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Mveng, Angeline Amombo

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Masculinities in relation to male-on-male Violence: Exploring Male Perceptions of Safety and Vulnerability in Public Spaces

A research report submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters by Coursework and Research Report degree in the field of

Psychology

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Angeline Amombo Mveng

892148

Supervisor: Prof. Peace Kiguwa

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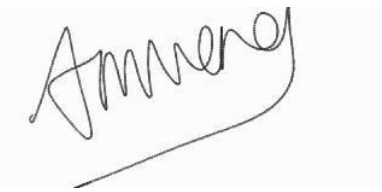
Signature: 

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Abstract

This research is concerned with men's vulnerability to violence victimization. Through viewing their talk as 'small stories', discourse analysis was deployed to discover the men's construction's regarding safety & threat in public space. Most research concerned with violence and masculinity tends to frame masculinity in terms of being indicative of perpetrating violence. There is scant research which considers male vulnerability to violence inflicted by other males. This has influenced dominating social discourse which fails to acknowledge the vulnerability which men experience in relation to violence. This study interviewed seven black men who reside in South Africa, aged between 23 and 30 years old, querying them on their experience of vulnerability when navigating public space. Affective experiences of anxiety emerged in the men's constructions of vulnerability and safety in space. The study found that all the men experienced themselves as vulnerable to violent victimization, even though they tended to make invisible their experience of this in their daily lives.

Keywords: masculinities; vulnerability; violence; affect; public space

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Aim, Objectives, and Research Questions p.7

Rationale p.7

Significance of the study p.11

Chapter 2 – Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Hegemonic Masculinity p.13

Affect Theory p.14

Narrative Theory p.17

Masculinity Studies p.19

Violence Studies p.24

Fear of Violence p.26

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1 Research Design p.29

3.2 Method p.30

3.3 Participants p.31

3.4 Data Procedures p.32

3.5 Data Analysis p.37

3.6 Ethical Considerations p.40

3.7 Trustworthiness p.41

Chapter 4 - Affective Spatial Geographies of violence and crime

Introduction p.43

Affective Atmosphere of Anxiety p.44

Attachments to space and bodies p.47

Conclusion p.55

Chapter 5 – Surfacing Race: Constructing the face of violence and crime

Surfacing Race p.56

Conclusion p.64

Chapter 6 - (In)Vulnerable Masculinities: Making sense of self in face of violence and crime

Introduction p.65

Vulnerability to violence p.65

Masking vulnerability p.73

Conclusion p.82

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

Conclusion p.83

Methodological and Theoretical Reflexivity p.85

Personal Reflexivity p.86

Reference List p.88

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Schedule p.101

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet p.102

Appendix C: Informed consent sheet p.103

Appendix D: Ethical clearance p.104

Chapter 1

Introduction

Aim:

To discover men's constructions of vulnerability and perceptions regarding (male-on-male) violence through their narratives of safety and experience of public space.

Objectives:

1. To explore men's constructs of vulnerability to violence in Johannesburg
2. To discover how participants describe their strategies for safety in relation to this vulnerability.

Research Questions:

1. How do men construct themselves as vulnerable to violence living in Johannesburg?
2. What strategies for safety do men describe in relation to this vulnerability?

Rationale:

Violence in South Africa is a problem (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017, Lancaster, 2021). High rates of violence necessitate people having an awareness of oneself in relation to others when in public spaces. Both men and women are vulnerable to threat yet men report having no fear of violence and women more openly share their experiences of fearing being victimised (Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010). The violence that men are exposed to is different from the violence women are threatened by and typically victims of. Research has found that women typically fear and are at highest risk of being sexually victimised (Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010; Mehta & Bondi, 1999) whereas men are more at risk of being victims of homicide (Ratele, 2013). Although men are more likely to be killed by their fellow men (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), 2019; Ratele, 2013; Sanberg & Tollefsen, 2010),

violence against women by men is focused on and a major point of concern in South Africa. This is, in part, because of the underlying power dynamics which normalize male domination and female subjugation (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017). This domination of masculinities over women is what links men together, however not all masculinities hold the same amount of power (Ratele, 2013). Within masculinity there are hierarchies which place some men in subordinate positions (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This leads us to the topic of hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity refers to the dominant social narrative about traits and practices men assume (Ratele, 2013). These traits usually belong to few men and are hegemonic because they dominate as ways most men should be and so in the process, silence other forms of masculinity (Ratele, 2013). Hegemonic identities and practices are established as dominant through their correspondence with cultural and institutional power (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In the South African context, we cannot ignore how the apartheid government used physical violence and militarism to maintain control (Gqola, 2007). This use of violence was gendered in both black and white communities since men were the ones who were armed and socialized into using violence to gain control or maintain order in their respective communities (Gqola, 2007; Ratele, 2013). This history of violence has shaped South African men's masculinities similarly with what Hinojosa (2010) identified as the tools of hegemonic masculinity. These tools are used actively in military settings to force conditions which have institutional value. These tools include violence, aggression, risk taking, self-discipline and physical ability (Hinojosa, 2010). The militarism of masculinity teaches men to equate their strength with being emotionally hard and the use of violence (Gqola, 2007). Furthermore, as Ratele (2013) highlights, hegemonic masculinity details ways men can gain dominance over women and other men. These tools set boundaries on what is considered appropriate expression for a man and so they silence the

many ways a man can acceptably be a man (Hinojosa, 2010). This is because associating oneself with hegemonic practices reaps social rewards (Mehta & Bondi, 1999)

Men are typically insincere when reporting on their fear, because of hegemonic masculinity which does not associate itself with male vulnerability (Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010). Through understanding men's vulnerabilities, we may add to our knowledge-base of why some men act violently and others do not. This is said because men's violence sometimes serves the purpose of mitigating their own sense of fear and insecurity and so distracts them from their vulnerability (Ratele, 2013**).** When speaking about men's vulnerability, we are referring to an external risk that puts them in danger. Men's vulnerability is closely linked to their emotions, particularly to their expression of emotions which may render them less of a man (Ratele, 2013). Men are socialized to not express fear (Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010) and to demonstrate fearlessness to neutralize threat when amongst (or confronted by) other men (Brownlow, 2005). Although through men demonstrating fearlessness, they are attempting to protect themselves, this demonstration still puts them at high risk for violent altercations (Ratele, 2013). This is because a demonstration of fearlessness involves a readiness for confrontation and aggression which easily leads to violence (Brownlow, 2005). For this reason, the perceptions of safety and vulnerability male participants experience when navigating inner city Johannesburg was in question, because of the possibility of male participants seeking to adopt an approach of fearlessness which places them at a higher risk for the experience of aggravated robbery. Although the stereotype of the stance of fearlessness was a motivator to investigate vulnerability experienced by men, it was not being assumed as a definite position assumed by the participants.

If anything, most of the narratives shared expressed what Sisonke Msimang (2020) describes as angst, which is a typical emotion experienced by people who navigate the anxious city of Johannesburg. The inner-city of Johannesburg is filled with spaces frequented by criminals and

criminal activity. For example, The Nelson Mandela Bridge is a location frequented by both civilians and criminals (News24, 2006). It is an example of a space people have to navigate which poses a major safety risk through being a potential site for violence victimization. Johannesburg is notorious for criminal activity such as muggings or hijackings (eNCA, 2021), however the angle this research focused on is the perceptions of safety and vulnerability men experience in terms of concern regarding a mugging situation escalating into violence. The potential for violence during crimes is being considered since aggravated robbery is the second leading cause of murder in South Africa, following misunderstandings/arguments (Lancaster, 2021). Violent crime victimization is a scary reality present in South Africa; there was a 37% and 43% increase respectively, in murder and armed robbery in the eight years pre-2020 (Lancaster, 2021). The statistics decreased during lockdown restrictions, however as restrictions ease the country is witnessing an increase in these types of violent crime once again (Lancaster, 2021). Discourse concerning male fearlessness creates perspectives around masculinity as invulnerable to violence, or at least as less concerned about it (Langa, 2012). In the process of becoming a man, this type of discourse may be internalised in varying ways depending on the context in which boys are raised (Langa, 2012). The stereotype of there being a stance of fearlessness may aggravate a robbery, as a criminal is most likely to behave unpredictably violent if they perceive the possibility of a threat (Bruce, 2019). Men are typically viewed as being more threatening than women, and there are a multitude of ill-fated situations where male victims of muggings become victims of violence in the form of being stabbed, shot, beaten or even murdered (CSVR, 2019, Flanagan, 2018, Lancaster, 2017).

This research sought to understand how hegemonic discourse may interact with the high risk for violent altercations, in terms of how these realities shape the experiences of men in dangerous public spaces, within the city of Johannesburg. Brownlow's (2005) study done in the USA, found that men do have wariness about public spaces, and this is what led them to

deem certain areas as ‘relatively safe’ instead of ‘safe’. Furthermore, in his research, which was conducted in focus groups, ‘dominant men’ checked other men when they tried to express any sense of vulnerability when in a public space. His study and findings are relatable within the South African context because both contexts share similar histories of militarism (Hinojosa, 2010; Gqola, 2007) and racialized socio-economic inequalities which influences the risk for violence victimization (Ratele, 2013; Brownlow, 2005).

“Men do not fear” equates to saying “men do not cry”; although experiences of men’s vulnerability are silenced from recognition and suppressed due to hegemonic ideals (Hinojosa, 2010), that does not mean they are absent. “It is of interest to look at the presence or absence of shared stories among certain social groups” (Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010, p. 2). This is because through doing research around men’s vulnerability, we are making available more narratives through which men can negotiate and construct their identities (Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010). This is important because our discourse frames the ways in which we think of, and so practice ourselves.

Significance of the Study:

The significance of this study rests in that there is scant research which has accounted for male vulnerability to violence (van Niekerk., et al, 2015). Considering that men constitute the majority of the statistics of homicidal violence, their experience of navigating a violent social context is valuable towards a broader understanding of the influence violence has on the lives of South African men. Through analyzing the narratives the men shared regarding their navigation of a violent South Africa, the perceptions and affect men have in terms of male-on-male violence along with their constructions of vulnerability emerged. Actual violent encounters not being the focus of this research allowed for the development of understanding

of how men perceive their safety and risk in a country where numerous men are killed by other men during violent interpersonal conflict. To reiterate, this study investigated black men's masculinities in relation to vulnerability to violence. This was a means to discover how men are affected by the possibility of (male-on-male) violence victimization.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

Hegemonic Masculinity

Hegemonic masculinity coined by Connell (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p.832), is "understood as the pattern of practices that allowed men's dominance over women to continue.... It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man". This form of masculinity is not necessarily statistically dominant but it has a normative value to it. Hegemonic masculinity is a way of being/embodiment which other men, who may not necessarily practice it, position themselves in relation to.

Forms of masculinities are affected through context and culture. A male becomes a man through social processes which make available certain knowledge, practices and ideas about masculinity (Ratele, 2008). A certain form of masculinity being dominant in any context is influenced by institutional and cultural processes. In a society, more than one hegemonic masculinity can exist, even within subgroups (Jewkes et al., 2015). This is important to note because in a multi-cultural and heavily stratified context like South Africa, masculine ideals are birthed within multiple contexts. At this point it is important to clarify that part of what makes an identity dominant/hegemonic is in its capacity for "tangible benefits to be gained by being a particular type of person and interacting with others in particular ways" (Mehta & Bondi, 1999, p.70). It is not necessarily violent but force can be used for the purpose of achieving cultural and institutional benefits (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Furthermore, forms of masculinity are not exactly the same in every culture, though in every culture and even inter-culturally there are hierarchies amongst masculinities; some are dominant, others marginalized, subordinate or complicit (Ratele, 2013). In this way, we can see that hegemonic practices do not only grant some men power over women (external hegemony) but also over

some other men (internal hegemony) (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). It is for this reason that masculinity in relation to violence is in question in this research; because disputes between men can escalate as a means to assert one's masculinity (Ratele, 2013).

Masculinity can be viewed through Manganyi's (1973) understanding of different ways of "being-in-the-world". Manganyi (1973, p.28) argues that "existence is dialogue: relation.", and the type of dialogue people have with their environment is influenced by historical experiences. Through his understanding we can think of masculinity as an identity one practices in relation to things in the word; namely oneself, others, objects and time. Connell (as cited in Wedgwood, 2009) stress that masculinity is not just a system of relations but it is a practice men embody. This links with Manganyi, whereby masculinity can be viewed as a relationship one has with their own body. Men embody masculinity through their bodies being the objects which practice it. Masculinity as an embodied practice is embedded in historical ideas of what it means to hold a male body (Wedgwood, 2009).

Hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical concept is utile for the analysis as a way to show some of the similitudes the men express which are related to their experience of self as men in the world, and within the South African context particularly. Hegemonic masculinity is related to their experience of self because they are aware of typical expectations and pressures associated with masculinity. Understanding that there are several ways different men are placed in relation to hegemonic masculinity (Ratele, 2013), allows for a more critical engagement towards understanding how the discourse influences what and how they express the experience of themselves in a violent South Africa.

Affect Theory

Affect theory is a view on emotions that challenges the common conception that they are private experiences (McCormick-Huhn & MacArthur, 2016). Although there are several

diverse theories on affect, all affect theorists concur that affect is not within but circulates between bodies (Pile, 2010). Affect emerges as part of the interaction that occurs between bodies (Anderson, 2006). There exist two dominant concepts on affect, namely Non-Representational Theory (NRT) and Representational Theory (RT).

