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Dissertation accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Master of Health Sciences in Psychology* at the North-West University

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Graduation: May 2022

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ABSTRACT

Divorce is a significant life stressor that negatively impacts on the holistic wellness of divorced individuals. In an African, socio-cultural and patriarchal society, in particular the Kingdom of Eswatini, the pressure on men to exhibit characteristics of hegemonic masculinity are prevalent. The aim of this study was to understand and explore the lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

This was a phenomenological qualitative research that used interviews to explore the lived experiences of divorced men. The study utilised non-probabilistic methods of snowballing and purposive sampling to select the study participants. The study sample constituted of 12 divorced men, 27 years and older, married for a minimum of 3 years and more prior to the divorce. The data was analysed using thematic data analysis.

Four main themes namely (1) divorce stressors, (2) impact of divorce, (3) coping strategies, and (4) personal analysis of the divorce process, emerged in the study. Societal and religious perceptions, emotional and financial stressors were sub-themes identified in theme 1. Health and wellness, and the family unit dynamics emerged as sub-themes for theme 2. Adaptive coping and maladaptive coping emerged as sub-themes for theme 3. Contributory factors and emotional awareness emerged as sub-themes for theme 4. Furthermore, narratives on the implications of the process of divorce on self and others were captured. The emergence of the different themes has enriched the study and brought depth into understanding the participants' experience of divorce, its stressors, impact, coping and its process thereof.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that while some men recover from the divorce experience and are able to cope with the negative impact of divorce, there are those who emotionally struggle to return to their optimum level of functioning prior to the divorce.

Keywords: Divorce, marriage, lived experiences, Swati men, hegemonic masculinity, holistic wellness.

DECLARATION

I, Sabelo Thulani Khumalo, student number 30630274, make a declaration that:

(i)   This research dissertation report is my original work, except otherwise indicated. Apart from the supervisor-student guidance, no succour was offered in the writing of this dissertation.

(ii)   The research dissertation has not been presented for any examination or degree on any platform or university.

(iii)   The dissertation contains no other researcher's writing, graphs and pictures. In the event other written sources have been quoted, they are acknowledged and indicated or referenced.

Sabelo Thulani Khumalo

Signed…………………………. Date………..…………………

Professor Choja A Oduaran (Supervisor)

Signed………………………. Date…………………

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving wife and friend Sihlelelwe. You did not only believe in me,but you kept pushing me. You became an extension for my arm when it was short to reach for this dream. And today here it is. We did it!

To our phenomenal children Tumaini and Vakalisa, this one is for you. Tumi my boy you became a deputy parent to your sister when Daddy's head was buried in the books. I am proud of you. My little angel, Zilikazi "*Daddy let us pray*", my intercessor. Dad loves you. I believe in you and I know you and your brother will do Dad and Mom proud.

To the two women in my life, my children's grannies Rev A.K and Calendar. I love you. Thank you. I owe you what no amount of money can pay. Look what the Lord has done!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ABBREVIATIONS

COMPRES   COMMUNITY PSYCHOSOCIAL RESEARCH

COVID-19   CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 19

EHHRRB   ESWATINI HEALTH AND HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW
                 BOARD

HREC   HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ISI   IRON SHARPENS IRON

NWU   NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY

WHO   WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1.   Introduction

The conceptualisation of divorce emanates mainly from Eurocentric perspectives. As a result, the narratives of divorce have also been captured within Eurocentric subjective perspectives. Within the African context, for example in Eswatini, the concept of divorce remains underexplored by research and hence less documented. Furthermore, in Eswatini and globally, there is limited knowledge on the ways that the concepts such as hegemonic masculinities may influence the coping strategies of African men when they experience divorce. This chapter constitutes the following sections; the study background, the problem statement, aims and objectives, research questions, scope, significance of the study and the operational definition of terms.

1.2.   Background of study

The Kingdom of Eswatini, previously known as Swaziland, derives its name from one of its greatest fighting kings, Mswati II. The Swati people are descendants of the Southern Bantu who migrated from Central Africa in the 15th and 16th centuries, together with the Xhosas and Zulus, as part of the Nguni subgroup (UN, 2021).

Within Eswatini customary marriage, there is no provision for divorce. Thus, it has always been unofficially known that "There is no divorce within the Swati law and custom" (see also, Mkhabela, 2017). However, within the civil laws of marriage and customs of the Kingdom of Eswatini, divorce is an option. The above two legal provisions on marriage within the customs of the Kingdom of Eswatini affords a research gap to understand the meaning and conceptualisation of divorce. To contextualise this study the review of literature (which is

discussed in-depth in Chapter 2) focuses on; (1) Global perspective, (2) regional sub-Saharan African context, and (3) locally in the Kingdom of Eswatini, where the study was conducted.

Studies that discuss the trends of divorce at a Global level have referred to demographic research platforms such as the United Nations (UN). For example, the UN tracks divorce trends by examining overall marriage patterns and divorce statistics within the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD).

Global divorce statistics in 2017 were 44% compared to 41% in 2010 (Ortiz-Ospina, 2020). A global study conducted by Ledic (2018) shows that divorce rates had increased in various countries. The rates of divorce for selected countries in 2018, as shown in Ledic (2018) were highest in countries such as; Luxembourg (87%), Spain (65%) and France (55%), compared to the low divorce rates of countries such as Colombia (9%), India (1%) and Chile (3%). The United Kingdom (UK), which had a colonial influence on Eswatini, has a fewer marriages and more divorces. Many couples prefer co-habitation rather than to marry (Feijten & Van Ham, 2010).

A recent study by Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2020), shows a global increasing trend in divorce. For example, the proportion of divorces among adults within the age range of 35-39 was doubled. According to the UN global marriage patterns overview, divorce in the 35-39 age bracket doubled, as it rose from 2% in the 1970s to 4% in the 2000's (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020). The study showed that the Maldives, the country with the highest divorce rate in the world, had 10.97 incidences of divorce per 1,000 inhabitants in a one-year period, 4.63 in Belarus, and 4.34 in the United States of America (USA). In the USA, the rate of divorce more than doubled. It increased to over 5 per 1,000 in the 1980s, from 2.2 per 1,000 in 1960. According to Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2020), Norway, the United Kingdom and South Korea had their divorce rates more than tripled. In other countries like Turkey and Mexico, divorce

rates are also on the rise. A much later peak was observed in South Korea, with divorce rates persistently rising until the early 2000s. In the OECD Family Database it is noted that in the years 1995 and 2017 there was an escalation in divorce rates in more than half (18) of the OECD countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], n.d.).

Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2020) highlight the significance of the notable differences in divorce rates between countries, and that there is a need to document the pattern of the changes from the 1990s to date. To highlight this, they purport that even though in many countries the rate of divorce ballooned markedly between the 1970s and 1990s, since then divorce rates have declined, rendering a substantial variation of divorce trends from one nation to another. The influential factors to these variations have been captured elaborately within chapter two of this study.

In the singular case of the USA above, 45% of marriages ended in divorce, with about 40% of children in the country experiencing parental divorce before the age of 18 (Jackson & Fife , 2018). Therefore globally, the USA has a disproportionately higher divorce rate and divorce earlier in marriage. According to The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (2021), the 15-24 age bracket recorded the highest divorce rate of 27 divorces per 1000 people followed by the 25-34 age bracket, at 23 divorces per 1000 people. The 65 and above age bracket recorded the least, 5 divorces per 1000 people (CDC 2020). Many studies have focused exceptionally on exploring the perspectives on divorce in the USA; perhaps due to the multitude of socio-cultural diversity in the country. Most of these studies capture the perspectives of divorce from the African Americans' narrative. Adding to this trend may be the known urgency that Americans are known to possess. This urgency was further depicted during the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and lockdowns. Seifman (2021) opines that

online self-help divorce agreements on sale grew in 2020 by 34% as compared to the previous year, 2019.

Because of Eswatini's geographic location within the sub-Saharan African Region, it is befitting to identify what studies on divorce in the region portray. In the sub-Saharan Africa region, a conspicuous knowledge gap has been identified in regard to divorce. This gap is imputed to the non-existence and deficiency of high-quality data in the region. The standard measures of the rates of divorce in sub-Saharan Africa is dependent on data from fundamental registration systems, which are insufficient in almost all countries forming part of the region (Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2015). This huge gap in literature looking at divorce in developing countries also affects data available for this study. As a result, most studies on divorce are conducted in South Africa. This could be explained as South Africa is the economic hub and academically well-resourced compared to most countries in the region. The Demographic Health Survey (DHS) sub-sample in the 33 sub-Saharan countries indicated that studies that exist on divorce in the developed countries are mostly orientated towards capturing the lived experiences of women rather than men. (Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2015).

The researcher was able to allocate data with reference to the divorce geographic distribution in the sub-Saharan African region. Strikingly, Clark and Brauner-Otto's (2015) findings demonstrate that estimates of divorce were found to be more frequent compared to widowhood; in 22 of the 33 countries that they focused on, divorce was three times as high as the experience of widowhood. Furthermore, in this study all estimates were for the age interval 15-19 years after the initial union began; whereby results showed that on average 33.4%, which is a third of unions, would have ceased by this point, with 25.0% resulting in divorce and 8.4% through the death of a spouse. There are marked substantial variations in the subcontinent. In Mali, 9.6% of marriages ended in the first 20 years as compared to over half in Congo-Brazzaville

and Liberia. The majority of the unions in all these three countries ended in divorce; 83.5% in Liberia, 71.3% in Mali and 92.3% in Congo-Brazzaville (Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2015).

In the same year, 2015, 45.4% of divorces in South Africa were from marriages less than a decade old (Bell, 2017). The data shows that more women (51.6%) compared to men (33.8%), initiated the divorce process. It is noteworthy that 8.6% of divorces were a result of initiation by both the husband and wife. In more recent statistical reports it is indicated that while women were instituting divorce proceedings more than men in South Africa, there had been a 6.2% decrease in divorces between 2018 and 2019. Statistics South Africa, in its 2019 Marriages and Divorces report, found that 1 771 civil unions, 129 597 civil marriages and 2 789 customary marriages were recorded that year. Of these, 23 710 divorces were recorded (Statistics South Africa [StatsSA], 2019).

According to Statistics South Africa (2019), the observed rate of divorce was 40 divorces per 100 000 of the estimated resident population. When compared to other population groups, Black African couples account for the highest statistics in divorce. This was reported to have been the pattern from 2010 to 2019. The Black community recorded 45% of the divorces in 2019. In the same year the White community accounted for 22.2%, followed by the Coloureds with 19% and Indian or Asian groups representing 5.5% of divorces (Statistics South Africa [StatsSA], 2019)

In the case of Eswatini, divorce dynamics were highly influenced by the type of marriage regime initially opted for. Through the Marriage Act of Swaziland (1964), the Government of Eswatini recognizes two types of marriage contracts – (1) marriage by Civil Rights, further divided into 'in community of property' and 'out of community of property;' and (2) marriage by Swazi Traditional Law and Custom. The Times of Swaziland (2015) reported a rise in divorce statistics in Eswatini in 2015, bringing it to a total number of 236 divorces within a

space of 11 months. These figures proved very high for a nation constituting a male population of 531,111, with 79% of the population being youth. (Population and Housing Census, 2017).

Divorced persons may be required to deal with the aftermath of divorce such as the change in social circles and settings. This change may result in social discrimination among friends and significant others as the divorced person becomes stigmatised. Friends may unconsciously find themselves having to split as they endeavour to strike a balance in the support of the divorced couples. The splitting of friends compels the divorced to shift blame while explaining the reason for their divorce (Mendoza et al., 2020)

In this study it is of essence that the lived experiences of divorce by men in Eswatini be conceptualised within an African cultural context, one which portrays the significance of factors such as that of hegemonic masculinities. It is with consideration of this paradigm that we may begin to understand the narratives of Eswatini men related to divorce. This is because men's psychological perspectives and mental formations are founded on their cultural socialisation and associations of masculinities. (Little & McGivern, 2013)

The sections above highlight the global, regional and local trends of divorce, and the underlying observation is that divorce is a serious social issue that requires more research. This is further supported by Zandiyeh and Yousefi (2014), in their assertion that divorce remains a controversial and damaging social issue.

1.3.   Problem statement

Divorce is a major stressor in the lives of the involved individuals. It potentially has strong negative repercussions for the holistic health and wellness of all family members. Since marriage is considered a norm in many societies, the divorced population is often neglected and stigmatized (Mendoza et al., 2020). According to Sekyiamah (2013), African men are

considered to be strong and stoic, thus are not expected to overtly express their deep emotions. One is considered a man if he is able to bottle up emotions, hence the ethos, "men do not cry".

Given the patriarchal nature of Eswatini's socio-cultural context (Eswatini- UNICEF, 2020), married men are highly respected. However, a divorced man faces challenges such as stigma, and other social, psychological and financial repercussions. These challenges contribute to difficulties experienced by men in dealing with divorce within their societies. Additionally, men who seek professional divorce therapy have been considered incompetent, vulnerable and frail (Clarke et al., 2015).

Therefore, the absence of African men's voices in expressing their personal narratives, feelings and struggles during divorce is highly concerning. The state of one's mental wellness during the process of divorce may, more often than not, present with varying mental health issues, including self-destructive, maladaptive habits, and tendencies such as psychological trauma, substance abuse, avoidance, depression and suicide (Condorelli, 2016). Additionally, Mnyango and Alpaslan (2018) reported that for a myriad of reasons, men struggle in emotionally and psychologically processing their experiences of divorce.

Perhaps this challenge could be attributed to what Ngwena (2018) refer to as the upheld conceptualisations of nativism, culture, sexualities and traditional constructs of masculinity. According to Christensen and Jensen (2014), characteristic of hegemonic masculinities is dominance through discursive and cultural consensus, as opposed to overt utilisation of physical coercion and raw force. In hegemonic masculinities, it is presented as gendered roles for men to "support" and "protect" thus divorce is manifested as detrimental to men's mental health. This gives rise to the questions related to the "Who, What and How" of supporting and protecting men.

According to a study by Mnyango and Alpaslan (2018) the topic of men and divorce continues to experience a lacuna in knowledge. With respect to background statistics, it would perhaps motivate targeted research that explores the intersectionality of lived experiences of divorce, contributing factors to trends in divorce, and the creation of generational divorce cycles. This could further add value in the development of culturally sensitive holistic wellness interventions geared towards not only men, but the plural family structure of African societies, such as in Eswatini.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher aimed to explore lived experiences of divorced men in Eswatini. This research also endeavoured to bridge the identified gaps in knowledge and praxis, whilst hoping to present a conducive platform for African men to confidently seek help and be receptive to interventions geared towards improving their holistic wellness.

1.4. Aim and objectives of study

1.4.1. Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to explore and understand the lived experiences of divorced men from an African context, with particular focus in men in Eswatini.

1.4.2. Objectives of the study

- To explore the emotional and psychological experiences of divorced men in Eswatini

- To understand the impact of divorce on divorced men in Eswatini.

1.4.3. Research questions

- What are the emotional and psychological experiences of divorced men in the kingdom of Eswatini?

- What are the impacts of divorce on divorced men in Eswatini?

1.5. Scope of study

The scope of this study was divorced men living in Eswatini. The study looked at men who were aged 27 years and above, because that is the median age at which most men get married in Eswatini (Swaziland Demographic and Health Survey, 2006/07).

1.6. Significance of the study

The study contributes to the development of scholarly and evidence-based knowledge in counselling practice and family therapy in academia, and praxis platforms. The results of the study could serve as a baseline data for policy makers and researchers whose interest is in developing divorce models and frameworks. The mastery gained in the study may also enrich the development of knowledge-based and professional intervention programmes for divorced men. The research findings will be made available in local libraries, academic institutions, online platforms and the Ministry of Home Affairs in Eswatini.

