Young women's narratives of young womanhood in Hanover Park

Simone Gilbert

Department of Psychology

University of Cape Town

Supervisor: Dr Nokuthula Shabalala

Co-supervisor: Dr Floretta Boonzaier

Word Count

Abstract: 262

Main Body: 10 000

SURNAME: _____

FIRST NAME(S): _____

STUDENT NO: _____

COURSE CODE: _____

DUE DATE: _____

DATE SUBMITTED: _____

DECLARATION

1   I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and to pretend that it is one's own.

2   I have used the _____ convention for citation and referencing. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this essay/ report/ project/ _____ from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

3   This essay/ report/ project/_____ is my own work.

4   I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE_____   DATE:_____

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and express my deepest gratitude to the following people for their contribution and support:

To the young women, thank you for sharing your stories and experiences with me.

To all those at CASE, for making this research a possibility, for arranging interviews with the participants, and for your continued input throughout this time.

To Mr Desai, the principal of Athwood Primary School, for allowing me to conduct the interviews on school property.

Finally, to my supervisor, Dr Nokuthula Shabalala, and my co-supervisor, Dr Floretta Boonzaier, thank you for your constant support and guidance, encouragement and advice, and for sharing your insight and knowledge with me throughout this research process.

Abstract

The Cape Flats consists of a group of areas characterised by poverty, unemployment, prostitution, poor quality of education and gangsterism. These issues create complex situations in which people construct their identities and make meaning of their experiences, especially for young women. However, not much research has focused on young women living on the Cape Flats and how various contextual and environmental influences affect constructions of their identities, and shaping's of their understandings of young womanhood. Therefore, the aim of this research was to explore and understand how young women shape their understandings of young womanhood and make sense of their experiences when faced with such circumstances. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with 10 young women living in Hanover Park. These young women participate in a programme offered by Community Actions toward a Safer Environment (CASE) which is a community-based organisation aimed at breaking the cycle of crime and violence. This research was approached from the perspective of Intersectionality theory, a branch of feminist theory, which recognises that women's experiences can be understood in relation to their context and social identities such as race, class and gender. The data was analysed using thematic narrative analysis. The study found that young women construct their understandings of being a young woman based on traditional beliefs of masculinity, femininity and female sexuality. However, this research also suggests that young women are able to manipulate and transgress stereotypical notions of gender. The findings of the study also emphasize the importance of viewing young women's reflections in relation to the intersecting cultural elements present in this environment.

Keywords: Young women; Hanover Park; Intersectionality theory; narrative; femininity; gender;

Introduction

Young[1] women represent a marginalised group in society and in an area such as Hanover Park, where the focus is mainly on issues of gangsterism, violence and crime, young women and their understandings of femininity, in relation to these circumstances, are often further neglected. Hanover Park, together with many other areas, forms part of an area known as the Cape Flats. During apartheid, the Cape Flats was a residential area designated for coloured[2] people only. Due to the political turmoil of the country at the time, areas on the Cape Flats, amongst others, saw poor housing, living conditions, employment opportunities and quality of education. Many of these problems are still ongoing. Encountering these social ills on a daily basis has a strong impact on how individuals understand the environment that they live in and how they make sense of their experiences. This is especially important for young women whose knowledge and understandings of femininity are related to these daily difficulties. This research proposes to investigate how young women reflect on their understandings of young womanhood relative to their context. It also aims to explore how young women perceive and construct their identities and experiences, as young women living in Hanover Park, while being faced with various contextual and environmental challenges.

History of the Cape Flats

The Cape Flats consists of a group of areas such as Manenberg, Hanover Park and Bonteheuwel. During the apartheid era, the Group Areas Act demarcated these suburbs, amongst others, as coloured only areas (Salo, 2009). As a result, these suburbs had poor housing, education and less than adequate job opportunities. Although apartheid has since ended, and the related physical constraints have been theoretically removed, many residents of the Cape Flats are still affected by social and economic boundaries brought on by the historical, social and economic effects of the past (Standing, 2003).

The Current Situation of the Cape Flats

The communities on the Cape Flats still encounter many social problems, one of them being unemployment. Unemployment rates are particularly high and where job opportunities are available, they are often temporary and do not provide adequate income (Standing, 2003).

[1] The term, young women, is used to describe women during early adolescence, between the ages of 10 and 14, such as the participants. It used interchangeably with the term girls as this was done by myself and the participants during the interviews.

[2] Coloured refers to those who were categorised as such based on their racial identity during apartheid. Belonging to this group meant that people had to comply with other racially-based policies. It is used in this sense to acknowledge that the effects of this racial division are still seen today.

In addition, areas on the Cape Flats also suffer from poor schooling and a lack of much-needed educational resources (Standing, 2003). Residents of the Cape Flats also encounter a high prevalence of drug use and communities are finding it increasingly difficult to tackle this crisis (Standing, 2003). The high level of substance abuse also contributes to a range of other social problems, such as interpersonal violence and increased risk of HIV infection (Abrahams, Jewkes, Hoffman & Laubsher, 2004; Strebel et al., 2006).

One of the most vivid characteristics that constitute the experiences of people living on the Cape Flats is the presence of gangs. Gangs have become powerful and prominent groups within these communities as their influence and domination increases. Gang activity has had major consequences for the communities involved such as the lucrative drug trade which gangsters use to fund their operations, and the colonisation of community spaces (Ward & Bakhuis, 2010). This control of areas in the community has elicited a great sense of fear and lack of safety amongst residents (Ward & Bakhuis, 2010).

A strong feature of gangs on the Cape Flats is the associated violence. Many innocent people also fall victim to gang violence by being caught in the crossfire (Standing, 2003). The effect of gang violence is especially evident in the lives of young people. This can be seen in their school environments where extra measures have been taken to ensure the safety and protection of young people by installing electric fencing and bullet-proof windows (Standing, 2003).

Young people recognise how the dominant features of these communities on the Cape Flats come to shape their lives, and that of those around them. The different characteristics of these suburbs influence the daily experiences of these young people. For example, the lack of educational encouragement in their personal lives leads many adolescents to trivialise their schooling and, as a result, they have poor employment opportunities (Ward & Bakhuis, 2010). This also leads to an increased engagement in crime and violence as alternative future prospects are perceived as dim.

These circumstances affect how young people make sense of their subjective experiences and their experiences with others, and it should also be seen in conjunction with other factors, such as gender, race[3] and poverty (Parkes, 2003). It is important to acknowledge that these lived experiences are strongly impacted by such contextual dynamics and that it allows young people to negotiate the paths and positions they place themselves in.

---

[3] Race is used to indicate the separation of people into four distinct racial groups during apartheid. This is done to acknowledge the implications of this division in the present day.

Women on the Cape Flats

For young women, these experiences, in relation to contextual factors are paramount to their beliefs around femininity and young womanhood. Strongly affecting these beliefs are the conventional notions of femininity, which view women as subservient, inferior, controllable and weak (Schippers, 2007). The general public rewards women who conform to orthodox views of femininity and masculinity, while those who breach the status quo are often met with concern (Shefer et al., 2008). There is an increasing awareness about the manipulating of traditional gender roles and the acquisition of increased power for women.

