

**SISTERING AND SEXUAL SOCIALISATION: A PSYCHOSOCIAL
STUDY OF XHOSA WOMEN'S 'SEX AND REPRODUCTION TALK'
WITH THEIR SISTERS.**

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of
Arts with Masters in Psychology

by

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Abstract

While much work has been put into understanding parent-child talk about sex, less is known about how sisters discuss sex. Using a psychosocial framework, in this study, I explore how women report talking about sex and reproduction in their sister-sister relationships, the subject positions within the talk and how the talk restricts or shores up particular ways of ‘doing sex and reproduction’ in society. Moreover, I examine why these women emotionally invest in certain discourses over others in their sisterly sex talk. The psychosocial framework combines discursive psychology with a psychoanalytic approach to explore both ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ processes involved in sexual socialisation within sistering. Psychoanalytic concepts were used to ‘thicken’ the discursive reading of the text.

Five isiXhosa-speaking, middle aged and working class women were the participants of the study. The Free Associated Narrative Interview was used to collect the data thus participants were encouraged to convey their experiences of sex talk and reproduction within their sisterly relationships with minimal interruptions from the interviewer. Analysis suggests that the women drew on two broad interpretative repertoires in order to construct their sisters as sexual subjects: a repertoire of secrecy, and a repertoire of responsabilisation and risk. Furthermore, sisterly sex talk was constructed as a complex interchange of shifting positions of openness and power due to two coinciding identities – that of mother and of peer taken up by the participants. A psychoanalytic reading of the data suggests an emotional investment in exemplifying responsibility. The participants experienced anxiety in negotiating a sexualised femininity and projected their sexual desire onto their sister to defend against anxiety in their talk; this enabled them to feel as though they were ‘doing’ sex better than their sisters.

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List of Acronyms

HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
US	United States
UK	United Kingdom
FANI	Free Associated Narrative Interview

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Chapter 1

Contextualising sexual socialisation in South Africa

1.1. Introduction

Much research in psychology has been devoted to promoting healthy patterns of talk about sex within society (Kunkel, Farrar, Eyal, Biely, Donnerstein, & Rideout, 2007). According to Doyle, Mavedzenge, Plummer and Ross (2012) the early information given about sex in girlhood arguably sets the scene for subsequent patterns of talk and influences sexual behaviour in womanhood including for example, the age of sexual debut, condom use and sexual risk-taking. These behaviours have consequences for a myriad of social issues such as HIV/AIDS, abortions, unwanted and unsupportable pregnancies and sexual violence (DiIorio, Pluhar, & Belcher, 2003). The way we talk about sex in our close relationships therefore has societal impacts, as our interactions with others influence how we conform to certain societal norms and ultimately how we get socialised into certain gender identities and sexualities. Despite this, sex talk remains an uncomfortable topic for discussion between children and the older generation (Shtarkshall, Santelli & Hirsch, 2007).

In this chapter, I present a brief overview of sexual socialisation literature focusing on parent-child relationships and then eventually sibship, particularly sisters. I draw on broader issues such as women's issues in South Africa demonstrating how these are rooted in how one is socialised into society to show the importance of sexual socialisation. The cultural practices that shape sexual socialisation in isiXhosa are then discussed. Followed by an exploration of existing literature on Black', working class women's sexuality. Furthermore, I problematise the dearth in literature on sibling sexual influence in the African context given the high HIV incidence rates in South Africa.

1.2. Kinship and sexual socialisation

According to the literature, sexual socialisation begins in childhood and common contexts for this process are parent-child relationships (Martin & Luke, 2010), formal education (Dunlap, Benoit & Graves, 2013; Shtarkshall, et al., 2007), religion and the media (Anarfi & Owusu, 2010). Certainly, it is particularly within the family setting that an individual's preliminary ideas, attitudes, beliefs and norms about sex are introduced (Eyal et al., 2007; Martin & Torres, 2014). While there is widespread agreement about parents' involvement in sexual socialisation, there are other taken for granted role players in the healthy sexual development

of a child within the family setting, for example siblings. Siblings may provide a particularly favourable context for sexual socialisation, as there is relative equality within these dyads compared to the hierarchy in parent-child relationships (Mitchell, 2003). Previous research has suggested that parent-child hierarchy results in discomfort (Wilbraham, 2009) and a tendency to emphasize danger and the moral aspects of sexual activity (Kim, 2009). In this research, I am interested in exploring the ‘sex and reproduction talk’ women describe in their sister-sister relationships.

A review of the sibling literature suggests that sisters exchange views about sexual relationships and reproduction with ease (Mauthner, 2002). According to this study by Mauthner (2002) on sisterly relationships in the United Kingdom (UK), sisters’ talk includes discussion about heterosexual desire, boyfriends, sex and marriage. However, scarce attention has been paid to such talk within the South African context, particularly among ‘Black’ working class¹ women. This dearth in literature is surprising given the inequities that exist around sexual and reproductive issues e.g. higher HIV infection incidences faced by working class women (Booyesen & Summerton, 2002). In the section that follows, I introduce the South African context and the existing sexual health concerns faced by its youth.

1.3. The importance of sexual socialisation in the South African context

South Africa has the highest incidence of HIV in the world with 5.3 million people living with HIV/AIDS thus contributing 25% of the HIV burden in sub-Saharan Africa (Rehle, Hallett, Shisana, Pillay-van Wyk, Zuma, Carrara & Jooste, 2010). Rehle et al. (2010) state that women have the highest incident rate of HIV infection, particularly women who are 25 years and older. According to Rehle et al. (2010), HIV incidences in women aged 15 and older was 10 times higher than their male counterparts were. A contributing factor is transactional sex. Women are offered gifts and money in return for sex and individuals in impoverished settings can be persuaded to provide sexual favours using inexpensive gifts (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2004). Research indicates that transactional sex tends to be associated with coercion and results in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2004). This further indicates that socioeconomic class coupled with gender mediate women’s sexual experiences in South Africa.

¹ The term working class in this study refers to those often economically marginalised on the basis of income, education and occupation (Lui, Soleck, Hopps, Dunston & Pickett, 2004).

Considering the above-mentioned rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, sexual violence, unplanned pregnancies and other sexual health issues mentioned above in South Africa, governmental efforts to intervene were deemed necessary over a decade ago (Thomas, 2004). This resulted in an upsurge in sexual health research that looks into people's sexual behaviours and beliefs. One of the initiatives that came from this was loveLife, which encouraged parent-child sex talk in amongst an increased emphasis on sex talk using the media, sex education at schools and other campaigns (Noar, Palmgreen, Chabot, Dobransky & Zimmerman, 2009). LoveLife used the slogan "Love them enough to talk about sex" which was similar to the "Talking to Kids About Tough Issues" campaign in the US to advocate for more parental involvement in the sexual socialisation of their children (Phetla, Busza, Hargreaves, Pronyk, Kim, Morison, Watts & Porter, 2008). However, according to Thomas (2004) this initiative did not yield positive results because it did not address "the social factors that shape gendered identities and determine the course of the epidemic in South Africa" (Thompson, 2004, p.29). LoveLife was also unsuccessful because many parents still avoided talking about sex with their children and those who did offered "vague warnings" (Bastien, Kajula & Muhwezi, 2011, p.2) about morality and disease. Furthermore, according to Morrel (2003) children are punished in many South African communities for informing their parents that they are sexually active which also contributes to the culture of silence around sexual health. However, when we look at Delius and Glaser's (2002) study, it becomes apparent that campaigns like loveLife could benefit in taking cultural values and beliefs about who should be talking about sex to whom in account. For instance, in isiXhosa-speaking communities, according to Delius and Glaser (2002), clan elders were historically responsible for talking to the youth about sex instead of parents. Sexual socialisation in the isiXhosa culture is discussed in the next section.

1.4. Sexual socialisation in isiXhosa speaking communities

Delius and Glaser (2002) explore the literature from precolonial South Africa and how sexual socialisation in this country has transformed under the influence of Christianity, urbanisation and migrant labour. They use these social and historical events to better understand contemporary sexual culture. Findings of their study state that the elders in isiXhosa speaking communities were historically responsible for the sexual socialisation of adolescents (Delius & Glaser, 2002). Sex talk in isiXhosa communities comprised of the elders relaying information about sexual norms and behaviours with the onset of puberty as a means to keep pregnancy at bay according to an anthropological study by Mayers conducted in the 1960s

(Delius & Glaser, 2002). Adolescents were taught contraceptive measures such as *ukumetsha* [limited sexual intercourse], by their elders. *Ukumetsha* is a custom that allows premarital sex, which is non-penetrative between an unmarried man and woman (Delius & Glaser, 2002). It was introduced to avoid penetrative sexual intercourse between adolescents and ultimately to prevent pregnancy (Delius & Glaser, 2002). The impregnation of unmarried women was also policed through imposing a fine on a man for conceiving a child with a young woman out of wedlock as this compromised women's opportunity for marriage in the future (Delius & Glaser, 2002). These men thus had to pay for *damages* as a form of punishment. This was a cattle or monetary fine paid to the family of the impregnated woman to compensate for limiting their daughter's chances for marriage by engaging in penetrative sex with her (Delius & Glaser, 2002).

The main differences between the conventional western parent-child sexual socialisation and this historical form of sex talk in the isiXhosa culture is firstly that it was conducted by either an uncle\ aunt, grandparent or an elected and respected member of the community (Delius & Glaser, 2002). Secondly, it was permissive of sexual practices during adolescence due to an understanding of sexual curiosity during these years. However, similarities exist as well, as the universal patriarchal image of virgin women as pure can also be seen within this tradition. This is problematic in that it does not afford sexual liberation to women and in turn constructs women's sexuality as belonging to a single man. Patriarchal forms of sexual socialisation such as this sanction women's available sexual identities and further construct women as mere containers for children.

However, based on the findings of the anthropological study by Philip and Iona Mayer in the 1950s and 1960s on Xhosa migrant culture and the impact on youth sexual socialisation. Delius and Glaser (2002) argue that this intergenerational sex talk in isiXhosa-speaking communities lessened and even disappeared with the introduction of Christianity and the onset of urbanisation and migrant labour. Delius and Glaser (2002) further demonstrate that with many people converting to Christianity, abstinence became central and talking about sex became an obscenity. Moreover, with many people moving in and out of these communities due to urbanisation and migrant labour it became harder for elders to sanction people's behaviour, resulting in an increase in premarital pregnancies (Delius & Glaser, 2002). Therefore, premarital sexual intercourse, which was condemned prior to the introduction of western sexual norms, became normative replacing limited sexual intercourse. However, the rise of premarital

sex and thus premarital pregnancies resulted in women being deemed the only subject responsible for taking precautions against pregnancy. Delius and Glaser (2002) state the following:

the main onus was, nonetheless placed on girls to avoid full intercourse and they were taught various techniques to assist them in this. Should a girl become pregnant it was regarded as an extremely shameful experience. The wider group of youth treated members who transgressed this ruling with considerable harshness and they would be ridiculed and shunned by the others (p.32).

Delius and Glaser's study is important for understanding the evolution of gendered sexual socialisation within isiXhosa communities in the context of migration and industrialisation. Their work shows how the change of a system of sexual socialisation led to the silencing of women's voices through being "shamed" and "ridiculed" for their premarital pregnancies as well as the individualisation of women's sexual issues (Motsemme, 2003). For example, previously there was retribution for impregnating a woman and thus men would play an active role in preventing pregnancy by practising limited sex, now contraceptive responsibility was placed on individual women.

Evidence for the silencing of women's voices both historically and contemporaneously can also be seen in the work of Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) who argues that in isiXhosa-speaking communities it is perceived to be vital that men make decisions on matters even in households that are headed by women thus reinforcing patriarchal dominance (Nkosi & Daniels, 2007). These cultural, social, historical practices and traditions may have shaped 'Black' women's sexuality to what it is today. Therefore, it is significant to acknowledge them when investigating the construction of sex talk available in the isiXhosa culture in the context of sisters, particularly working class, isiXhosa-speaking women.

1.5. Class, gender discrimination and sisters

There is a gap in the documentation of the lived experiences of 'Black' working class women in South Africa. They are still marginalised due to the historical and ongoing inequalities of the unjust system of apartheid and thus remain on the margins even in the post-apartheid present. In this study, I focus on sex and reproductive talk of working class women. Many of these women occupy the domestic sector, thus work as cleaners, cooks, and wash laundry (Fish, 2016). However, working class women in African communities also head homes and are

sometimes responsible for economically supporting their extended families including their siblings (Eriksen & Gerstel, 2002). This is because care work in the African context is not limited to parents. Siblings usually also assume the carer role at times of need and thus economically support the entire family (Bozalek, 1999). Therefore, structuring the relationship between siblings in a certain way however, this study seeks to find whether sexual influence is inherent in these sibships through talk.

To understand the sex and reproductive talk of working class women I turn to the literature to demonstrate the sexualities and femininities that were previously available to 'Black' women. According to Collins (1991), with patriarchy pervading female sexuality, women had to negotiate their femininity and sexuality within four cardinal virtues, namely "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (p.71) to be deemed as 'true' women in the US. However, "Black womanhood was then polarised against white womanhood and defined in terms of 'lack' — absence of male protector, beauty, morality, home, and family" (Motsemme, 2002, p.652). Therefore, the four cardinal virtues only functioned to construct white women. Collins (1991) argues that this was because 'Black' women's sexuality and femininity was not only controlled based on gender as seen in the White women's experiences. Race and class oppression also contributed in shaping 'Black' womanhood and the available gendered identities and sexualities. As a result, 'Black' women in America during slavery negotiated their sexual subjectivities between the 'Mammy' or asexual domestic worker gender identity and the hypersexualized 'jezebel' who is a sex worker (Collins, 1991; Hammonds, 1997). In the African context, given that constructions of African women's sexuality have also been found to be problematic, Motsemme (2007) argues that:

it is when we begin to also view African women's sexuality as not wholly linked to reproductive health or disease that we simultaneously open up room to focus at a deeper level on the pleasures and joys that are the precursor and precondition of sexual danger. This allows us to then investigate some fundamental aspects of human interactions, and the ways cultural artefacts and other methods are used by young women in urban ghettos to fashion viable identities in the midst of social chaos. In other words, we begin to get a better sense of how meanings are generated in times of social and ethical breakdown (p.62).

Here, Motsemme (2002) constructs African women as agentic subjects who have to negotiate their sexual desire in the midst of HIV and socio-economic disadvantage. Kambarami (2006)

adds that there is an “interplay between femininity, sexuality and culture in the African society” (p.1) that subordinates women, limiting their ability to exercise power and choice this also includes sexual relationships. Motsemme (2002) and Kambarami (2006) both express concern around African women’s sexual health and caution against attempts to victimise the women without an exploration of the cultural process that sustain their subordination often beginning in the family.

With the focus on kinship relationships and its perceived effect on sexual socialisation, it is surprising that the role of sibling sex talk has not been explored in the African context particularly because sexual socialisation is known to begin at home (Shtarkshall et al., 2007). The gap in the documentation of African sisterly relationships in the literature reinforces the idea that ‘Black’ women are often the most marginalised group in society (Motsemme, 2003). The narratives of ‘Black’ women’s experiences have been continuously neglected. A big part of sibling relationships that researchers tend to ignore in their work is gender formation, where there are large amounts of influence between the older and younger siblings (Mauthner, 2002). For example, older siblings are expected to set examples for their younger siblings, while the younger ones mimic their older siblings’ behaviour until younger siblings are able to exert their own influence (Sanders, 2004). In isiXhosa-speaking communities, a large number of people still live in extended families even though a shift to nuclear family lifestyles has been found (Bozalek, 1999).

In this chapter, I have demonstrated the importance of research on sexual socialisation in South Africa confronted by HIV/AIDS, sexual violence and unwanted/ unupportable pregnancies. I then briefly mention some of the contexts responsible for sexual socialisation of individuals showing that sexual socialisation happens within relationships and how parent-child sex talk has been prioritised as most significant in the literature. I also showed how sexual socialisation isiXhosa speaking has been affected by cultural and historical contexts as well as by class with ‘Black’ women frequently being marginalised in these contexts. Finally, I argue that sexual socialisation also happens in sibling relationships. Given all this, this thesis argues that siblings could potentially be a valuable tool for sexual socialisation and seeks to establish whether the construction of sex talk between sisters allows for ways of resisting traditional gendered processes in relation to sex and sexuality or whether it simply maintains the tendency to place responsibility for sex on women.

1.6. Research aims

The aim of the proposed study is to explore how women construct their talk about sex and reproduction in their sister-sister relationships, the subject positions within the talk and how the talk restricts or shores up ways of ‘doing sex’ and ‘doing gender’ in society. Furthermore, the proposed research is interested in the affective processes such as anxieties and desires that may be understood to be (consciously and unconsciously) motivating these women to invest in particular discourses over others when constructing the role of sex and reproduction talk in their sister-sister relationships.

Research such as this is important because discursive practices amongst sisters can be understood as facilitating, resisting and maintaining gender discrimination, women’s subordination and loss of control over their own sexuality (Kambarami, 2006). This is because the “taken-for granted, seemingly unimportant, everyday talk, activities and caring have consequences for aspects of identity and relationality” (Edwards, Hadfield, Lucey & Mauthner, 2006, p.59).

The research will make significant contributions to our understanding of ‘Black’ women’s experiences, how they come to relate to other women about sex as well as the power relations produced that reinforce or undermine particular gender roles and stereotypes within sexual relationships. It seeks to lend critical insight into the extent to which isiXhosa women can reclaim power in public discourses concerning sexuality as how we talk about sex in the social realm largely impacts on how we construct ourselves, thus impacting sexual relationships and reproduction later in life (Ampofo, 2001).

1.7. Chapter guide

Chapter 2 presents the literature review. I begin this chapter by showing the importance of sexual socialisation. I then explore the debates that have moulded the concept of sexual socialisation focusing on the role of the family and on the development of gender identity. Literature on the impact of parent-child sexual socialisation on sexual behaviour is presented and critiqued. Using parent-child sex talk I portray the gendered identities that result, I then review sibling literature demonstrating that there is potential positive influence on sexual behaviour. However, due to there being minimal research on sibling sex talk I draw on research on female-female sex talk (amongst peers) in order to draw inferences about sisterly talk because these relationships are also lateral compared to the vertical, hierarchical parent-child relationships. However, while female friendship sex talk is reviewed, this context is not

conflated with sisterly sex talk; peer sex talk is recognised as different but helpful in understanding women sex talk and femininity.

The next chapter, chapter 3, sets out the theoretical framework. In this section, I introduce and explicate the lens I use in exploring sexual socialisation within sisterhood. I use a psychosocial lens, which diverges from mainstream psychology in that it tries to not create a social-individual division but instead attempts to incorporate these two perspectives to produce a nuanced understanding of an issue (in this instance of how women talk about sex with their sisters). The psychosocial paradigm combines the central tenets of discursive psychology with those of psychoanalytic theory, particularly in the case of this research Klein's object relations theory. At first glance, these two theoretical frameworks could be perceived as being at odds with each other. However, they are both interested in how we construct our reality. Melanie Klein's work on early relationships is central because object relations theory explores interpersonal relationships and how they influence behaviour.

Chapter 4 operationalises the research process by discussing the various steps that were used for generating and analysing data on how women construct talk about sex with their sisters. Briefly, it describes the research design, research questions, sampling and interviewing techniques, the analysis of the interview transcripts and the researcher's field notes as well as the participants' biographical details. In addition, ethical considerations for this research as well as issues of credibility and dependability are discussed.

Chapter 5 is the first chapter of two that presents the findings. In particular, this chapter presents the dominant discourses and subject positions that were found in the participants' constructed narratives on sex talk with their sisters. The study found that the isiXhosa-speaking women drew on two dominant interpretative repertoires. The secrecy interpretative repertoires were used to construct a sexually explorative subject within the sibling dyad while the responsabilisation and risk repertoires were used to judge and police sexuality.

Chapter 6- is the second chapter of findings; this is where the interpretative phase of the analysis was done, which required the psychoanalytic reading of two chosen core extracts. The interviewer analysed the core narratives alongside the participants' personal biography and the researcher's field notes to understand the participants' personal investment or psychological payoff inherent in the elicited narratives. The findings indicate that the since there was anxiety

around negotiating a sexualised femininity and the participants tended to construct clear distinctions between their own sexual behaviour and that of their sister for defensive purposes.

Chapter 7- The discursive and psychoanalytic findings of this study are first summarised and then they are discussed alongside sexual socialisation literature within the family. Therefore, demonstrating the implications of drawing on a secrecy and responsabilisation repertoire and the fear sexual self on negotiating a sexualised femininity while attempting to exemplify responsibility. The limitations, contributions, future studies and other recommendations related to this study are then discussed.

Chapter 2

Review of sexual socialisation literature

2.1. Introduction

As a topic of research, sexual socialisation has evolved rapidly with studies being conducted in psychology, sociology, anthropology and other related social sciences and scientific fields. Interest in researching sexual socialisation was sparked by the rise of the HIV epidemic and other related risky sexual behaviours (Delius & Glaser, 2003). This chapter reviews the relevant literature that has emerged around sexual socialisation in the past few decades. I begin the chapter by conceptualising sexual socialisation followed by a discussion of the influence of sexual socialisation on gender identity and femininity. I then present the existing literature on sexual socialisation with a focus solely on research conducted within the family setting, in the process showing how siblings are side-lined in sexual socialisation research. This parent-child focus is followed by a review of the literature on sibling ‘sex talk’ and the potential effectiveness thereof. Thereafter, I explore the minimal literature on sister-sister sex talk and its importance. However, because of the dearth of literature on sexual socialisation between siblings I turn to literature on ‘sex talk’ in female friendships.

2.2. Conceptualising sexual socialisation

There are varying definitions that the literature uses to engage with the term sexual socialisation. A number of authors premise their definition on sexual activity and expression (Cohen & Kuvulanka, 2011; Delius & Glaser, 2002) while others go beyond this and include gender role socialisation, physical maturation, body image as well as social relationships (Anarfi & Owusu, 2011). Early researchers of sexual socialisation such as Spanier (1977) conceptualised it as the process “of sex-object preference; development of gender roles; development of a gender identity; acquiring sexual skills, knowledge and values; and development of sexual attitudes” (p.88). Later, researchers defined it as collaborative process in which children learn about sexuality where they shape and are shaped by present meanings of sexuality. Therefore, children interpret the given societal and cultural meanings of sex and sexuality and do not merely internalise present meanings (Martin & Torres, 2014). From a psychosocial perspective, which is the theoretical framework of the present study. Sexual socialisation would be construed as the process where subjects (e.g. women) actively construct values, beliefs and practices about sex in their interpersonal talk with their sisters. These constructions have consequences for the people constructed and the people using these

discourses invest in certain discourses over others in order to achieve something at an interpersonal and intrapsychic level (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Furthermore, power is maintained and lost through this talk as they achieve and fail to achieve the desired effect (Edley, 2001). This becomes their cultural understanding of what sex is and how to talk about it which is fluid and likely to change.

The term sex talk refers to “how people use various linguistic features to construct their sexual identities and relationships, and how this varies from culture to culture.” (Sauntson & Kyratzis, 2007, p.1). With this definition in mind sex talk informs sexual socialisation through sexuality, language and culture (Sauntson & Kyratzis, 2007). A review of the sexual socialisation literature in sub-saharan Africa by Bastien et al. (2011) states that ‘sex talk’ influences an individual’s understanding about negotiating sex and self-efficacy. Sexual socialisation occurs through conversations, but it can also occur at a conscious and unconscious level, as well as through verbal and nonverbal communication of attitudes and values regarding sexuality (Cohen & Kuvallanka, 2011). Kim (2009) states that nonverbal sex talk involves facial expressions and gestures, which inform how subjects understand sex and sexuality.

2.3. Sexual socialisation and available gender identities

There is agreement in the literature that the way we talk about sex constructs gendered practices, usually in the gender binaries of feminine and masculine (Butler, 1990). How sexual socialisation constructs gendered practices has been approached by a variety of researchers in different and creative ways. For example, Schick (2014) argues that popular culture and songs like “Hit me baby” by Britney Spears promote violence, the subordination and objectification of women. According to Eyal et al. (2007), pornography also resulted in the sexual objectification of women. These studies further found pornography promoted non-condom use, group sex and extramarital sexual activity in men while exposure to pornography resulted in lack of contraceptive use in women and infections with chlamydia in the US (Eyal et al., 2007). In South Africa, a study by Vincent (2008) found that ritual male circumcision in the Eastern Cape promoted male entitlement to sex and thus resulting in a violent sexual culture. These studies therefore demonstrate how daily activities and cultural practices that seem trivial influence our understanding of gender.

For example, femininity is understood to be a set of attributes, behaviours, and roles generally associated with girls and women (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010). It is a social construct made up of

both socially and biologically defined factors. The social, refers to how we traditionally construct a woman, using attributes such as sexual desirability, passivity and parenting, while the biological refers to inherent phenomena such as genitalia and the breasts and vagina. The gender role of an individual, as masculine or feminine is, according to Dozier (2005), fostered immediately after (or before) birth when the doctor informs the parents of the child's gender. These early classifications have interactive consequences. However, according to Butler (1990) gender and sex are both social constructs used to limit the available gendered identities and sexual subjectivities available to people. Butler (1993) further argues that "if gender is a social construction of sex, and if there is no access to this "sex" except by means of its construction, then it appears not only that sex is absorbed by gender, but that "sex" becomes something like a fiction" (p.5). This understanding of gender and sex therefore has implications for this study as it reveals that the structural and sexual subordination women face is a product of gendered constructions of femininity and womanhood as lesser.

2.3.1. Sameness, silencing and power

Motsemme (2002) argues that traditional constructions of femininity such as subservient, passive and pure make women inferior and submissive allowing men to subscribe to a culture of dominance and power. Motsemme (2003) further argues that constructions of 'Black' homogeneity and solidarity require women to be silent and sensitive to patriarchal discourse so as not to threaten this 'Black' solidarity. Therefore, assuming the role of a powerful woman is deemed counter to 'Black' liberation and the idea of 'Black' femininity. Outside of these patterns in men-women relations, Mauthner (2005) claims that sistering embodies "sameness and gender solidarity" (p.625) because of the universal effects of patriarchy. She argues that women use the notion of sisterhood in politicised initiatives to advocate against marginalisation. However, even with the complex history shared by women, research between sisters or sisterhood has been peculiarly left unexplored possibly because of its potential to reveal the power relations that may exist between women (Mauthner, 2005).

An investigation of these relationships would be useful in identifying women's ability to oppress or stifle each other's sexuality as much as men, because power is something that is always present in relationships (Mauthner, 2005). Alternatively, research into female relationships can also explicate women's ability to shape their own sexual experiences through talk because, according to Mauthner (2002,) in lateral ties such as sister-sister relationships, influence can include the formation of opinions about sexual relationships and reproduction. However, considerable research has only been devoted to parent-child sexual socialisation

while scarce attention has been paid to sibling influence on sexual behaviour. The section that follows reviews the research on parent-child sexual socialisation that has surfaced in the past few decades as well as the effectiveness of this sex talk.

2.4. Sexual socialisation in the parent-child relationship: Pitfalls and promises

As a response to sexual health issues governmental and nongovernmental campaigns have advocated for parental involvement in the sexual socialisation process of children in the past decades as a means to “risk-proof them” (Wilbraham, 2009, p.59). This is because according to the literature, sexual socialisation begins in childhood and common contexts responsible for instilling attitudes and values about sex/uality and reproduction during this process are parent-child relationships (Martin & Luke, 2010). Parent-child sexual socialisation in adolescent years has been well documented in the literature (Chilman, 1990; DiIorio, McCarty, Denzmore & Landis, 2007; Miller, 2002; Fine, 1988; Fine & McClelland, 2006; Fletcher, Ward, Thomas, Foust, Levin & Trinh, 2015; Guzmán, Schlehofer-Sutton, Villanueva, Stritto, Casad, & Feria, 2003; Kim, 2009; Pluhar & Kuriloff, 2004). This is because the average onset for sexual debut is in many cases adolescence (DiIorio et al., 2003). In the past, studies on sexual socialisation had limited generalisability to White families and university students; however, this is gradually being redressed in the literature (Jansen & Janssen, 2010). Studies on sexual socialisation in the US have also included ‘minority’ groups such Asian American (Kim, 2009) and lesbian parent sexual communication (Cohen, 2009; Cohen, & Kuvallanka, 2011) in investigating sexuality in adolescence. This inclusion was important considering the higher rates in sexual risk behaviour in Latin and African American communities (DiIorio, Kelley, & Hockenberry-Eaton, 1999; Guzmán et al., 2003; Hutchinson & Cooney, 1998; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2001). More recent developments in the literature have also led to research into sexuality and sexual socialisation in Africa (Dunkle, Jewkes, Brown, Gray, McIntyre & Harlow, 2004; Motsemme, 2003; Segalo, 2013; Wood & Jewkes, 1997).

2.4.1. Parent-child sex talk avoidance

In South Africa, sexual socialisation during adolescence takes place within a relatively high rate of early sexual debut. A study by Eaton, Flisher and Aaro (2003) found that by age 16 years, 50% of adolescents in South Africa were already sexually active and between 50% and 60% of the sexually active teens reported never using condoms during sexual intercourse. This study revealed power dynamics within sexual relationships and further discussed women’s lack of power in negotiating condom use. Studies such as this demonstrate that unsafe sexual

behaviour is pervasive and hence parent-child sexual socialisation has been promoted in the literature aiming to influence adolescents' sexual decision-making.

However, Dennis and Wood (2012), argue that by the time parents initiate sex talk with adolescents, they are already sexually active and have thus received alternative forms of sexual socialisation. In addition, according to research by Jaccard, Dittus and Gordon (1998), conducted in the US, 73% of parents reported that they had talked to their children about sex while only 46% of teens agreed. There is therefore an incongruence that demonstrates the lack of success of parent-child sexual socialisation. There are a range of possibilities here: parents are not talking about sex with their children and reporting that they do; or children feel that the sex talks are not happening often enough; or parents are not talking to their children about topics they want to hear about. In a South African study by Jearey-Graham and Macleod (2015) using focus groups with young college students, sex talk with parents was constructed drawing on a discourse of disconnect. Participants expressed that sex talk with their parents was often non-relational and unrealistic about their life experiences and thus unhelpful.

2.4.2 Euphemisms, cultural avoidance and authority

Research suggests that intergenerational sexual socialisation is often ineffective because parents often opt for metaphorical discourses of pollination among bees and the laying of eggs by birds to avoid speaking openly and technically about sex and reproduction (Martin & Luke, 2010). In addition, Kim (2009) reports on direct and indirect methods parents use to communicate about sex in a study conducted in the Asian community. In this study, sexuality was a closed topic and mothers often resorted to nonverbal strategies such as facial expressions and body language to express disapproval about certain sexual attitudes and expectations (Kim, 2009). This silence was attributed to the Asian cultural heritage. Furthermore, according to Martin and Luke (2010) sexual socialisation within parent-child relationships fails because "lower income mothers often do less explaining and more directing in their socialisation of children" (p.281). This talk is thus often authoritative in nature as parents use scare tactics to discourage sexual activity in adolescents by emphasizing the danger and morality aspects, which results in limited sexual agency in girls (Lesch & Kruger, 2005).

In the US context, more reluctance in talking explicitly about sexual health issues is found within African American and Latina families as well as higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases (Hutchinson, 2002; Hutchinson, Jemmott, Jemmott, Braverman & Fong, 2003). A

study by Aronowitz, Todd, Agbeshie and Rennells (2007) used focus groups to investigate sexual socialisation using the stereotypical mother-daughter context in African American families and found that mothers worried that if they talked to their children about sex they (the daughters) would become sexually active. In addition, the daughters were warned about the predatory male sexual drive and engaging in sexually risky behaviour was associated with a low self-esteem in the adolescents thus sexual initiation was seen as seeking validation in boys. Moreover, the study states that the adolescent girls viewed sexual activity as “a dichotomy of either being a ‘little girl and not participating’ in sexual activity or being sexually active and being viewed as a ‘hoe’” (Aronowitz et al., 2007, p.15). These are some of the problems associated with parent-child sex talk in the US context.