1.7. Operationalisation and definition of terms

1.7.1. Divorce

Divorce is derived from the Latin language "*divortium*" which has its roots in "*dis*". The word "*dis*" represents 'to do apart' and "*vertere*," suggests 'to turn.' To divorce therefore suggests turning apart. Divorce is therefore the dissolution of the act of marriage (Sanctuary, Gerald & Whitehead, cited in Pothen, 1986). The United Nations Demographic Yearbook (2013), defines divorce as "a final legal dissolution of a marriage" conferring on the parties involved the right to remarriage under religious, civil and/or other provisions in accordance with the laws of each individual country. The three grounds recognised for divorce, according

to the Swazi Traditional Law and Custom, are infidelity, witchcraft or sterility (CEDAW, 2021). Divorce in this study is conceptualised as a process whereby a legal marriage between a man and a woman is officially dissolved.

1.7.2. Marriage

According to the APA Dictionary of Psychology (2021), marriage is "the social institution in which two (or, less frequently, more) people commit themselves to a socially sanctioned relationship in which sexual intercourse is legitimated and there is legally recognized responsibility for any offspring as well as for each other. Although there are exceptions, the marital partners typically live together in the same residence." The Marriage Act of Swaziland (1964) recognises two types of marriage contracts, these being; marriage under the Civil Rights, and under the Swazi Traditional Law and Custom. The Civil Rights is further divided into 'In community of property' and 'Out of community of property.' Marriage in this study is conceptualised as a process whereby a man has been legally joined to a woman with the intention of spending their lives together and being separated only by death.

1.7.3. Swati men

Swati men in this study are conceptualised as men living within the context of the Kingdom of Eswatini. These are men who are of African descent and considered as 'LiSwati' by birth right.

1.7.4. Lived experiences

In qualitative phenomenological research 'lived experiences' refers to a representation of the experiences and choices of a given person and the knowledge they gain from these experiences and choices (Given,, 2008). It is a methodology oriented towards understanding and exploring the experience of a particular phenomenon (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2019). Lived experiences in

this study denotes a first-hand account and impressions that divorced men encountered in the event of the divorce.

1.7.5. Hegemonic masculinities

External and internal hegemonic masculinities are characterised by supremacy through discursive and cultural consensus as opposed to overt use of physical coercion and raw force (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). According to Morojele and Motsa (2019), hegemonic masculinities are the more idealised and socially exalted forms of masculinities in any given context, associated with authority, respect, social power and influence. In this study hegemonic masculinity is included to identify the nuanced understanding of lived experiences of divorce by African men. This facilitates the process of conceptualisation of possible socio-cultural understandings of how African men are expected to present themselves within socially constructed and gendered role definitions, leading to their inability to seek or receive help towards achieving health and wellness.

1.7.6. Holistic wellness

Holistic wellness in this study is conceptualised within frameworks of holistic wellbeing, beyond emotional and psychological health. The Global Wellness Institute (2021) defines wellness as the vigorous pursuit of lifestyles, choices and activities that lead to a state of holistic health. Hence, wellness in this study supersedes just physical health, but is multi-dimensional as typified in the eight dimensions of the Wellness Wheel (Eight Dimensions of Wellness, 2021). namely; physical, occupational, spiritual, environmental, social, intellectual, financial and emotional wellness.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the theoretical formulations and lenses utilised in the study. The chapter begins by outlining the theoretical frameworks around divorce, namely; Offence or Guilt Theory, Mutual Consent Theory, and the Irretrievable Marriage Breakdown Theory. Following is a section that discusses Bowen's Family Systems Theory, which is the theoretical perspective identified as suitable in facilitating an understanding of the impact of divorce on men, generally, and from an African context of Eswatini in particular.

2.2 Theoretical framework

Mbwambo (2020) cites Bindra (1996), and in his citation he mentions three theories of divorce as per the Hindu Law in the Marriage Act (1955). These are the Offence or Guilt theory, the Mutual Consent theory and the Breakdown theory. Eswatini law recognises the "fault or offence" theory, where the person who is at fault may be negatively impacted during the distribution of property in a divorce (CEDAW, 2012). Though this theoretical framework is based on the Hindu Law, it has a lot in common with the Swazi Law and Custom, and the basis for divorce according to the Marriage Act (1964) in Eswatini.

2.2.1   Offence or guilt / fault theory

The exclusive nature of the marriage union comes to an end when it stops being a marriage. The foundation of marriage can be destroyed by adultery. The core marriage value is that the couple stay together in mutual confidence and harmony. Thus, infidelity, abuse, and rejection can be destructive to the marriage foundation. The Guilt theory postulates that one of the

partners must prove that the other partner has committed a matrimonial offence after the solemnisation of the marriage. The theory addresses the perceived contributory factors to divorce as reflected in the personal analysis theme. Hence the offence would be recognised as the basis for the divorce.

In most states of the USA and many Commonwealth countries, the offence theory is frequently used to issue a divorce decree; the guilt theory suggests that there is a guilty party and an innocent party.

In a legal sense, in Eswatini law and custom there is no divorce. The dissolving of a marriage relationship can be through an extra-judicial meeting between the husband and the father of his wife, adultery, or abuse by a husband. The practice of witchcraft by the wife, desertion by the either of the spouses, or loss of respect by wife can also result in the marriage being dissolved (OECD, 2019). A meeting between the husband and wife's families can also suffice to dissolve a marriage (High Court of Eswatini, Nxumalo v Ndlovu, 2011)

2.2.2 Consent theory

After the adoption of the guilt theory in the west, it was discovered that marriage often breaks down because one party is found guilty. Married couples may find it difficult to pull together after they have tried hard to make the marriage a success. Eventually, they may divorce by mutual consent. Consequently, in view of the assumption that freedom of marriage suggests freedom of divorce, individuals should not be denied the freedom to marry or divorce each other.

The consent theory has been criticised for making divorce both easy and difficult. The first criticism is that by making divorce easy, divorce by mutual consent offers a great temptation to ill-considered and nasty divorces. Moreover, parties may unnecessarily amplify their

discomforts, differences and other difficulties. This may be nothing than problems of mutual adjustment which may negatively affect the whole family.

In a latter criticism, divorce is by mutual consent and therefore requires the consent of both parties and if one of the parties withholds consent, a divorce cannot be obtained, rendering it a difficult affair. It therefore became necessary to find an alternative to the consent theory. However, in countries such as the UK, modes were found to mitigate this rigour. Some countries enlarged the fault grounds of divorce so much so that "incompatibility of temperament" or profound and unresolved disruptions were made grounds for divorce.

2.2.3   Irretrievable breakdown of marriage theory

The assumption of the Breakdown theory is that marriage should be dissolved if it has broken down without any possibility of being fixed. That happens without considering who is at fault. The modern world is faced with challenges such that both parties may not be willing to save their marriage, hence the marriage has broken down irretrievably. Given that both parties are no longer willing to settle together, there is no need to find the guilty party and grant divorce on such a basis. Furthermore, if a divorce would be granted based on being found guilty, what will be the consequences in a situation where both parties are guilty, or in a situation where no one is guilty but the marriage has since broken down; should divorce be granted or withheld?

2.3 Theoretical perspectives

There are different theories and perspectives in psychology that try to explain families and their problems from different angles. For this specific research, family systems theory will be used to explore the impact of divorce in men, particularly in an African context of Eswatini.

2.3.1 Family systems theory

Bowen's family systems theory (Brown, 1999) views the family as an emotional unit. The emotional connection intensely binds the members of the family together. Family members can deeply influence each other through, actions, thoughts and feelings such that they may appear to be identical. Also, they seek each other's approval and support one another, resulting in interdependence. Changes in one member's behaviour is reciprocated by change in the other members' behaviour. However, families may be different in the level of their connectedness but there is always some level of interdependence.

The basic assumption of the family systems theory is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008). A family is not just a collection of individuals who live together. The individuals are related to each other, and as a natural social system, it possesses its own characteristics, roles, rules, communication patterns, and power structure.

If a problem such as divorce occurs within a family, it is not only the wife or husband who is blamed, but all family members as a whole, because no behaviour can be understood in isolation, and all behaviours are considered to be part of ongoing, interactive, and recurring events (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2009). It takes two to have a conflict.

A family system delineates its boundaries from other family systems by having its own covert and overt rules, and members learn gender roles and responsibility within the family system. When a person deviates from these rules, in order to keep the homeostasis, the family will either use negative feedback to that behaviour, or will use positive feedback for important adjustments if the individual's deviation is caused by dysfunctional family rules. Divorce is a form of social deviation from family norms and rules – overt or covert – and is likely to attract negative feedback from society, and therefore a family's adjustment to stressful situations is essential. It is necessary that a family becomes flexible in terms of changing the rules, roles,

and patterns of communication, as being rigid will create a conflict and misunderstanding among the members (Bacallao & Smokowski, 2009).

The Family Systems theory brings synergy of a conceptual framework that best explores the lived experiences of divorced men. It helped the researcher explore and understand the lived experiences of divorced men by focusing on the family unit and the society.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The literature review of the research focused on Swati men's experiences of divorce. In instances where literature is scanty, classic or ancient literature has been used and cited in the study. According to Abebe (2015), divorce and marriage are not only social issues but also private concerns. The repercussions of a failed or successful marriage have a ripple effect beyond the people involved. When individuals at the crossroads of divorce fix their relationship and initiate a stable and healthy marriage, it also benefits their families, neighbourhood and communities (Tizita, 2013). Moreover, this assertion is of relevance within family units in the African context which have proven to be particularly orientated towards multiplicity or plurality, as opposed to the singularity family unit common amongst the majority of European contexts.

This chapter captures literature around conceptualisations of divorce in relation to the likely demands this phenomenon may have on holistic health and wellness of men generally, and specifically Swati men living within the African context and, by extension, to their circles including families. The literature further discusses concepts of intersectionality related to issues of experiences of divorce and help-seeking behaviours for African men, and in particular Swati men. This includes socio-cultural formations and hegemonic masculinities.

3.2 Divorce

Divorce is not a new phenomenon in marriage. Although the researcher is mostly aware of religious literature on divorce, he made a deliberate effort to utilise less of that literature because it was going to present much of the researcher's bias to religious beliefs, thus

minimising the efforts to conduct research through a more critical lens. Furthermore, as indicated by Clark and Brauner-Otto (2015), the sub- Saharan Africa region has a rich diversity of marital practices. These practices are coupled with the rapidly changing cultural, social and economic landscape. The diversity offers researchers a unique opportunity to positively construe the complex dynamics of human partnering and is likely to yield surprising findings on lived experiences of divorced men.

According to Clark and Brauner-Otto (2015), in the sub-Saharan African region there has been a rise in divorce rates, followed by a plateau and fall in some countries. In developed countries this has been a result of the differences in divorce rates across cohorts, and the delay in marriage in modern younger couples (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020). Many studies have highlighted various reasons that motivate divorce, and these studies list issues such as; marriage at a too young an age (46%); unrealistic expectations (45%); couples arguing too much (56%); lack of commitment (73%); infidelity (55%); lack of equality in the relationship (44%); domestic violence or abuse (25%); and lack of preparedness for marriage (41%) (Wilkinson & Finkbeiner, n.d.).

It is noteworthy to highlight that at the regional and African level, statistics of divorce may be irregular due to the forms of marriage regimes in the continent. Many African cultures infuse a customary law marriage regime with a civil law marriage regime. This yields irregularities in statistical numbers of marriages and divorces. Nonetheless, over the years, the traditional customary marriage regime has been accounted for, and legalised, in some sub-Saharan African countries, including South Africa and Eswatini (Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2015). This is perhaps due to the rise in contestations related to families' claims of wealth, especially after the death of the head of the family – often a man in the African context.

A common trend that is demonstrated in other literature is that most initiators of divorce and separation continue to be women. For example, a study conducted by Reniers (2003) on divorce and re-marriage in rural Malawi highlighted that female empowerment was one of the key motivators for divorces. Additionally, Adegoke (2010) found that in Nigeria, the increase in formal education and urbanisation contributed towards increased rates of divorce. It would seem that, the more women attained an education, thus creating shifts in their socio-economic status patterns and hence becoming less dependent on men as partners, the more likely for them to seek independent lifestyles through divorce.

In cases of death and the divorce process, contestations pertaining to financial obligations present as another family life dynamic. Therefore, it is significant for the helping professions' praxis to understand lived experiences and effects of divorce on the holistic wellbeing of men from an African and patriarchal context such as that of Eswatini.

3.3 Marriage and divorce in Eswatini

3.3.1   Marriage in Eswatini

There are two types of marriage regimes in the kingdom of Eswatini. The process of marriage in the Eswatini cultural context is embedded in that the marriage is between two families, not just two individuals. Thus, marriage of two families is a lengthy process. Marriage in Eswatini involves a lengthy procession of traditional customs including *lobola* (family negotiations and ceremony for bridal dowry), gift ceremonies, a traditional and sometimes a white wedding, slaughtering of cattle and rituals such as using their bile duct to unite ancestors of both parties. All these processes are significant during the joining of the two families, whether the marriage is monogamous or polygamous.

According to the Marriage Act in Swaziland (1964) there are two types of marriage namely, customary marriage and the civil rites marriage. Irrespective of the type of marriage process that may be followed, all marriages have to be recorded. According to the Swaziland Demographic and Health Survey (2006-07) the median age at first marriage for women is 24.3years and 27.7 for men.

3.3.2   Divorce in Eswatini

Divorce continues to be a problematic social experience in Eswatini. According to Amato (2003), causes of divorce vary by gender, social class and life course. Thus, in many cases in Eswatini, predominantly a patriarchal context, divorce is perpetuated by various socio-cultural factors. Factors such as religion, ethnicity, gendered-role conflict between men and women, childlessness, and traditional family dynamics, have formed as contestation platforms for divorce in Eswatini over the years. These factors seem to have been concurrent with the surge of foreign nationals becoming part of the Eswatini population.

In the context of Eswatini, a culturally ingrained society, family remains the backbone and basic unit of everyone. Therefore, divorce is becoming a threat to the foundation of Eswatini society. Dlamini (2014) claimed that it was a known fact that within the Swati Law, custom and traditional courts, divorce was discouraged and shunned. Furthermore, Dlamini (2014) highlighted that the lengthy marriage processes in Eswatini involved a number of parties that included the family, community and other representatives that were expected to form part of efforts to mediate and resolve disputes to avoid divorce.

In the event of a divorce due to irreconcilable differences, certain rituals and customs had to be reversed in order to formally record a dissolution of marriage in the customary law. This may be because, once married through the Swati customary law and traditions, getting divorced has

remained in contestation (Dlamini, 2014). Nonetheless, divorce within civil law is not as cumbersome, although it may be emotionally, financially and otherwise draining.

3.4 Divorce intersectionalities

The concept of 'intersectionalities' affords researchers an opportunity to purposefully highlight contributing factors and dynamics concerning the topic under study, whilst highlighting that every phenomenon is likely to have multifaceted nuances. To confirm this point, a study conducted by Schweizer (2020) in the USA brought to light the significance of investigating the concept of divorce from a framework of emergent and intersecting dynamics and factors such as variations by median age; variations by race, ethnicity and class; and variations by educational attainment.

Added to these, in the current study, divorce is studied within the limitations of patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity, African cultural value systems and principles, gendered roles and educational advancements. These intersecting limitations associated with divorce may be better conceptualised within various factors such as; (i) types of family units, (ii) shifts of socio-cultural spaces, (iii) shifts in socio-economic status, and (iv)shifts of individual psycho-social status. These factors may have varying implications on divorce dynamics, proceedings, and available support, to name but a few.