NR theorists maintain that affect is transpersonal capacity of a body being open to other bodies (Pile, 2010). It is precognitive and beyond reflection, so it is not able to be represented (Thrift, 2004). The process of representing affect, changes it into emotion which is knowable and capable of being represented (Pile, 2010). Spinoza (in Thrift, 2004) attaches affect to encounters and action as opposed to responses and situations. What this conception asserts, is the embeddedness of affect as experienced in movements and gestures in the process of encounters occurring. They are not an evaluation after the fact, but form part of the complex relations as events unfold. Massumi (2002, p.25) describes this as an intensity of feeling which is 'purely autonomic' and without depth or qualification. It is for this reason that affect theorists separate affect from discourse.

Whereas representational affect theorists discuss affective economies which are an accumulation of modes of relationality influenced by social history, and so discourse. NR theorists argue for 'affective assemblages' which are a network/arrangement of practices which emphasizes constructionism rather than social constructionism (Anderson & Harrison, 2010). This places an emphasis on new potentialities in processes and how things fit and hold together as an arrangement of practice during interactions. Factors such as place, time, materialities of bodies and objects come together, and these factors allow or limit certain affective capacities within the encounter. So, NR affect theorists argue that different configurations of time, place, objects, and bodies, create diverse 'fields of potential', whereby a network of affective assemblages can differ significantly by a single factor being slightly different (Anderson & Harrison, 2010).

Representational affect theorists aim to show the ways in which affect is social, psychic and material (Ahmed, 2004). Affect is social because it emerges during interactions between / amongst subjects in social space and it is for this reason that social context has become more important when discussing emotions (Van Kleef in McCormick-Huhn & MacArthur, 2016). Different social contexts have different discourses and so wide-ranging systems of practices or ways of relating between individuals. Since South Africa has a violent social context, people are predisposed / more vulnerable to have stronger reactions to conflictual situations (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013). For this reason, affect is an important aspect to consider in violence research. Furthermore, with affect theory in mind, people are predisposed to have stronger reactions dependent on the type of body they encounter in a situation. Signs of threat or danger are attached to particular bodies due to socio-historical configurations which construct certain people as dangerous (Ahmed, 2004)

Signs attach to bodies influenced by historical modes of relationality between subjectivities. Affect is explained using psychoanalysis in that it is viewed as a manifestation of associated ideas a person may have of another. These associated ideas (emotionality) are said to have different levels of meaning (feelings) in different people and so these associated ideas are produced and circulate across the social and psychic field. These ideas do not reside in people (subjects), objects or signs because it is precisely the relation between people that forms and circulates them. It is “a relationality that works through the circulation of signs” (Ahmed, 2004, p.121).

Ahmed (2004) argues that emotions not only move between bodies, but they also do things in the social sphere. Between bodies, signs circulate setting boundaries between individuals and collectives. This means emotions align us with some while distancing us from others, in this way “emotions involve subjects and objects, but without residing positively within them". Individuals come to align with some, and not others based on the signs attached to their bodies.

Engaging with affect theory provides a means to analyse how seemingly intangible relations/ interactions manifest and present themselves as an occurrence within space and between bodies. It displaces the focus from solely being on a single person's experience and feelings, towards placing people and feelings as always contextual and relational. Viewing affect contextually and relationally allows it to be less elusive and more accessible when under investigation.

Narrative Theory

Narrative research can be described as research focused on gathering stories of experience (Riessman, 2002). It is a conversational style of storytelling that encourages people to listen, share and empathise with the storyteller, for this reason Riessman (2002, p.701), sees storytelling as a "reciprocal event between a teller and an audience". The use of narratives is an approach suitable for this research because stories of experience and storytelling is what allows people to make-sense of their experiences, in a sequential and meaningful manner, that also expresses both the inter/personal and broader contextual factors through re-presenting and reconstituting experiences in the interview context (Squire, 2008). Narrative inquiry is good for collecting thick descriptions of experiences where, through the stories they tell of themselves, participants can reveal themselves (Butina, 2015). Gathering this kind of information is relevant to this study which is trying to elucidate cognitive and emotional experiences in relation to violence, with an awareness that these experiences are embedded in socio-historical contexts.

Through personal narratives, biographies, histories and society are intersected in a non-objective fashion so positionality and subjectivity are brought to the forefront (Riessman, 2002). As is evident in the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity and affect theory, relationality between subjectivities is a strong thread in this research. Since narrative inquiry

has a focal interest on context it is a suitable means to understand the relationality of a human subject through analysing their interpersonal dimensions with awareness of broader social narratives in which they are ever rooted (Squire, 2008). The narrative approach in focus here is "experience-centered" and hermeneutic. This means that events are not focal but the way they are experienced takes precedence in order to understand the person (Squire, 2008). Since nt is experience-centred and focused on conceptualising relationality between subjectivities, it proves to be a helpful approach towards gathering data that can be analysed for themes related to experience and relationality.

Literature Review

Masculinity Studies

According to Kimmel and Bridges (2011, para.1), masculinity studies are an interdisciplinary field, focused on decoding "the social construction of what it means to 'be a man'". Scholars in this field of study speak about 'masculinities' as opposed to just masculinity because it is increasingly understood that there is not a universal expression of this gendered identity which is applicable cross-culturally nor cross-temporally (Kimmel & Messner, 2010). Masculinities studies have been of interest to biologists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and even evolutionary psychological models which try to examine masculinity and explain how it operates in various cultures. It was in the 70's that feminist scholars challenged many of these models of masculinity, which held unrecognized assumptions that masculinity was the norm that both genders were weighed against (Kimmel & Messner, 2010).

Before feminist critique, traditional gender roles went unexamined by scholars across multiple disciplines (Kimmel & Messner, 2010). An example of this is how biological models reproduced findings that attributed aggressiveness, competitiveness and violence as a predisposition for men (because of testosterone) and 'exaggerated emotionality' and tenderness as an estrogen related predisposition. Attributes such as self-esteem were viewed to be inherently masculine (Antill & Cunningham, 1979) and passivity was seen as a feminine trait which influenced the roles women assumed and so their position in society (Hochschild, 1973). This type of research reinforced traditional gender roles through affirming myths of masculinity or femininity as identities of men and women which were due to an innate mechanism (Pleck, 1975) or reinforced by biology (Burton et al., 1979). Instead of gender being viewed as a socially constructed role which people perform based on the specificities of

their context (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017) it was examined as a natural predisposition with ideological assumptions of female fragility and male vigour (Kimmel & Messner, 2010).

The biological model has largely been challenged due to difficulty determining causation between varied behaviours of men and women, and differences in biology (Kimmel & Messner, 2010). Furthermore, the biological model leaves several questions unanswered regarding the role "cultures [play to] interpret, shape, and modify these biological inheritances." (Kimmel & Messner, 2010, p.XIV). Anthropological models seek to examine men as gendered beings, whose ways of being are associated with but not wholly determined by biology (Dudgeon & Inhorn, 2003). Masculinities are examined as gender identities which have an association with biological sex, but different from the biological model, it cannot be wholly explained through biological factors because culture also needs consideration.

Anthropological researchers of masculinity have investigated topics related to reproduction (Dudgeon & Inhorn, 2003), and evolution. Research related to these topics consider cultural adaptation to nature as an explanation for instances of universality in gender organisation (Kimmel & Messner, 2010). There are, however, major differences within anthropological studies of masculinity. For instance, studies in this field that take an ethnographic approach to understanding gender identities, are more focused on non-essentialist and non-binary understandings of masculinity and femininity (Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994). This means Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994) link feminism to anthropology to produce an understanding that masculinity does not have an essence, and masculinity and femininity are not opposite to one another.

Before the introduction of feminism to multiple disciplines studying masculinity, men and masculinities were limited in how they were discussed and examined. An example of this is a study by Spence, Helmreich and Stapp (1975), which had very limited categories of positions

men could occupy; they were either masculine, feminine or androgynous, and the attributes that were assigned to men were stereotypical ones. Sociological research pre-feminist critique, combined biological, anthropological and psychological understandings of gender identity into an "sex roles" (Kimmel & Messner, 2010). Sex role research exaggerated differences between the sexes (Hochschild, 1973) and through its allocation of particular sets of attitudes, characteristics and behaviours as appropriate contingent on one's sex, upbringing and cultural context (Kimmel & Messner, 2010) encouraged a binary understanding of gender. Feminist scholars critiqued both essentialist and binary gendered notions and so worked to de-essentialize how masculinity had been historically examined and understood.

Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity has been a central link between feminist and masculine research and has influenced studies of men and masculinities in productive ways (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). When the concept of hegemonic masculinity entered academia, it was used to explain men's behaviours in terms of health, violence and patriarchy (Jewkes et al., 2015). The difference was men's behaviours were not being naturalized, as a result of 'maleness', but rather they were explained as influenced by social styles of relationality. This had major impact in terms of gender activism because it linked masculinity to feminist research (Christensen & Jensen, 2014) as well as highlighted men's oppressive styles of relationality as choices they could resist (Jewkes, 2015). Furthermore, Christensen and Jensen (2014, p.68) argue that "Connell's work should be acknowledged for emphasizing differences, inequalities and hierarchies between men" because her work drew attention to the reality of men being in marginalized positions due to the intersection of race and class in society. These intersections (and internal hegemony) prior to Connell's theory, were not considered central to masculinities studies.

Internal hegemony is important to consider, especially within the South African context because of how heavily stratified the country is. There is some research that has begun to

thicken understanding of masculinities aware of racial and class intersections (Ratele, 2008; Luyt, 2012). Kopano Ratele (2008) argues that failure to acknowledge the intersection of socio-economic positions and gender leaves a gap in gender studies. This is because poverty, which is racially disproportionate amongst the black community, influences the way black men experience and so practice their masculinity (Ratele, 2013). Due to time constraints this research will not be investigating this intersection in-depth, though some basic analysis of difference will be done. It is, however, left open as a topic for expansion to further explore men's affective economies along the intersection of race and class. Fearlessness, as an affective economy experienced by men, is not being assumed in this research for the sake of intersectionality which values that within group differences are ever present (Crenshaw, 1991). Viewing masculinity through varying intersections emphasizes that masculinity varies not only historically and cross-culturally but also contextually. According to Kimmel and Bridges (2011, para.2) this means that "even within a given society and time period, masculinity can mean different things to different people."

Studies on masculinities in South Africa have sought to explain the high rates of violence as well as gender relations within the context (Morell, Jewkes, Lindegger & Hamlall, 2013). Gender-based violence has tended to be a major area of focus when investigating masculinity (van Niekerk et al., 2015; Graaf & Heinecken, 2017), in addition to the influence of militarism on men towards having violent identities post-apartheid (Hamber, 2010). It follows that most research concerned with masculinity in South Africa would focus on violence, given that the media depiction of men is usually violent, oppressive, and associated with women abuse (Langa, 2012). This is an especially true depiction for men who are poor and black in the country. Other areas of interest for masculinity studies in South Africa, include fatherhood (Morell, 2005), HIV risk and/or prevention (Harrison et al., 2006) and -in lesser quantities- male mortality (Ratele, 2008). A common thread relevant to these areas of interest is their

relation to unequal dynamics. In studies on fatherhood there is inequality in the expectations and contributions of mothers and fathers (Morell, 2005). With HIV risk, gender inequality has a major role to play in HIV transmission (Harrison et al., 2006). Lastly, in terms of male mortality, what Ratele (2008) coins as "ruling masculinity" (comparable to hegemonic masculinity) supports unequal power dynamics between men in a manner that results in violence and death.

Irrespective of internal hegemony within the male community - which results in violence and death, as Ratele (2006) points out in his discussion on ruling masculinity - masculinity studies in South Africa that examine male-on-male violence are still minimal. This deficit can largely be attributed to persisting discourse which ignores the vulnerabilities of men and boys in society (Shefer, Ratele & Strebel, 2007). This ignoring of male vulnerability is not only a reflection of idealized masculine performances of invulnerability (Clowes, 2013), but it is also a reflection of a society fixed on viewing masculinity as a violent monolith (Davis, 2017) which cannot be reconciled with what is considered feminine, vulnerability. This research will be valuable as contributing to masculinity studies that view men as possible victims of violence - who may navigate in particular ways to avoid certain spaces - as opposed to more thoroughly being researched as perpetrators (Shefer, Ratele & Strebel, 2007).

Research that investigates men as perpetrators, tends to focus on men committing general crime, intimate partner violence, violence against children or sexual assault/rape. However, according to Heilman & Barker (2018) improved understanding of masculinity's connection to violence is needed and will be beneficial towards creating and implementing more thorough programs and policies that prevent violence. This means not only understanding masculinity (and men) through associations of being a perpetrator; masculinity and men are also connected to violence through vulnerability to it.

Violence Studies

Violence has typically been understood and defined through focusing on the physical nature of violent acts (Aisenberg et al., 2011). Reiss and Roth (in Aisenberg et al., 2011) viewed violent behaviour as an intentional threat which causes physical harm. Other researchers have also subsumed violence as aggression and argue that even the threat of physical force constitutes violence. The assumptions which underlie these conceptions of violence are that hostility is involved as well as social, legal or moral deviance (Aisenberg et al., 2011). These earlier conceptions of violence can be thought of as first wave violence research which was mostly individual-centered, with a focus on pathologizing violent offenders (Bowman et al., 2015). First wave violence research tends to neglect violence directed towards or by groups and institutions in society (Aisenberg et al., 2011).