2.5. Sexual socialisation as a gendered process

Fox (1980) is one of the first researchers to advocate that social change programmes urge mothers to initiate sex talk with their daughters in the US, leading to the current global focus on mother-daughter sex talk two and a half decades later. Mother-daughter ‘sex talk’, however, all too often emphasises morality and danger and is thus flawed (Fine & McClelland, 2006). Fathers are often side-lined in this process especially when it comes to sex talk with their daughters (DiIorio et al., 1999). Following this realisation, studies on sexual socialisation in the US began exploring the father’s role in the development of a child’s sexual attitudes. The review of the literature by DiIorio et al. (2009) reports that only 22-38% of children report talking about sex with their fathers. In both single- and dual-parent households, mothers (74.2%) were much more likely than fathers (48.9%) to discuss AIDS with their children (Meschke, Bartholomae & Zentall, 2002). Female adolescents “tended to talk about the menstrual cycle with their mothers, sexual abstinence with their fathers and sexual intercourse with their friends.” (DiIorio et al., 1999, p.181).

Several sexual socialisation researchers found that different discussions are offered for boys; these conversations are often more positive towards sex (Martin & Luke, 2010) and encourage non-relational sex (Ampofo, 2001). Therefore, sexual socialisation is a gendered process and there are reported gendered differences in what parents impart to their children about sexuality and reproduction (Martin & Luke, 2010). This results in different values and expectations about sex in adolescent boys and girls. For example, according to research sexual assault is discussed with girls and seldom discussed with boys. Restrictive sex talk that largely emphasises the danger and moral aspects associated with sex is offered to women while permissive attitudes

are emphasised for men (Martin & Luke, 2010). Fine (1988) and more recently Fine and McClelland (2004) argue that pleasure is hardly a topic of discussion for girls, although it is more explicitly discussed with boys. The result is that more women are at greater risks of HIV infection (Jewkes & Morrell, 2010). All contraceptive responsibility is thus placed on women in relationships thus introducing greater vulnerability to unwanted pregnancy and STDs when in reality the decision to use condoms, as well as the decision to conceive often rests upon men, particularly in the South African context (Wood & Jewkes, 1997).

The bulk of research on sexual socialisation emanates from Western contexts. However, inferences can be drawn from the US because similar to results found with African American and Latin American parents, 'Black' and 'Coloured' South African parents also assume topic avoidance and an authoritative role when talking about sex with their children (Lesch & Kruger, 2005). Therefore, this kind of parent-child sex talk has often been unsuccessful considering the reported HIV prevalence and teenage pregnancies in South Africa (Lambert & Wood, 2005). The work on socioeconomically deprived communities within the US and the impact on sexual health is helpful in revealing the universal impact of poverty on sexual behaviour. It shows how the remnants of a previously oppressive government have impacted and continue to disenfranchise subjects in terms of access to sexual and reproductive health services such as contraception.

South African studies on parent-child sex talk also demonstrate similar trends to the vast literature found in the US context. Firstly, parent-child sex talk in South Africa also often defaults into mother-daughter talk (Wilbraham, 2009). In addition, "parents are rarely equipped with adequate experience or skills for broaching sexual topics. In contexts such as South Africa, mothers are often themselves sexually and socially disempowered and thus unable to assist their children in constructing positive and responsible sexual identities" (Phetla et al., 2008, et al., p.3). As a result, many parents are reluctant to confront issues about sex with their children (Paruk, Petersen, Bhana, Bell & McKay 2005; Stadler & Hlongwa, 2002; Wilbraham, 2009).

This assumption that parents\mothers are ill-equipped to approach sex talk with their children, can be seen in Wilbraham's (2009) study. In the study, Wilbraham (2009) uses text adapted from a women's magazine on how to approach sex talk with "unwilling" teenage children in middle class families and loveLife's 'teaching moments' initiative in which 'Black' families were encouraged to use in the media, e.g. watching television in 'Black' families to talk about sex. In her study, Wilbraham (2009) argues that these desperate pleas for safe sexual behaviour

by the government through loveLife at times contradict the portrayal of teenagers as temperamental. However, the media conveniently depicts adolescents as willing participants to talk about sex and mothers as unwilling. Therefore, the media and government tend to make this process seem unproblematic and smooth when, in fact, there are power dynamics at play. In addition, “the techniques hide power that settles around the regulator of such conversations (the mother) who determines the topic, cues speaking turns and controls the outcome” (Wilbraham, 2009, p.68). The reluctance and discomfort seen in the US literature in parent-child sex talk is therefore evident in this study (Wilbraham, 2009). According to Delius and Glaser (2002), in South Africa this reluctance often results in adolescents having “little option but to seek information elsewhere — normally from their peers” (p.27). However, peer sex talk tends to be problematised because it introduces pressure for adolescents towards sexual experimentation (Whitaker & Miller, 2000) which sometimes results in high-risk sexual behaviour (Selikow, Ahmed, Flisher, Mathews & Mukoma, 2009).

2.5.1. Criteria for ‘successful’ sex talk

Although the bulk of the literature supports open dialogue about sex, it remains unclear what methods are successful in imparting attitudes, which lead to responsible and healthy sexual practices in adulthood. A study by Whitaker, Miller, May and Levin (1999) in the US however, found a significant decrease in risky sexual behaviour in the adolescents of parents who were comfortable and open when discussing sex with their children. DiIorio et al. (2003) further critically analysed parent-child communication about sexuality literature conducted between 1980 and 2002 and identified the content, predictors and behaviours associated with sexual socialisation in parent-child relationships. The study discovered that many parents said they were talking about sex with their children while fewer children reported to having sex talks with their parents. DiIorio et al. (2003) found that menstruation, pregnancy, dating, contraception, HIV/AIDS and sexual intercourse were discussed while talks around wet dreams, masturbation and abortion were avoided in parent-child relationships. Mothers who thought their children were sexually active were found to be likely to broach topics about sex as well as the parents’ knowledge about sexual topics were predictors for sex talk (DiIorio et al., 2003). Through this talk parents wanted to delay their children’s sexual initiation, encourage contraceptive use and discourage risky sexual practices. According to DiIorio et al. (2003) the review found that there are mixed results about the effectiveness of parent-child sex talk on adolescent sexual behaviour.

More recent studies by Widman, Choukas-Bradley, Helms and Prinstein (2014) as well as Dennis and Wood (2012) identified affect and the comfortability of parents as well as their children during sex talk as essential. Therefore, 'successful' sex talk requires the parent to have open interactive communication about the dangers as well as the pleasure associated with sex instead of the fragmented and context-free comments about sex some mothers were found to be making (Dennis & Wood, 2012). This is because the information that is offered and that which is withheld shapes the individual's understanding as well as decision-making about sex (DiIorio et al., 2003). These studies further established that the manner in which the parent approaches sex talk impacts the children's ability to avoid risky sexual practices in adulthood lessening the risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or dealing with unwanted\unsupportable pregnancies. All these aspects of the conversation play a role in the effectiveness of the talk. The effectiveness of the sex talk is measured by likelihood to use contraceptives, positive attitudes towards sex, sexual comfort and greater openness about sex between parents and their children (DiIorio et al., 2003). However, sexually risky behaviour in adolescence and parent-child sex avoidance still prevails. As a result, in a study by Guerro and Afifi (1995), adolescents and young adults were found to prefer talking with their siblings about sex rather than their parents.

2.6. Turning to sibling relationships

When considering women's vulnerability to sexual health issues, one can therefore argue that perhaps due to the hierarchical nature of the parent-child relationships, intergenerational sex talk does not facilitate open talk, which is helpful in understanding youth sexuality, but instead it closes it off. However, because "siblings are uniquely situated members of both the family and peer contexts" (Wallace, Hooper & Persad, 2014, p.690), there is relative equality within this dyad compared to the hierarchy present in parent-child relationships (Mitchell, 2003). But siblings remain greatly understudied as a viable alternative context for the sexual socialisation of subjects within the family space. Instead, the emphasis in the literature exploring sibling relationships in the US has been on, for example, violence and substance abuse among African American siblings according to Wallace et al. (2014). However, adult sibling literature has expressed a growing interest in sibling intimacy (Bedford & Avioli, 2001; Cicirelli, 1991; Pike, Coldwell & Dunn, 2005), identity development (Edwards et al., 2006; Vivona, 2007) and support between siblings (Voorpostel & Blieszner, 2008). Sex talk between siblings, particularly same sex siblings has been a much overlooked phenomenon.

In spite of this gap in exploring sibling influence on sexual socialisation, more recent literature in the US has started examining sibling influence on sexual behaviour. For example, Wallace et al. (2014) investigated sibling discussion about sex and sexual relationships and found that African American men are more likely to recall conversations promoting sexual activity and risk taking when talking about sex with their older brothers. The women recall conversations about abstinence, safer sex and prevention with their siblings (Wallace et al., 2014). These findings suggest that even within sibling relationships there is a promotion of conservative sexual attitudes in women, which do not allow for ways of resisting traditional gendered notions of female sexuality and thus maintain the tendency to place responsibility for preventing unwanted consequences of sex on women (Van der Riet & Nicholson, 2014). This suggests, yet again, sexual socialisation is often a gendered process even in egalitarian relationships. In the section that follows, I review the ways in which sibling relationships have been understood in grand psychological theories to better understand the role siblings are understood to be playing in identity development.

2.7. Historical perspectives on siblings

Whiteman, McHale and Soli (2011) state that social psychology has not contributed much to the present understanding of sibling relationships while Systems theory has studied siblings merely as part of the whole family system. Instead, considerable research in psychology has been devoted to investigating parent-child relationships. As early as Freud, the oedipal complex explored the attachment of the child to the parent of the opposite sex while projecting unconscious aggressive feelings towards the parent of the same sex (Freud, 1908). Bowlby's attachment theory observed the relationship between an infant and its primary caregiver as the basic tenet for attachment (Bowlby, 1978). As a result, this left sibling relationships underexplored (Mauthner, 2005). When Freudian concepts such as sibling rivalry were investigated, childhood was the focus. Moreover, previous studies discussing sex and siblings focus on incest (Finkelhor, 1980; Sherwin-White, 2007) and none of these studies, explore the long-term impact of having a brother or sister on sexuality leading to the current scant literature on sexual socialisation within sibship. Adler eventually explored the role of the sibling in moulding the individual's personality and the impact of birth order and this work led to the formulation of the idea of egalitarianism when studying sibling relationships thus rendering siblings as equal counterparts within the family (Whiteman et al., 2011). It appears that further investigation of this equality would be useful in establishing the experiences of talking about sexual health in sibling relationships.

2.8. Sibling influence and sex talk

While there is inevitable hierarchy within parent-child relationships, there is relative equality in sibships (Mitchell, 2013). This hierarchy, according to Wilbraham (2009), causes discomfort in parents when talking about sex with their children and therefore results in the construction of sexual activity as dangerous and immoral as seen in section 2.5. However, research suggests that talks about sex and reproduction can be approached with relative ease between siblings because there is less of an age difference compared to the intergenerational age difference with parents. For example, a study by Guerrero and Afifi (1995) in the US, while investigating topic avoidance between siblings and parents found that participants were much more willing to discuss dating and life experiences with their siblings than their parents during adolescence and young adulthood. This study further established that female dyads such as mother-daughter and sister-sister relationships used the least avoidance in discussing sexual matters. In addition, a review of the sibling literature suggests that older siblings' behaviour influences later risk-taking behaviour of younger siblings (Slomkowski, Rende, Longer, Simons & Conger, 2001). Differences between same sex sibships have, however, been noted. For example, a study by Widmer (1997), researching sexual initiation in sibling relationships, indicated that the older brother's attitudes influenced the younger brother's sexual initiation while the same trends were not reported for younger sisters. This implies that there is peer pressure within brotherly dyads and more protective attitudes in sister-sister relationships. Moreover, sibling influence is further facilitated by relationship quality. A study by Kowal and Blinn-Pike (2004) on direct communication about sex (e.g. through asking about sex) between White siblings in the US demonstrated that sex talk between siblings occurs when the quality of the relationship is positive. In this study, Kowal and Blinn-Pike (2004) found that relationship quality between siblings facilitated more talks about safe sex especially when combined with parent-child sex talk. Furthermore, these conversations are said to occur even when the older sibling are conservative or risky sexual subjects. Finally, according to a longitudinal study by East and Khoo (2005) closeness in African American and Latino sibling relationships resulted in less engagement in sexual risk behaviours.

A further review of the sibling literature suggests that same-sex siblings (e.g. sisters) exchange views about sexual relationships and reproduction with ease (Mauthner, 2002). According to a study by Mauthner (2002) on sisterly relationships in the UK, sisters' talk includes discussion about heterosexual desire, boyfriends, sex and marriage. Also, a US study by East and Kiernan (2001) found that adolescents who had sisters who gave birth in their teenage years were likely

to engage in risky sexual practices and thus also have to parent during their adolescence years. This quantitative longitudinal study was conducted on 1510 Latin American and African American adolescents and 24% of participants had two or more siblings who had children during adolescence.

Scant attention has been paid to such talk within the South African context, particularly among 'Black' working class women. This dearth in literature is surprising given the inequities that exist around sexual and reproductive issues e.g. higher HIV infection incidences faced by working class women (Booyesen & Summerton, 2002). Most studies on sexual socialisation between siblings have been conducted in the US, which is a different context to South Africa. Some inferences can perhaps be drawn as sibling research is still in its infancy in South Africa. Nevertheless, research such as this is important because "Talk among women based on collaboration and intimate confiding creates a private world where relationships are 'managed'" (Mauthner, 2002, p.28) and I argue that within this confiding and managing of relationships gender identity and sexual practices are moulded.

There is not much literature on sister-sister sex talk. However, according to Chatters, Taylor and Jayakody (1994), who conducted a study on kinship in African American communications, peer relationships tend to resemble sibling relationships in some ways. This is because like sibling relationships, friendships also often horizontal and thus allowing for more talk around sex-related topics (Lefkowitz et al., 2004) Therefore, I will draw on literature on same sex female friendship to understand sisterly sex talk. This is because in the study conducted by Chatters et al. (1994) women reported that their friends were like sisters to them. For example, one of the participants responded in the following way: "We were tight like sisters... Sue just made me feel that I was her sister, and I guess I made her feel the same" (p.302) thus forming fictive kinships. However, even with these parallels drawn between friends and peers it is important to state that these relationships are distinct.

2.9. Friendship sex talk- female friends

According to a US study by Widman et al. (2014) friends are an important context for shaping an individual's sexual development. It is through sex talk in friendships that adolescents learn to communicate about sex as a result Widman et al. (2014) argues that adolescents disclose information about their sexual development more to their friends than their parents. However, Widman et al. (2014) also argues that explicit talk about sex requires "skills in sexual assertiveness and negotiation that are not prevalently modelled for youth (p.732)".

Widman et al. (2014) investigated the effects of talking to parents and best friends about sex and explored whether this influenced people's ability to talk openly about sex with their partners. As usual siblings were left out of this process. The study found that 46% of the adolescents sampled in the study talked about sexual health with their partners, 71% talked with their parents while 75% of the participants talked with their best friends. This study also found that female friends were likely to discuss more about sex than male friends were. These findings are similar to the study by Lefkowitz et al. (2004). A study by Fletcher et al. (2015) exploring the effects of parent-child and peer sex talk conducted on African American college students found that the students drew on four discourses to construct sex talk with parents and peers. Namely: abstinence, relational sex, sex positive and gendered sexual roles using the Sexual Socialization Discourses Measure which is a 28 item scale developed by Caruthers and Ward (2002). According to the study, parents were reported as emphasizing abstinence and relational sex messages more than peers were while peers drew mostly on sex positive and gendered sexual role messages as compared to parents (Fletcher et al., 2015). Women were offered more gendered sex talk in constructing the female as the "cautious sexual gatekeeper" (Fletcher et al., 2015, p. 208) while men were offered talk around non-relational sex.

2.10. Sex talk- frequency and comfortability

Researchers have found more frequent sex talk and comfortability around talking about sex in female friendship relationships compared to male friendships in the US (Lefkowitz, Boone & Shearer, 2004; Busse, Fishbein, Bleakley & Hennessy, 2010). However, Busse et al. (2010) argue that even though girls were more likely to talk about sex they were less likely to have the intention to have sex than boys were. The differences in the intentions behind the sex talk in female friends and male friends shows that sex talk has gendered consequences on sexual initiation for boys and girls (Busse et al., 2010). In exploring sex talk, same-sex best friends Lefkowitz et al. (2004) found that sexually active youth discussed more sexual topics than abstinent youth (Lefkowitz et al, 2004). In addition, the study found that frequently discussed topics are feelings, dating and reproduction. Lefkowitz and Espinosa-Hernandez (2007) state that HIV, rape and abstinence are less discussed in friendships. DiIorio et al. (1999) further argues that adolescents who had discussed many sexual topics with their friends were likely to have initiated sexual intercourse and often had "'liberal' sexual values" (p.181). According to Busse et al. (2010), adolescents were likely to start engaging in sexual intercourse if they thought their friends were having sex. The studies reviewed above demonstrate that sex talk is

deemed easier between friends however, in the section that follows I show that comfortable sex talk between peers does not necessarily result in healthy sexual practices.

2.11. Effectiveness of female friendship sex talk

Peer sex talk however is problematised because sexual behavioural influence from friends has been found to be linked to more sexual risk (DiIorio et al., 1999). Mother- daughter sex talk tends to focus on the negative consequences of sex instilling ‘conservative’ ideals in adolescents as they are most affected by the consequences of unprotected sex while friends instil attitudes that are more ‘liberal’ (DiIorio et al., 1999). In South Africa, friendship influence on sexual behaviour has been associated with peer pressure and a need to belong to a social circle. Therefore, girls in adolescence “feel misled by their peers” (Selikow et al., 2009, p.109) because they are not receiving accurate information about sex even though they experience more comfort talking about sex with their peers. In addition, peers were referred to as an untrustworthy sexual socialization context in the study.

2.12. Conclusion

In the chapter, I have explored the existing research on sexual socialization within the family context. Demonstrating how sexual socialization within the family has been exclusive to parent-child relationships and more particularly mother-daughter relationships. The review has also portrayed that there are mixed results about the success of parent-child sex talk due to the avoidance and discomfort experienced by parents who broached topics around sexuality with their children. I then turned to the minimal literature around sexual influence in sibling relationships showing that because of the equality inherent in sibling relationships there is potential for more honest sex talks. However, because there is a dearth in literature on sex talk in sibships and similarities have been found between sibling and peer relationships, I explored the literature on same sex friendships, focusing on female peers and the possible influences on gender identity.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework: the discursive and defended subject

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I conceptualise the theoretical concepts appropriate to this study, which were useful for analysing and making sense of the yielded data. This conceptualisation process begins with a clear description of social constructionism as the over-arching paradigm of this research and its impact on traditional views of the individual to the present notion of the ‘language user’, which assumes we can never stand outside the confines of language (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Georgaca, 2005). I then outline what a psychosocial framework is, locating it in relation to discursive psychology and psychoanalysis, which have different epistemological and ontological assumptions but form the bases of the psychosocial lens. Sexual socialisation and subjectivity are discussed from a discursive perspective and from a psychoanalytic perspective, in turn. As I provide a psychosocial conceptualisation, I evaluate the significance of combining the two approaches, which could be conceived as fundamentally at odds with each other (Billig, 1997). The process of sexual socialisation within sister-sister relationships will be discussed in relation to this paradigm.

3.2. The psychosocial framework

A psychosocial paradigm that draws on the works of discursive psychology coupled with psychoanalytic theory, particularly Klein’s Object Relations theory was adopted in this study. Hollway and Jefferson (2012) are amongst the authors to incorporate Discursive Psychology and Psychoanalysis to produce what they coined as the psycho-social framework. This in-depth lens can be used to analyse and interpret sex-talk, in particular conscious and unconscious ‘reasons’ for this talk. A psychosocial paradigm conceptualises the subject as both psychic and social (Hollway & Jefferson, 2005a). This is done using the theoretical principle of the defended subject established by Hollway and Jefferson (2012). The defended subject is conceptualised as a subject that is anxiety-driven; thus the choices in utterances that the subject makes are used to protect vulnerable aspects of the self (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

A psychosocial theoretical lens is interested in the individual’s subjective reality within the greater social context (Saville Young, 2009). The lens tries to deviate from the conventional

assumptions in ethnographies and interview settings where the participants are assumed to be telling it like it is (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Instead, the psychosocial framework attempts to interpret the underlying principles that govern behaviour in what has been said using psychoanalytic concepts such as the unconscious, free association, and defense mechanisms as well as discourse analysis. It acknowledges that people's accounts on life events are governed by the need to protect against anxiety. Therefore, we are defended subjects and interpretations on what is said in the interview require the researcher to go behind the text to find alternative meanings, which may require interrogating what is unsaid in our intellectualised accounts (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

The psychosocial theoretical framework, through its use of the discursive and the defended subject (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012) interweaves two frameworks that equally appreciate the importance of the social context and the inter- and intra-psychic processes of the mind. According to Frosh and Saville Young (2008), combining psychoanalysis and discursive psychology offers a 'binocular' lens to understanding the subject that explains the inner and outer processes of an interaction like a Moebius strip whereby the "underside and topside, inside and outside flow together as one, and the choice of how to see them is purely tactical, just like the decision as to whether to look at the subject from a "social" or a "psychological" perspective" (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008, p.349). As a result, psychosocial research "offers an emotionally colourful account" (Saville Young, 2009, p.2) as it draws rich descriptions through its use of psychoanalytic strategies to understand the psychological processes occurring while investing in particular discursive positions (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008). Therefore, psychosocial research goes further than positioning people in a certain discourse or analysing the speaker's subject position, which is the case in a discursive approach. It arguably humanises the individual by asserting that when the subject constructs him/herself in a particular way there is something else occurring at the individual level. The psychosocial approach has therefore renewed the relevance of psychoanalysis within social research (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008).

In the next section, I offer a description of the psychosocial framework's underpinnings, starting with Social Constructionism and Discursive Psychology. Using social constructionism as the umbrella term, I demonstrate the basic tenets for mediating experience through daily talk in interactions in Discursive Psychology. In addition, I offer a critique for a discursive-only take on experience and advocate for the inclusion of psychoanalysis therefore forming the psychosocial theoretical framework.

3.3. Social Constructionism and Discursive Psychology

Social constructionism is the idea that our reality is socially situated; therefore, what we know as true depends on what we are exposed to in the environment (Parker, 1998). These meanings are ever changing and we use language to articulate them; thus, we can never separate the individual from the cultural context (Edley, 2001). Constructionism claims that “knowledge in some area is the product of our social practices and institutions, or of the interactions and negotiations between relevant social groups” (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 376). Social constructionism therefore emphasises the social environment as the key to understanding experience and this experience is construed by the subject through language (Edley, 2001). What and how we come to know then, according to social constructionism, is entirely dependent upon our cultural, social and discursive practices; while there is some stability in there, they are also subject to change as we interact with others (Parker, 1998). In this view, language is constructive: it produces and reproduces our reality through a system of meanings in everyday talk and these become our subjective reality (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). However, these constructions of reality achieved through language do not directly reflect an objective reality. Therefore, social constructionism avoids any claims about the ‘truth’ (Parker, 1998). So, for example, constructions drawn on by women about their talk with their sisters around issues of sex and reproduction are not the ultimate ‘truth’ about these interactions but are actively produced in talk.

3.3.1. Reality vs the subject

Social constructionism, thus, proves to be anti-essentialist because it avoids claims about truths that make subjects seem stable (Parker, 1998). Instead, the subject is understood as multiple and dynamic within this frame, taking up various subject positions at various times (Davies & Harre, 1990). It is this principle of social constructionism that facilitates or opens the window for reconstructing our subjective realities in ways that suit us better, meaning, there is a liberating aspect to constructionism (Hacking, 1999).

From this perspective, sexual socialisation itself, learning about sex, comes into being through talk; we come to understand it through a discursive system (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). According to Wiggins and Potter (2008), discursive psychology is concerned with deconstructing, challenging and questioning dominant constructions about ‘truths’ which create the existing sexual norms that reinforce patriarchal dominance. As will be seen, discursive psychology has

social constructionist underpinnings in its production of knowledge and the chief locus of understanding in social constructionism is the talk produced in social relationships (Hacking, 1999).

3.4. Discursive Psychology

Discursive psychology “focuses on the way both ‘reality’ and the ‘mind’ are constructed” (Potter & Edwards, 2001, p.103) by individuals in their daily talk. This discursive lens, signified ‘the move towards language’ adopting the central tenets of social constructionism in analysing human subjectivity using discourses produced in an interaction (Potter, 2012). According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), “discourses are broad patterns of talk that are taken up in particular speeches and conversations, not the speeches or conversations themselves” (p.328). They are a system of statements, which construct objects (Macleod, 2002). In addition, discursive psychology argues for the study of outward experiences which can be observed within talk rather than unobservable inner mental states previously studied by traditional theorists e.g. cognitivists prioritising thoughts and psychoanalysts the unconscious (Billig, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Drawing on discursive psychology in construing the subject, with social constructionism as the umbrella paradigm, I argue that sex and sexual reproduction are discursively produced within sisterhood through discourses produced by the speaker (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Therefore, the social context in which the women participating in this research are embedded, facilitates their constructions of their sex talk with their sisters, which are continually reproduced and changed as the social context changes. This, therefore, invites us as researchers to think thoroughly about the discourses participants draw on when talking about sex and the effects of the meanings participants give to them.

Three key characteristics of discourses are required to exploring how talk creates our reality namely that discourses are: action-oriented; situated; both constructed and constructive (Edley, 2001). Firstly, discourses are produced in a certain way to achieve specific actions. The cultural resources a subject draws on are used to accomplish a myriad of social actions using different patterns of talk (Edley, 2001; Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). Secondly, discourses on sexual socialisation, for example, are influenced by the cultural and social context (Martin & Luke, 2010). Therefore, “discourse does not simply reflect or express ready-made cognitive schemas”

(Frith & Kitinger, 2001, p.216), rather it is context-specific and relationally specific. Lastly, through talk meanings are constructed and within interactions individuals concurrently ‘work up’ significances on a particular discourse drawing from an already existing lexicon of shared knowledge (Edley, 2001). Hence, according to Hollway and Jefferson (2012) the same word can conjure up different meanings and experiences for different people. For example, sexual socialisation might connote the act of sex to young men, sensuality and how to be sexually desirable for young women while connoting reproduction for the older generation. It is these three characteristics of discourse that allow for the positioning of subjects in talk; it is this notion of positioning that makes multiple subjectivities possible. In the sections that follow, I discuss subject positioning and power within Discursive Psychology to demonstrate the implications of talk.

3.4.1. Subject positioning

Subject positioning “is the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines” (Davies & Harre, 1990, p.51). The subject takes up a location in relation to another within these coproduced utterances and consequently makes other positions available (Edley, 2001). In the process, identities are negotiated; therefore, talk is not a passive process between subjects but active, with these identities constantly shifting through accepting and resisting certain discourses and positions (Arribas-Allyon & Walkerdine, 2009).

There are multiple positions that a single subject can embody (e.g. mother, sister, daughter, wife and worker) and within these positions subjects can construct experiences in a variety of ways all based on what the subject wants to achieve using the discourse (Arribas-Allyon & Walkerdine, 2009). This in turn creates multiple realities, which are ever-changing depending on the context in which they are produced (Frosh & Saville Young, 2009). For instance, discourses about sex talk with peers are likely to facilitate very different subject positions compared to discourses about sex talk with parents (Kim, 2009).

3.4.2. Power in Discourse

According to Edley (2001), discourses build stabilised versions of constructs that seem neutral. These discourses then become understood as normative forms of behaviour through repetitive use. As a result, certain discourses become powerful and become formulated as ‘truths’ (Edley, 2001). Subjects must therefore make choices within these discourses and according to Davies

and Gannon (2005) we are inclined to choose dominant discourses. Dominant discourses are often deemed to be easier ways of talking about sex, for example. Some sexuality discourses are powerful and can *do* things. For example, in many situations heterosexuality is deemed as the ‘normal’ and ‘right’ sexual orientation to ascribe to, thus affording privilege to those in heterosexual relationships. However, subjugated discourses conversely resist these ‘normalising discourses’ (Macleod, 2002; Macleod & Durrheim, 2002), thus opening up other ways of talking about sex or ‘doing sex’.

According to Macleod (2002) even though discourses construct multiple identities, they also have the ability to be restrictive as they constrain certain experiences. Therefore, the constructions of sexual socialisation available in women’s talk are understood to be the effects of societal discourses that construct the ‘reality’ that tends to favour patriarchy and in turn oppresses women (Powell, 2010). Dominant discourses have been reiterated and become automatic through the years. However, the power of discourse enables people to discursively construct their own reality as well as liberate themselves from the constraints of certain discourses (Hacking, 1999). Liberating oneself from discourses is possible through not maintaining destructive discourses with unjust effects in talk; this can potentially change the patterns of talk, which mitigate the current status quo. Moreover, debunking powerful discourses used within sisterly sex talk creates the possibility of addressing social inequality within female spaces exerted by society while aiming for full sexual and reproductive citizenship for all. These are some of the things a discursive paradigm can achieve. Discursive psychology is thus valuable for its ability to reveal the ‘language games’ played using talk. In the process it advocates for exclusionary dominant discourses to be challenged and revised as all discourses are not permanent or God-given (Edley, 2001). However, discursive psychology’s sole focus on talk has resulted in criticism with authors arguing that the discursive subject lacks agency as it is determined by talk.

3.5. Critiques of Discursive Psychology

Hollway and Jefferson (2000) ask whether the subject uses and discards discourses like putting on different hats Branney (2008) asks what holds discourses in place. Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman (2003) question what ‘produces the specific “choice” of location a particular individual makes amongst the available identity positions? (p. 40). These are some of the questions critics of a purely discursive framework are posing. Wetherell (2005), one of the pioneers of discursive psychology argues that, from a discursive paradigm, the individual’s

inner world is insignificant as it is unobservable. She therefore asserts that we can never know the individual psychological aspects of the subject. This gives the impression that we are only products of our social contexts and the utterances that position us in talk are the only way we come to know. However, this “privileging of text and discourse as key theoretical touchstones” (Greco & Stenner, 2013, p.9) of analysis, and lack of interest in affect or anything beyond language creates an empty or blank subjectivity (Georgaca, 2005; Hollway, 2011; Potter, 2012; Frosh & Saville Young, 2009). The reason is that the context specific nature of discourse neglects feelings and emotions, which are not limited to talk, that can offer insight into the reasons behind people’s choices or investment in certain discourses over others. Therefore, critics have argued that lack of interest in affect makes it seem as though the subject is rational and continuously acts in ways only determined by the social context thus not offering the individual agency.

3.6. Affective turn

The development of the affective turn extended discursive epistemology “beyond the socio-cultural domain to include pre-conscious and pre-discursive forms of existence” (Greco & Stenner, 2013, p.9). This illuminated the importance of other bodily responses and mental processes present within talk and inherent in affect and emotion, which influence the subject positions and identities we take up in social settings. From this perspective we are thus not passively affected by our cultural context; instead we also exert influence in which emotions are evoked. According to Hollway and Jefferson (2005b), we consciously and unconsciously invest in certain discourses over others. The reasons for the choices we make in talk may be defensive pointing to rigidly held identifications that are quite specific to the particular family context in which one was brought up. These investments are connected to identity and we use defence mechanisms to protect against anxiety. As a result, we are defended subjects: “‘defended’ in the sense that, following psychoanalytic principles, it is assumed that research subjects are not necessarily transparent to themselves” (Hollway, 2011, p.12). Instead, meanings in what is constructed as sisterly sex talk are hidden behind well-crafted and rationalised accounts, at face value, in order to avoid the threats this anxiety poses on the self (Hollway, 2011). However, we are sometimes unaware of these processes as they occur at an unconscious level and influence our behaviour, thoughts and interactions with others. These defences impact on people’s positioning and investment in certain discourses. Hence, psychosocial research is of the opinion that the psychic and the social can never be separated because they simultaneously construct subjectivity (Saville Young, 2009). It deems both the

social and inner processes that drive an individual's choice in discourse to be equally important without taking a reductionist approach. Psychoanalysis becomes an important tool worth considering when analysing the emergent discourses in constructions of sex talk. This is because psychoanalytic theory is one of the approaches that delve into the complexities of the subject; hence, this theory is now increasingly deemed helpful in the research setting and not exclusively the clinical setting (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). The discussion will now turn to psychoanalytic theory, specifically how it can be adapted to the social research process.