3.5 Divorce and type of family unit

Eswatini family structures are of a plural nature as opposed to Eurocentric family structures which are singular in nature. The type of family unit that an individual is born into plays a significant role in many aspects of personal development. Therefore, the family is the first point of reference in life and forms the foundation of the experiences of life (Dlamini, 2014).

Family units in the context of Eswatini have been mostly of a patriarchal nature. Thus, men are the dominant figures and main providers in families, which in essence is the platform for hegemonic masculinity (Ngwena, 2018). This is also reflected in the types of marriage regimes that are highlighted in earlier sections of this study. Therefore, a family's values and principles, may be influential in the formation of an individual's values and beliefs on divorce. Often, families that people are born into, and their expectations of family sustenance may have negative or positive implications on marriage and divorce. Moreover, in Eswatini, the type or lack of support that a divorcing family member may be party to to is likely to be determined by a plethora of factors closely related to family influences.

3.6 Divorce and socio-cultural shifts

Family structures are situated within socio-cultural contexts. According to Pedrotti (2013), culture is a concept that must be deliberated on when engaging any field of psychology, as no individual or group exists in a vacuum. Recent studies, including those of Parham (2002), have built on the concept of applying African-centred approaches in psychological practice. When the African-centred psychological approach is applied in research, we acknowledge that psychological studies conducted in Africa deserve to be defined from a perspective that reflects an African orientation and perspective to the worldview, meaning of life and relationships with one's self and others (Parham, 2002). The use of an African-centred approach will also demonstrate the existence of multiple perspectives of truth, and the respect of African thought, including the existence and significance of the phenomenon of complementary duality in human contexts (Nwoye, 2006; 2007- 2008).

Conceptualisations of divorce intersect directly with the individual's cultural socialisation as positioned within family and community structures. Therefore concepts such as 'normal' or 'healthy,' should better be construed from a cultural worldview to avoid the distortion of

meaning. It should be pointed out that there is a difference between the way people behave in a cultural context (Ngwena, 2018) and the concept of culture as a way of life. The behaviours of people at home could include performance of rites, rituals and ceremonies, which are not feasible in the workplace.

The Swati men who participated in this study were socialised in a background that respects the way of life and traditional values at home, in the community and at workplace. The norms and values of society help regulate and guard strong values in the entire life of the individual. Patriarchy and hegemonic masculinities once again are a featured intersectional construct of socio-cultural influences in the experiences of the effects of divorce on Swati men.

Swati man are socialised to assume roles such as being the head of the family, provider, protector and exhibiting a stoic presence. On the other hand, Swati women are socialised to assume the role of family supporter, through nurturing, caring, household management within the immediate family unit, and of being a support to the extended family. Within this gendered role, Swati women were and are expected to be subservient to their male counterparts as well as in-laws (Dlamini, 2014).

The significance of the current study in investigating experiences of divorce and its effects in the Eswatini context is relevant because it has highlighted how most research has focused on the conceptualisations of marriage and family, whilst leaving out the socio-cultural shifts, which now include divorce. Additionally, this study provides space to interrogate the multi-layered nature of divorce from shifting African cultural contexts.

These shifts have included that women have, over the centuries, assumed a working or career role, which has rendered them socio-economically independent of their male counterparts (Dlamini, 2014). These socio-cultural shifts, reflecting women as not only home-keepers but also as holding their own within the world of work, have therefore become a normalised way

of life for the people of Eswatini. However, what has seemingly remained is the socially and patriarchally constructed gendered roles, thus creating another implicating factor for divorce and its effects within the context of men living in Eswatini.

3.7 Divorce and socio-economic shifts

As highlighted in various studies, the most significant factor contributing to the increasing rates of divorce, is career development for women, such as better global opportunities to attain education, meaningful employment, and positive socio-economic status (Alexander & Dlamini, 2012). With socio-economic freedom, women have further utilised this as an opportunity to have a choice and to make decisions pertaining to marriage, and on whether to remain in a marriage contract or to leave. As indicated in earlier sections, statistics have proven that most divorces are instigated by women (StatsSA, 2019).

Ortiz-Ospina and Roser (2020), although referring to a USA study, have highlighted that socio-economic status dynamics pertaining to women have contributed to the surge in divorces. This is partially owing to the changes in expectations within marriage as women enter the workforce. Moreover, women who married before the large rise in women's employment may have found themselves in marriages where expectations were no longer suited. Although this may be similar in the context of Eswatini, nonetheless the motivating complexities around this idea may be different due to existing systems such as patriarchy, which are also present within religious doctrines in the country. Education for women and men has not only opened up a platform for employment and financial independence, but has further contributed to psychological and mental health shifts for individuals in Eswatini. However, due to the lack of research on holistic wellness in Eswatini, this is not documented but stands as a subjective observation by the researcher.

3.8 Divorce and psycho-social shifts

The psychological wellness of individuals in Eswatini has recently, due to current issues such as COVID-19, become a major concern on all fronts. From the health, organisational and social spaces, individuals seem to be struggling with mental health. The pressure from work, or the lack of jobs has rendered some citizens helpless and hopeless and, in many cases, resulted in families contemplating divorce (Lebow, 2020). Before COVID-19, Eswatini has been known for issues related to gender-based violence, which in some cases has been a contributing factor to divorce (Global Fund, 2021)

3.9 Why men divorce

According to Lowenstein (2014) there is no single reason to divorce. Often, there are a number of factors involved that lead to separation and eventually divorce among couples. Marriages do not just end overnight. It is often only after months or years of both spouses trying to fix their problems, for the sustainability of their marriage. Cohen and Finzi-Dottan (2021) cite those longitudinal studies indicate that predictors of disruption in marriage are often domestic violence, frequent conflict, and infidelity. The number of perceived relationship problems, a weak commitment to marriage, and low levels of love and trust between spouses have also contributed to the breakdown of marriages (Rodrigues & Fincham, 2006).

According to Sayer and Bianchi (2000) men like to express the love they feel for their spouses, but when they feel unappreciated, they are likely to show resentment instead of love. Thus, men who are not appreciated and feel disillusioned by the realities of their marriage are at risk of divorce.

On the other hand, Barth (2018) also suggests that many men who attend couples' therapy appear to be disgruntled about their partner's substandard financial decisions. Sayer and

Bianchi (2000) explored the contribution the wife's economic independence had on the marriage and the risk of divorce. There was a significant association between a wife's percentage of contribution to the family income and divorce. Some men felt inadequate when the woman's contribution was higher than theirs. Sometimes men will cheat, act out, and try to control their partners. The usual drive of such behaviour is often a deep fear that they are not matching up in their partner's eyes. The control becomes a form of defence mechanism for the man.

Other factors that exert an effect on divorce and marriage dissolution among men is son-preference. Lowenstein (2014) opines that a marriage with no male child was significantly at a higher risk of divorce than those with at least one son. This is prevalent in African contexts.

3.10 Phases of divorce

The effects of divorce are best summed up in the six phases of divorce, as identified by Kiernan and Mueller's (1998) classic study.

3.10.1 Emotional divorce

The positive feelings of love and affection are replaced by feelings of anger, resentment and betrayal, and the characteristics that attracted the couples to each other will fade away.

3.10.2 Legal divorce:

It involves the legal process and documentation that states that the couple are no longer married.

3.10.3 Economic divorce:

A fair property and assets settlement may require the involvement of the court. This includes money and property the couple have accumulated during the marriage relationship.

3.10.4 Co-parental divorce:

The custody of children will require the parents to discuss certain things that pertain to the children. This on its own has a tendency to prolong healing. Habitually, women are automatically given the children, but a court may decide who is more suitable in the best interest of the children.

3.10.5 Community divorce:

This will involve changing living environments, friends, work, and previous socialization.

3.10.6 Psychological divorce:

The divorced person's living adjustments resorting to individual decision-making in daily activities.

Some of the phases may take several years to complete and some people pass through all the phases,while others struggle and never adjust to pass some phases. And if children are involved, they will pass through the gates along with their parents (Kiernan & Mueller, 1998)

3.11 The impacts of divorce on men

The impact of divorce can be enduring and traumatic. The process and journey of recovery from divorce is distinctive for each individual and gender. The agony of the divorce process has many casualties, for example the children, friends, wife, relatives and finances. An understanding of the effects divorce has on the different parties involved helps facilitate the healing process and gives the necessary tenacity and fortitude to journey through the proceedings. A study by Kim and McKenry (2002) suggests a divorced person may be hesitant to divorce again. In Asian countries this hesitancy is a phobic reaction to being labelled as pathological or abnormal.

3.11.1 Emotional consequences

Cohen (2012) likens the grief and stress that men and women experience in divorce as "second only to the distress experienced from the death of a loved one." Women are said to adjust better than men emotionally after divorce.

The mental and emotional symptoms experienced during grief may include numbness, confusion, sadness, guilt or anger, and a sense of detachment. Denial, inability to concentrate, hopelessness and helplessness are also some of the most common emotional responses. According to Amato (2010), divorced individuals are more susceptible to experience depression, health problems and diminished levels in life satisfaction than married individuals.

3.11.2 Financial consequences

Mortelmans (2020) opined that men are more prone to experience crippling and debilitating financial consequences and a diminished standard of living than women. Mortelmans's study found that a man tend to lose less income post-divorce compared to women. This is however dependent on the number of children and employment stability of the couples involved.

3.11.3 Social consequences

Divorce has a ripple effect on the family. This include the children, the parents, relatives and friends. Divorce remains stigmatised in some societies, hence parents may not be able to withstand the stigma associated with it and may eventually be crushed by shame, guilt and hatred. Consequentially, children may lack parental love and support which may disrupt their growth and development. This may result in some children engaging in crime (Arugu, 2014). Also the pivotal nature of the divorce event has the tendency to shift one's self-awareness and others' cognitive perceptions, especially in desirability for a new intimate partner (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012). According to Wang and Amato (2000) the loss of the experience of a

partner, either by divorce or death can make the adaptation process a lonely journey. Men often find new love quicker than women do. A correlation on coping strategies and adjustment to the divorce process in general has been investigated (Wang & Amato, 2000). The investigation however has not focussed on the appraisal of existing and potential new partners as a risk to the social relationship.

The consequential impacts of divorce run like a thread into every pocket of the life of the divorced man and create holes of varying sizes in his financial, emotional and social life. Therefore it is fundamental that platforms be created where men can open up to express their emotional and psychological frustrations that are a result of navigating the turbulent moments of life pre, intra, and post-divorce.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the procedures followed to conduct this study. It includes the research design, sampling strategies, data collection instruments, procedures for data collection and analysis, the guiding ethical principles, and the significance of the research.

4.2 Research approach

A qualitative approach to research was used in this study. This approach has its focus on people's experiences, thoughts and feelings. Qualitative research has unique characteristics which help facilitate the gathering of rich information (Kruger & Gericke, 2004). The qualitative approach enabled men who participated in this study to make meaning of their own realities concerning divorce, while providing the researcher a holistic and in-depth narrative of their realities. Qualitative research describes experiences from the participants' perspective, taking into consideration the context and unique characteristics of the individual (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005)

4.3 Research design

In this study the researcher used a phenomenological design for inquiry. This design was decided upon as a strategy of inquiry. It aims to interrogate the thoughts, feelings, and lived experiences of individuals in tandem with an event. In this case it is related to the divorced Swati men's lived experiences. This design enabled the researcher to collect accurate data for analysis. Thus, a phenomenological study proved useful in understanding the participants' interpretation of their reality. The researcher ensured that the authentic representation of

participants' experiences was captured and recorded. This paradigm was chosen because it is appropriate to explore and understand the lived experiences of the participants.

4.4 Population

The population in this study was divorced men in Eswatini. These are men who have been married according to Civil rights or as approved by Swazi law and customs, and have been married for 3 years or more, prior to divorce.

4.5 Sampling method

The study used non-probabilistic purposive sampling, after which snowball sampling was employed to recruit more participants. According to Nepolo (2020), snowball sampling or chain referral sampling, which is non-probability in nature, is a technique valuable for identifying research subjects. One participant recommends to the researcher the name of another participant. The recommended participant in turn provides the name of a third, and so on. This sampling method is widely used in qualitative research to identify and select information-rich cases that are related to the phenomenon of study interest.

The snowball sampling technique was used to select participants (divorced men) in Eswatini. This was appropriate because Eswatini is a small community made up of one tribe and only four regions. These regions which formed the research setting are Hhohho, Manzini, Lubombo and Shiselweni. The researcher did not limit the study to one region. Men come together to drink or braai and watch soccer, thus making it easier to know one another. For privacy purposes, interviews were held behind closed doors, with a "DO NOT DISTURB" sign on the door, in a community office or church office, and for some in their workplace office. In some instances, a warning for privacy was communicated to others to guard against likely

interruption. This was especially with interviews that were conducted in the participant's workplace office. The researcher signed a confidentiality form as a mitigation measure.
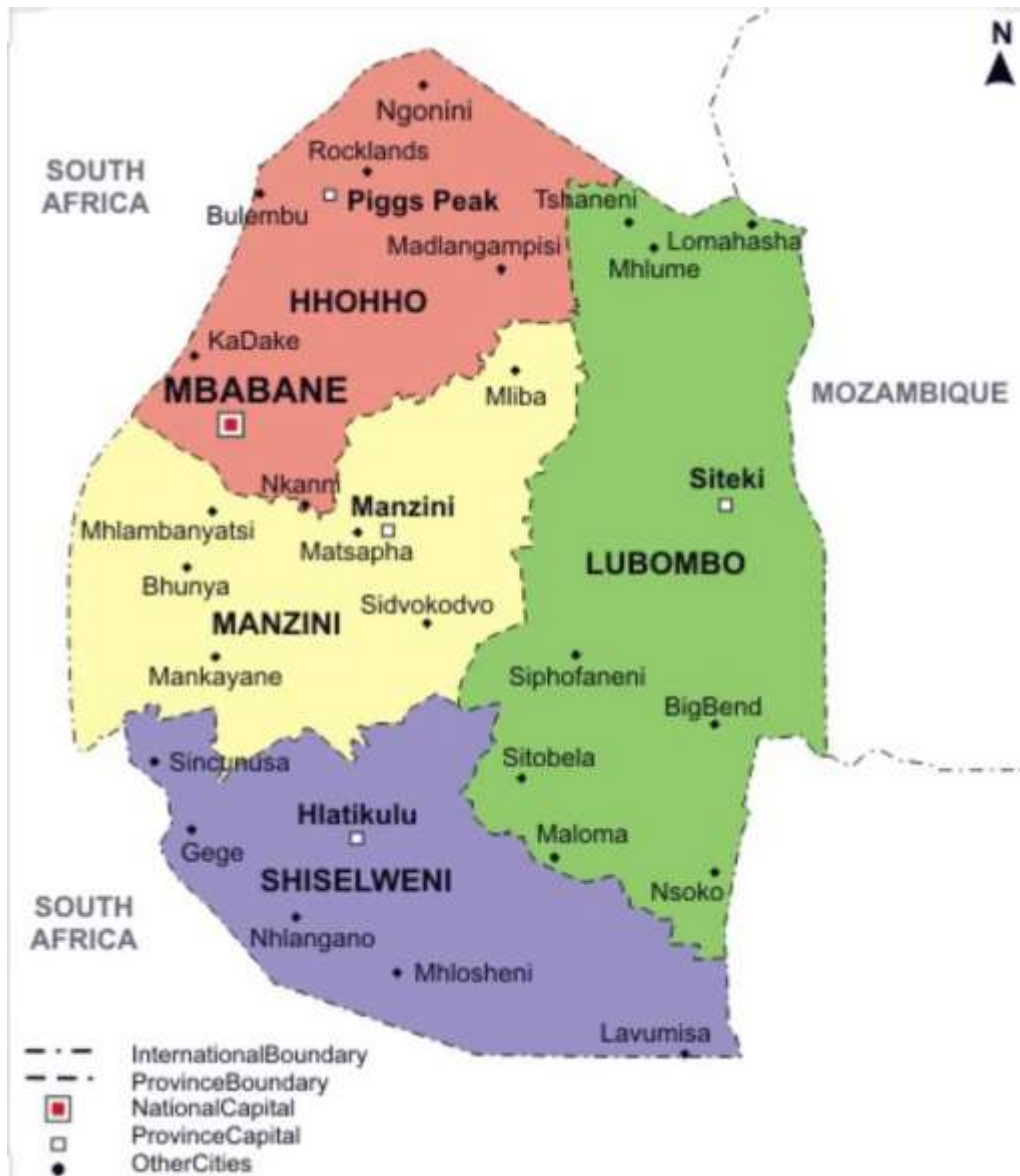
Figure 1: The map of Swaziland showing the 4 regions (extracted from www.vidiani.com)

4.6 Sample size

The sample of this study comprised 12 participants (divorced men) until data saturation was reached. According to Guest (2006), saturation occurs at around 12 participants in a homogenous group. "Data saturation in qualitative research is reached when data collected yield redundant information" (Lippincott et al., 2017).