As many women find themselves as the breadwinners, in positions of power and equal to men, they are becoming more and more aware of the ways in which gender roles are able to shift and to be transgressed (Strebel et al., 2006). While young women are aware of the stereotypical behaviour expected of them, they are continuously redefining and reconstructing their identities as women. This can be seen in communities where older women still have stereotypical beliefs about women, compared to younger women who have different ideas about womanhood (Salo, 2009). Thus, it seems more common for young women to manipulate the traditional views on gender to suit the more recent and newly developed norms of what it means to be a young woman (Salo, 2009).

While there are possibilities for women to become empowered through various means, it is important to note that women are still the most disadvantaged group in society, especially in terms of poverty. Society views women as a group that can contribute much less to the sustainability of an economy (Kehler, 2001). Instead, women's roles are relegated to the domestic sphere, which is considered less important. Thus, women suffer greatly in terms of their social standing in society. Their role as a woman in relation to society is not considered as important or valuable compared to other groups, such as men (Kehler, 2001). Not only can this been seen in women's immediate contexts but in broader contexts as well, where the legislation and the Constitution are not implemented properly in order to relieve historically disadvantaged groups of their poor standard of living. This is especially evident amongst women, who compromise one of the most marginalised groups in society at the moment (Kehler, 2001).

As mentioned earlier, the Cape Flats consists of areas that are host to a number of social ills, including gender-based violence. Women in areas such as Hanover Park are subject to increased experiences of gender-based violence due to their race and low socio-economic status (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, 2011). While these are two of the most prominent characteristics that place women at risk for gender-based violence, it is important

to acknowledge the effect that this has on women's identity. Because women in this position are also often marginalised by society, it makes it increasingly difficult for them to construct identities around positive aspects. Rather, it is easier to identify as shameful or abused women (Boonzaier & van Schalkwyk, 2011).

Gender-based violence can comprise of different forms, including sexual harassment, rape and woman abuse (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003). Men are most often the perpetrators of gender-based violence, while women tend to assume the role of the victim (Boonzaier, 2008). For many men, the act of being violent, especially towards their intimate partners, is a way for them to express and validate their masculinity (Strebel et al., 2006). This is related to the beliefs surrounding traditional gender roles with women expected to be submissive and obedient, while men hold positions of power and dominance. When women are perceived as violating these norms, men experience this as a threat to their position of power and control and often react with violence (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2003). Therefore, a man may feel the need to discipline a woman through violent means, reminding her of her natural position.

Amongst low-income communities such as the Cape Flats, transactional sex is a common feature (Monroe, 2005). Transactional sex provides women with alternative options in a society where they are relegated to the lower levels in society. For many women in this situation, transactional sex provides a source of income that they are unable to receive elsewhere, due to low levels of education and poor employment opportunities (Bucardo, Semple, Fraga-Vallejo, Davila & Patterson, 2004). Women's poor status in terms of class, race and gender all work together in order to perpetuate their lived experiences of inequality, thus making it even more difficult for them to find better ways of securing an income (Kehler, 2001). As a result, the combination of these factors portrays transactional sex as a viable option for women to pursue.

For women living on the Cape Flats, their environment presents them with many hardships. Not only do they witness the social ills characteristic of the Cape Flats but, as women, they are vulnerable to more specific problems such as gender-based violence, poverty, discrimination and inequality based on their race and class. These factors work together to influence and impact they way in which women come to think of themselves, and womanhood in general. It also affects how they perceive notions of gender and femininity which are central constructs of women's identities. Thus, it is important to examine how women formulate their identities based on their understandings and experiences of gender and femininity. This should also be seen in relation to the circumstances of their environment

and how this affects they way women perceive themselves based on the context in which they live.

Aims and Objectives

In light of the above, the overall objective of this research is to explore how young women construct their identity in a community where influences such as gangsterism, traditional gender roles, crime and poverty are paramount as told by the narrative accounts of participants. Secondarily, the study seeks to understand the extent to which young women prescribe to dominant views on femininity and how stereotypical feminine roles are reconstructed and changed in order to fit their environment. Therefore, the research question for this study is: "How do young women reflect on young womanhood in Hanover Park?"

Design and Methods

Theoretical Framework

For the purposes of this research, young women's subjective experiences and identity is viewed through the lens of Intersectionality theory, which is a branch of feminist theory. Feminist theory views women's subjective experiences and identities as resulting from their status and social positioning (Freeman, 1990), as well as the complex interplay of social, political and economic structures. Intersectionality takes women's experiences one step further in recognising that experiences can be viewed in relation to their context and social identities such as race and class with a particular focus on gender, which is fore-grounded in this research (Shields, 2008). Women's beliefs and experiences are strongly affected by their social identities and the context in which they place themselves in. Therefore, Intersectionality allows for the acknowledgement of the different social identities and contextual factors that work together to affect how young women come to make sense of their experiences and identities.

Stereotypical notions of both femininity and masculinity inform, to a large extent, the way in which women come to construct and define their identities (Salo, 2009). However, when viewed in line with principles of Intersectionality, it is possible for the traditional ideas on gender to change in accordance with the social identities, contexts and environments that women find themselves in. Therefore, it is important to view the identity of being a woman as changing with time and that it has the possibility to be manipulated in relation to the contexts that women are surrounded by (Salo, 2009).

Qualitative Research Methods

This research made use of a qualitative research method which emphasises the description and understanding of human behaviour as it seen from the view of the participant (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). It is also concerned with studying people in their natural environments as well taking into account the importance of the participants' actions, views, history and beliefs. Qualitative research acknowledges the importance of the contextual backgrounds of participants and that their behaviours should not be viewed in isolation but rather, within this context. It also recognises that the role of the researcher is an important one. The researcher is able to reflect on his/her position in relation to the research. By taking into account his/her race, age, sex, social standing, views or beliefs, the researcher is able to evaluate what impact this could have on the research (Willig, 2001).

I chose a qualitative approach for this research because I am interested in exploring young women's reflections of femininity and gender within the context of Hanover Park. In an area such as Hanover Park, categories of race, class and gender do not act in isolation and the use of qualitative methods allows for the exploration of how these factors interact in complex ways to inform how young women use these categories to construct and define their experiences and social identities (Willig, 2001).

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

The sample for this study consisted of 10 young women who form part of the Girl Power group at Community Action toward a Safer Environment (CASE). CASE is a non-profit organisation based in Hanover Park and one of its key objectives is breaking the cycle of violence within the community. Girl Power is a group that focuses on creating awareness on bullying, values and young women's role in the community. It involves education of women and children's rights. There is also a strong focus on young women's self-image and identity, where particular attention is paid to young women's future and the various challenges that they may face.

Ten semi-structured one-on-one interviews (Appendix A), were conducted in total. I chose to conduct interviews, as opposed to focus groups as the initial aim of my research was to explore young women's subjective narratives of their life in Hanover Park. The participants ranged in ages between of 10 and 14 years old. The recruitment of the participants involved me approaching CASE and informing them of my research. I then asked if they would be willing to help me recruit ten young women that I could interview. They agreed to let me interview 10 young women who form part of the Girl Power group. The

young women who form part of this group were informed of the study by a mentor, and were then asked to volunteer.