3.7. The turn to Psychoanalytic concepts

In the present section, I demonstrate that the subject is driven towards certain discourses over others both internally and socially. Therefore, how the participants construct their sisters in relation to sex is influenced by their social and intra-psychic context. The intrapsychic context is what mediates talk in psychoanalysis through the unconscious that constantly resists being known however ironically pushes for expression not in its pure form but through slips of the tongue and dreams, for example (Frosh, 2012). Turning to psychoanalysis to supplement discursive practices is beneficial because it provides the opportunity to explore the inner mental processes occurring during talk as well as the hidden reasons and emotional investments in an utterance. This is because emotions are an integral part of communication, not purely language as how we signify emotion in talk lends insight to what is said and the effects of it (Georgaca, 2005). Yet, discursive psychology captures only that which has been said and does not prioritise what is outside of talk or the unsaid. Psychoanalysis then becomes an important tool that can be used to understand what goes unsaid and the intra-psychic motivations that mediate talk (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). In the section that follows, I offer available critiques to using psychoanalysis alongside a discursive framework as well as a psychoanalytic conceptualisation of sexual socialisation.

3.8. Critique of Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis was discredited within the last few decades due to its lack of empirical evidence as the unconscious central to the theory can never be disproved (Frosh, 2012). For example, when the subject denies certain aspects of interpretation they are regarded as being defensive and therefore using defence mechanisms; hence, many authors refrain from using it on these grounds. Interpretations generated can be largely subjective; thus, the discipline has been accused of lacking standardisation. Psychoanalysis has also been referred to as deterministic, implying that life-long actions are interpreted using the same events that occurred in childhood

(Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Therefore, psychoanalysis as a lens needs to be triangulated with other approaches to be helpful in theorising the subject (Saville Young, 2009).

A number of psychological studies have labelled traditional theories such as psychoanalysis as individualistic, due to the emphases on mental states (Frosh, 2012). Hence, psychosocial research does not draw on traditional Freudian theory, with its emphasis on drives and desires, which are at an intrapsychic level. Instead, this study mostly draws on Object relations or Kleinian theory, which is much more interested in unconscious patterns of relating to others than in innate drives. The traditional Freudian approach could be seen to be quite at odds with a social constructionist framework whereas an object relations perspective could be argued to share more with a social constructionist frame.

3.9. Psychoanalysis and sexuality

Freud spent much time arguing for the significance of interpersonal familial interactions the child encounters within its infancy which are deemed relevant to sexual socialisation (Freud, 1908). Psychoanalysis proposes some continuity in our constructions of our subjective reality stemming from how we completed our developmental stages in childhood (Frosh, 2012). Given this, from a psychoanalytic view, sexual socialisation is construed through the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex where psychic processes that impact a child's sexual and emotional functioning in the social world must be resolved (Spurling, 2009). According to classical psychoanalytic theory, the Oedipus complex occurs at the age of 3 to 6 years and in a girl it involves a shift in the initial attachment with the mother into rivalry. The child further experiences incestuous sexual desires for the opposite-sex parent, the father, and competes with her mother for her father's attention but eventually realises that this is incest and thus socially unacceptable (Frosh, 2012). She is then obliged to push this desire out of consciousness and identify with her mother in the hopes of finding someone like her father (Spurling, 2009). Identification is the expected outcome of the Oedipus complex and enables a child to acquire his or her sexuality in order to form good relationships in adulthood. The classical Oedipus complex has been experienced as heterosexist in its emphasis on 'normal' child development as dependent on opposite parent attraction and thus constructing same sex attraction as a fixation (Frosh, 2012). The implications of the traditional Oedipus complex is that there are negative and positive forms of development. However, contemporary psychoanalytic theorists have argued that the child can be attracted to either parent (e.g. mother or father) or identify with either and subsequently function well sexually in a given culture (Spurling, 2009). Frosh

(2012), also adds that “the complete arrangement of the Oedipus complex as found in any individual involves a rich tapestry of possibilities for homosexual as well heterosexual love” (p.81). This theoretical development in understanding the Oedipus complex therefore does not pathologise or normalise certain sexualities over others and is therefore inclusive of all sexualities.

Klein extends Freud’s ideas and lessens the emphasis on sexual desire in the Oedipus complex and conversely emphasises early relationships particularly mother-child relationships as important for sexuality (Spurling, 2009). She argues that we are driven to form relationships with others and an inability to form these in early life leads to anxiety and problems with forming sexual relationships in adult life (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Sexual drives were a big component of Freud’s theories. However, this study advocates for a move towards a more relational view of the Oedipus complex such as those of contemporary psychoanalytic literature which assert that successful resolution of the Oedipus complex is dependent on the quality of relationships and range of identifications instead of the choice of object thus we have multiple identifications (Spurling, 2009; Vivona, 2010). This view is more in line with a social constructionist view of subjectivity. A much overlooked aspect in Freudian psychoanalysis is that it observes interactions between subjects, drawing on emotions and the unconscious which are intersubjective in that they affect and are affected by others (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). As a result, while at first glance psychoanalytic theory appears to be in conflict with the discursive view described above, the Oedipus complex can be understood as portraying a child’s sexuality as socially constructed within the family context albeit with siblings side-lined in this process. This challenges the notion of psychoanalysis as purely intrapsychic and individualistic and rather demonstrates how from a psychoanalytic perspective, sexual subjectivity is co-constructed in the psychic and social realm by a range of important figures in childhood. Kleinian theory is much more interested in unconscious patterns of relating to others than in innate drives (Branney, 2008). Therefore, employing Object Relations theory psychoanalysis proves not to be individualistic. The section below discusses some of the theoretical concepts within relational psychoanalysis that inform a Kleinian psychoanalytic understanding of experience in a psychosocial framework

3.10. Relational Psychoanalysis

Object relations theory’s focus on the individual’s development in relation to the others in the social world and Melanie Klein’s theory of “how the self is forged out of unconscious defences against anxiety” (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.19) will be the dominant psychoanalytic theory

employed for analysing the data for this study. According to Klein, anxiety is inherent in the human condition and it precipitates the use of defences (Winnicott, 1960). At the beginning of life infants, learn how to manage anxiety using polarised emotions of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ and these are kept separate for defensive purposes (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). This is a Kleinian concept called splitting and forms part of the paranoid schizoid position where subjects believe in the good in an object and split off the bad or locate it elsewhere. Thus, the feared aspects of the self are projected onto an object or another individual in a process called projection whereby the individual unconsciously projects or externalises the unwanted and internalises the wanted aspects in mental objects and this is called introjection (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). The depressive position on the other hand, refers to when the infant realises that good and bad aspects can both reside in the same subject (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Klein argues that we use these defense mechanisms in order to protect against anxiety hence we are defended subjects. These defense mechanisms will be used to understand the women’s experiences and behaviour within the narratives as well as intersubjective processes between the researcher and participants.

3.11. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have conceptualised sexual socialisation employing a psychosocial theoretical framework and in the process described the theoretical underpinnings of this framework. This required demonstrating how the psychosocial theoretical framework combines Discursive Psychology and Psychoanalysis to provide a holistic view of the psychological and the social processes in sisterly sex talk. Therefore, producing a binocularly of vision that explains ‘how’ and ‘why’ certain discourses are chosen over others in talk thus creating a complex subjectivity (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008). In the chapter, I further explicated how Discursive Psychology and Psychoanalysis complement each other through reviewing the critiques for both frameworks. Moreover, I demonstrate how contemporary psychoanalytic theory and Melanie Klein’s Object Relations Theory can be used to understand behaviour and further offered a description of the theoretical concepts that will inform the analysis of this study. The methods employed in the present study will be discussed in the chapter, which follows.

Chapter 4

How and Why using Psychosocial methods

4.1. Introduction

Qualitative research methodology has in recent decades gained ground as a viable method for producing data within psychological research (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). This is because qualitative methods produce rich, in-depth data about a phenomenon instead of the traditional quantitative research methods, which yield numerical data that often lacks contextual information (Bryman, 2012). In addition, qualitative methods allow the researcher to connect lived experiences to social action (Parker, 2005). As such, in carrying out this research I chose qualitative research methodology to “give voice to participants and to allow their own perspective and understanding of their experiences to be foregrounded” (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008, p.9). I aligned this study with these qualitative outcomes because a consistent limitation noted in the review of literature chapter is that there is little existing research on sibling sex-talk, particularly amongst isiXhosa-speaking sisters. Therefore, a psychosocial approach was used to research isiXhosa-speaking women’s perspectives and experiences of sister-sister sexual socialisation. Moreover, I sought to investigate why these women invest in particular discourses over others in their talk. To do this, a qualitative paradigm, informed by a psychosocial framework which combines ground up data (what is there) with a top-down (theory driven, interpretative) approach to enrich understanding (Frosh & Saville Young, 2009), was selected as the best method to explore these ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions of women’s experiences of sex talk between sisters.

In this chapter, I outline the methodological steps taken in producing psychosocial data as well as the reasons behind these steps as laid out by Hollway and Jefferson (2012). I begin this chapter by stating my research aims and goals; thereafter I describe the procedures for data collection using an exploratory-interpretative research design. The motivations behind decisions taken in collecting data using a psychosocial methodology are then outlined; this includes the sample used and how it was obtained; location for interviewing as well as a thorough explanation of the free association narrative method used for interviewing. Following data collection, I outline the analysis process within psychosocial methods, which is premised on the principle of working with the whole data or a gestalt to inform interpretation. Here, I also demonstrate how intersubjective dynamics during the interview affects the elicited data,

using some psychoanalytic concepts and the notion of reflexivity. Towards the end, I offer detailed explanations of how quality was maintained throughout the research study. Moreover, I discuss ethical considerations that had to be considered in exploring the experience of sexual socialisation among isiXhosa-speaking women and lastly I deal with the critiques of producing and analysing data using Hollway and Jefferson's (2012) psychosocial methods.

4.2. Research aims and goals

The aim of the study was to qualitatively explore how women talk about sex and reproduction in the context of isiXhosa-speaking women's sister-sister relationships, the subject positions within the talk and how the talk restricts or shores up ways of 'doing sex' in society. Furthermore, the research was interested in the affective processes, such as anxieties and desires, that may be understood to be (consciously and unconsciously) motivating these women to invest in particular discourses over others when constructing the role of sex and reproduction talk in their sister-sister relationships. This research will make significant contributions to our understanding of women's experiences, in particular how these women come to relate with other women about sex as well as the power relations produced that reinforce or undermine gender roles and stereotypes. It seeks to lend critical insight into the extent isiXhosa women can reclaim power in discourses concerning sexuality as how we talk about sex in the social realm largely affects how we construct our sexual subjectivity thus affecting sexual relationships and reproduction later in life (Ampofo, 2001).

4.3. Research Questions

The main questions guiding this research were:

- a. How do women construct their experiences of talking about sex with their sisters?
- b. What shared discourses do they draw on and what subject positionings do these make available?
- c. Why do these women emotionally invest in certain discourses over others? What are the intra- and inter-psycho processes that intersect with socially shared meanings to produce particular sexual subjectivities?

4.4. Methods

4.4.1. Research design

A research design is a "plan or protocol for a particular piece of research" (Tredoux & Smith, 2010, p.161). This plan must be suitable for answering the research questions set out by a study thus the careful consideration of an appropriate research design will illuminate understanding

into a topic as the project proceeds within qualitative research (Richard & Morse, 2012). As a result, for this study an exploratory-interpretative research design was chosen for exploring how isiXhosa-speaking women talk about sex with their sisters and the motivations behind this talk. Employing a qualitative exploratory research design can help make preliminary investigations into an area where there is a dearth in knowledge. This is because an exploratory research design is open and flexible and thus can potentially generate new insights (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Therefore, an exploratory approach such as the psychosocial approach that makes sense of the yielded data using discursive resources, supplemented with psychoanalytic concepts to enrich understanding of people's constructions of everyday talk and their reasons for these constructions thus proves to be useful in generating data. The psychosocial method is however also interpretative as "to do justice to the complexity of our subjects an interpretative approach is unavoidable" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.3). Therefore, in developing insights about women's constructions of sex talk between sisters this exploratory method also interprets the implications of certain constructions over others. In the section that follows, I describe the sampling process I used to explore women's sex and reproduction talk.

4.5. Sampling

A combined purposive and convenience sampling technique was utilised in the study. Purposive sampling refers to when the sampled participants are chosen because they satisfy a certain criterion while convenience sampling refers to approaching readily accessible individuals as participants for your study (Bryman, 2012). At the end of the recruitment process, the sample for the research consisted of five isiXhosa-speaking women working as cleaners and caterers at an educational institution. This sample size was established through data saturation. Saturation refers to "adding new cases to the point of diminishing returns, when no new information emerges" (Elliot & Timuluk, 2005, p.151). Five participants were sufficient because qualitative research explores phenomena in-depth to capture its important aspects and variations rather than generalise findings to the population (Elliot & Timuluk, 2005).

The inclusion criteria for participating in the study required that sampled women have at least one sister, and that they should be willing to narrate stories and memories of sex-talk they could recall having with them. According to Wallace et al. (2014), there are as many as 81 different family combinations in 'Black' communities and these familial connections often blur the lines between a sister and a cousin. Given the importance of the extended family in many African

families this research used the term 'sister' to refer to biological sisters and included first cousins (female) because some of the participants elicited stories about their cousins who they felt were like their sisters. Therefore, it was the constructed relationship that was considered to be more important rather than the blood relationship.

Secondly, the sampled women had to be in their middle adulthood years to be included in the study. Middle adulthood seemed as an appropriate age range as it facilitated rich data because participants were invited to draw on present and past sexual experiences and according to Fletcher, Ward, Thomas, Foust, Levin and Trinh (2014), participation in sexual relationships is normative during adulthood. However, participation in sexual activity was not a necessary criterion, as one does not need participate in sexual activity in order to be exposed to sexual socialisation. Finally, the women chosen for the study had to be working class² as an effort to bring the voices of 'Black' women with less education opportunities into academic debate (Segalo, 2013). However, before the aforementioned participants could be recruited and rich data could be obtained, permission from a series of gatekeepers had to be sought.

4.5.1. Recruitment strategies

In recruiting participants for this study, I sent a letter to the Human Resources director at an educational institution, requesting permission to approach the Heads of Staff at the institution to allow me to recruit a number of their employees to participate in this research study (See Appendix 2). After approval to approach the Heads of Staff for the cleaning and catering staff from the Human Resources director was granted, I sent emails to both heads of staff to set up appointments to meet and discuss my request to conduct a study with their staff. At the meeting, I requested the following: firstly, permission to attend one of their scheduled meetings to recruit their members of staff (I informed each gatekeeper that approval was already obtained from the Human Resources director). Secondly, I informed each gatekeeper that chosen participants were requested to attend two interview sessions with me (the researcher) at a time convenient for them preferably during their lunch hour. In both these interviews, these isiXhosa-speaking

² The term working class in this study refers to those often economically marginalized on the basis of income, education and occupation thus they hold lower paying jobs due to the hierarchical impacts of the above mentioned indices (Lui, Soleck, Hopps, Dunston & Pickett, 2004). However, within the South African context where there is high unemployment the working class, are often 'privileged' within their particular social contexts by virtue of being employed. Measures often do not take into account the number of dependents on individuals' salaries, which in the context of high unemployment is often high.

women would be asked about how they talk to their sisters about sex, sexuality and sexual reproduction. I chose the lunch hour break for conducting these interviews because it would result in the least disruption of the sampled women's work schedules. Finally, I requested from the heads of staff for an additional 30 minutes to be added to the participants' hour lunchtime break. The reason for this was that free associated unstructured interviews are often impractical to time. Everything said by the interviewee is regarded as important because I was attempting to tap into the participants' history and the tangents participants go on are deemed significant in relation to the topic. Therefore, psychosocial methods mandate that interviewees should not be distracted when talking; hence, the hour allocated for lunch would be insufficient.

Once gatekeepers granted permission, I attended the next available meeting for the educational institution's staff. At the end of it, the chairperson introduced me to the staff and encouraged the female isiXhosa-speaking employees to remain seated while the rest of the staff returned to their respective workstations. I thanked the chairperson for the opportunity, warmly greeted the potential respondents to my study and then handed out recruitment adverts (refer Appendix 3) that were written in isiXhosa to the women. These adverts, briefly explained what my study was interested in and after handing out the recruitment advertisements to everyone present. I then verbally explained in isiXhosa what my study's objectives were and what participation would entail for interested candidates. I asked willing candidates to fill out the recruitment advert by entering their names and contact details at the bottom of the page. I assured them that their anonymity and confidentiality would be retained throughout participation and that they would have the right to drop out of the study at any point during the research. After briefing the isiXhosa-speaking women about my study, I addressed any questions or concerns that the possible candidates voiced about taking part in the study. I made sure that I maintained a friendly and inviting demeanour throughout this recruitment process. At the end of this recruitment session, I collected the recruitment adverts. Ultimately, seven women returned the recruitment adverts with their contact details filled in. The rest informed me that they needed time to think about whether they wanted to participate in my study or not. I then contacted the women who showed interest in the study by volunteering their contact details in order to setup a meeting time with them. The characteristics of the women who agreed to be interviewed are discussed below.

4.5.2. Participant characteristics

All the sampled participants had at least one sisters or close cousin; were employed as cleaners at an educational institution and lived in relatively close proximity with their sisters. Two of

the five participants had one sister, the other two had two sisters and one participant had two close cousins. Additionally, two participants were married and the rest were single. The participants' characteristics have been summarised in table 1A below:

Table 1A Summary of sample

Participant *pseudonyms used	Age	Marital status	Number of sisters	Number of children	Contact
Sive	38	Widow	1	2	frequent
Lungi	35	Single	2	1	frequent
Buhle	35	Single	2	1	frequent
Khanya	36	Single	2	1	infrequent
Nwabisa	35	Married	1	1	frequent

In the section that follows, I describe the procedure for generating data that were used in interviews with the women described in the table above. However, this description begins with pilot interviews, which were conducted to see whether the interview schedule could produce rich data on women's experiences of sex and reproduction talk within the sister-sister relationship. Followed by a description of the actual interviews in line with the Free Associated Narrative Interview method established by Hollway and Jefferson (2012).

4.6. Data collection

4.6.1. Interview schedule & Pilot interview

An interview schedule with broad open-ended questions was established in order to produce results, which were in line with a psychosocial framework. However, in order to deduce whether the interview would be suitable for demonstrating women's constructions of their experiences of talking about sex with their sisters a pilot interview was conducted using two university students. The first pilot interview was conducted using the English interview

schedule (see appendix 4A) thus the student did not have to be isiXhosa speaking while the second interview was conducted using the isiXhosa interview schedule (see appendix 4B). The first interview was conducted in English to examine whether the established interview schedule was suitable for the study's objectives and research questions. Whereas the second pilot interview was conducted to establish familiarity around the topics subsequent to the translation into isiXhosa and establish flow in questioning. After technicalities and problems such as, being accustomed to using the respondents' own phrasing when asking questions without paraphrasing. Secondly, establishing the order in which to approach negotiating consent in isiXhosa. Thirdly, getting used to some of the words translated into isiXhosa, which one would usually borrow from the English language in everyday conversations. Lastly, I learnt not to add my own life experiences or finish off the participants' responses, which often happens in normal conversation. When all these technicalities were addressed, the suitability of the interview guide was deduced and the actual interviews for the study could be conducted. As mentioned in section 4.6.1, participants who met the criteria for this study were contacted via telephone to confirm their availability and thereafter appointments were set for the first interview as well as the follow-up interview. Two interview sessions were thus scheduled with each participant.

After having adjusted the interview schedule appropriately and set up dates with the participants according to their availability, I proceeded with the actual interviews. I conducted the research interviews at a quiet office location at the educational institution where distractions were improbable. Refreshments were served at the beginning of the interview with every participant because interviews were held during the interviewees' lunch hour breaks. This refreshments segment however seemed also useful in creating a comfortable environment as I established that respondents were able to treat the interview as a conversation. Therefore, the women in the study were able to draw on their experiences of talking about sex with their siblings with relative ease. In addition, conducting the interviews in isiXhosa also seemed helpful because in a multilingual country such as South Africa and with dealing with a sensitive topic such as sexuality it is important to limit barriers that affect rapport and disclosure.

At the onset of the first interview, I re-introduced myself and the objectives of my research study to the participant and then began negotiating participation consent in isiXhosa (please see appendices 5A and 5B for English and isiXhosa consent forms) as well as recording consent (see appendix 6) from the respondent. In the process, I emphasised the participants' right to

discontinue participation at will. This negotiation of consent process is discussed in detail in the Ethical Considerations section (4.8). The audio recorder was only switched on when the interviewee was satisfied with the conditions for participation and signatures for consent to partake in the study and be recorded had been obtained.

4.6.2. Interviewing

I began the data collection process by asking the interviewee some direct questions to garner biographical data (biodata) e.g. age and family life. According to Hollway and Jefferson (2012), this ‘factual’ information about the participant lends insight to early behaviour that may influence their present behaviour. Biodata also helps in contextualising the interviewee’s desires, fears and anxieties that produce certain emotional concerns and associations within participants during the interviews (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). It is through these emotional concerns that we can recognise each participant’s investment in particular constructions of sex talk. Once the biographical data had been collected, I moved onto unstructured interviewing.

In this research, the first interview with participants was largely unstructured whilst the second/follow-up interview was semi-structured depending on the additional information I required subsequent to listening and re-listening to the first interview’s audio-recorded interviews. Unstructured interviews have little or no structure imposed on the interview. Therefore, participants are requested to speak freely with no interruptions and a few prompts. In the semi-structured interview, on the other hand the interviews were structured in that a predetermined interview schedule or set of questions suited to the study or research study was used to guide the process. However, the questions were also open as they allow for elaboration and further prompts (Lyons, 2015). According to Bryman (2012), unstructured interviewing is typical of exploratory-interpretative qualitative methods, which are largely open-ended. Open-ended inquiry is “flexible and carefully adapted to the problem at hand and to the individual informant’s particular experiences and abilities to communicate those experiences, making each interview unique” (Elliot & Timuluk, 2005, p.150). The use of unstructured and structured interviews signifying the first and second interview, which have different goals within this study will be discussed in greater detail in section 4.6.4 and 4.6.5. However, briefly, the main difference between the first and the follow up interview was how the interview schedule was used in the interviews. The second phase of the interviewing process required the use of the interview schedule (Please see Appendix 4A) however using it sparingly as set out by Hollway and Jefferson (2012). The questioning became more aligned with the research questions set out

when compared to the biographical data. Therefore, more questions related to the study were now asked.

However, interviewing using psychosocial methods deviates from the conventional methodological assumptions in many qualitative approaches in psychology because it questions the very premise that subjects can 'tell it like it is' through surveys, interviews and focus groups. It argues that the truth is often "compromised by the story-teller's motivations and memory" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.32). In addition, this psychosocial method assumes that the participant and the researcher may not hear the questions through the same meaning-frame. This is because its methods were adapted and developed from the interpretative biographical technique established by German sociologists, to produce the free association narrative interview method (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

The biographical interpretative and free associated narrative techniques of interviewing assert that subjects invest in certain positions in discourses over others in order to protect vulnerable aspects of the self (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Additionally, subjects are often not aware of the reasons behind their investments because they are unconsciously motivated to hide the meanings behind these investments and behaviours. Therefore, a combination of semi-structured and unstructured interview methods was used in this study to go 'beyond' the sex talk elicited by the interviewees and further seek the complex emotions and motivations for participants' investments in certain ways of constructing their sex talk with their sisters. However, this process also required the defences and investments of the interviewer to be brought forward as a means to understand the elicited data in the interview because the interviewer is also deemed a defended subject (Georgaca, 2005; Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). According to Hollway and Jefferson (2012), intrapsychic processes occurring during an interview can be interpreted by drawing on the conscious and unconscious conflictual forces in the intersubjective exchange that result in the production of the selected discourses. Hence, it is important to be aware of the idea of "producing data with defended subjects" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.26) in psychosocial research and the free associated narrative interview technique by (Hollway and Jefferson (2012) was key to this process.

4.6.3. *Free associated narrative interview (Fani)*

Interviews used in this study were psychoanalytic in nature, as participants were encouraged to free associate, particularly in the first interview, which was largely unstructured. Free association involves encouraging participants to narrate stories about the sex talk they have with their sisters with minimal interruptions from the interviewer, thus leaving the participants' thought processes and talk relatively uncensored. This interviewing method required the interviewer to *avoid 'why' questions* because, according to Hollway and Jefferson (2012), 'why' questions sometimes generate an intellectualisation from participants. Intellectualisation and other defences dominate our reasons for our responses, meaning, what participants say at face value about a topic. From this perspective, a participant may invest in a particular discourse in order to protect herself from anxiety caused by perceived judgment for not accessing contraceptive or family planning. According to Hollway and Jefferson (2012), regarding the individual as defended brings forth the biographical differences within subjects. Therefore, different subjects have different relationships with their sisters, influenced differently by both conscious and unconscious anxiety provoking life events. Hence, defences against anxiety affect the discourses an individual will draw on, on a subject matter, alongside the contextual availability of these discourses (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

The free associated narrative interview technique also requires the interviewer to *ask open-ended questions*. Open-ended questions allowed participants to use their own meaning frame to interpret what sex talk with their sisters is and how it relates to their own lives instead of fixed notions pre-established by the interviewer (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Another requirement of the free association narrative interviewing method is for the interviewer to *elicit stories*, this results in the respondents drawing on real life events in answering questions. Hollway and Jefferson (2012) state that the elicited stories are used by the interviewees to justify specific actions and answer direct questions. Furthermore, these stories are used to engage with reality even though participants might compromise them in order to defend against anxiety. Nonetheless, the story told, the details given, emphases and the manner in which it is all told all reveal significances about the interviewee beyond their intentions (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Hence, I kept questions open-ended throughout the interviews in order to allow for these often-compelling stories to surface.

Lastly, interviewing using the free association narrative interview technique required me to *follow the respondents' ordering and phrasing*. This required me to be an attentive listener in order to follow up on themes using the interviewee's order. I used the interviewee's order to

retain the participant's meaning frame (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). In addition, this manner of interviewing encourages the interviewee to say more in a way that does not introduce the interviewer's biases and judgements (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). I used these four principles of interviewing to draw out the subjects' anxiety-driven investments.

This free association narrative interview method as a data collection method avoids short answers from participants and structured questions but instead invites storytelling and spontaneity in responses wherever possible (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). This resulted in the individual's own unconscious motivations coming to the fore instead of the ideas or suggestions of the interviewer.

4.6.4. First Interview

During the first interview only one or two broad questions from the interview schedule (refer to appendix 4) were asked and subsequent questions were gathered from their elicited accounts. I informed the participant about the interview process that was to follow and encouraged them to speak as much as they would like in answering a question. I also assured them that it was also fine to refuse to answer questions they were not comfortable answering. A more open and flexible manner of interviewing was then applied to the data collection procedure (Elliot & Timuluk, 2005). I paid more attention to eliciting stories rather than controlling the process because this first interview was designed to build rapport with the interviewer and to let participants talk about their experiences with minimal interruptions, according to unconscious logic rather than rational intentions (Hollway, 2011). However, more importantly the interview helped with locating contradictions; inconsistencies; avoidances and changes in the emotional tone of the interviewee, which are understood as "evidence of a struggle with the unconscious, or a struggle of the conscious conflict between dissonant selves" (Spears, 2005, p.167) that could be explored in the second interview. Furthermore, the first interview was important because through asking broad unthreatening questions aimed at the interviewee's early life, it allowed the participants to link the interview questions to their life histories (Branney, 2008). Nonetheless, even though the interview is designed to tap into the interviewee's unconscious by having as little input as possible (through asking one or two questions from the interview schedule and allowing them to link the questions to their life histories). The interviewer was also viewed as a defended subject who by all means also impacts the type of information elicited (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). This is because the resulting narratives are always a product of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. Hence, I had to write in-

depth field notes with clear reflexive accounts of the observations and experiences of emotional effects the interview had on me (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008). Therefore, at the conclusion of the first interview, I thanked the interviewee for her time; confirmed her availability for the follow up interview and once the participant had left the interview venue, I switched the recorder off and then started writing in-depth field notes.

4.6.5. Second interview

In the second or follow-up interview, more structured questions, which may have not been addressed in the first interview, deemed significant, were asked. I also used this interview to follow-up on the participants' contradictions, inconsistencies and changes in emotional tone identified during the first interview (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). However, I still had to be careful not to suppress the respondents' stories (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Therefore, the interview was semi-structured. During the interviews I allowed the interviewees to elaborate on their own understanding of sex talk using their sister-sister relationships without consciously cutting their meaning frame and invited more stories using a "non-committal but interested 'yeah?'" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.42) regularly. At the end of this interview, I thanked the participant and then presented her with a gift voucher worth R150 to express my gratitude for her willingness to partake in my study. When the participant had left, I wrote more in-depth field notes about the processes that occurred during the interview. Both interviews with participants ranged between 45-90 minutes in length; moreover, they were conducted one week apart.

4.6.6. Reflexivity

According to a psychoanalytic perspective, the narratives produced during an interview are always unconsciously co-constructed by the interviewer and the interviewee (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Hence, in Hollway and Jefferson's (2012) psychosocial method interview transcripts are supplemented with in-depth field notes written after the interviews by the researcher. Field notes account for the psychoanalytic processes of transference and countertransference that may have occurred during the interview process after every interview (Frosh & Saville Young, 2010). This process of communication leads to the occurrence of other forms of intersubjective processes such as transference and countertransference (Clarke, 2002). Transference refers to the interviewee unconsciously redirecting the feelings about the subject they are describing onto the researcher and countertransference refers to the feelings evoked in the interviewer by the interviewee (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). This act of observing past

relational patterns as they emerge in the relationship and emotional responses evoked is called reflexivity (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008).

Reflexivity refers to where the researcher's feelings, actions and interpretations are analysed for their own unconscious content (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). The reason is that the interview in psychosocial research is an interaction between two people even though dominated by the interviewee. However, feelings are evoked in the interviewer that influence the direction the interview takes and these feelings say something about the intrapsychic and interpersonal processes of the participant (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008). Reflexivity in the psychoanalytic methods considers the researcher's position and how this affects the end-product of the analysis as the researcher continuously exerts influence as we can never be completely neutral or objective as we are naturally responsive beings (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008).

Therefore, taking into account all that has been said as well as the unsaid, I reflected on the feelings evoked by the content of the interview in myself. For example, in terms of first impressions, I had to reflect on the impact of my age, sex, class and sexuality and how this might have influenced the production of selected discourses. Hollway and Jefferson (2012) argue that these indices affect the participants' responses therefore the researcher must keep an honest gaze over what they bring into the interview setting. This is because data is not a true reflection of the interviewee's experiences with her sister but what is constructed according to their view of me as a 24-year old, isiXhosa-speaking woman doing a psychology master's degree at a historically white university. In these reflections I questioned whether the interviewee's elicited stories have possibly persuaded me towards a biased picture of the sister? Did I readily accept the discourses produced by the interviewee or was there something else being defended against in the self, leading to the produced discourses? For example, the interviewer's discomfort, is an important part of the elicited information as it may inhibit the exchange between the two parties and prevent the interviewee from elaborating more on certain experiences and in turn opting for more politically correct ways of speaking about sex.