In qualitative research, saturation is attained when there is no new analytical information emerging and the study has yielded maximum information on the study phenomenon. The usually small sample size is dependent on the richness of the information in the data and the variety of participants. Additionally, the broadness of the phenomenon and the research question, the data collection method (for example, group or individual interviews), and the sampling strategy used can determine the size of the sample

4.7 Inclusion criteria

The inclusion criteria were that participants were to be divorced men who were at least 27 years but should have been married for three years or longer, before divorce. 27 years is the median age at which men in Eswatini marry (SDHS, 2007). According to Fisher (2006), there is a natural and psychological breaking point in marriage and it usually happens after the 3rd year of marriage.

4.8 Sample exclusion criteria

The exclusion criteria was that, participants who were separated, or who were under 27 years of age would not be participants in the study. Divorced participants who would have been in a marriage for less than three years prior to divorcing were excluded. The study excluded men who had been in a polygynous marriage (accepted under Eswatini customary law).Participants diagnosed with mental health issues were not permitted to partake in the study. Divorced

participants from same-sex marriages were also excluded based on the researcher's operational definition of divorce.

4.9 Description of procedure

The researcher made contact with the leader of a WhatsApp support group, run by a state-registered organisation called Iron Sharpens Iron. The group is a mixture of married and divorced men from Eswatini community. The men come together, virtually and physically, to discuss and share ideas on issues that impact men and leadership. The discussions also provide group therapy in what is known as *lisango*.

The leader assumed the role of a gatekeeper for this study and assisted the researcher to have access to the group. The leader assisted the researcher to recruit the first participant in accordance with the study inclusion criteria. It was the first participant who then referred and guided the researcher in the identification and recruitment of other potential participants as per the snowball sampling technique.

The researcher obtained informed consent from the participants. The researcher or the referring participant voluntarily contacted the potential participants to enquire about their willingness to participate in the study. Most of them offered to participate, except for two who felt that they did not want to relive their past. All participants were given clarity on the informed consent based on the principles of privacy and autonomy. A detailed explanation on the nature, aim of the study and research-related activities, were provided to all the potential participants. The title of the study was put at the top of each informed consent form with the purpose clearly outlined.

Consent was obtained verbally and in writing, and the consent form was both in siSwati and English. Clarity on the benefit, risks and consequences of participating were explained to

inform the participants. Participants' competencies to understand and make a voluntary decision were considered. The participants were given an informed consent form only if all the inclusion criteria was met.

Thereafter, the researcher obtained the list and contact information of participants who indicated interest and consented to participate in the study. The researcher made contact with the participants and arranged an appointment at a mutually convenient venue and time to conduct the interviews.

4.10   Data collection method

Unstructured face-to-face in-depth interviews were utilised for data collection because they provide richer sets of data in terms of nuances and depth. The researcher ensured both himself and the participants maintained the one-metre social distance and wore masks as a COVID-19 precautionary measure, as described by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2019), and according to the COVID-19 guidelines of the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Eswatini. A hand sanitizer was made available and in the event the participant wanted to cough, he was encouraged to practice the appropriate cough etiquette. A phenomenological design assisted the researcher to gather in-depth information about the experiences of participants (Engel & Schutt, 2009). This research design helped the researcher to unearth and gather new information and gain deeper understanding of the experiences of men in Eswatini regarding divorce.

Interviews were conducted in a private and safe location where participants were comfortable and accorded confidentiality and privacy, as ethics dictate. The researcher was flexible towards participants and allowed them to use the nearest community offices during interviews. The offices are freely available when booked in time. Through Mobile Money, participants were given a standard fee of SZL50.00 for lunch. There was no monetary incentive for participating

in the study. The researcher engaged a research assistant to do both the role of a transcriber and a co-coder on a pro-bono basis.

The researcher used a tape-recorder to capture information provided by participants. Interviews varied between 40 minutes and one hour .The recordings were done with the consent of research participants. Information obtained from participants will not be disclosed to the public and will be solely used for the purpose of this study.

4.11   Data analysis methods

Analysis of data was done by the thematic method of analysis. This method identifies, analyses and reports patterns within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This allowed the researcher to analyse data into subordinate themes and finally into major themes. A theme captures important concepts in the data in relation to the research question. It also represents some level of patterned response, feedback   and meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006.) The data was allowed to speak for itself without the researcher's assumption in an attempt to reduce researcher bias. Braun et al. (2016) suggest that the benefits of this analysis is its flexibility and that it describes and organises the data in rich detail. The researcher used Braun and Clarke's steps to carry out a thematic analysis methodology, outlined below;

4.11.1 Familiarising with data

As part of the data analysis process, the researcher listened to and transcribed verbal descriptions of the participants' divorce phenomenon. The data were then read, first without the researcher applying his mind, in order to understand participants' expressions and meanings in the broader context. This helped the researcher familiarise himself with the data and provided a foundation for the subsequent analysis.

The researcher differentiated parts of the descriptions, identifying meaningful units and organising the data for later analysis. Redundant and irrelevant expressions identified in the descriptions were eliminated.

4.11.2 Generating initial codes.

The researcher identified categories in the data from which he generated codes and labelled them. Relevant words, phrases and sentences were highlighted. The highlights were about actions, concepts, differences, opinions and processes as experienced by the participants. The coding was largely descriptive and the labels were attached by the researcher to discrete instances of phenomena. It was then that new, low-level categories emerged. Eventually higher-level categories were identified. These categories were systematically integrated with low-level categories into meaningful units. Thus, analytical categories were introduced.

4.11.3 Searching themes

The researcher generated themes from the descriptive units to prepare for a structural eidetic and in-depth analysis. The descriptive material was re-ordered according to themes identified by the researcher. The researcher harnessed member-checking in elaborating meanings identified in different situations. The research participants were convened to read through the tentative findings and provide feedback. The participant's group was to identify vital areas omitted, and evaluate if the narrative was authentic to their experiences.

4.11.4 Reviewing themes

The researcher reviewed and questioned the identified themes on whether to refine, separate or discard initial themes. Meaningful coherence of data within themes was noted with identifiable and clear distinctions between themes. This was in two phases. In each phase the themes were

checked in relation to the coded extracts in the first phase, and then for the overall data set in the second phase. A thematic 'map' was then generated from this step.

4.11.5 Defining and naming themes

The themes and potential sub-themes within the data were refined and defined in this step. The themes and subthemes are discussed in the next chapter. On-going analysis was performed to further enhance the themes that were identified. Thereafter the researcher provided the names of the themes and working definitions that clearly captured the essence of each theme in a succinct manner. At this juncture, a unified and concise story of the data emerged from the themes.

4.11.6 Producing the report

Finally, the researcher transferred the analysis into an interpretable piece of writing. Compelling and vivid extract examples that related to the themes, research question, and literature were used. The results of the analysis were relayed in a way that convinces the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis. It went beyond a mere description of the themes and portrayed an analysis supported with empirical evidence that addressed the research question.

4.12   Trustworthiness

According to Shenton (2004), frameworks for ensuring rigour in qualitative research have been in existence for many years. This is despite the reluctance of many critics to accept its trustworthiness. Guba's constructs, in particular, have won considerable favour and formed the focus of this research (Shenton, 2004). Trustworthiness of qualitative research was used in the study, underpinned by the four principles of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, according to Shenton (2004).

4.13 Credibility

Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, (2011) argue that a researcher should ensure credibility to establish trustworthiness. The researcher applied the following provisions to promote confidence that he recorded the phenomena accurately and under scrutiny.

Appropriate research methods were adopted by the researcher. These methods are well established both in qualitative investigation and in information science. Thus, the specific procedures employed, such as the line of questioning pursued in the data gathering sessions and the methods of data analysis, were derived, where possible, from those that have been successfully utilised in previous comparable projects.

The researcher ensured the development of an early familiarity with the culture of the participants' prior to data collection (Shenton, 2004). The researcher had established a relationship with the organisation and was familiar with its culture.

The researcher had frequent debriefing sessions and updates with the research supervisor. This guidance ensured that the researcher recognised his biases and preferences. The supervisor is experienced in qualitative research and brought her experience and perceptionsto help broaden the view of the study, and helped in the identification of challenges and provision of alternative approaches.

Iterative questioning and probing were used in addition to the "preventative" strategies outlined above. This enabled the researcher to detect and uncover deliberate lies. However, this was not used for all participants. The researcher returned to matters previously raised by the participants and extracted related data by rephrasing the questions.

The researcher's "reflective commentary" ensured credibility. The researcher evaluated the project, as it was developing. This he did by recording his impressions of the data collection

sessions, emerging patterns and theories generated. This commentary was key in progressive subjectivity.

The pastoral background, health science career and exposure of the researcher enhanced credibility in the study. According to Patton (1990), the researcher's credibility is key in qualitative research as the researcher becomes a major instrument of data collection and analysis.

The researcher assessed the degree of congruence of the study with previous studies by examining previous research findings. Silverman (2000) considers that the ability of the researcher to relate his or her findings to an existing body of knowledge is a key criterion for evaluating works of qualitative inquiry.

4.14   Transferability

Adequate descriptive data regarding the context, methodology and findings of the study were provided in order to ensure transferability of findings when appropriate to other studies.

4.15   Dependability

An audit of records was done to establish dependability of the study. Audio recordings, thematic categories, interview transcription, and research schedules underwent an ongoing audit from the start of the project up to completion by bouncing them off a fellow researcher. This was to ascertain whether, if the work was repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained.

4.16   Confirmability

The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity. The researcher took steps to ensure that the study's findings were the result of the

ideas and experiences of the participants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher. Researcher's biasness was guarded against by eliminating the researcher's predispositions in the process of the data collection through the application of an audit trail. This can enable any observer to trace the course of the research step-by-step as per the decisions and procedures described.

4.17   Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from Human Research Ethics Council (HREC). The ethical clearance number **NWU-00434-20-S1** was granted. Gatekeeper's permission to conduct this study was granted by Iron Sharpens Iron. An approval letter was received from Eswatini National Health Research Review Board. An invitation to participate in the study was sent to the men through the group chairperson.

Participants were informed of the purpose and process of the study as well as confidentiality, ethical responsibility of the researcher, the right to withdraw at any time in the study, and the use of pseudonyms or codes in all publications to ensure confidentiality. Informed consent for participation and audio recording of interview was obtained using consent forms.

All information relating to the study was kept in a password-encrypted computer. Pseudonyms were used in transcribed text to ensure confidentiality, and protect the participants' identities.

The following ethical guidelines were considered.

4.17.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

The participants' names were not used to identify them in the research. None of the participants' personal information (identifying information) were used in the writing up of data.

Participants were not addressed by their names but by '*Babe,*' which is 'Sir' in the siSwati language.

4.17.2 Veracity

Veracity is defined as telling the truth (Gravetter & Forzano, 2018). Information about the purpose of the study and how information about the study was going to be shared and disseminated was made available to the participants. The researcher was honest when giving information or answering any questions that arose from participants with regards to this study.

4.17.3 Privacy

Interviews were conducted in a safe and private location where the participant was comfortable. The researcher was flexible regarding the participant's ideal place, even if it had to be in his house or office. A "Do not disturb" note was hung on the door of the room where interviews were conducted. Information obtained from participants will not be disclosed to the public. The information will be used solely for the study.

4.17.4 Non-maleficence

During the whole duration of the research, the researcher ensured that he observed all ethical considerations to ensure no harm to the participants. This he did by giving the participants liberty to freely communicate if they were no longer comfortable, or feeling disadvantaged, in the course of the research interviews

4.17.5 Right to withdrawal

The research participants' right to withdraw at any point in time in the process of the research without being threatened or deprived of likely benefits was communicated to them

4.18   Data storage

To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, audio-recordings and electronic copies of transcripts will be stored on password-encrypted files. Hard copies of transcripts and consent forms will be stored in a locked cupboard at the North West University. As per the Data Storage Act (Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013) the data will be kept for a period of 5 years and thereafter destroyed.

4.19   Risk and benefits

Risk in research is the probability of harm occurring as a result of participation in a study. The harm can be physical, psychological, social, or economic. The probability and magnitude of possible harm in human research varies from minimal to considerable (Korenman & Remler, 2016). Minimum risk was anticipated in this study. Though it was likely to trigger emotional and psychological reactions, there was no foreseeable risk of harm or discomfort in the course of the study. In the event emotions were triggered, an arrangement had been made for psychological or spiritual counselling, depending on the participant's preference

4.20   Dissemination of results

The findings will be shared with the participants in one of the Iron Sharpens Iron meetings. In addition, the findings will be shared with family therapists, the Eswatini Psychology Association, and other organisations that focus on family therapy and men's issues, such as Kwakha Indvodza in Eswatini, through in-service training or presentations.

The researcher plans to present the research findings in a National Health Research Conference that is the initiative of the Ministry of Health-Eswatini. A publication of the findings is targeted for the South African Journal of Psychology.

4.21   Researcher's role and reflexivity

The research study has contributed to my growth as a psychology practitioner. I have experienced growth in my individual capacity and as a professional as I came to be in the same mental shoes that divorced men have to wake up and wear daily. Seeing men cry as they share their experiences, I had to revisit how many times I have been biased and judgemental towards divorced men. The battle with stress and the stigma that is associated with divorce that the men went through was unbearable, yet they pulled through. Hearing their par suicidal stories, left one gasping for air but nevertheless helped wash away all the prejudice I had towards divorced men. My dairy entry best express these sentiments:

I realise that no man gets married with divorce at the back of his mind. Men are not iron. They do feel pain and how sad it is that culture has inculcated an impression that man should not cry to their own detriment. (Researcher's diary, December 2020)

As a psychological counsellor my comprehension of the experiences of divorced men was enhanced and served to re-focus my therapeutic interventions. This study has made me realise the needs of divorced men and challenged me to consider a study on the experiences of the boy child from divorced families.

The theoretical perspective, Bowen's family systems theory (Brown, 1999) that guided the interpretation of results enabled me to view the family as an emotional unit and how divorce impacts not only the divorced man but his entire ecosystem which includes his siblings, children, in laws and friends. I was challenged to engage myself in divorced men advocacy especially in faith based organisations and platforms. There is need for support groups for divorced men and their spouses and children.

Initially the research process was emotional due to the complexities that came with acquiring participants. The men were not easy to open up on their personal issues, but once they opened, the depth of the information they gave as they shared their experiences was worth it. My understanding about divorced men shifted as I engaged the men and read the literature. My researching skills were horned and I appreciated the value add that research brings in academia.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. Emerging were four themes and various sub-themes. The discussion of the themes is supported with quotes from the interviews with participants. In the quotes, the participants are represented by the letter "P" and a number e.g. P2.