This means first wave violence research would fail to account for collective violence, which in the South African context would have a major contribution to make towards understanding offenders and interpersonal forms of violence. More recent conceptions of violence are aware of violence in collective forms as well as have an awareness of how violence manifests through the use of power, intimidation and threats which inspire a sense of insecurity and varying perceptions of threat in different people (Aisenberg et al., 2011). It is for this reason of violence being associated with the demonstration of power, that it is typically linked to maleness and masculinity. It is, however, also true that males are the typical perpetrators (Davis, 2017) of what the WHO (2021, para. 1) defines as;

> "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."

This definition of violence shifts beyond interpersonal physical forms of violence towards acknowledging collective forms of violence which may lead to more than physical injury by causing economic or psychological harm for example. Collective violence refers to violent actions that are "motivated by political, economic and social factors" (CSVR, 2019, p.2). Although this research is focusing on community (outside the home), interpersonal forms of violence, a broader perspective of violence is especially useful in a society like South Africa, which Hamber (1999) describes as having a "culture of violence". This is useful in this context because, as said earlier, understanding of interpersonal forms of violence is aided through being cognizant of the historically relevant collective violence.

A broader perspective on violence allows for increased consideration of the contribution of structural and contextual factors in violence perpetration (Aisenberg et al., 2011). The South African history of Apartheid has created a society where violence is a legitimate route for problem resolution (Gqola, 2007). Pandey (2012) discusses the culture of violence in South Africa, as not only influenced by the legitimation / routinization of violence as a solution for conflict, but it is also influenced by the fact that children witness violence around them during their upbringing, and this normalizes violence as a part of life. This culture of violence paired with the exacerbation of violence in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, emphasizes the need to intersect social influences on subjective experiences of violence.

Eagle (2015, p. 85) demonstrates this intersection of social influences and subjective experiences of violence through arguing for violence in South Africa as a

> "perverse set of social patterns [...], where the impact of high levels of exposure and associated fear, anxiety, anger, aggression and disillusionment, contributes to a breakdown in desirable aspects of social cohesion, creating a context in which further violations continue".

This perspective of violence being facilitated by a lack of social cohesion, is further supported by Lamb (2019) whose research links various types of violence (violence against children, VAW, collective and youth violence) to a lack of cohesion either within the home or in communities. This research also found there to be compounding risk when there is a breakdown in the family unit, alcoholism, or the witnessing of violence as a child. From this, one can see that although social cohesion is flagged as a major influence towards a cycle of violence, there are in fact several factors which are multifaceted and complex that influence its continuation.

Another shift that developed in violence research is the idea of a "web of violence". This conception is inclusive of socio-economic, individual, situational or other contextual factors that are seen to be drivers of violence (CSVR, 2019). This perspective views different forms of violence as interconnected and "not always cause-and-effect" (CSVR, 2019, p.7), perpetrators are also seen as possible victims in this account of violence which analyses with heightened specificity to contextual and situational factors. This research can contribute towards understanding the web of violence through having information on men's perceptions regarding male-on-male violence. Their perceptions around this issue could assist in understanding the factors that change the risk of violence into actual violence (CSVR, 2019).

Fear of Violence

According to Hamilton and Casola (2020, para.3), fear involves the "cognitive interpretation" of danger which influences one to have a biological reaction, whereby the sympathetic nervous system is activated, leading to the release of adrenaline and cortisol.

Fear of violence has generally been subsumed under 'fear of crime' (FoC), except for cases when researchers are looking into women or other marginalized (eg. LGBT) communities fearing violence. Research on FoC has tended to equate fear to perceptions of risk and safety, which Hinkle (2014) argues has resulted in levels of fear being overstated. Perceptions of

safety, similarly to affect, affect how people navigate space, along with who people interact with and where they do it (Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), 2019). From the fact that perceived safety affects an individual's experience of their environment, it is an important aspect to consider when exploring the influence of violence on men's experiences.

Perceived safety is related to, yet importantly distinct from an individual's actual risk of violence victimization (Uittenbogaard et al., as cited in Jansson, 2019). Irrespective of it being different from actual level of risk, it still influences people's behaviour, as they may modify their activities to decrease the risk (Jansson, 2019). According to Uittenbogaard (in Jansson, 2019, p.12), perception of safety may be thought of as a subjective feeling of "an individual's experience of the risk of becoming a victim of crime". Hinkle (2014) argues it is an experience distinct from fear, because fear is a more pervasive experience and not an occasional or space-related issue.

The pervasive nature of fear which Hinkle describes is relevant to the way crime and violence influences people's experience of social space in South Africa. High levels of crime influence people being in heightened emotional states because they are constantly hearing of violent events which occur in the country (Eagle, 2015). This means, most South Africans navigate social spaces with anxiety / angst (Msimang, 2020). Perceiving that one is not safe is different from fear. Perceptions hold an increased cognitive assessment of one's or an imagined situation whereas fear, according to Ahmed (2004), involves a visceral response experienced at the 'passing by' of an object attached with signs deemed fearful. Both perceptions (IJR, 2019) and a fearful affect (Gqola, 2007) have the capacity to influence how people relate to one another as well as move in space. However, affect holds a social dimension different from the cognitive nature of a perception (Shepherdson, 2014).

FoC research in South Africa has seen several shifts since the early 1990's (Roberts, 2008), and this change in dynamics could possibly be understood as due to the various political changes the country has experienced from then into the present (Falok & Van Staden, 2020). According to Roberts (2008) personal perceptions of safety amongst the South African populace increased between 1991 and 2007. However, the opposite was experienced with regards to feelings of safety within one's community/neighbourhood. This decrease in feelings of safety may be attributed to the levels of crime, which make people feel less safe when navigating their community spaces (Falok & Van Staden, 2020). Furthermore, research on FoC has shown that the stereotypical ideas of men not fearing crime, do not reflect reality (Roberts, 2008).

The level of FoC that men experience is equal to, and in some cases even exceeds the levels experienced by women. In the words of Roberts (2008, npn) "Fear of victimisation no longer has a predominantly female face." The high rates at which men in South Africa are victims of homicidal violence (CSVR, 2019) may be an explanation for this shift in levels of fear. The silence regarding the victimisation of men (Bruce, 2019) may be a reflection of our societal discourse still needing to make room for the changing ways in which men experience and navigate the social space. This is to the detriment of South African society because it implies an acceptance of the violence that men too are vulnerable to (Bruce, 2019); and this implied acceptance can inadvertently service the web of violence which the country struggles with today. The shifting dynamics demonstrated in how FoC is experienced in the country suggests that further investigation needs to be instigated, in order to discover how outdated the prevalent conceptions are concerning vulnerability to (and fear of) violence victimization in the country.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Since this research is trying to obtain knowledge about men's experience of safety and possible fear in relation to male-on-male violence, a qualitative design was used to gather information about their subjective experiences. Qualitative research values close inspections of participants' perspectives (Silverman, 2004) as well as in-depth, detailed data of their lived experiences (Patton, 2005). It seeks to develop "an understanding of the meaning and experience dimensions of humans' lives and social worlds." (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002, p.1). This means that the meanings that participants attribute to experiences in their lives are valued in qualitative research which seeks to explore the meanings of phenomena. Data in qualitative research is non-quantifiable as there is a primary reliance on the use of words to come to know of a subject matter that may be understudied (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007).

Qualitative research has roots in hermeneutic and phenomenological forms of inquiry, because it is concerned with detailed descriptions of human experiences of social phenomenon (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007). The context in which phenomena is experienced is important, so in attempting to explore men's perceptions in relation to violence, this research is seeking to understand men's experience of male-on-male violence aware of the sociohistorical and violent nature of South African society. It is a process of discovery which makes use of open-ended questions to elicit in depth responses from participants (Patton, 2005). The objective of the current research is to have a conversation with men concerning their perceptions concerning male-on-male violence. This was achieved through narrative inquiry about instances and contexts where men may have questioned their safety. A narrative inquiry

and discourse analysis were used given the focus on describing the experiences of interactional and perceived situations of crime and violence. Following this, their stories were described, interpreted and explained in a way that explores their constructions of safety and vulnerability in space. Through using the narrative approach, participants meaningfully engaged with their experiences by recounting moments and encounters with others and in different contexts.

What makes this qualitative project critical, is that it is concerned with going beyond the descriptive towards explaining the socially shaped nature of discursive practices, and the social effects they have (Fairclough, 1995). Furthermore, critical research is concerned with relations of power and how they (re)produce subject positions and discourse in society. The intricate ways that masculinity discourse is produced and recycled in everyday talk is an important avenue to explore some of these nuances of gendered subjectivity. The study is especially interested in how men themselves may account for their vulnerable moments and encounters in violence, engaging alternate ways of making sense of their lives as men embodied in particular ways and sometimes outside of the hegemonic discourses of masculinity. Data in qualitative research is considered to always be in a process of emerging, because with a different angle researchers may pick up on as well as construct differently nuanced meanings.

3.2 Method

Interviews are widely used tools for collecting information. They are non-neutral communicative contexts which function to gather narratives about peoples lived experiences (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). They are considered ‘active sites’ because information is not simply given, it is co-constructed as well as interpreted by the listener. Interviews are good conversational information-gathering tools (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). Since this research is seeking experiential knowledge of people's lived experiences, a semi-structured interview is appropriate to use. The semi-structured approach allowed for details to be shared in a way in

which they would be limited if a more formal interview context was created. The openness of the questions allows for interviewees to elaborate on themes without being steered too much by the interviewer (Alsaawi, 2014). An interview schedule was used to maintain as much consistency as possible between the different interview contexts; this contributed towards the reliability of the research findings (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). The interviews were conducted over zoom, and all of them began with the participant and researcher making acquaintance with one another. This typically did not take longer than 10 minutes and it contributed towards creating a comfortable and more open atmosphere for conversation. Before delving into the interview, participants were presented the opportunity for any queries or statements they wished to make. All participants and the researcher had their cameras off due to the choices of the participants. During the interviews, the interviewer would ask a question and would ask a follow up relevant to how the interviewee addressed the question. This means that although all the set questions were asked of every participant, there were some queries that were particular to some participants because of how they responded to the set questions.

3.3 Participants

The 7 participants in this research were black men, aged between 23 and 30 years old. All have received tertiary education, and all but one of the participants was currently working at the time of the data collection. Below is a table, detailing the pseudonyms of the participants, their ages and employment/educational status.

Name and age	Employment/Education
Thabo 26	Employed while studying (Master's)
Lungelo 25	Employed
Julius 23	Intern
Kabelo 23	Intern

Tebetse 25	Unemployed graduate
Kgaogelo 30	Employed
Lesego 30	Employed while studying (Undergraduate)

Table 3.1

The socio-economic positions of the participants were not a main unit analysis. Rather what was focused on was the practices that the men shared, and understanding was gained through this regarding which resources they had access to. All the men have navigated inner city spaces in Johannesburg and are able to articulate in as well as understand English.

3.4. Data Procedures

3.4.1. Recruitment Procedure

Participants for this study were recruited through snowballing technique. If they were interested in participating and met the criteria, they were requested to email the researcher, whose details were made available through the first informant. Once interest was established, communication between the researcher and possible participants occurred via email. They were sent participant information letters to have a better idea of what the research was exploring. From then if they were still interested, they received a consent form to look through and sign, from then a date was arranged on when to have the interview and the preferred platform (eg. Zoom/ Microsoft Teams/ Skype) was discussed.

3.4.2. Data Management Procedure

Qualitative data analysis refers to the process of making sense of the information collected (Butina, 2015). Fairclough's version of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used. This model has 3 interrelated aspects of discourse which are; 1. the object of analysis - any form of text, 2. the way the object of analysis is produced and received – eg. through speaking/listening or writing/reading, and 3. "the socio-historical conditions which govern these processes".

These 3 interrelated aspects are linked to 3 interrelated processes of analysis; 1. Text analysis, 2. Processing analysis and 3. Social analysis (Janks, 1997). These processes of analysis are concerned with describing, interpreting and explaining text.