The interviews took place on the premises of Athwood Primary School in Hanover Park as all the participants attended this school. Permission was granted by the principal and the interviews took place during school hours. Five of the interviews were conducted in Afrikaans as these participants were first-language Afrikaans speakers, while the rest were conducted in English. All interviews, which lasted between 45 and 60 minutes, were audio-recorded and transcribed thereafter.

Data Analysis – Thematic Narrative Analysis

Thematic narrative analysis focuses strongly on what is said by participants, concentrating on the content rather the structure of speech and use of language (Reissman, 2002). Thematic narrative analysis also allows for the researcher to take into consideration the role that context, historical and political structures play in influencing the narratives told by participants. Even more so, it recognises that these factors operate together and influence each other in order to produce narratives of a particular kind (Smith, 2000). By acknowledging the role that content of speech, context and broader structural systems play, it is possible to understand deeper meanings within the data (Reissman, 2002).

The process of thematic narrative analysis followed seven steps as proposed by Fraser (2004). 1. Hearing the participants' stories. This allowed me to reflect on the participants use of body language and feelings described. 2. Transcribing the interviews verbatim. This allowed me to become more familiar with the data. 3. Interpreting the individual transcripts by identifying the different types of narratives as well as contradictions within them. 4. Identifying different aspects within the participants' stories such as interpersonal, structural and cultural elements. 5. Linking the personal with the political. I explored how dominant discourses in society may help to understand and interpret the participants' narratives. 6. Identifying similarities and differences across narratives. I identified common themes as well as differences that emerged from the data. 7. Writing a research report in a cohesive manner that accurately represents the findings.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a crucial factor in the qualitative research process. Within qualitative research, the researcher is not entirely separate from the research and has a considerable impact on the data collection and analysis process (Horsburgh, 2003). It involves the researcher acknowledging that his/her presence, views, opinions and beliefs have a strong

bearing on the way in which meanings and experiences are interpreted, both by the participants and the researcher (Horsburgh, 2003).

I identify myself as a coloured female living in a middle-class environment. The participants were also young coloured women and these similarities helped to establish familiarity and rapport during the beginning stages of the interviews. Initially, I believed that many of the participants were forthcoming in their interviews because we share similar identities in terms of race and gender. However, upon reflection and analysis of the data, I realised that I underestimated the environment into which I was entering and how the participants perceived me. This provided me with more understanding as to why my data did not reflect what I wanted it to and why it was better to change the topic of my research. My initial research question was: How do young women experience life in Hanover Park? Because the participants tended to reflect more on young womanhood in Hanover Park than their own subjective experiences, it was better to change the topic of my research, as well as my research question, to one that would better represent my data.

A possible explanation for this could be because the participants did not see me as trustworthy when it came to their personal narratives. For many young women in Hanover Park, their lives are characterised by the absence of one or both parents, as well as many people coming in and out of their lives too quickly to form any long-lasting and trusting relationships. As a result, they are wary of whom they trust. This came across in the interviews as many participants spoke about how they only trusted a handful of people with their personal experiences. I assumed that because the participants and I shared some similarities in some of our social identities, that rapport would be easily established and trust quickly gained. However, the environment in which the participants live is a sensitive one and as an outsider, I did not take that into account. The participants may have perceived me as unfamiliar with their lived environments and thus, unable to trust me enough with their personal stories.

What also facilitated my position as an outsider is my association with the University of Cape Town (UCT). Hanover Park forms part of the Cape Flats and overall, it is considered a low-income community. On the other hand, UCT is strongly affiliated with positions of privilege and wealth and the participants might have regarded this as a position of superiority that they were unable to identify with. Therefore, my perceived position as superior and the participants lack of trust in me, could have led them to reflecting more on young womanhood in general instead of speaking about their own subjective experiences.

The participants in this study are part of Girl Power, a group offered CASE. This means that these young women may have access to various systems of social and emotional support that other young women living in Hanover Park, do not. Because of this, their lives may not consist of the same issues as other young women and as a result, found it easier to speak about young womanhood in general, rather than their own subjective experiences. While the participants live in the same environment, with the same challenges as other young women, the fact that they have access to an exclusive support base, may mean that the participants have better and more constructive ways of dealing with these daily difficulties of living in Hanover Park.

Furthermore, my identity as a middle-class citizen and attending an elite institution such as UCT caused me to form certain assumptions about Hanover Park and its residents, especially due to its characterisation as a low-income community. For example, I assumed that the participants would come from poor households, be subject to extremely bad living condition with parents either absent or addicted to drugs and alcohol. Part of this is true, such as the fact that most of the participants' fathers were absent in their lives. However, nearly all the participants were satisfied with their lives and had parents/guardians who were adequately providing for them.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from UCT. An informed consent form (Appendix B) was drawn up for the parents/guardians of the participants as they were all under the age of 18, and an assent form was given to the participants (Appendix C). Both forms were translated into Afrikaans and participants were allowed to choose between the English and the Afrikaans forms. Permission to interview the young women was granted by CASE. Informed consent was also obtained from all of the participants' parents/guardians. The participants signed assent forms indicating their voluntary participation. Participants could not participate in the interviews unless both the informed consent and assent form had been signed. Both forms stated that participation was entirely voluntary and that there would be no consequences if participants chose not to take part in the interviews. The forms also ensured participants and their parents/guardians that all information obtained during the interviews would be anonymous and confidential. In order to maintain this anonymity and confidentiality, pseudo-names have been used to protect the identities of the participants.

The research was beneficial for the participants because it gave them an opportunity to discuss any personal experiences or concerns with regards to being young women in Hanover Park. Although the interviews did not cause direct harm to the participants, some of

the interviews involved personal discussion of a sensitive nature. Participants were made aware of the counselling services they could access should they find the interviews emotionally upsetting.

Analysis and Discussion

When analysing the data using thematic narrative analysis, three main narratives emerged: narratives of survival, narratives of femininity and narratives of success. Upon further analysis of the data, associated thematic areas were identified within each of the narratives. A prominent theme that emerged within narratives of survival was sex as a commodity, and within narratives of femininity, related themes included stereotypical femininity, constructing female sexualities and alternative femininities. Because this research draws on Intersectionality theory, it is recognised that, although the narratives are represented separately, some of them may interconnect and overlap with other narratives.

Narratives of Survival

Narratives of survival came across as very dominant throughout the data. This occurred particularly through themes of sex as a commodity, in that it provides young women with substantial income they might otherwise lack. Participants also stated that many young women involved in sex work are single mothers, largely because their understandings regarding young women's role as the primary caregivers for their children and families.

Sex as a Commodity

As the participants spoke about some of the most problematic issues they encountered living in Hanover Park, sex work emerged as a key theme. In particular, the participants spoke of how young women, after having children at a young age and dropping out of school, turned to sex work as a result. Because of this lack in education, young women find themselves in situations where they are unable to provide for their family (Williamson & Folaron, 2003). Thus, in light of this, sex work can be seen as a means of survival because it provides young women with the opportunity to meet their basic subsistence needs (Greene, Ennett & Ringwalt, 1999).