The unconscious involvement of the researcher is thus a significant part of understanding the psychosocial subject as the unconscious dynamics playing out within the interview brought in by the personal history of the interviewer impact the narratives elicited (Saville Young, 2009). Therefore, psychosocially "knowledge is mediated through the subjectivity of the knower (analyst): that is knowing the other requires knowing the impact of the other in (or on) the self" (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008, p.112). This is critical in demonstrating the complexity of the

subject, which also applies to the interviewer. Therefore, interpretation does not only end with the interviewee's defences against anxiety, those of the interviewer are also important. Hollway and Jefferson (2012) state that being reflexive has the potential to reveal contradictions within text, which is often unseen using other qualitative interviewing techniques. Therefore, the researcher must be open about what he/she brings to the research process (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). A failure in reflexivity may result in distorted interpretations of the data, which do not take into account the complexity of people's meaning making frame and experience thus yielding invalid research (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

After writing up these field notes, I listened to the interview recordings from the first interview and subsequently tailored clarifying questions and missing links for the second interview (or follow up interview) which was scheduled to be a week after the first interview. I also, listened to the audio recordings to pick up interruptions and absences within the interview transcripts in how the isiXhosa-speaking women of the research study constructed sex talk with their sisters of which some of these avoidances were clarified from the participant in the follow up interview (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). The data collection phase was followed by the analysis however translation and transcription were the first steps necessary before themes from the data could be established.

4.7. Procedures for Data Analysis and Interpretation

As a fluent isiXhosa speaker, I translated texts myself during the transcription phase and thereafter had my transcripts checked by a professional translator to ensure accuracy and where there were differences in interpretations. In order to ensure this accuracy, I handed over the study's interview recordings as well as the English transcripts and asked the translator to independently compare and contrast the translated interviews with the content in the audio recordings. The translator and I then set up a meeting to discuss established differences in opinion, direct translations and the complexities of finding an equivalent word for translation where relevant (Twin, 1997). We each argued for our own sense-making processes and the most plausible translations were added to the interview transcripts. Self-translation was preferable because it immersed me more in the data. Therefore, I became more familiar with the text and was able to gain a firm grasp of the details and nuances within the transcripts.

A professional isiXhosa translator to ensure transcript accuracy subsequently checked the transcripts as mentioned above. A pro forma was written for the participant's with narratives,

which were chosen for the psychoanalytic reading due to the richness of their personal narratives garnered within the interview transcripts. A pro forma, includes the biographical data of the participants and discourses uttered by the participant throughout the text, was created in order to garner descriptive details of the participants (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). The pro formas were approximately two pages long however they were excluded from the final report as to protect the anonymity of the participants.

4.7.1. The Gestalt

The rationale for the methodological commitments within this psychosocial research method are based on its conceptualisation of participants as defended subjects (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Participants are understood to be employing particular discourses for defensive purposes. However, through minimal intrusion by the researcher the participants' Gestalt is expected to emerge. The Gestalt is the idea that the individual or the whole is more than the sum of its parts – thus requiring the researcher to observe a range of data in order to understand the individual and the possible conscious and unconscious reasons behind the defences. These defences within narratives can be gleaned from biographical information, core narratives³ and/or the researcher's field notes about what it was like interviewing the participant (Hollway, 2011). Hollway and Jefferson (2012) argue against research methods, which seem to fragment data by only coding material because these analytic accounts tend to be devoid of context. They suggest using a range of data such as biographical details, pro formas, researcher's field notes combined with the interview transcripts (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). These were important in making sense of the obtained data, resulting in a holistic interpretation of the psychosocial subject and establishing the defended subjects meaning making processes using the Gestalt.

The next part of the analysis required a discursive and a psychoanalytic reading of the overall transcripts. However, this was done in such a way that the psychoanalytic reading supplements the discursive resources being drawn on by participants in the interview transcripts in order to enrich my understanding of women's sexual and reproductive practices within sisterhood demonstrated through their construction of their sex talk in this relationship. Firstly, a discursive reading of the data was done that looked into interpretative repertoires, ideological dilemmas and subject positioning that shape their constructions of sex talk and those used to

³ Core narratives are narratives within the interview transcripts chosen "for their emotionality or 'breaches'" (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010, p.119)

construct the sister and thus understand the ways of 'doing sex' these discourses allow for.

4.7.2. Discursive reading

A discursive reading of an entire interview was done first to get an overall feel of the individual post interview. Part of undertaking a discursive reading of text is determining the interpretative repertoires (often used interchangeably with discourse), ideological dilemmas and subject positions within the overall discourse of a study (Wetherell, 2004). Interpretative repertoires are shared, relatively coherent ways of talking about a particular object or event (Edley, 2001). These discourses are prefigured in the cultural context and become explicit through repeated exposure to the interview transcripts (Edley, 2001). Participants start making similar arguments during the interviews and thus create a pattern. Edley (2001) argues that this process becomes easier when the researcher conducts the interviews because as he/she reads the transcripts they get a sense of having heard the same themes before. E.g., participants may use similar metaphors and images when referring to their sex talk with their sisters. Edley (2001) asserts that this is a clear indicator that the researcher is capturing the "discursive terrain" (p. 199) on a particular subject and in this case how women report talking about sex with their sisters. When we analyse the ways in which people talk about a given subject we can thus comprehend the limitations present in constructing the self and others or what we can say about isiXhosa-speaking women and sex and what cannot be said (Macleod, 2002). The coding software program, NVivo, was used to identify these dominant discourses emerging within the data; relationships between the participants' discourses and how these relate to each other; and the ways that the discourses speak to the research questions framing this study.

However, even though interpretative repertoires provide the script for talk about what we consider as common sense, in drawing on arguments on a subject matter we often contradict ourselves in narratives. Therefore, interviewees often unintentionally produce incoherent narratives; this is called an ideological dilemma (Edley, 2001). The next step to the discursive analysis of the text focused on ideological dilemmas, which states that our narratives are incoherent, disjointed and contradictory (Edley, 2001). For example, a participant is faced with an ideological dilemma when during an interview, she draws on conventional principles of heteronormativity such as 'slut-shaming' and refers to women as not having a libido or condemning premarital sex while at the same claiming to be a liberal woman. This is an ideological dilemma as there is an incongruence between these repertoires. According to Billig, Condor, Edwards, Gane, Middleton and Radley (1988 as cited in Edley, 2001) these

contradicting strands between ideology and common sense allow people to think meaningfully about themselves and the world. Lastly, the discursive reading of the text-explored subject positioning. Subject positions refer to locations in talk e.g. within interpretative repertoires subjects take up positions and make others available consequently (Davies & Harre, 1990; Edley, 2001). In the process, identities are negotiated (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Talk is therefore not a passive process between subjects but active with these identities constantly shifting (Taylor, 2006).

4.7.3. Psychoanalytic reading

The second analytical task was to conduct a psychoanalytic reading investigating the interruptions, absences and emotions within narratives to note where the unconscious is pushing for expression was undertaken. In Hollway and Jefferson's (2012) psychosocial methods unconscious processes surface in pauses, alterations in emotional tone as well as avoidances. Spears (2005) states that pausing, avoidances or change of tone within the interview is attributed to unconscious material surfacing or the subject grappling with identity.

Therefore, the psychoanalytic reading investigated the conscious and unconscious 'reasons' for investing in particular discourses over others was undertaken. To do this, identified core narratives were chosen from the transcripts due to their emotional content using a strategy established by Frosh and Emerson (2005). These core texts were chosen based on their emotional content, defensive use of language and according to how they differ from existing literature in that they could possibly generate new knowledge about ways of talking about sex. Moreover, core extracts were selected depending on whether they contain traces of transferences and countertransferences; these are psychodynamic concepts, which use the unfolding relationship between the researcher and the participant to understand the produced data. Chosen core texts were then re-transcribed using the transcription conventions of Jefferson (1984) (see appendix 7) which not only focuses on what is said but the manner in which it is said as well. I used these transcription conventions to find emphases, pauses, overlapping talk for a fine-grained reading of the data. Re-transcribing this core extract required listening and re-listening to the audio recordings and meticulously documenting everything said according to Jefferson's (1984) conventions.

Chosen core narratives were analysed alongside the participants' personal biographies and the researcher's field notes that had reflections on the emotional responses the interview had on

the interviewer (Hollway, 2011). The reflexive field notes were important because they shaped the way I interpreted the data because “[the fact] that the feelings came up in me told me something . . . that I wanted to take as data” (Walkerdine, 1997, p.67). This technique of recording in detail the researcher’s emotional involvement in the interview is consistent with qualitative reflexivity but relies more on unconscious logic rather than purely conscious reasoning (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). For example, a participant talking about her sex talk with her sister in an interview while drawing on a slut shaming discourse is not a neutral discourse, this discourse had an impact on me as the interviewer. Key concepts from Kleinian psychoanalytic theory specifically projection, splitting, paranoid schizoid position and depressive position as outlined in the theoretical framework were the dominant psychoanalytic concepts used for analysing the data. However, I proceeded with caution, careful not to rob participants of their individuality (Spurling, 2009). These psychoanalytic concepts (splitting, projection, and introjection) were applied to the core narrative to ‘thicken’ the discursive reading of the text (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008). Furthermore, for analysis of the core extract of the defended subject, interpretation was based on *content, structure, interruptions, linguistic formulations* and *reflexivity* in the material (following the analytic strategy described in Saville Young & Frosh, 2010).

4.7.4. Concentric reflexivity

Concentric reflexivity refers to construing the analysis of a particular text as containing different layers that must be sequentially peeled off while deeming the text to be the central point (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). Therefore, each layer analyses a different aspect of the text but adds merit to a particular argument. Hence, the readings of the text are not unrelated to each other but understood as nested in each other (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). By the *content* I refer to the ways in which sex-talk is constructed by social and cultural contexts and taken up by the women in their core narratives. In addition, the ways in which they selectively emotionally invest in particular constructions of sexual socialisation over a range of other constructions and discourses about sex due to their own psychic processes which mandates a need to protect the vulnerable aspects of the self. For example, do they invest in discourse of sexual agency and sex positive constructions or do they draw on restrictive, heteronormative discourses when talking about sex-talk with their sisters? According to Hollway and Jefferson (2012) the chosen positions; details in which the story is told and emphasis are representative of choices the interviewee makes and these choices “contain significances beyond the teller’s intentions” (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.33). Nonetheless, these emotional investments made

are never independent of the interpersonal relationship forming between the interviewee and the interviewer (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

The *structure* refers to the organisation of the narrative taking into consideration that there are different ways to telling a story and the way it is told serves a defensive function (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). Therefore, does the participant capture the attention of the listener or not and what purpose does this serve? Is the narrative constructed to evoke sympathy or identification in the listener, and why? For example, the use of direct quotes in storytelling may add colour and drama to the constructions of sex talk within the particular sibling dyad. Therefore, intriguing the listener as it has detailed telling causing the listener to wonder what will happen next or empathise with interviewee (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010).

Interruptions refer to instances where the interviewee fails to maintain the structured story telling e.g., when they attempt to make meaning of situations while narrating and sometimes end up not making sense (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). Lastly, analysis of the text consisted of reading the *linguistic work* done by the participant within the interview transcripts. This refers to our word choices and their effects on what is said and what is left unsaid. A linguistic reading also includes analysing interruptions, laughter, tears, and change in tone: emphasis and absences using psychoanalytic theory. However, caution has to be exercised when using translated text as in order to pick up on the ‘language games’ used by narrator one has to be as close to the original text as possible. This is because the minute workings in interactions were deemed important and to demonstrate them, I analysed the participants’ linguistic work using original isiXhosa transcripts and translated the resulting analytic argument back to English. This seemed a good decision because the verbatim evidence could be used to move the analysis forward. The section that follows describes the ethical considerations that had to be kept in mind throughout the research process.

4.8. Ethical Considerations

According to Hollway and Jefferson (2012) ethics serve to safeguard the interests of the participants during research. Therefore, before conducting this research ethical clearance had to be granted by the Rhodes University Department of Psychology Research Projects Ethical Review Committee (See Appendix 1). An Ethical Standards Protocol had to be completed outlining all measures in place for protecting the interests of the women sampled for this study for ethical approval to be granted to me. How these abovementioned ethical guidelines were operationalised in this study is outlined below.

4.8.1. Negotiating Consent

At the beginning of every interview, participants were provided with two consent forms written in isiXhosa, namely a Participant Consent Form and a Recorder Consent Form (see appendix 5 & 6). I then clearly explained in isiXhosa to each interviewee what participation in the study entailed; that participation would be voluntary and that the interviewee could discontinue participation in the study at will. I also addressed participants' concerns about privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, stating that in order to safeguard their interests I would use pseudonyms and alter some of the identifying details within the transcripts to retain confidentiality however careful to not distort the data. I further explained to the participants that the researcher and a translator were the only individuals who would be in full possession of the audio recordings of the research interviews. Lastly, the consent form included information about ethical approval of the research study, permissions obtained and my supervisors' contact details. After offering a verbal explanation of what involvement in this study entailed using the participant consent form as my guide and thus careful not to omit any information, I gave the interviewee a chance to read through the isiXhosa participant consent form.

I also gave the participants a verbal explanation of the Recorder Consent Form in isiXhosa. I stated the purposes of recording the interviews, which is for transcribing accurate notes, and disclosed the third parties would gain access to the audio-tapes for transcript quality and the audio tapes would be erased once the study was complete. Participants then signed to conditions they agreed with and only when this consent was granted I switched on the recorder. This consent negotiation process was also repeated at the beginning of the second interview with the participants of this study. In addition, participants were also informed verbally and in writing of their right to quit the study at will before the commencement of both interviews. Moreover, they were assured that participation in this research would in no way affect their affiliation with the educational institution they were associated with. On top of these universal generic ethical principles required within qualitative research (informed consent, the right to withdraw, and anonymity and confidentiality). Hollway and Jefferson (2012) add honesty, sympathy and respect as important ethical considerations that should inform how research with participants is conducted from the start until the end of the research process.

4.8.1.1. Honesty

In order to uphold honesty, I had to approach the data in an open manner that was driven by the need to know instead of advocacy (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). I used the psychosocial theoretical framework to make judgements and strongly relied on evidence to support every

premise without ignoring certain aspects of the evidence for my own agenda. This process thus required me to interrogate my own responses to the data of which my primary supervisor who is psychoanalytically-trained and my secondary supervisor who specialises in discourse analysis were helpful in helping me detect areas where there may have been lapses in my judgement (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

4.8.1.2. Sympathy

I had to approach all the interviewees with sympathy. This required me to attempt to feel what the participants felt in order to have a deeper understanding of the content. Thus, I had to use my own self-knowledge and the difficulties I was aware of to understand my participants' inconsistencies, confusions and anxieties (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012).

4.8.1.3. Respect

It was my duty to respect my participants thus I had to be attentive and constantly observe my participants carefully. I did this to pick up attributes that are often overlooked in the data as well as what is sometimes deemed "too painful to notice" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.101). Hollway and Jefferson (2012) refer to respecting people but at the same time being able to condemn their action. What is crucial, however, is conveying the material in a respectful way as some interpretations can be harmful.

4.8.2. No harm & Debriefing

None of the participants became emotional due to sensitive issues surfacing during the interview. However, in the event where a participant would have felt distressed I would have discontinued the interview and referred the participant for counselling at the Rhodes Psychology Clinic or with the Family and Marriage society of South Africa, FAMSA, for professional help. However, some participants reported experiencing sharing their narratives as enjoyable. For example, when asked about her experiences of taking part in the interviews, one participant elicited the following response:

I feel light you know because I have let other things out (okay). Because we don't get enough time to talk with the people we work with because we are busy and then lunch is only an hour long. But because you touched on many things it made me feel a lot lighter you know (okay) because I have talked about things that I wanted to discuss.

A feedback or debriefing meeting was not scheduled; however, each interview had a follow-up or second interview where participants were given an opportunity to comment and ask

questions about the study at the end of the interview. My details and those of my supervisor were also provided in the consent form for participants to contact me or my supervisor in the case where a subject felt distressed due to taking part in the study and it is at this point, where steps towards debriefing for all participants would have been taken.

4.8.3. Remuneration

As a token of appreciation, interviewees were given a R150 shopping voucher at the end of the data collection process because payment can be seen as a means of inducement, which undermines the free choice of a person to participate in research (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). Therefore, participants were not informed about the shopping vouchers until the end of the interviews to avoid this and to ensure that participation was voluntary.

4.9. Methodological rigour

In order to establish methodological thoroughness, Lincoln and Guba (1985) created new concepts for demonstrating rigour within the qualitative paradigm when positivistic concepts such as validity and reliability were no longer a good fit (Bryman, 2012; Tobin & Begley, 2004). These concepts of rigour include credibility, transferability, dependability and compatibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Credibility, which is comparable to validity, investigates whether the generated interpretations and explanations are compatible or whether the interpretations are credible or not. Do the representations of the participants presented by the researcher match the views expressed by interviewees? (Tobin & Begley, 2004). To increase the credibility of the study, a triangulated approach was adopted to ensure that interpretations were not one-dimensional but instead considered holistic view of the individual (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012). I used “a narrative free- association method of collecting data, a theoretical understanding of the defended psychosocial subject, a theory of the researcher-participant relationship based on unconscious intersubjectivity, and a method of analysing data resembling psychoanalytic interpretation” (Georgraca, 2005, p.79) to inform interpretation. Additionally, the credibility of the text was ensured by the psychosocial method’s binocularly in vision whereby top down interpretations, which are largely theory based, are supported by bottom up evidence emerging from the data (Frosh & Saville Young, 2008). Moreover, credibility was also established through interviewing until data saturation was reached where no new discourses were being drawn on during interviews.

Transferability is synonymous with external validity and it refers to the generalisability of the study to the general population (Schwandt, Lincoln & Guba, 2007). However, according to Tobin and Begley (2004), in qualitative research there is usually more than one interpretation to a single case and thus no 'true' interpretations. This is because the naturalistic paradigm prioritises individual subjectivity over generalisation. Therefore, a study aimed at generalising its findings would use a larger sample, in order to establish dependability of the. However, the aim of qualitative research is to deduce subjective understanding of an experience or phenomenon and not to generalise its findings.

Dependability, which is synonymous with reliability addresses whether the study has been accurately documented in a logical way that can be repeated (Schwandt et al., 2007). Tobin & Begley (2004) assert that the notion of reflexivity is critical to this documentation process as through reflexivity the researchers constantly reflects on the research process and decision-making this includes the researcher's conscious and unconscious dialogues that impacted the study. In this study, dependability of the researcher's analysis was ensured through systematic documentation of all research procedures (Bryman, 2012).

Therefore, in order to establish dependability within interpretation a coherent analysis which encompasses all stages and aspects of the research process, namely: biographical material, the interviewer's reflexive field notes and the participants' own words in verbatim transcripts used as extracts in the full report was well documented. Establishing dependability can be complex in qualitative research as meanings can be both unique and shared; thus, replicating results is complicated. In terms of this research, the interpretations were dependable in that similar deductions were drawn during supervision by my supervisors when using all the available evidence. Nevertheless, alternative explanations can be deduced but consensus about interpretations often existed.

4.10. Conclusion

Sampling techniques and the recruitment process have been explained. Ethics were kept in mind throughout the process and during data collection. The researcher remained aware of the inability to know the exact factors at play during an interaction and further remained open to her thoughts, feelings and biases that may have been evoked by the interviewer because of the study. In the chapter, that follows the findings on sexual socialisation among isiXhosa-speaking women sampled in the study will be explored.

Chapter 5

Findings: Let's talk about sex *Sisi*

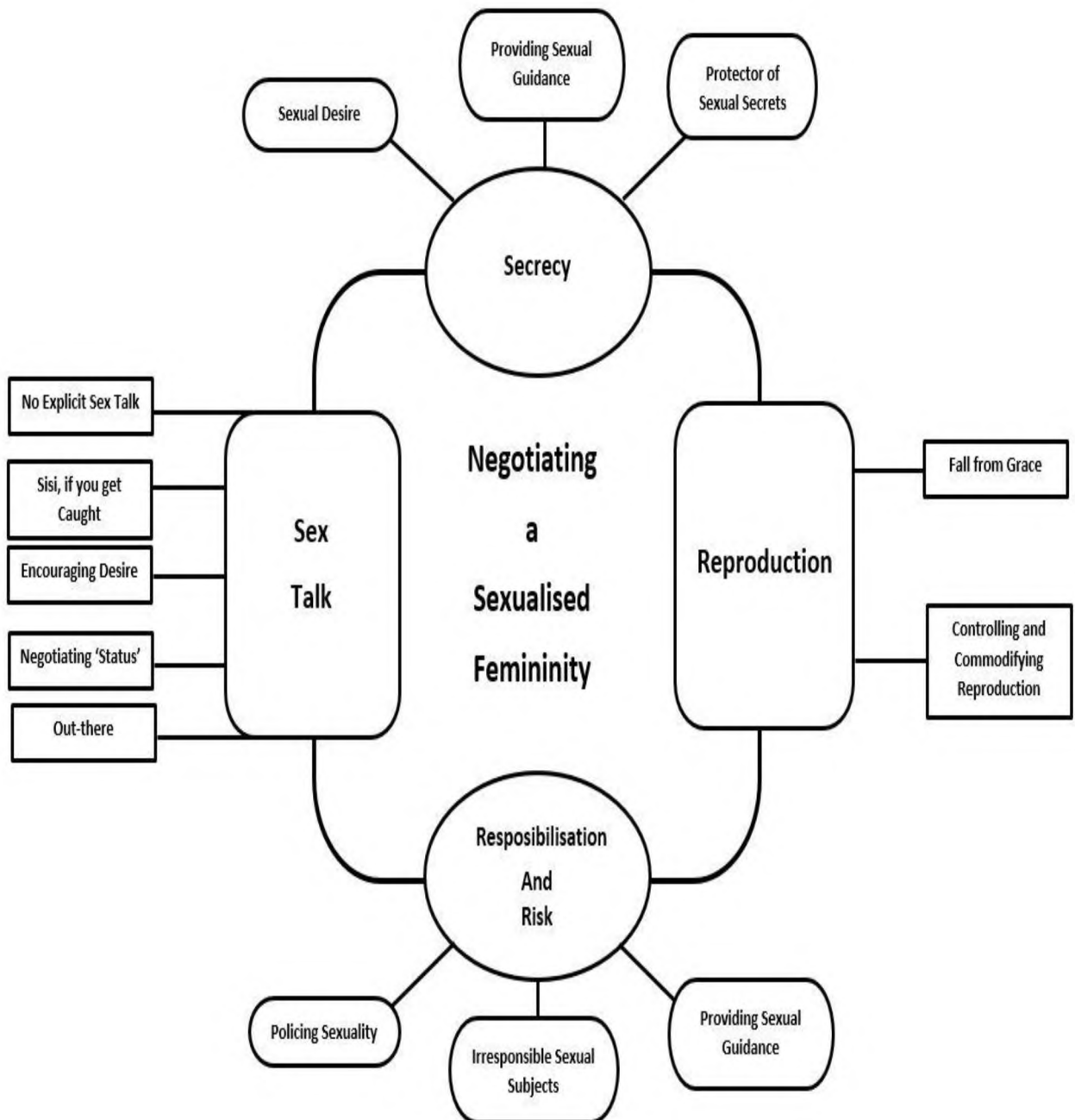
5.1. Introduction

The findings of this study will be analysed over two chapters. This is the first chapter and it will focus on conducting an in-depth discursive reading of the women's constructed sex and reproduction talk with their sisters in the data. The chapter begins by describing the emergent interpretative repertoires and the resultant subject positions within the repertoires about sex and reproduction that were overall present in the sampled participants' narratives. Chapter 6, however, will adopt an additional individual focus on women's sexual socialisation within the sisterly context, analysing alongside the available discourses, the emotional investments in the repertoires the participants drew on. Therefore, the second findings chapter will function as a resource for thickening understanding of the possible conscious and unconscious 'reasons' for these particular women's emotional investments in certain interpretative repertoires of sisterly talk of sex and reproduction over others.

5.2. Discursive reading

In this section, I present a discursive reading of the interview transcripts demonstrating the discursive resources participants used to construct their experiences of sex and reproduction talk within sisterhood and using this to understand their resultant gender identities and ways of performing their sexuality in society. The women in this study drew on the following broad interpretative repertoires: a repertoire of secrecy and one of responsabilisation and risk. In drawing on these interpretative repertoires, participants often assumed consistent subject positions. Such subject positions included the sister as: the protector of sexual secrets; provider of sexual guidance; policing sexuality to shore up femininity; the responsible and non-risky sexual subject. These repertoires and subject positions functioned to describe the types of femininities and sexualities available to these isiXhosa-speaking women in middle adulthood. Diagram 1 below, provides a summary of the findings of this study. It demonstrates the interpretative repertoires on sexual socialisation on reproduction the women drew on in the interviews.

Diagram 1: Repertoires on sisterly sex and reproduction talk



The above-diagram provides a summary of the psychosocial reading of the data however focusing mostly on the discursive data that was found in the analysis. The study focused on two topics sex talk and reproduction. In the diagram, sexual socialisation and reproduction are

separate categories which avail different interpretative repertoires that the women drew on around sex talk part of sexual socialisation and the repertoires on reproduction are listed on the right hand side. The repertoires the women draw on and the subject positions they take up in sex talk within their sibling dyad are at the bottom and the top of the diagram. In the middle is the intrapsychic process, which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 6 while the rest is the outer processes.

5.3. Secrecy repertoire

The data reveals the participants drew on a repertoire of secrecy to demonstrate ways in which they used their sisterly relationships to resist and challenge the stifling of female sexuality. As a result, the participants used the secrecy repertoire in interesting ways. Firstly, they employed the secrecy repertoire to construct sex talk as vague and non-descriptive within the sister-sister context. They also employed it to construct sex talk as something that occurs within secret spaces between sisters because the subjects concerned are not deemed age appropriate by their parents. Finally, they employed this repertoire to construct sex talk as a process in which the participants constantly negotiate insider status on their sisters' sexual secrets.

5.3.1. No explicit sex talk for sisters

The participants of this study constructed their sisterly relationships as not being a viable relational context for talking explicitly about sex and sexuality by drawing on a repertoire of non-disclosure and secrecy. This narrative led to subject positions of sexual innocence, purity and other value-laden positions when participants decided not to share specific things about their sexual experiences and within this sexual curiosity would be conflated with promiscuity. However, the secrecy repertoire also led to subject positions of sexual guidance and protector of sexual secrets where the women facilitated and maintained each other's sexual exploration. The extracts below serve as evidence of the women's responses when asked about their sex talk with their sister. Extracts 1 and 2, are both narrated by Nwabisa who is the oldest of 3 children: she has one sister and a brother who is disabled. These are her responses, when asked about the last time she talked about sex with her sister:

Extract 1

Nwabisa: Maybe it's because we live far from each other but we hardly talk about those things together, even when we are together in [place]. [*Interview 1, page 8, line 185-186*]

Nwabisa responds by saying she does not often talk about sex with her sister as seen above in extract 1. Explicit sex talk is referred to as “those things”. She then constructs distance as the reason for the secrecy and vagueness about sex between her and her sister. However, she later contradicts these reasons in the rest of the extract by saying, “even when we are together” visiting one another, they do not talk about sex. Therefore, discrediting distance as the constructed reason why they do not talk about sex. In extract 2, Nwabisa re-emphasises the lack of explicit sex talk with her sister also stating that she had made this point clear during the first interview, see below:

Extract 2

Nwabisa: I answered this question I said I don't really talk about these things with my sister (*laughs*). I don't talk about those things with my sister and so on (uh huh) I told you. [*Interview 2, page 1, line 18-19*]

Nwabisa reiterates the utterance that she does not talk explicitly about sex with her sister in extract 2, emphasising that she had made the point in interview 1. Nwabisa also uses repetition to emphasise that she does not talk about sex with her sister. Her use of “these things” in the first sentence and “those things” in the second sentence when referring to sex (this can also be seen in extract 1) indicate avoidance and awkwardness. Moreover, this use of euphemistic language possibly indicates that she construes explicit sex talk as inappropriate and performing a certain femininity, one she wants to distance herself from hence their sex talk remains implicit even when they are together. Extract 1 and 2 thus allow Nwabisa to take up subject positions of ‘purity’ and ‘innocence’. A similar unwillingness to talk explicitly about sex within the sisterly dyad can also be seen in other participants’ responses. These women claimed that they preferred detailed sex-talk with their friends; others constructed their relationship with their boyfriends as a better relational context for explicit sex talk, see below.

Extract 3

Lungi: Wi with my sisters (*laughs*) talking about sex? Uhm we don't talk about sex, let me say, I talk about sex with my friends (mhh) you learn other things outside instead of within the family because you get embarrassed talking about those things (mhh). So you would meet advanced people at school and learn that way (oh okay). Sometimes you don't even do these things but you keep putting pieces together [*lowers voice*] okay ... [*raises voice*] okay... (*YN laughs*) the TV also shows you see, it also shows ja. [*Interview 2, page 18, line 589-594*]

In extract 3, Lungi is asked about the last time she spoke about sex with her sisters and she explains that she does not talk about sex with her sister because it is embarrassing: “because you get embarrassed talking about those things”. She constructs her friends and the media as a better context for sexual socialisation but not her sisterly relationship. Lungi further adds that “sometimes you don’t even do these things but you keep putting pieces together” which functions to position her as sexually ‘innocent’ but also introduces sexual curiosity. A similar construction can be seen in the below extract with Khanya, who shares the same sentiments about sibling sex talk as Nwabisa and Lungi. Constructing her sisterly relationships as not a viable context for explicit sex talk.

Extract 4

Khanya: No, it’s not right with sisters, you cannot share things like that with someone who is not your boyfriend (okay) because you’re going to look like a slut (*both laugh*) you see? [*Interview 2, page 4, line 122-123*]

From the above extract, Khanya constructs talking explicitly about sex with her sister as equivalent to looking “like a slut”. In employing this discursive resource, Khanya constructs a need to be viewed in a certain way as asexual, ‘pure’ or ‘moral’ by her sister. Indicating a struggle in managing sexual desire because explicit sex talk is equated with sexual promiscuity. Hence, she would rather talk about sex with her partner than with her sister. In contrast, in the extract below Buhle described being unable to talk explicitly about sex with either her boyfriend or her sister. In the extract below, however, it becomes apparent that sisters tend to talk around sex avoiding the physiological aspects of sex in order to construct themselves as sexually active subjects but not ‘sluts’.

Extract 5

Buhle: mhhh it’s not easy to talk about it with my boyfriend, I get very shy (*YN laughs*) I find it easier to talk about it with my friends not even with my sister (mhhm). But I usually say to my sister (okay). I say, “You must learn how your man thinks and see exactly what he values. Does he really love you or is he just after what he wants [sex]?” (Mmh) That’s why I usually play hard to get, I want to see if he really really loves me or is he (indistinct word) because he wants this thing? (Okay). That’s what I say that’s the kind of stuff we talk about (mhh) but going deep into sex, no. What I usually say is don’t always be with a man and get him used to that thing [sex] all the time because a man will devalue you, you see? A man will undermine you when you do that he will see you as weak, you do whatever

he wants you to do or that you don't care about your family, do you see what I mean?

(Mhh) When you do things like that (*coughs*) [Interview 2, page 17, line 537-549]

Buhle has two cousins whom she regards as sisters; through the years these cousins came to live with Buhle and her family and the above extract is one of her narratives of her experiences of talking about sex with one of her cousins. Buhle constructs a similar inability to talk explicitly about sex with her sisters by saying “but going deep into sex, no” she then offers an account of her own sex talk within the sister-sister context which requires the women to talk *around* sex. Therefore, eliciting vague constructions of how women should perform sex and sexuality drawing on heteronormative repertoires of romantic love and the male sexual drive (Hollway 1984) in turn, taking up a subject position of providing sexual guidance on ‘doing sex’ like a woman who is likely to ‘keep’ her man. However, Buhle provides sexual guidance drawing on traditional notions of female sexuality and therefore shores up subject positions of women as vulnerable to the seduction of men. For example, the romantic love repertoire is evident when she says, “Does he really love you or is he just after what he wants?” In addition, the construction of a virulent male sexual drive is apparent when she argues “don’t always be with a man and get him used to that thing all the time because a man will devalue you, you see?” Here, Buhle constructs clear different feminine and masculine sexualities: drawing on the voracious male sexual drive, she constructs women as vulnerable and thus female sexuality must be ‘preserved’ through “playing hard to get” thereby promoting repressive sexuality for women. By doing this, Buhle constructs a certain kind of woman for her sister, one who is passive and pressured by men to engage in sexual intercourse negating women’s willingness and desire to engage in sexual activity for their own needs.