Analysis in qualitative research begins prior to any form of coding that may be done. During the interviews the construction of meaning already began, then again during the transcription phase, patterns for organising the data were observed (Butina, 2015). After transcribing the interviews, the researcher then familiarized herself with the content through reading over the transcripts. In this process sections that were relevant to answering the research question were highlighted. After completing this process, the researcher read over the highlighted content to begin coding. Codes were written in action form, to describe what they were expressing in their language use. This forms part of the text analysis phase of CDA, which focuses on analyzing the "verbal signs" to describe the text. This was comparable to summarizing whereby the highlighted content was read carefully to identify ideas that dominate in the text, and the kind of relation the dominating ideas had with supporting ones. I was careful not to add information unsaid in the text at this point (Miller, 1997). An example of this is seen below (table 3.2);

Data Extract	**Coding**
"You in the middle of the night, what are you doing in the street if you're not part of a gang? "	Criminal bodies associated with public space at night
*", I ... think it's possible that I also factor in how a person looks facially. and uhh how a person is built. Cause if I feel like I can if I feel like I could take the person on, uh without any ..uh hassle then *stutters* I won't be that alarmed"*	Build and facial features affect level of threat perceived. Gauge vulnerability based on build

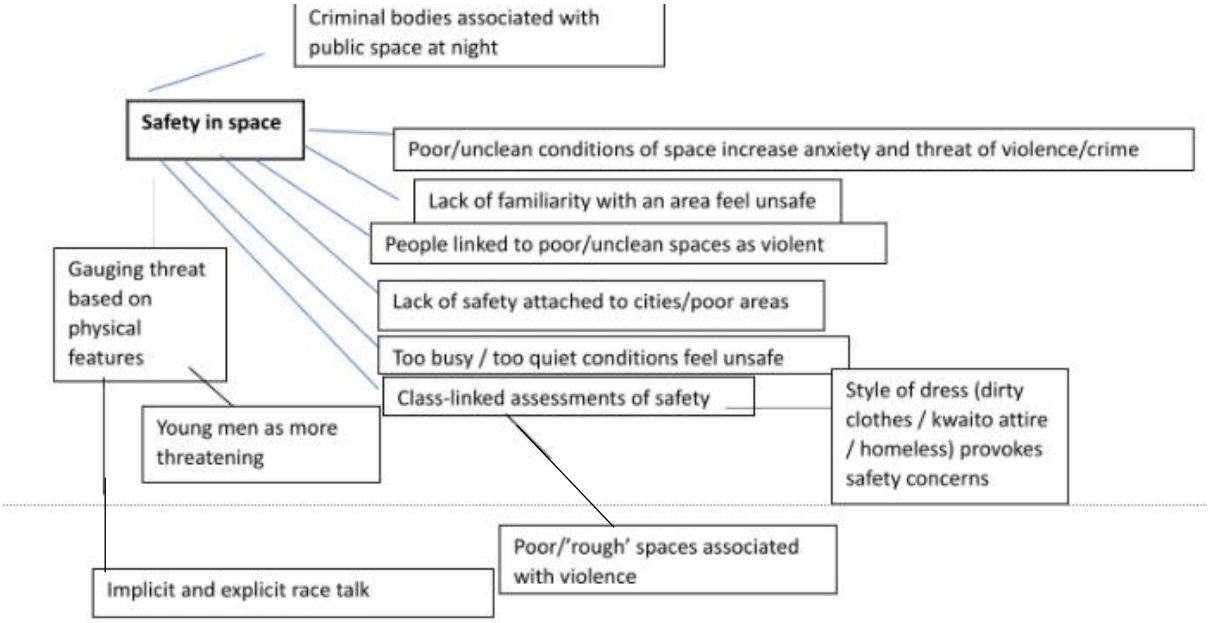
Table 3.2

Following this, the codes were written on a separate page and the men were grouped under the different coded headings that they shared. From here, what they were expressing was interpreted through linking their speech to other research where similar or different ideas to theirs was expressed. This was how codes became subthemes, for example see below (table 3.3);

Limited expression of emotionally charged situations + growing up without emotional talk
Lack of emotional disclosure

Table 3.3

Following this their discourse was contextualized to the South African context and history as a method to try and explain how they were constructing space, safety and themselves and others as social subjects. For example, lack of emotional disclosure is a hegemonic practice linked to masculinity within many South African and African cultural contexts. It is in this way that overarching themes started to be formed which were engaging with the research themes. The research themes were concerned with safety in public space, vulnerability and masculinity. These themes were linked to codes/subthemes as is seen below (mind-map 3.4);



Mind-map 3.4

Safety in space was divided because some assessments were more linked to bodies, irrespective of the type of environment the participants were in. Safety was divided to demonstrate the way that they affectively constructed space and the body/face which they associated with violence. Their awareness of their vulnerability was also apparent in their talk of safety. However, the way it was expressed tended to be entangled with their masculinity. For this reason, I created a third theme which demonstrated their construction of self while considering their vulnerability to violent victimization. These sections were divided as is seen below (Table 3.5);

Affective spatial geographies of violence and crime	**Affective atmosphere of anxiety**
	• Conditions of space increase anxiety
	• Entrenchment of criminal practices and bodies in public space at certain times
	• Lack of safety attached to city spaces
	Attachments to space and bodies
	• Sense of threat influenced by type of people space shared with
	  • Reading bodies in space (gauging level of threat)
	• Coding of poor environments as violent
	  • the people as threating (mainly black male bodies)
	  • boundaries set between participants and poor spaces and the people that inhabit them

Surfacing race: constructing face of violence and crime	• Class-linked assessments of threat
	  • Homeless as threatening
	• Poor spaces / informal settlements associated with violent people (largely black areas)
	  • Signs of threat follow through dress style – may indicate poverty or homelessness or "being a tsostsi – kwaito attire"
	• Explicit talk of race
	  • Black / coloured men as threatening

(In)vulnerable masculinities: making sense of self in face of violence and crime	**Vulnerability to violence**
	• Feel at risk for violent victimization
	  • Situation-based - Walking/ in clubs/ using public transport
	  • In relation to particular bodies
	• Increased exposure and risk linked to black men with fewer resources (occurrent vulnerability)
	
	Masking Vulnerability
	• Lack of emotional disclosure and masculinity
	  • Emotionally restrictive practices in masculinity
	  • Expression of vulnerability/emotion as sign of weakness
	  • Ignore feelings of invulnerability

Table 3.5

3.5. Data Analysis: Engaging affective and discursive attributes of data

Narratives are texts that can be analyzed using a variety of methods. This research sought to exhume the construction of perceptions and the affect present in the men's talk concerning violence and crime. Research concerned with constructions, text and talk is concerned with discourse. Discourse is understood differently in various fields, here it is understood as knowledge, which is produced and circulates in talk, it is a system of ideas, beliefs, assumptions and actions that constitute social practices (Gee, in Tenorio, 2011).

Discourse and affect are fields of study argued by Non-Representational affect theory (NRT), to be irreconcilable. NR theorists contest that affect is something pre-conscious and so separated from discourse which is conscious. Affect is understood as an intensity of feeling, an embodied experience which is instinctive and in situ. Massumi (2002) describes discourse as related to 'quality' which differs fundamentally from the 'intensity' which is affect. Quality is form and content which he describes as a "depth reaction" which may involve autonomic bodily processes; however, it involves expectation which diverges it from the realm of intensity which manifests at the surface of the skin (Massumi, 2002, p. 25). Both are embodied

experiences but “quality” names, tames and changes affect from a preconscious intensity to something intelligible which can be discussed and shared. According to Massumi (2002) and Thrift (2004) discourse is not a method through which affect can be known or represented. It is beyond representation. If this were true, it raises a major question regarding the methodology of this research which relied on discourse as a route through which affect emerged.

If affect cannot be represented, one is left to wonder how affective research is conducted. Wetherell (2013) highlights two major methodological challenges that arise when classifying affect as an intensity beyond representation. Firstly, any type of reflection or narrative that participants share must be occluded from their affective experience. Instead, it would rely on rich descriptions that emphasize how events and situations are entangled in multiple complex relations which interact to produce “the sites, scenes and episodes of social life.” (Wetherell, 2013, p.358). However, there remains the challenge of how something which is beyond representation can be described. This creates affect as an elusive field of study; the very object of study is “unspeakable” (Wetherell, 2013, p.356).

When analyzing NRT research, Wetherell (2013, p.359) found that most of the affect researchers were focused on “embodiment, entanglement, the middle ranges of agency, patterns that organize but cannot necessarily be articulated, and the importance of taking action complexes as the main units of analysis.”. She further indicates that their focus being on these objects of analyses, resonates with research on social practice. For example, Foucault’s work is concerned with invisible patterns of organisation, human embodiment as subjects and complex relations of power which constitutes social action (Smart, 2002). These are Foucault’s objects of analysis in his approach to discourse.

Knowledge on discourse is gained through investigating these objects of analysis, which are similarly focus points when affect researchers gain knowledge on affect. A key question that

arises from this is, does the knowledge gained and how it is acquired irreconcilably differ between affective and discursive research? Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a method and theory strongly informed by Foucault's oeuvre. Theoretically it seeks to bridge the connection between social practice – which is important to affect theorists – and discourse. Methodologically, it is preferred to reduce the textual in its analysis (Meyer, as cited in Dremel & Matic, 2014). What this means is it values situating social practice within social context. Wetherell (2013) considered discursive research by Goodwin (2006), which analyzed the embodied practices in situ, of young girls on the playground over a 3-year period. Goodwin, managed to develop a rich understanding of affective-discursive processes through combining a methodological focus on material bodies and their practices which are inclusive of their articulations (Wetherell, 2013).

Goodwin's research demonstrates the interwovenness of affect and discourse pre and within situations. Social practice, which includes affective experiences are interwoven with social contexts and histories; history - hence discourse - is always present in lived experiences. Analyzing live embodied experiences would have been valuable to this research, to shift discourse methodology to have more balance between talk and action, however what this lack presents is a limitation in the method, not a complete failure of it. Affect is as entangled in talk as it is in bodies. Goodwin (2006) described her research as an account of "embodied language" because their talk was embodied as much as their gestures and movements were.

During the process of coding, emerging affect was read in tandem to discursive constructs of violence and crime. These constructs were intertwined with expressed embodied experience and interaction with/in space. So, during the coding process a first layer of coding was used with a full description to demonstrate the entangled constructs and affective experiences. For example, one participant said "if I go to ... an area with squatter camps for example. I know that, violence, no there're issues... the area's dirty, it smells bad, it's not a comfortable

environment to be in"; and this was coded as 'conditions of space (dirty/smells) emerge discomfort/association with violence'. From here the entanglement between his affective experience and construction of space is evident. His discomfort and association with violence, influenced by the conditions, are not separate instances but occurring simultaneously. To remove the affect from their constructions, would have left their constructions incomplete.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This research obtained ethical clearance before reaching out to any participants or collecting any data. I am aware participants may have experienced violence or the threat of it, and this is a sensitive topic. For this reason, a requirement was that the participants should not have encountered a violent altercation within the past 5 years. However, if participants do find themselves negatively affected by the sensitive topic, I referred them to receive free counselling services through LifeLine or Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand. Furthermore, as the interviewer has experience in counselling youth who have experienced trauma, I engaged with them with an awareness of the sensitivity of the topic and also informed them beforehand that withdrawal or refusal to answer any question is completely acceptable and without consequences.

The researcher ensured that participants were aware of what the research entails, so they could give informed consent. Participants were also informed of the outcome of their participation and were asked to consent to the transcript form of their interview being possibly accessed by other researchers within a 5-year period. Although their anonymity could not be guaranteed because their names are known by me, what they disclosed will be kept confidential as I will not disclose anything they share with me with anyone else. Furthermore, during the transcription phase, their names were replaced by pseudonyms. Any names shared during the interview were changed during the transcription phase.

3.7 Trustworthiness

The limitations mentioned in this section, will now be addressed, along with how they were approached. There is a limitation whereby movement and action in space was not analyzed as it occurs in situ. This is a limitation because research (such as Goodwin's (2006)) that works with embodiment in movement along with embodiment in language, can provide richer and fuller analyses of social practice, with all the multiple intersecting aspects that influence events to unfold as they do (Wetherell, 2006). This research tried to elicit a sense of movement through querying the men on what they do with their bodies and how they interact with other bodies in space. This cannot and does not completely abate the limitation, but mildly addresses it through acknowledging the body, its feelings, and movements.

Another limitation relates to the use of interviews as a tool for data collection. As much as there are benefits to using interviews, there are also several limitations which need to be considered. As mentioned above, interviews are spaces where meaning is co-constructed (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). This means that the stories and experiences the men shared may have not pre-existed the interview exactly as they were said. In the accounting of their experiences, meanings and evaluations of them may have easily changed (Davies & Davies, 2007). This is not an issue questioning the credibility of the men but rather the dynamics of the interview and how it affects what is shared (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). This here is a limitation which cannot be fully mitigated, it is however important to be reflexive of the type of dynamics that existed between the interviewer and interviewee. Also, being aware of the influence of interview dynamics, it was important as an interviewer to speak less and listen more to exert less influence on the way participants decided to tell their stories. Interviews run a high risk of interviewer bias going unacknowledged (Alsaawi, 2014). Furthermore, the dialogue of the interviewer and interviewee being excluded from analysis, risks taking talk out of context (Potter & Hepburn, 2008). It is for this reason that contextualizing the data extracts selected,

was highly important. There is researcher bias, because even with contextualized data extracts, I selected what was “fitting” to be the main focus from their talk. It is for this reason that the data management section is included, in order for there to be transparency regarding the selection of extracts and how they were deemed relevant to answering the research questions.

Chapter 4

Affective Spatial Geographies of Violence and Crime

Introduction

This chapter focuses on affective spatial geographies of violence and crime. Affect emerged through questioning participants on how it felt to be in situations and places. This helped to identify affective experiences since the body is prioritized as a site through which we perceive and make sense of situations and experiences (Anderson & Harrison, 2010). The space in focus here was the city of Johannesburg; and there is anxiety attached to it (Msimang, 2020), which most of the participants expressed. They were also given a chance, however, to express other locations to which anxiety or concerns of safety are attached besides the city of Johannesburg. When discussing space, this paper is concerned with public space and understanding how various interrelated factors influence its constitution and the experience of it. When conceptualizing public space, one needs to consider the physical (/urban) structures and the culture that constitutes it (Hanzl, 2013). The way physical structures are organised and distributed interacts with the human activity that occurs to create public space. This means that public space is understood to be the physical structures (eg. buildings, roads) and the activities that occur in an area.