5.2 Discussion of themes

The main research question for this study was "What are the lived experiences of divorced men from the kingdom of Eswatini?" The study yielded rich data about divorced men's experiences, stressors, impact and coping with divorce. There were four main themes and various sub-themes that emerged from the data. These were; (1) divorce stressors, (2) impact of divorce, (3) coping strategies, and (4) personal analysis of the divorce process. In this chapter each theme and sub-theme has been discussed individually and in detail.

Experiences of divorced men

Divorce stressors

Social perceptions

Religious perceptions

Emotional stressors

Financial stressors

Impact of divorce

Health and wellness

Family unit and dynamics

Coping strategies

Adaptive coping

Maladaptive coping

Personal analysis of the divorce process

Perceived Contributing factors

Emotional awareness
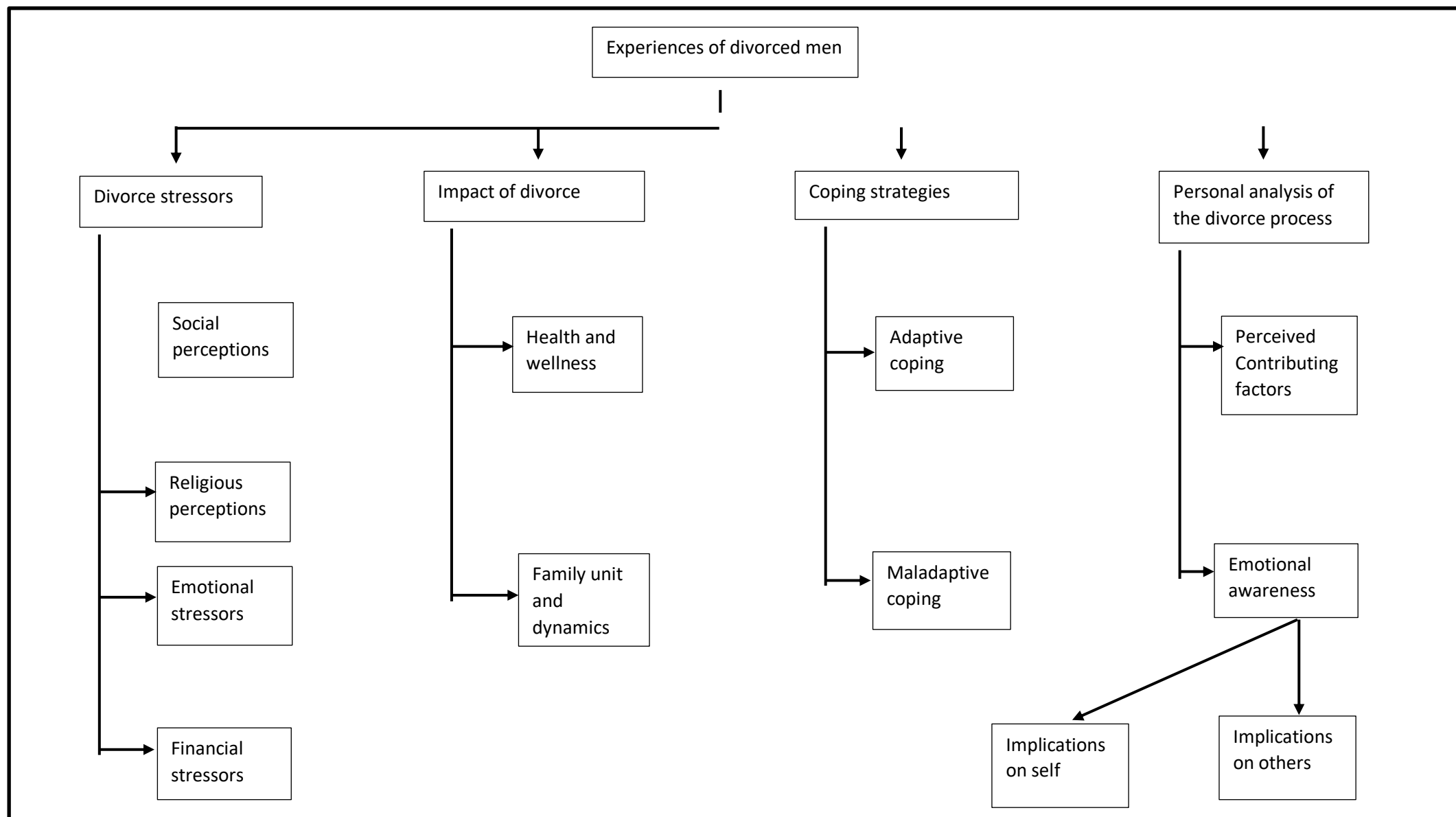
Implications on self

Implications on others

Figure 2: Themes and sub-themes

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5.2.1 Theme 1: Divorce Stressors

Divorce stressors refer to factors that the participants experienced as challenging in relation to their coping with divorce. Under this theme were four sub-themes, namely (1) societal expectations, (2) religious expectations, (3) emotional stressors and (4) financial stressors.

5.2.1.1 Societal expectations

The society's perceptions and attitudes towards divorced men are cynical, and associate men's divorce with failure. Eleven (92%) of the participants experienced a negative attitude because of their divorced status, and only one (8%) of the participants in the study indicated no particular attitude from the community. The high number of participants reporting a negative societal attitude are proof that some pockets of society continue to esteem and recognise the traditional constructs of masculinity and this is detrimental to men's mental health (Corcoran, 2014).

Participant 3 indicated that *"...besides being painful it also has that stigma with the community, like when you tell them you are divorced, they tend to think that you were at wrong."*

To some extent the stigma extends into blocking access to certain services as experienced by a participant in the study. *"I remember one time I was doing a personal loan and one of the guys at credits calls me, he was on loudspeaker, that he will tick the box of divorcee in the form because I had forgotten to tick."* (P5)

5.2.1.2 Religious expectations

Different religious beliefs view the divorce phenomena through different lenses. All the participants reported to be of the Christian faith. According to the Report on International Religious Freedom Eswatini (2019), 90% of the Swati population is Christian. Approximately 2% is Muslim (of whom many are not ethnic Swati.) The remainder belong to other religious groups, including those with indigenous African beliefs. This made it difficult to access non-Christian participants for this study. The Christian faith is known for its orthodox and unyielding stand on issues of divorce. The Bible is quoted expressing utter contempt and hatred for divorce "For I hate divorce…" (Malachi 2:16; NLT). Participant 12 said:

> *"…for me by the time I took the decision to divorce, I had already been crushed, I had nothing, I was ashamed and numb so the only thing I was living for then was for the child that I had, caring for the child."*

He went on to lament that, *"The turmoil for me was in the ministry side, you don't have friends in ministry. Pastors are afraid to associate with people going through pain."*

This can be summed up as observed by Participant 5, *"I continued with my Christian walk but I felt like the church is distant from me."*

Participant 7 felt that in the church, "*we spiritualize things, always praying, no men-to-men issues, all the friends are for prayer not practical things."*

5.2.1.3 Emotional stressors

According to Corcoran (2014), men experience greater emotional adjustment problems as compared to women. Sekyiamah (2013) propounds the idea that African men are considered to be strong and stoic, so they should not openly express their deep emotions. Thus, one is

considered a man if he is able to bottle up emotions, hence the ethos that "men do not cry." Participants highlighted the unbearable pain that results from being torn away from your spouse and children by divorce. In the current study, 50% of the participants interviewed indicated having between 1 and 5 children when they divorced, and 40% reported to have none, while 10% had 1 child at the time of divorce.

"*Divorce makes you feel like you have no life, always feeling judged"* (P7).

It is contrary to Braver et al.'s (2006) assertion that divorced men are less likely to have a close confidant to whom they can talk to about their feelings and frustrations, to shy away from professional help, thus breeding fertile ground for depression and suicidal ideation. The current study shows that 80% of the participants reported not to have had suicidal thoughts and only 20% admitted to have entertained thoughts of suicide. For example:

> *"There were times where I thought I would fall into suicide and even give up the Christian walk, there are moments where I wanted to give up, it was tough but the main support structure was my mom and she told me to remain grounded in faith."* (P5)

5.2.1.4 Financial stressors

Kiernan and Mueller (1998) allude that a fair property and assets settlement may require the involvement of a court. This includes money and the property the couple accumulated during the marriage. It is the distribution that becomes the cause for financial stress, and the other partner may view it as being an unfair settlement.

As shown by Participant 5, *"When I went into that period, I had three cars but after that I had lost everything and financially I went back to zero."*

5.2.2   Theme 2: Impact of divorce

Two sub-themes emerged from this theme, namely the impact on health and wellness, and the impact on the family unit and dynamics.

5.2.2.1 Health and Wellness.

The impact of divorce on men was evident on their health and wellness. According to the World Health Organisation (2014) "health is the state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, which is marked not only by the absence of disease or infirmity." The Global Wellness Institute (2021) defines wellness as the active pursuit of activities, lifestyles and choices that lead to a state of holistic health. Wellness is more than just physical health but is multidimensional as typified in the 8 dimensions of the Wellness Wheel (see figure below):
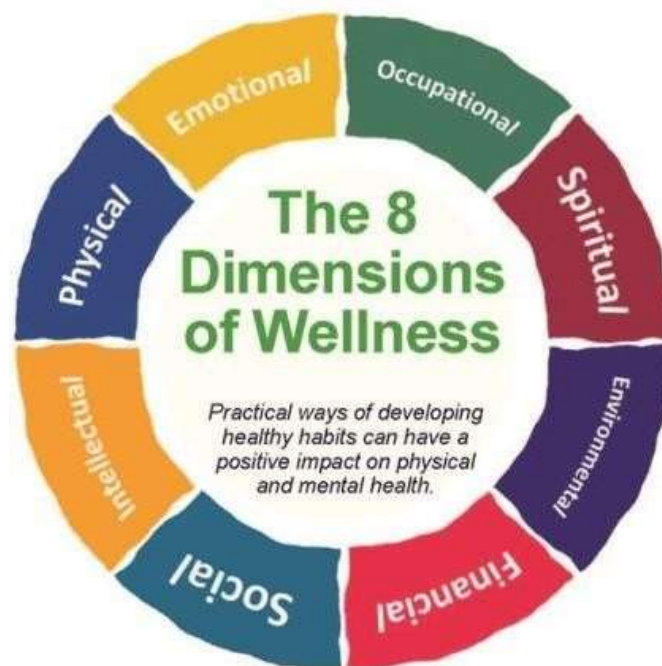

Figure 3: Wellness Wheel (extracted from: www.pitzer.edu)

In the current study's findings, 75% of the participants reported health-related complications. These included; weight loss, elevated blood pressure and disrupted glucose levels. Some of the participants developed stress and depression and had to be put on antidepressants and psychotherapy. As shown below:

"I even had visible symptoms physically and at some point both my legs were swollen, I could not walk and when I got to the clinic I was told it's symptoms of serious depression, I was advised to go to the psychiatric centre and seek counselling and help, and I did that and I was told that they need to sort the physical symptoms first and then go to counselling." (P4)

From the current study's findings, 25% of the participants reported a more difficult life and frustrations mounting as a result of the divorce because of irreconcilable attitudes from the other partner.

Participant 1 with a sigh could only say *"Now our marriage died in our hands without us letting anybody help us."* Here is a man who wanted help but the woman was reluctant, much against Clarke's (2015) statement that men who engage professional marital help are considered weak, incompetent and vulnerable.

Participant 12 said

"I was diagnosed with diabetes and high blood pressure and that's when I knew that this is serious and I had to put an end to it and accept and face the divorce." (P12).

Participant 7 had his emotional wellness dented; he said:

"3 years before I got divorced the problems were piling up and the depression from there and I even though of committing suicide and do whatever. I owned a gun at the time and I drove somewhere and I thought I should just shoot myself and die, and it was really tough, I got so depressed, so sick and sothin…" (P7)

He went on to relate how it affected his financial wellness:

"It really affected me because we had some loans that we were paying out as a family like a house loan. Here I was now, it was bad, with the car loan, house loan, it was bad. So that then caused me to cling to this new girl because she had money and I felt like I was going to be comfortable. So, it really affected me."

When Participant 7 was still dealing with the divorce he once collapsed and got admitted at the hospital. He narrated:

"…it was terrible, I wouldn't even know what part of my body was sick and I was so numb. I remember I got into the house and I fell, I tried to get a friend of mine, he could feel I was gasping for air, then I woke up at the hospital and when I woke up there I didn't know what had happened and they said it's depression."

Participant 9 narrated how he also almost died:

"…and at some point, in time I was sleeping and I felt numb on my lower limbs and I was rushed to hospital where they discovered my BP was very high,I almost died."

Participant 8, apart from developing a stress-related pigmentation condition, said, *"I started having migraine headaches."*

5.2.2.2 Family unit and dynamics

According to Bowen's family systems theory, it is in the nature of a family that its members be emotionally and intensely connected. The basic inference of this theory is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2008). If a problem such as divorce occurs within the family, it affects their entire family ecosystem.

5.2.2.2.1   Children

Participants who had children in the previous marriage(s) seemed to miss their children.

Participant 7 said that, as part of his divorce experience, he felt lost, useless and hopeless, but:

> *"There are two things that made me survive, it was the thought of my boys. I even wanted to skip the country and start a new life but the thought of my boys. They are living away from me and I was thinking, how am I going to be a real father to them when I live away from them?"*

This affirmed the bond that comes with being a family unit that shares norms and values. When the family becomes dysfunctional the unit is destabilised.

5.2.2.2.2   Extended family, siblings and neighbours

This study has helped the researcher understand and explore the lived experiences of divorced men in the context of the family unit. Unlike in the western culture where family is only the immediate members, in the African culture it involves the extended family (grannies, uncles and aunties, nieces and nephews) and by extension, the neighbourhood and community.

It is no wonder, as Participant 7 put it,

"I got emotional and hit her and she went out, she started shouting and neighbours rushed, she called the cops on me and they came and the family came loaded…"

In the African cultural context, neighbours are part of the family unit and have an influence on the dynamics of the family.

5.2.2.2.3 New spouse

The impact extends to the new spouse, as related by one of the participants on his remarriage after divorce:

"…this one comes and emotions started bubbling up and I have all these fears and that everything will crush again because she seems cool and down to earth. So, I told her that she should help me out, I am trying to deal with a lot so don't be shocked when I get emotional. Now we are at peace but I'm trying to flush all these memories one step at time and if I feel reminded of all these bad memories, I am able to talk to her. The healing process is getting better because we talk; previously, we wouldn't talk but now I have learnt the art of communicating which previously I didn't have. I am learning." (P8)

5.2.2.2.4 Biological parents

Participant 12, talking about the stigma related to divorce, highlighted that

"...there was a lot but what really broke my heart was my mother, because I'm the only son she had, so she was very proud that her son was doing well in life…working and stuff like that and suddenly. So, she was telling me how she is going to look at her friends and what not." (P12).

75% of the participants still had their parents. The researcher can only imagine the impact this has on them. Participant 9 recalled that his divorce and remarriage strained his relationship with his mother. As he said, *"my mom said she wants nothing to do with her (my new wife)"* (P9).

5.2.2.2.5   The ex-spouse

The researcher also observed that the other impacts of divorce can emerge from the ex-spouse, especially if still alive. 55% of the participants indicated that there are moments where they missed their spouse, either because of the children they have together, or just out of the mere basic understanding they had. Only 27% reported having nothing to miss about their previous spouse.