In the extract below, Diane speaks about her neighbour who is involved in drugs and prostitution:

> *Diane: There's a girl, she's 13, she live in our road. She's 13 and she have a baby already and she's on drugs. Her baby is two years old and she's on drugs and she prostitute.*

In addition, the participants also spoke about how sex work allows young women to provide for their children, to whom they are single mothers, or to feed their drug/alcohol addictions

> *Hajierah: Like most of the young girls think it's cool to be a prostitute cause they sell their bodies just for drugs*
>
> *Interviewer: Why do you think young girls think this is a good way to live?*
>
> *Hajierah: They mos don't have like money for the drugs and some of them don't have money for food then they go look for something and they don't find then they like go to prostitution and sell their bodies*

Above, Hajierah's narrative illustrates how young women are unable to find other means of employment and thus turn to sex work, of which the financial income can be used to meet their drug addictions or to provide basic resources such as food. Similarly, other research states that many women enter into sex work because it offers a much-needed financial income in the face of mounting pressures (Benson & Matthews, 1995; Greene et al., 1999).

Another participant also states the reasons for young women's engagement in sex work, as seen below:

> *Gadija: Because they do it for the money and drugs...But some do it for their children*

Gadija echoes Hajierah's narrative, in that young women's entry into sex work is to feed their drug addictions. But she also indicates that some young women become involved in sex work to provide for their children (Bucardo et al., 2004).

Below, Gadija elaborates on young women's reasons for engagement in sex work:

> *Gadija: No they are so 19, so. They were in the paper already. Then they show how they dress, show them who is the owners and so*
>
> *Interviewer: They have owners?*
>
> *Gadija: Yes that gives them clothes and stuff*

The above extract also illustrates how sex work can provide basic resources for survival such as clothes and food. However, it also reflects how sex workers rely on their owners, to whom they give a portion of their earnings in return for necessities such as food, clothing and shelter. These owners are most often men and this speaks to elements of power and control over women that is characteristic of sex work (Dominelli, 1986). More importantly, it draws on dominant discourses of masculinity and femininity that construct women as dependent on men.

Participants' responses also indicated that what perpetuates young women's engagement in sex work as a means of survival is the fact that many young women are single mothers and there is an absence of the young men that fathered their children. In their

research on female sex work, Bucardo et al., (2004) found that nearly half of their participants reported engaging in sex work in order to support their children, to whom they were single mothers. Young women are almost always left to provide for their children, largely because of assumptions that because women have the physical anatomy to care for a child, they should be the one to care for the child from birth onwards. Not only is this perception related to the narrative of survival, it is also strongly linked to dominant discourses on femininity and masculinity, where women are seen as the ones most suitable to caring for children and a family while men's role does not involve this.

> *Interviewer: So why must the mother care for the baby?*
>
> *Anthea: Because the mother has the breast and everything*

The above quote reflects on how it is assumed that a woman must care for her child because her physical anatomy allows her to do so.

In the extract below, Diane expresses how difficult it must be for a young man to look after a child, given that he is still too young and inexperienced:

> *Diane: He's also that old (13). How must he take care of a baby now? He still have a life to live...The boy just don't want to. He wanna do his own things. He don't wanna worry about a child still. He just think I still have a young life; I must still do a lot of stuff. I don't care about a baby*

In the above extracts we see how Anthea thinks that by virtue of being a woman, and the stereotypical ideals associated with women and child care, the mother is the one who is expected to look after her child, even if she is young. In doing so, this perpetuates typical feminine and masculine ideals which allow men to escape their responsibilities as a father. This can be seen in Diane's narrative where she explains that young men are not ready to be fathers because, as opposed to young women, they still need to consider their future prospects and providing for their child will interfere with this. On the other hand, this reproduction of stereotypical principles creates a deeper need for survival amongst young women because they are left to provide, solely, for themselves and their children.

However, there were some exceptions to this way of thinking in that not all the participants considered young men as unwilling to provide for their families.

> *Fowzia: I know a person but she's not like too young, she's 17, 18. She have a baby. But her baby's boyfriends also a gangster but he's like trying to make a difference. He's working and everything. He's trying to improve his life and prove himself to the people.*

Fowzia's narrative as presented above shows how it is possible for young men to make an effort in trying to provide for their child. This is in stark contrast to some of the other participants' narratives that depicted young men as absent and unwilling when it came to taking care of their child

Similarly, Hajierah describes some young men as sacrificing their future in order to provide for their child:

> **Hajierah**: *Like then they (young men) go look for work, they leave the school then they go look for work*

The participants' narratives illustrated that for many young women, sex work provides an alternative source of income that they are unable to receive elsewhere. This income provides a way for young women to take care of their children, to contribute to their drug/alcohol addictions, or a combination of both (Benson & Matthews, 1995; Bucardo et al., 2004). Consequently, sex work becomes a way for young women to survive in circumstances that can be seen as unfavourable. The participants depicted many sex workers as single mothers. Not only does this speak to narratives of survival but also to gendered narratives of femininity where women are considered to be primary caregivers for their children and families. They are also expected to take on the sole responsibility of this. Also, this stems to dominant discourses on masculinity that present men as unable to perform the role of caregiver (Schippers, 2007).

The majority of the participants narratives presented above illustrates that many young women engage in sex work because it presents as a means for survival. The intersections of various factors work together in this context to create situations where young women see sex work as the only other option in order to provide much-needed living necessities (Greene et al., 1999). Young women may also perceive sex work as appealing when they find themselves in difficult situations such as lacking adequate education and unable to secure employment (Bucardo et al., 2004). Thus, bearing the brunt of such adversities may present women with few alternatives to support themselves and those dependent on them. Also, young women's understandings of gender and femininity may place them in a position where they are the sole provider for their family. Although this alludes to constructions of femininity, it will be discussed in the next section.

Narratives of Femininity

Narratives of femininity also came across as very dominant when speaking to the participants. Most of them perceived young women as subscribing to the dominant ideas

regarding femininity, sexual relations, behaviour and appearance. This includes heterosexual relationships being the norm, young women being passive observers, docile and respectful in these relationships, and constructing their appearance to fit normative feminine beauty. Thus, ideas on stereotypical femininity were a key theme as well as how young women construct femininity. In addition, alternative femininities also emerged as a related theme.

Stereotypical Femininity

For many of the participants, stereotypical femininity was a recurring theme around which young women positioned themselves. Traditional ideals of femininity consider women as weak, fragile and complacent (Schippers, 2007). The participants observed young women embodying these notions through their appearance and behaviour, as illustrated in the extracts below:

> ***Diane****: A proper lady, she must have good manners and not be outside late. And wear skirts but not till here (indicating to her mid-thigh). There's a girl in the other class, her skirt is till here (indicating to the top of her thigh). And when she bend or walk, the whole panty stick out*

Diane's narrative above illustrates that her perception of what it means to be a proper lady supports the dominant discourses of femininity. In society, women are seen as fulfilling certain expectations, including the way they dress, as shown by the above extract. On the other hand, it also reflects that which is considered unacceptable for a young woman.