When investigating how students in a South African university experience space and safety Shefer and colleagues (2017) found race, class, gender and sexuality to be among the social identities that intersect towards influencing how safety is experienced in space. These identity markers are what shape dynamics of power inequalities which work to influence how safe people will feel within public space. Social identities intersect in ways that influence people to be and also experience themselves as more or less unsafe. For instance, a black man navigating

the city of Johannesburg may experience more or less safety based on his sexuality or class status because of how those identity markers influence relations with others and access to resources. Space can therefore be conceptualised as safe or unsafe based on one's relations within space - the types of people present, the movement of interactions – and how the space is accessed – for instance, whether you are in the buildings, walking, driving, or using public transport.

Affective spatial geography considers the affect that is attached to particular geographical locations. This section will demonstrate how conditions of space and situational factors work to emerge an affective atmosphere of anxiety. Furthermore, the way conditions of space attach to certain bodies to surface anxiety and threat in space will be discussed. The role of memory in affective experiences of space is also a theme interrogated in this section.

Affect is identified as a process which is always changing as humans experience life with others within material space (O'Grady, 2018). Thien (2005, p.451) describes affect as the "motion of emotion", which can be related to what O'Grady (2018) states, whereby affect focalises the body as being expressive of what a current situation is that it is within. Furthermore, what this means is affect is always relational, and if it is relational this means it is not within but rather between people and things (Anderson & Harrison, 2010). Affect theory is a view on feelings that challenges the common conception that they are private experiences (McCormick-Huhn & MacArthur, 2016). Affect theorists aim to show the ways in which affect is social, psychic and material (Ahmed, 2004). People affect and are affected within space.

Affective Atmosphere of Anxiety

One of the major themes that emerged during the interviews was that of Affective Spatial Geographies of Violence and Crime. To better understand this theme both geographies of violence and crime and affect and emotion in geography will be explicated. Geographies of

violence is still an emergent research topic, and investigations within this field seek to understand "how violence shapes space" and vice versa (Springer & Le Billon, 2016, p.1). These investigations are attempts by researchers to focalise how violence is constituted through space.

Affective geographies were identified through the participants in this research project, expressing having affective reactions/responses attached to certain spaces:

> *"So, we had to go to a very dodgy place in Alberton called Funny Farm. It's like shacks in the middle of town. […] And then I walked in. To this dodgy ass place. Very dodgy, no power, no electricity. Just shacks. […] I was very uneasy in that case I guess. Walking through that place"* – Lesego

> *"Yes, it's usually the environment that you're in. In this case I was talking more about, so the type of people that are thereeee you know. Usually adds to it. The setting, there's usually a situation where you sort of start to feel uncomfortable"* – Thabo

As can be seen, it is the conditions of the material space, as well as the people that occupy certain places that inform their affective relations with space. Space is never just space; it is composite of more than objects or buildings. Even an "empty" lot is loaded with content given that people and their relations constitute that space.

Differing levels of anxiety were expressed by the participants. Anxiety is an affect that the participants experienced in certain places, either based on the conditions of the space or situational factors:

"sometimes I feel anxious when I'm walking in a crowd where I feel like I'm not safe in this, but I try to, to be aware you know" – Kgaogelo

"in Braamfontein, I give it like 30%. mainly because it's uhh, okay during the day I'd say 30% [anxiety] and then at night I'd say 70. Ya. the reason why I give it 30 during the day is because there's a lot of people around. Even if something happens it's not gonna be, violent violent […] But at night it's I feel like it's anything goes. […] And then, based on the environment, how it looks and all that and my familiarity with it, then it keeps scaling up." – Lungelo

As can be seen in the excerpts above situational factors – such as whether it is crowded or not, daytime or night-time – physical conditions and familiarity with spaces are what influence the affect experienced in the place. This demonstrates that there are several factors, outside of these participants, that affect them to experience the space anxiously. Anxiety attaches to locations through these factors clinging to people's association with the space. This can be referred to as an 'affective atmosphere'. An affective atmosphere is what emerges when "multiple practices […] collaborate and gather together to control a time and place" (Shaw, 2014, p.87). These practices are performed by particular bodies and become entrenched within a set geographical location. For example, for Lungelo, Braamfontein at night is less crowded and so less safe. One of the practices associated with the night-time bodies, involve violent crime. So, in this way a boundary is entrenched concerning the types of bodies and the practices that emerge in Braamfontein at particular times. The people that are there during the night-time, he would prefer to keep a good distance from because there is an affective atmosphere of anxiety.

Affective atmospheres are theorised to belong to non-representational theories (NRT) of affect, which explain affect as situated interactions that are a bodily experience (Buser, 2014). Affect is instinctual and remains at the level of the body and bodily sensations. In non-representational theory affect is divorced from discourse and thus from representation. This means in saying an "affective atmosphere of anxiety", by calling the atmosphere anxious, I am no longer describing affect which is a non-represented process. This makes affect an elusive subject because in the process of naming it, it shifts from affect to emotion (Wetherell, 2013).

NRT works well to describe the "intensity of feelings" that are attached to social locations. I argue that anxiety is an intensity of feeling; it is a feeling of arousal, a rapidly beating heart or sweaty palms. It is a corporeal sensation, and instinctive bodily arousal which emerges in situ. A common argument that NR theorists have against representation is that "experience is too often reduced to language or discourse" (Thorpe & Rinehart, 2010, p.1269). There is emerging NRT research which used, yet never "overly-relied" on talk to understand and build a fuller conception of affective atmosphere in situ (Michels, 2015). Representing affect does not imply that lived experiences are reducible to the language that we use to describe them. Rather that discourse and lived experience exist in a complex relation to one another (Anderson & Harrison, 2006). Language is not a disembodied system of symbols, it is embodied because it requires the feeling body to be understood (Hustvedt, 2016).

Attachments to space and bodies

Bodies are born into a world that is already filled with meaning (Fanon, 1967). Bodies and their sensations are born into meanings and so are not separated from discourse. That "initial feeling" that some NR theorists understand as pre-conscious (Massumi, 2002), will have varying

intensities depending on the bodies being interacted with. For example, Lungelo has a more pronounced intensity of feeling when around male bodies:

> *"Come to think of it, there will be certain ... people I feel more threatened around. uhm. ... like I barely feel threatened around women uhm the issue is when I'm around men and then, even with men, there's some levels to it."*

Thabo, also expressed a similar sentiment, whereby young / male / coloured or black bodies make him feel particularly uncomfortable (/unsafe) in what he describes as "rough locations". Rough locations can be understood as poor areas which are associated with violence.

> *"If I see, for example, a coloured person or a black person. Relatively young, coloured or black person I'd also just factor that in and obviously in more cases if I see another man uhm, in certain situations, that also adds to it. I wouldn't necessarily feel as uncomfortable seeing a woman in a rough location."*

A factor that affects the level of discomfort and threat which the participants are expressing feeling, is social discourse, and it is in this way that initial feeling is imbued with discourse. There are certain instances in which affect being explained as a pre-conscious intensity of feeling - even when what is emerging is instinctual – is not suitable. For instance, some of the participants discussed "gut feelings" and listening to them as an important practice when navigating public spaces:

> *"...you need to pay attention to your surroundings, you know. And most importantly I think you need to listen to your gut."* – Lesego

"…in some areas there are some areas of the city where you know, instantly just entering the space you already get a sense that this isn't exactly a very safe place to be." – Thabo

"…if [there is] something I feel like I don't want to do, I rather don't do it, you know."- Kgaogelo

These gut feelings and senses that the men are describing are instinctual and according to NRT, preconscious intensities of feeling which emerge between theirs and the other human and non-human bodies within a space (Massumi, 2002). However, when interrogated with more depth, there is a consciousness associated with their "senses" of the environments that they occupy. The men are reading bodies and are aware of the bodies affecting their experience of the space:

"Yes, it's usually the environment that you're in. In this case I was talking more about, so the type of people that are thereeee you know. Usually adds to it. The setting, there's usually a situation where you sort of start to feel uncomfortable and get a sense that, you know this isn't a safe place to be." – Thabo

"Even with my friends […], when I'm with them, when a group come[s], I tell them that gents we have to be aware. These guys, they look so suspicious you know" – Kgaogelo

We can see here that Kgaogelo and Thabo's affective experience of space is influenced by the "type of people" that they are sharing the space with. Even though embodied experience in situations is key to affective theories, it remains that affect is transpersonal. This means it arises

within and between bodies, as a dynamic and fluid process and it is the 'energetic outcome' of these processes within certain places (Buser, 2014, p. 232). A body which is socially constructed as dangerous and suspicious, being seen during an affective atmosphere of anxiety, is likely to heighten the intensity of feeling in the situation. We saw this above when Thabo expressed that he would feel a greater degree of discomfort "in a rough location" if he came across a young, coloured/black man. He would feel less discomfort if passing a woman in the same location. This is because affective experiences are integrally linked to discourse which reads (Ahmed, 2014) and codes environments and bodies in particular ways. In South Africa, Black (Langa, 2020) and coloured (Peters, 2021) men are socially constructed as criminal, violent and threatening, so their bodies in situations are typically initially felt/sensed through that lens.

NRT works well when describing the intensities of feelings attached to social locations. However, as the focus deepens to focalise the types of bodies that occupy places, representational conceptions are better suited towards understanding the ways that different bodies influence the emergence of affect, and what its emergence does in social space. Participants read both their own bodies and the bodies of others to navigate particular spaces the way they do. This relation between and amongst bodies is the "motion of emotion", and it does things in the social sphere. Between bodies, signs circulate setting boundaries between individuals and collectives (Ahmed, 2004). This means that affect aligns us with some while distancing us from others. Individuals come to align with some, and not others based on the signs attached to their bodies.

For example, Thabo, one of the participants of this study said:

"a lot of the time when - if I go to like a rough area, uhm yes the environment will be unclean and stuff but on top of that, it'll be the people in that environment that make you realise that it's not the safest environment."

His words reveal that safety is perceived as more likely when there is a distance between his and the particular kinds of bodies that inhabit the "rough areas" he describes. The spatial conditions being unclean act as a sign which arises, as he later articulates, anxiety in him. The unclean space signifies to him that the people that occupy this space are a threat to his safety. A similar comment was mentioned earlier, a comment made by Lesego:

"So, we had to go to a very dodgy place in Alberton called Funny Farm. It's like shacks in the middle of town. […] And then I walked in. To this dodgy ass place. Very dodgy, no power, no electricity. Just shacks. […] I was very uneasy in that case I guess. Walking through that place" – Lesego

This area having "no power, no electricity" and simply just being full of shacks, works as a sign that signals to him that his safety is significantly compromised; *"well..ya no. There's a lot of violence in those places. Informal settlements especially. A lot of violence. yeah. you know so yeah no. yho I don't wanna be buried under a shack.".* These signs of poverty in the environment come to be associated with the people that live there, to the extent that when seeing a person who inhabits the space uneasiness surfaces, setting boundaries between him and the people in the space. There is an emergence of anxiety because he reads the environment as signalling people with a high potential for violence. This surfacing of uneasiness and anxiety, along with the setting of boundaries can be seen in both Lesego's and Thabo's accounts:

"…and it [feelings of uneasiness] makes you very hard to interact with because, even though people are being friendly, you're 100%- you're not a 100% sure about where you are at, and whose really...on your side, you know what I mean. So, you're very, ya you're very careful. You know, which limits the way you socialise I think." – Lesego

"some areas are more concerning than others if I'm in ...how do I describe it... if I'm in a... nicer area, if I'm in a place like ...uhm the Waterfront or if I'm in Sandton for example, I'm obviously gonna be much less concerned about something happening to me. But if someone does approach me, I am still going to be concerned. […] it depends also on the type of person that's approaching you. Because again I use the example of somewhere like Sandton. If someone approached me in Sandton, if it's just someone who's trying to be intimidating in sort of a funny way then, I wouldn't necessarily feel as anxious as I would if someone did the same thing in … the City Centre in Joburg for example". – Thabo

Something to note in the different ways Thabo discusses these places, in the beginning when he is imagining being approached by someone in Sandton, he is ranging his imagined experience in terms of "being concerned". Only when he shifts to imagine a similar situation occurring in the City Centre, then does the description of "anxious" arise. There is now not a possibility of someone "being intimidating in a funny way". It is serious, because the City Centre space works as a sign that any body that approaches you with even a hint of intimidation, is an actual threat that arouses anxiety.

For this next section, we are going to focus on the participants' experience of Johannesburg in particular. This section will detail some of the ways they describe their experience of themselves and others when in the city. Words such as "uncomfortable", "uneasy", and "anxious" were used to describe experiences in the city. What stands out in this section is the different ways participants related to the same space. For example, Julius says; *"busy places where there's clubs everywhere in streets you know, so even during the day it's always packed. Movement is too much, you can tell that something might happen anytime".*

Yet Lungelo says:

> "*there are areas where ... like suburbs like proper suburbs where I feel a bit anxious because thing is ... suburbs are very quiet. They are very quiet and if something is happening, the chances of someone going outside and checking what's happening are very very slim."*

From this we can see that the relation participants have to space is very different. The reason for this difference can be located in an important consideration which forms part of our affective experiences - memory.