In extract 5, Buhle’s construction of what she deems appropriate sex-talk within the sister-sister relationship is also vague and un-descriptive. For example, Buhle says “or is he just after what he wants” and somewhere else in the extract, she says, “he wants this thing” and in both instances omits the word sex and then says, “That’s what I say that’s the kind of stuff we talk about”. While Buhle makes inferences to sex, the word sex is avoided thus resembling Nwabisa’s account of sex talk within the sister-sister context in extract 1 and 2 and also demonstrating that for these particular women sisters talk around sex avoiding explicit telling. With this in mind, I argue that the women are construed as not talking explicitly about sex with their sisters because this preserves their identity as sexually explorative but responsible within the family context. As can be seen above, there is also desire for their siblings to see them as sexually explorative subjects but not ‘sluts’.

5.3.2. “Sisi, if you get caught, you’re on your own”

Some of the participants constructed their sisters as the ‘gatekeepers’ of their sexual exploration particularly during adolescence; they and their sisters were constructed as practising their sexuality in secret with one another’s help. Parents were made outsiders to the women’s sexual exploration based on the adolescence and marriage repertoire. The adolescence repertoire restricts sexual activity during adolescent years constructing women as ‘too young’ and unable to make rational choices (Macleod, 2001; 2003). The marriage repertoire states that women need to do their sexuality within the confines of marriage. The “Sisi, if you get caught, you’re on your own” narrative, however, introduces sexual curiosity and desire, which is maintained and protected within the sister-sister context. The below extracts serve as evidence of sexual curiosity and desire as a secret that sisters collude to keep from their parents. However, the participants also constructed clear accounts of protecting their own sexual ‘chastity’ and ‘innocence’ in cases where they were unable to protect their sister’s sexual exploration:

Extract 6

Khanya: We talked about everything even about her boyfriend. She had this boyfriend that we used to chat about and when he was outside our house she’d say “Look, I am going to leave, you must open up for me”. I would agree and then oversleep in the morning only to realise that she has been lurking outside for a long time waiting for me to open. She would stand by our neighbour’s house and try to jump over the fence in order to get into our yard and knock on my window (*YN laughs*). Then one day she had asked me to open up for her and then I decided to not sleep in our room. I slept in mom’s room. My sister and I shared a bed and mom had her own room (uh huh) so on this day I decided to sleep with my mother and she didn’t ask me about my sister because she thought I left her sleeping in her room. So she apparently she knocked and knocked and eventually gave up only to find that mom was already washing dishes in the kitchen (Woah). Mom said “Where were you?” that’s when everyone found out that she was sexually active (*laughs*) [*Interview 1, page 13, line 343-353*]

The above extract is talk between Khanya and one of her two sisters. In this excerpt, she humorously relays her experiences of sex talk with her sister and assumes the subject position of the protector of her sister’s sexual secrets. Implicit in this narrative is the idea that parents should not know about their adolescent children’s sexual activity but sisters can know. Therefore, the participants, due to their positions as sisters, were allowed into the sexuality of adolescence whereas parents were kept out. The sisters’ insider status on sexual exploration

can be seen when Khanya's sister says "Look, I am going to leave, you must open up for me". Khanya's willingness to open the door for her sister upon return is representative of how siblings are allowing of each other's desire to explore and be adventurous about their sexuality resisting parental 'protection'. This moreover denotes how sisters perhaps assist in pretending that adolescents are 'innocent', thereby construing the sister-sister relationship as different from the parental relationship: more flexible and permissive towards sex.

A similar construction of sexual permissiveness between sisters can be seen in the below extract with Buhle. In the extract below, Buhle draws heavily on the repertoire of secrecy; keeping her sister's desire to engage in sexual activity a secret is at the heart of this repertoire.

Extract 7

Buhle: She was wearing a gown. I said "What's wrong?" She said [lowers voice] "Can I go out?" then I said where are you going because it's Sunday today and you have school tomorrow? (.) Uhhh what was the name of her boyfriend at the time? [thinks out loud]. Then I said "You're putting me in an awkward position here because the way I have been raised (.) I can't change that when it comes to you and say what you're doing is fine." Then I said "Sisi if you get caught you're on your own" (*YN laughs*). Then she said "I am sure I won't get caught (*laughs*) she said "I am sure I won't get caught". She then took pillows and placed them where she was supposed to sleep (uhh) to pretend as if she was sleeping there and left. Then my mother asked who is walking outside the door?! [raises voice]. It was at around 11 and her boyfriend was waiting outside for her. Dead silence! (*both laugh*) Who is walking outside the door?! [Raises voice] Dead silence! Gosh, my mom is very strict, she's very strict. She switched on the lights [mother] (.) We had switched the lights off to hide that one of us was missing. She switched on the lights and said, "I said who is leaving?" [*Interview 1, page 11, line 313-326*]

In the above extracts (6 & 7), both participants positioned themselves as the protectors of their sister's sexual secrets. However, Nwabisa and Buhle both construct accounts of failing to uphold the subject position of protector of sexual secrets as it was very difficult to maintain secrecy around their sister's sexual exploration with parents because in both extracts the sisters were caught by their mothers, which placed their sister's sexual identities as sexually 'innocent' and 'chaste' at stake. For example, Nwabisa says "that's when everyone found out that she was sexually active (*laughs*)". Being discovered as sexually explorative was constructed as eroding the parents' view of Buhle and Nwabisa's sisters as sexually 'innocent'. Female sexual innocence is inherently tied to the view of unmarried women as virgins and lacking sexual

desire and this perpetuates heteronormative notions of female sexuality as something to be ‘protected’. However, the women are constructed as resisting this idea of female non-desire and protection of their sexual innocence by their parents through their sisterly relationships, which are construed as more receptive of each other’s sexual exploration.

Buhle and Nwabisa further positioned themselves as sometimes unable to aid their sister’s sexual development in the face of parental oversight and in such circumstances, the participants constructed a need to protect and conceal their own sexual desire and exploration (see extract 6 and 7). For example, Buhle, says “*Sisi* if you get caught you’re on your own” (*YN laughs*). This utterance can be seen as a scare tactic, used to restrict Buhle’s sister from sexual exploration or it can be construed as Buhle positioning her sister as responsible for her own sexual decisions while still accepting the position of the protector of sexual secrets. The secrecy of sexuality repertoire was also used to signify how the participants of this study encouraged sexual desire in their secret spaces. This is also apparent in the “*Sisi* if you get caught you’re on your own” narrative discussed above.

5.3.3. Encouraging desire

Sexual desire was encouraged and accepted within the sister-sister relationship. As such, the encouraging desire repertoire refers to talk alluding to sexual freedom in the constructed representation of sex talk between the participants and their sisters. Female sexual desire was introduced in this repertoire, thereby availing particular subject positions such as the desiring and agentic sexual subject. Sive constructs this notion of female sexual desire in extract 8 below:

Extract 8

Sive: On the first day I came back complaining that I don’t understand why many girls sneak out at night to see their boyfriends if this thing is this painful (yes) “I don’t think I will do it again”. My little sister said to me, do it again you will eventually be fine (*both laugh*) so I went back again and like she said I ended up being fine (okay) [*Interview 2, page 5, line 126-129*]

Sive relays an account of discussing with her sister her first experience of sexual intercourse above. In the extract, Sive constructs her sisterly relationship as one in which she could say she did not enjoy her first sexual experience, so “I don’t think I will do it again”. Thus, the sister-sister relationship was a context in which Sive could talk about her sexual experiences, even negatives ones. In response, Sive’s sister is positioned as providing sexual guidance to Sive,

and in the process encouraging sexual desire by playing an important normalising role – normalising first sexual activity as sometimes painful for women. Sive’s sister therefore takes Sive’s negative sexual experience and helps her transform it into a positive one by saying “do it again you will eventually be fine” thus allowing for female sexual pleasure and subjugating female passiveness. Extract 8 serves as evidence that sexual behaviour does not happen in vacuum but within contexts and the sisterly context can help shape sexual experiences as in Sive’s case. A more explicit account of sexual desire in sisterly sex talk is evident in the following extract:

Extract 9

Sive: No, we are the kind of people who talk about these things, I will tell you a very funny story when one has a boyfriend we come back and say “Wow, guys I didn’t sleep, I’ve never seen one that big”

YN: Whoa!!... *(both laugh)*

Sive: Or ag no I was bored there is nothing there *(both laugh)* so we are very open (yes) we come back and chat. *[Interview 2, page 5, line 136-140]*

In the above extract, Sive represents talk about her own sexual encounters and those of her sister, construing some experiences with some partners as pleasurable while some are not. For example, “Wow, guys I didn’t sleep, I’ve never seen one that big” was construed as a pleasurable experience whereas “ag no I was bored there is nothing there” was a bad sexual experience. Sive and her sister are thus positioned as agentic sexual subjects who have sex for their own sexual pleasure in the extract. This construes the sister-sister relationship as a context where individuals can be honest about their sexual selves, resisting traditional gendered ideologies of restrictive female sexuality. Sex talk between Sive and her sister is further constructed as talking back to the restrictive ‘female innocence’ sexuality repertoire by placing sexual pressure on men through assessing their sexual performance and sexual organs. Sive reports that she and her sister had their own preferences, thus reinforcing women’s sexual desire. The extract further introduces serial courtship, thus reinforcing Sive and her sister’s positioning as agentic sexual subjects.

As seen in the secrecy repertoire the women of this study were taking their sexual experiences, which were practiced on the margins, to their sisters and in this talk the sisters would provide sexual guidance to each other as seen in extract 8 and 9 between Sive and her sister. However,

even though the participants were receptive of their sister's sexual exploration and even encouraged this, some of the sexual guidance constructed as provided by the participants to their sisters was power laden and policed sexuality as can be seen in the extract below. I use extract 10 as an example of how participants can sometimes stifle the sexuality of desiring sexual subjects:

Extract 10

Lungi: Mhh he is in [place], well I don't know you never know (*YN laughs*) people these days don't just have one partner. People no longer have one partner. They say they have a partner here and another one there, which is not right, you see. I even asked her "How do you have one here and another one there. When this one calls what do you do because you have to answer?" "No, I deal with him before he answers (*both laugh*). I call him first you see so that he does not call me later because he is going to interrupt me this side". Then I say, "Oh uhhh why don't you just stick to one person then? And she says "please stop" (*both laugh*) [*Interview 2, page 10, line 294-300*]

In Extract 10, Lungi's construction of sex talk with her sister is quite unlike Sive's construction of sex talk with her sister in extract 9, which allows for sexual agency and encourages the desire to simultaneously date more than one man without policing behaviour. The talk in the above extract begins with Lungi's constructed uncertainty about her sister's actual boyfriend "he is in [place], well I don't know you never know". Lungi's talk proceeds and becomes about how women nowadays date multiple men concurrently; she construes this behaviour as "not right" signifying that Lungi is advocating for monogamy. In the extract, Lungi's sister is constructed as a sexually explorative and desiring sexual subject. Lungi problematises this behaviour and constructs a compromising situation for her sister by asking "When this one [sexual partner] calls what do you do because you have to answer?". Using this question Lungi constructs an account of one of her sister's sexual partners calling her sister while she is with another sexual partner and challenges whether her sister would answer the phone or not. However, her sister is constructed as candidly saying, "No, I deal with him before he answers (*both laugh*). I call him first you see so that he does not call me later because he is going to interrupt me this side" therefore challenging monogamy. Lungi is, however not receptive to this type of sexuality and drawing similarly on Hollway's (1989) Have and Hold repertoire which alludes to finding and keeping a sexual partner she asserts, "Oh uhhh why don't you just stick to one person then?" This utterance works to construct committed relationships as better. Lungi's utterance also positions her as a provider of sexual guidance in her sister-sister relationship, but also positions herself as 'saint-like' and 'chaste'. Conversely, she positions her sister as an irresponsible

sexual subject as there is a policing of sexuality in Lungu's narrative. However, Lungu's sister resists this policing and this is evident in her response "Please stop", suggesting some allowance of diversity in sexuality within sisterhood.

5.3.4. Negotiating 'insider' status

In this interpretative repertoire, participants constructed themselves as sometimes insiders on their sisters' sexual secrets and other times outsiders. In addition, sharing one's sexual secrets with one's sister did not mean that the sister would also disclose their own sexual secrets. Therefore, sisters who talked explicitly and openly about their sexual experiences were sometimes also outsiders to their sister's sexual secrets; allowing for sex talk and sharing about sexual relationships to occur but at their own discretion. Sive asserts that she was close with her sister when they were growing up and that they still share personal details in middle adulthood. Below are Sive's narratives on talks with her sister, in one part of the interview (extract 11) Sive is an insider on her sister's personal details and sexual exploration while in another part of the interview (extract 12) she is made an outsider to her sister's pregnancy.

Extract 11

Sive: No, it has not changed for instance let me tell you a short story, my sister... she called me and told me that she got her husband arrested. It's 16 days of activism right now and he is still in jail. She told me that she is now thinking of moving on with her life and after the divorce is through there is a guy that is an albino that heard her speaking on radio and admired her strength. This albino guy is looking for someone (oh) so they are trying to date (*laughs*) so we are still like that even today. [*Interview 2, page 12, line 313-318*]

In extract 11, Sive constructs her sisterly relationship as close and works to demonstrate that she is still afforded insider status on her sister's marriage and dating experience in middle adulthood. She draws on the details of the end of her sister's marriage and the beginning of a relationship with someone to show that she is still granted insider status on her sister's dating life. However, Sive is not granted insider status in extract 12, below. Sive and her sister both got pregnant at around the same time in their late adolescent years, Sive at 18 and her sister at 16- years. However, Sive's sister hid her pregnancy from her family including Sive by tying pantyhose around her belly for months when she fell pregnant, making Sive an outsider in this sexual secret, see below:

Extract 12

Sive: I was also still pregnant but I got pregnant before her, we had a few months difference. The day she finally came out with it we [Sive and her mother] found her sobbing and sobbing because she could see that she could not hide it anymore even with the panty hose you could still see the belly. “What’s wrong?” “No, I’m pregnant” then she was shouted at because pregnancy is not the end of life and whatever so she got scolded for doing that and then things went back to normal. I gave birth before her and then the house became full of grandchildren (*laughs*). [*Interview 1, page 4, line 118-123*]

The above extract constructs sex talk between sisters as something that has to be earned and negotiated. In the above, Sive’s sister was constructed as uncomfortable with informing her family, including Sive, about her pregnancy until she could not hide her sexual secret anymore. The above extract also demonstrates that sometimes sexual secrets were discovered rather than shared in the sister-sister context thus making everyone in the family outsiders to one’s sexual development. Hence, Sive says, “We [Sive and her mother] found her crying and crying because she could see that she could not hide it anymore”. Sive’s sister’s sobbing and decision to keep her pregnancy a secret is based on the assumption that adolescence and motherhood are mutually exclusive. However, Sive normalises her sister’s pregnancy by asserting, “Pregnancy is not the end of the world and whatever so she got reprimanded for doing that and then things went back to normal”. Sive’s statement functions to accept teenage pregnancy and constructs the sister-sister relationship, and indeed the mother-daughter relationship in this case, as a place one can take all sexual experiences to both positive and negative.

Extracts 11 and 12 demonstrate how insider status into a sister’s sexual activity is constantly negotiated even in sexually permissive sister-sister relationships. However, outsider status for participants who hardly talked about sex with their sisters was common:

Extract 13

Nwabisa: Like my sister fell pregnant when I was already in [place] (mhh) you see? She was staying with dad, I remember visiting this one time and I couldn’t tell that she was pregnant and she was hiding it from me. I just noticed that she had put on a bit of weight and whatever. I eventually found out from my dad that she was pregnant. I don’t know man; I wasn’t shocked because she was at the right age. She wasn’t young. [*Interview 2, page 4, line 112-115*]

In the above narrative, Nwabisa's father is an insider in Nwabisa's sister's pregnancy while she is an outsider, therefore eroding the construction that children are always secretive about their sexual development towards their parents, particularly the father (Holmes-Walker, 2010). Nwabisa's narrative is also at odds with the repertoires of sexual secrecy seen in the above extracts that exclude parents from their sexual development, elicited by other participants. Therefore, participants due to their positions as sisters were not always allowed knowledge into their sisters' sexuality; instead, parents were sometimes the knowers. However, even though some participants had open relationships with their sisters in which they provided sexual guidance to each other, other participants drew sparingly on the sexual permissive repertoire. More explicit examples of sisters policing sexuality can be seen in the section to follow. Women who wanted to construct a clear balance between sexual agency and responsabilisation used this repertoire trying to construct a subject who is sexually active but responsible and would end up subjugating their sisters' sexual desire and policing sexuality.

5.4. Repertoires of responsabilisation and risk

In describing their experiences of talking about sex with their sisters, the participants drew heavily on the sexual responsibility and risk repertoires. There were subtle differences between the responsabilisation repertoire and risk repertoires but they both worked to police sexuality albeit in different ways. The responsabilisation repertoire was used as a method for managing risk to one's sexual health. As a result, emphasis was placed on the individual's ability to make informed decisions about engaging in sexual intercourse, contraceptive use and reproduction. For example, age is often used to establish whether one is a reflexive sexual subject who is able to make informed decisions about sex and reproduction (Macleod, Moodley & Saville Young, 2015). Therefore, are you 'old enough' to have sex or have a baby? However, risky behaviour was construed as resisting responsabilisation through making a conscious decision to not take precaution against risk e.g. pregnancy and HIV regardless of the consequences to their sexual health. For example, being sexually active but not taking contraception when not 'ready' for reproduction was construed as knowingly participating in risky behaviour.

However, the responsabilisation and risk repertoires do not speak to sexual desire nor do they speak to the complexity of negotiating contraception within relationships and thus both function to promote abstinence by not engaging with the complexities of sexual relationships. The participants would therefore construct their experiences of sex talk with their sisters using responsabilisation and risk repertoires but would struggle to construct an agentic sexual subject

who is also sexually responsible. As a result, some of the participants would police their sister's sexuality and decisions while still positioning themselves as protectors of their sisters' sexual secrets and providers of sexual guidance positioning their sisters as irresponsible and irrational sexual subjects. This will be explored below.

5.4.1. Policing sexuality

The participants constructed sisterly sex talk as an activity, which involved policing sexual practices and womanhood even though these participants constructed liberal ideals about sex and sexuality in the broader text. The participants' talk suggested that there were boundaries within which their sisters had to practice their sexuality and failure to remain within these bounds resulted in the participants labelling their sisters' behaviour as sexually irresponsible. Therefore, the policing sexuality repertoire was used to construct a sexually explorative woman who is also construed as sexually irresponsible and risky. The policing sexuality repertoire was drawn upon when sisters resisted the participants' sexual guidance, which was construed as safe and responsible by the participants. In the extract below, Buhle draws on repertoires of desire and curiosity when talking about her sister's sexual behaviour. However, she also seems to be constructing a 'good' and a 'bad' way of performing sexuality and thus positions her sister as 'doing sex wrong':

Extract 14

Buhle: What makes it even worse is that I sat her down and said, "Yes, I also used to do these things but not the way you're doing them. Disappearing for 3 or 4 days. Yes, you do things but in the right way so that your parents don't find out (*laughs*) but she is doing it all publicly, hide these things from old people. [*Interview 2, page 1, line 31-34*]

Extract 14 is about Buhle's sister who is constructed as unable to hide her sexual exploration from her parents, which is construed by Buhle as sexually irresponsible behaviour. In policing her sister's behaviour Buhle talks about her own sexual behaviour in relation to her sister's sexual behaviour by saying, "Yes, I also used to do these things but not the way you're doing them. Disappearing for 3 or 4 days." In this utterance, Buhle gives her sister the agency to be sexually explorative thus encouraging desire as she is not saying "do not have sex". However, keeping one's sexual activity a secret is constructed as important for Buhle therefore shoring up the notion that sex should always be kept secret and practised on the fringes. In the extract, Buhle draws on her own sexual experiences to shore up her subject position as doing sexuality

the 'right' way. She positions herself as a desiring but also a sexually responsible subject because she has always 'done' her sexuality in secret, which is a subject position Buhle's sister, is construed as resisting. Therefore, within this repertoire, sisters are positioned as providing sexual guidance and encouraging sexual exploration, but also policing this sexuality when it conflicts with their own constructed values and beliefs about sex. Therefore, a responsible sexual subject in the sister-sister relations is construed as a sexually explorative subject who can successfully hide her sexual behaviour or pose as sexually pure and chaste to her parents. Similar to Buhle, who constructs a more receptive attitude towards her sister's sexual behaviour and only polices her inability to keep her sexual development secret, Lungi (in the below extract) encourages sexual exploration for her sister but emphasises the importance of using contraception.

Extract 15

Lungi: I don't know what she wanted and I didn't know that she was already sexually active but I realised that during December she came here often and I was surprised that "Oh she drinks?" okay wow. "Oh, she doesn't sleep at home" but I was like let me just keep my mouth shut and see. I didn't understand 'cause she is still young she could focus on her studies what's her problem? She would leave the others [cousins] and leave, go drink and then go to her boyfriend which is... when asked if she is on the injection... Do you go to [the clinic to] get the injection? You see what I mean? Because when going out for a nice time she mustn't come back with a baby. Go and get the injection, girl. "Yes, I am on the injection". Only to find that she is not. We would remind her and ask her about her clinic card. "No, I left it in [place]". How can you forget your card when you're here in [place] and forget it in [place], I mean you know your date? So you could already see that she was going to have a baby in fact she wanted this baby (okay). Because you can't keep being reminded and reminded about something you know. You know you creep out to see your boyfriend so you have to be on the injection if you don't want to have a baby.

[Interview 2, page 23-24, line 762-773]

Lungi is constructed as providing sexual guidance to her sister by insisting that she use contraception construing pregnancy as the consequence for sexual irresponsible behaviour such as being sexually active while not being on some sort of contraception to avoid unwanted pregnancy. Also inherent within this position of providing sexual guidance was the subject position of the rational sexual subject. Using this subject position Lungi positions herself as a

reflective individual who is always aware of the implications of her own sexual practices and she assumes that if she tells her sister to have protected sex or use contraceptives she will. However, Lungi's sister is constructed as resisting Lungi's sexual advice, and as a result is positioned as sexually irresponsible and irrational.

Evidence for this can be seen in extract 15 when Lungi says, "You know you creep out to see your boyfriend so you have to be on the injection if you don't want to have a baby". In the extract, Lungi constructs pregnancy as a risk inherent in sexual exploration. However, in the talk, Lungi is not saying, "Do not have sex you will get pregnant and possibly contract HIV". She is saying, "Do not have sex without being on some form of contraception" and suggests the needle thus the encouraging desire repertoire was tied to responsabilisation. Desire does not operate outside of responsabilisation but it was a complex territory for the participants to negotiate and hence the amount of policing that resulted. However, within the intricacies of encouraging desire and responsabilisation was risk. In the same extract (extract 15), Lungi starts as permissive and as the extract progresses she sarcastically claims that her sister "wanted this baby"; thus, despite all her sexual guidance about consistent contraceptive use, her sister got pregnant. Implying that it was a planned pregnancy and that it is ludicrous for her sister to want this pregnancy during adolescence Lungi thus constructs irresponsibility as the choice her sister made. Her sister's decision to reject her sexual guidance is the reason why she is pregnant now; Lungi thus considers her blameworthy for her pregnancy.

In the excerpt above, being a responsible sexual subject is constructed by Lungi as being on contraceptives. To do this, she has to construct her sister as not ready for motherhood; but the sister resists this sexual guidance. Hence, Lungi says "How would you forget your card when you're here in [place] and forget it in [place] I mean you know your date so you could already see that she was going to have a baby in fact she wanted this baby (sarcastically) (okay)". Lungi then frames her sisters' pregnancy as planned. This, however, does not take her sister's lived experiences into account to produce a nuanced understanding of the contextual factors that introduce barriers to negotiating contraception within relationships. For example, the contraceptive injection as advocated for by Lungi in extract 5 nor does it take into account the possibility that an adolescent can make an active choice to get pregnant. These complexities and decisions are often taken for granted as irresponsible sexual behaviour by the participants thus policing sexuality. More of this kind of policing of sexual practices and reproduction can be seen in the section that follows.

5.4.2. *Fall from Grace*

In describing their experiences of sexual socialisation with their sisters, a number of participants policed reproduction. Therefore, there was a construed 'right' or 'wrong' way to do reproduction. For example, teenage pregnancy, having many children or having children out of the confines of marriage were construed as a 'fall from grace' for women. Drawing on the assumption that reproduction is only for heterosexual married adults, the women's narratives sometimes constructed their sisters' pregnancy as a 'fall' or as sexually irresponsible. A 'fall' in the women's narratives signified a 'fall from grace' or 'failure' in performing 'true' womanhood through e.g. becoming pregnant and thus unable to retain the 'pure' and 'chaste' femininities associated with adolescence. Therefore, they would police their sibling's reproduction drawing on the things that they felt were unconventional or "embarrassing" about the reproduction. Extract 16 and 17 serve as evidence of narratives by Sive constructing her siblings' reproduction in relation to herself.

Extract 16

Sive: [dramatically takes a sip of drink] our brothers and their many children [sarcastically] (YN *laughs*) 2,3,4,5 there's 5, he has 5 children but he's younger than me. He's actually the youngest but already has 5 children. Then my sister has one girl and 2 boys from her marriage and the girl is a 'fall'. [Interview 1, page 1, line 14-17]

In the above text, Sive uses humour and sarcasm to construct her brother's many children and as a result, there is a shared joke between Sive and me about male reproduction, which humourously accepts men's decisions to procreate with a variety of women and have many children even when they are younger than their female siblings. Within this construction Sive jokingly says, "Our brothers and their many children (YN *laughs*) 2,3,4,5 there's 5" and in contrast towards the end of the extract, Sive reports that her sister has two boys and explicitly states that "the girl is a 'fall'". However, in the extract Sive's brother's children are not constructed as a fall from grace, his reproduction was accepted as 'silliness' and a normal male 'inability to control himself'. Whereas when Sive spoke about her sister's children she demonstrates her desire to specify which children were born within the confines of marriage and which were not. In addition, referring to the one child from before marriage as a 'fall' connoting a 'fall from grace' and thus implicitly polices her sister's reproduction. Moreover, there is no humour expressed in constructing her sister's reproduction; therefore, there was a gendered understanding of Sive's brother's reproduction and that of her sister because there was a constructed difference in rules of reproduction for men and women.

Extract 17

Sive: She has 2 from her marriage and 1 who is older, her 'fall'. [Interview 1, page 3, line 86]

In extract 17, Sive constructs her sister's reproduction again within the same interview, emphasising the difference in her sister's marital status when her children were conceived. She is implicitly ascribing the children within marriage different status to the one her sister had before marriage. Sive's policing of her sister's reproduction, however, becomes apparent in the extract below where she constructs her own reproduction.

Extract 18

Sive: I am a mother of 2 boys [Interview 1, page 1, line 9]

Extract 18 becomes important because it demonstrates how women can oppress each other resembling the effects of patriarchy. Sive and her sister had a child at around the same time during their adolescent years before marriage. As a result, one of Sive's sons was conceived before she got married while her younger son was conceived within marriage. However, she does not state the difference between her children in the narrative compared to extract 16 and 17 where Sive repeatedly stated that her sister had a child from out of wedlock by referring to the child as her sister's 'fall'. She thus construes her sister's reproduction differently in relation to her own and positions herself as 'doing' reproduction better than her siblings and thus as a 'better' woman than her sister. Some participants drew on this 'fall from grace' narrative in more implicit ways. In the extract 19 below Nwabisa implicitly 'slut-shames' her sister for her uncertainty about the paternity of her child constructing this as abnormal and as a 'fall from grace', see below:

Extract 19

Nwabisa: She just... the only person she used to tell me about is the father of her child (oh) she really used to talk to me about the father of her child. That "I went to visit Bonga and this and that and that happened". All of a sudden she would say... after telling me about Bonga. She would come up with someone else while we were talking and then you would find that Bonga is no longer the father of the child. Then she would say, "No, my sister can you see that Zandile looks like this guy? He's Zandile's father" (Really?). [Interview 1, page 8, line 190-194]

Nwabisa begins the narrative by saying that sex talk with her sister is mostly about experiences with the father of her child. Nwabisa's telling, however, begins to judge her sister's uncertainty

about the paternity of child when she says, “All of a sudden she would say... after telling me about Bonga. She would come up with someone else.” It is here that her sister’s constructed uncertainty about who Zandile’s father begins possibly suggesting multiple partners. Nwabisa’s use of the words “all of a sudden” and “come up with someone else” gives the impression that her sister randomly decides to choose someone as the father of her child without giving this a considerable amount of thought suggesting that women should always know who the fathers of their children are. If they do not know the paternity of their children they are doing their sexuality ‘wrong’, are sexually irresponsible and have fallen from grace. Towards the end of extract 19, Nwabisa’s sister is constructed as confirming that Bonga is not the father but still with some degree of uncertainty. Nwabisa constructs this as an anomaly and using the ‘fall from grace’ narrative judges her sister for not knowing who Zandile’s father is. This enables her to position her sister as a failed or lesser woman. The above extracts serve as evidence of how heteronormativity ‘works’ to marginalise certain women’s reproduction by othering some of their experiences as a social ill and not the norm or standard in order to regulate and restrict procreation to stable heterosexual relationship where the paternity of the baby is known. This demonstrates how women can restrict each other’s reproductive rights within their sister-sister relationship drawing on patriarchal notions of the family.

5.4.3. Controlling and commodifying reproduction

The controlling and commodifying of reproduction within sisterhood was also inherent in the sexual responsabilisation and risk repertoire. This was a complex repertoire and participants who had HIV positive or unemployed sisters sometimes drew on it. HIV positive sisters were construed as risking their own health by deciding to procreate; hence, the women policed this decision. The women constructed their sisters as having gone through hardships subsequent to their sister’s decision to have a baby e.g. paralysis or miscarriages and often ended up policing their sexual behaviour and decisions. Participants construed reproduction as requiring extra precaution when performed by HIV positive bodies; therefore, they did not allow their sisters much agency when it came to reproduction. On the other hand, unemployed women were constructed as sexually irresponsible as they were construed as unable to financially support their children; thus, reproduction was commodified. This is evident in extract 20 and 21 below:

Extract 20

Sive: She finally got discharged but now had a problem with her legs. But you know a part of me blames her because I think you shouldn’t be having children when you are not

feeling well. But she had another baby, her youngest child now. *[Interview 1, page 8, 209-213]*

Sive's sister was hospitalised and diagnosed with HIV around the same time when Sive was giving birth to her second baby. Sive asserts that during this time her sister had problems with her legs due to the symptoms of HIV, which had affected her spine and also presented with psychotic symptoms. However, soon after being discharged from hospital Sive's sister decided to have a baby and in extract 20 above, Sive talks about her sister's deteriorating health due to her pregnancy, which resulted in paralysis. She argues, "I think you shouldn't be having children when you are not feeling well" and further constructs her sister as blameworthy for her paralysis as she should have recovered first before deciding to have a baby. Therefore, Sive's sister's decision to have a child is constructed as irrational and sexually irresponsible while Sive positions herself as a 'knower' and a rational sexual subject who understands the importance of recuperating first before deciding to procreate. A similar account to Sive is relayed by Buhle and both participants draw on biomedical repertoires in order to police their sisters' sexual behaviour. "The biomedical discourse constructs the ways that patients should understand, regulate and experience their bodies" (Noone & Stephens, 2008, p.715)

Extract 21

Buhle: No, she miscarried both of her babies. It's because she does not do those prenatal steps when one is HIV. There is a pill that they give you that is meant to protect the baby and all that. She never used to go to the clinic she would not go to the clinic for over 3 months and I was shocked. How can you not go to the clinic because there is something growing inside and anything can happen? So you are supposed to go to the doctor each and every month to see what's happening. She never used to go for check-ups. I would say "These pills are from June, what's the date today? You have been hogging and not drinking these pills. *[Interview 1, page 10, line 283-289]*

In the extract, Buhle constructed her sister as resisting prenatal care and this behaviour is construed as the reason for her two miscarriages. For example, "It's because she does not do those prenatal steps when one is HIV." This discourse subjugates the common experiences of stigmatization that HIV positive people often report, including stigmatization by health practitioners at clinics. Therefore, Buhle constructs seeking prenatal health care as a simple unproblematic process.

