies have been conducted concerning the transformation of partnership patterns such as the decline of marriage, cohabitation and increases in divorce rates.

This chapter aims to discuss partnership patterns, such as marriage cohabitation, living apart together and living alone. It further looks at the marriage and cohabitation trends globally, and in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa, and KwaZulu-Natal. Moreover, the chapter looks at the marriage process and the Zulu marriage process. Lastly, it delineates on factors that influence partnership patterns, race, age and place of residence. Lastly the second demographic transition theory is discussed as the foundation of the study,

2.2 Partnership patterns

There are various kinds of partnership patterns that exist where one decides the kind patterns they want to find themselves in. There are numerous factors that contribute to decision making in terms of the type of partnership pattern one opts for. Marriage is one pattern that has been most prominent and well celebrated, however with changes occurring within society such as increasing modernization, there are other partnership patterns that have emerged. This section aims at providing a comprehensive picture of partnership patterns and also presenting a variety of partnership patterns such as marriage, cohabitation, living apart together and living alone.

Marriage

Marriage is generally defined as the legal union between persons of the opposite sex, although same-sex unions are now legalised in some parts of the world (Anderson, 2013). This union can be legalised by a civil or religious ceremony or by any other means as stipulated by the laws of a country. Marriage as an institution plays a huge role in shaping families and has been identified as the proximate determinant of fertility since childbearing occurs primarily within

the context of marriage (Palamuleni and Palamuleni, 2011; Kalule-Sabiti et al, 2007). Additionally, marriage norms and customs differ among societies and cultural groups, more especially among Africans (Budlender et al., 2004). Types of marriage are so diverse that they range from civil, to religious, to customary or to a combination of all these different types.

Even though modernisation is occurring at an accelerated pace, the black population continues to hold on to their traditional norms and values concerning marriage (Posel, Rudwick and Casale, 2011). In South Africa, the religious marriage refers to marriage registered as civil marriage with the Department of Home Affairs (Department of Home Affairs, 2016). This kind of marriage is recognised by the Civil Marriage Act of 2006. There is also a customary marriage which is supported by the Customary Marriage Act of 1998, where marriage is negotiated through the indigenous laws of the system. For example in the context of the Zulu, the payment of lobola would be identified as the customary marriage (Kalule-Sabiti et al., 2007). However, it is not uncommon to have a combination of both traditional marriage and civil or religious marriage, which therefore attests that traditional practice still plays an integral role in the African marriage.

Cohabitation

Recently, partnership patterns are becoming complex and changing between generations. The decline of marriage has given rise to other forms of patterns such as cohabitation. Cohabiting refers to unmarried individuals who are romantically involved, and who live together (Parent et al., 2017). Cohabitation has become a common and acceptable form of partnership. Heuveline and Timberlake (2004) highlight that there have been several debates surrounding the interpretation of cohabitation, whether to define cohabitation as a path to marriage or as an alternative to marriage. Palamuleni (2010) argues that in South Africa, cohabitation is no longer viewed as just a path but also as an alternative to marriage due to the large proportions of individuals in cohabitating relationships. Manning (2015) affirms the increase of cohabitation in USA, where the vast majority (66%) of married couples lived together before they officially got married. Furthermore, the share of Americans who have cohabitated has doubled in the past 25 years (Manning, 2015).

There is considerable cross-country disparity in both prevalence and level of support for cohabitation (Gubernskaya, 2008). There are areas where it is still stigmatised and regarded as a deviant behaviour. For example, in KwaZulu-Natal cohabitation is called *ukukipita,* which is considered a shameful practice (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). Yet in some parts of the world

cohabitation has become an accepted behaviour and is identified as an alternative to marriage. For example, in Sweden, cohabitation has become more prevalent and the practice is no longer regarded as a form of deviant behaviour (Raley, 2001).

2.3 Partnership patterns: Levels and trends

2.3.1 Marriage

2.3.1.1 Global context

Industrialisation has brought changes to relationship patterns across the world, which has resulted in a shift in family formation (Sassler and Schoen, 1999). Partnership patterns have become complex, resulting in a change from marriage as a significant pattern to other forms of partnership patterns (Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos, 2015). This transformation of partnership patterns is accompanied by a dramatic decline in marriage, and the decline is marked in many parts of the world (Okun and Manor, 2016). Studies have been conducted by institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations and the USAID Demographic and Health Survey concerning the decline of marriage rates and the emerging of new partnership patterns (Posel, 2011). Cohen (2013) examined the Eurostat database that documents the decline in marriage. Demographics from Europe indicate that countries that account for 78% of the population on the continent are all showing a decline in marriage rates for every decade. Research has shown that developed countries are experiencing a decline in marriage rates. These include Russia, Mexico, Brazil, the USA, Japan, Italy, Germany and France (Cohen, 2013). A study conducted by Bertrand et al (2016) further affirms the decline as it shows that in the USA, 35 out of 44 people had never been married as compared to 7% in 1970. The same trend is also identified in Europe where the marriage rate has declined by 50% between 1965 and 2011 (Bertrand et al, 2016). Moreover, a study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) policy division further indicates that almost all OECD countries are experiencing an immense decline in marriage rates (OECD Family Database, 2015). The decline is observable in countries such as Portugal who went from 6.6 per 1000 marriages in year 1995 to 3.0 per 1000 in 2014. This is an enormous decline within a very short period. However, not all regions are experiencing a decline in marriage at the same pace. The study indicated that in Lithuania, Turkey, and the United States, the rates were slightly higher at around 7 per 1000. However, the overall estimate by the OECD affirms a decline in marriage where the crude marriage rate

is estimated to be between 4 and 5.5 marriages per 1000, with the OECD average standing at 4.8 per 1000 (OECD, 2015)

This decline in marriage rates is further accompanied by the increase in age at first marriage. In 1990, the average age at first marriage for women in most of the OECD counties was between 22 and 27 whereas for men it was between 24 and 30 years of age. However, there has been a drastic increase up to the year 2016, where women's average age at first marriage increased to the range of 27 to 33 and the men's average to the range of 29 to 39 (OECD Family Database, 2015).

2.3.1.2 Marriage levels and trends in sub-Saharan Africa

The decline of marriage has spread to sub-Saharan Africa where marriage could be described as an early and significant practice (Arnaldo, 2004). There are still variations where the decline differs across the continent. For example, there are countries where marriage has remained stable even though it is increasingly replaced by the modern values and other rising partnership patterns. Zambia and Malawi are the example of countries where marriage is still common and remains a significant partnership pattern (Indongo and Pazvakawambwa, 2015). Yaya and Amoaten (2016) argue that although there has been a dramatic shift to late marriage, there are still chances that about 82 million girls in developing countries between the ages of 10 and 17 get married before their 18th Birthday. For example, a study conducted by Palamuleni (2011) on the socio-demographic factors affecting age at first marriage indicated that marriage in Malawi takes place early, where age at first marriage is 17 years of age. Furthermore, the Demographic Household Survey (DHS) data further affirmed that the mean age at first marriage ranges between ages 15 and 19 years for most African countries except for Namibia, Botswana and South Africa where the average age at first marriage is estimated at 24 (Garenne 2004).

Hertrich (2002) and van de Walle (1993) found that age at first marriage in East Africa has remained at around 21 years and around 20 years in both Central and East Africa respectively. A comparative study conducted by Ayiga and Rampagane (2013) using the Cox proportional hazard model affirm that Median Age at First Marriage (MAFM) was 19 years of age in Uganda while South Africa has experienced a remarkable increase where median age at first marriage is 29 years. Moreover, research indicates that Botswana, Namibia and South Africa are the only countries who have a proportion of women never married that is above 8%, and women

are said to be at the age of 45-49, while other countries have an average that is less than 1.1 % (Garenne, 2016).

The above discussions prove that despite the excessive decline of marriage, there are some parts of Africa where marriage is still an early event while Southern Africa experiences a decline in marriage. The decline is connected to Southern Africa's low fertility relative to other African countries' fertility, which is declining at lower pace. Moreover, the differences in the decline are a result of the apparent differences in education and women empowerment within the Sub-Saharan countries. For example, Ahaibwe (2017) proclaims that Uganda is still faced with low female education attainment, early marriages, teenage pregnancies and poor female labour participation which therefore hinders the progress of the country, therefore leading to early marriage as a form of financial and social security (Ayiga and Rampagane, 2013). A study conducted by Ayiga and Rampagane (2013) using the 2006 Uganda demographic and health surveys and the 2003 South African demographic and health surveys suggested that 30% of girls from Uganda begin childbearing below eighteen because they get married early. This is seen by the mean age at first marriage being 19 years.

On the other hand, Namibia has experienced a significant improvement in women education and participation in the labour force and it is believed this has had an impact on partnership patterns as well as the increasing median age at first marriage which is above 25 years (Gareen, 2004).

2.3.1.3 Marriage levels and trends in in South Africa

Marriage

South Africa has endured drastic changes in partnership patterns where a decline in marriage rates has been observed since 1960 (Mhongo, 2013). A study conducted in South Africa using the demographic microdata drawn from a range of representative household surveys on marriage discovered that marriage among females has decreased from 35% in 1995 to 28% in 2003 and the decline is still continuing (Posel, Rudwick and 2014). Furthermore, Statistics South Africa (2014) declares recorded marriages were 186522 in the period of 2003 – while it dropped 150 852 in 2014. It is also said that marriage dropped to approximately 37% in recent years (Haffejee et al., 2018). Even though this may only reflect a partial decline, these figures demonstrate that the significance of marriage is slowly eroding within African society, where marriage has previously been a significant rite of passage.

However, there are disparities in the decline of marriage rates among racial groups. De Haas (1987) concurs that although marriage decline is a universal phenomenon, the decline among the Black population in South Africa is higher compared to other population groups, whereas marriage among Black has been a norm in the past years (Diako, 2013). However, after 1960 it all changed, and it became vice versa (Cohen, 2018). In Figure 2.1 below, there is a clear trend indicating the declining marriage rate across all races. However, a study conducted from 1995 to 2010 using data from the national representative surveys for South Africa shows a significant decline in the likelihood of African women in South Africa to get married compared to White women (Posel and Rudwick, 2012).

Further, the gap is widening. The results, as shown in Figure 2.1 below, indicate that the percentage of individuals ever married among African females aged 20-30 is very low as compared to white females. The share of African women has declined since 1995 by more than half as it moved from close to 21% in 1995 to 10% in 2010. There is a noticeable decline for Whites where the 20-30 age range shifts from 80% in 1995 to 60 % in 2010. Although there is noticeable decline for Whites, the pace is not the same as Africans. There is also a decline among the 40-50 age range, which indicates that the decline of marriage is not only influenced by the postponement of marriage, but also the eroding significance of marriage.

Figure 2.1: Percentage women ever married in South Africa 1995 - 2010
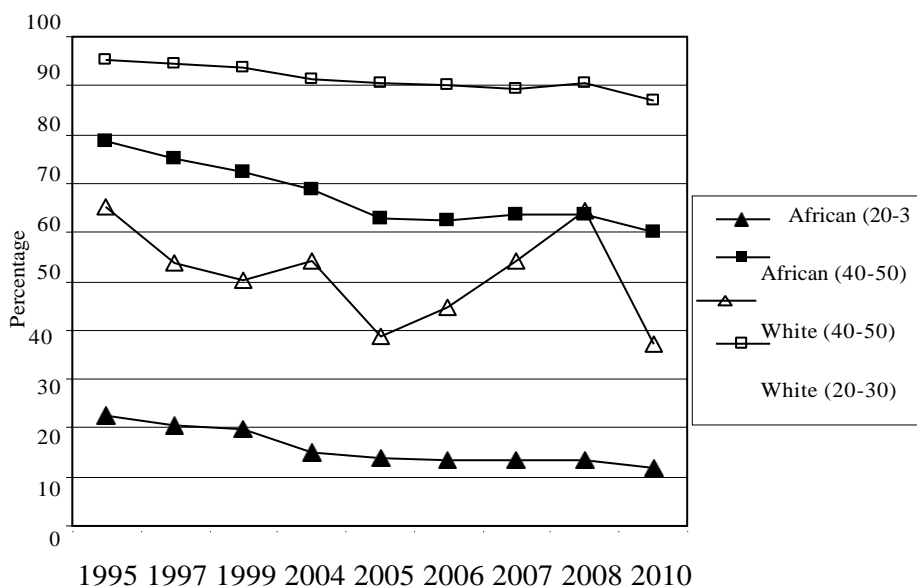
Source: Posel and Rudwick (2011)

Furthermore, Moore (2013) asserted that almost one in every two Black South Africans between the ages of 20 and 49 had no partner while for the White population, four out of five were married. Research has been conducted to understand this phenomenon and the migrant labor system has been identified as a role player towards the decline as well as the existence of complex partnership patterns (Hosegood et al., 2009). The prominent argument brought forward in the discourse of marriage decline and changing partnerships pertains to apartheid policies. According to this argument, racial disparities are interrelated to the apartheid policies such as the 1952 Pass Laws Act which ensured that African adults were restricted from accompanying their spouse into urban areas unless they were also employed, which destroyed the family structure through a migratory labour system (Hosegood et al., 2009). This system disturbed the family unit as men worked far from their homes, especially those who worked in the mines, and therefore no spaces were created for family formation occurrences.

The migratory labour system is not the only factor that contributed to the decline and transformation of partnership. Moreover, hostels that were built during apartheid were solely built for one sex (males), therefore women were not allowed (Maharaj, 1992). As a result, apartheid is observed as a profound force in the decline of marriage and hanging partnership patterns in South Africa. Although restrictions on permanent residence were dismantled in the late 1980's, marriage rates remained low and have continued to decline in the post-apartheid era, particularly among Africans whom were arguably the population group most affected by the apartheid system and policies.

2.3.2 Cohabitation

2.3.2.1 Global perspective

The decline of marriage has been identified as a major factor contributing to the rise of cohabitation. Cohabitation has become a common practice and a popular living arrangement across the world. Kok and Leinarte (2015) define cohabitation as a scenario where partners live in the same residence without a legal contract like married people. The rates of cohabitation have increased dramatically and this drastic increase can be observed in the United States where the number of women who have ever cohabited has almost doubled over the past 25 years (2015). Kienan (2011) highlights that in the past, cohabitation was limited to the disadvantaged people in society such as ageing people, divorcees and poor people who could not afford a wedding. However, that has since changed as cohabitation has spread among all

social groups and economic classes. Tyyskä (2014) affirm that the younger generation is more likely to cohabitate at the age range of 20 to 34 as compared to the previous generation at the same age.

Various theories have emerged to explain why people choose to cohabit and the discourse distinguishes between two arrangements of cohabitation (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). Markham and Stanley (2009) assert that cohabitation has become a path towards marriage where people have an opportunity to assess compatibility with partners. The study by participant (2012) revealed that about 44% of women cohabited before marriage in the 1980's and that percentage has gone up to 67% in the 2000's. In this case, cohabitation is used as a temporary convenient arrangement that will be left once the constraints to marriage are removed. It further gives couples the opportunity to be stable and establish themselves before marriage (Magagula, 2009). However, Wood and Vergauwen (2017) argue that other couples opt for cohabitation as an absolute alternative to marriage to avoid the responsibilities that come with marriage. For women, this can refer to domestic chores in the case of married couples (Desingly and Cicchel, 2003). Partnership patterns have changed profoundly in many Western countries, and cohabitation has been institutionalized in several countries. However, the changes are not occurring uniformly across countries (Keizer, 2010).