Psychoanalytic thought has been deployed in literature, to understand the role of memory when discussing affective experiences. When using psychoanalysis, affect is explained as a manifestation of associated ideas a person may have of others or objects. These associated ideas (emotionality) are said to have different levels of meaning (feelings) in different people and so these associated ideas are produced and circulate across the social and psychic field (Ahmed, 2004). The relationality that is affect, "works through the circulation of signs" (Ahmed, 2004, p.121); and particular signs have come to attach to particular bodies through the influence of

historical modes of relationality between people, objects, and signs. An example of this is seen in Lungelo detailing how there are particular signs he feels conditioned to be threatened by:

> *"So uhm its sort of the same situation with uhm the attire and faces. There's *nervous laughter* it's it's highly subjective it's it's subjective it's not based on on fact, it's just me feeding off of my past experiences and then being like okay, that looks like a face that could you know... do 1 2 3 to me."*

Lungelo mentions a dress code and faces as signs which surface anxiety in him. He attributes these signs arousing anxiety in him, as solely related to his past experiences. Although this does play a role, there is more to it than this and what he is saying here will be explored in more depth after considering Julius's affective relation with crowded spaces. Julius's affective relation with space can be explained more neatly than Lungelo's, as influenced by his past experiences:

> *"I was once robbed of the phone uh a few years back. so yeah, I was in public with a lot of people and then, this other guy came to me, took out his gun. He took out his gun and then take my phone. They just watched me."*

In Julius's affective relation, there is a convergence of anxiety and apathy. He experienced the heightened sensation of anxiety, simultaneously with the indifference of people "just watching" and doing nothing. He says; *"World that we live in everybody minds their own business. So even when you get attacked, they just look at you, so it doesn't guarantee safety."* This suggests an affective atmosphere of apathy was part of his experience of being robbed. Robbery was treated by the bodies present as an entrenched practice, which is spectated to, within the social

space. This normalised what was happening to him, and the memory has set an atmosphere of crowded and busy places, as unsafe.

Lungelo's affective relation with signs can be described as yes, influenced by his past experiences. However, what is also present is a broader social construct which links danger to particular class groups. The people that occupy the "unclean" and under-resourced spaces, "with no electricity or power", are poor. When navigating public space outside of these areas, there are still other signs that attach to the bodies of poor people. These signs are apparent in Lungelo's quote, whereby he feels threatened by particular "*attire and faces".* His anxious affective relation which these signs are not particularly bound to specific spaces. These signs more so work to construct the face of violence and crime unbound to any particular location.

Conclusion

The men expressing how factors such as time, place and cleanliness affect them to feel more at risk of violence, demonstrates how material and situational factors converge to create affective atmospheres of anxiety. When particular factors and practices pertain to specific geographical locations more often than not, an atmosphere of anxiety entrenches itself as part of the space. The representational conception of affect was utile towards understanding of materialities of space that influence people to associate a certain kind of person as belonging to that space. In constructing particular spaces as violent, the people who inhabit those spaces are the ones affectively experienced as threatening and dangerous. Furthermore, as seen in Julius's case and Kgaogelo's anxiety in crowds, the bodies which are not threatening offer little comfort, because of their positioning as apathetic bystanders who normalise violent and criminal practices through solely spectating to it.

Chapter 5

Surfacing Race: constructing the face of violence and crime

"uhm ya when I went to Joburg this one time, these two these other guys, they looked homeless but not the sad and and hungry kind of homeless but the the dangerous homeless people. Ya they kept following me. And they said that they wanted to show me where I was going, in spite me telling them that I know where I'm going. So, they kept on walking with me ya and then we cut this corner, and they just stopped and and uh like cornered me, put me in a little box and they told me that I should give them, I should pay them for, because they took to me to where I was going. I said and I told them that I didn't want didn't ask for their help. They just told me that no if you don't pay us we will hurt you" – Kabelo

Who were the perpetrators imagined in the reading of this narrative? When being told of this occurrence for the first time, I imagined the type of clothes and a particular demeanour based on the details Kabelo shared. However, they were black men without it ever being said. Shameful to admit but these initial assumptions are unsurprising because of the extent to which violence and crime are racialized in South African society. The theme we have now segued to is identified as **"Surfacing Race: constructing the face of violence and crime"**. It intersects with the theme just discussed, **affective spatial geographies of violence and crime**, in that, race, dress and age, circulate as signs which people are affected by to perceive themselves as at risk of violent crime. Violent crime in this paper is inclusive of interpersonal physical assault - such as what occurs in bar fights or road rage. Furthermore, violence that occurs during a mugging situation is conceptualised as part of violent crime.

Violence and crime are racialized in that there are race-driven attachments to crime and violence that circulate socially. Racializing discourse has created what Ahmed (2004) calls a "metonymic slide". A metonym refers to a process through which certain signs attach to some bodies and not to others, it is in this way that black men are made synonymous with being perpetrators (Dick & Wirtz, 2011).

Amongst the participants there are both implicit and few explicit references to race. Implicit references to race were made through the participants associating violence and crime with spaces that are inhabited by mostly black people. It remains that race is integrally tied to the spatial and class divisions due to the historical racist distribution of resources, which left a large portion of the black population in poverty and designated to particularly poor areas (Cohen, 2011):

"Townships no. Not so bad. uh towns, not so bad but informal settlements, ya no, a little, a little anxious. Ya. […] there's a lot of violence in those places. Informal settlements especially. A lot of violence. Yeah. You know so yeah no. Yho I don't wanna be buried under a shack." – Lesego

Dixon, Foster, Durrheim and Wilbraham (1994), analyzed discourse which was circulated as being focused on the environmental issues associated with the development of squatter camps (informal settlements). Upon analysing it, they found that the ecological repertoire deployed was actually used to justify racist rhetoric and racist divisions of space. Mentioning this study is not with the aim to signify that racist rhetoric was identified amongst my participants. Rather, it is to highlight that any discourse involving space does not occlude the bodies that inhabit it. When Lesego highlights space-related anxieties, there are certain people that are necessarily

implied in his talk. Townships and towns are filled with people who do not all belong to one class category. There is more range in the economic positions of people who inhabit these spaces (Phadi & Ceruti, 2011). The same cannot be said regarding people who live in informal settlements. People inhabiting informal settlements usually do not have adequate resources to live in their remote rural homes and travel long distances daily for work. They also are unable to afford accommodation within the towns and cities where they work. People who live in informal settlements are destitute and displaced by socio-economic circumstances (Cohen, 2011). By this logic the face of violence and crime that Lesego is constructing here is black and poor. The intersection of race and class heavily influences how violent people in particular areas are assessed as being. In his articulation Lesego not only associates crime with informal settlements, he associates homicidal violence. This is demonstrated in him mentioning not wanting to be *"buried under a shack".*

Outside of particular locations, there are other signs that surface anxiety regarding risk of violent crime amongst the participants. A return to the opening quote by Kabelo is appropriate for this section. In Kabelo's narrative of being mugged, he differentiates between the "sad and hungry poor" and the "dangerous poor":

"uhm ya when I went to Joburg this one time, these two these other guys, they looked homeless but not the sad and and hungry kind of homeless but the the dangerous homeless people."

Sad, hungry and dangerous are affective terms which Kabelo has constructed as in opposition to one another within the context of violent threat. In his construction of danger, the sad and hungry are occluded from being a threat. The threat which he encounters with the passing of

the “dangerous homeless”, he later explains as associated with not only the way their bodies were, but also the movement of their bodies:

“mm. ...I don’t know maybe because they were not like sitting down and begging like the other homeless people there. They were up, yeah they were up on their feet and they seemed a bit more energetic than the others. And they looked like they were they were addicted to drugs”.

The homeless people not begging and sitting, placed them outside of the boundaries of the sad and hungry homeless, into the dangerous kind. The movement of their bodies produced what Whitney (2015) refers to as an “affective exchange” which communicated threat and danger before they even began to follow him. More of the participants expressed similar reading of bodies, which signalled to them the possibility of threat when navigating social space. Thabo expressed that body language, posture and what I am referring to as “excess activity” of the homeless, signal danger:

“*So you might see uhm... a homeless person walking around or in many cases you actually see many of them in the same area. […] It usually comes down to the way that they are dressed [what makes someone look dangerous]. uhm. So if I were to seeee uhm you know people dressed in unclean clothes uhmm and then in addition to that, the way that they're behaving, if someone’s body language shows that, you know this isn’t someone who's in a good state.”*

In Thabo’s articulation of what makes someone appear dangerous, we see once again there is an affective exchange of danger associated with the movement of homeless people. This affective exchange may be linked to Merleau-Pontian’s body schema, explained using Fanon’s (as cited in Whitney, 2015, p.56) “historical-racial schema”. Firstly, body schema can be

explained as a variety of sensorimotor possibilities. These ranging bodily possibilities constitute a person's experience of space along with their perception of sensation. Whitney (2015, p.56) explains it clearly as "an organisation at work that makes sense of the environment in bodily terms, as a variety of sensorimotor possibilities. The body schema is the system of equivalences between these movements." Fanon's historical-racial schema emphasizes that the body schema can foreclose certain possibilities in light of the environment shared with others. In other words, the social environment might limit the possibilities available to some bodies through "establishing pattens in the distribution of certain gestures, postures, and feelings" (Whitney, 2015, p.56). It is the circulation of affective exchanges which establish patterns available to some and not to others. So, Kabelo and Thabo's affective exchange of danger can be linked to the bodily movement of homeless people working outside of the established patterns available to them within space.

Most of the participants mentioned body language as key, when considering their affective experiences of threat to violence:

"no I pay attention to body language." – Lesego

"when i was with my friends and we saw that ok the guys ... usually, you know, when they're on a mission, you can... kinda tell by where they are and how they... actually position themselves right." – Tebetse

Body language was read by the participants, who constructed violent criminals as "always looking for a target" or for who is "not aware":

"And I think I've said it before, keeping your guard up because the reality in cape town is that uhm, and I don't know so much about Johannesburg but in cape town, there's a tendency for people to target you if they see that, you're not aware of your environment."- Thabo

This construction of a violent criminal as someone always on the prowl can also be seen in how they are affected to be constantly vigilant and reading bodies when navigating social space:

"So being alert all the time I think it's, yeah I think it's something that you develop as you grow up and you are not aware that you developed that so. […] I kind of have to be more active in terms of my own safety." – Tebetse

"Be aware of everything you know. Like when I'm in a place when I go out, just be aware, you know. I have this thing I know it's annoying and sometimes I feel anxious when I'm walking in a crowd where I feel like I'm not safe in this, but I try to, to be aware you know. Just be aware and know what places do I go" – Kgaogelo

"You just need to always be attentive and just aware of what's happening." – Lesego

From what Kgaogelo and Tebetse are saying, their vigilance is not something they are actively choosing. It is an immediate affective engagement with space, which is anxious. Kgaogelo goes further to highlight that his anxiety and awareness is raised dependent on the places he goes and their circumstances. Using Freud's (Ahmed, 2004) concept of the "unconscious emotion", which contests that affective impulse can be misconstrued as attached to an idea which it is not. Affect is related but is not emotion. Affect is produced due to the circulation of emotion,

and emotion can be unconsciously influenced by the "absent presence" of history. Using this logic, I will demonstrate that the anxiety in space expressed here, is influenced by the historical-socially constructed face of a violent criminal.

Even though they are vigilant and constantly reading their environment for signs of danger, some participants expressed reading particular bodies more. There was a degree of discomfort and hesitation when it came to explicit references to race, and this may have been influenced by the men of this research being black themselves. An example of this discomfort is seen in Lungelo giving reason for why his relations with particular black men affected him anxiously. Being black men, it is possible that some of the participants may have to grapple with being misrecognised as potential perpetrators. Their misrecognition may be tied to the stereotypical associations attached doubly to the signs of their skin colour and gender (Aaouinti-Haris, 2016; Ahmed, 2004):

*"Uhm I... okay (stutters) come to think of it, there will be certain ... people I feel more threatened around. uhm. ... like I barely feel threatened around women uhm the issue is when I'm around men and then, even with men, there's some levels to it. uhmm .... like ... okay I grew up in a in a black neighbourhood yabo. From a township in Eastern Cape I saw... I spent like 12 years around black people, so I see black people doing terrible stuff to other black people and all that. So when I see black people I am more scared than when I see white people. But even in black people there's another level. There are certain uh dress codes that these... *struggles* that the guys that that do terrible things in my neighbourhood wear".*

Blackness is strongly attached to violence, and Lungelo shows that he is aware of this racializing discourse that typically circulates the trope of black men, being perpetrators of

violent crime (Dick & Wirtz, 2011). He displays his awareness in his attributing his sense of threat as not solely tied to being around black men. He never actually says "black men", he avoids a direct articulation through first identifying men as threatening as opposed to women. Then following this, he explains that growing up in a black neighbourhood has influenced him to fear "black people". It is still clear that he is referring to black men, however through being less direct about it he gives himself some distance from the stereotypical and racist identification of perpetrators primarily based on race - i.e., black violence (Tazanu, 2019). He ties his anxiety to certain "dress codes" which he associates with violence from witnessing "*guys that do terrible things"* in his neighbourhood. Unconscious emotion is operating here in that before he sees the clothes, he sees the skin and the male body. The initial impulse that later directs him to read for signs such as dress code, is attached to an economy of emotion that produces certain bodies as dangerous.