Drawing on biomedical repertoires Buhle continues to police and attempt to regulate her sister's pregnancy asserting, "There is a pill that they give you that is meant to protect the baby", "She never used to go to the clinic", "She never used to go for check-ups" and "You have been hogging and not drinking these pills". These utterances work to position her sister as an irresponsible and risky sexual subject while positioning Buhle as a provider of sexual guidance and a rational sexual subject who would not perform her sexuality like her sister. Her repeated use of the words "never used to" and "supposed to" construct an extreme case of negligence and rationalise her argument that her sister's decision to resist the advice she is given is the reason for her miscarriage. Buhle, moreover, attempts to control her sister's pregnancy by personifying her sister's foetus, constructing it as also disapproving of her sexual behaviour when she says, "How do you think that baby in your belly feels when you keep doing what you are doing?" The utterance construes Buhle's sister's behaviour as hurting her unborn child and thus she personifies her sister's foetus in order to problematise her sister's sexual behaviour.

In the above extracts, both Sive and Buhle's talk about their sister's pregnancy suggests that reproduction should occur in a certain way i.e. without risk. Their talk works to control and judge behaviour when their sisters resisted these societal expectations of women. For example, Sive constructs her sister as blameworthy for her paralysis in extract 20 and Buhle implicitly constructs her sister as not taking certain pills thus positions her as blameworthy for her miscarriages. Moreover, Sive and Buhle position themselves as 'knowers' and 'experts' in reproduction, thus positioning their sisters as irresponsible.

Participants also did not afford the agency to reproduce to their unemployed sisters and this is evident in Lungi's construction of talks with her sister. Lungi often positions herself as 'doing sexuality' well because she had a child at a time when she was employed. The following extract is an example of this:

Extract 22

Lungi: Ja I think she figured she should have another baby (okay) even though uhhh uh she should at least get a job and try to support the children and not rely on a man. Because having a child is hard it comes with a lot of responsibilities, it has to be clothed, fed and it has to be schooled, you see? [Interview 1, page 5, line 131-134]

In the extract, Lungi judges the decision to have another baby while unemployed. She constructs her sister as unaware of the expenses that come with parenting, drawing on socio-economic standing thus restricting reproduction only to a few - those who can afford it resembling the effects of the family planning repertoire (Mavuso, 2014). The family planning repertoire assumes a rational individual who 'plans' pregnancies to coincide with correct financial security, a stable relationship and emotional circumstances. However, in the extract Lungi also constructs herself as empowering herself in order to provide for her children instead of expecting a man to provide for thus rejecting heteronormative notions of femininity.

In extract 23 below, Khanya reinforces the notion of commodifying reproduction when she constructs her sisters as having advised her against early motherhood and the importance of financial independence construing early reproduction as not an identity that women should readily take up.

Extract 23

Khanya: For me sometimes they like... they advise me like... having a child in the early stages is not right because you might have complications especially when you are not working because a baby requires money. Maybe you were studying and now you can no longer continue studying, you see what I mean? It's like that. *[Interview 2, page 3, line 84-87]*

In the above extract, Khanya construes the sexual socialisation that occurs in her sisterly relationship as having played a major role in her decisions against early reproduction. She further implicitly constructs reproduction as resulting in dropping out of school, thus reinforcing the notion that schooling and mothering are mutually exclusive. As a result, the participants' response to their sister's reproduction was constructed positively when their sisters were employed and self-sufficient while restrictive when their sisters were not financially independent or physically healthy. While, I do not deny the advantages of education, financial security and healthy pregnancies, I problematise the above repertoires because they work to marginalise women who find themselves in these situations. The controlling and commodifying of reproduction function of the talk that was elicited by the participants was also tied to the narrative of sisters as 'out-there'.

5.4.4. Sister constructed as "Out-there"

Participants used a pattern of words such as 'out there' in the extracts, it appears to have multiple meanings. Firstly, the term 'out there' was used to construct clear distinctions between

the participants' own sexual behaviour and that of their sisters (see extract 24). Secondly, the sisters were constructed as 'out-there' when they were construed as having crossed the line of acceptable sexual behaviour. Therefore, one was deemed as 'out there' when they were construed as beyond reasonable talk or beyond listening to other's advice (see extract 25). So, the term 'out-there' refers to conduct, but it also refers to place. Doing these illicit sexual acts meant being away from the home, away from school and other spaces deemed correct and safe for young women. Being 'out there' was assisted by being young and frivolous (see extract 25 and 26). Within this narrative, the participants constructed some of their sister's sexual behaviour as more sexually explorative than their own. The out-there narrative was construed as disruptive to personal progress and because their sisters were 'out-there' they were construed as ending up in a host of circumstances which caused them to stray from 'good' womanhood. This is illustrated in the extracts below:

Extract 24

Lungi: And then again you get jealous because she has a boyfriend, why does she have a boyfriend? (YN: uhh huh) cause she should study and stay away from boyfriends (*laughs*), you see? (YN: Yes) So it's like that like wasn't like I... I wasn't that out there so I was always at home at all times. [*Interview 1, page 8, line 230-233*]

Extract 25

Buhle: She was already mature. She was already experiencing her periods and everything (okay) because we found out that she was pregnant. It happened in [place] when she was still with her mom but her mother passed away and she had to come and stay with us in [place]. Then she started school at [school] and while she was in school she decided to drop out. I realised that she is very out there and I tried to sit her down. I tried to talk to her but realised that she was very out there. [*Interview 1, page 1, line 13-17*]

Extract 26

Lungi: My other sister has two children but she does stay with us after... she went to school and then dropped out (okay) she dropped out when she was in... in standard 9 (okay). She dropped out when she was in standard 9 and we begged her to continue with school and whatever. Then she had a child (woah) she has a child but she was forward I mean she was very out there, you see and you know there was a big age gap between us, you see (okay). When when... there was a difference even in maturity. She was very out there she enjoyed that life, she enjoyed being out there (okay). [*Interview 1, page 7, line 191-196*]

The repertoire works to position the participants' own sexual behaviour as different from their sisters' sexual behaviour. In the above extracts, Lungi and Buhle construct the desire to date as contributing to their sisters being 'out-there'. In addition, this 'out-there' sexual behaviour was construed as hindering education and thus as problematic. For example, in extract 24 and 26 Lungi constructs herself as doing sexuality better than her sisters. This is evident when Lungi says, "why does she have a boyfriend? (YN: uhh huh) cause she should study and stay away from boyfriends (*laughs*)," in extract 24. She problematises her sister's decision to date and construes it as a potential hindrance to education and later in the extract, Lungi positions herself as a different sexual subject from her sister when she says her sister was 'out there' while she chose to stay at home. Therefore, she positions herself as a 'good' woman in turn positioning her sister as sexually forward and 'out-there', thus policing femininity while promoting abstinence. Buhle does something similar to Lungi in extract 25, she constructs her sister as pregnant and having dropped out of school and then attributes this to being 'out-there'. She further construes the sexual guidance that she offered her sister as ineffective by saying "I realised that she is very out there and I tried to sit her down. I tried to talk to her but realised that she was very out there". Buhle's sister rejected this sexual guidance and chose sexual agency, which Buhle construes as potentially harmful to her own future. In extract 26, Lungi's sister is also constructed as having resisted sexual guidance and being 'out-there' is construed as a choice she made and a life she enjoyed when she says "She was very out there she enjoyed that life, she enjoyed being out there".

In extract 27 below, Khanya also others her sister's sexual behaviour like Lungi and Buhle. However, she uses this othering to demonstrate her sister's influence on her own sexual behaviour.

Extract 27

Khanya: I learnt some things from them. For example, my [oldest] sister is secretive but if she doesn't understand something she wants to know if "Uhhm I wonder why is this like that should it be that way?" (okay), you see? I also learnt something from the other one [older sister], I told you she was 'out-there' too much, you see? So she taught me that I shouldn't be 'out there' and that I should teach Pumla who is younger than me how to carry herself, you see? [*Interview 2, page 5, line 136-140*]

In the above extract, Khanya constructs sex talks with both her sisters as having influenced her decision-making in different ways. Firstly, her oldest sister is constructed as secretive but with the ability to ask questions about sex and sexuality when she does not understand something.

While her older sister who passed away from HIV/AIDS has influenced her not to be ‘out there’ perhaps alluding to assuming conservative sexual behaviour and thus constructing her sister as a bad example from which she learnt how not to ‘do sexuality’. She further states that she has bestowed this information about sexuality and how to be woman onto her niece. Extract 27 however also polices sexual behaviour like Lungi and Buhle in extract 24, 25 and 26. Although the participants drew on a secrecy and a responsabilisation repertoire when presenting their experiences of sex talk with their sisters they also often drew on repertoires of risk to construct their experiences of sex talk with their sisters and this is discussed in section 5.5.

5.4.5 Repertoire of risk

In discussing their experiences of sex talk with their sisters, participants also drew on a repertoire of risk. This sex talk constructed by the participants tended to position their sisters as riskier sexual subjects compared to themselves. The risk repertoires as mentioned above, was also used to police female sexual desire because the participants’ sisters’ sexual decisions were construed as having real consequences for other people’s lives. This repertoire was also used as a scare tactic resembling the morality and disease repertoire in parent-child sexual socialisation literature (Lesch & Kruger, 2005; Fine & McClelland, 2006; Martin & Luke, 2010). This repertoire, in turn, positions the participants and their sisters in the following ways. The participant’s sister’s sexual behaviour and womanhood is positioned as problematic and potentially risky and is thus policed. The following extracts are some examples of this:

Extract 28

Buhle: I asked her and she said that they use it [condom] and I said that can’t be because the last time you were pregnant (mhhh). How did you get pregnant if you use protection? (ja) which means you do not use protection and I am worried about other people’s children (ewe) so that means even with your new boyfriend the one that works at [name] stores you don’t use a condom with him. I am sure of it, and there is going to be another fight between the two of them and she will go find another one and then another one. Wow then I worry about my brother or (mmh). You see? Because I test all the time. I get tested all the time (mmhh yho). *[Interview 2, page 7, line 203-209]*

Extract 28 is a description of Buhle’s talk drawing on a risk repertoire. Buhle’s sister is HIV positive and in the above extract Buhle emphasises the importance of using protection. However, the talk is confrontational and results in a policing of her sister’s sexual behaviour. The construction of her sister as a risky sexual subject is foregrounded by saying “How did you get pregnant if you use protection?” and this functions to problematise her sister’s sexual

behaviour and also ‘warrants’ Buhle’s concerns about her sister resisting her sexual guidance on the importance of using protection particularly when HIV positive. Buhle reinforces the construction of her sister as a risky sexual subject and inconsistent protection user by asserting her sister is having unprotected sex with her “new boyfriend” who she will break up with soon and then have unprotected sex with several other men. Her construction of her sister as a risk and a danger to the lives of other people becomes apparent when she says “and I am worried about other people’s children”. However, in this talk there is no acknowledgement of the difficulty of disclosing HIV status within relationships or of negotiating protected sex in relationships. Buhle further reinforces this idea by saying, “Wow then I worry about my brother” making her sister a threat to her immediate family by constructing her brother as someone who could be a ‘sexual victim’ to a risky sexual subject like her sister and thus contract HIV/AIDS.

Buhle then makes references to her own sexual behaviour towards the end of the extract using repetition to cement the importance of testing regularly for HIV. In saying, “Because I test all the time. I get tested all the time” Buhle thus implicitly positions herself as sexually responsible; she positions herself as a responsible sexual subject and a ‘good’ woman. Therefore, removing the possibility of her potentially being a sexual threat to the lives of others in order to shore up her own femininity which is a sexually explorative femininity but also informed by traditional notions of femininity e.g. monogamy. A similar construction is evident in Sive’s talk who also constructs her sister’s sexual behaviour as risky and thereafter emphasises the stark differences in relation to her own sexual behaviour and this can be seen below:

Extract 29

Sive: Her life was like, you know (.) When she found out that she is HIV positive she said she was not going to blame anyone because she never used to condomise and that she never used to have one boyfriend at a time (okay) so life for her was not easy because (clicks tongue) she was, how can I put this? [*Interview 1, page 8, line 226-229*]

In the above extract, Sive’s sister is constructed as having been risky. Sive uses the words “never” twice, firstly, referring to condom-use and secondly to monogamy which ‘works’ to exaggerate her sister’s sexual behaviour but also positions her sister as a risky sexual subject. The absence of talk about Sive’s own sexual behaviour within this narrative conversely positions her as a responsible sexual subject who is monogamous and a consistent condom-

user, thereby positioning herself as a rational sexual subject who has a better grasp of safe and responsible sexual behaviour. This policing of sexual desire and behaviour makes the ‘danger and disease’ repertoire seen in parent-child talk available for Sive and Buhle’s sisters while resisted for themselves in extract 28 and 29. Moreover, Sive and Buhle, positioned themselves as sexually explorative but responsible in relation to their sisters in order to negotiate a sexualised femininity while still shoring up their own femininity as ‘good’ women. This othering of their sisters’ sexual behaviour can be attributed their desire to be seen as responsible and non-risky sexual subjects by the interviewer and society. In some cases, the participants constructed themselves as providing sexual guidance to their sisters in order to prevent sexual risk and this can be seen in extract 30 below, which is a description of talk between Buhle and her sister.

Extracts 30

Buhle: And now she is also unwell and to find out that when she was 18 years old that she is HIV positive so she is currently on ARVs she was actually meant to arrive today because she has to go and fetch her treatment on Monday and then leave again on Tuesday. And you know I told my mom about this I want to ask if her boyfriend is on the ARVs or not because it’s not safe for you to be ARVs and not condomising while the boyfriend is not taking ARVs while she’s not taking them. She’s still not safe they should both go to the clinic and *bhuti* must also get tested and check his CD4 count then they must put him on treatment so that they can then be both safe. So I am still waiting for her to arrive so I can talk to her. [*Interview 1, page 4-5, line 114-122*]

In this extract, Buhle constructs her sister as vulnerable to risk and thus plans to talk to her about the futility of being on ARV treatment while still having unprotected sex. Buhle constructs her sister as at risk to reinfection by her boyfriend, who she assumes is also HIV positive but not on ARV treatment, if she is not condomising when engaging in sexual intercourse with him. In this extract, Buhle construes her sister as at risk and requiring sexual guidance, thereby positioning her sister as an unknowing or uninformed desiring sexual subject and herself as the ‘knower’ and ‘protector’ of her sister’s sexual health. Therefore, this depicts the sister-sister relationship as one that is open to ‘sex talk’ in order to retain the wellbeing of the other sister through shoring up the position of a responsible/rational sexual subject and avoiding risk.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter has explored how women talk about sex and reproduction in their sister-sister relationships, the subject positions within the talk and how the talk restricts or shores up ways of ‘doing sex’ in society for women. The dominant repertoires of secrecy and responsabilisation and risk as well as the related sub-repertoires present in the interviews indicate that all participants engaged in talk about sex and sexuality with their sisters. Drawing on the secrecy repertoire and the responsabilisation and risk interpretative repertoires the participants’ sisters were constructed as inconsistently sharing their sexual experiences with their sisters. Thus, the participants constantly negotiated ‘sex talk’ with their sisters within an ideological dilemma of openness and secrecy. The construction of the undesirability of explicit sex talk, while at the same time constructing sisterhood as a place where sexual secrets can be kept from parents alluded to openness while the negotiating status repertoire introduced secrecy sometimes. Inherent in these interpretative repertoires were ways of talking about sex with their sisters, which inform how the participants ‘do sex and reproduction’ in society. The construction of explicit sex talk as undesirable and distance (growing up in different areas) was seen as introducing secrecy about sex and sexuality between sisters, thus lessening the talk between sisters and thereby making the participants outsiders to their sisters' sexual development.

The secrecy interpretative repertoires and its subject positions, I argue, portray how women can facilitate each other’s sexual development providing sexual guidance and protecting each other’s sexual secrets. However, the sexual advice sometimes policed sexuality and more explicitly the participants drew on responsabilisation and risk repertoires to police their sisters’ sexual behaviour. This demonstrates how women can police other women’s sexual behaviour by subjugating stories of HIV stigma and stories of the difficulty of negotiating protected sex in relationships resembling the effects of patriarchy and thus also limiting their own sexual freedom in the process. This is because while participants took up subject positions as their sister’s protector of sexual secrets and provider of sexual guidance, they also upheld conventional meanings of femininity e.g. women as monogamous, sexually passive and ‘pure’.

Drawing on traditional femininity, which their sisters were constructed as resisting set the scene for the policing and oppression of agentic sexual subjects (who were often also economically deprived), thus creating hegemony in an otherwise egalitarian relationship. This is because the participants construed their sisters as ‘failing’ to ‘do sex and womanhood’ in these instances and as a result they would position themselves as the ‘better’ woman. In addition, participants represented their sisters as more sexually permissive than they were. This was a powerful

repertoire, which positioned their sisters as sexually irresponsible and thus more susceptible to danger. The interviewed women also policed their sisters' reproduction through drawing on repertoires of 'good' womanhood and heteronormativity and all chosen repertoires worked to position the participants as the 'better sister' and the 'better woman'. Therefore, the participants tended to vilify and construct their sisters as risky and in turn normalised their own behaviour.

Chapter 6

Findings: 'Psychological pay-off' in narratives

6.1. Fine-grained reading

Having described the dominant repertoires present in the study's interviews in the previous chapter, the present chapter conducts a psychosocial reading of the texts, combining a discursive approach with a psychoanalytic reading of the affective processes such as anxieties and desires that may be understood to be (consciously and unconsciously) motivating these women to invest in particular repertoires over others when presenting their experiences of talking about sex with their sisters. As discussed in the theory chapter, the psychosocial framework argues that we can understand people's repertoires on a topic within a certain context through attending to their personal investments in them. Thus, another level of analysis follows the discursive reading of the data. This psychosocial analysis requires undertaking a fine-grained reading of two chosen core narratives to explore questions of motivated telling within the talk using psychoanalytic concepts. Biographical data and reflexivity are used to enrich understanding of these particular isiXhosa women's sexual and reproductive talk within sisterly relationships. This analysis attempts to address the 'why' questions, exploring the emotional investments behind why women constructed their experiences of talking about sex with their sister in the particular ways described. That is, why do these women emotionally invest in certain repertoires over others? I therefore offer a psychosocial reading of women's emotional investments in certain repertoires of sex and reproduction over others.

6.2. Concentric reflexivity

The psychosocial reading of the text will draw on Kleinian concepts to interpret the data while using the principle of concentric reflexivity to analyse the data and thus understand women's experiences of talking about sex with their sisters. In concentric reflexivity each paragraph represents a different reading of the core narrative, focusing on a different aspect of the narrative, which taken together build a picture of the interpersonal and intrapersonal 'reasons' for investments. To do this, concentric reflexivity requires attending successively to the *content, structure, interruptions, linguistic formulations* and *reflexivity* in a given text to understand the available subject positions and their emotional investments constructed by the interviewee and interviewer within the chosen interpretative repertoires (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). The first chosen core narrative analysed in this section is extracted from a follow-

up interview with Sive, an isiXhosa speaking 38-year old woman, while the second interview is taken from an interview with Buhle, a 35-year-old isiXhosa speaking woman.

6.2.1. Core narrative

The first core narrative was selected from an interview with Sive. I chose this narrative because it contains instances of active co-construction of Sive's sexual experiences in relation to her sister between myself and Sive, which portray the presence of conscious and unconscious conflictual forces at play during the interview, indicated through nervousness, awkwardness and laughter.

6.2.2. Biographical information

Sive, now a widowed woman, was born in [place] but her father was a pastor so Sive and her family used to travel all over the Eastern Cape depending on where he was placed to deliver his ministry that particular year. Her mother was a stay-at-home mother. Sive is the oldest of three children, two girls and a boy. Therefore, Sive has one sister, Pam, with whom she asserts she has a close relationship. She indicates that they were often referred to as twins when they were younger because they looked alike, although, according to Sive, Pam was thinner. The participant reports that she had an open relationship with her sister and they spoke explicitly about their intimate relationships and sexual encounters even though Pam hid her pregnancy from everyone including Sive by tying pantyhose around her belly for months due to 'embarrassment' when she got pregnant during her teenage years. Sive also states that when Pam found out that she was HIV positive in 2006, she was the first person Pam disclosed her HIV status to but unfortunately, the virus spread to her spine. Therefore, Pam has been in a wheelchair for around 4-years now. However, Sive says her relationship with her sister has shifted from talking about sex in their young years to talking about marriage problems in their middle adulthood years. These sisters both got pregnant at around the same year in their late adolescent years, Sive at 18 and her sister at 16- years. Below is a re-transcription of an extract from Sive's interview. The analysed material was Sive's response to a question about whether her sister has contributed in any way to her knowledge about sex.

In the section that follows, I present the chosen core narrative Sive drew on. The core narratives were re-transcribed using Gee's (1991) idea units using lines that could stand on their own "both syntactically and topically"(Emerson & Frosh, 2005, p.57). Thereafter the produced lines were numbered and this can be seen in extract 1 below:

Extract 1

1. YN: Okay... so you're saying you girls talk
2. and that's how you know that there is this thing we call sex,
3. your sister, didn't she play a role?
4. how has your sister played a role in everything?
5. Sive: In what?
6. YN: With the first time you found out that there is something called sex
7. didn't your sister maybe play a role?
8. Sive: (*boldly*) To tell you the truth
9. my sister is younger than me
10. but she matured before me, (*YN laughs*)
11. she slept with a boy before me (*both laugh hysterically*)
12. so I was almost like the younger one (mmh)
13. because by the time I started doing these things
14. she had started doing them long before me.
15. YN: So you kept asking her?
16. Sive: She was experienced [sarcastically]
17. so I had to be the one asking for her advice (*YN laughs*)
18. YN: what did she say?
19. Sive: You see, on the first day
20. I came back complaining that
21. I don't understand why many girls sneak out at night to see their boyfriends
22. if this thing is this painful (yes?)
23. "I don't think I will do it again".
24. My little sister said to me,
25. do it again you will eventually be alright (uh huh) (*both laugh*)
26. so I went back again (*both laugh*).
27. and like she said I ended up being alright (okay)
28. YN: Alright, it's nice then.
29. Sive: Growing up... (*laughs*)
30. YN: Yes, growing up (*laughs*)
31. uhhm okay so she told you to do it again (mhh)
32. but after you had done it again...

33. I feel like the papers I'm carrying are distracting you.
34. Like I am going to ask questions,
35. we're having a conversation (Sive *laughs*).
36. Uhhm okay, so after a while
37. and after trying it again
38. and gaining your own experience
39. do you think that after some time you guys now started advising each other?
40. or did it remain one sided or?
41. Sive: uh no, we are the kind of people who talk about these things,
42. we
43. I will tell you a very funny story
44. When... one has a boyfriend
45. she comes back and shares
46. and says "Wow, guys I didn't sleep,
47. I've never seen one that big"
48. YN: Whoa!!... (*both laugh hysterically*)
49. Sive: Or "Ag no I was bored" (*both laugh*)
50. *Mxm* waste of my time (*both laugh*)
51. so we are very open (yes)
52. we come back and chat.

6.3 Analysis

6.3.1. Content

The first level of analysis required me to attend to the *content* of the text. Content refers to the discourses and associated subject positions the interviewee draws on within the narrative thus, what are the repertoires being drawn on and the resultant subject positions? (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). There are two distinctive interpretative repertoires present in the above extract. Firstly, Sive draws on a repertoire of permissive sexuality, which "refers to a central proposition about sex based on the belief that sex with many partners can be both pleasurable and harmless" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.14). She uses this permissive sexuality repertoire to construct two different subjects- her sister as sexually explorative and herself as hesitant thereby othering her sister's sexual experiences. This othering is evident in (1.9-14) where she constructs her sister as younger than her but already engaging in sexual activity using the following utterances "matured before me" in (1.10), "slept with a boy before me" in (1.11) and

“by the time I started doing these things she had started doing them long before me” in (1.13-14). She, therefore, makes the subject position of the desiring sexual subject and ‘knower’ (Macleod et al., 2015) available for her sister. In contrast, Sive takes up traditional female sexuality subject positions. The subject positions Sive readily takes up will be discussed in greater detail the second interpretative repertoire to demonstrate Sive’s investment in juxtaposing permissive and traditional female sexuality. For example, sexually innocent and late bloomer even though these subject positions change towards the end of the extract.

More examples of the discourse of permissive sexuality at work can also be seen in line (24-26) where Sive’s constructs her sister as someone who inducted her into sex by saying “My little sister said to me, do it again you will eventually be alright”. Here, Sive’s sister is positioned as someone who disrupts the traditional gendered ideologies of restrictive female sexuality and presents the discourses of pleasure and desire in sexual intercourse. Particularly, she encourages her sister to engage in sexual intercourse again thus normalising the women’s first sexual experience as sometimes painful and sex as something Sive might eventually enjoy by saying, “you will eventually be alright” (1.25). Sive’s sister is therefore constructed as a woman who enjoys sex and engages in sexual activity for her own physical pleasure and not only to please men; hence, she encourages Sive to “do it again”. Furthermore, Sive draws on a discourse of permissive sexuality (in line 44-51) where Sive is construed as having gradually gained her own sexual experiences, which she shares with her sister. Herein, a humorous account of different sexual partners can be seen as Sive describes their talk about their sexual experiences, constructing some as pleasurable while others as not thus making the agentic sexual subject position available for her and her sister, as women who talk ‘openly’ about sex.

The second interpretative repertoire Sive draws on in the core narrative is one of restrictive sexuality – this repertoire is more implicit. Her investment in restrictive sexuality coheres around a shared meaning of the desirability of delayed sexual intercourse for women and can be seen in Sive’s humorous account of her younger sister’s sexual curiosity at the beginning of the narrative. Here, Sive says, “To tell you the truth my sister is younger than me but she matured before me, *(YN laughs)* she slept with a boy before me *(both laugh hysterically)* so I was almost like the younger one (mmh) because by the time I started doing these things she had started doing them long before me. YN: So you kept asking her? Sive: She was mature [sarcastically] so I had to be the one asking for her advice *(YN laughs)*” in line (8-17). In this repertoire, Sive positions herself as a ‘late bloomer’ construing delayed sexual debut for

women as an idealised feminine sexual subject position in turn positioning her sister as sexually curious and forward. Drawing on these discourses, she positions herself as a different sexual subject from her sister.

Moreover, to reinforce differences between her own sexual practices and that of her sister, Sive repeatedly constructs herself as “like the younger one” in (l.9). Therefore, positioning herself as the sexually inexperienced and immature one in relation to her sister by drawing on age, alluding that one must be older in order to make rational and responsible choices with respect to sexual intercourse and the involved risks. Sive’s investment in this age repertoire (in l. 9-12 & l.24) also functions to make Sive and her sister’s order in sexual debut unconventional and thus an anomaly. The assumption is that women should wait or preserve their sexuality and that the older sister should engage in sexual intercourse or experiment first. Drawing on this age repertoire implicitly makes Sive the responsible sexual subject who waited until she was 18 years in order to explore with her sexuality albeit with her sister’s help. This works to position her sister as sexually forward and allows Sive to take up positions of ‘good’ womanhood. Further evidence of Sive’s investment in the ‘late bloomer’ construction can be found in the broader text where she constructs the following account:

Well we talk about sex as girls girls girls but there is one thing that I had vowed to do. I swore that I would date people but once they wanted to have sex (.) I told myself that I would have sex the day I finished writing my matric exams (mhh) once I was 18 and that’s exactly how things happened.

6.3.2. Structure

The next step in the analysis is to explore the *structure* of the narrative, which investigates why the story is being told in *this* way, remembering that one can tell the same story in a variety of ways (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). For example, Sive could have chosen to tell me the ending first, in this case about her varied sexual experiences and then fill in the details, or she could start from the beginning, how her sexual development started and work her way to the end. Therefore, stories can be structured in different ways but the structure that is chosen has an effect. In order to establish this, I broke Sive’s core narrative into various sub-plots in order to understand the association and chronology of her story.

Sive’s narrative can be broken down into three sub-plots. The first sub-plot is in (l. 8-14) when she talks about delayed sexual debut in relation to her sister and, as argued in the first layer of analysis, this narrative works to construct clear differences between her and her sister. Sive’s

core narrative starts in a paranoid schizoid fashion where she constructs clear distinctions between her own sexual behaviour and that of her sister. Her desire to hold onto the 'late bloomer' subject position is evident in Sive sarcastic "she was mature" response in line 16. Therefore, I argue that her decision to first draw on her own sexual innocence in relation to her sister suggests that in negotiating a sexualised femininity for herself, it was important for Sive to construct someone else's sexual desire as greater than hers first and this will be supported below.

The second plot is in l.11-17, it is about how Sive's sister inducts Sive into sex, and here she gradually introduces her own sexual experiences while positioning her sister as her sexual advisor or provider of sexual guidance. However, she still holds onto the sexual differences between her and her sister constructed earlier in the text (l.8-14). She builds onto this story of her sister as sexually explorative and permissive by construing her sister as the sexually experienced one, 'knower' and 'expert' in line (16-17) by saying, "She was experienced [sarcastically] so I had to be the one asking for her advice (YN laughs)". As a result, positioning her sister as knower and expert allows Sive to take her sexual experiences to her sister (in line 21-23), where Sive reports on constructing her first sexual experience as painful and further says, "I don't think I will do it again" to her sister. Sive's desire to be sexually explorative is evident in this second sub-plot but sexual pleasure and experience are still associated with Sive's sister.

Finally, (in l.44-51) within the narrative, Sive diminishes the sexual behavioural differences between her and her sister in the narrative, when she constructs how they talk 'openly' about their experiences. Here, Sive is constructed as sexually developed and thus having gained her own sexual experiences. As a result, Sive now moves from the paranoid schizoid position that was seen earlier in the core narrative and adopts a more depressive position, which introduces her own sexual desire. Sive's construction of her sister as sexually explorative first in her sequence of narrating the story and then gradually shifting to a construction of similar sexual subjects demonstrates the 'trouble' in relation to negotiating a sexualised femininity and the work that women have to do in relation to talking about themselves as sexual subjects.

As mentioned above, there is a *progression* towards sexual desire and liberal sexual attitudes for Sive, which is not afforded to her sister. In the narrative, she positions herself as sexually explorative but still perhaps more 'feminine' than her sister because she waited to have sex and she went through the motions of finding sex as "painful" (l.22) and then eventually "alright"

(1.27). However, with the help of her sister she learnt to enjoy sex. I argue that it is important for Sive to construct her sister as more sexually explorative than her in order to defend against being seen as promiscuous by the researcher and it makes talking about herself as a sexual being less anxiety-provoking. Hence, the need to construct her sister as the sexually developed and provider of sexual guidance first and then slowly relaying her own sexual experiences. Thus, she uses the above mentioned storytelling structure with the different subplots to limit the anxiety of being deemed as ‘too sexual’, sexually forward or a ‘slut’.

6.3.3. Interruptions or breaches

The next step of analysis requires paying attention to the *interruptions or breaches* within the text. Interruptions refer to “narrative breaks or ruptures that point to emotional ‘work’” (Saville Young, 2011, p.49) caused by the participant or the researcher, for example, instances where the interviewee fails to maintain the well-crafted structured story telling (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). A breach is evident in line (33-35) where I get the impression that the presence of my interview schedule was hindering the rapport between us “I feel like the papers I’m carrying are distracting you. Like I am going to ask questions, we’re having a conversation (Sive laughs)”. Sive laughs indicating that she may have interpreted this comment as a joke but I do not join in the laughter thus demonstrating sincerity in my concerns. This comment is said abruptly and disrupts the flow of the story and I interpret it as clear indicator of my desire for a successful interview as well as my own anxiety about talking about sex with an older woman. Therefore, in many ways my interaction, like that of Sive and her sister, was upsetting the accepted status quo of how age dictates when to perform sexuality and who you speak to about sexuality. Interestingly, the comment is followed by Sive’s desire to share “a very funny story” in (1.36) which is where her decision to diminish the sexual differences between her own sexual behaviour and that of her sister and ownership of her own sexual desires happens.