Some countries have experienced a rapid increase in cohabitation where the belief of marriage is dying out, while other countries have experienced a very little increase in cohabitation. To affirm that, a comparison study by Aarskaug Wiik et al. (2012) conducted in Europe using a generation and gender survey to investigate relationship quality in Europe discovered that in the Nordic countries, cohabitation is more institutionalized than elsewhere, and this is identified in Scandinavia and North-Western Europe. A high proportion of births within cohabitation were observed in the early 2000s in Norway and Sweden, where over 40% of births occurred within cohabitation (Perelli-Harris and Gassen, 2012). In Norway, 47% of men and women aged 26 to 35 are said to be in cohabitation, while the figure is 37% in the Netherlands and France. The Eastern and Southern European countries experience low levels of cohabitation. The study indicates that Romania has the lowest level of cohabitation where only 8% of the people age 26 to 35 were cohabiting (Aarskaug Wiik et al., 2012).

2.3.2.2 Cohabitation levels and trends in Africa

Cohabitation has spread and continues to be prominent in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) however there are limited studies conducted concerning the phenomena (Odimegwu et al., 2018). Although cohabitation is taking place in all parts of Africa the rate varies. Central Africa has a higher rate of cohabitation standing at 21.7% as compared to Western Africa which had the lowest occurrence of cohabitation standing at 6.8%. Eastern and Southern Africa presented 11.7% and 1.04% respectively. Research further shows that in four regions central Africa , Southern Africa, West Africa and Eastern African women in the 20–24 years age group, followed by those aged 25 years and older, have more chances of cohabiting (Odimegwu et al., 2018).

The study conducted by Odimegwu et al. (2018) using the weighted pooled DHS identifies the socio-cultural and the economic factors as drivers of cohabitation in the SSA. The inability to pay bride price due to financial constraints is a predictable factor giving rise to cohabitation. Moreover, religion is also identified as a determinant of cohabitation. It is found that Catholic and Christian believers are more likely to cohabit as compared to Muslim believers (Odimegwu et al., 2018). Botswana is one of the regions with highest rate of cohabitation in Sub-Saharan Africa. The prevalence of cohabitations is not traditionally acceptable within the region of Botswana as in the rest of Africa where marriage has been a primary and universal institution and cohabitation practices have been very rare (Mokomane, 2006). Cohabitation has traditionally been uncommon and has often been perceived as a shame to the society. Data collected from the Botswana Family Household Survey reveals cohabitation increment where it rose from 31% in 1991 to 46% in 2001 in the proportion of women aged 15-49 (Mokomane, 2006). The underlying factors that have led to the rise of cohabitation are associated with primary factors that have led to the decline of marriage. Mokomane (2006) identifies women education attainment, the migration labour system and the decline of polygamy in Botswana as the fundamental factors that have contributed to the rise of cohabitation. The destabilization of polygamy in this region by missionaries and inability to return to this polygamy practice during the decline of marriage is identified as the reason behind the excessive rise of partnership patterns such as cohabitation in this region (Mokomane, 2006).

The trend is further observed in Namibia where the decline of marriage is recognized as a contributing factor towards cohabitation in Namibia and it continues to strengthen as a trend. A study conducted by Indongo and Pazvakawambwa (2015) proclaims that in Namibia more adults opt for cohabitation or singleness rather than marriage. There are numerous explanations

behind this decision. Among the contributing factors are unreasonable *lobola* payments and other marriage costs.

2.3.2.3 South African cohabitation levels and trends

The uncertainty around marriage gives impetus to the desire to explore other partnership patterns such as cohabitation (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). Posel et al. (2011) confirm the ever-increasing rate of other forms of partnership patterns as marriage rates decline. In South Africa, cohabitation increased from 5% in 1995 to 14% in 2008. Some countries have experienced a rapid increase in cohabitation accompanied by premarital cohabitation and the dying out of marriage, while other countries have experienced very little increase in cohabitation. In 2008, almost half of all African mothers were neither married if not cohabiting with a partner, and only 30% of African children got the chance of growing up with their fathers in the same household (Posel and Rudwick, 2012). Research shows that in South Africa cohabitation is only identified as an acceptable behaviour when it is a path towards marriage and not as an alternative (Posel and Rudwick, 2012).

This could possibly be due to cultural norms that display cohabitation as shameful and unacceptable behaviour. Although there are still race and ethnic disparities in terms of cohabitation, it has not increased expressly which therefore explains why cohabitation rates among Africans and the Zulu population have not increased further even if the marriage rate is declining significantly (Posel et al., 2013). Although cohabitation has become more common, nevertheless the rate does not match with the excessive decline of the marriage rate.

2.3.3 Other partnership patterns

2.3.3.1 Living apart together

Partnership patterns have become more complex to understand as they have continued to be diverse. Relationships can start as cohabitation, transfer to marriage and even divorce (Perelli-Harris and Amos, 2015). However, there are also other partnership patterns such as living apart together (LAT), which is also referred to as a non-residential partnership pattern. Reimondos et al. (2011) proclaim that LAT refers to those who are in an intimate relationship but do not live together with their partners. Very few studies have been conducted on LAT and these were mostly conducted in European counties and in Australia. Reimondos et al. (2011) stress the importance of including this category because failure to do so can lead to an immense overestimation of the proportion of people who are considered as single. People have a tendency to identify themselves as single since they are not married or cohabiting although

they are in fact in relationships. Recent studies suggest that LAT relationships are likely to be temporary for young people where they are a route to residential relationship while for older people, it is likely to be permanent (Wagner et al., 209). Factors such as a socio-economic change and the increasing rate of relationship dissolution allow individuals some form of independence or autonomy. This partnership pattern is said to be more convenient for older people who have gone through separation and divorce.

2.3.3.2 Living alone

The drastic changes in family arrangements have resulted in an increase in the number of people opting to live alone (Yeung and Cheung, 2015). Living alone arrangement refers to one person living in a household. Such an arrangement of living alone is also referred to as a one-person household (OPH) and it has become a very popular practice in most Western societies. The practice is spreading to other countries, globally. Although this living arrangement is likely to be found in most parts of the world, it has received less attention (Podhisita and Xenos, 2015).

Yeung and Cheung (2015) assert that OPHs are mostly found in the economically advanced countries such as Germany, Norway, Finland, Denmark, and Switzerland among others. In 2017, 33.6% of households in the European Union and an estimated 40% of households in Nordic countries except Iceland were single households (Yeung, 2015). OPHs have been associated more with widowed and adult people. However recently, young people and middle-aged people are opting for this living arrangement. Even married people are opting for this arrangement (Yeung and Cheung, 2015). This has been identified in China in recent years where single or married people living alone now outnumber those who are widowed, which has historically been the largest group of people living alone (Yeung and Cheung, 2015).

There are various factors which have been identified as role players to the rise of one person households such as the increase in urbanization. The movement of people to urban lifestyles and mobility are said to be the reason for most families living apart (Podhisita and Xeno, 2015). This is the stage where young and working individuals become employed in an urban space which therefore forces families to live apart. This can be observed in Nordic countries which have the highest rate of individuals who live alone in urban spaces (Strandstrom and Karlsson, 2019). In the United Kingdom and Sweden, the same trend is observed. However, this does not mean that everyone who is living alone is either financially stable or working well. There are people who opt for this living arrangement due to financial stress. Yeung and Cheung (2015)

assert that in Asia, some people opt for this living arrangement because of economic challenges and are likely to be migrants that are less educated and cannot afford a home.

Other studies identify the eradication of traditional family patterns such as the postponement of marriage as the reason for the drastic increase of OPH. This has been observed in Japan and other Asian countries where the highest rates of OPH are recorded (Yeung and Cheung, 2015). This trend occurred from 1985 to 2010 among young adults, during a period in which Japan was experiencing an excessive decline in marriage (Yeung and Cheung, 2015). In the past, young adults usually left home when getting married. However, with the delay of marriage and declining marriage rate, young adults tend to leave home in pursuit of independence and therefore live alone. Since then, the phenomenon has been linked to the increase in the number of women who are educated that are likely to live alone as compared to those who are less educated. However, Sandstroom and Karlsson (2019) assert that the education gradient is influenced by the gender equity laws of the country. Education can also contribute to OPHs especially in countries where gender equity is not practiced. Without regard to education levels, countries with gender equity experience less OPH (Strandstroom and Karlsson, 2019). This shows that people tend to opt for this living arrangement to avoid oppression and to gain autonomy in their lives. For example, OPH is more predominant amongst women as compared to men (Sandstroom and Karlsson, 2019).

2.3.4 Literature appraisal of partnership patterns in KZN

Although marriage rates have dropped across all the nine provinces in South Africa in recent years, the decline is particularly more marked in KwaZulu-Natal (Posel and Rudwick, 2011) .The disparities in the decline extend to ethnicity where the Zulu population experiences more marriage decline as compared to other ethnic groups (Hosegood, and Moultrie, 2009). Posel and Casale (2009) assert that only 19% of all young African women in KwaZulu-Natal were married compared to the national average of 30%. Furthermore, Posel and Rudwick (2011), indicated that in 2008, only three out of 10 Zulu speakers were either married or had been married.

A report that used national data on marriage rates among African women affirmed the drastic decline in marriage rates in KwaZulu-Natal. Figure 2.2 indicates that the pace at which marriage has been declining among the age of 20 to 45 in KwaZulu-Natal is faster than the national rate.

Figure 2.2: Marriage rates among African women (20-45 years), South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal
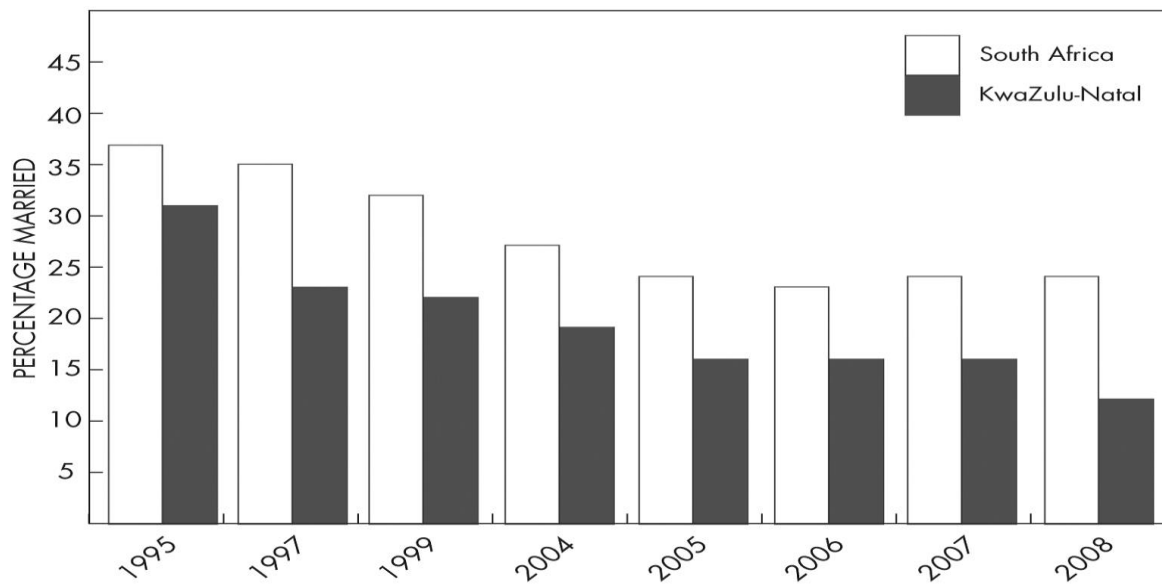
Figure 2.2 shows the decline where 31% of African women in KwaZulu-Natal were married in 1995 as compared to a record low of 12% in 2008 while South Africa moved from from 38% to 24% (Posel et al., 2011).

Furthermore, a study conducted by Palamuleni (2011) observing marriage patterns in South Africa comparing 1996, 2001 and 2007 further affirms that marriage rates have excessively declined in KwaZulu-Natal as compared to the other eight provinces, with Gauteng province being the lowest.

Furthermore, research suggests that unwed motherhood is even more pronounced among the Zulu-speaking women of South Africa (Posel et al., 2011; Rudwick and Posel, 2012; Hosegood, 2013; Posel and Casale 2013; Posel and Rudwick, 2013).

The decline in marriage in KwaZulu-Natal caught the interest of various scholars. Studies seeking to understand this decline in marriage rates among the Zulu people have been conducted. *Ilobolo* (bride price) has been identified as a contributing factor towards the decline. This is a common practice in southern Africa, and it has various names depending on the ethnic group in question. Hence, each practice contains a different antiquity and it involves a payment from the groom's family to the bride's family as a token of appreciation to the bride's family (Hosegood et al., 2009).

In KwaZulu-Natal it is argued that although payment of *ilobolo* is an old practice, it has been modified. Hosegood, McGrath and Moultrie (2009) affirm that in the past, *ilobolo* was only negotiated by the families and was rarely paid in full before marriage took place and it has since changed. Moreover, Khomari et al. (2012) affirm that the Zulu culture allowed a bridegroom to bring what he could afford. Although it was a matter of honour to give as many cattle as possible, there was never a stipulated number of required cows.

The practice of paying lobola to the bride's family was formalized by the Natal Secretary for Native Affairs, Theophilus Shepstone, to ten cattle and one extra cow that belongs to the bride's mother referred as *Inkomo kamama* or equivalent value (Welsh, 1971). The fixed number of cows has now been identified as a hindrance to marriage among the Zulu ethnic group. Cousins (2013) argues that the costs of marriage are greater than the benefits for many young couples, although marriage remains a vastly cherished and desired life-event, which could thus lead to a rise in alternative partnership patterns. Moreover, studies conducted in 1995 and 2008 by Rudwick and Posel (2011) indicated that 60% of Zulu speakers identified lobola as the main hindrance to marriage. Khomari et al. (2012) citing Khumalo (1997), highlight that for the Zulu people, *lobola* aims at connecting both the bride and the groom's ancestral spirit. However, the true meaning has since been eradicated through the commodification of the process, which then creates a barrier for young adults to get married.

Further, the soaring rates of unemployment among the young adults in KwaZulu-Natal has been recognised as a contributing factor to the declining rate of marriage in the province (Hunter, 2007). The whole of South Africa is faced with the challenge of unemployment where the unemployment rate grew from 36.3 percent in 1995, to 49.5 percent in 2003 (Rudwick and Posel, 2011). Furthermore, it is also claimed that KwaZulu-Natal is among the provinces characterised by the highest unemployment rates among African adults. These increased from 39.5% to 51% and these trends are identified within those of a marriageable age, which is therefore young people (Rudwick and Posel, 2011). Considering the above arguments, it then explains the vulnerability of marriage in KwaZulu-Natal and the excessive decline in marriage rates when compared to other provinces.

2.4 The marriage process

Marriage is known as a universal social institution that occurs everywhere, however, this institution varies across cultures and changes over time. Meekers (1992) identifies marriage as a difficult concept in African societies because it is a process rather than a discrete event and involves rituals, negotiations and transactions that can stretch over years, making it difficult to say at what point a couple becomes married. Marriage in most African societies involve numerous stages where there are negotiations and rituals that are regarded as being necessary, especially for the customary marriage type (Arnaldo, 2004). Marriage is a process composed of several stages between the preliminary rites and the full acceptance of the couple as a social unit (van de Walle, 1968; United Nations, 1988). All the stages are very significant, and these are all perceived as being an integral part of the union and each stage is characterized by necessary rituals. Yet in the Western societies marriage remains a simple event (Meekers, 1992).

2.4.1 Zulu marriage processes

There are various arguments in relation to marriage processes, especially in terms of how it came about and its influence on the partnership patterns (Posel and Rudwick, 2011). It is important to observe all the stages that the Zulu ethnic group follows in the process of getting married. These stages consist of *Lobola* negotiations (gazetting of the bride price)*, Umembeso*, where the groom's family brings gifts for the bride's family, *Umbondo*, where the bride's family brings groceries to the groom's family, *wedding/umshado*, which is the actual wedding day, and *Umabo*, where the bride's family gives gifts to the groom's family after the wedding ceremony. In the Zulu culture, these stages are considered as the foundation and they are important for a couple in becoming one unit.