The "absent presence" (Ahmed, 2004) here is discourse which has attached race as a sign that "marks some groups of people as fundamentally and irredeemably dangerous, suspect, polluted, and Other" (Urciuoli as cited in Dick & Wirtz, 2011, p. 4). There is an economy of emotion which operates mostly unconsciously, this economy circulates anxiety at the first passing of the subject to whom fear/danger is attached. Thabo says:

"unfortunately the reality is also the race of a person and their age can also add to that as well. If I see, for example, a coloured person or a black person. Relatively young, coloured or black person, I'd also just factor that in and obviously in more cases if I see another man uhm, in certain situation, that also adds to it [perceiving them as potentially dangerous]."

Thabo is explicitly clear in expressing race as a key sign to which he responds and reads for a potential perpetrator. A male also being young made them more dangerous. This may be related to a younger body being perceived as stronger and so more threatening. Lungelo says:

*"I … think it's possible that I also factor in how a person looks facially. And uhh how a person is built. Cause if I feel like I can if I feel like I could take the person on, uh without any ..uh hassle then *stutters* I won't be that alarmed"*

Here we can see there were other nuanced evaluations that some of the participants made, either through dress (which intersects with class), age, facial features, and body language. They made sense of their initial affective impulse through later reading for other signs that might warrant their sense of threat.

Conclusion

The face of violence and crime is constructed by the participants as black, male and poor (possibly homeless). The violent criminal is always on the prowl, and this affects the participants to navigate space with constant vigilance; with increased anxiety in "unclean"/ "rough" – poor – spaces. They read bodies, some more than others, because their affective impulses are attached to socio-historical constructs of a dangerous body. They are aware of their potential vulnerability to threat in multiple public spaces.

Chapter 6

(In)Vulnerable Masculinities: Making sense of self in face of violence and crime

Introduction

As will be demonstrated in this chapter, men not only tried to make their experience of vulnerability invisible in situations of potential threat, but many of the men make their vulnerability invisible to people within their social networks. They do so by not openly expressing their experiences of vulnerability to violence victimization. Some of the men do this to protect themselves against being emotionally vulnerable. For this reason, vulnerability will be discussed both corporeally and emotionally.

Vulnerability to Violence

All of the men in this research reported feeling vulnerable to violence victimization. This is different from research in which men's vulnerability to violence largely goes unacknowledged, both by themselves and others around them (Hollander, 2001). In response to their feelings of vulnerability, the participants articulated that they devised strategies that help them navigate public space with relative safety. The men here having strategies to protect themselves contradicts research which asserts that men navigate space with feelings of invulnerability or without fear of being possibly violently victimized (Hollander, 2001; Sandberg & Tollefsen, 2010). However, it did become clear that most participants did use their body and the discourse associated with male invulnerability to appear invulnerable (embody invulnerability) in spaces where they felt vulnerable to crime or violence.

Vulnerability most generally is discussed as a susceptibility to harm and a high potential for being violated (Gilson, 2016). The body is intimately connected to vulnerability because the

very fact of having a body is what "expose[s] us to the gaze of others, but also to touch, and to violence, and bodies put us at risk of becoming the agency and instrument of all these as well." (Butler, 2004, p.26). By this understanding, it is because we have bodies that we are open and susceptible to be affected by and affect other bodies. The exposure which makes us vulnerable is not only physical, "the gaze of others" implies that we are exposed even through just being seen. This understanding of vulnerability is quite different from the dominant notion of the term, which associates vulnerability with an inherent weakness and deficiency in agency (Gilson, 2016). This concept is widely associated with femininity to the extent that women are socially construed to embody vulnerability (Hollander, 2001), along with the weakness, violability and notions of dependence that cling to it (Gilson, 2016). Hollander (2001) notes that men are in turn associated with "potential dangerousness", and this reproduces discourse of male invulnerability to violence victimization. Male invulnerability is linked to their bodies being as they are, "larger with greater strength". To embody vulnerability suggests that some people are born with significant susceptibility to harm and need especial protection. Women, children, and the elderly are usually grouped into this cohort (Hollander, 2001). Hollander (2001, p.91) found in her study that participants associated vulnerability with women as an inherent part of being in the group, and any vulnerability associated with men was situation-based, through it being linked to particular characteristics or behaviours such as being "out late a lot". Although it is important, in our society, to consider population groups who are at higher risk for harmful victimization and exploitation, the dominating perspectives on vulnerability detract from the reality that it is a shared human experience and not an inherent default. Furthermore, men who are typically constructed as invulnerable because of their larger, stronger bodies, in actuality are the group with the highest rate of homicidal victimization (Ratele, 2013; Hollander, 2001). All of the men participating in this research expressed that they feel vulnerable to violence victimization, and they spoke of their vulnerability to violence

in terms of the risks of harm being done to them. To the question asking, "Do you ever think about yourself as vulnerable to violence?", they responded saying:

> *"Ya when walking in streets ya, big time."* – Julius

> *"Yes sometimes […] uhm… most of the times when I leave ... a place that I know very well. For instance when I left when I left Pretoria and came here [Soweto]."*- Kabelo

> *"Almost all the time uhm... cause the thing is you never really know what someone is thinking. Yabo. I'm a person that uses taxis right now. So it it's uhm... like when you're inside a taxi there's a lot of strangers around you"* - Lungelo

Most of their understanding of their vulnerability was situation-based and as we see, the participants linked their vulnerability to certain spaces. Whether it is on the street, a new area or taxis. Their vulnerability was not directly expressed as related to living in a particular body but rather to inhabiting certain spaces. This will be discussed more later after reviewing two participants who directly linked their vulnerability with a factor related to their bodies.

> *"as a male living in South Africa obviously it's something that crosses my mind quite often. Yes I do think of myself being vulnerable to violence, because uhm especially uhm having lived in both uhh Johannesburg and cape town, I know that there are always uh risks of something happening to me. so uhm it is something that I have to be aware of that violence is like a big issue in the country"* – Thabo

> *"Every time everywhere you go it's all about .. always concerned about am I safe to go there? Am I safe to be in this place. So yah, it really it's something that it's there and*

we can't control it you know, and even me as a man, as a black man.. you know it's something that's our everyday."- Kgaogelo

In the first quote by Thabo, it was not further explicated how his being male relates to him feeling vulnerable to violence often. However, his vulnerability is linked to the situation of the South African space being a violent one. Kgaogelo went more in depth with how his vulnerability relates to his body as a black man in particular. Firstly, it is important to note he says "even [him] as a man", "even" suggests that it is something unexpected of a man; in spite of him being a man he is not able to control his safety in the spaces he inhabits. This construction of his maleness may be influenced by social conceptions that construct men as more in control of what happens to them, in virtue of the strength of their bodies. He has introduced the idea of control as an important part of determining his vulnerability. Having more control in situations, would mean one is less susceptible to harm and so, less vulnerable. Mackenzie, Rogers and Dodds (2014, p.3) argue that "a person is vulnerable to the extent to which she is not in a position to prevent occurrences". Kgaogelo then goes on to link his vulnerability to him being a black man in particular:

"For us it's like... with this violence and safety. It's either you are...immediately when they see you, it's either you are part of, the violence. You commit the violence, or also it will affect you because now you are walking you don't have means of your safety."

Kgaogelo articulates that being a black man, he is suspected as a perpetrator, and this makes him vulnerable to harassment – *"because its either you just even when they see you walking, they can come you, even cops, police, they come to you and just say hey they wanna search you, you know they actually harass you.".* Another salient link is made to the vulnerability that

comes with walking; Julius also linked it to his vulnerability. Cohen (2011) notes that walking in South Africa is largely a racialised practice dominated by black men, women and children who do not have access or the means to their own private transportation. Lungelo's experience of his vulnerability as linked to taxi usage, now intersects with the kind of vulnerability implicit in Julius's statement and explicit in Kgaogelo's. These constructs are touching on what Mackenzie, Rogers & Dodds (2014) refer to as occurrent vulnerability, which is linked to one's circumstances. Having decreased access to financial resources means that one's dispositional vulnerability (the shared human exposure) is aggravated by one's circumstances (Richerme, 2016).

Kabelo and Julius, later on in the interview, confirm that their response to this occurrent vulnerability, is to make use to private transportation through Uber for example:

> *"What I do to kind of be safe is I avoid using pub-uh taxis because you know taxi ranks are in congested spaces and that's where they usually are (interviewer: where who?) people like that [dangerous homeless men]. Ya so I usually, to remain safe, I would use an uber to get around and then ya. That's what I usually do."*- Kabelo

> *"…whenever I go out I use Ubers. I make sure I use transport. I don't walk. That's what I do."* – Julius

In Kabelo's quote, we see that he constructs his vulnerability as space-related, which is circumstantial as well as relational. Being in spaces where he is open and exposed to people whom he perceives as dangerous - or as Lungelo put it, being exposed to strangers whose thoughts he is unable to access - makes him vulnerable. Their exposure is one which arises in

circumstances when accessing private transport is not immediately available. In South Africa, access to these resources is divided along racial and class lines (Cohen, 2011). This means that their dispositional vulnerability is heightened by being black men; they are less likely to have access to resources because of the distribution of wealth in the South African context. It is in this sense that vulnerability becomes associated with black men's bodies.

It is interesting because black men, as Kgaogelo elaborated earlier, are vulnerable through being seen as potential perpetrators and also through being accessible/exposed potential victims. This construction was different from Hollander's (2001) white male participants who understood themselves as more vulnerable in reason of their whiteness and its association with belonging to a higher social class. Although Hollander's study was done in America, these constructions are relevant to the South African context where whiteness is associated with vulnerability to crime and "black violence" (Cohen, 2011). In their constructions of vulnerability, in Hollander's (2001) research, the men identified themselves as vulnerable mainly in opposition to black men who were constructed as potentially dangerous. In the South African context, black men's typical accessibility as potential victims due to class status, is often overshadowed by the 'potential danger' associated with their body. Interestingly Tebetse describes his vulnerability along these lines:

> *"So knowing that uhm I'm not the one that's for instance, mugging people. It means that I am a potential target, right. So it means that at any moment you can actually get mugged and through that either get shot or stabbed."*

Without speculating too much, it is still interesting to note that Tebetse mentioned his not being a perpetrator when discussing his vulnerability. This could be linked to Tebetse living in the

township of Soweto. Perhaps in him mentioning that he is not the one committing crimes, he is alluding to the reality that many young township men are associated with criminality and perpetrating violent crimes (Langa, 2020). In this way he is constructing his vulnerability as linked to him resisting the pressure to embody a violent version of township masculinity. Another key description that he gives here is "at any moment"; this speaks to the accessibility / increased exposure to violence, which is pertinent to living in a township community where practices of masculinised criminality heighten vulnerability to be potential violence victims. Vulnerability in the men's constructions is circumstantially influenced. South Africa is a violent context where having fewer resources makes an individual more accessible as a potential victim. Having fewer resources gives one less control of the spaces they have to inhabit to reach their destinations. This means, using Mackenzie and colleague's logic (2014, p.), there is less possibility to "prevent occurrences" and importantly, who these spaces are shared with. In this way, vulnerability is also constructed as relational.

The men in the research read the bodies of others as a strategy to protect themselves. When asked what they do as an attempt to ensure their safety, there were replies such as;

> *"I pay attention to body language. And .. ya just *little laugh* be attentive"* - Lesego

> *"I said body language is also very important, the way the person's approaching because again, someone could sort of be approaching you in a joking way or you could also pick up that this is someone who could actually hurt me or they seem like they're preparing themselves to actually do something"* - Thabo

In reading bodies, they are attempting to gauge their level of vulnerability in relation to other bodies in the spaces that they inhabit. It is for this reason that vulnerability is also constructed as relational. As Thabo explains, bodies are read almost instinctively because body movements and gestures are what allow him to "pick up on" whether someone is preparing to approach

him with a friendly atmosphere versus a threatening one. In the process of reading other bodies, to mitigate their vulnerability they also attempt to have control over how their bodies are read by others.

> *"so if I have feelings of anxiousness and vulnerability, I make sure so, what I'm doing with those feelings, I'm not showing them. so, if for example... i wanna like, you know when you're anxious you, you wanna shake your leg or something, so, I'll make sure that i'll counter all of those so, if I feel like I wanna shake my leg, I'll just..try not do that or do something else. "* - Lesego

> *"So I know if I'm ever in town, in Joburg specifically, uhm I need to just focus on where I'm going. Uhm not look like I'm lost or anything like that. "* - Thabo

> *"I would ya just pretend that I'm safe. I would continuously tell myself like in my head that no man you're fine. You're fine you know Yes safe, perfectly safe nothing will happen. Just walk like you belong."* - Kabelo

In trying to control their bodies, not look lost or walking like one belongs, the men are attempting to reduce their appearance as vulnerable subjects. Lesego says, *"if people think you're scared, you become.. a lot more vulnerable."* Appearing fearless may be more easily achievable with the male body which is socially constructed as invulnerable (Lazarus, Tonsing, Ratele & Van Niekerk, 2009). However, being vulnerable is not invariably socially constructed (Brown, Ecclestone & Emmel, 2017), so even these strategies of pose do not prevent their bodies from being read by others as vulnerable. Kabelo acknowledges that he is simply pretending to be safe as a strategy which helps him cope with the reality that he is not, while simultaneously not drawing much attention to himself through "embodying belonging".