When asked about the possibility of the divorced missing each other, Participant 4 openly declared that:

> *"...they are very high, because you get to have wonderful memories which can never be erased. There was a time where, when I thought of my ex, I only had good memories and nothing bad; I would feel like the person who took her away from me used her and confused her because she just changed into a completely different person, she was like someone I never knew."* (P4)

When Participant 7 was asked if he remembered his ex-wife with fond memories, said, *"Sometimes you felt like you remember her sexually; the companionship, because it was not bad all the time so you have to bounce out of it and it is really not easy"* (P7).

5.2.3 Theme 3: Coping strategies

Based on the participants' experiences, the strategies of coping employed were either adaptive or maladaptive. Using the church as a support group and system was also investigated.

5.2.3.1 Adaptive coping methods

Adaptive coping refers to healthy means of managing stress (Adaptive Coping Strategies: Definition & Examples, 2016). Adaptive coping mechanisms utilised by the men were dominated by church and prayer, though some mentioned that religious perceptions pushed them away from church. Others coped through biking, socialising, jogging, reading and watching TV. A few used alcohol or smoking. Participant 4 said:

> *"I started jogging because of her, I would leave early to jogging then to the gym then to work. I maintained my all-time favourite pastime, the piano, which also helped to calm me and give me an opportunity to empty myself before God."* (P4)

Participant 9 felt that information exchange and sharing was helpful for him:

> *"I engaged with people who have the same experience and that one helped a lot. I used to like football but I lost interest. I used travel to South Africa to watch Kaizer Chiefs and Pirates."*

The role of the church and workplace as a support group played a major role for some participants to cope and pull through, as reported by Participant 4:

> *"I got a lot of support from my spiritual leader, he was actually a spiritual leader for both of us and he tried to cater for both our needs, he stood with me… I was lucky to have a good relationship with my boss at work and I told him that I was undergoing difficulties in my marriage and he tried by all means to be of support to me, so much*

that when things were really tough, he would even allow me time off away from work. This office in particular knows my tears and prayers because, uhm, sometimes I would have to deal with issues and sometimes have to deal with divorce as an issue with other people; they didn't know what I was going through and I would break down in front of them, rush out, but I got quite some support from my boss and also family." (P4)

However, Participant 8 felt that there was a need for practical platforms for men to vent their emotions and also to be capacitated on real life issues such as sex:

"I don't think men are being given the platform because I remember society always treats the woman as the victim, the man is never the victim, and as a result you have single mum clubs, divorced mum clubs and women are taken care of and not the men." (P8)

Participant 1 suggested that marriage counsellors should follow up and not neglect the people they marry. His concern was *"Ask the marriage counsellors where are the people you married?"*

5.2.3.2 Maladaptive coping methods

Van Seeters (2021) defines maladaptive coping as, "not coping in a helping manner." This can include unhealthy eating habits, excessive shopping, drinking alcohol and substance abuse. In the current study, 25% of the participants resorted to alcohol as a means for coping.

In order to cope, Participant 9 reported that:

"...at some point I felt like drink too much so felt I should change a bit... I would stay up at home till 3 am and go to work tired, so you can imagine the stress. I would say I

am lucky I am still employed. I would submit sick notes because I went out drinking so I'd tell them I'm sick and ask someone to work for me. You miss work a lot and you lose a lot; your reputation is eroded and all kinds of things happening you." (P9)

Participant 7 attempted drinking but it was not helpful for coping:

"I did go for alcohol for a month while in church. With the first wife I drank while at work and my boss covered me because he understood what I was going through… I took one sip and felt so bad and cried and prayed, so what really has helped me is the games that I do, going hunting and hiking and music, reading and those few friends who understand would take me out." (P7)

5.2.4 Theme 4: Personal analysis of the divorce process

Personal analysis of the divorce process entails the individual participant's inquiry of the divorce process and the lessons learned thereof. Two sub-themes emerged from this theme, namely contributory factors to divorce, and emotional awareness.

5.2.4.1 Perceived contributory factors

The researcher identified four contributory factors that stood out through the study, namely infidelity, irreconcilable differences, lack of respect and emotional regulation, and sexual dissatisfaction or difference in sexual experience and incompatibility.

Participant 7 shared with chuckle that, *"the number one issue was the issue of sexual experience, with me being the inexperienced one."*

"And though it is unwritten, sex talk in churches is seen as a sin. As a young person I am unable to go to my elders and say 'eish mfundisi' there is a problem with ABCD and that could have been helpful." (P8)

Participant 2 voiced his concern:

"…*another challenge was that on the bed when we are sleeping, we would sleep in opposite directions. When my head is would be her feet, she would sleep wearing trousers and a lots of other clothes and when I ask her she would tell her doctor said she should be warm. I would ask her to add blankets since we had plenty and she would not come out clear.*"

5.2.4.1.1   Infidelity

A heartbroken Participant 2 made a gross discovery, "*I caught my neighbour red-handed in my bedroom with my wife.*"

Another participant in the study, after discovering that his wife was cheating on him, confessed that, "*it's an embarrassment for a man to get cheated on…in fact when I finally found out who she was cheating on me with, she really wasn't angry as to why I found out.*"(P8)

It is worth noting that the infidelity as a cause for divorce is not only when it is the woman who has been a victim, but also when it is the man who is cheating. Participant 9 acknowledges that "*I really messed up because I got a girlfriend and things started going haywire; I was juggling my wife and the other relationship…*"

5.2.4.1.2   Irreconcilable differences

Incompatibility was another cause for divorce. Participant 6 reckoned that:

"*Up to today I believe that we were somewhat not compatible as partners even though we were very much in love. We were happy, we believed we were happy but there were things that made us not to be compatible.*"

He and his wife could not see eye to eye on parental issues:

> *"...to the extent when we clashed, she openly declared that I had to choose between her and my parents, that is where the spark started."*

Participant 11 also shared his experience:

> *"My experience for one was not because of infidelity, but we discovered that we were worlds apart, worlds apart, yes. Her thinking and her approach to life was quite different from mine."* (P6)

He sighed and said *"...uh, up to a time where it was evident, she was becoming a danger to herself and to the children, she was diagnosed to have a bipolar."* (P11)

5.2.4.1.3   Lack of respect and emotional regulation

Eswatini is a patriarchal society and what amounts to disrespect, especially with regards to gender roles, may not be disrespect in other cultures. In the Swati culture, there are chores and roles that are assigned to women. When men do them it is associated with witchcraft *(udlisiwe)*, thinking that he has been charmed, or it is gross disrespect. These are roles such as cleaning the house, changing a diaper, and cooking. Participant 7 shares his experience:

> *"...so, one day she slapped me for not cooking, saying don't I know she is working and I was at home. I am supposed to be a wife, because she says she buys food and that she does everything and I don't do anything and then I got emotional and hit her..."*

5.2.4.2 Emotional awareness

This sub-theme discussed the impact that divorce had on self and others. Some participants reported that they came out stronger and wiser. Others narrated that it impacted their families and network of friends.

5.2.4.2.1 Impact on self

On a personal reflection, Participant 4, concluded that though divorce was painful,

> *"...but the experience of love or getting to be loved and broken is a very important experience in someone's life. I'm not saying 'go out there and get heart-broken' but I'm saying it is very important for your survival. I believe people who have been heart-broken at a tender age get a better understanding of how to deal with it later in life. Someone will grow without experiencing that, but only get to experience it in marriage it becomes really difficult for them to survive."* (P4)

Participant 3 reminisced about his marriage, "*I would say my marriage was a beautiful experience with a painful episode*" and as if with some kind of paradox, he emphatically hinted:

> *"...there is nothing good about divorce, it is terrible and I wouldn't wish it for my worst enemy. It is a painful thing that doesn't go away. You may get relief for a while and even have a better life outside the divorce but it is a pain you carry with you"*

Participant 9 felt that the presence of a father figure was critical for the upbringing of the boy child because it shapes his manhood and masculinity. His contemplation was that:

"… the absence of the moving picture in front of you growing up, of how it should look like, the father and the mother, the full picture. I think the absence of that plays a major role in the underdevelopment of the boy child. That is one thing I've learnt."

Some of the men believed that psychology had a role to play in marriage, as one participant suggested *"I think psychologically, a lot should have been worked on in order for the marriage to work"* (P8). Participant 5 had this advice for the divorced men drawn from his personal experience "*there is life after divorce, don't lock yourself up, confide in somebody. As men we don't talk, learn to start afresh and something passionate,*" and to the single man his advice was *"...learn, learn, learn, keep learning before you are married.*"

5.2.4.2.2 Impact on others

Categorical disapproval of divorce has declined over the years. However individuals still have the feeling that they are blamed and held liable for their divorce. Evidence for this can be seen in the "splitting" of friends and relatives (Gerstel,1988). Divorce can bring friends and relatives into a state of polarity as they debate on which side to take.

 Participant 5 shared his experience:

> *"I lost friends and the atmosphere changed and I was left alone and no one to talk to and ask for advice and you could hear in the corridors people talking about you and laughing at you, and you would really shut down completely."*

For Participant 8, it was the upbringing of his son from a previous marriage "*I've been told I'm over-compensating but know that I miss what I lacked growing up and try to make sure that my son does not fall on the same track that I did.*" (P8)

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Having walked this emotional journey into the experiences of divorced men, the researcher in this chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature, conceptual framework, the family systems theory and the aims and objectives of the study. The researcher also brings the study to a conclusion by pointing to some limitations encountered. He then makes recommendations for future research on the divorce phenomenon.

6.2 Discussion of the results

Divorce stressors that emerged from the findings included societal expectations and perceptions, religious expectations and perceptions, and emotional and financial stressors. There was evidence of the impact of divorce on the men's health and wellness. Furthermore, divorce had positive and negative impacts on the dynamics of the family unit. Men utilised adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies when wrestling with the divorce process. Personal analysis of the divorce process included focusing on the contributing factors and development of emotional insight by the individual.

The findings had similarities with findings from studies conducted on divorce in sub-Saharan Africa, such as Clark et al. (2015), in South Africa (www.statssa.gov.za), Malawi (Reniers, 2003), Nigeria (Adegoke, 2010), and countries with a similar context to Eswatini, where both traditional and western kinds of marriages are conducted. The findings from the current study agree with Adegoke's (2010) report on Nigeria, that the increase in formal education and urbanisation has increased the rate of divorce.

6.2.1 Divorce stressors

It is evident from the study that men going through divorce experience various stressors. As noted by Corcoran (2014), men usually experience greater emotional adjustment to divorce. All the participants in the study reported that at some point or another, they found themselves having difficulty with coping, including depressive episodes. Two of the participants had to be put on antidepressants and one was referred for psychotherapy. The researcher also noted that the patriarchal nature of Emaswati though not reported in this study can contribute as a divorce stressor, which labels and stigmatises divorced men as failures. It has made it more difficult for men going through the divorce experience, because the current study's findings suggest that no man wants to be associated with failure.

As highlighted in the report, the lived experiences of divorced men from Eswatini in relation to the theme of divorce stressors, particularly societal and religious expectations, may be associated with the concept of hegemonic masculinities as defined by Ngwena (2018). Ngwena (2018) further alludes that men in Eswatini appear to be greatly affected emotionally due to external hegemonic masculinity, which is further internalised and affects perceptions of "self," whilst further destabilising their identities.

The role of the type of family unit intersects with the concept of divorce in that it creates a platform whereby the divorced men are judged within the family, and at times suffer financially due to their hegemonic role of being a provider. The expectation is for these men to continue exhibiting stoic identities, even at a time when they may feel like their world is spinning aimlessly. As indicated in the South African statistical data (www.statssa.gov.za), over the years, the majority of divorces have been instigated by women. Literature has shown that socio-economic shifts, portraying women as having opportunities to gain meaningful employment and career advancement (Dlamini, 2012) may be an intersecting factor. Hence, the financial

burdens that men from Eswatini carry as a result of divorce may be a direct result of the patriarchal society within which they exist in.

Eswatini' s socialisation of men, may require a re-visit through the traditional platforms that exist for marriage, particularly as highlighted in the literature on the processes involved during the marriage of the two individuals, and the two families. The hegemonic pressures that form part of this socialisation present as a hindrance to their holistic wellness. Thus, the coping strategies that they may rely on or refer to during divorce may also be detrimental, until such time that the cultural systems shift towards the application of a less gender-biased and subjective masculine socialisation.

6.2.2 Coping strategies

The findings of the current study were aligned with Condorelli's (2016) observation that divorced men go through self-destructive, maladaptive habits and tendencies such as psychological trauma, substance abuse, avoidance, depression, and suicide. Some of the participants confessed trying to calm their nerves using alcohol, while two participants contemplated suicide.

Men who coped better with the effects of divorce were those who had access to spiritual support. The spiritual support was provided by the participants' spiritual leaders, or spiritual fathers as most addressed them. However, some of the participants reported that religious perceptions of divorce crushed them. Or they find themselves caught between a rock and a hard place on who to side with in the process of the divorce.

The findings concurred with those of Mnyango et al. (2018), that some pockets of society still recognise traditional constructs of masculinity that are detrimental to men's mental health and wellness. Participants were concerned that there are no platforms that support divorced men

and allow them to vent their feelings, while women by their nature talk in salons and in stokvels. Men would prefer the avoidance coping strategy. According to Clarke-Stewart and Brentano (2007), men are less likely to have a close confidant they can open up to on their frustrations. African men do not believe another man can tell them how to run their marriage. This culminates in a tendency of divorced men suppressing their emotions and shying away from professional help, resulting in depression and suicidal ideation. This is because African men are considered to be strong and stoic and should not openly express their deep emotions (Sekyiamah, 2013).

Contrary to the study by Village, Williams & Francis (2010), that showed the divorce statistics among Christians are higher than the average population, it is difficult to agree with this, since in Eswatini, 90% of the population is Christian (International Religious Freedom, Eswatini, 2019). However, the increase in divorce statistics globally and in Eswatini does indicate that churches and marriage counselling practitioners need a new proactive model and pattern for building good marriages. It appears the current model is reactive and its strength is in mending broken marriages rather than the former. The findings disagree with Zartlet, Wilk & Kranzl-Nagl, (2002), that the initiators of a divorce or separation are in most cases women. The study indicates that of the 12 participants interviewed, 9 of the divorces were initiated by the men and only 3 by women.

6.2.3   Personal analysis of the divorce process

According to this study the perceived contributing factors to divorce that stood out were infidelity, sexual dissatisfaction, lack of respect, and irreconcilable differences. This is synonymous with what Sayer and Bianchi (2000) identify as a feeling of inadequacy. However, this research could not identify with an "*overspending wife,*" as Barth (2018) put this forward

as a concern men bring into her therapy sessions. None of the participants in the study showed concern about it.

6.2.4   Impact of divorce

All the participants indicated concern on the impact that divorce had on their health and wellness. Two participants reported that they developed hypertension and diabetes. As previously discussed on stressors, all participants experienced stress to some varying degree. This is contrary to a study by Kim and McKenry (2002) that being once divorced, a person may be hesitant to divorce again; most of the participants agreed to what they called "serial divorce." Participants alluded that if you divorce once, the subsequent divorces may not be as difficult as the initial one. The first divorce breaks the fear barrier, and all it takes to divorce again is just a signature and you are done. However, some indicated the fear of 'once bitten twice shy.'

As reported by Amato (2010) it was evident that divorced individuals experience more health problems, depression and less life satisfaction than married individuals. Participants reported being not only emotionally unwell but also financially, socially, occupationally, intellectually and spiritually unwell. This expressed itself in guilt, hopelessness and helplessness. One of the participants reported that it took his mother realising that he was sinking into a black hole of helplessness and hopelessness before he sought help.

The implication by self of divorce as a pivotal event has the propensity of shifting ones' self-awareness and cognitive perception of others (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012). A participant in his personal analysis of the divorce process acknowledged the other side of the coin of divorce is that it left him strong. Another participant indicated that divorce is painful and you would not wish it for your enemy.