> Another participant, Caryn, expressed similar views on young women's appearance
>
> ***Caryn****: A girl must always be neat and have manners and she can't come to school wearing different sorts of uniforms*

In the above quotes, Diane and Caryn speak of young women's appearance and behaviour in ways that reflect traditional gendered notions of femininity through what is considered acceptable and unacceptable dress for young women. The participants understanding of stereotypical femininity is also expressed through the role of compliance that women are expected to play, as illustrated in the quote below:

> ***Anthea****: Now they (the boyfriend) tells you: 'No, I don't want you to dress so old-fashioned and you mustn't wear mini's and you must dress lekker (in this context, the use of the slang word lekker implies dressing nicely or attractively). Then the girls must just run and say: 'Ja (yes) my boyfriend wants me so, so I can dress like this'.*

In the above extract, Anthea describes how young women dress according to what their boyfriends want. This demonstrates the compliance and passivity of young women toward

their male partners. In contrast, men exhibit control over their female partners through means such as women's appearance. Such understandings of femininity also seek to reproduce traditional gendered ideals on femininity and masculinity. Thus, the dominant discourse on femininity is imbued with certain characteristics that position women in direct opposite to men and essentially reproduces the inferiority of women and the superiority of men (Schippers, 2007). In doing so it also positions young women as powerless and lacking in agency. While the issue of young women's agency does present here, it came across very strongly in the theme on constructing female sexuality.

Constructing female sexuality

The participants also drew on narratives of femininity to illustrate constructions of female sexuality. This was most notable in the ways in which participants spoke about the particular dress and appearance of sex workers in the community

> **Diane**: *Every night about 7 o'clock then you see here come the prostitutes. So with short skirts. Just so a long boots. So a midriff here and it's so cold outside and they walk just so*

Similarly, another participant describes the physical appearance of sex workers:

> **Gadija**: *Sometimes they don't dress like that but sometimes, say now their lips are blood-red and they are dressed in short clothing and they stand so, then you know*

The above extracts show how female sexuality can be constructed in a particular way by relating a woman's physical appearance to her sexual behaviour. Traditionally, female sexuality has been perceived as submissive, but also uncontrollable due to women's inherently loose nature (Dominelli, 1986). As a result, women's sexual behaviour has become a defining feature of their morality (Frost, 2001). This draws on particular notions of the double standard of female sexuality, known as the Madonna/whore dichotomy which constructs female sexuality as constrained on the one hand, and on the other, as wild and unruly (Tolman, 1994). Women who abide by these dominant discourses of female sexuality are seen as good and respectable while those who do not conform to the status quo are regarded as deviant. Sex workers can be considered as deviant because they exhibit sexuality uncharacteristic of typical women. Thus, through the participants' stories on sex workers, through the use of physical markers, sex workers are labelled as deviant by virtue of their sexuality.

The participants also discussed how the onset of puberty for young women indicates a level of sexual readiness as observed by men, as illustrated below:

> *Anthea: A lot of times my granny say that if I get my period then I mustn't walk so, don't walk around because then a grown man can walk after you*

This perspective is echoed by Caryn who indicates the implications for young women's sexuality once they have reached puberty:

> *Caryn: They (boys and girls) can't sleep together and as my mother told me um, girls, when they become young women um, and have their period then if they boys touch them then they can get pregnant*

Here, the participants discuss puberty for young women, more specifically menstruation, in relation to female sexuality. They also illustrate how the maturing of young women's bodies, leads them to becoming objects of the male gaze (Frost, 2001). In addition, they also come to see themselves as sexualised adult women which have particular connotations. That is, they become much more aware of their sexuality and what is considered acceptable for young women not only by men in the community, but also by society. Thus, as young women become older, and their sexuality is seen as maturing, it becomes subject to more control and lacking in power.

The participants also constructed female sexuality as powerless and lacking in agency:

> *Fowzia: She (a young woman) shouldn't dress too naked-ish because men like that and once that happens then you don't know what can happen*

Gadija also talks about how female sexuality is associated with a lack of agency

> *Gadija: Like a child. She must act like a child and dress properly, not so short. And then tomorrow, tomorrow they hear that you got raped then everybody knows then you don't want to come out*

Historically, young women's bodies have become the sites for sexuality, power and control. Above, Fowzia and Gadija make the association between a young woman's body and her sexuality (Frost, 2001). In her work on female sexuality, Tolman (1994) explains how young women are taught to constrain their sexuality due to the prevailing discourses on female sexuality. Women who do so are seen as decent and respectable. On the other hand, if women express their sexuality, they are considered defiant and rebellious because female sexuality is meant only for male desire, dominance and control. Thus, by making the link between young women's inappropriate physical appearance leading directly to sexual assault, participants reinforce the traditional notions of female sexuality regarding its need to be controlled by men. In doing so, it also purports young women's lack of agency and powerlessness over their bodies and sexuality (Dominelli, 1986). However, it is important to note that the

dominant discourses surrounding female sexuality and its passivity are deeply embedded in larger societal structures (Frost, 2001). Through these extracts it is possible to see how the participants draw on larger elements of these structures, such as patriarchy, that serves to subordinate women through the regulation of their physical bodies.

Alternative Femininities

Through other narratives told by the participants, it was also shown how young women are able to transgress traditional notions of femininity and embody characteristics not thought to be typically feminine. That is, they were resisting a narrative of stereotypical femininity.

> ***Elaine***: *I don't know. Because they think if you wanna be like a boy, nobody will mess with you. Because now everybody's mos gonna look scared for you. But if you lady-like then they take advantage of you, especially if you go to another court and you lady-like. They gonna say you stervy (stuck-up) and this girl and you that. Now some of the girls, they just normal boy-like and they know nobody's gonna interfere because you know, they gonna say don't loer with that girl (The term loer can be better understood as a slang word meaning 'to mess with'). But if you girly then they gonna try to attack.*

In the extract above, Elaine describes stereotypical femininity as associated with vulnerability and potentially putting young women at risk for victimisation. In contrast, it also illustrates young women's awareness of the power rooted in masculinity and the advantage it has for reducing or avoiding victimisation.

In addition, participants also spoke about young women joining gangs, which is often dominated by men

> ***Hajierah***: *They talk to the young girls that wanna become gangsters because most of the girls, some of the girls just wanna become gangsters because they see what the boys do now they wanna do the same*

Hajierah's narrative of why young women feel the need to become gangsters draws on the same discourses of masculinity and its associated benefits as Elaine's narrative above. Another participant also describes why young women join gangs:

> ***Caryn***: *It's because, they just wanna say, you are a gangster and nothing can overcome you or something*

In the above extracts, the participants describe young women as embodying alternative femininities, particularly along the lines of characteristics associated with typical masculine ideals. These young women find themselves in an environment dominated by men. Masculine

qualities such as strength, power, authority and control are rewarded with respect and status. Young women, a group who are very disadvantaged in such a complex environment, identify the advantages of being associated with men and masculinity. Thus, by young women taking on typically masculine characteristics, such as being strong, out-spoken and strong-willed, they seek to ensure some sort of respect and status within their community. Young women realise the disadvantage their femininity places them in but in order to overcome this, they learn to align themselves with the dominant position in society, that is, by exhibiting traditional aspects of masculinity.