6.3.4. Linguistic formulations

Engaging with the next layer of analysis pays attention to the *linguistic formulations* within the text; this refers to when language causes its own effects (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010), so words have meanings beyond our intentions. Linguistic formulations can be found in the repetitive use of a word or similar words constantly used by a participant causing a particular effect. In the above core narrative, linguistic work can be seen in how there is no mention of the word sex in Sive’s narrative. The word ‘sex’ is only mentioned by me at the beginning of the narrative and in the rest of the text Sive and I talk *around* sex. Sive is also constructed as talking around sex when relaying her sexual experiences in talks with her sister. Sive uses

words such as “slept with a boy” (l.11), “by the time I started doing these things she had started doing them long before me” (l.13-14), “girls sneak out at night to see their boyfriends” (l.21), this thing is this painful (l.22) or “do it again” (l.26). She therefore avoids speaking explicitly about her experiences opting for language that implicitly alludes to sex in sharing her experiences of sex talk with her sister. However, the implicit talk inherent in the women’s constructions seems crucial because it indicates that there are certain expectations of how women should talk about sex with other women, which avoids explicit, detailed telling. This, therefore, adds merit to the argument that talking about the self as sexual can be deemed anxiety provoking for women and in order to defend against this anxiety of being experienced as ‘too sexual’, sexually forward or a ‘slut’ sexuality is constructed using vague terms and it is also projected elsewhere, in this case onto the sister. Therefore, negotiating a sexualised femininity is not only a discursive exercise but also an emotional one even in female-female talk.

6.3.5. Reflexivity

A final aspect of the analysis using concentric reflexivity requires *reflexive* thinking about the intersubjective dynamics between Sive and me, including unconscious processes that may have mediated the produced data and influenced my understanding of Sive. Therefore, contributing to our performance in the interview context and investment in certain repertoires. Hollway and Jefferson (2012) argue that reflexivity beyond the demographics of the interviewer and interviewee has the potential to reveal contradictions within text, which are often unseen using other qualitative interviewing techniques. Therefore, what is deemed important is not only reflections on the sex, race and age or the “the asymmetrical power relations of the research interviewer and the interviewed subject” (Kvale, 2002, p.9) but further illustration of the role of the interviewer using Melanie Klein’s (1952) concepts of projection, transference and countertransference. This requires more honesty about the elicited data than traditional reflexivity. To do this, I read and re-read the core narrative in conjunction with my field note reflections, which were written after both interviews with Sive to get a sense of my overall first impressions, transferences and counter-transferences that were present between Sive and me. Transference refers to the interviewee unconsciously redirecting the feelings about the subject they are describing onto the researcher and countertransference refers to the feelings evoked in the interviewer by the interviewee (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). The power dynamics that may have been at play between Sive and me, affecting our thoughts, feelings and intentions, help make sense of the psychic processes going on in the encounter. This moves the analysis forward.

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, the core narrative on Sive was selected because it contained constructions of the act of sex presented as talk between Sive and her sister, albeit vague. Therefore, it was a counter narrative to the other participants' narratives who construed the sister-sister relationship as not a context for talking around sex, particularly the act of sex. Secondly, I was drawn to this narrative because of the amount of laughter between Sive and me that can be seen throughout the text and this seemed peculiar to me as I could not recall sharing this much laughter with Sive as interviews with her often felt heavy going. I thus felt it was important to analyse this incongruence by attending to what was intersubjectively occurring between us in the talk. Below is an extract from my reflections about the interviews with Sive:

Sive was very assertive in demeanour but was often unwilling to control the interview, which often frustrated me, she offered straight to the point answers, which weren't as elaborate as other participants and thus sometimes felt rushed and draining. As a result, the interview never felt like a conversation.

The above reflections are adapted from field notes I wrote after the second interview with Sive and they construct a certain kind of woman: one who is reserved and not willing to elaborate much on the meaning of sex talk with her sister. In the field notes, I reflect on helplessness in transferring the power to Sive and making the interview an open process where I could feel like she reflected on questions a bit before answering. Instead, I felt flustered and I felt a need to fill in the blanks by asking questions. As a result, the core narrative was definitely a disjuncture from the rest of the data and the field notes because in the core narrative Sive and I seem to be having a humorous and flowing conversation.

However, my response (in line 33-35) also referred to as the breach or interruption in the above analysis re-introduces the frustration I sometimes felt in the rest of the interview with Sive. Therefore, the above narrative had its moments of flow but did not always flow which indicates that our laughter had a defensive function, unconscious intersubjective conflictual forces were at play during the interview between us and affected how we could and could not talk about sex. These psychic processes were, however, hidden. Hence, we were both unaware of these emotionally charged moments of transference and countertransference that were occurring through laughter, vague talk and my decisions to assume I understood what Sive was saying

without having to probe her for more details on a narrative that seemed like detailed sex talk at first glance.

6.3.5.1. Using humour

The humour had a function. Discursively, it was a resource used to construct her accounts as a joke or not serious while it psychoanalytically functions as a diversion to mask or defend against anxiety. As such, it makes that which is deemed unacceptable acceptable. Thus, it was a defensive strategy we used to repress the threat to our self-image as ‘sluts’ or not doing sex ‘well’. Speaking overtly about sex and sexual desire was experienced as anxiety-provoking, thus the laughter added an element of protection. The laughter also made some of Sive’s stories about her sexual experiences and her sister’s less embarrassing especially considering our 14-year age difference. I also want to attribute the inconsistency, demonstrated in the field notes, to Sive’s desire to construct a certain kind of femininity. The same story could have been narrated in a serious and monotonous way and had a different effect. The humour made her narrative playful, thus guarding against the risk of being construed as a ‘slut’. My responses (e.g. shared laughter) and probes gave Sive cues about whether to continue with her narratives or not. Thus, the data were co-produced by Sive and me and significant power dynamics were present. This is reflected upon in the next section.

6.3.5.2. First Impressions and Power Relations

My notes on initial impressions of Sive included that she was a beautiful, dark in complexion, 38-year old woman, with long thick well-kept dreadlocks. She was slender and wore lots of make-up to both interviews. Her eyebrows were shaved off and then drawn on again perhaps to shape them in a desired way. As a result, she looked younger than her actual age, which was 38-years; she looked about 30 years old because of her presentation. However, it is also important to reflect on how Sive could have seen me. I am a 24-year-old, isiXhosa-speaking woman doing a Psychology Master’s degree at a historically white university that represents wealth and power (Gune & Manuel, 2011) who occasionally switched to speaking in English during the interviews. Sive, by contrast is a cleaner at this same educational institution. Therefore, Sive perhaps saw me as the ‘knower’ and felt coerced to say certain things or did not feel as though she had the agency to not say certain things or even exit the study at will even though she had been told she could leave the study. Sive could have also felt the need to give me the ‘right’ answers, thus fashioning her narratives of life experiences to meet her self-defined notions of what an interviewer from Psychology would want to hear. Conversely, Sive could have also seen me as a child, thus ‘naïve’ and ‘inexperienced’, drawing on the age-

hierarchy within the isiXhosa culture which requires the younger generation to respect elders. Therefore, she perhaps felt the agency to answer as she liked and to withhold whatever information she wants to withhold - I can never really know. However, judging from the data, education was important to Sive because she sometimes spoke about her son who was going to university the following year to study. I argue that she volunteered this information to let me know that she may not have university education but she is working very hard to make sure that her son gets one and in a sense taking back some of the power inherent in our formed research relationship.

6.3.5.3. Diminishing power relations

I attempted to diminish the power relations between Sive and me by conducting the interviews in isiXhosa and keeping the interview process at a conversational level; however, power still operated at both a conscious and unconscious level. The power was conscious because I was aware that the talk was not natural or flowing. This was very evident to me because some participants were able to go on tangents talking about their life experiences. In those situations, I was able to elicit emotionally colourful long narratives with little input from me. This was not the case with Sive.

The power dynamics were also unconscious because essentially I was a stranger and a researcher who had invited Sive to an interview. The fact that some participants were able to keep the interview at conversational level did not necessarily mean that this would be so for the next participant, in this case Sive. This was a case of countertransference and my response to this can be seen in the field note reflections in the beginning of this section. In hindsight, I realise that in my overall analysis of my transcripts with Sive I have gleaned that I responded to her in two oscillating ways- as peer/ sister and as an authority/ mother figure. Firstly, as a peer because Sive was older than I was and I was interviewing her about a very sensitive topic, even though she was receptive to the questions that I asked her. I defended against the anxiety of seeming disrespectful as a young isiXhosa girl old enough to be her daughter [Sive has a 17-year old son] by treating the unstructured interviews as a conversation between friends or even sisters and felt uneasy whenever this flow was obstructed. The core narrative and laughter inherent demonstrate this and my inability to notice the amount of laughter within the narrative show that I was invested in establishing with Sive and judging from the amount of laughter and sometimes uncomfortable laughter in the core narrative this friendship or sisterly relationship was sometimes achieved. In the second way of responding to Sive I had positioned myself as

a mother or that authority figure that polices whether people are practicing safe sex or not. I was implicitly judgemental in instances where it seemed as though Sive was engaging in risky sexual practices. Below is an example of my urge to ensure that the participants were practising safe sex even though this was not part of what the interview was attempting to obtain.

P2: Very, I am not scared of testing that's why HIV is running away from me because I am very strong for it and I am really not afraid of it.

YN: Mhh but at the same time condomizing?

P2: No, I do condomize, when I say I am not scared of it I mean if you would ask me to test now I would be willing to do it because at the end of the day I want to know while I am still fresh so I can get my ARV treatment and not wait till I get very sick and people start noticing that I am sick you see?

In the above extract, I felt the need to ask whether Sive was using protection because her husband passed away from HIV in 2010 and I wanted to know whether she is being safe with her current partner. In the section that follows, I introduce the second core narrative and then I conduct a psychosocial reading of it, using concentric reflexivity just as above (in section 6.3) with Sive.

6.4. Core narrative

The material in the core narrative below is extracted from the second interview Buhle had with the researcher. Buhle is a 31- year- old isiXhosa speaking woman. Buhle's parents have two children, a boy and a girl (Buhle). However, Buhle has an uncle who has always lived with her and her family. Buhle's uncle's daughter [cousin] also eventually came to live with Buhle and her family following the death of her mother and now Buhle's relationship with her cousin mimics a sisterly relationship in many ways. By way of contextualising the lengthy extract below that I will be reading using a psychosocial lens, I want to first present an extract from interview 1. In this first interview, using the respondent's words, I asked her if she eventually talked to her sister about whether or not she uses protection when engaging in sexual intercourse with her boyfriend. Below is the narrative Buhle relayed that prompted the follow-up question in the second interview that is used as the core narrative in this chapter:

6.4.1. Buhle's narrative in Interview 1

She is HIV positive and is currently on ARVs. She is actually meant to arrive today because she has to go and fetch her treatment on Monday and then leave again on Tuesday and you know I told my mom I want to ask if her boyfriend is on the ARVs as well. Because it's

not safe for you to be on ARVs and not condomising while the boyfriend is not taking ARVs. Then she's still not safe they should both go to the clinic and *bhuti* must also get tested and check his CD4 count. Then they must also put him on treatment so that they can both be safe. So I am still waiting for her to arrive so I can talk to her.

The above extract presented an instance of sisters playing an important, active role of providing sexual guidance to each other. Buhle expresses some concerns around her HIV positive sister's sexual health. This is because Buhle is uncertain whether her sister who is on an ARV programme, thus being proactive about her health, is using protection or not. In the extract she was telling the researcher that she is planning to ask her sister to use protection if she is not condomising and also inform her sister to encourage her boyfriend to get tested so that he can also be placed on an ARV treatment plan if he is also HIV positive. In the extract Buhle and her sister have not yet discussed this while in the core narrative Buhle has talked to her sister about the dangers of unprotected sex with an HIV infected partner while only one partner is on ARVs as will be seen in the extract that follows. I chose the following extract because it demonstrates how the data is collaboratively produced by the interviewee and interviewer within the interview setting. Psychoanalysis is a valuable tool for engaging with the affective/psychic processes that were happening alongside discursive processes playing out between the participant and I influencing how the data is produced and how Buhle's sister was construed. Below is the second core narrative from the study's data identified for its emotional content.

Extract 2

1. YN: *Sisi* (.) *Sis* Buhle when we spoke the last time
2. I remember you said uhh that (.)
3. you would ask your sister,
4. now that she knows she is HIV positive,
5. when she comes to fetch her ARVs (mhh mhh)
6. and I know you have touched a bit on that earlier
7. because you said the boyfriend [now ex-boyfriend]
8. was only recently put on ARV treatment (mmmh mhhh).
9. The last time we spoke you said she was going to arrive that day (mhh)
10. and that you would ask her if she uses a condom
11. because even if you both have Aids
12. you still have to use protection.

13. Did you eventually ask her?
14. **Buhle**: I asked her and she said that they use it [condom]
15. and I said that can't be
16. because you were pregnant last year (mhhh).
17. How did you get pregnant if you use protection? (ja)
18. which means you do not use protection
19. and I am worried about other people's children (yes)
20. so that means even with your new boyfriend the one that works at [name] stores
21. you don't use a condom with him.
22. I am sure about that (.)
23. and then there is going to be another fight between the two of them [current boyfriend]
24. and she will go find another one
25. and that one
26. and another one.
27. Wow then I worry about my brother or me (yes yes).
28. You see?
29. Because I test all the time.
30. I get tested all the time (mmhh yho)
31. and when I meet someone I tell them,
32. I say "Look *bhuti* I don't know you
33. and you don't know me,
34. we can't.
35. we have to start in step 1 by getting to know each other first (mhh)
36. so that we can be comfortable".
37. I don't understand how people can straight to step 5.
38. I understand one that starts in step 1
39. and moves to 2,
40. then 3,
41. then 4
42. so that I can be comfortable.
43. That's why I was saying
44. I am probably not going to be able to find a partner
45. because you don't find that nowadays.

6.5. Analysis

6.5.1. Content

In responding to the follow-up question about condom use, Buhle draws on a repertoire of risk (in 1.8-24) to construct her sister's sexual behaviour and assumes the subject position of provider of sexual guidance. She further constructs her sister as someone who does not use protection (1.18) "which means you do not use protection". In addition, a threat to other people's children by saying in (1.19) "I am worried about other people's children". Moreover, a serial dater in (1.23-26) by describing that "and then there is going to be another fight between the two of them [current boyfriend] and she will go find another one and that one and another one". Later in the narrative, Buhle draws on a traditional repertoire of sexual conservatism (1.19-29) and uses her own sexual experiences to construct clear differences between her own sexual behaviour and that of her sister.

In line 21 Buhle then draws on a repertoire of responsabilisation to construct clear differences between her own sexual behaviour and her sister's sexual behaviour. Here, she thus positions herself as a responsible sexual subject because she gets her HIV status checked regularly while positioning her sister as a risky and irresponsible sexual subject. She rejects repertoires of permissive sexuality and draws on monogamy (1.15-18) and getting her status (1.21) checked as sexually responsible. She uses her own constructions and beliefs about femininity to argue for her own sexual behaviour as 'right'. For example, in lines 27-29 she talks about getting to know someone before engaging in sexual intercourse with them unlike her sister who is constructed as engaging in dating multiple partners. This act of othering works to make Buhle seem as the 'better' woman in the sibship because in juxtaposing these two discursive positions – the irresponsible sexual subject and responsible sexual subject – demonstrates that Buhle is invested in exemplifying responsibility. Drawing on traditional notions of femininity does not help Buhle in finding a partner but works to construct her as a responsible citizen, which is a desired subject position for Buhle. Indicating that there was perhaps a fear of judgement by other women e.g. the researcher about being deemed as sexual and thus creating ambivalence around negotiating a sexualised femininity in the sister-sister relationship.

6.5.2. Structure

The present level of analysis attends to Buhle's skills as an orator. According to Saville Young and Frosh (2010) the way the narrative is put together can shed light to an individual's anxieties and defences on a particular topic. The story begins with a follow-up question from Buhle's first interview where she talks to her sister about the dangers of having unprotected sex with a

partner who is not on ARV treatment while the other partner [her sister] is on it. In her response (l.8) Buhle says “I asked her and she said that they use it”. Buhle then builds a strong case evidencing that her sister is not engaging in safe sex using her sister’s pregnancy in line 9-11 “and I said that can’t be because you were pregnant last year (mhhh). How did you get pregnant if you use protection?” She claims that her sister is lying because she would not have fallen pregnant if she really was using protection with her boyfriend; this utterance worked to intrigue the listener as her sister’s pregnancy served as good evidence for her sister’s non-use of protection. Buhle then uses this lie to construct her sister as someone who never uses protection, thus endangering the lives of other people. Buhle builds on this story reinforcing her argument that her sister is a risky sexual subject using extreme cases. For example, in line 18, Buhle constructs her sister as someone who does not use protection at all by saying, “So that means even with your new boyfriend the one that works at [shop] you don’t use a condom with him. I am sure about that”. Drawing on the responsabilisation and risk repertoire positions her sister as an irresponsible sexual subject while Buhle assumes the position of providing sexual guidance and problematises her sister’s sister sexual behaviour drawing on worst case scenarios in order to construct her sister as the ‘other’.

The second sub plot is in line (l.19) where Buhle builds on this story by reinforcing her argument that her sister is a risky sexual subject when she says “I am worried about other people’s children”. Herein, Buhle constructs her sister’s sexual partners as victims to her sister’s sexual behaviour as they could possibly contract the HIV virus through her serial dating ways. Buhle constructs this as behaviour she disapproves of and behaviour that “worries” her (l.12) which positions Buhle as responsible and caring. She further personalises the impact of her sister’s sexual behaviour in (l.19) when she claims “Wow then I worry about my brother”. Constructing her sister’s sexual behaviour as something her brother could also fall victim to and eventually even herself. These discourses construct heightened risk in her direct social environment due to sexual behaviour such as that displayed by her sister. She thus does not construe the risk as just ‘out there’ but as risk ‘amongst us’. Hence, she negotiates her own sexual behaviour drawing on traditional notions of female sexuality while distancing herself from permissive sexuality instead problematising permissive sexuality as risky. This structure is effective because it problematises her sister’s sexual behaviour first not only ‘out-there’ but ‘in here’ as well. It others her sister as a risky sexual subject; it constructs her as a risky sexual subject to whom her brother could fall victim. The effectiveness of this structure becomes apparent towards subplot 2 where she constructs her own dating habits in relation to her sister

as it becomes apparent that she construes herself as the actual other but finds this anxiety provoking so it is hidden in problematic constructions of her sister's sexual behaviour.

6.5.3. Interruptions

Interruptions can “reveal moments of active sense-making work by speakers, and in psychoanalysis, which takes them to be key indicators of a breakdown of routine ‘egoic’ speech in the face of pressing unconscious material” (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010, p.56). Buhle constructs her own sexual behaviour as different from her sister's behaviour from the beginning of the text (see l. 9) and successfully convinces the interviewer that she is the complete opposite of her sister. Thus, she defensively claims her own space through investing in the repertoire of othering. By creating these clear differences between them, Buhle becomes her own person who can be construed as sexually responsible and reflective about her sexual practices in order to be seen as a ‘good woman’. However, a breach is present at the end of the narrative in (l.28) when she says “That's why I was saying I am probably not going to be able to find a partner soon” (l.30-31). This statement implies that this value-laden woman with conservative dating ideals does not find a partner as fast as the sexually free people such as her sister, who easily go from partner to partner, see (l.16-18). She construes this as the price to pay for being a traditional, sexually responsible woman and as a result she is also therefore ‘other’.

6.5.4. Linguistic formulations

This layer of analysis looks at the particular words used by the participant because words have meanings beyond our conscious intentions of them (Georgaca, 2005). Having used translated transcripts for the analysis of the data, in this layer, which is preoccupied with word choice, I referred back to the verbatim text in isiXhosa to explore the linguistic formulations that were used by Buhle during our interview. The verbatim text alerted me to a way of speaking Buhle sometimes uses where she repeats certain words in order to emphasise her point. However, I argue here that this repetition is also important for managing anxiety around negotiating a sexualised femininity and below I show how she does this.

This repetition and ordering of words can be seen (in l.16-18) when Buhle says, “*uzophinda aye komnye naphaya na komnye*” translated as “and she will go find another one and that one and another one”. Later in the text Buhle says “*Ndazi eqala ku step 1 and then ithi 2 ithi 3 ithi 4 ndizokwazi nam uba comfortable*” in (l.28-29) which is translated as “I understand one that starts in step 1 and moves to 2, then 3, then 4 so that I can be comfortable.” In l.16 to 18, Buhle uses this “another one and another one” this pattern of speaking in order to construct her sister

as a serial dater and this also works to construct her dating ways as fast paced and irresponsible. However, (in 1.28-29) she uses “the step 1, then 2, then 3 and then 4” pattern in order to construct her own dating ways as slow and value-laden. I also realised by the end of the extract a variety of men had been constructed as available to her sister and possibly ‘victims’ to her sexual behaviour by Buhle, including her ex-boyfriend, the one who she was impregnated by last year, (see 1.9-10), and in (1.12) “other people’s children”. This saying could be used to refer to all the men in the world. Buhle constructs the next victim as her sister’s new boyfriend, the one who works at [shop] and evidence for this can be found in line13. Finally, she further builds on this argument by saying “and then there is going to be another fight between the two of them [current boyfriend] and she will go find another one and that one and another one” in (1.15-18).

The revelatory shift becomes apparent in line (1.30-31) when Buhle says, “That’s why I was saying I am probably not going to be able to find a partner”. Therefore, throughout the narrative Buhle invests in these conflicting repertoires, the ‘fast- paced’, modern woman/sister versus the ‘slow paced’ traditional/woman. Having multiple sexual partners is constructed as harmful by Buhle to repress the anxiety of deeming herself as undesirable; hence, the need to other herself from her sister becomes deeply personal. Creating two different women makes the idea of being alone and never finding a partner, which her sister finds easily, less threatening or less anxiety-provoking. Buhle manages her anxiety about being alone by rationalising her lack of success in dating while problematising her sister’s dating habits. This way Buhle positions herself as more sexually responsible and thus more feminine while positioning her sister as dangerous, sexually irresponsible and thus less feminine.

6.5.5. Reflexivity

At first glance, Buhle’s narrative seems based on two woman talking about sex while one cautions the other on dangerous sexual behaviour. Hence, Buhle is seen problematising her sister’s sexual behaviour drawing on a risk repertoire advocating for sexual responsibility in constructing the narrative. On the surface, this is can be understood as purely based on Buhle’s desire to protect her sister and her sister’s boyfriend by advising against unprotected sex if her partner is not yet on Antiretroviral treatment. Within this repertoire, she positions herself as providing sexual guidance to her sister. As the conversation progresses Buhle constructs her sister as serial dating (1. 15-16; 1.17-18) further problematising her sister’s sexual behaviour as irresponsible and risky. So, why was it important for her to convincingly problematise her sister’s sexual behaviour? Certainly, Buhle tells a compelling story and as a result, I agreed

with her in our interaction. I understood Buhle's frustration and sympathised with her; this is evident in how I eagerly accept her argument by uttering a bold "ja" (l.17) when Buhle confronts her sister about her non-use of condoms and using her fairly recent pregnancy as proof. Buhle's success as a storyteller or proof of her well-structured narratives can also be seen when she says "and I am worried about other people's children" (l.12). Again, I accept her seemingly reasonable argument in by saying "yes" indicating that I also sympathise with those 'victimised' by Buhle's sister's sexual behaviour. Therefore, my response was no longer the "non-committal but interested 'yeah?'" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p.42) but I was emotionally involved in the narrative. I was able to identify as a woman with one brother who could also one-day fall 'prey' to behaviour such as the type described by Buhle. Moreover, she personalises this narrative when she says "Wow! Then I worry about my brother" (l.19).

Buhle's narrative positioned us in the right way of 'doing sex' thus we were both 'good women' while she drew heavily on a responsibility and risk repertoire to construct her sister. HIV is a life-threatening virus and Buhle's narrative was constructed in such a way that alluded that Buhle's sister might be purposefully having unprotected sex with her sexual partners and thus spreading the virus, which evoked emotion within me. It upset me that her sister was willing to place people's lives in danger. Buhle further had good evidence to prove that her sister was not using protection, her sister could not have fallen pregnant if she was using protection this was a brilliant portrayal of a 'caught red-handed' scenario. However, this also worked to rationalise the policing of sexuality we were both doing because it set the precedent for all the policing that resulted in the narrative constructing Buhle's sister's 'excessive' dating habits and ultimately positioning her as an irresponsible sexual subject.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter was used to 'thicken' an understanding of the women's reasons for being drawn to some repertoires which shore up certain ways of being over others in the process shaping their sexual subjectivities e.g. ways of 'doing sex'. Ultimately, this chapter has demonstrated how the social is embedded in the individual and the individual in the social using Buhle and Sive's core narratives, their personal biographies and field notes on conscious and unconscious intersubjective dynamics between the interviewer and the participant. The analysed core narratives demonstrate how we might understand Sive and Buhle's reasons for drawing on these particular repertoires on a more personal level and established that participants had a vested interest in exemplifying responsibility to defend against the anxiety of being deemed to be engaging in irresponsible and risky sexual behaviour which is not construed as 'good'

womanhood. To do this, Buhle and Sive used their narratives to project onto their sisters heightened sexuality, which was dissociated from their own sexual practices. Therefore, they positioned their sisters as more sexually irresponsible beings in the process opting for repertoires of sexual conservatism and emphasised femininity that positioned themselves as the example for 'good' sexual behaviour to describe their own sexuality. These repertoires were powerful and less anxiety-provoking for the participants and for the researcher but did not subvert current oppressive notions of female sexuality which make women vulnerable to HIV/Aids, unwanted pregnancies and construe women as lacking sexual desire. As a result, the narratives co-produced by the participants and the researcher maintained these gender discriminatory notions of 'doing sex' 'like a woman' which do not give women agency over their bodies.

Chapter 7

Discussion & Conclusion: Negotiating a sexualised femininity

7.1. Introduction

The discursive and psychoanalytic findings in chapters five and six demonstrate an understanding of subjects “whose inner worlds cannot be understood without knowledge of their experiences in the world, and whose experiences of the world cannot be understood without knowledge of the way in which their inner worlds allow them to experience the outer world” (Hollway & Jefferson, 2012, p.4). The two findings chapters employ a lens that focuses on rhetoric alongside a psychoanalytic focus, reminding us that talking about sex is not purely a discursive exercise. The talk is also an emotional exercise between the researcher and the participant because there is also something internal that drives the participants’ choices of discourses over others. The present chapter aims to review the findings in chapter five and six in relation to the research questions of this study and the existing literature on sexual socialisation. To do this, I begin with a brief summary of the key discursive and psychoanalytic findings of this study. This summary is followed by a discussion of each finding, comparing and contrasting it to the existing sibship sexual socialization literature. The chapter ends with a conclusion section and a discussion of the implications, limitations and future studies.

7.2. Summary of findings

The study sought to identify some of the interpretative repertoires particular -isiXhosa speaking women use to construct their experiences of talking about sex with their sisters. In constructing the talk, they were also demonstrating how they ‘do’ their own sexuality in relation to their sister and the role sisters play in shaping each other’s femininities, thus making certain sexualities and gender identities available while restricting others. Firstly, the research findings of this study demonstrate that the sibling relationship is constructed as a different sexual socialisation context compared to the parent-child relationship as a lot more sex talk was construed as allowed in sisterly relationships. The sampled women drew on two broad interpretative repertoires in constructing their sisterly sex talk: a repertoire of secrecy and a repertoire of responsabilisation and risk. The secrecy repertoire allowed space for female sexual desire and worked to resist traditional notions of femininity. However, the participants also used the responsabilisation and risk repertoires to police their sisters’ sexuality. The secrecy repertoire was used as a mechanism to keep the women’s parents out of their sexuality because

the women practised their sexuality in secret with the help of their sisters. Their sisters were therefore constructed as generally more receptive to their sexual exploration compared to parents. Therefore, participants were constructed as active-role players in shaping their sisters' sexual exploration and development.

However, using the *No sex talk for sisters* repertoire the participants avoided talking explicitly about sex with their sisters and thus constructed sex talk with their sisters in a certain vague way. This vagueness, was construed as necessary by the women as it allowed them to take up 'saint-like' and 'good woman' subject positions both within their sisterly relationships and also possibly within the interview itself. Therefore, the participants talked around or broadly about sex with their sisters and the researcher in the process negotiating sexual desire but also managing the risk of being deemed a 'slut'. Drawing on the "*Sisi if you get caught you are on your own*" narrative the sisters were constructed as resisting parental control by being sexually explorative. Sisters were thus found to be playing a vital role in facilitating and maintaining this sexual exploration and would position themselves as protectors of their sisters' sexual secrets and sexual guiders, thus assisting in pretending that their sisters are 'sexually innocent' to their parents. In addition, drawing on the *Encouraging desire* repertoire, the women were allowed to have sexual desire within the sister-sister relationship; it was encouraged and accepted but sometimes also policed. However, the participants construed sex talk, as a process to be negotiated as their sisters would inconsistently share and not share their sexual experiences with them, so negotiating insider status was ongoing.

As mentioned above the participants also drew heavily on a dominant interpretative repertoire of responsabilisation and risk in describing their experiences of talking about sex with their sisters. The responsabilisation and risk functioned to construe their sisters as having *fallen from grace* when they had any children while unmarried. The women's narratives also pointed to how their talk worked to *control and commodify reproduction* using older age, physical health and financial security as the standard for 'doing reproduction' thus positioning their sisters as outside of doing reproduction 'well' thereby construing their own reproduction as 'right'. Sexuality was also policed by the participants using the responsibility and risk repertoire by constructing their sisters as '*out-there*'. The 'out-there' narrative was used to construct sexual desire, which was construed as elsewhere thus crossing the boundary of 'normal' sexual exploration. The study further found that sisterly sex talk was constructed as a complex interchange of shifting positions of openness and power due to two coinciding identities- that

of mother and of peer. Sexual exploration and freedom was encouraged in the peer subject position and the policing of femininity and drawing on traditional femininity was facilitated by the mother position.

7.3. Psychoanalytic reading

A psychoanalytic reading of the findings suggested anxiety around being deemed as sexual subjects. Thus, participants invested in sexually conservative discourses to shore up their gender identity as feminine and to be seen as ‘doing their sexuality’ better than their sisters. Therefore, the participants tended to ‘other’ their sister’s sexual experiences producing a psychic split. The splitting and ‘othering’ of certain sexual experiences resulted in the women having two disconnected selves. Firstly, a sexually explorative and curious subject who talks to her sister about sex albeit not explicitly, still allowing, however, more than just talks about morality and danger contrary to mother-daughter sex talk. The second subject was one with internalised sexism (Bearman, Korobov & Thorne, 2009; hooks, 2000) through policing sexuality they enacted sexist behaviour and beliefs towards themselves and other woman. This is because the negotiation of a sexualised femininity was anxiety provoking and introduced power dynamics in women’s narratives of their sex talk with their sisters, which led to participants policing sexuality and reproduction to shore up their own femininity, both within their sister-sister relationship and in in their relationship with the interviewer.

Policing of sexuality worked to ‘normalise’ their sexual behaviour in two ways. Firstly, it made the sisters’ sexual behaviour seem excessive and thus eased the anxiety of being deemed as an irresponsible subject when the participants relayed their own sexual experiences because the ‘irresponsible sexual subject’ was their sister. This positioned their own sexual exploration as ‘normal’ and responsible. Secondly, the policing of sexuality was used by the participants to project their own sexual desires onto their sisters because there was real ambivalence about how to be a sexual woman even for women in their middle adulthood years. Hence, the participants invested in passive sexualities and in the process reproduced patriarchal dominance. In the sections that follow, I discuss the discursive and psychoanalytic findings of this study in relation to the sexual socialisation literature to understand sisterly sex talk and personal investments in certain ways of talking about the self as sexual.