According to the Bowen's family systems theory (2021), the implications of the divorce can not only impact self but also others. In the family systems theory, the family is viewed as an emotional unit. Therefore, what happens to one member impacts the whole dynamics of the family unit. The divorce of one man in the family affects the thoughts, feelings and actions of the entire ecosystem as if the members live under the same "emotional skin." The connectedness makes the functioning of family members interdependent. This is because no behaviour is understood in isolation, therefore, the family's adaptability to novel and traumatic situations is essential.

Though divorce is interpreted as a form of social deviation from family norms and covert or overt rules, divorced men need the support of family to cope with the stressors of the divorce phenomenon so as not to find himself taking a slump into maladaptive means to cope with the divorce.

6.3 Limitations of the study

Men interviewed in this study were from a middle socio-economic background and did not represent the experience of men from disadvantaged and lower socio-economic backgrounds. All the men interviewed were from a Christian background, therefore the researcher missed the experiences of non-Christian divorced men. The inherent limitation of qualitative research studies is that one cannot generalise the findings to bigger populations. This is because unlike in quantitative research, the aim of qualitative research is to provide meaning and explanation rather than generalising the findings.

6.4 Conclusion

This study explored and gained a deeper understanding into the lived experiences of divorced men in Eswatini. In this study it emerged that, as one participant would put it, "*there is*

nothing good about divorce, it is terrible, and I wouldn't wish it for my worst enemy. It is a painful thing that doesn't go away. You may get relief for a while and even have a better life outside the divorce but it is a pain you carry with you".

It is worth noting that while some men recover from the experience and negative impact of divorce, there are those who never recover. This results in negative coping and impact on their emotional regulation. This not only impacts on self, but on the many others whose lives are dependent on them. Most of the participants in the study had children when they divorced and these children will have to be raised by a single parent; who knows what impact the divorce of their parents may have on the children's marriages? Based on the findings of the study on lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini, the conclusion drawn depicts that:

- Divorce is a painful experience.

- Divorce is like starting afresh in life

- Divorce is depressive and affects one's health and wellness

- No one gets married to divorce

- Divorce is traumatic and may develop into post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

- The experience of divorce will linger on long after you have remarried.

- Divorce has a stigma

- A suicide watch is recommended for men going through divorce.

- The impact of divorce is ecosystemic in nature.

6.5 Recommendations

The ever-escalating divorce statistics are a precursor of dysfunctional marriages. There is a need for psychologists, family therapists and faith based organisations as custodians of the

marriage institution to design a new proactive model for building good marriages rather than fixing broken ones.

This study shows 83% of the participants had tertiary education and are resident in urban or contemporary locations. It would have been very significant for the researcher to have had an opportunity to conduct a comparative study on divorced men living in rural and urban areas to ascertain the orientation towards divorce with intersecting factors such as educational background, exposure to modern lifestyle, and self-awareness.

There is a need to capacitate divorced men on managing divorce-related stress. Societal and religious perceptions on divorce, that perpetuate stigma which make it difficult for the divorced man to pull himself back into life, must be discouraged.

The government should promote men-friendly platforms in the communities where men can express themselves without fear of being ridiculed. There is need to restore the *lisango* concept, which was a kind of group therapy for men and also offered a network of support and sharing of experiences.

There is need to conduct more targeted research that could explore the intersectionality of lived experiences of divorce, contributing factors to trends in divorce and the potential creation of generational divorce cycles. In more recent occurrences, the global and Eswatini divorce rates may potentially present more dynamics attributable to the socio-economic and cultural impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions and lockdowns in the year 2020 and beyond. Therefore, this study could not have come at a better time. Further research is needed on experiences of divorced women, in order to strike a balance. It would also be interesting to conduct a study on the lived experiences of children with interest in the boy child from divorced families.

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APPENDIX I

Dear Mr Sabelo T. Khumalo

Re: Permission to do research at Iron Sharpens Iron (ISI), Eswatini

On behalf of Iron Sharpens Iron Board of Trustees, the Organization is pleased to grant you the permission to lead your study/ research on, "Lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini."

As an organization, we believe that this study will help unveil critical issues affecting not only divorced men but also men in general, resulting in effective interventions by psychologists and family therapists in the Kingdom. It also our belief that the positive impact of this study will go beyond the Kingdom.

ISI is an independent association of Pastors who have come together to share and support one another on church/ministry matters.

All the best.

Yours Faithfully

Pastor Elijah S. Dlamini
Chairperson

APPENDIX II

18 November 2020

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the North-West University Health Research Ethics Committee (NWU-HREC) on 18/11/2020, the NWU-HREC hereby approves your study as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-HREC grants its permission that, provided the general conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini
Principal Investigator/Study Supervisor/Researcher: Prof CA Oduaran
Student: S Khumalo - 30630274

Ethics number:	N	W	U	-	0	0	4	3	4	-	2	0	-	A	1
		Institution			Study Number					Year			Status		

Status: S = Submission;   R = Re-Submission;   P = Provisional Authorisation;   A = Authorisation

Application Type: Single study
Commencement date: 18/11/2020   Risk: Medium
Expiry date: 30/11/2021

Approval of the study is provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of a six-monthly monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation. Monitoring reports are due at the end of May and November annually until completion.

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The principal investigator/study supervisor/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-HREC:
  - six-monthly on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided annually, and upon completion of the study; and
  - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the principal investigator/study supervisor/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the NWU-HREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for active monitoring.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-HREC reserves the right to:
  - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
  - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;

Special conditions of the research approval due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Please note: Due to the nature of the study i.e. (face-to-face unstructured in-depth interviews with divorced men from the Kingdom of Eswatini within a community context), this study will be able to proceed during the current alert level, following receipt of the approval letter. This approval is dependent on the researcher following the COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies as indicated in the application and as approved by the reviewers.

The NWU-HREC would like to remain at your service and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the NWU-HREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Chairperson NWU-HREC

>   - *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
>   - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
>   - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-HREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
>   - *submission of the six-monthly monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and/or*
>   - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*
> - *NWU-HREC can be contacted for further information via Ethics-HRECApply@nwu.ac.za or 018 299 1206*

Special conditions of the research approval due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Please note: Due to the nature of the study i.e. (face-to-face unstructured in-depth interviews with divorced men from the Kingdom of Eswatini within a community context), this study will be able to proceed during the current alert level, following receipt of the approval letter. This approval is dependent on the researcher following the COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies as indicated in the application and as approved by the reviewers.

The NWU-HREC would like to remain at your service and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the NWU-HREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely,

_____

Chairperson NWU-HREC

APPENDIX III

RESEARCH PROTOCOL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

BOARD REGISTRATION NUMBER	FWA 00026661/IRB 00011253						
PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER	271/2020						
Type of review	Expedited		X		Full Board		
Name of Organization	Student (Masters)						
Title of study	LIVED EXPERIENCES OF DIVORCED MEN IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI						
Protocol version	1.0						
Nature of protocol	New	X	Amendment		Renewal		Extension
List of study sites	The four regions						
Name of Principal Investigator	Sabelo Thulani Khumalo						
Names of Co- Investigators	Professor. Choja A. Oduaran						
Names of steering committee members in the case of clinical trials	N/A						
Names of Data and Safety Committee members in the case of clinical trials	N/A						
Level of risk (Tick appropriate box)	Minimal			More than minimal	High		
		X					
Clearance status (Tick appropriate box)	Approved		X			Disapproved	
Study approval validity period	Start date	03/09/2020			End date	03/09/2021	
Secondary approval validity end dates	Renewal end date				Extension		
Signature of Chairperson							
Signing date	03/09/2020						
Secretariat Contact Details	Name of contact officers	Bongekile Shongwe					
	Email address						
	Telephone no.	(00268) 24044810					

Page **1** of **2**

APPENDIX IV

NWU®

Scientific Committee Approval for a Research Application
Research using human participants, health or health-related studies

Scientific Committee Information			
Name of the scientific committee	COMPRES	**Discipline(s)**	MA/MSc Research Psychology
Research Entity	COMPRES	**Contact Person for the committee**	Chanté Klopper
Faculty	Health Sciences	**E-mail address for the committee contact person**	Chante.Klopper@nwu.ac.za

Study & Scientific Review Information				
Title of the study:	Lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini			
Researcher/Study Supervisor Initials, Name and Surname:	Prof C.A. Oduaran		**NWU Number:**	22590110
Student Initials, Name & Surname:	Sabelo T. Khumalo		**NWU Number:**	30630274
Other Researchers involved in the study (Initials, Names and Surnames):	None indicated			
Potential risk level for human participants:	No risk	☐	**Motivate:** Research topic is of a sensitive nature	
	Minimal risk	☐		
	Medium risk	☒		
	High risk	☐		
Potential risk level for children and incapacitated adults:	No risk	☒	**Motivate:** Click here to motivate the risk level	
	No more than minimal risk of harm	☐		
	Greater than minimal risk with the prospect of direct benefit	☐		
	Greater than minimal risk with no direct benefit	☐		
Recommendation for the REC:	Review by the research ethics committee required	☒	**Motivate:** Human participants involved	

Any additional comments	Motivate: This application is in process since 2019. The proposal was deferred and for a second time again referred back with several changes. A Second new reviewers panel were appointed by the interim committee with several new changes. The process within the Scientific committee and student/supervisor is currently jeopardizing the academic progress of this student. The proposal is presented to HREC as the interim panel is of opinion that the objectivity within the scientific environment towards this study has been compromised.
Chairperson of the committee	Prof Retha Bloem
Committee members present during the review (NB, please ensure no conflict of interest)	Dr Issie Jacobs Dr Tamlynn Jefferis Dr Elmien Truter
Date of review	2020/07/01

Signature of Chairperson
Date: 2020/07/01

Signature of Research Director
Date: 2020/07/01

Original details: (23239522) G:\My Drive\9. Research and Postgraduate Education\9.1.5.6 Forms\9.1.5.6_SC Approval_Human Participants.docm
10 August 2019

File Reference: 9.1.5.6

APPENDIX V

NWU-HREC Approval Date: 2020.11.18 10:58:20 +02'00'

NWU-HREC Stamp

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR DIVORCED MEN

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY: Lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini

ETHICS REFERENCE NUMBERS: NWU-00434-20-A1

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Prof. Choja A. Oduaran

POST GRADUATE STUDENT: Sabelo T. Khumalo

ADDRESS: P.O.Box 441, Mankayane, Eswatini.
        Email: sabelokoo@yahoo.com

CONTACT: (00268) 76065669

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of Masters study. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (NWU-00434-20-A1)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH,2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

What is this research study all about?

- *We plan to capture the lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini. In order to do that we will explore and understand the experiences, emotional and psychological of divorced men in Eswatini.*
- *This study will be conducted in the Kingdom of Eswatini in the four regions. The study will be done by experienced health researchers trained in Research ethics and Evaluation .All COVID 19 restrictions will be adhered to in the course of the research.*
- *Unstructured face-to-face in-depth interviews will be used to collect data as they provide richer sets of data in terms of nuances and depth. The researcher will ensure both himself and the participants maintain the one meter social distancing and have masks on as a COVID 19 precautionary measure by the World Health Organisation (WHO, COVID19, 2019) and according to the COVID 19 guidelines of the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Eswatini. A hand sanitiser will be available and in the event the participant wants to cough, he will be encouraged to practise the appropriate cough etiquette*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited to participate because you are a divorced man, 27years and older and have been married for 3 years and above prior to divorce, and you can provide the most relevant information for this research.*
- *You will unfortunately not be able to take part in this research if you are a divorced man from a same sex marriage since in the Kingdom of Eswatini same sex marriages are illegal*

What will be expected of you?

- *You will be expected to sit for an interview and the session is anticipated to take not more than 1hour. In this interview you will be expected to share your experience as a divorced man. This should include not limited to your emotional and psychological experiences.*
- *The nature of the interview will be unstructured depending on your willingness to share your experience as a divorced man*

Will you gain anything from taking part in this research?

- ➤ *The indirect benefits include the gain of knowledge about the lived experiences of divorced men in Eswatini.*
- ➤ *Indirect benefits include that you would have contributed to the development of professional and relevant initiatives that can form part of a psychotherapy program for divorced men.*
- ➤ *The research's potential to capacitate divorced men translates into reducing the psychological impact of divorce in men and all their families,*

Are there risks involved in you taking part in this research and what will be done to prevent them?

- *This is a medium risk study. The gains from participating in this study outweigh the risk.*
- *The need for psychosocial support during data collection is not expected, it is however prepared for in the event that it should occur. For example, if you report emotional discomfort or psychosocial challenges, as a direct result of participating in this research, arrangements will be made for you to receive those services from professionals arranged by the researcher.*

- It will not cost you anything to take part in the research. Participation is absolutely voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in the research, this will not affect you in any negative way and you will not be forced.

How will we protect your confidentiality and who will see your findings?
- The research data (information provided by you and other participants) will only be accessible to: the researcher, the study leader (supervisor to the student researcher and the co-coder (the person who will help with the grouping of information obtained from interviews) will sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Your anonymity as a participant will be protected as far as possible. The informed consent form signed by you will have identifying details but it will be stored separate from data collected and kept in a locked cupboard in the researchers office. All the electronic copies will be downloaded onto the researcher's password protected computer. The electronic data will only be shared with the co-coder until data analyses has been completed. The data we collect from you will be stored this way until we are done analysing it. Then it will be deleted from all devices of the researcher and co-coder and hard copies (interviews and informed consent forms) will be stored in a locked cabinet and electronic copies will be stored on a password- and virus-protected computer in a locked office at the North-West University.
- In publishing findings, the names of participants will not be mentioned.
- The collected data is only for this research. It will not be used for any other purpose.
- Upon completion, no names will be mentioned in the write-up of the research.
- Data will only be stored at a secured office in the North West University for a period of five (5) years. After this period, the transcripts, digital files and all data related to the research will be destroyed by shredding hard copies and deleting electronic copies. This will be done by a member of the research team.

What will happen with the findings or samples?
- The findings of this study will only be used for this study. Should there be need to use it in future studies approval of HREC on your behalf will be sought

How will you know about the results of this research?
- Upon completion, a summary of the research results (hard copy and electronic copy) will be provided to the Ministry of Home Affairs (Birth, Marriage and Death Unit) and you can access a copy on request
- They will be also shared to the Eswatini Health and Human Research Review Board
- You will be informed of any new relevant findings on contact with the Ministry of Home Affairs

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs for you?
- This study is funded by the University of North West and there will be no cost to you.
- You will not be paid for your participation in this research. The Research Ethics in Eswatini does not promote monetary incentives for research participants
- You will be reimbursed transport costs and be given a standard allowance for lunch which is SZL 50.00

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You can contact Sabelo Khumalo at 76065669 or at sabelokoo@yahoo.com if you have any further questions or have any problems.
- You can also contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at 018 299 1206 or carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za if you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research.
- You will receive a copy of the signed information and consent form for your own purposes.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I .... agree to take part in the research study titled "Lived experiences of divorced men in the Kingdom of Eswatini"

I declare that:

- I have read this information/it was explained to me by a trusted person in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- The research was clearly explained to me.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person getting the consent from me, as well as the researcher and all my questions have been answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be handled in a negative way if I do so.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in the best interest, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) .... on (*date*) .... 20....

....
Signature of participant   **Signature of witness**

Declaration by person obtaining consent

I (*name*) .... declare that:

- I clearly and in detail explained the information in this document to

....

- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I gave him/her time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) .... on (*date*) .... 20....