In addition, the participants indicated that young women joined gangs because they recognise the associated power and control associated. Traditionally, gangs are comprised mostly of males, who often yield large amounts of power and high levels of status within the community (Laidler & Hunt, 2001). For both boys and girls, gang membership is seen as an outlet from the host of social ills in their lived environments, which is compounded by race and class (Messerschmidt, 1997). However, the social ills experienced by young women are further exacerbated by gender. Therefore, the participants illustrate that through the act of joining a gang, young women expect to gain prominence within the community because of its association with control and authority.

Through these extracts, the participants have shown how young women in Hanover Park are able to establish a different notion of femininity based on their understandings of femininity and gender (Laidler & Hunt, 2001). This is different to what the participants described as stereotypical femininity where young women are compliant with the traditional notions of gender regarding their appearance, behaviour and child care. It also differs from the young women who appear to be unagentic and powerless when it comes to their bodies and sexuality. Instead, the participants are aware of the alternative femininities that young women are able to embrace.

Narratives of Success

Narratives of success emerged as an important narrative as many of the participants expressed the desire to finish school and to go study further. Many of them also had aspirations in terms of their desired career paths for the future. The participants also emphasized how important it is for other young women to be aware of the benefits of education and assist them later in life. Despite this, some of the participants were aware of certain obstacles that could prevent young women from furthering their education.

As illustrated below, many participants spoke about having aspirations for their future in terms of their education and careers:

> *Fowzia: I think I must be a policeman...Or a social worker, to help children, like small children...They (young women) must like have respect and see already a future for them. Like must make done with matric and go study further.*

Not only does Fowzia have career-oriented goals for her but emphasizes the values that young women should have in order to be successful in the future.

Another participant reiterates this view:

> *Caryn: They must finish school and go to university and learn or something*

The above extracts show that the participants recognise the importance of young women furthering their education and the role this plays in terms of their future careers.

However, achieving this success was not considered to come as easily to young women because of particular problems, as illustrated by one of the participants below:

> *Janine: Maybe their mommy tell them: 'Yor you stupid, you can't do that'...They don't get encouragement by the parents.*

Here, Janine speaks about the lack of encouragement and support from parents regarding young women's education. There is also an element of parents undermining young women's ability to continue their education because they are not considered smart enough.

Another participant also illustrates how the influence from friends can disrupt young women's focus on their education:

> *Nadia: They, say now ne, they carry on nicely ne, they passed and everything. Now they see, maybe friends ne, now the one friend says: 'I don't want to go to school anymore'. And now they watch that friend and then they also don't want to go to school anymore.*

Together, Janine and Nadia show how possible obstacles presented from friends and family can interrupt young women's belief in continuing their education. The lack of encouragement and belief in young women's intellectual ability from parents, coupled with influences from friends can lead to young women undermining the value of their own education. Parental involvement and influences from peers are key factors when considering the level of educational achievement for children (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

On the other hand, there were participants who had family members encouraging them in their studies and who provided support.

> *Elaine: I learn from their mistakes and think I should do that. My mommy always tell me I must never do what she did. And they want me to learn from their mistakes they*

made and not go where they went. And they always encourage men to do better in school. And they always look at my report and always look at my school letters. My mommy come to meetings. And if I got a six or a five they always tell me it's bad, I must get a seven and it must be higher. And I must do my school work and always do my homework, sit with my books. So they always tell me to do that.

Research has shown that across low-income communities, education for young women is something that is not emphasized and that there is a large gender gap in education, with young men being seen as better suited to an education, than young women (King & Hill, 1997). That is, more importance is placed on the education of young men than young women. This is partly to do with the strong gendered belief that young women's role is relegated to the domestic sphere (Fine & Zane, 1991). However, in the above extracts, the participants emphasized how important it is for themselves and other young women to finish school and go on to study further. Many of them recognise the benefits for young women in furthering their education. Such benefits include better employment opportunities, increased incomes, lower rates of teenage pregnancy and the empowerment of women (Herz & Sperling, 2004).

Many of the participants have formulated ideas about in what direction they wish to go in terms of their careers. However, for some young women, the path to achieving these desired goals is not that simple. For many of the participants, it seemed imperative to have support from those closest to them, namely their parents, who could provide encouragement and talk about the value of education. This, as well as influences from friends, were the main reasons for young women trivialising their education. While there were participants who received consistent support from their family, all participants showed some evidence of wanting to pursue a career in later life. In their discussion on education in developing countries, King and Hill (1997) illustrate how low education levels are strongly linked to poverty and gendered notions of femininity and masculinity. Therefore, while the participants name lack of support and peer influences as reasons for young women not furthering their education, it should be viewed in relation to larger social structural influences that reinforce the barriers to education as perceived by the participants.

Summary and Conclusion

For this study, 10 semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted in total. The data was analysed using thematic narrative analysis which revealed three main narratives as well as various associated themes. The findings suggest that young women reflect on young womanhood in Hanover Park through narratives of survival, femininity and success.

Narratives of survival revealed that young women's involvement in sex work was due to a combination of factors. It provides a source of income that presents access to basic necessities, resources for child care and a way to feed their drug/alcohol addictions. It is also related to the disadvantaged position of young women regarding their race and socio-economic level, thus making it difficult for them to escape these unfavourable circumstances. In addition, the significance of gender relations emerged through the reinforcement of dominant beliefs surrounding the expectations of femininity in terms of women's role as primary caregiver. With the framework of Intersectionality theory in mind, young women's decision to engage in sex work is strongly affected by the interconnecting nature of their social identities in terms of race, class and gender (Crenshaw, 1991; de la Rey, 1997).

Narratives of femininity illustrate that young women prescribe to the dominant understandings of femininity and construct their behaviour, beliefs and appearances based on these understandings. The participants' assertions of stereotypical femininity also reveal how traditional notions of gender are embedded in more complex power relations that position men as superior and women as inferior. This was evident in the participants' reflections on aspects of heterosexual relationships where the woman is expected to be compliant toward the man (Schippers, 2007).

This speaks to greater power imbalances that came across very strongly in the participants' narratives on female sexuality. The participants constructed young women's sexuality as passive, lacking in agency and created for the male gaze. At the same time, participants illustrated that young women's sexuality, if not contained by men, can be considered deviant. These understandings reflect the Madonna/whore dichotomy which places female sexuality in a particular position where young women are taught to suppress their sexuality, for fear of it getting out of control. At the same time, they are to recognise their sexuality in terms of what is considered acceptable and unacceptable by society (Tolman, 1991). Thus, the participants draw on greater structural influences in society, such as patriarchy, to inform their understandings and reflections of young women's sexuality (Frost, 2001). In doing so, they construct female sexuality as something that serves to control young women.