The above stages can be time consuming and they require financial resources. Hence, the unemployed find it difficult to go through the above steps, which can take a long time. In the past, this payment was in the form of cattle, however, due to urbanisation, where the number of urban residents is growing, *ilobolo* is now paid in cash. Such features of the Zulu marriage cause Zulu marriage to be more vulnerable than all other traditions due to the complexity of the process, the payments of bride price and other long processes add on costs to the marriage (Hosegood et al., 2009).

The processes undertaken can be one of the explanations that have contributed to the South African marriage rate dropping to approximately 37% in recent years (Statistics South Africa, 2017). This decline is particularly more noticeable among the Black African population compared to other race groups (Posel et al., 2011). The financial constraint on young Black African men in the face of high rates of unemployment and high payments of *ilobolo* and the cost of marriage process can be identified as contributing factors that have exacerbated the low marriage rates amongst Black Africans and the shift to and rise of other forms of partnership patterns (Posel et al., 2011).

2.5 Factors leading to decline of marriage

There are many factors that are associated with the changing of partnership patterns and the decline of marriage. This section focuses on the determinants of family changes such as place of residence, level of education, HIV and AIDS, age and race as the factors contributing to complex partnership patterns.

2.5.1 Place of residence

Studies indicate that geographical area is another factor that influences partnership patterns as well as the timing of marriage. Rutto (2015) affirms that partnership patterns differ depending on urban and rural areas. Garenne (2004) further asserts that rural areas are often associated with early marriage while people residing in urban areas delay marriage. In Latin America, rural women younger than 20 years were found to be 25% more likely to be married as compared those residing in urban areas. The geographical differences are also visible within African countries. A study conducted in Kenya on age at first marriage indicated that men and women residing in in rural areas have more chances of getting married younger as compared to men and women residing in urban areas, of course with lower age at first marriage for women as compared to men (Rutto, 2015). Research additionally asserts that women residing in urban areas are more likely to marry 2 to 3 years later than rural women (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2003) and (Kenya National Bureau of Statistic, 2010). A similar pattern is observed in South Africa where it is shown that people residing in urban areas are 1.3 times less likely to be married than those residing in rural areas (Amoateng, 2007).

Rural areas are culturally entrenched, and hence people residing in rural areas are guided by cultural norms while people residing in urban areas are not bound by culture. In rural areas marriage is identified as step towards adulthood and hence rural people are more likely to

uphold traditional practices of early marriage while people in urban areas are driven by career aspiration. Another factor that contributes to the geographical disparities is the unequal distribution of economic opportunities, as the rural economy offers less employment opportunities as compared to urban areas. Therefore, marriage becomes another means of survival.

2.5.2 Education

The changes in partnership patterns have been greatly associated with numerous factors such as women's attainment of education (Cheng, 2014). Research has shown that as women become empowered and become role players in the economy, the premise of marriage being a means of financial security starts to erode (Kalmijn, 2011). Therefore, as a higher number of women access education, they attain economic independence, and hence the desire for marriage starts to erode.

There has been a lot of debate around this topic where Becker and Oppenheimer have different views regarding the role off education on changing partnership patterns. In the context of the economic independence theory, Becker (1964) hypothesises that marriage as a partnership pattern is based on gains where two individuals commit to maximise productivity and therefore the commitment is reduced when one person begins to gain much on education and labour market than a spouse's income. This theory therefore asserts that economic stability for females decreases the chances of marriage as women are now able to provide for themselves or easily divorce.

Contrary to the Becker's findings, Oppenheimer (1988) explains and emphasises the importance of women's contribution in families. The argument is that depending on one gender for the stability of marriage is a risky strategy, especially for a family facing economic problems. This theory asserts that women's education should make them more attractive and raises the likelihood of marriage (Torr, 2011). This theory has been proven in Sweden where women with higher education enjoyed higher chances of getting married (Ono, 2003).

Research shows that a severe marriage decline was observed in Taiwan after it became a post-industrial society and the earning capacity was improved (Jones and Gubhaju, 2009). A decline among the lower class was observed due to the economic instability. The same trend can further be observed in East Asia where the attainment of education by women has been considered as a key role player towards the decline of marriage and educated women being less likely to marry less educated partners (Raymo,et al., 2015). Another argument brought forward is that

women choose not to marry when educated as to try to avoid the patriarchal institutions, rather opting for the flexible living arrangements (Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos, 2016).

The same trend can be observed in Sub-Saharan Africa where marriage was occurring at an early age. Research shows that educated women enjoy more chances of postponing marriage due to a number of years spent in school and career aspiration (Odimegwu, et al., 2017). This explains the decline of marriage since there has been lot of emphasis on women education and employment equity for women in Africa. A study conducted in Kenya established that chances of getting married are 46% lower for women with secondary education as compared to 24% for women with primary education (Odimegwu et al., 2017).

Furthermore, a study conducted in South Africa based on attitudinal data from the South African Social Attitudes Survey, identifies the same pattern where almost 70% of black South African women emphasised the importance of fulfilling career aspiration before getting married (Moore and Govender, 2013). The importance of financial stability and accumulation of resources remains the priority before commitment takes place.

The above discussion proves that education is one of the profound factors that contributes to the decline of marriage almost globally.

2.5.3 The HIV/AIDS epidemic

The decline in the number of people who get married has been largely attributed to HIV/AIDS, however few studies have been carried out to this effect. (Kalmijn, 2011). As South Africa started facing a severe HIV/AIDS epidemic the decision regarding family formation was affected (Heuveline, 2004). Marston et al. (2009) contends that the spread of HIV/AIDS is precipitated by the dissolution of marital unions. The loss of one's marriage partner (widow and widower), divorce and separation have been associated with an increased prevalence of HIV/AIDS. For example, in Manicaland, a province in Zimbabwe, an exceptionally high prevalence of HIV was observed among widows and widowers (54% and 61% respectively), while women in polygamous marriages have been shown to have a higher risk of acquiring HIV than those in monogamous marriages. Also, in South Africa it is evidence that young people are no longer positive about marriage due to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS (Haffejee et al., 2018). Therefore, the above discussion affirms that there is indeed a relationship between partnership patterns and HIV/AIDS. Nonetheless, literature on this aspect is minimal (Haffejee, et al., 2018).

2.5.4 Age

The decline in enrolment in the institution of marriage is also attributed to marrying at a later stage in life. Mgwaba and Maharaja (2018) asserts that age at first marriage has been increasing in most countries over the years. A study conducted in OECD countries (OECD Family Database, 2015) indicated that individuals were getting married at an age of between 25.03 and 27.8 years for women while the mean age for men is 32.5 (OECD, 2011). This habit to postpone the age of first marriage is identified in Switzerland where the mean age at first marriage increased by more than seven years from 1980 to 2008 (OECD, 2011). It is further argued that cohabitation has been identified as a major contributing factor for the decline in marriage. Countries such as Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have been experiencing a high rate of cohabitation and it has become a common practice therefore on average, for individuals to marry for the first time at over 30 years of age (OECD, 2011).

The postponement of marriage is found in some parts of Africa where marriage has been identified as an early and universal practice. Although results indicate that the median age at first marriage is still low for most African countries (Gareen, 2004), early marriage has become less dominant and this has given rise to the delay in marriage, which has therefore led to a rapid increase in the mean age at first marriage. Research by Shemeikka et al. (2005) reported that the mean age at first marriage for females in Namibia in 1990s was around 30 years for females and 34 for males. Similarly, the mean age at first marriage in South Africa is 30 and 34 years for females and males respectively (Statistics South Africa, 2012). However, the Africa Policy Forum (2013) asserts that the minimum legal age of marriage is stipulated as 18 for both countries but delays in the onset of marriages are observed. This increase in average age at first marriage in Southern Africa shows that the significance of marriage is slowly eroding.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Marton et al. (2009) using the National Demographic and Health Survey data analysing the marriage trends of Sub-Saharan countries further confirmed the delay in marriage observed, by showing that the uMkhanyakude district in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) had the highest proportion of women who never married and that the age of first marriage was older than 35 years. South Africa has the highest levels in terms of delays in marriage as compared to neighbouring counties, nonetheless. However, Amoateng (2004) asserts that once the knot of marriage is tied, it is much more likely to be dissolved through death than through divorce as compared to other parts of the world.

2.5.5 Race

Although the decline is experienced by all races, the rate at which marriage declines among Black people is higher as compared to White people. The decline of marriage is characterised by large racial differences. The racial disparities are observed in Western countries where changes in partnership patterns began. The study conducted in United States of America (USA) shows that Black people in USA wait longer to get married as compared to white people (Raley et al., 2015). The study further shows that the mean age at first marriage for White people was 30 while Black Americans had an average of 26 in 2010 (Raley et al., 2015). Furthermore, a study conducted by Caucutt et al. (2016) on women in the USA shows that in 2013, only 79% of White women were ever married and that rate had dropped by 15% since 1970, while black women have experienced a 38% decline since 1970.

Similar patterns were observed in South Africa where Africans were getting married later as compared to their White counterparts. The disparities are explained using the singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM). Research conducted by Palamuleni and Palamuleni (2011) asserts that Africans and Coloureds tend to marry later with an average above 27 years, while the Indians and Whites marry slightly earlier with a mean age at first marriage of between 24 and 27 years. Moreover, Table 2.1 indicates that KwaZulu-Natal also has the highest SMAM among South Africa's provinces, with the SMAM standing at 34 years for males and 32 years for females in year 2007 KwaZulu-Natal carries the bulk of Africans and it is the largest province (Posel et al., 2011). Therefore, this explains the very high national mean age at first marriage since Africans constitute over three quarters of the population. Additionally, the observed mean age at first marriage among Africans is identified as leading among all the races and is very high, thus contributing towards the national average which is 32 and 29 years for males and females respectively (Palamuleni and Palamuleni, 2011).

Table 2.1: Singulate Mean Age at Marriage for population group and provinces in South Africa

Province, Population Group and Country		Male			Female		
	1996	2001	2007	1996	2001	2007
Eastern Cape	32.9	32.1	33.8	29.1	28.2	30.2
Free State	28.6	29.2	31.0	26.8	26.7	28.3
Gauteng	30.1	29.8	31.5	27.7	26.3	27.6
KZN	33.0	32.0	34.7	31.0	29.7	32.2
Mpumalanga	31.0	30.4	32.6	28.8	27.2	29.5
N Cape	30.3	30.8	32.8	28.6	27.8	30.1
Limpopo	30.7	29.7	33.1	27.4	27.3	29.9
N West	31.7	31.3	32.7	29.5	28.4	30.2
W Cape	29.5	29.3	30.7	27.9	27.0	29.0
Population group						
African	32.0	31.2	33.4	29.6	28.1	30.2
Coloured	28.9	28.7	30.7	27.9	27.0	28.7
Asian	26.9	27.3	29.0	23.9	24.5	25.5
White	27.0	27.2	28.8	24.6	24.8	25.9
Country						
South Africa	31.0	30.5	32.53	28.7	27.7	29.62

Source: Palamuleni and Palamuleni (2011).

The economic inequalities between the Blacks and Whites is identified as the fundamental reason behind these racial disparities (Caucutt et al., 2016; Posel and Casale, 2009). The difficulty for Black people to climb the income ladder and overcome structural challenges contributes to the excessive decline of marriage among the Black Americans in USA. The same problem of economic inequalities is observed in South Africa for the Black population and more especially for Black men, which thus makes it hard for them to get married.

2.6. Theory

2.6.1 Second Demographic Transition Theory

In exploring the perceptions of selected members of the Zulu ethnic group on contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group, the study uses the second demographic transition theory (SDTT). This theory has become popular in understanding family/fertility change in contemporary Europe as well as the rest of the western world (Lesthaeghe, 2014).

Although the SDT is popular in the western world, the developing countries are catching up with the developed world in using this theory and globalization is playing a further role. It is now common to identify family changes that were observed in the developed countries as occurring in developing countries. Therefore, this same theory can be used to understand such changes in partnership patterns occurring in South Africa.

The Second Demographic Transition Theory (SDTT) was jointly proposed by Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa in 1986 as an update to the first Demographic Transition Theory (DTT), formulated in 1960 by Thompson (Lesthaeghe, 2014). The first DTT refers to the historical declines in mortality and fertility which started in Europe and further spread to developing nations. The first DTT was no longer applicable in some settings where development brought other features to society such as postponement of marriage, new forms of partnership (cohabitation), and an increase in divorce. These new features which the first DTT did not cite, thereby paved the way for the Second Demographic Theory (Zaidi and Morgan, 2017). The common feature between the two theories was the changes in mortality, which were not very different from those of the DTT. In spite of all the new developments cited in the SDTT, both theories present an improvement in mortality rates (Lesthaeghe, 2014). Zaid and Morgan (2017) assert that the main difference between these two theories is that the DTT did not undermine the role of marriage and parenthood regardless of industrialisation and economic development while the SDTT highlights the changes in family formation and continuous decline in marriage instituting.

The focus of the SDTT is the rise of new social challenges associated with adaptation to other cultures, aging, and complexity of partnership patterns and high levels of poverty (Lesthaeghe, 2014). Further, it is argued that Maslow's the changing needs of 1954 is a cornerstone of this second demographic theory where education and accumulation of resources pushes people away from people societal standards and solidarity to self-individual consciousness (Lesthaeghe, 2014). Furthermore, the SDTT is associated with the concept of post materialism

by Ron Inglehart and its growing importance in political development. Zaida and Morgan (2017) argue that post materialism comes with consequences of changes in demographic outcomes such as the sub-replacement fertility. The rise of alternative living arrangements or partnership patterns and the growth of alternative household living arrangements, which are likely to occur in non-Western societies or developing countries if they equally develop a greater prominence of Maslowian "higher order needs". The theory highlights how the level of education and financial stability could shift people away from solidarity to individualism and self-realization (Zaida and Morgan, 2017).

The Second Demographic transition theory (SDTT) aligns very well with the current study as the study observes the contemporary partnership patterns. Zaidi and Morgan (2017) concur that the changes in partnership patterns are at the heart of the Second Demographic Theory. Thus, the SDTT entails sustained sub-replacement fertility, a multitude of living arrangements other than marriage, the shift between marriage and procreation, and no fixed population (Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 2008, 2008). In large sections of the African population in South Africa, marriage is no longer the dominant institution regulating relations between men and women (Rudwick and Posel, 2015).

The excessive changes in family formation and the postponement of marriage that are observed in South Africa matches with the SDTT. Furthermore, the changes have been observed in many parts of the world. KwaZulu-Natal has been identified as the leading province when it comes to the disconnection of marriage since the marriage rate has fallen excessively as compared to the other eight provinces (Moore and Govender, 2013). The disconnection of marriage has given rise to features such as the increase in cohabitation and the increase in mean age at marriage.

It is argued that the primary driver of these changes is a prevailing, unavoidable shift in attitudes and norms in the direction of more individualism and self-actualization. Kalmijn (2011) asserts that as women become empowered and become role players in the economy, the premise of marriage being a means of financial security diminishes. Education provides women with power and stability, which therefore decreases the chances of marriage. Hence, women are now able to provide for themselves or easily divorce as compared to the past where they stayed in marriages because of being unable to be self-sufficient.

Furthermore, women's increased autonomy has also allowed them to postpone marriage and choose cohabitation as an alternative (Oppenheimer, 1997; Kalmijn et al., 1997; Kalmijn, 2011). Individuals now opt for these flexible living arrangements to avoid the responsibility that comes with marriage and also avoid the patriarchal institutions.