7.3. Sister-sister sex talk constructed as abstract

The study found that all the sampled sisters reported talking about sex with their sisters. Therefore, the research suggests that for these women the sister-sister relationship offered space for them to talk about themselves as sexual beings within the family context in contrast to the traditional inter-generational parent-child sex talks, which only allow male-children to be sexual and restricts female sexuality (Martin & Luke, 2010). However, the participants used vague descriptions to construct the sex talk they had with their sisters. Therefore, the present research study found that detailed and informative talk was absent in sisterly sex talk that these particular women described; this finding was at odds with the Wallace et al. (2014) study on African American adolescent siblings. The implicit talk inherent in the women's constructions seems crucial because it indicates that there are certain expectations of how women should talk about sex with other women, which avoids explicit, detailed telling. Therefore, to protect their image of own sexual 'chastity' and 'purity' the participants would talk about sex using vague terms, awkwardness and laughter. Abstract sex talk was not only evident in the participants' talk; the researcher also had moments where in a sense the talk with the participant was re-enacting the kind of awkwardness and vagueness that happens in sister-sister relationship sex talk. This adds merit to the argument that it was hard for the participants to embrace their sexuality through frank talk, thus they constantly felt the need to check whether or not they had gone too far in their telling and would use laughter and vagueness to 'protect' their sexual identity as 'good' women.

The findings of this study resemble those of Aronowitz et al. (2007) using mother- daughter focus groups. This study found that young girls were required to negotiate the dichotomy of "little girl" who was sexually inactive thus pure and that of being deemed a "hoe" which occurred when girls were sexually active. The psychoanalytic reading of this study also argues that the sampled women experienced a lot of anxiety when talking about sex as they feared being construed as 'sluts'. The data suggest, therefore, that talking explicitly about sex had implications for the women such as being construed as immoral, promiscuous or a 'slut'. As a result, even though there was plenty of sex talk reported and moments of representing sexual desire in the participants' narratives albeit vague. The participants were still careful about how they negotiated a sexualised femininity both within their sister-sister relationships and in the interview itself, which resulted in drawing on traditional notions of femininity for themselves while tending to position their sisters differently. Hence, the participants also sparingly addressed issues about sex and sexuality in their sisterly relationships and within the

researcher-participant relationship in order to hold onto passive femininity, which maintains patriarchy. Passive femininity does not allow for the expression of female sexuality in a way that differs from what was traditionally understood as female sexuality, which is male directed and barely existing (Kitzinger & Wilkinson 1997).

However, vague sex talk was problematic because it made sister-sister sex talk seem artificial because it does not allow for explicit sex-related issues to be addressed similar to findings of Aronowitz et al. (2007). In addition, vague sex talk does not allow for the harnessing of the full development of the sexual self (Fine, 1988; Fine & McClelland, 2006), resulting in narratives in which sexual desire is left out and talk that focuses on morality and danger. This, then, resembles parent-child sex talk, which does not allow for talks about, amongst other things, negotiating sexual consent, different sexual positions as well as using lubricants in moments of pain experienced during sex.

7.4. Female sexuality as illicit

The findings of this study also demonstrate that the participants used the secrecy repertoire to construct sisters as ‘gatekeepers’ to each other’s sexual exploration and curiosity. This construction of sisters as gatekeepers to sexuality is consistent with Wallace et al’s. (2014) qualitative study done on African American youth siblings, which found the sibling context to be a symbiotic relationship where they offer advice about sexual relationships to each other. This indicates that sisters played an active role in shaping each other’s sexual development by protecting each other’s sexual secrets or providing sexual guidance. Using the “*Sisi if you get you’re on your own*” narrative, the participants were constructed as facilitating and promoting each other’s sexual exploration which was illicit. Sexual secrets were discussed in the sisters’ secret space where sexual desire was sometimes encouraged. However, the participants also relayed accounts of protecting their own sexual chastity in the event where their sisters were discovered to be sexually active by their parents. Therefore, the participants had to negotiate their sexual exploration in such a way that they remained virgins and ‘pure’ to their parents. This finding suggests that the sisters may be more receptive to their sexual exploration compared to parent-child relationships. The problem with the secrecy repertoire, however, is that it strips women of their autonomy and limits their sexual identity to traditional femininities of women as virgins. This is why the women’s sexual exploration had to be illicit.

7.5. Negotiating status

Even though sisters talked about sex, constructing it as illicit, and talked about it in abstract terms as mentioned above, sisters were also construed as not always being allowed into each other's sexual development; therefore, the sex talk had to be continually negotiated and earned. A sister who was in on a 'deep dark secret' at one point was not necessarily an insider on the next one. As a result, sometimes sexuality was discovered rather than disclosed; hence, being 'in' on a sexual secret had to be negotiated. Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that sisters constantly negotiated disclosure within an ideological dilemma of openness and power within their sister-sister relationship. According to sexual socialisation literature, children prefer hearing and talking about sex with their parents (DiIorio et al., 1999). However, many of the participants in the study who were in middle adulthood reported that they preferred detailed sex talk with their friends. This means that even though there was significant potential for liberal sex talk in sibling relationships, this space also had clear moments where the participants were denied knowledge of their sister's sexual development. Preference to talk about sex with friends was consistent with the study conducted by DiIorio et al. (1999) that found sex talk with peers resulted in liberal attitudes, whereas talk with parents resulted in conservative attitudes about sex. Having said that, it became increasingly clear that siblings do provide a favourable context for sexual socialisation, because of the relative equality within these dyads; sisterly sex talk allowed some things, but not all things and not all the time as compared to the hierarchy in parent-child relationships.

According to the literature, friendship sex talk offers a space where sexual desire can be facilitated and promoted. However, this space can also be problematic as it sometimes introduces peer pressure (Selikow et al., 2009). Interestingly, this study found that even though the siblings were the 'gatekeepers' to each other's sexual exploration, there was no reported peer pressure to have sex in sister-sister relationship for these particular women. This finding is consistent with the study by Wallace et al. (2014) conducted in the US, which found gender differences in sister-sister and brother-brother talk as males reported on pressure from their brothers to sexually explore while this pressure to explore between sisters in this study was absent. Therefore, there are differences in sex talk within friendships and sister-sister sex talk and this difference problematises the notion that sibling relationships closely resemble friendships found in Voorpostel and Van Der Lippe (2007).

The present study found that siblings bridge the gap between parents and friends neatly because unlike parents, the sister-sister context allows for talk about sex but unlike friends, this talk

was never explicit. In a sense, the siblings held onto the parent danger and morality repertoire while also encouraging sexual exploration drawing on the “*Sisi*, if you get caught, you’re on your own” repertoire. Therefore, sibling relationships portray a certain sexually ‘pure’ and ‘chaste’ impression to their parents but their sisters are allowed knowledge about certain aspects of their sexuality and sexual desire thereby negotiating a sexualised femininity that is permissive but in a relationship that can also greatly police sexual behaviour.

Hence, siblings could be a crucial resource for shaping each other’s sexual behaviour because sibling relationships according to Cicirelli (1991) and Pike et al. (2005) are potentially the longest relationships that individuals experience in their lives and have characteristics of both peer and family relationships consistent with the findings of the present study. Moreover, because of the shared environment and frequent contact, they are likely to be powerful influences on one another (Goetting, 1986). As a result, the literature should advocate for more sibling involvement in the sexual socialisation process of individuals.

7.6. Sex talk constructed as encouraging and resisting sexual desire

Findings suggest that the participants encouraged sexual desire within the sisterly relationship as sexual exploration was allowed. However, the resistance of sexual desire is also inherent in this study because in allowing sexual development the women were also cautious not to disrupt traditional femininity. Therefore, sexual behaviour that was construed as outside of how women should ‘do sex’, was understood as having negative implications for how society views one’s sexual behaviour and sexual identity. This is because compulsory heterosexuality assumes certain gender traits for both men and women in sexual encounters and uses these to “control the body” (Russell, 2011, p.71). The findings of this study therefore, say something quite specific about the importance of gender in talking about sex for the participants, which meant taking into account what is expected for both men and women in sexual relationships when talking about sex in the sister-sister relationship. Similar to the findings by Fletcher et al. (2015) in the US researching parent-child and peer sex talk which found parents to be promoting abstinence and relational sex while peers promoted more sex positive talk, the participants promoted relational sex and monogamy. As a result, there was a policing of sexuality and femininity when the participants’ sisters were construed as owning their sexuality because the participants deemed this to be an undesirable female trait. Sexual desire was often conflated with sexual risk and sexual irresponsibility thereby maintaining the belief that female sexual behaviour should be illicit and shutting down spaces for honest sex talk where women

can talk openly about the negotiating the use of contraception, sexual pleasure, masturbation, orgasms and sexual violence. It was thus deemed impossible for one to own one's sexual desire and yet still remain aware of irresponsible and risky sexual behaviour, this also applied for the researcher resembling Aronowitz et al. (2007) as mentioned above.

The psychoanalytic analysis argued that even though the sisters supported each other's sexual exploration, the anxiety associated with discussing their sexual selves honestly, led to the repression of their own sexual desire thus they opted for traditional notions of female sexuality. As a result, in relaying their experiences of sex talk with their sisters, the participants never constructed themselves as engaging in risky sexual behaviour or being sexually irresponsible. In addition, they constantly assumed more sexually conservative subject positions. This denial of their own sexuality and construction of the sisters as sexually irresponsible is evident in the policing of sexuality through the responsabilisation and risk repertoires.

For example, in chapter six Sive's sister was constructed as sexually explorative while Sive was positioned as sexually naïve. On the other hand, Buhle was sexually responsible while her sister was positioned as sexually irresponsible. This was however significant because contrary to the vast sexual socialisation literature that tended to construct sexual desire as a male trait (Jewkes & Morrell, 2012), for the participants, sexual desire belonged to their sisters and it was construed as something negative. There was an investment in presenting themselves as 'doing sex' right. Moreover, in my analysis I argued that the participants were frightened of the possibility of being viewed as sexual by their parents and sexually immoral by the researcher and thus would pose as a certain kind of woman e.g. a 'good woman', as 'pure' and 'chaste' and in the process maintain interpretative repertoires of patriarchal dominance. For example, the "*Sisi*, if you get caught you're on your own" narrative drawing on the responsabilisation and risk repertoire demonstrates that the women made it clear that if their sisters' sexual exploration and curiosity was discovered by their parents they would then protect their own sexual purity in the eyes of their parents. However, sexual behaviour was not the only index the participants used to police their sisters' sexuality; they also drew on a responsabilisation and risk repertoire to construct their sexual innocence in relation to their sister.

7.7. Policing sexuality and reproduction drawing on the repertoires of Responsibilisation & Risk

The findings of this study indicate socioeconomic status and reproductive practices such as having children outside of marriage; deciding to procreate while still studying; having a number

of children while unemployed or while physically unwell tended to set the precedent for the power struggle in the sibship and policing constructed by the participants. This resulted in “the need to control and regulate the sexuality of those rendered the ‘other’” (Hammonds, 1997, p.95) in this case the other was the sister and in doing this the participants restricted their sister’s reproductive rights. Drawing on the responsabilisation and risk repertoire the participants would police their sister’s sexuality and reproduction. There were clear differences between the responsabilisation repertoire and risk but they both worked to police sexuality but in different ways. The responsabilisation repertoire claims that one has to be reflexive, rational and well informed about sex before deciding to engage in sex or procreate (Macleod et al., 2015). Therefore, are you ‘old enough’ to have sex or have a baby? Within that, sexual behaviour was constructed as linked to certain outcomes, which were sometimes construed as risky thus leaving little room in the sister-sister relationship for acknowledgement of sexual desire, difficulties of negotiating using protection and other gendered power dynamics within relationships. However, this understanding of sexuality worked to police femininity as it assumed that there was a ‘wrong’ and a ‘right’ time for sexuality in agentic subjects similar to some of the sexual health ‘issues’ parent-child sexual socialisation was set to combat. As a result, teenage pregnancy was constructed as a ‘Fall from Grace’ and the participants’ sister’s reproductive decisions were sometimes policed through the controlling and commodification of reproduction. The participants also constructed their sisters as ‘out-there’ thus positioning their sister’s sexual behaviour as hypersexual and thus positioning them as irresponsible sexual subjects posing as a certain kind of woman; the ‘good’ woman in relation to the sister. However, even though the participants policed their sisters’ sexual behaviour drawing on a responsabilisation and risk repertoire they afforded their sisters more sexual agency.

7.8. Conclusion

In analysing the constructions of particular isiXhosa speaking women’s sisterly sex talk using a psychosocial framework several findings were made about the construction of these women’s sexual subjectivities in relation to their sisters and the impact these constructions have on the women’s resultant gender identities. This study found that how the participants talk about sex in the interview context considering the research relationship, their own personal histories and their chosen discourses was influenced by their psychological and social need to ‘do sex’ right and thus further influenced their decisions, actions and experiences of how sex is negotiated in the social world. So the participants tended to position themselves as sexually responsible and in the process positioned their sisters’ sexuality as immoral and potentially dangerous. It was

anxiety provoking for the participants to negotiate a sexualised femininity both within their sisterly relationships and in the research interview itself, how to be a sexual woman while being careful about being construed as ‘slutty’. As a result, in talking about sex in relation to their sisters the participants were psychosocially understood to be performing and legitimising certain kinds of femininity and womanhood in line with the dominant discourses in society and in order to manage their own anxiety at transgressing these.

The previous section of this chapter discussed these findings using the literature to make sense of the implications of this study. I will now discuss future studies, contributions, limitations and recommendations for future sexual socialisation interventions that can be deduced from this study.

7.9. Limitations

This research yielded a rich description of the meanings women attribute to sex talk with their sisters; however, responses were one-sided. It would be interesting to compare and contrast the responses on sisterly sex talk and the resultant gender identities using the theory of the defended subject not just from the participants’ talk but from their non-verbal interactions as well. It would be particularly valuable to use video recordings in order to observe the interaction i.e. moments of laughter and awkwardness to observe the exact moments of changes in associations in the participant and researcher and the body language at those moments would have been a helpful resource in enhancing the psychoanalytic reading. Another noted limitation is that working with translated text often means that some of the meaning gets lost in translation (Twin, 1997). It would have been interesting to have done the analysis using the verbatim isiXhosa text thus staying true to the participants’ words especially when using analytic tools such as Psychoanalysis which are sensitive to what has been said and how it is said because these have implications for how the individual’s internal world is understood. Finally, the discussed themes are those present in the rich descriptions of subjective realities of a selected few middle-aged women and even though data saturation was reached, the data produced by subjects on each topic is not generalisable to all middle aged, isiXhosa speaking women.

7.10. Contributions

Despite the limitations laid out above, the research study has offered insight into the impact of female-female relationships in shaping each other’s sexual development and the resultant gendered identities, and demonstrated that siblings are a valuable context for sexual socialisation. In addition, it has demonstrated how women can oppress each other’s sexual

development drawing on traditional notions of femininity that do not allow for a sexualised femininity. The study portrayed that sexual desire is present in women's narratives about their sisters even though it is sometimes also denied. The difficulty women face in negotiating a sexualised femininity was also demonstrated by the women's narratives.

7.11. Further studies

Future studies could interview both sisters together and separately to establish whether sexual desire is projected onto the other sister as well or whether some women own their sexuality. Interviewing both sisters separately would be helpful in establishing the women's individual experiences of the sisterly relationship instead of one-sided narratives. Moreover, interviewing the sisters together in interview would thicken the individual experiences elicited by the women in the separate interviews and would further give the interviewer the chance to observe sisters constructing their sex talk in the interview context. Future studies should also investigate the effects of cross sex siblings e.g. brother-sister relationships must be explored to establish whether their elicited talk sexually empowers or disempowers the siblings and what gendered meanings are maintained in their sex talk using a psychosocial framework. In addition, future studies should compare sex talk between sisters and friends to establish how talks between friends and sisters differ and how negotiating a sexualised femininity is experienced in friendships. It is important to consider that the participants in my study were employed while their sisters were often unemployed thus this may have brought in the sisterly mothering component and hence we find the amount of policing present. Therefore, future studies should explore sexual socialisation between employed working class sisters to observe whether differences in themes result.

7.12. Recommendations

Future interventions on sexual socialisation should incorporate siblings into learning processes of sexuality, encouraging frank discussion about sexual pleasure and sexual risk. The family context has a significant contribution to make to sexual and gender identity formation and future interventions on sex and sexuality should focus on how to bridge the conversations that happen within families and those that happen within schools. Therefore, sex talk should not only focus on parent-child sex talk, which defaults to mother-daughter talk that focuses on danger and morality but should also advocate for sibling involvement in shaping gender identity. Interventions should also focus on ways to make the sexual socialisation process less gendered thus ensuring that talks that allude to femininity do not disempower women.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grahamstown • 6140 • South Africa

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT Tel: (046) 603 8500/8501 Fax: (046) 603 7614 e-mail: psychology@ru.ac.za

RESEARCH PROJECTS AND ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

3 June 2015

Yanela Ndabula
Department of Psychology
RHODES UNIVERSITY
6140

Dear Yanela

ETHICAL CLEARANCE OF PROJECT PSY2015/21

This letter confirms your research proposal with tracking number PSY2015/21 and title, 'Sistering and sexual socialization: A psychosocial study of Xhosa women's 'sex and reproduction talk' with their sisters', served at the Research Projects and Ethics Review Committee (RPERC) of the Psychology Department of Rhodes University on 3 June 2015. The project has been given ethics clearance.

Please ensure that the RPERC is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Marx'.

Dr Jacqueline Marx

CHAIRPERSON OF THE RPERC

Appendix 2: Letter to Human Resources

31 Station Street

Indwe

5445

Dear [Name]

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON CLEANING & CATERING STAFF

My name is Yanela Ndabula, and I am a Psychology Masters student at Rhodes University in Grahamstown. I am hereby seeking your consent to approach the Head of Staff for cleaners and caterers at [Educational institution], to recruit five women ranging from age 35- 58 years to provide participants for interviews for this project. I am currently conducting research on sexual socialisation in the context of isiXhosa-speaking women's sisterly relationships in young adulthood. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr Saville Young (l.young@ru.ac.za) and Professor Catriona Macleod (c.macleod@ru.ac.za).

The institution will benefit through creating space for restricted voices to share their lived experiences and discourses about sexual socialisation, which feed into patriarchy, sexual risk and sexual health among isiXhosa speaking women and ultimately adding to their advancement. Therefore, allowing these women to contribute to the creation of new knowledge that can benefit society.

This research has been approved by the Psychology Department's Research Department's Projects & Ethics Review Committee (RPERC) as well as the Humanities Higher Degrees Committee (HHDC). All participation will be voluntary. Please see attached, a consent form which will be given to all participants.

If you require any further information, please contact me on 0798411426 or yanelandabula@yahoo.com. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yanela Ndabula', written in a cursive style.

Yanela Ndabula

Appendix 3 A: Recruitment advert Appendix



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Where leaders learn

Do you have a sister or sisters?

Would you be willing to share your experiences of talking about sex, sexuality, pregnancy & childbearing with me?

If so, please take part in this study.

My name is Yanela Ndabula and I am a Masters student in the Psychology Department at Rhodes University and would like to find out about your experiences of talking to your sisters about sex, sexuality and childbearing.

Taking part in my research will involve two tape-recorded conversations that will be about an hour long. These conversations will be held at [place] at a time convenient to you.

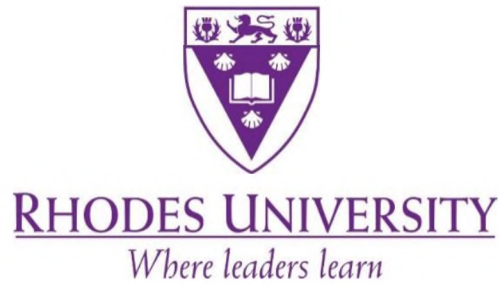
This research has ethical approval as provided by the Rhodes University Psychology Department's Research Projects & Ethics Review Committee (RPERC). Furthermore, permission to recruit participants has been obtained from the Human Resources director and from Head of Staff.

However, participating is completely voluntary!

If you would like to take part please contact Yanela on 0798411426.

Thank you! 😊

Appendix 3 B: Recruitment advert Appendix



Ingaba unabo na oodade?

Ungathanda uthatha inxaxheba kufundo phando olujonge ekufumaneni ulwazi nzulu ngamava ababhinqileyo wokuthetha ngezesondo, ukuzala nokukhulisa abantwana nodade babo.

Ukuba kunjalo yibayinxalenye noluphando.

Wena Othandekayo

Igama lam ndingu Yanela Ndabula kwaye ndingumfundi owenza isigaba se Masters kwi Dyunivesthi yase Rhodes. Ndingathanda ukuba ndikumeme uthathe inxaxheba kufundo phando olujongene nokufumana ulwazi nzulu ngamava wabantu ababhinqileyo wokuncokola noodade babo ngezesondo, ukuzala nokukhulisa abantwana.

Ukuba ufuna ukuthabatha inxaxheba njengomgqatswa kolu phando nditsalele ku (079) 841 1426. Kufanelekile ukuba ungenele udliwano ndlebe kabini olu thatha phantse iyure ubude. Kolu dliwano ndlebe ndizakuthanda ukwazi ngamava onawo ngokukhula neendlela udade wakho okanye oodade bakho abakuchaphazele ngayo ekuthatheni iziqgibo ngezesondo, ukumitha nasekukhuliseni abantwana bakho. Ngemvume yakho udliwano ndlebe olo luyakushicilelwa.

Ophethe olu phando ngu Gqirha u L Saville Young nokwa ngumhlohli kwicandelo lezolwazi ngengqondo kwi Dyunivesthi yase Rhodes. Uphando olu luthunyelwe na kwi sigqeba esiphanda ngendlela uluntu oluziphatha ngayo iPsychology Department's Research Projects & Ethics Review Committee (RPERC) kwi Dyunivesiti yase Rhodes ukuze luphunyezwe.

Owenu Ozithobileyo,

Yanela Ndabula

Appendix 4A: Interview Schedule

My name is Yanela and I am a Masters Psychology student at Rhodes University interested in isiXhosa-speaking women's sisterly relationships. You were asked here today because you have a sister and have potentially experienced talking to your sister(s) about sex, sexuality and reproduction this includes menstruation, boyfriends, sexual intercourse, masturbation, pregnancy, birth and sexuality, for example. However, before we talk about your sisterly conversations we will begin the interview with a description of your family as background.

First interview

1. Please give me brief introduction to your family.
2. Tell me about what it's like to have a sister.

Second interview

3. Tell me about the last time you spoke to your sister about sex, menstruation, pregnancy etc.
4. How did you feel?
5. How did you come to know about sex?
6. Did your sister contribute in any way to this process?
7. Or maybe have you helped your sister know about sex?
8. How often do you talk about sex now that you are older, if at all?
9. How have you experienced your conversations with your sister about sex compared to conversations about sex with others (your partner, your parents, your friends)?
10. Has your relationship with your sister changed over the years in terms of openness about sexuality, sex and reproduction?
11. How has your sister influenced your decisions about sex?
12. How has your sister influenced the woman that you are today?

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix 4B: IsiXhosa Interview Schedule

Igama lam ndingu Yanela Ndabula kwaye ndingumfundi owenza isigaba se Masters kwi Dyunivesthi yase Rhodes. Ndikumemile namhlanje uba sizoncokola ngamava akho wokuncokola noodade bakho ngezesondo, ukuzala nokukhulisa abantwana. Incoko yethu izokuchaphazela izinto ezifana nokuya exesheni, ukuthandana, ukumitha, ukuzala nezinye izinto ezinjalo. Kodwa phambi koba sithethe ngeencoko zakho noodade bakho ndingathanda ukubuza ngosapho lwakho nemvela phi yakho.

Udlwano ndlebe lokuqala

1. Ndicela undibalisele uba ungubani wena kwaye undibalelisele ngosapho lwakho nemvela phi yenu.
2. Kunjani ukuba nodade?

Udlwano ndlebe lwesibini

3. Ndicela undibalisele ngexesha olikhumbulayo apho wena nodade wakho nanincokola ngezesondo, ukuya exesheni, ukumitha nezinye izinto ezidibene na lomba.
 4. Waziva kanjani ngale ncoko?
 5. Lento kuthiwa sisono weva ngayo phi?
 6. Oodade bakho babe no galelo njani ekufundeni kwakho ngalento kuthiwa sisono?
 7. Okanye wena ubeno galelo njani ekufundeni ko dade bakho ngalento kuthiwa sisono?
 8. Nithetha ngesondo kangaka nani na ngoku sele nise budaleni noodade bakho?
 9. Uziva njani xa uthetha ngesondo noodade bakho xa uthelakisela nomlingani wakho, nabazali bakho okanye naba hlobo bakho?
 10. Ubudlelwane bakho noodade bakho butshintshe ngahlobo luni kuleminyaka? Ingabe nisakhululekile ngokuthethe ngezesondo nokumitha nodade bakho?
 11. Oodade bakho bazichaphazele njani izigqibo zakho ngezesondo?
 12. Oodade bakho bakuchaphazele njani wena ukuze ube ngulo sisi okanye umama onguye namhlanje?
- Enkosi ngoku thabatha inxaxheba koluphando.

Appendix 5A: Participant Consent Form

AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDENT RESEARCHER AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I _____ (participant's name) agree to participate in the research project of Yanela Ndabula on sisterly sexual socialisation. I understand that:

1. The researcher is a student conducting the research as part of the requirements for a Master's by Thesis degree at Rhodes University. The researcher may be contacted on 0792694032 or yanelandabula@yahoo.com. The research project has been approved by the relevant ethics committee(s), and is under the supervision of Prof Saville Young and Prof Macleod in the Psychology Department at Rhodes University. Prof Saville Young may be contacted on 046 603 8047 or l.young@ru.ac.za while Prof Macleod can be contacted on c.macleod@ru.ac.za or 046 603 7328.
2. The researcher is interested in women's experiences of talking to their sisters about sex, sexuality and reproduction.
3. My participation will involve attending two interview sessions conducted in isiXhosa by the researcher at the Psychology Department. These interviews will be arranged at a time convenient to me and will be recorded and are expected to range between 45 minutes and 1 hour and 30 minutes in length.
4. I may be asked to answer questions of a personal nature, but I can choose not to answer any questions about aspects of my life which I am not willing to disclose.
5. I am invited to voice to the researcher any concerns I have about my participation in the study, or consequences I may experience as a result of my participation, and to have these addressed to my satisfaction. A counselling centre may be contacted for further support on 046 603 8502.
6. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time – however I commit myself to full participation unless some unusual circumstances occur, or I have concerns about my participation which I did not originally anticipate.
7. The report on the project may contain information about my personal experiences, attitudes and behaviours, but that the report will be designed in such a way that it will not be possible to be identified by third parties and general readers.

Signed on (Date):

Participant: _____ Researcher: _____

Appendix 5B: IsiXhosa Consent Form

Dyunivesiti yase Rhodes

Icandelo lezolwazi ngengqondo

Isivumelano phakathi komphandi nomthathi nxaxheba.

Mna _____ ndiyavuma ukuthatha inxaxheba kufundo phando luka Yanela Ndabula olujongene nokufumana ulwazi nzulu ngamava ababhinqileyo wokuncokola ngezeso, ukuzala nokukhulisa abantwana nodade babo.

1. Umphandi ngumfundi wase Rhodes University kwaye uphando lumalunga nezifundo zakhe zesigaba se Masters kwaye angatsalelwa kukle nombolo (079) 841 1426 okanye abhalelwe ku yanelandabula@yahoo.com. Ophethe olu phando ngu Gqirha u L Saville Young nokwa ngumhlohli kwicandelo lezolwazi ngengqondo kwi Dyunivesithi yase Rhodes yena angaqhakamishelana ku l.young@ru.ac.za okanye ku (046) 603 8047 no Gqirha u Catriona Macleod angabhlelwa incwadi ku c.macleod@ru.ac.za okanye atsalelwe ku (046) 603 7328. Uphando olu luthunyelwe na kwi sigqeba esiphanda ngendlela uluntu oluziphatha ngayo iPsychology Department's Research Projects & Ethics Review Committee (RPERC) kwi Dyunivesiti yase Rhodes ukuze luphunyezwe.
2. Umphandi unqwenela ukufumana ulwazi nzulu ngamava wabantu ababhinqileyo wokuncokola noodade babo ngezeso, ukuzala nokukhulisa abantwana.
3. Ukuba ufuna ukuthabatha inxaxheba njengomgqatswa kolu phando kufanelekile ukuba ungenele udliwano ndlebe kabini olu thatha phantse iyure ubude. Kolu dliwano ndlebe ndizakuthanda ukwazi ngamava onawo ngokukhula neendlela udade wakho okanye oodade bakho abakuchaphazele ngayo ekuthatheni iziqgibo ngezeso, ukumitha nasekukhuliseni abantwana bakho. Ngemvume yakho udliwano ndlebe olo luyakushicilelwa kwaye luyakuthabatha ixesha elingange yure enemizuzu elishumi elinesithathu.
4. Usenokubuzwa imibuzo eyimfihlelo ngoko ke unegunya lokungazi phenduli izinto ezikwenza ungakhululeki.

5. Ukuba unemibuzo onayo nokungaqondi okuthile ngoluphando, ungaqhakamshelana nam ngokukhulekileyo ku yanelandabula@yahoo.com okanye unditsalele ku (079) 841 1426. Kungenjalo ungaqhakamishelana nabandiphetheyo uGqirha L. Saville Young ku l.young@ru.ac.za okanye ku (046) 603 8047 no Gqirha u Catriona Macleod angbhlelwa incwadi ku c.macleod@ru.ac.za okanye atsalelwe ku (046) 603 7328.

6. Inxaxheba yakho iyakuthathwa njengephuma kuwe entliziyweni futhi wamkelekile uba ungangavumi ukuthabatha inxaxheba. Akukho nto imbi ozakuchaphazeleka ngayo ngokwala kwakho. Ukwavumelekile uba ungarhoxa noba kunini kolu phando noba ubusele uqalile na.

7. Zonke iinkcukacha ezithe zafumaneka kolu phando ziyakugcinwa nje ngeziyimfihlo. Ukuqinisekisa ukuba iinkcukacha ezi zikhuselekile, ndim kuphela njengomphandi oyaba nelungelo lokukwazi ukufikelela kolushicilelo apho luzakube lufihlwe khona kwindawo ekhuselekileyo. Kwakhona akukho mntu uyakwazi ukuba olu phando belisenziwa nabani ngoba iinkcukacha ezinje ngamagama akho azizukuvezwa okanye zibandakanywe kumxholo woluphando.

Umhla: _____ Umntu othatha inxaxheba: _____

Umphenyi: _____

Appendix 6: Recorder Consent Form

Rhodes University — Department of Psychology

USE OF TAPE RECORDINGS FOR RESEARCH
PURPOSES
—
PERMISSION AND RELEASE FORM

<i>Participant name & contacts (address, phone etc)</i>	
<i>Name of researcher & level of research (Honours/Masters/PhD)</i>	
<i>Brief title of project</i>	
<i>Supervisor</i>	

Declaration		
<i>(Please initial/tick blocks next to the relevant statements)</i>		
1. <i>The nature of the research and the nature of my participation have been explained to me</i>	verbally	
	in writing	
2. <i>I agree to be interviewed and to allow tape-recordings to be made of the interviews</i>	audiotape	
	videotape	
3. <i>I agree to take part in and to allow tape-recordings to be made.</i>	audiotape	
	videotape	

4. <i>The tape recordings may be transcribed</i>	without conditions	
	only by the researcher	
	by one or more nominated third parties:	
5.1	<i>I have been informed by the researcher that the tape recordings will be erased once the study is complete and the report has been written.</i>	
5.2	<i>OR I give permission for the tape recordings to be retained after the study and for them to be utilised for the following purposes and under the following conditions:</i>	
Signatures		
<i>Signature of participant</i>		<i>Date</i>
<i>Witnessed by researcher</i>		

Appendix 7: Transcript notations

Adapted from Gail Jefferson (1984, cited in Saville Young, 2008)

Cu-	A dash represents a sharp cut-off of previous words or sounds
.	Represents a natural ending
,	A comma-like pause
(Italics)	When in round brackets they denote interviewer's speech.
[]	Square brackets denote non-verbal actions or sounds by the interviewer.
()	Round brackets represent unclear speech omitted name of proper noun.
...	Ellipsis denotes omitted text between paragraphs