The participants' narratives also illustrated that it is difficult to separate the understandings of femininity from those of masculinity and vice versa. In Hanover Park, an environment where male dominance is highly valued, young women were positioned as at risk for victimisation by virtue of being young women. As a result, young women attempt to lessen this risk by constructing alternative femininities that steer away from stereotypical

notions of femininity. It is important to recognise that there are various understandings of alternative femininities (Schippers, 2007), However, the participants constructed an alternative femininity specifically in relation to typical masculine characteristics. In doing so, they hope to reap the benefits associated with masculinity, such as power and control (Laidler & Hunt, 2001). Thus, in communities such as Hanover Park, young women are presented with a complicated matrix of challenges that involves aspects of race, class and gender (de la Rey, 1997). These are strong factors that must be taken into account when considering the ways young women come to think of femininity, masculinity and gender in relation to their environment.

Narrative of success reflected the participants understanding of the value of education for young women. Education is associated with positive future prospects such attending a tertiary institution, or having a successful career. The participants' emphasis on education for young women is particularly important because globally, there is a trend that devalues young women's education, thus placing them at a greater disadvantage (King & Hill, 1997). This lack of importance placed on young women's education can be seen as various barriers in communities such as Hanover Park, such as poverty and gendered notions of masculinity and femininity. In low-income communities, many young women do not have the financial resources to study further. Also, the poor level of education characteristic of such communities may not adequately prepare young women for tertiary education. In addition, the dominant discourses of gender in society, values men more than women. This is not to say that stereotypical ideals of gender are features of low-income communities, but rather, it acts as a powerful social structural system that puts young women at a disadvantage in terms of education (King & Hill, 1997).

This study makes several contributions to the existing literature. Firstly, and most importantly, it gives a voice to young women who have been marginalised by the greater social structures of society in terms of race, class and gender. It acts as a platform for young women to express their concerns, experiences and understandings of life as young women in Hanover Park. Secondly, it acknowledges how important the cultural and environmental influences are in relation to young women's understandings and constructions of gender and femininity. It also explores young womanhood in an environment where the attention is largely placed on issues of gangsterism. This study does not mean to retract any importance from such problems. Instead, this research recognises the vital role that these issues play when it comes to young women forming notions of gender and femininity.

This research also addresses vital aspects of young women in a South African context. The existing literature on young women's constructions of identity and understandings of gender are limited to low-income communities on an international scale. While international literature on such phenomena contribute fundamental knowledge to this area of study, it is important to focus on young women in a local context. Expanding on research such as this can be beneficial in terms of informing existing policies, legislature and practices regarding young women in low-income communities in South Africa.

Furthermore, the framework of Intersectionality theory shows how young women's constructions of gender and femininity and essentially, their identities cannot be viewed in isolation. It takes into account the complex interconnections of the historical and political aspects of Hanover Park, the current challenges for living in this community as well as young women's other social identities in terms of race and class. Thus, this study emphasizes these intersections and how they produce various cultural and environmental elements, which young women draw upon to construct their identities.

This study presented with several limitations that are important to acknowledge. Firstly, this research focused only on young women of a particular age group, namely between the ages of 10 and 14. A future study that includes participants of a broader age range would enrich the data, allowing for a deeper and more detailed account of young women's experiences.

It is also important to acknowledge the issue of language in research. Some of the participants were first-language Afrikaans speakers while I only speak Afrikaans as a second language. This presented the most difficulty when trying to phrase questions in Afrikaans and this may have led participants to misunderstand some questions. Thus, for future research it would aid the understandings for both the participants and the researcher/s if the researcher/s was fluent in English and Afrikaans.

In addition, this research consisted of participants that have access to a support base that the majority of young women in this environment do not. As a result, the sample was biased in this way as it only reflects the views and opinions of a particular group of young women. In future, it would be beneficial to interview young women who do not have such social support systems in place as well, thus, creating a space for more detailed exploration.

Finally, the data that was obtained was not sufficient in answering the original research question. This has particularly been attributed to the lack of trust from the participants in myself as the researcher. Therefore, for future research of this kind and especially in this context, it is recommended that the study be done over a longer period of

time. This will also help the researcher/s become more familiar with the context become more familiar with the context and to establish a more trusting relationship with the participants. It will also be more beneficial to use focus group instead of one-on-one interviews as this will allow for more exploration of the interactions and multiple meanings of participants responses, and provide a more holistic understanding of young womanhood in Hanover Park.

References

Abrahams, N., Jewkes, R., Hoffman, M., & Laubsher, R. (2004). Sexual violence against intimate partners in Cape Town: Prevalence and risk factors reported by men. *Bulletin of the World Health Organisation, 82*, 330-337.

Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2007). *The Practice of Social Science Research*. Cape Town, SouthAfrica: Oxford University Press.

Benson, C., & Matthews, R. (1995). Street prostitution: Ten facts in search of a policy. *International Journal of the Sociology of Law, 23*, 395-415.

Boonzaier, F. (2008). 'If the man says you must sit, then you must sit': The relational construction of woman abuse: Gender, subjectivity and violence. *Feminism & Psychology, 18*, 183-206.

Boonzaier, F., & de la Rey, C. (2003). "He's a man, and I'm a woman": Cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity in South African women's narratives of violence. *Violence Against Women, 9*, 1003-1029.

Boonzaier, F., & van Schalkwyk, S. (2011). Narrative possibilities: Poor women of color and the complexities of intimate partner violence. *Violence Against Women, 17*, 267-286.

Bucardo, J., Semple, S. J., Fraga-Vallejo, M., Davila, W., & Patterson, T. L. (2004). A qualitative exploration of female sex work in Tijuana, Mexico. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour, 33*, 343-351.

de la Rey, C. (1997). South African feminism, race and racism. *Agenda, 13*, 6–10

Desforges, C., & Abouchaar, A. (2003). *The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: A literature review*. Nottingham, UK: DfES Publications.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*, 1241-1299.

Dominelli, L. (1986). The power of the powerless: Prostitution and the reinforcement of submissive femininity. *The Sociological Review, 34*, 65-92.

Fine, M., & Zane, N. (1991). Bein' wrapped too tight: When low-income women drop out of high school. *Women's Studies Quarterly, 19*, 77-99.

Fraser, H. (2004). Doing narrative research: Analysing personal stories line by line. *Qualitative Social Work, 3*, 179-201.

Freeman, M. L. (1990). Beyond women's issues: Feminism and social work. *Affilia, 5*, 72-89.

Frost, L. (2001). *Young women and the body*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Greene, J. M., Ennett, S. T., & Ringwalt, C. L. (1999). Prevalence and correlates of survival sex among runaway and homeless youth. *American Journal of Public Health, 89*, 1406-1409.

Herz, B. K., & Sperling, G. B. (2004). *What Works In Girls' Education? Evidence And Policies From The Developing World*. Council on foreign relations.

Horsburgh, J. (2003). Evaluation of qualitative research. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 12*, 307-312.

Kehler, J. (2001). Women and poverty: The South African experience. *Journal of International Women's Studies, 3*, 41-53.