Moreover, the shift from traditional norms to modern ways or individualism has been identified by the SDTT as a contributing factor towards the demographic changes (Van De Kaa, 2002). The marriage process is one of the traditions that the Zulu ethnic group follows despite some adaptation to modern values. The pressure towards the procedures that need to be followed can be regarded as one of the role players in the changing of partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group and the reason behind the excessive decline of marriage rates among the Zulu and broader population.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a critical analysis on the discourses on partnerships patterns. A global overview of the partnership patterns was presented wherein in general the global marriage rate is on the decline. This decline has subsequently paved the way for alternative partnership patterns such as cohabitation. The literature also indicates that these global trends are spreading to the African continent, a region where marriage is considered hallowed and important in many cultures. The decline in marriage on the continent is not however uniform across all countries. South Africa has witnessed drastic changes in partnership patterns over the decades. Furthermore, within the different race groups in the country, there are major disparities in the rate at which marriage has declined. The Black population has seen the largest decline in marriage, and this can be explained by various contributing factors. The final point this review has analysed is that no other South African province has witnessed a pronounced decline in marriage like KwaZulu-Natal. KZN is considered the home of the Zulu ethnic group, an ethnic group that does not consider the beginning of marriage as after just one ceremony, but rather as after several processes that must be undertaken, which form the foundation of marriage. Bearing all this in mind, this literature sets the backdrop for the current study that explores the perceptions of Zulu postgraduate students towards the marriage process. While they value their culture, they also live in a modern space to which they have adapted. Therefore, this study explores the discourse on partnership patterns as the views of a contemporary generation are likely to produce new knowledge.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to familiarize the reader with the study design and to discuss the methodological approach explored to answer each of the research questions, the recruitment process of the participants and the method chosen to collect data. From then on, data analysis, reflexivity, and trustworthiness will then be observed followed by the ethical considerations and limitations of the research.

3.2 Target population

The study was undertaken at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College) situated in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. This university was selected for the study as the province of KwaZulu-Natal carries a large percentage of Zulu speakers in South Africa and it is further regarded as a home to the Zulu-speaking population in the whole of South Africa. The Zulu ethnic group is well known for valuing the importance of tradition and cultural practices including the marriage process and more especially the payment of *ilobolo* as well as other processes (Rudwick and Posel, 2012). Various studies have noted the decline and delay of marriage and the situation is noted to be severe among the Zulu ethnic group. A study on marriage rate decline asserts that there are now fewer married Zulu-speaking women and it further reported that by 2008, only three out of every ten Zulu adults was or had been married (Posel et al. 2011; Posel and Rudwick, 2012). These numbers reflect how the significance of marriage has eroded among Africans. Furthermore, some literature affirms that the low marriage rate among the Zulus is due to the payment of *ilobolo* and the marriage process. For instance, the average *ilobolo* price for a Zulu maiden is eleven cows, and this payment is followed by other stages that require a lot of money (Posel, and Rudwick, 2013).

To bring into line the sample to the deliberated phenomenon, ten male and ten female Zulu-speakers starting from the age 25 and above at the postgraduate level were part of the study. The rationale behind the idea was that women at age 25 years have more probability of getting married, given that the mean age at marriage in South Africa is 30 for females and 35 years males (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Furthermore, students are identified as open-minded critical thinkers with the ability to analyse their practices and culture. Therefore, findings from their interviews will develop a deep understanding of the phenomenon provided by the young adults of the Zulu ethnic group.

3.3 Research Methodology

3.3.1 Qualitative methods

The research has employed a qualitative study design to investigate the perceptions of University of KwaZulu-Natal students towards contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population. This design allows the researcher to elicit views they may not have thought about. A qualitative design further provides a greater platform in understanding the beliefs and experiences of the population (Bricks, and Green, 2007). It creates a flexible capacity for participants to express feelings and beliefs on the phenomena (Mack et al., 2005). Therefore, this methodology will provide an opportunity to explore the role of marriage processes on marriage decline and contemporary partnership patterns. It further determines whether low marriage rates among the Zulu population are explained by processes in which the Zulu ethnic group undertake before the day of the wedding. The main purpose of the data collection process was therefore to identify whether there is any evidence demonstrating that the marriage process, namely *ilobolo, umubondo, umabo, umembeso,* and the wedding itself, play a significant role towards the contemporary partnership patterns. The meaning and value that respondents attach to the Zulu marriage process is a key element of the study and thus their interpretations and opinions are the primary focus. Therefore, to achieve rich and deep insight in understanding the contemporary partnership patterns and Zulu marriage process from the perspective of the subject, qualitative research methods were executed.

Therefore, data for the study was collected through semi-structured and in-depth interviews, using an interview schedule (questionnaire). These are the main characteristics of the qualitative design that allow the researcher to shift from what is already known in the world to understanding the participants' perceptions (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Kielmann et al. (2012) argue that qualitative design allows participants to be natural and flexible during data collection. It further allows the triangulations that allow multiple ways of data collection, (Kielman, 2012). Moreover, exploration of new and related topics emerges, thus increasing the depth, quality and quantity of data collected and further contributing to a nuanced understanding of the subject.

3.3.2 Social Constructivism Paradigm

The social constructivism paradigm was nominated as a suitable paradigm for conducting interviews. Social constructivism highlights the importance of the construction of reality, knowledge, and teach (Andrews, 2012). The foundation of this paradigm is that one's

perspective is constructed through his experiences and observations. Considering what has been said above, the contemporary partnership among the Zulu ethnic group can be best described and explained thoroughly by the Zulu Ethnic group themselves.

3.4 Data collection and generation

Data collection and generation are a very significant process and hence they allow participants to delineate on their experiences and perceptions, which then lead to a better understanding of the studied phenomenon. The study employed two types of sampling methods, namely convenience and snowballing sampling techniques. The study further used semi-structured interviews to gather data from participants. All these methods are explained further in the following section.

3.4.1 Sampling

The purpose of sampling is to get a small proportion of the population as it was practically impossible for a research project to cover the entire population (Brick and Green, 2007). The study has used two non-probability methods, where the researcher identifies the relevant and suitable participants for the study, unlike the probability where participants are randomly chosen and every participant has an equal chance of participation (Setia, 2016). The convenience and snowballing techniques are the non-probability techniques employed for the study.

3.4.2 Convenience sampling

As mentioned above, convenience sampling is one of the techniques employed for choosing the participants. Setia (2016) asserts that convenience sampling is defined as a non-probability technique where the researcher recruited participants who are easily accessible in terms of geographical proximity and also available at a given time. Convenience sampling is commonly used for qualitative research and for this study the Zulu population was selected since the purpose of the study is to investigate Zulu perception on contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group. Moreover, it was very specific in terms of ethnic group and age. This was to acknowledge the difference in cultures or ethnic groups, although some elements might be the same.

The Zulu ethnic group was chosen as they understand the Zulu tradition and at the age of 25 the chances are that they are already planning to be in a form of partnership pattern, if not so already. Hence the study interviewed partakers irrespective of the partnership pattern the participants find themselves in. As such, this study is educational as it helps in understanding

the contemporary partnership pattern participants find themselves in or are planning for in the future. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher already knew some of people that were suitable since the researcher is a part of the Zulu ethnic group, is a Zulu speaker and is a tutor within Howard College.

3.4.3 Snowballing

The convenience sampling encompassed the first step as to choose participants that are accessible and can contribute to the study. After that snowballing was used to identify more participants for the study. This refers to when participants recruit other participants and can enable access to the hidden population (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). This was particularly appropriate for this research, as the research required a very specific population, which is the Zulu ethnic group, and hence it made it easy to find other postgraduates from other schools referred by participants.

Figure 3.1: Participants recruitment process
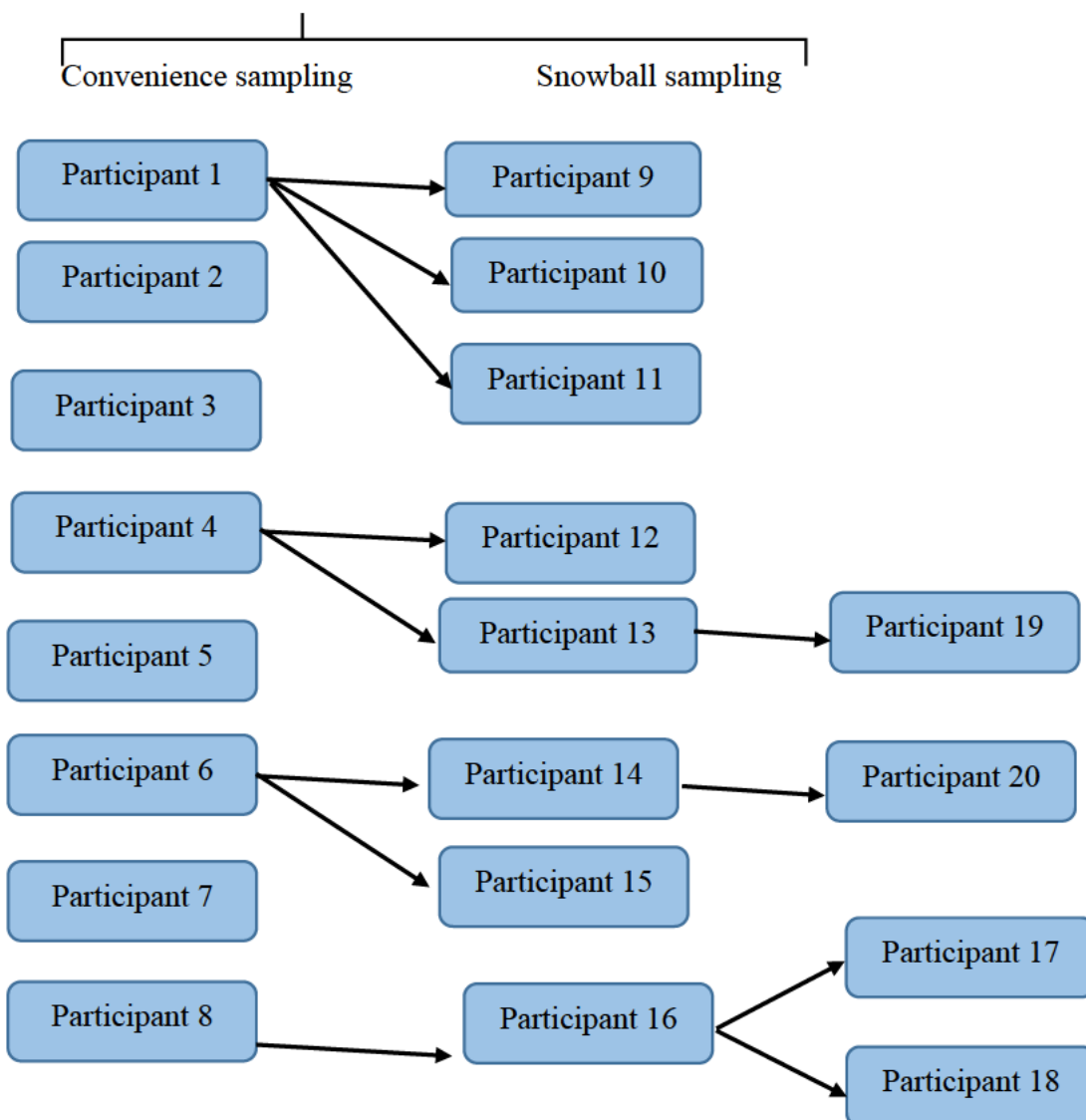
3.5 Participant recruitment process

Recruitment was undertaken in two phases. In the first phase, four participants were recruited and in the second phase, 4 participants were recruited. The researcher, who was the principal investigator of this study, conducted the recruitment process of participants.

The first phase included a presentation of the study which was undertaken in the tutors' room in order to get more postgraduate students. Further, it was done to ask other tutors to refer the researcher to other Zulu postgraduate students who may be interested in participating in the study.

The second phase was at the student residence for postgraduate students. This is an area that contains a bulk of postgraduate students and some at a PhD level. The focus was on Zulu speakers within the residence and it was not a difficult process since the researcher stays in the same residence. The potential participants were allowed to review the questionnaire, the informed consent form, the proposal and ethical clearance letter before the actual interviews. This allowed the participants to better understand their role in the study and to further minimize last-minute withdrawals in the research study.

Postgraduate students who were recruited at the residence were interviewed at their residences or any other area where they felt comfortable and it was reasonable to talk. Interview locations and times were discussed during appointed follow up calls and interviews were restricted to afternoons and evenings in order to not disturb the academic schedules of participants.

3.6 Participants' profile

The number of participants that were interviewed was twenty (20). Ten (10) males and ten (10) females. The following table (Table 3.1) gives a detailed profile of participants. The participants were coming from different fields of study. Thirteen participants were at masters' level, four honors level while three were PhD candidates. All participants were starting from the age of 25 upward.

Table 3.1: Participants' Profile

Name	Sex	Age	Level
Participant 1	Female	26	Masters
Participant 2	Female	25	Masters
Participant 3	Male	27	Masters
Participant 4	Male	34	Masters
Participant 5	Female	29	PhD candidate
Participant 6	Male	33	Masters
Participant 7	Male	26	Honors
Participant 8	Male	25	Masters
Participant 9	Male	25	Honors
Participant 10	Female	25	Masters
Participant 11	Female	26	Masters
Participant 12	Female	27	PhD candidate
Participant 13	Female	25	Masters
Participant 14	Male	25	Masters
Participant 15	Female	28	PhD candidate
Participant 16	Male	30	Honors
Participant 17	Male	32	Masters
Participant 18	Female	27	Masters
Participant 19	Male	30	Honors
Participant 20	Female	32	Masters

3.7 Participants' description

The researcher intended to interview participants from the UKZN Howard College campus. The first four participants were very engaging, and the interviews flowed since they are colleagues. The interviews were held at the tutors' room after consultation times on different workdays. Participant 4 found it difficult to understand the concept of partnership patterns. However, after the researcher explained the concept, Participant 4's responses flowed and indicated that the study was interesting. Participant 5 and 8 reside in the same vicinity with the researcher, and this is an area that contains most postgraduate students, with some of them being PhD students. All the participants were given questionnaires prior to the actual

interviews. Some of the participants were interviewed in their respective dormitories. Participant 6 faced difficulties in answering the question on the definition of family. As a result, the participant requested that researcher pause the recording to get a chance to think and respond accordingly. Despite these minor challenges, the rest of the interviews with participants residing at student residences went well.

Participant 9, 10 and 11 were referred to the researcher by Participant 1. The researcher had an initial meeting with these participants prior to the interviews, where the study was explained, and the interviews were scheduled according to the availability of all participants. Participant 10 was slightly uncomfortable at the beginning of the interview. However, as time went by, the participant's responses started flowing, although she had difficulty in answering questions relating to the type of partnership. Participant 10 also took time in explaining that she is not cohabiting, and that her partner stays with her for a week or a month but does permanently reside with her. Participant 11 indicated that she was cohabiting and requested that such information should not be shared since her parents are not aware. Therefore, the researcher assured her that whatever was shared during interviews would be confidential and would never be shared, and her identity shall be kept anonymous. Participant 11 also showed lot of interest in the study since her partner recently proposed, and worried that the *ilobolo* process will cause problems in their relationship. Participant 9 showed a lot of interest in the study since the participant is also conducting a study of the Zulu tradition, and the interest led to a long and in-depth interview session. Participants 12 and 13 were referred to the researcher by Participant 4, and Participant 19 was referred to the researcher by Participant 13. Participant 13 was slightly hesitant in answering the cohabitation questions since this practice remains taboo in Zulu culture. Hence, the participant indicated that it is challenging to answer such questions because one might appear as a promiscuous woman. The researcher then assured the participant that her identity would remain anonymous, and that the actual names of all participants would not be mentioned in the study.