....
Signature of person obtaining consent

Declaration by researcher

I (*name*) …Sabelo Khumalo…………………………………………………… declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to participant
- I did/did not use an interpreter
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them or I was available should he/she want to ask any further questions.
- I declare that there will not be conflict of interest, I am an Employee Wellness Officer and a psychology student, and I will not engage the participants in counselling. There will be a professional person assisting to render counselling services to participants.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at (*place*) …………………..……...……………….. on (*date*) ……………...……..... 20....

……………………………………………………………
Signature of researcher

Declaration by researcher

I *(name)* …Sabelo Khumalo……………………………………………………… declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to participant
- I did/did not use an interpreter
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them or I was available should he/she want to ask any further questions.
- I declare that there will not be conflict of interest, I am an Employee Wellness Officer and a psychology student, and I will not engage the participants in counselling. There will be a professional person assisting to render counselling services to participants.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as described above.
- I am satisfied that he/she had time to discuss it with others if he/she wished to do so.

Signed at *(place)* …………………………...…………….. on *(date)* ………………...…….... 20….

……………………………………………………………
Signature of researcher

APPENDIX VI

NWU-
HREC
Approval

Date:
2020.11.18
10:58:52
+02'00'

Sitembu seHREC

SIVUMELWANO SELUCWANINGO KUBESILISA LABA DIVOSILE

SIHLOKO SELUHLOLO: IMPHILO LEPHILWE BESILISA LABADIVOSILE ESWATINI

INOMBOLO YELUCWANINGO: NWU-00434-20-A1

UMHLOLI LUCWANINGO LOMKHULU: Prof. Choja A. Oduaran

UMFUNDZISIKOLO: Sabelo T. Khumalo

LIKHELI: P.O.Box 441, Mankayane, Eswatini.
Email: sabelokoo@yahoo.com

LUCINGO: (00268) 76065669

Uyacelwa ubeyincenye yelucwaningo lwami loluholela eticwini te Masters (Masters in Research Psyccholgy). Uyacelwa utinike sikhatsi ufundze loko lokulotjiwe kute utfole kucaciseleka ngalolucwaningo .Ukhululekile kutsi ubute umcwaningi. Buta umcwaningi noma loyo lokuchazelako nakukhona longakucondzi ngalolucwaningo. Kumcokwa kutsi wenetiseke   ngalokucacile kutsi uyacondza kutsi lolucwaningo lungani nekutsi umbandzakanyeka kanjani. Kungenela kwakho lolucwaningo kusekuvumeni kwakho ngaphandle kwekucindzeteleka. Uma uncaba loko ngeke kube nematsabela ngoti kuwe nom ngayiphi indlela. Uvumelekile kuyekela kuba yincenye yalolucwaningo noma kusibi sigaba noma ngabe bovumile.

Lolucwaningo lugunyatwe yi **Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University (NWU-00434-20-A1)** lutawuphindze

APPENDIX VII

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The aim of the interview is to gain more understanding into the lived experiences of divorced men in Eswatini. I hope that the information provided here would give professionals, the government, and organizations working with men an idea how to best support divorced men. Other men in a similar situationwill also gain knowledge on how to cope.

I am well aware that sharing your experiences is an emotional process and I am honoured to have the privilege to listen to your story. Should you get overwhelmed at any stage you are free to stop the interview. The interview is confidential; even though it is audio recorded, anonymity will be maintained. When the interview is transcribed, your names will be represented by a number.

I ask that you speak as loudly and as clearly as possible so that your voice can be recorded effectively. Are there any questions before we start?

1. What is your experience as a divorced man ? Would you kindly share. I will be interjecting and asking questions as we continue.

We have come to t h e e n d . Thank you for your valuable insight and for your participation

APPENDIX VIII

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SISWATI VERSION)

Singeniso

Ngiyabonga kutsi uvume kuba yincenye letawubutwa imibuto kulolucwaningo. Inhloso yalemibuto kucondzisisa tehlakalalo letehlela besilisa labehlukene nabomkabo (divorced).Ngiyetsemba lolwati lolutawutfolakala lapha lutawusita tisebenti tetemphilo, hulumende, beluleki kanye nesive kucondzisisa tidzingo tenu, kutsi banganisita kanjani nekutsi banisekele kanjani. Nalabanye besilisa labasesimeni lesinjengesakho batawutfola lwati lekutsi bangabhekana kanjani nalobulukhuni.

Ngiyati kutsi nisangibhobokela ngemphilo yenu kutabakhona imivuka letabakhona emoyeni yenu ngiko ngitivela ngihloniphekile ngekutsi ningitfole lelitfuba lekuva lapho nihambe khona. Nakutowenteka uve lusizi lukwengama noma uve kulukhuni kuchubeka, ukhululekilekutsi ukuvale kuchubeka kwalemibuto. Noma emavi atsetjulwa kulokucocisana kwetfu, yati kutsi ligama lakho litawuhalale liyimfihlo. Nakubhalwa lenkhulumo yetfu, kutawusetjentiswainombolo esikhundleni seligama lakho.

Ngicela kutsi ukhulume kakhulu, ngalokuvakalako kute kuvakale kutsi utsini kusatsetjulwalenkhulumo. Ikhona yini imibuto lekhona sisengakacali?

1. Ungasicephulela kutsi imphilo yakho ibengulenjani njengewesilisa lo dovozile (noma ke lohlukene nemkakhe) ? Ngitohle ngiphawula ngibuta sisachubeka.

Sesifike emaphetselweni alencociswano. Ngiyabonga lwati lolumcoka longiphe lona,ngibonge sikhatsi sakho ekuhlanganyeleni kulolucwaningo.

APPENDIX IX

House 367

Hex River Lifestyle Estate

Waterkloof East Ext 12

Rustenburg 0299

18/11/2021

This is to certify that the min-dissertation entitled

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF DIVORCED MEN IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI
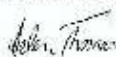
Submitted by   **KHUMALO SABELO THULANI**

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8649-1661

For the degree of   **MASTER OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

(PSYCHOLOGY)

At the   **NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**

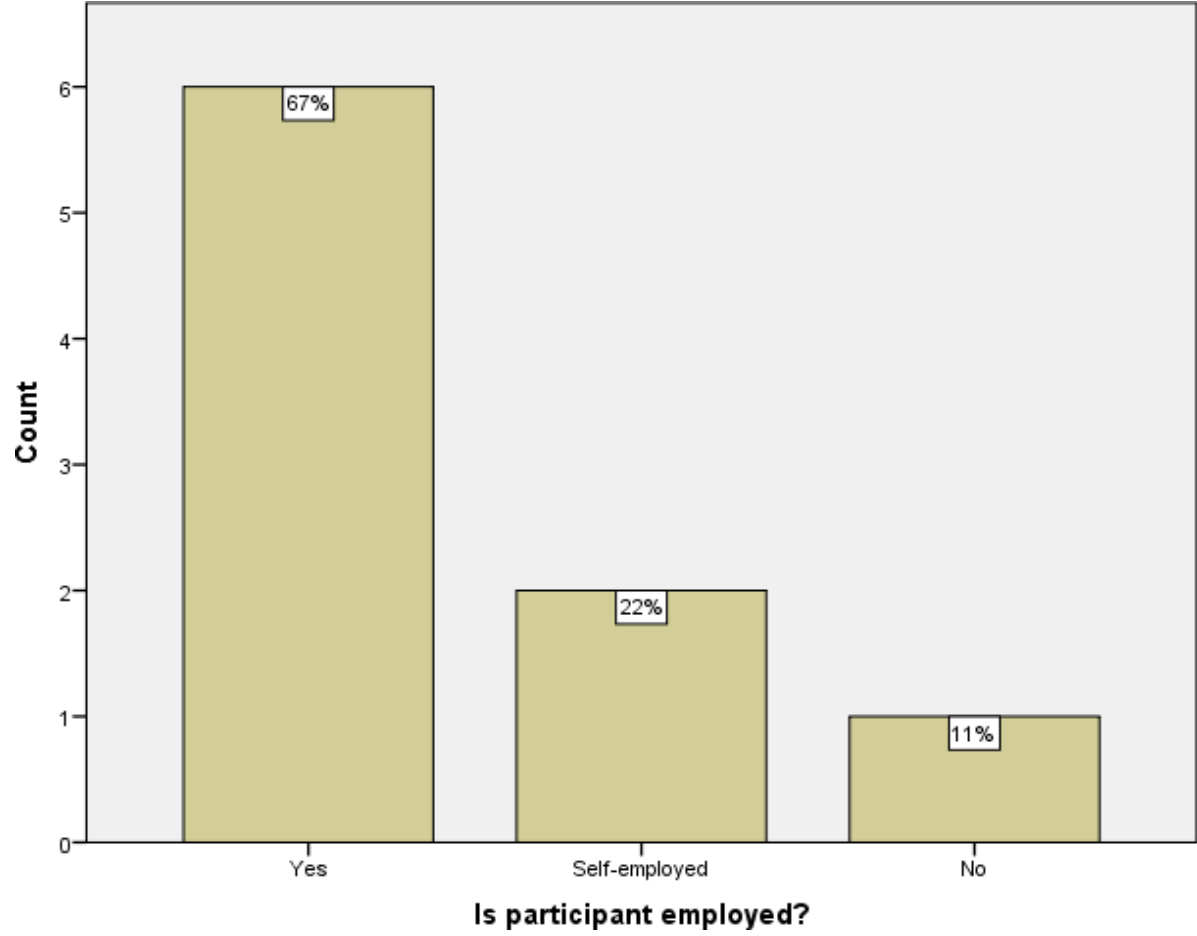Has been edited for language by

Mary Helen Thomas (B.Sc. Hons. PGCE)

Email: thomashelen212@gmail.com

Cell: 072 242 9066

APPENDIX   X
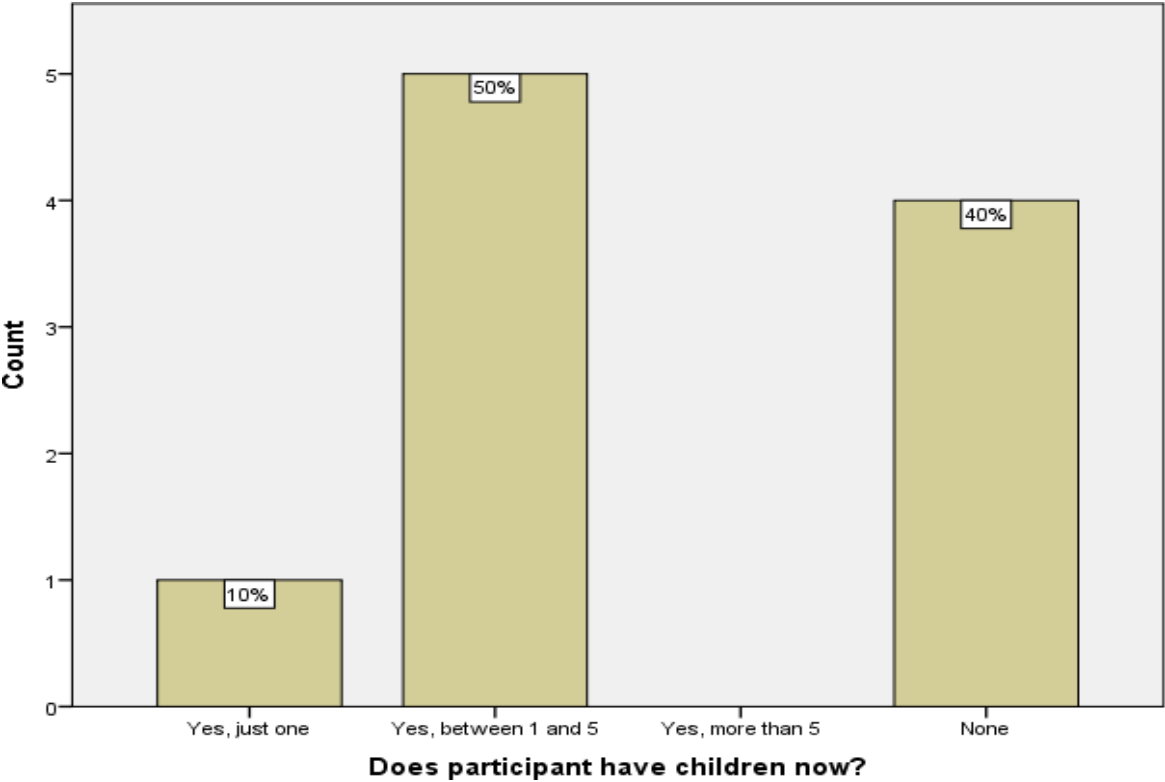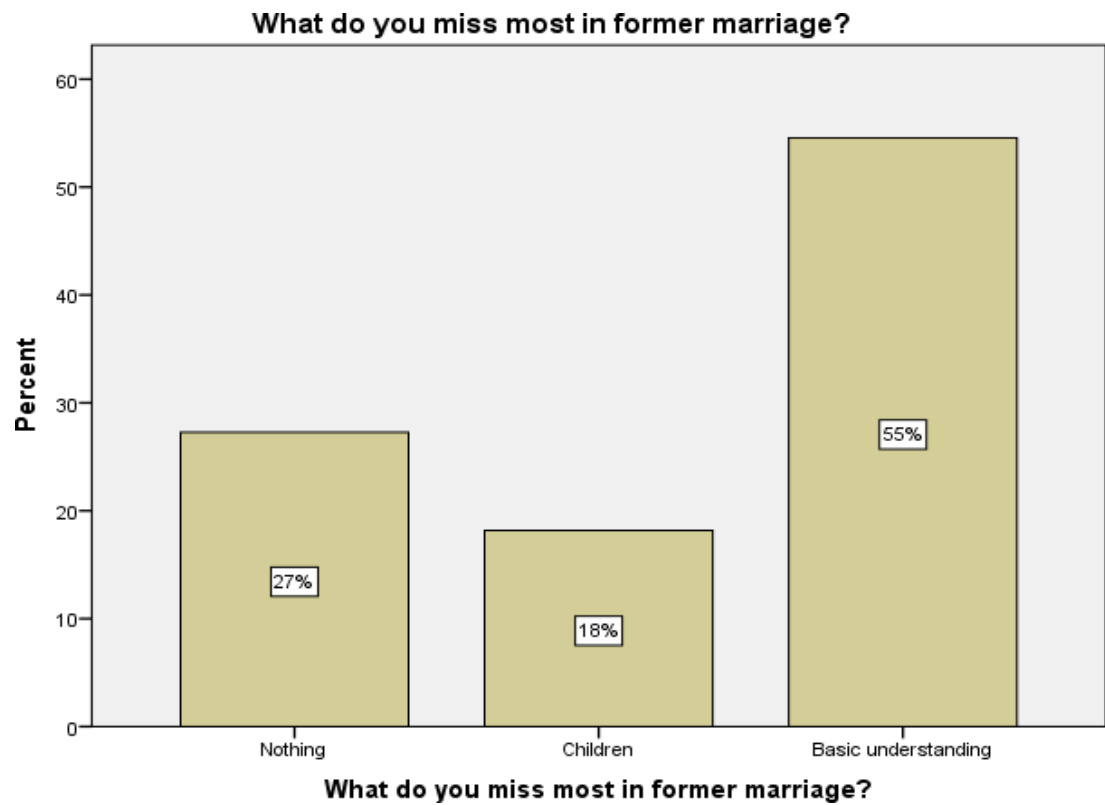
APPENDIX XI

APPENDIX XII

What do you miss most in former marriage?

APPENDIX XIII

Participant's coping mechanism

APPENDIX XIV

Reason to divorce

Percent

50%

25%

17%

8%

Lack of respect | Infidelity | Infidelity, sexual dissatisfaction, disrespect | Ireconcilable differences

Reason to divorce