King, E. M., & Hill, M. A. (Eds.). (1997). *Women's education in developing countries: Barriers, benefits, and policies*. World Bank.

Laidler, K. J., & Hunt, G. (2001). Accomplishing femininity among girls in the gang. *British Journal of Criminology, 41*, 656-678.

Messerschmidt, J. (1997). *Crime as structured action: Gender, race, class and crime in the making*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Monroe, J. (2005). Women in street prostitution: The result of poverty and the brunt of inequity. *Journal of Poverty, 9,* 69-88.

Parkes, J. (2007). The multiple meanings of violence: Children's talk about life in a South African neighbourhood. *Childhood, 14*, 401-414.

Riessman, C. K. (2003). Analysis of personal narratives. *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns*, 331-346.

Salo, E. (2009). Coconuts do not live in Townships: Cosmopolitanism and its Failures in the Urban Peripheries of Cape Town.

Schippers, M. (2007). Recovering the feminine other: Masculinity, femininity and gender hegemony. *Theory and Society, 36*, 85-102.

Shefer, T., Crawford, M., Strebel, A., Simbayi, L. C., Dwadwa-Henda, N., Cloete, A., Kaufman, M. R., & Kalichman, S. (2008). *Feminism & Psychology, 18*, 157-182.

Shields, S. A. (2008). Gender: An intersectionality perspective. *Sex Roles*, 301-311.

Smith, C. P. (2000). Content analysis and narrative analysis. *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology*, 313-335.

Standing, A. (2003). The social contradictions of organised crime on the Cape Flats. Institute for Security Studies

Strebel, A., Crawford, M., Shefer, T., Cloete, A., Henda, N., Kaufman, M., Simbayi, L., Magome, K., & Kalichman, S. (2006). Social constructions of gender roles, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS in two communities of the Western Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS, 3,* 516-528.

Tolman, D. L. (1994). Doing desire: Adolescent girls' struggles for /with sexuality. *Gender and Society, 8*, 324-342.

Ward, C. L., & Bakhuis, K. (2010). Intervening in children's involvement in gangs: Views of Cape Town's young people. *Children & Society, 24*, 50-62.

Williamson, C., & Folaron, G. (2003). Understanding the experiences of street level prostitution. *Qualitative Social Work, 2*, 271-287.

Willig, C. (2001). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method.* Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Appendix A

Interview guide

- What is it like to be a young woman living in Hanover Park?
- How long have you been living in Hanover Park?
- Growing up, what have been the most difficult things to deal with?
  Probing questions:

  - How do you manage with the challenges you face?
  - What has helped you cope?
- What is it like growing up as a young woman in Hanover Park?
  Probing questions:

  - How are young women treated by other community members?
  - What are strong influences for young women in Hanover Park?
  - How do these influences affect being a young woman?
- What does being a young woman mean to you?

Appendix B

Parental consent form

Dear Parent,

<u>Invitation and purpose</u>
I am currently a student in Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town. Your daughter has been invited to take part in this study which explores young women's experiences of living in Hanover Park.

<u>Procedure</u>
If you agree to allowing your daughter to choose to participate in this study, I will interview her about her personal experiences and what it is like, as a young woman, to live in Hanover Park.

The interview will consist of a discussion between me and your daughter which will last between 45-60 minutes.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. There will be no consequences for you or your daughter should she choose not to participate in this study. Her involvement with CASE will not be affected, whether she chooses to participate or not.

<u>Risks</u>
Discussing personal experiences may be emotionally upsetting to your daughter but she may stop taking part in the interview at any time, should she wish to.

If she wishes to discuss any of these issues with a counsellor, she may contact Linda Bruyns, the counselling co-ordinator at CASE on 021 691 7066, who will be able to assist her.

<u>Benefits</u>
Your daughter will benefit from this study by being able to voice any personal experiences and concerns about life in Hanover Park. It will also contribute to knowledge on what it is like to live in Hanover Park.

Confidentiality

All information obtained during the interview will remain confidential and anonymous. This will be done by changing your daughter's name and any identifying details in reports and publications. Your daughter will also be given a form to fill in if she agrees to take part in this study. This form will ensure that your daughter's participation is 100% voluntary and all information will remain anonymous and confidential.

The interview will be audio-recorded in order to preserve the integrity of the information your daughter gives me. The recordings will be kept in a secure place, and only I and my supervisor will have access to it. As soon as I have written down everything that was on the recording, the written notes will also be kept confidential.

Contact details

If you have questions relating to this research, please contact any of the following people:

Simone Gilbert (researcher): 082 994 7535

Dr Nokuthula Shabalala (supervisor): 021 650 3900

Dr Floretta Boonzaier (co-supervisor): 021 650 3429

Signatures

If you agree to your daughter's participation in this study, please read and complete the form below and give it to your daughter to return to the CASE offices

I have read the information regarding this study and understand its purpose, possible risks and benefits. I agree to allow my daughter to choose whether or not she would like to participate in this study. I understand that my daughter is free to withdraw from the study at any time and that this will have no consequences for myself or my daughter.

Your name and surname _____

Daughter's name and surname _____

Your signature _____

Date _____

Appendix C

Participant assent form

Dear 'Girl Power' member,

Invitation and purpose

I am currently a student in Department of Psychology at the University of Cape Town. You have been invited to take part in this study which explores young women's experiences of living in Hanover Park.

Procedure

If you agree to participate in this study, I will interview you about your personal experiences and what it is like, as a young woman, to live in Hanover Park.

The interview will consist of a discussion between you and myself which will last between 45-60 minutes.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this study, it will have no consequences for you or your association with CASE.

Risks

Discussing personal experiences may be emotionally upsetting for you but you may stop taking part in the interview at any time, should you wish to.

If you would like to discuss any of these issues with a counsellor, you can contact Linda Bruyns, the counselling co-ordinator at CASE on 021 691 7066, who will be able to assist you with this.

Benefits

You will benefit from this study by being able to voice any personal experiences and concerns about life in Hanover Park. It will also contribute to knowledge on what it is like to live in Hanover Park

Confidentiality

All information obtained during the interview will remain confidential and anonymous by changing your name and identifying details in reports and publications.

The interview will be audio-recorded in order to preserve the integrity of the information that you give me.

You have the right to request that the audio-recorder be turned off at any time during the interview.

The recordings will be kept in a secure place, and only I and my supervisor will have access to it. As soon as I have written down everything that was on the recording, the written notes will also be kept confidential.

Contact details

If you have questions relating to this research, please contact any of the following people:

Simone Gilbert (researcher): 082 994 7535

Dr Nokuthula Shabalala (supervisor): 021 650 3900

Dr Floretta Boonzaier (co-supervisor): 021 650 3429

Signatures

If you agree to participate in this study, and to the interview being audio-recorded, please read and complete the form below:

I have read the information regarding this study and understand its purpose, possible risks and benefits. I agree to participate in this study. I also agree to the interview being audio-recorded. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary and I am free to withdraw from the study at any time and that this will have no consequences for myself or my association with CASE.

Your name and surname _____

Your signature _____

Date _____