Participants 14 and 15 were referred to the researcher by Participant 6, and Participant 20 was referred to the researcher by Participant 14, while Participant 16 was referred to by Participant 8, and Participants 17 and 18 were referred to by Participant 16. Participant 20's interview was conducted at her workplace since she is on an internship program. The environment was quiet at the beginning, and later her colleagues came in and out of the office and the interview had to be paused several times. The participant requested a short break to get coffee for the both of

us since she was slightly exhausted after a long day at work. Despite these few challenges, the interview proceeded well.

Some participants faced difficulties in listing and describing the Zulu marriage stages, and although they were correct, the sequencing differed from one participant to another. Participant 16 indicated prior to the interview that his sequence of the Zulu marriage process might not be correct since he has never been exposed directly to the marriage process. Overall, most participants were hesitant in responding in English throughout the interview sessions, thus, they were permitted to respond in isiZulu.

3.8 Semi-structured interview and recordings

Each interview was recorded and lasted approximately one and a half hours. Before the recording and executing of the interview took place, the consent forms were attained from each participant. Furthermore, they were made aware of all the procedures put in place to ensure their confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. This stage played a significant role in ensuring that all participants were comfortable and at ease, and in a space that encouraged extensive conversation and exploration of the subject topic. As such, interviewees could select a location of choice and for some participants, this was their residence rooms. However, some students were interviewed on campus since they reside at home and in other communal houses. The second step observed in the research process to ensure that anonymity was maintained, was that participants were requested to select a fictitious name with which they were referred to during the interview. Lastly, the participant's details were kept on a separate database and not revealed in the research report. Data was recorded and stored in a secured drawer where only the supervisor and the researcher had access. Throughout this data collection process, the researcher was in charge of collecting, storing and analysing raw data.

3.9 Trustworthiness

It is imperative that a research study is trustworthy to ensure its effectiveness and as such certain measures have to be employed to achieve this. In quantitative research, it is much easier to ensure the trustworthiness of a study. However, this is more challenging in qualitative research as people's perspectives and opinions, which cannot be easily verified, are analyzed. However, certain criteria can be employed in qualitative research in an attempt to achieve trustworthiness. These criteria are as follows; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria are be discussed below.

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility concerns showing the efforts taken to demonstrate the truth of the study findings (Guba, 1981). The researcher has already highlighted in this methodology chapter various steps that were undertaken to collect a sample of participants that fit the description required for this research. Additionally, before each interview, the researcher informed the participants exactly what the study entailed and made it known that there were no benefits to participating in the study. This strengthened the study's credibility as the participants had nothing to gain from participating which would influence their responses.

3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability concerns whether the study could still be applicable if it is replicated in other settings (Guba, 1981). This chapter has provided a detailed description of the methods undertaken such as sampling and the recruitment process. By so doing, researchers who wish to undertake this study have full detail of the processes involved.

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability is quite similar to the criterion of transferability. However, dependability concerns whether the exact findings would be repeated if the research methods were transferred to another context (Guba, 1981). Since qualitative research explores social phenomena in an ever-evolving world, exact replication cannot occur. Nonetheless, comprehensive details about the objectives, research methodology and data analysis have been provided to inform future researchers in that each stage of the research was clearly articulated.

3.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability concerns accurately presenting the data that reflects the participants' views (Guba, 1981). The confirmability criterion employed is that the researcher verified the information the participants shared to confirm the information given was accurate.

3.10 Data analysis

Thematic coding was utilized as the primary method of analysis. Primary coding was undertaken from the first interview and with subsequent interviews to establish initial themes. This refers to a method of identifying, analysing and reporting the pattern of data (Braun and

Clarke, 2006). This method evaluates primary data through stages, with the first step enabling the researcher to understand the collected data and its content through a division of data collected into different themes. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, and recordings. The data was analysed and thus categorized according to themes.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Before the study, a research proposal was submitted to the ethics committee for ethical clearance. The proposal was passed through an internal review at the School of Built Environment and Development Studies and the College Higher Degrees Committee. In the last phase of inspection, the proposal was reviewed by the Ethics Committee at the College of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

To ensure that participants were all orientated with the research and what was expected of them, the interview schedule, the questionnaires along with the informed consent and research proposal were shared with the participants before the interview. The information letter and informed consent form each contained the contact details of the researcher and the research supervisor.

At the beginning of each interview, the researcher reviewed the information letter and informed consent form with the participant before signing to provide clarity if required. Participants were all required to sign an informed consent form before the interview took place and further took to select a fictional name to hide their identity. Hence the participants were guaranteed that the discussions between themselves and the researcher were voluntary and that they could refuse to answer any question they felt uncomfortable with and/or withdraw from the study at any point in time. There were no refusals or withdrawals.

With regards to confidentiality, all interviews were conducted at the participant's residence or a private location of their choosing. Also, only the interview dates and fiction names were used as a reference in the transcription of the interviews. As per the outline in the proposal, all data including digital recordings will be stored in a secure location till the end of the study or any other predetermined time specified by the ethics committee which is normally up to five years after the study

3.12 Limitation of the study

A limitation of this study is that the participants do not represent the views of the entire Zulu population. Another limitation was that all participants were postgraduate students, mostly in their final year of study. Therefore, these perceptions and results of the study only represents the sample and not the entire Zulu population. However, with the transferability and dependability of this study, this research could be transferred and conducted to another setting, where rich information could be drawn from participants outside the University setting and who at least have lived experiences of some partnership patterns and marriage. Another limitation of the study was the use of self-reported data and social desirability of responses by participants. Thus, some responses were not accurate and reflected the individuals' personal experiences which differed from person to person.

3.13 Summary

This research study aimed to investigate the observations of students, in regard to contemporary partnerships, that low and falling marriage rates among the Zulu population are explained by the stages in which the Zulu ethnic group partake before marriage. Family formation theories were used as the foundation of the study. The study used qualitative methods of inquiry through in-depth, semi-structured interviews to determine the perception of partnership patterns among Zulu students. The study further employed the above tools to ascertain the attitudes of Zulu-speaking female postgraduate students toward the marriage process.

Results of the study will firstly help to determine the effect of the marriage process on the Zulu ethnic group's attitude towards marriage and other partnership patterns. Furthermore, the findings will also contribute to the literature on marriage decline in South Africa and will further help researchers understand the underlying factors of this phenomenon.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and explains the findings of the study. The themes that were related to the main objective of the study have been used together with subthemes to organize results accordingly. Although the perceptions of the participants were different, themes were identified using the data that was pertinent to all participants regarding the contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group.

4.2. Zulu students' partnership patterns

4.2.1 Partnership pattern identity

When participants were asked about the type of partnership pattern they are involved if any, there were various types of partnership patterns that prevailed. Two participants indicated that they were married while only one participant proclaimed to be cohabiting and requested that such information is never shared. There were other partnership patterns that rose from the study such as singleness, while other participants were confused about the category they fall under.

Reimondos et al. (2011) argue that living together apart (LAT) is a partnership pattern that differentiates those who are single to those who are in a relationship but not cohabiting nor married. This partnership pattern has received less popularity in Southern Africa however, it exists. When participants were asked the type of partnership pattern they are in, the data collected suggests that most participants identify themselves as single beside those who were married or cohabitating. Participants had limited understanding of the living apart together which is why they referred themselves as single, while some of them do have partners but are not cohabiting with nor married to them. These were some of the responses provided when participants were asked about the type of partnership pattern they are in, female participant 10 articulated:

> *"I am in a relationship with the father of my child, we swap weekends, one weekend he comes to my place, the following weekend I visit him." (Female participant 10).*

"I am not cohabiting, and I'm not married so I can say I am single because I am not sharing my space with anyone. But I have a girlfriend and we visit each other from time to time." (Male participant 4)

4.2.2 Delay in marriage

A follow up question was then posed to participants concerning how long the period should be of being in the above relationship before considering marriage. It emerged that this sample of the young adults do not put marriage on a pedestal. The data collected suggests that Zulu postgraduate students that participated in the study do not place marriage as a top priority, but rather place more interest on career aspiration, education and accumulation of resources before any commitment.

The findings from the conducted interviews revealed that Zulu postgraduate students portrayed no urgency to get married. The perception of marriage as the most integral step is starting to erode (Pauli, 2019). Most participants highlighted that they have moved away from the impression of marriage as an achievement. Moreover, they argue that marriage, particularly early marriage, can hinder one from achieving or advancing their career because of the responsibility that comes with marriage. Therefore, postgraduate students are interested in advancing their careers and creating a stable life for themselves more so than getting married. Therefore, the best possible option generally suggested was to engage in courtship until the above plans are achieved.

When female participants were asked about the acceptable length of the above relationship before marriage, a participant articulated:

> *"Some people think marriage is like an achievement, whereas marriage is not an achievement." There are a lot of things we need to achieve before getting married considering the opportunities we are now granted as women. I personally aim at utilizing those opportunities before finding myself stuck in marriage with regrets. Therefore, I do not really mind the period for as long as I am using it to uplift myself in becoming a better person." (Female participant 5)*

Another female participant said:

"I do not think there is an acceptable length of time, it depends on a person and you cannot decide for everyone, it depends on an individual. I wouldn't say there is an acceptable length, but parents always emphasize that you should be independent first." (Female Participant 11)

These were other responses provided by female participants to the question of the acceptable length of dating before marriage:

"Although there is no stipulated time before getting married I think it should apply in the age group of 29-year olds who are more likely to own a house and car, and stable jobs."(Female participant 10)

"There is no stipulated period, but our generation is different from our mothers', who were raised to become good wives. Courtship will give us time to be stable, therefore there should not be a time frame because no one knows how long it will take. However, I know there is no way of getting married without a proper job, so there is no rush." (Female participant 12)

"It is important to get into marriage with your own things as a woman, at least a degree if you're not working. Although, just in case things do not work out, I feel like we should all work, as a woman you should be independent because I believe getting married before self-sustenance contributes to abuse." (Female participant 15)

"Well I would like to be financially stable first than settle down because I would not like depend on my partner. If we are both financially stable then we have a combined resource as opposed to just one source." (Female, participant 18).

Both male and female participants interviewed shared the same sentiments on the accumulation of resources and career fulfilment before getting married, however, for different reasons. Female participants emphasized career fulfilment and accumulation of resources for their independence and having a backup plan in case things do not work out in marriage. While for males, accumulation of resources will then allow them to provide for their families and enable them to become the heads of households.

When male participants were asked the question, this is what they had to say:

"I am not much of a fan of getting married especially at a young age. By the time you get married you need to make sure you have a secure life, a good stable job and stable income and possibly a house. I would not be comfortable getting married and bringing my wife home otherwise, I need a secure high paying job and income." (male participant 4)

Another participant further corroborates*:*

"I do not think there should be a stipulated time but when a person is ready financially then you can get married. Remember as men you should be at a stage where you can provide for your family. You cannot marry someone and expect your parents to provide for your partner." (male participant 16)

Other male participants portray marriage as an institution that requires sacrifices where one loses autonomy in certain areas of life. As such they emphasize that you must get into it with an open mind. The participant below articulated:

"One can be single when you choose to achieve things before commitment. There are things you need to achieve before getting married hence I indicated that marriage comes with sacrifices. When you are single you do not have to make decisions that accommodate anyone except yourself. Therefore, staying single allows one to build themselves and achieve their dreams before getting married. Because when you are married, you cannot be making selfish decisions as you are expected to make a decision that will accommodate your partner as well." (male participant 9).

While male participant 19 (male) further asserts:

"For us guys it's not that we don't like getting married, but we prefer to learn to stay with the person long enough and feel comfortable before getting into the legal contract because marriage is a legal contract and if you want to break a contract it then involves lawyers and there are lot of terms and conditions you get into (laughing). So my perception is I think there is nothing wrong with cohabitating, it's just people deciding to create that family."

The above perception on delaying marriage matches with the view that education is strongly related to the postponement of marriage (Sabbah-Karkaby and Stier, 2017).

The study shows that women and men are interested in attaining some financial stability and independence. According to these accounts from the sample of Zulu students, perhaps the perception of marriage as a means of financial security is starting to erode (Kalmijn, 2011). But then again, what is more interesting is that male participants also have no desire to commit without being resourceful. According to the male participants, there is an expectation that men should be providers in the family unit (Mwamanda, 2016). As such this has been a deterrent to early marriage as males try to accumulate enough resources before getting married. It should be noted that the South African economy has faced several challenges hence many people do not receive high paying salaries or job opportunities (Posel, and Rudwick 2011). Subsequently, this has also been an obstacle to resource accumulation, thus delaying marriage.

4.2.3 Cohabitation as a process to marriage

In response to the question, which was asked about the participant's perception of cohabitation, participants presented cohabitation as the best way to start a relationship. Participants highlighted cohabitation as the best strategy for couples to truly understand each other's respective habits and lifestyles before signing a contractual obligation of marriage. One of the participants said:

> *"I think the couple should start with cohabitation, so they understand each other very well. But it cannot be a replacement for marriage." (male participant 6)*

Another participant in support of the above statement said

> *"For me people need to know each other for at least a year because it is very hard to understand a human being. Cohabitation time will allow you to get to know your partners' history and how your partner reacts when having problems." (male participant 4)*

The participants articulated that cohabitation is still stigmatized and identified as unacceptable behaviour among Zulus, but it is better when it is a process towards marriage as compared to being an alternative. Participants further argue that the only way to view cohabitation as a process is when there is *ilobolo* paid as a symbol of commitment. One of the participants articulated:

> *"I do not think it [cohabitation] is accepted. I think it is usually accepted when the man has already brought ilobolo. When the woman has done her processes*

it gets better, the community knows at least she is engaged and at least lobola has been paid for her. So it's not necessarily that it is accepted, it has just become a thing that we just have to accept." (female participant 15)

Female participant 10 further echoed:

"I personally do not agree with cohabitation, but maybe if they have paid lobola and other processes, and maybe waiting for the wedding date and making sure your family agrees and then you stay together because it convenient for planning and so forth."

Male participants also share the sentiments that identifies cohabitation as acceptable only if it is a route to marriage. Participant 14 was asked about his views on cohabitation and responded:

"Traditionally ukukipita is not allowed, well we understand things have changed due to standard of living and economic problems however I personally think one can cohabit if you have asked for a lady's hand in marriage, and elders and family have been informed about such an arrangement" (male participant 14)

The above findings are in line with literature where cohabitation is identified as unacceptable behaviour among the Zulu people (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). There is still a negative connotation attached to cohabitation and it is found to be deviant behaviour among the Zulus. However, the data collected suggests that it is only less stigmatised when it is a process towards marriage rather than being an alternative to marriage. The payment of *ilobolo* is identified as the symbol that legitimises cohabitation as a route to marriage (Posel and Rudwick, 2014).

4.2.4 Modern Definition of Family Formation

The participants' perception of family formation was not described in the usual traditional context of marriage. Many participants asserted that forming a family does not require marriage but rather a strong support system and having someone to share responsibilities with, irrespective of whether it is within marriage or outside marriage. The data collected suggests that there has been a shift from families in the past where childbearing and family formation occurred in the context of marriage (Studer, 2018). The way participants define family formation is encompassing, meaning that for them, families can not only be formed within the premise of marriage, but also through other kinds of partnership patterns such as cohabitation. Other participants revealed that:

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> *"Cohabitation can be a form of family formation; building a family doesn't require one to pay, it needs love and commitment."* (male participant 9)

Other participants further asserted that:

> *"I consider cohabitation as a form of family formation because a family does not have to have a contractual obligation of marriage; we can be a family without signing down in front of the priest. If you're cohabitating you are still family. Yes there is no legal obligation, but you are still a family living under one roof and you can build a family and have children if you are cohabiting. It is still a family formation. There are a lot of single parents who come together and end up living together without being married."* (male participant 4)

Another participant also said

> **"You can be a family without getting married. I know situations like that, like my aunt who has been living with her partner but is not married. But we call him HER husband because they have been living together for years."**(female participant 18)

This was echoed by another participant

> *"The partnership patterns have changed gradually, and it has diverted from the idea that people can only stay together when they're married, or they can have children only if they are married. All that has changed because young girls are now dating and sexually active and the partnership patterns have changed, and my understanding of all this has changed growing up."* (female participant 15)

Although many participants agreed that marriage is no longer the only strategy to start a family, there are participants who define family in the context of marriage. When participant 3 was asked to define family, he said:

> *"I would say it is when a mother, father and children live in the same space, then you can refer to them as family. (spreading his hands) Family is formed through marriage according to my understanding."*(participant 3 male)

Some participants argue that marriage is the only formal way of starting a family and is a sign of commitment. Participants agree that cohabitation is informal, and it thus leads to a lack of

commitment and responsibility, while it further creating problems in future since partners are not bound by any law.

> *"I think there is less tolerance for those who are cohabitating because they know that I am not legally bound to you. There is less tolerance and commitment." (Female participant 10)*

Participant 14 also argues:

> "*Personally, I do not like cohabitation because people easily separate when they're cohabitating unlike those who are married, yet you have wasted so much time together.*" *(Male participant 14)*

Participants further argue that forming children out of wedlock creates problems, hence cohabitation is not acceptable within the Zulu culture, as it then creates a confusion about where the children conceived outside of marriage belong.

> *"According to the Zulu culture if the child is born before marriage that child belongs to the mother's family or the uncles, and if you are cohabiting the guy will not allow his child to use the mother's surname although you were not married and that clashes with culture." (Female participant 5)*

Although participants acknowledge that families can be formed outside of marriage, some highlighted problems associated with families formed out of marriage.

> *"When my partners die I cannot even attend the funeral. Because it is very difficult at the end of the day, there are certain things, even if I stay with him, there are certain privileges that culture will not allow me to have if we are not married." (Female participant 11)*

These findings are in line with Hosegood et al. (2009) where family structures are said to be changing drastically across the world. The way events occur have changed in the past 50 years. Studer and Mooyaart (2018) further argue that there is no longer a sequence of events when it comes to family formation. Events such as cohabitation and non-marital birth have become very popular and the most preferred arrangement, while marriage is receiving less popularity. Although cohabitation is identified as another way of forming a family and more convenient, Rhoades, Stanley and Markman (2009) argue that families that are started in cohabitation lack the mutual commitment that is enjoyed by those who started families in the context of marriage.

Nonetheless, despite the stigmatization of cohabitating and the complications associated with cohabitation, it is slowly becoming a prominent form of partnership pattern.

4.3 Zulu marriage process

4.3.1 Understanding the Zulu marriage process

According to the study conducted by Posel and Rudwick (2011) in trying to understand the low rate of marriage among Zulu adults, Zulu marriage is defined as a lengthy process that involves rituals and gift exchange between the groom's and the bride's family. There is *ilobolo,* which is the payment from the groom's family to the bride's family, and it can either be in the form of money or live cattle. There are also steps that follow after *ilobolo* such as i*zibizo*, which is given to the bride's family from the groom. There is also *umbomdo*, where the bride's family brings groceries to the groom's family. There is also *umabo,* where the bride is expected to use some of the money from *ilobolo* to provide a gift for the groom's family**.**

From responses to a question which asked about their understanding of the Zulu marriage process, all participants agreed that Zulu marriage is not a one-day event. The process involves numerous negotiation rituals for a couple to become a unit or fully married.

Female participant 5 asserts:

> *"Marriage process differs from one culture to another, it differs but I will only unpack the process I understand well which is the Zulu process. With the Zulu process, it is a very long process before you get married."*

Male participant 6 further affirm the above statement:

> "*It all depends on tradition as well. Some traditions prefer shorter marriage processes where you can have a small ceremony sign while other African traditions prefer to have things done the traditional way so it involves a lot of culture."*

In addition female participant 13 also adds:

> *"A process of marriage for the Zulu is very complicated, you need to be aware that traditionally it brings two families together within them becoming one. There are a lot of processes that actually occur for them to be classified to be one."*

Lastly:

"The Zulu marriage process involves a lot of cultures. So you have people going to pay for lobola that is the groom's side paying the brides' side ilobolo. Those are the lobola negotiations, then you will have a whole lot of processes and cultural ceremonies, umbondo, izibizo and other cultural ceremonies before we get to the actual marriage process." (male participant 4)

Participants were further asked to list the processes based on their knowledge and the majority of participants identified the payment of *ilobolo* as the first step of the marriage for the Zulu Ethnic group, where the groom pays the bride price to the bride's family and asks the bride's family for her hand in marriage. This is handled by the elected individuals referred as negotiators. One participant asserted that:

"What I know is that at stage 1, the groom's negotiators come to the bride's family to ask to marry the bride and pays lobola." (male participant 17)

Another participant asserts that:

"So you have people going to pay for ilobolo - that is the groom's side paying the bride's side ilobolo. Those are the ilobolo negotiation." (male participant 14)

However, there are participants who started the process from *ukucela* where the negotiators are sent to the bride's family to ask for her hand in marriage. It is during this time where both families negotiate the *ilobolo*. Female participant 20 articulated:

"… they have to elect the negotiator, a negotiator can be from the guy's family or a family friend or a community member depending on whom they trust. There are usually two negotiators, they have to set up the date, sometimes because of the expenses they may face in the lady's house, the groom's uncles can send R1000 for the lady's family to prepare, and then come the day they go and negotiate. After negotiation has been successful the negotiators set another date whereby now the boy's relatives have to go back and pay lobola."

While male participant 19 further stated:

"From my understanding, although I have not gone through the process, the process begins from ukucela, where the groom sends negotiators to the bride's

house to request for her hand in marriage, the bride's and the groom's representatives agree on the amount of lobola."

Female participant 1 stated that there are a lot of steps and ceremonies that occur after *ilobolo*. The exchange of gifts between two families, izibizo, where the groom brings the gift to the bride's family and umbondo, where the bride brings groceries to the groom's family.

Another participant further defines the second step:

"So after completion of lobola, they have to set another date for the guy to give gifts to the lady's family especially the mother and the father and close relatives, like first born and all the wives of the lady's family. Normally with the mother they give something that she will not forget easily. Normally it used to be pots and blankets. This is called izibizo (participant 3 male)

Another participant:

"The process is too long (using her hands to demonstrate how long the process is), dragging costs because after paying the lobola the bride's family is expected to bring umbondo (bringing groceries to the groom's family)."(Participant 8 male)

Umabo is the last ceremony that is conducted after the white wedding. It should be noted that some view *umabo* as an imperative stage, as the couple is acknowledged as married after that stage. Even if a white wedding occurs, *umabo* is still vital for some people, hence they choose the traditional route only. In other words, the findings suggest that participants identified *umabo* as the actual traditional wedding. The data collected suggests that during this process the bride brings gifts to the groom's family. According to information provided by the female participant 20:

"*During the 'umabo' ceremony the bride is expected to bring a bed and kitchen necessities and further give other gifts to the groom's family.*"

Participants further suggested that it is during this step where the bride is welcomed to the family and can use the kitchen for the first time.

Female participant 12 asserted:

"Umabo is the process that takes place after the white wedding, but this step can happen in the absentia of the white wedding; some people prefer to only conduct the traditional wedding and for the Zulu , it is considered as the real wedding. This is the process where the bride brings gifts and blankets for the husband's family on the day of the wedding, normally it has always been the blankets and traditional mats. She also needs to bring a bed since she is joining the family, she also needs to bring kitchen sets and most of the things she will start in the kitchen since she is the bride. She also needs to bring groceries to start in the kitchen. After the day of the wedding the bride is expected to wake up, clean the yard and make tea for elders since they are welcoming her on the day and greet everyone in the family."

Another participant affirmed the above argument:

"If you are a culturally based individual you are expected to do Umabo, which is regarded as the actual marriage according to Zulu beliefs." (female participant 5)

Female participant 18 also echoed*:*

"The last process after getting married is umabo. Umabo is where the lady must go back and see the guy's family. They give her indlakundla whereby they slaughter a goat for the bride as symbol of acceptance. They have to report the lady to the ancestors."

There are other steps outlined by the participants such as *ingqibamasondo*. Most participants mentioned this step, as this is where the bride's family brings gifts to the groom's family to level the ground. A participant proclaimed that this process aims at covering marks that were created by cattle sent to the bride's family:

"*After paying ilobolo the lady has to prepare for a ceremony. From her side it is like the gift from the lady's side to the guy's side, they call it ingqiba masondo it's like they're levelling the ground after the cows were sent. Then the lady has to prepare gifts to give to the guy's family including the leading negotiator and negotiator." (male participant 17)*

4.3.2 Role of the Zulu marriage Processes when getting married

The participants were questioned about the aim of the Zulu marriage process for the researcher to establish whether or not the participants understood the purpose of the processes they mentioned. Most of the participants shared their own understanding as to what the purpose of the Zulu marriage process is to them and they provided almost similar responses. Participants indicated that they are bound to follow this process even if they are having a western wedding, because for them these rituals complete marriage.

Most participants emphasise that these processes are essential as they are attached to spirituality, meaning it connects those who are alive with the ancestors. Additionally, it ensures that that the marriage is acknowledged, blessed and protected by the ancestors of both families. During these processes the couple is introduced to the ancestors, therefore these rituals cannot be missed. The bride needs report to her ancestors that she is leaving the family and then be introduced to the groom's family's ancestors as a new family member. Participants assert that the failure to conduct these processes can create problems in the future within the marriage.

> *"The process is exhausting. However, the process is believed to be the actual marriage; it is where one can be titled as married; where one can be introduced to the ancestors of the guy and to the entire family, and to show this is our new family member and the changing of the surname." (male Participant 8)*

> *"I think it is a process that we should keep as it has value and meaning to our culture. There are many things that happen besides the exchange of goods or money, and it involved ancestors. Incense is burnt, the elders inform and explain to ancestors that our daughter is now leaving, and she is going to another family. Even on the groom's side of the family, the bride needs to be introduced to their ancestors and angcobe nenyongo yakhona, from the goat to be welcomed in the family." (male participant 14)*

Female participant 11 further affirms that:

> *"The Zulu Marriage process aims at bringing two ancestors together from the groom's and the bride's families."*

Moreover, the data collected suggests that these ceremonies are there to unite these two families and to make sure they get know each other well before getting married. These ceremonies

provide a platform for both families and communities to agree and disagree which therefore strengthens the relationship between them.

When participants were asked about the whole purpose of these steps before getting married, two participants articulated:

> *"To build relationship between the bride's and the groom's family."(female participant 20)*

> *"These processes are more like an ice breaker for both the groom and bride's family to get to know each other.***" (***female participant 1)*

4.3.3 Attitudes on the Zulu marriage process

The participants' attitude towards the Zulu marriage process varied slightly. Some participants reflected on the importance of the processes and have a positive attitude towards it and value the process.

Male participant 16 argues that:

> *"For me the process is the actual wedding and recognised wedding. This white wedding is not recognised by our ancestors. If we have done the traditional process we are then regarded as married."*

Participant 20 asserts:

> *"Cultural marriage processes - for me I don't see any problem with it. I think it's part of our culture. A lot of countries, a lot of tribes and a lot of races do things differently and this is what we do differently."(Participant 20 female)*

> *"I think the process is a good tradition and a good fellowship and preserving of the family system." (Female participant 18)*

> *"I personally feel like it has too much value to us, we must not lose it and we must always carry it. Our history and our heritage make it very important." (Male participant 14)*

> *"I think all the steps are important as long as both families involved understand what each step means because each steps signifies a completely different thing on its own." (Female participant 13)*

Although participants show understanding of the process and the role it plays, some participants outlined difficulties associated with process such as the cost and the time which thus delays people from getting married. Female participant 12 indicated:

> *"Although I understand the importance of this process and value it. this whole process of marriage - it is draining. You find that by the time they complete the process many couples are in debt and many couples cannot afford the life they have desired to have after marriage."*

There are those who are completely against the process and argue that the process conducted stands as one major deterring factor to getting married and hence people are opting for other partnership patterns.

> *"I think if the Zulu marriage did not have a lot to follow before you actually get married, a lot of people would be married. I still do think that there will be a lot less people where they write at home affairs. I also think there will be less people who stay engaged longer than if these processes did not take place at all." (Female participant 10)*

> *"All these things delay the process and people are afraid to go through that process. But people do like to get married." (Participant 15 female)*

Some of the responses provided by participants to the question of perception were as follows:

> *"It is a waste of money; you have already thanked the family with ilobolo for raising your wife. And it is enough, you still have wedding preparations so why waste money." (Male participant 3)*

> *"The process is too long in such a way that you found that other people ended up not married not because they cannot afford to pay ilobolo, but they do not have the gifts to be exchanged or money for the ceremony because each time you have to exchange gifts, there has to be a ceremony. The ceremony is money itself, there must be catering and nowadays it is a big thing; it is like a competition. During the old days, it was better because there were only those people who will be receiving there and they did not have to cook lots of food. While nowadays, there must be three to four ceremonies before you get married and it is too much." (Participant 12 female)*

The collected data suggests that there are participants, especially females, who argue that this process gives them a sense of security and reassures them that the guy really is committed, because the process is draining, and a man will only go through it after having deeply reflected and really committed to his partner.

Female participant 20 who is already married highlights:

> *"For me this process teaches you to appreciate your person, since he went through hell in ensuring the process goes well. It gave me some sort of security as a woman, because it is hard to believe that anyone can put himself through this process for fun; this person must be really love you."*

4.3.4 Intracultural difference on the Zulu marriage process

The findings from the interviews revealed that the processes and rituals are slightly different amongst the Zulu ethnic group. The sequence of the rituals differs among clans and the regions. Some of the ceremonies which are conducted in the north of KwaZulu-Natal are not applicable in southern side of KwaZulu-Natal. This was identified as the following participants imparted:

> *"I do not think it's the same anymore; things are done differently including the number of cows paid depending on clans. The whole ilobolo ceremony depends on clans so therefore when you send negotiators, they will then find out what norms they follow or procedures they follow."* (Male participant 4)

> *"It is not the same because I grew up in uMtubatuba. It is different and the process is still not as expensive as it is here in Durban where all ceremonies are expensive. While at uMtubatuba the process is still cheap. For example, when they are doing ingqibamasondo, only the family attends the ceremony, that is why I am saying it differs according to location and level of competition in that place."* (Male participant 6)

The above statement is supported by another participant:

> *"I do not think it is the same. It differs according to place or the region where you come from. Remember the example I made of my mother who comes from Bergville and my father from Mpangeni. They do things differently there. If the guy has paid ilobolo traditionally you are his wife you can stay together, even if he has not done umemebeso, whereas this side you have to compete all the steps."* (Female participant 11)

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4.3.5 Conflict and confusion

The collected data suggests that the Zulu marriage process tests the relationship. This process can lead to conflict and can put a strain on the couple and can even go as far breaking the relationship or leading to divorce as some participants explained. The processes are lengthy, and the families are more involved in preparation. Female participant 12 substantiates as follows:

> *"People end up being in debt and it creates conflict and tension between the couples when they are getting married. Because now they are faced with financial debt. People have eaten and they are full and enjoyed ceremony and the couple is left with a huge amount of debt and they are expected to start the whole of their life. It has a huge impact and it can lead to a decreased marriage rate among Zulu people if it continues."*

Male participant 4 further asserted:

> *"I think it also has an impact on the number of people who do no want to get married as it also causes conflict in the marriage where people may be broke, and they start fighting about money. They then choose to divorce because as much as money is not everything, money is needed to start a family so you will need money to be able to take care of your children and the household and even to take care of yourself."*

According to the participants, finances play a huge role in creating conflict and confusion and subsequently placing strain on the couple's relationship.

> *"It can also cause a lot of stress and anxiety because now you are doing it for people and for the public and you have not started the marriage. It can cause conflict where the husband is complaining that you are costing so much and yet you know how much he earns and so it can create stress."(Male participant 3)*

Female participant 1 also supports this view:

> *"For some families they will not understand if you cannot afford ten cows. My sister took her time and she ended up separating with the guy because there was lot of process conflict between families."*

4.3.6 Evolvement of the process

The data collected suggests that the process has evolved and adapted to modernization and capitalism. The way the rituals are conducted as well as the dress code has evolved. In addition, the ceremonies nowadays are stylish, lavish and fancy. Participants argue that in the past they were told these rituals were never accompanied by big ceremonies and it was only family members. However now, it has become increasingly monetised.

"What has changed much is the exchange of cows. So in most places they prefer money instead of real cows because you find most of our people, due to our historical past of segregation, live in places like townships where they cannot really keep real cows, so they would actually tell you they prefer cash. But then you find in rural areas where people still hold their roots, culture is deeply entrenched in the marriage process and so they would want real/ live cows. It depends where people are located. It is either urban or rural that will determine what exchange happens." (Female participant 18)

I do not know how it has changed but the marriage process has definitely changed. I think also the economic status has grown, the marriage process has become lavish and about status and showing off." (Female participant 13)

"With my research, I do not want to lie it is better if we were to stay how we were, but everything has changed completely. It is no longer tradition but it is fashion. If it was a tradition we would have done it uniformly, there would be a fixed price for ilobolo." (Male participant 14)

4.3.7 The role of the Zulu marriage process toward the Zulu marriage rate

All participants unanimously conveyed that the process is long and further identifies the Zulu marriage process as one of the contributing factors to the marriage decline among the Zulu ethnic group. The collected data suggests that people opt for cohabitation so as to avoid the prices and stress attached to it.

"There is a lot of money and ceremonies involved unlike other cultures where marriage can happen anytime and anywhere without the involvement of family. At times when the couple decide they are ready to take their love life to the next

step they get married whereas with the Zulu your parents will kill you if you have done that without involving them." (Female participant 5)

Female participant 15 further alluded:

"It has a great impact, and you find people cohabitating a lot due to the long process, considering the fact that job opportunities are very scarce. Mind you there are other expenses that comes with marriage."

4.3.8 Perception on each component of the process

When participants were asked about their perception on each component some participants were concerned about the time and identified *ilobolo* as the most integral step as well as *umabo*. The study shows that *ilobolo* is the main step to initiate marriage while *umabo* is the actual traditional wedding and therefore cannot be missed if you are a culturally based individual.

Female participant 11 expressed:

"In my perception I think ilobolo is the most important. Remember ilobolo is supposed to bring families together. We are starting a union and we are starting a new relationship."

It is costly - unnecessarily costly. If we could just do the ilobolo and then organize a family gathering where they can get to know each other instead of all these steps that involve lots of money." (Female participant 2)

Female participant 10 further articulated:

"I really feel like even if they do pay lobola and maybe not do all other processes then do the traditional wedding, where they get blessings from elders of the family."

"All parents are expecting lobola as a sign of respect and umabo is the stage where I am officially welcomed to his family and bringing gifts; showing that I will be buried on this side of the family, therefore for me they are the only two important steps." (Female participant 20)

In contrast other participants asserted that they value the whole process when getting married. Participants articulated that each step has its own meaning. A married participant articulated:

"For me they were all important. I wanted everything to happen for the sake of my parents because when you are getting married it is not about you, but the whole families and parents."(Female participant)

4.4 Inhibitors of marriage

Even though participants understand that they are bound to follow the marriage process, there are other characteristics of the process which are said to be inhibitors of marriage and thus contribute to the complex partnership patterns. Participants highlighted that the time-consuming process, the financial constraints and the commercialization of Lobola are the inhibitors of marriage and play a role in the complexity and transformation of partnership patterns.

4.4.1 Time-consuming

When participants were asked about their perceptions of the Zulu marriage process, they indicated that the process is long, time-consuming and very unnecessary. All participants agree that this process prolongs people getting married and they agree it is a contributing factor to people opting for other partnership patterns. Data collected shows that the current generation is deterred by the lengthy process that Zulu marriage process entails.

"I'm pretty sure that if the Zulu marriage was not this long, you will find young couples like me (laughing) getting married." (Female participant 18)

"We live in times where we want everything to be done as quickly as possible and move on with our lives." (Male participant 3)

Another participant further affirms the above in saying:

"The process takes long and you find that from the date of lobola negotiations the couples end up getting married a year or two after because there are a lot of processes that need to happen." (Male participant 4)

A study conducted by Posel and Rudwick (2011) highlighted that Zulu marriage is very lengthy and it involves a lot of ceremonies with the exchange of gifts for the bride's and groom's family. This process is quite challenging; hence it is not even clear at what stage the couple can be considered as one unit. Therefore, the data collected affirms that the marriage stages for the Zulu ethnic group play a role in the deteriorating marriage rate and rise of the new forms of partnership patterns.

4.4.2 Commercialization of *ilobolo*

The data collected suggests that, with modernization and globalization taking place, the true meaning of *ilobolo* has been eradicated. All participants argue that *ilobolo* is nothing like how it used to be in the past. Participants contend that the whole aim of *ilobolo* was to unite two families both socially and spiritually since African people believe in ancestors. There was never a fixed number of cows or money that should be paid. However, with the advent of colonization in Africa, Shepstone introduced the idea of 11 cows as the standard lobola payment. This was done in the effort to disempower black men to start families, thus making them available to work as labourers. Shepstone's introduction has had a lasting effect on *ilobolo* and it has gradually transitioned into a money-making opportunity.

> *"People are eroding the original meaning of ilobolo. I do not know if it's people or we have put a fixed value of ilobolo , because at the end of the day ilobolo is just supposed to be a formal process of uniting two families." (Female participant 11)*

> *"The marriage process for the Zulu from the beginning, it more or less became a money scheme process, where you find that on the day a guy says ehh baba at the gate, money should be paid until the end of the wedding (male participant 7)*

> *"In the past there was no fixed amount a guy should pay for a lady; a guy could pay any amount as a token of appreciation or can give a hoe; anything a guy could afford at that moment. My great grandfather told me that he paid R40 as a bride price for my grandmother. All these things that are done nowadays can be a reason behind people opting for cohabitation or remaining single." (Male participant 9)*

The collected data still portrays *ilobolo* as the most significant step before getting married and hence it symbolizes commitment and brings a sense of pride to the bride's family. Most of the female participants indicate that they expect their partners to pay *ilobolo* for them. However, they expect their families to be lenient to them and not charge them a huge sum since they will be starting their lives together. The data collected suggests that families tend to charge *ilobolo* payment based on the bride's level of education and other achievements.

"In my perception I think ilobolo is the most important. Remember ilobolo is supposed to bring families together, we are starting a union and we are starting a new relationship. So I think in a way it gives my parents a sense of pride that their daughter is no longer a girl. Now she is entering a new adult stage." *(Female participant 11)*

Other female participants support the above statement:

"I would not say I don't want my partner to pay ilobolo for me, however, I do not understand the idea of charging him highly because of my education. And even the number of cows that are demanded - I do not understand why so many cows are charged, because the reason I would want to be with a guy and the guy would want to marry me, is because we want to build a future together." *(Female participant 15)*

"The lobola is the actual process of marriage, if there is no ilobolo there won't be a marriage at all. Ilobolo plays a significant role in the girl's family. To some extent, it proves that a guy is good enough and it proves that he would be able to take care of the family or he is fit enough to be a man that can provide for the family." *(Male participant 8)*

Male participants also identify *ilobolo* as the integral step of marriage that they would not overlook. The findings prove that males take pride for paying *ilobolo* since it a sign of being a man who can take care of the household. However, the data highlights that it is too expensive for them considering that job opportunities or high-paying salaries are very scarce. The data collected suggests that if the original idea of *ilobolo* could return, most males would be more open to marriage. One male highlighted that this has become a fashion rather than a tradition which is why the prices fluctuate depending on families. The idea of having to pay for the girl's education and achievements is one of the things males highlighted as a hindrance to getting married and the opting for other means of partnering.

Male participant 19 argues*:*

"I take pride in paying Lobola for my chosen lady. However, the number of cows is just too much and you are even charged based on her education. It was their duty as parents to give her education as my parents also did. Then why should the lobola rate be based on that?" *(Male participant 19)*

"We do not do not follow the same process as it differs with clan as well , this is why I am saying it is no longer a tradition for Zulu people because if it was a tradition, we would have done it uniformly and there would be a fixed price for lobola. The process will not be based on what the bride has achieved or the kind of resources the groom have."

Some participants further highlighted that the commercialization of *ilobolo* is a reason behind women now assisting their partners in payment of *ilobolo*. This is because the price may be too expensive for the partner to pay alone. A participant mentioned:

"The high prices charged by our families are the reason why we tend to assist our partners in paying ilobolo. Although it is unacceptable, you cannot let your partner suffer alone."

"If ilobolo can go back to its original idea, you will find a fewer number of women paying lobolo for themselves. The overcharging portrays marriage as something for the rich people."

The above findings indicate that university postgraduate students identify lobolo as important and that most female students expect *lobola* to be paid for them. While many students identify lobola as important, they all agree that it is the overcharging that hinders them from getting married and that instead leads them to opting for singleness or cohabitation.

4.4.3 Financial constraints

Financial constraint was another inhibitor to marriage that participants identified during process of collecting data. All participants contend that the marriage process requires a lot of money and it can even put a strain on the relationship. The data collected suggests that all stages and rituals require ceremonies with catering; a serious expense among others. As aforementioned, the marriage process is transforming to become an opportunity to display wealth through lavish and extravagant ceremonies.

"The process is too long in such a way that you found that other people end up not married, not because they cannot afford to pay lobola, but rather that they do not have the gifts to be exchanged for money for the ceremony because each time you have to do exchange of gifts there has to be a ceremony. The ceremony

is money itself, you have to do catering and nowadays it is a big thing; it is like a competition." (Male participant 9)

"Lobola alone you are looking at plus-minus forty thousand rand depending on families and that is just ilobolo. There are a lot of processes such as umbondo and umembeso. I can't even remember the rest. You have to feed people, and this might stop someone from getting married because it too expensive." (Male participant 4)

Another criticism most male participants had about the marriage process is that brides' families tend to ask for unreasonable luxurious gifts during ceremonies. They expressed that the bride's family uses the *izibizo* stage as a get-rich-quick scheme.

Male participant 9 also argued that:

"The mother requests a fridge and a stove and already I can't afford 11 cows yet am expected to buy such expensive stuff. These are some of the things that contribute to the delay of marriage and people opting for other partnership patterns such as cohabitation or remaining single."

Participant 13 and other female participants support the statement:

"These processes require a lot of money and some people use it as a getting rich scheme where you find that they request expensive blankets for certain aunties of the family, they will include even those who died and the children will sit on behalf of them and you find that it will go up to 35 blankets. That money could have been saved and when married you can use that money to buy necessities."

Female participant 11 shared her current experience as she is in the process of getting married:

"My partner has sent his representatives to my home to ask for my hand in marriage but in my head, I didn't think that he will only ask for my hand in marriage, I thought maybe he will also pay maybe a portion of ilobolo now! My goodness I was lying because even now, we are just putting everything on hold because there is no money."

4.5 Summary of Findings

The findings reveal that while these sample of Zulu postgraduate students do envision to get married in the future, it is not a high priority. The main concern that the students expressed is that the Zulu marriage process is becoming increasingly commercialized. Hence, they desire to accumulate enough resources before embarking on the marriage process. They are also drawn to other contemporary partnership patterns such as cohabiting or being together while living apart. They acknowledge and respect that the process is important to sustain their cultural values, nevertheless there are some factors about the process that discourages them. Aside from the issue of commercialization, potential conflict that could arise during the process and the variations in the order of the marriage process among the ethnic group are issues that are deterrents.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to understand the perceptions of university students on contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic population. The focus was on investigating how the Zulu marriage processes conducted by the Zulu ethnic group influences contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic population. This chapter commences with presenting an overall summary of the study. It further discusses the research findings and later provides recommendations. The chapter also provides the study's limitations as well as areas suggested for future research. Lastly, the summary of the entire study and the conclusions are presented.

The study comprised of five chapters, where the first chapter introduces the study by providing the study background, the problem statement, as well as the research questions. The second chapter presented a critical literature review by various scholars pertaining to the study. The second chapter moreover presents a theoretical framework that guided this study.

This theory explained predicted changes that were accompanying industrialization and modernization and its connection with partnership patterns. It looked at the drivers of these changes to the society from the global perceptive, African perspective, South African perspective and narrowed it down to perspective from KwaZulu-Natal. The literature on partnership patterns such as marriage, cohabitation, living apart together and living alone is reviewed in this chapter, and further looks at the contributing factors to the decline of marriage and the Zulu marriage process. Chapter 3 presented the methodology used for the study. Chapter four provided data and analysis and chapter five is a discussion on the findings of the study, the recommendations, and proposals for future research.

5.2 Discussion

The findings from the study established that there is a possible relationship between the Zulu marriage process and changing partnership patterns among the Zulu ethnic group. Zulu students understand the importance of the marriage process and the significance attached to it. Nonetheless, there are still negative connotations attached to the marriage process such as financial constraints, time consumption and the commercialization of lobola, which all discourage participants from getting married. Considering this, the participants are considering

alternative partnership patterns such as cohabitation, living apart together and singleness. Although they eventually desire to get married, marriage is not a priority. The findings revealed that self-development and accumulation of resources are perceived as integral steps before commitment to marriage. The following discussion brings together the findings from the current study aligned to the theoretical framework and the literature to fully understand the purpose of the study.

5.3 Partnership pattern identity

5.3.1 Living apart together

The first objective of this study was to understand partnership patterns among Zulu-speaking University students. Concerning this objective, the researcher established that partnership patterns are becoming very complex and there is a drastic shift from partnerships regarded as significant, such as marriage, to other forms of partnership patterns. Only 1 participant was cohabiting, two participants were married and while other students implied that they are in living apart together partnership patterns, they identified themselves as single, which is likely due to their limited knowledge on this type of partnership pattern. Duncan and Phillips (2011) asserted that this partnership pattern refers to when a couple stays in different residential addresses, however, have an intimate relationship. It is a new phenomenon found in the first world countries. Although there has been no research conducted in African countries on this partnership pattern, it is observed and identified as the preferred form of partnership by students. The study revealed that postgraduate students have no urgency to commit, even after completion of studies. Therefore, LAT appears to be the most comfortable form of living arrangement.

5.3.2 Delay in marriage

As a result, the study established that the age at first marriage will likely continue to increase among Zulu young adults. Although there is still a desire to get married, marriage is not a priority and an urgency. The priorities of young Zulu adults have shifted from aspiring to marriage to pursuing their career and accumulation of resources before any form of commitment. These findings concur with findings from several scholars who asserted that most young adults in South Africa and the USA stress the importance of financial stability before getting married (Govender and Moore, 2013). These findings are similar to those of previous research, as in a study conducted by Moore (2013) using attitudinal data from the South Africans, the findings asserted that about 70% of Black South African women in all ages stressed the importance of having financial stability and being well-resourced before signing a

contractual obligation of marriage. The findings established that males also share this attitude, however, as for males the ability to provide and become the head of the household is achieved through having enough resources. Subsequently, this leads to the postponement of marriage and using other forms of partnership patterns, such as cohabitation and living apart together.

The findings further align with the Second Demographic transition theory which was formulated in understanding changes occurring within society such as the postponement of marriage (Zaidi and Morgan, 2017). The study represents exactly what the SDTT theory predicted where there is self-realization, meaning that people are now deciding for themselves and based on personal preferences and not due to outside influences (Lesthaeghe, 2014). Hence, students are deciding to uplift themselves and be independent before marriage. What is more interesting is that even parents support the idea of independence before marriage. One participant articulated that, although there is no precise time, parents always emphasize the importance of securing independency first. Therefore, based on these results, it can be predicted that the age at first marriage will keep increasing, if postgraduates above 25 are still not interested in getting married any time soon.

5.3.3 Cohabitation

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that there is still a negative connotation attached to cohabitation. Nonetheless, the findings reflect that cohabitation is less stigmatized when it is a route to marriage rather than an alternative. Most of the sample asserted that payment of *ilobolo* can be regarded as a sign that cohabitation is a route to marriage rather than an alternative and that families should be informed about such an arrangement. This links with the argument brought forward by Baloyi (2016) that unless there are marriage intentions and lobolo negotiations are underway, the relationship cannot be perceived as legal. Although cohabitation is still stigmatized, some participants recognized cohabitation as the best strategy in getting to know partners, which therefore means that after getting to know their partner well and having accumulated sufficient resources, marriage will then follow. A similar observation was observed in European countries where there was a shift in the sequence of events in partnership patterns. Cohabitation is generally the initial step and it paves the way to marriage or dissolution (Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos, 2015).

Although participants emphasized that cohabitation is acceptable when it is a route to marriage that did not stop them from considering cohabitation as another means of forming a family. This links with the argument brought forward by Mohlabane et al, (2019) where marriage is

slowly losing its importance and prominence as the type of partnership pattern for family formation. Participants articulated that cohabitation can be used to start a family as what is required in family formation is two responsible individuals coming together which can be done in the absence of a contractual obligation. The participants articulated that family formation is not only based on the premise of marriage. The findings established that many participants articulated that starting families out of cohabitation is not a bad thing and once the constraints of getting married are removed, then the couple can get married. This is one of the main arguments brought forward by the Second Demographic Transition Theory where it predicted that there will be a disconnection between family formation and marriage (Lesthaeghe, 2014). Although this theory was created to understand the changes in the USA, it is evident that South Africa is undergoing the same changes that the USA went through. These findings further concur with the argument brought forward by Moore and Govender (2013) where they argue that the formation of families has changed drastically. However, some of the study participants were against cohabitation, arguing that there is less tolerance and effort on the part of cohabiting couples as compared to those who are married. Various issues were identified by participants such as the issue of the surname of the child born outside of marriage.

5.3.4 Perception of marriage process

The second objective of the study was to understand the perceptions of the sample of young Zulu adults of the Zulu marriage process. Based on the findings, it was clear that the Zulu marriage is not a one-day event. The process involves numerous negotiation rituals for a couple to become a unit or fully married (Posel and Rudwick, 2014). It was evident that the Zulu university students that were part of the study understood the process, the rituals and the meaning attached to it, although some might not have partaken in the process themselves. Additionally, the sequencing of the processes differed among the participants. It was clear based on the findings that the payment of *ilobolo* is regarded as the first integral step when getting married. This refers to the provision of gifts by the groom's family to the bride's family in the form of cash, kind or livestock (Baloyi, 2016).

This is one step all participants in the sample identified as the core step which no one should miss. This links with the argument brought forward by Posel (2011) that *ilobolo* is considered as part of the African identity and very important irrespective of whether one resides in an urban or rural setting. This finding is in contrast with the argument brought forward by Baloyi (2016) where it is argued that people are trying to forget about or neglect the practice of *ilobolo*. The result from this study proved otherwise as the sample of students in this study still expect

the practice to be conducted. They contend that payment of *ilobolo* for males proves to a family that the potential husband can provide for his household while for females, it provides some form of security and a sign that the partner is fully committed.

Although *ilobolo* is still seen as significant it is evident, based on findings, that there are some underlying problems associated with the practice, such as the commercialization of *ilobolo*. The findings established that, there are often incidences of greediness where the bride's family tend to ask for an irrational amount of money and expensive gifts. This finding links to various scholars such as Baloyi (2016) who argued that *ilobolo* among the Zulu population is usually the highest among other ethnic groups. Usually a payment of eleven cows is expected, however, the problem observed in the study was not the number of cows but the fluctuating rate of the lobola price. This is mainly because the lobola price is based on the achievements of the female partner such as her level of education. This uncertainty about lobola price has thus deterred some of the male participants from getting married.

The participants also noted some other important stages of the Zulu marriage process. For instance, there is *izibizo* where the groom brings gifts to the bride's family and *umbondo* where the bride's family sends groceries to the groom's family. Additionally, it is during this process where marriage is reported to the ancestors of both families and the couple is introduced to the ancestors. This is important for the marriage to be traditionally accepted. Thabede (2008) affirmed the importance of ancestors amongst the Zulu ethnic group.

The participants shared that *umbondo* is the last stage of the marriage process which all participants acknowledged as the actual traditional wedding. This step follows after the white wedding however it can also happen in absentia of the white wedding in the case that couples opt to omit the civil marriage and instead partake only in the customary marriage. The process is valued and vowed as the integral step for the marriage to be legitimised in the Zulu ethnic group. Overall, such processes are said to be a part of heritage and differentiate the Zulus from other ethnic groups.

Despite the valuing of the processes and the role they play towards ensuring that the marriage is blessed and recognised by ancestors, there is a still a negative connotation attached to the Zulu marriage process which discourages people from getting married. The issues of conflict and confusion created by the process emerged in the findings as well as the intracultural difference where certain rituals are conducted differently among different clans or in different

locations. These conflicts could bring a strain in the relationship and in worst scenarios even break up the couple.

5.3.5 Link between the marriage process and partnership patterns
The last objective of the study was to explore the relationship between the marriage process and other partnership patterns within the Zulu culture.

As aforementioned, while the process is valued, there are some characteristics of the process which are regarded as inhibitors of marriage therefore giving rise to other forms of partnership patterns. Cohabitation is said to be the most suitable living arrangement and another way of starting a family until the constraints attached to the process of marriage are removed. The study identifies some characteristic of the process which become the inhibitors of getting married, thus giving rise to other forms of partnership patterns. According to the accounts of the participants, the process is said to be long, and time consuming. The majority of the participants, even those who valued the process, complained about the process being too long which therefore discourages people away from marriage. Therefore, they are inclined to opt for other forms of partnership patterns such as cohabitation or living apart together.

The result established that this process is identified as a leading barrier to marriage and a factor in the decline of the marriage rate among the Zulu population. Although many studies have highlighted the payment of *ilobolo* as the hindrance of the marriage, the data collected also identified commercialization of *ilobolo* as a problem. However, the collected data suggests that it is not the main problem and cannot be merely identified as the single hindrance to marriage and a cause of new forms of partnerships. Young adults value the payment of *ilobolo*, however, the gift exchange that is accompanied by lavish ceremonies are said to be the inhibitor to getting married. The study established that the process is time consuming, thus creating financial constraints and conflict. This finding is in line the findings of Hosegood et al. (2009) who established that process conducted by the Zulu ethnic population makes marriage more vulnerable than in other populations. The result of this study confirms that changing partnership patterns exist as indicated in the third stage of the second demographic transition theory. Cohabitation, delay in marriage and the questioning of the institution of marriage are key features of the second demographic transition theory and these were features that emerged in this current research.

It is clear based on the findings that South Africa is already experiencing the second demographic transition as there are clear symptoms of the weakening of the institution of

marriage and a rise of cohabitation. Findings relate to the Malsows changing needs of 1954 which is the cornerstone of the SDTT theory where education and accumulation of resources pushes people away from conforming societal expectation however strive for self-development (Lesthaeghe, 2014)

Although the majority of the participants perceive as important and shared their desire to be married in the future, they also consider other forms of partnership patterns as an alternative to marriage. This is therefore an indication that South Africa is in the second demographic transition

5.5 Recommendations

This study showed a connection between the effects of the Zulu marriage process and contemporary partnership patterns amongst the Zulu population. Participants suggested that traditional leaders, working together with the relevant stakeholders, should have forum discussions to discuss the possible impact of the Zulu marriage process and *ilobolo* on contemporary partnership patterns and thus re-evaluate the significance of the process. The discussion should consider a fixed rate of *ilobolo* to avoid the fluctuation of prices depending on the bride's level of education. The price could either be specific to the Zulu population, or even apply to other African ethnic groups. Such a policy could play a role in increasing the marriage rate among the Zulu population. The various other ceremonies conducted in-between could be conducted in one day to avoid financial stress, the lengthy process and the unnecessary consumption of time. The participants argued that the Zulu population should go back to *ilobolo* and the marriage process in their original forms. The ceremonies such as *umbondo* and *izibizo* should be attended only by the immediate family as done in the past, in order to avoid wastage of money. Participants further recommended the need for a policy that protects those cohabitating. Such a policy could reduce the stigma attached to cohabitation. This would therefore limit the number of children raised by single parents, which in the past has had a negative effect on the population. A policy could also be introduced to prevent the exploitation of a partner after the death by a family fighting for money and resources.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of the study was to understand students' perceptions on contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population. The study aimed at understanding the role in which the Zulu marriage process contributes to contemporary partnership patterns. There have been drastic changes in partnership patterns in this population group. Based on findings from this

study, it is clear that among the sample of Zulu postgraduate students there is no urgency of marriage. In addition, these students are either considering or are already in other forms of partnership such as cohabitation and living apart together.

Previous research on the decline of the Zulu marriage rate has identified the payment of lobola as the main barrier to marriage. However, this study revealed that the sample of postgraduate Zulu students highlighted lobola as the most integral step when getting married. Moreover, *Umabo*, the final stage of the marriage process, is regarded at the actual traditional wedding recognized by the ancestors. However, the participants perceive the ceremonies inbetween to be the main inhibitor of getting married. Another problem identified during the study is the commercialization of lobola whereby there is no fixed amount for lobola prices but rather lobola is charged based on the bride's achievement, which therefore compromises the real meaning of lobola.

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UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
For research with human participants

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT TO PARTAKE IN RESEARCH

Date: 27 MARCH 2018

Hi/Hellow

My name is Sindisiwe Ngobese, student at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Howard College under Department of Built Environment and Development studies, school of humanities

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research in understanding the contemporary partnership pattern among the Zulu ethnic group. The aim and purpose of this research is to understand how partnership pattern have evolved over time, how the significance of marriage has been eroded and the role marriage process has contributed towards these changes. The study is expected to enroll twenty students, ten female and ten males where in-depth interviews will be conducted. Each interview will last not more than one hour Thirty minutes during in-depth interviews an

We hope that the study will benefit the participants in understanding demographic changes on how adaptation to the western norms have erode the significance of marriage and gave a space for other partnership pattern to rise such as cohabitation among Zulu population and will further help in understanding why the Zulu ethic group experiences great decline on marriage as compared to other ethic groups. This will give participants to view the necessity of the marriage process conducted by the Zulu. The views and participation will further generate other ideas for future research.

This study will not involve any risk since it looks at the perception and attitude of UKZN students towards the partnership patterns among THE Zulu population.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities ot personal only the opinions.
and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions, you may contact the researcher at 07361252249 or by email 214571008@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

Researcher: Sindisiwe Precious Ngobese   Supervisor: N Nzimande

University of KwaZulu Natal   University of KwaZulu Natal

Howard College   Howard college

School of Built Environment and   school of Built environment and

 Development studies   development studies

Contact details:0731252249   Contact details:0312603032

Email:ngobesesindisiwesn@gmail.com   Email:nzimanden@ukzn.ac.za

Should you wish to obtain information on your right as a participant, please contact the University of Kwa Zulu Natal's research office on 27 31 2604557 email HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Declaration

CONSENT

I ……………………………………….full Name of participant) have been informed about the study: (Contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population) by (Sindisiwe Ngobese) and willing to participate. I confirm that, the purpose and procedures of the study have been explained and I have been given an opportunity to answer

questions about the study to my satisfaction. I affirm that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to. Moreover I have been given a reassurance that information obtained will be kept strictly confidential. The researcher is available if have any further questions. I have been informed that the interviews will be recorded therefore:

1……………………………………….. Hereby consent to have this interview

2……………………………………….. Herby do not agree to have interview recorded

Signed   at………………………………… on …………………………….. This date……………………
Thank you for your participation

_____   _____

_____   _____
Signature of Witness   Date
(Where applicable)

_____   _____
Signature of Translator   Date
(Where applicable)

Demographic information

Sex: Male / Female

Age: ---------------------------

Level of Education ---

Ethnicity: Zulu speaking. / Zulu Ethnic group

Purpose of the study

To understand Contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population: Perceptions of University of KwaZulu-Natal students

Question (A)

1. According to your understanding, what is a family?
2. What is your understanding of partnership patterns?
3. What type of partnership pattern are you involved in, if any?
   ➢ Marriage
   ➢ Cohabitation
   ➢ Single

Question (B)

1. What is your understanding of the marriage process?
2. What is your understanding specifically about Zulu marriage process?
   ➢ Please list stages of the process according to your knowledge
   ➢ What is the role of Lobola in Zulu marriage?
   ➢ What are your perceptions on the marriage process?
3. Indicate how the process has evolved over time
   ➢ Would you say the marriage process is the same among Zulu ethnic group? if no, how has it changed?
   ➢ What are your perceptions regarding each component of the marriage process?
   ➢ Do you think the Zulu marriage process has an impact on marriage rates among Zulu ethnic group?

Question (C)

1. Is there an acceptable length of time between courtship and marriage?

2. Is that amount of time also relevant for cohabitation?

3. What are your perceptions towards cohabitation?

4. Is cohabitation an alternative to marriage?

5. Is cohabitation a process towards marriage?

6. Are cohabiting unions accepted within the Zulu culture? If yes, to what extent are they accepted? If no, explain reasons why they might not be accepted.

7. Are cohabiting unions/families the same as marriage? if not how do they differ?

8. Do you consider cohabitation a form of family formation?

UNIVERSITY OF

KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI

YAKWAZULU-NATALI

13 June 2018

Ms Sindisiwe Ngobese (SN 214571008)
School of Built Environment and Development Studies
College of Humanities
Howard College Campus
UKZN

Email: 214571008@stu.ukzn.ac.za

GATEKEEPER'S LETTER

Dear Ms Ngobese

Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), towards your postgraduate studies, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

"Contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population: Perceptions of University ofKwaZulu-Natal students".

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by conducting in-depth interviews with Zulu ethic origin university students on the Howard College campus.

Please ensure that the following appears on your notice/questionnaire: ● Ethical clearance number;
● Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor; ● Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire; ● gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

You are not authorized to contact staff and students using 'Microsoft Outlook' address book. Identity numbers and email addresses of individuals are not a matter of public record and are protected according to Section 14 of the South African Constitution, as well as the Protection of Public Information Act. For the release of such information over to yourself for research purposes, the University of KwaZulu-Natal will need express consent from the relevant data subjects. Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

███████████████ MRS MOKOENA

REGISTRAR

Office of the Registrar

Postal Address: Private Bag   Durban, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 8005/2206 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 7824/2204 Email: registrar@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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Ethics approval

UNIVERSITY OF

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31 August 2018

Ms Sindisiwe Ngobese 214571008
School of Built Environment and Development
Studies Howrd College Campus

Dear Ms Ngobese

Protocol Reference Number : HSS/0822/018M

Project title: Contemporary partnership patterns among the Zulu population: Perceptions of University of KwaZuluNatal students   Full Approval — Expedited Application

In response to your application received 2 July 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committe

/pm

Cc Supervisor: N Nzimande cc Academic
Leader Research: Professor Oliver Mtapuri
cc School Administrators: Ms A Msomi

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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