So in this sense, they remain at risk of being violently victimized, however, internally they are positioning themselves as having some degree of control over their vulnerability. Chambers (in

Brown, Ecclestone & Emmel, 2017) understands this as the "internal side" of vulnerability which stresses one's capacity to cope and whether they are internally defenceless or not. Internally, what is happening as they deploy these strategies for safety, they are simultaneously mentally preparing themselves for any possible adverse situation. This preparation does not remove them from their vulnerability, if anything their behaviour adds to the many ways people who are vulnerable can behave.

Masking Vulnerability

This final aspect of the theme is concerned with analysing the vulnerability the men expressed. During the interviews and when analysing the transcripts, it was very visible that many of the men have limited or have placed limitations on having emotional social connections. Some not only emotionally constrain with others but also with themselves as far as they express. Vulnerability is a tricky topic to navigate because irrespective of gender, allowing oneself to be emotionally vulnerable is difficult and has risk associated with it. So, why are these limitations to emotional social connection linked to masculinity in the findings of this research? These limitations are related to masculinity for the same reason that invulnerability is an important point of discussion when considering masculinity in the context of crime and violence. Irrespective of the reality of men in South Africa being frequently violently victimized, there is a discourse that persists which renders male vulnerability to violence invisible (Bruce, 2019). The way some of the men in this research discussed their vulnerability, and their openness about it in their personal lives, revealed that there are several limitations the men place on their expressivity, and this influences the invisibility of their vulnerability.

Each male participant expressed patterns of interaction with others and with themselves which in differing ways demonstrated what McKenzie, Collings, Jenkins & River (2018) refer to as a

"configuration of gendered social practice". They identified four patterns of practices that male participants typically used in their social networks: "reaching out", being "the independent guy", "difficulties in confiding" and "compartmentalizing relationships". These patterns of practice were also found amongst the male participants in this research study. The gender relations approach being deployed here, seeks to give a more nuanced analysis that leaves more room for agency, as opposed to assuming the inevitability of men always acting through their socialized male role (McKenzie et al., 2018). Gender relations are multidimensional, personal, and impersonal. This means there are distinguishable gender patterns that exist in varying parts of social life (e.g., in the workplace vs in emotional relationships) (Schofield et al., 2000), and patterns of gender arise from the intersection of institutional and cultural factors with agency and personal experiences of more intimate relationships (McKenzie et al., 2018). As we will see in the excerpts analysed, gender configurations are produced and reproduced (Connell, 2009) through the telling of the participant's relationship with their own vulnerability and how it is expressed socially:

> *"uhm well I did talk to someone, my family but it wasn't in detail right. It was just to inform them that I had got mugged. and where I got mugged right. And what they took. Not the uh gun and the knife part of it right."*- Tebetse

Five of the seven men in this research, articulated that they 'limit expressing their experience of emotionally charged situations and - as seen in the quote above - their direct experiences in which they were vulnerable to violent outcomes. This occurrence is understood as a 'challenge with emotional disclosure' and it is comparable to two of the male patterns of emotional interaction identified by McKenzie and her colleagues (2018). "The independent guy" and "difficulties in confiding" were identified as bases on which some men explain why they

restrict their emotional disclosure. Men who had tried to reach out and build supportive relationships yet met rejection or invalidation in some way, are subsumed under the category difficulties confiding. “The independent guy” category represents men who restrict emotional communication because they live their lives as self-sufficient men without the need for emotional support (McKenzie et al., 2018). The findings of McKenzie support this research, because it was found that the men here oscillated between these categories. For example, Tebetse expressed difficulty confiding because he feels like he will not be understood, and based on past experiences, believes his emotional disclosure will be used against him in the future:

> *“... I think it’s a matter of getting used to speaking to people about my anxiety right. and them not actually using it against me. 'cause I think I’ve been exposed to way too many people who use, the information I give them...uhm you know, at some sort of point they gonna use in some argument later on.”*

He seeps into “independent guy” discourse when sympathising with the challenges his friends experience:

> *“... so maybe I’m comparing our problems but, you know, when I look at them [his male friends] I’m like ya they going through a lot right now. Way more than I am but you know, maybe be there for them but, for me I think, I think I can handle it when I’m dealing with it on my own.”*

He acknowledges the difficulties his friends are experiencing and is open to being there for them. In this way he is not completely ruling out emotional talk through him playing a

supportive role in his interpersonal relationships. However, what he is occluding from his relationships is receiving support because he believes he can handle it on his own. It is in this sense that he has belonging to the "independent guy" discourse. He however diverges from McKenzie et al's (2018, p.1254) findings in that he does not express actively seeking to "maintain an image of masculine independence." Tebetse said:

> *"...I never got the hang of talking to people about my feelings right. So like to really like talk about uhm how I feel about things right, it... it really only started properly when I was when i was starting with uhm.. the therapist right."*

Irrespective of Tebetse's restrictive emotionality - the inability or difficulty some men have with communicating feelings (Ezeugwu & Ojedokun, 2020) - he still represents a resistant masculinity. From the quote above, it is clear that Tebetse is not actively practising restrictive emotionality, in the sense that he is not 'suturing' himself to an emotionally restrictive practice as part of his masculinity. The notion of suturing refers to when a subject invests in a subject-position into which they are 'hailed' (Hall, 2000). In this case, Tebetse is 'hailed' (called) into discourse which says there are particular ways to be a man. Suturing himself would mean Tebetse investing / buying into these practices as being linked to his male identity/ masculinity. This suturing is something he has not done, and this will be explained in more detail through locating how he constructs his masculinity, after comparing his discourse to two other participants who engage in similar restrictive behaviours while simultaneously reproducing stereotypical discourse on masculinity.

"I was very much relaxed." These are the words of Julius when discussing how he felt in the aftermath of a mugging altercation during which a gun was pointed at him. He detailed not

being physically triggered by the event as is evident in him even having the *"guts to ask for some of [his] things back from the guy who was pointing a gun at [him]*." These statements could be said to represent his later evaluations of the situation, which I will argue, locates him in stereotypical discourse of how men are said to navigate social space and experience themselves. This type of discourse within the African context constructs men as "strong in the face of challenges" (Kila, as cited in Ezeugwu & Ojedokun, 2020). In the South African context specifically, stereotypical discourse constructs young black men as fearless and tough enough to ignore pain (Ratele, 2010). Julius constructs himself as fearless and always in control of his feelings and actions, even in a high stress situation, through saying he was relaxed and exhibited courage in asking for some of his belongings. This construction allows him to have a little more control of the situation and demonstrates fearlessness. He later said, *"if I can tell you I wasn't scared. […] If you're just doing whatever they are telling you to do there's nothing to be scared of."* Through this second statement he more firmly constructs himself as not in control yet having a fearless response to the situation. This final evaluation of the situation is considerably different from how Julius first discussed his experience of the altercation. This is not to say that one account is more truthful than the other but rather it is more useful to analyse the type of subject the different evaluations construct and what the difference in constructions could produce. At first when Julius was asked about how he felt during the mugging he responded saying:

> *"You just blackout, in such situations. I wasn't in control of my body. I was just doing whatever that the guy was asking me to do. … … So, I don't know how I was feeling."*

This evaluation of the situation constructs Julius's experience within the framework of vulnerability. He was vulnerable to being violently victimized. Situations with a high potential

for violence victimization are highly emotionally charged situations. His life was endangered. He had a limited range of options to the extent that he blacked out and did whatever was demanded of him. This is not a shameful position to be in, however with the influence of stereotypical masculine discourse which says - in Julius's own words - *"you're a man, how can that scare you"*, it becomes challenging for some men to openly express their vulnerability to violence. Furthermore, vulnerability and 'emotional talk' are constructs that are consistently reproduced as part of femininity and womanhood (Clowes, 2013). Ezeugwu & Ojedokun (2020) discuss how African norms of masculinity have a role to play in the production of 'restrictive emotionality' amongst some men. This restrictive emotionality amongst men means they rarely share their experiences of vulnerability, which reproduces constructions of men as experiencing themselves as invulnerable. Discourse is reproduced which continuously disallows men from openly expressing their vulnerability because they perceive their vulnerability as being an outlier to the visible male experience. Men have reported feeling under pressure to "act like a man", and the suppression of feelings is one of the norms of masculinity (Elliot, 2003), being relatively invulnerable is an expectation that clings to being a man (Hollander, 2001):

> *"I kind of feel like men in essence are supposed to be protectors so…if your protector is scared how how are you gonna feel *laughs*."*

These are the words of Lesego, who in terms of expressing his feelings concerning vulnerability to violence, belongs very strictly to "the independent guy" pattern of practice. In his quotidian life, his vulnerability can be described as "invisible" because there is a "deficiency of communication to another person about how [he] is thinking, feeling, and reacting to [his vulnerability]" (Schwab, Addis, Reigeluth & Berger, 2016, p.290):

"..I don't feel there's a need for me to...tell them like. I don't feel like it's...something that important, you know. Things, I think there's things we just need to deal with on our own and just, you know. Ya. you don't wanna appear crazy as well. […] I kinda feel like if you're always telling people about...how…your fearful experiences, and I feel like as people we have them a lot. You know. I was scared I was scared I was scared, but I think if you kinda tell...a person every time you have a moment of just fear and scaredness or whatever, ya for me it's just it's gonna start sounding like paranoia. Or you're just a scaredy cat, you know"

From this quote, it is clear that Lesego has to grapple with vulnerability when experiencing moments of fear. However, he chooses not to communicate these moments, rendering them invisible to people in his social network. Connected to his lack of disclosure of vulnerability is his male identity, which discourages him from sharing vulnerability with *"the people he is meant to protect"* (women), and he is also dissuaded from sharing this with other men with whom he says, *"[he] feel[s] like it shows weakness."*

Lesego and Julius, in their constructions of masculinity, distance themselves from openness regarding vulnerability. Tebetse earlier was characterised as demonstrating resistant masculinity because he did not construct his manhood as sutured to restrictive emotionality and "acting like a man" who suppresses one's feelings (Elliot, 2003). In Tebetse's words, he *"never got the hang of talking to people about [his] feelings"* and he attributes this to his upbringing:

"…so I learnt earlier on, probably before I was even 10, that, you don't cry right. 2, you don't tell people right uhm if they hurt your feelings or what right. 3, you don't show any signs of weakness right, so if you are in a position where you are literally at

your worst right, you don't show it, right. And the funny thing about that is the people that taught me this are women right".

In this quote it is evident that he was raised on similar constructions of masculinity that Lesego and Julius expressed; not showing weakness through expressing feelings such as hurt and fear. In being taught that he should not cry, nor express feelings of hurt which show signs of weakness, he is being taught to maintain an image of invulnerability both to himself and others. This kind of gendered education is what produces some men who understand their encounters with vulnerability as something they should *"just suck it up [from] and move on."* (Kabelo) Or vulnerability is almost viewed as something to recover from, as moments to take and use to *"help you become stronger. or yeah. stronger, tougher...less...fearful you know"* (Lesego) Or the feelings associated with vulnerability, are seen to be ones that should be ignored – *"I just ignore them [feelings of anxiety related to violence] […] Ya what is there to cope about?"* (Julius).

Another construction that stands out in Tebetse's quote, is the construction of women. There is something funny about it being women who taught him to emotionally constrict and appear invulnerable. The women are acting outside of the "openly emotional" norms that govern femininity and womanhood, and Tebetse makes it known that he is aware of this and that it feels unusual.

Tebetse is described as having a 'resistant masculinity' because even though he still performs the practices associated with masculine discourse (emotional restriction and appearing invulnerable), he does not see the practices as important for defining his manhood:

"So I had to learn that most of these things are nonsense, when I was basically, I think I was 18. Ya on my way out of high school right, that's when I was actually realising ok that no this does not make sense. By being exposed to different people from different uhm backgrounds, that's when I realised that ok being vulnerable is important, but you know ... going about that in a way that can actually allow me to unlearn what I learnt 'cause those things are still influencing how I behave now right so."

What Tebetse is saying here challenges agentic conceptions of gendered practices. He presents his practices as habits, which he is influenced by irrespective of not subscribing to the discourse. Agentic conceptions stress that people have agency and emotional reflexivity, and so people are not passive performers of gendered practices and norms (Waling, 2019). I would not describe Tebetse's articulation as affirming his uncontrollable complicity to masculine performances, but rather draw emphasis to the unlearning which he confirms needs to be done. Unlearning is not a purely cognitive process but also an affective one. Let us return to the concept of a body schema; his body schema has been organised so the practices he enacts have been formed in tandem to the liberty his environment affords him (Whitney, 2015). This does not mean he cannot unlearn it, he can, but it is an affective process of his living, thinking, feeling body adopting a wider ranger of sensorimotor possibilities he can perform with the other bodies in space.

In discussing the way men construct and approach vulnerability, I am not seeking to problematize masculinity, but rather to draw attention to the various ways it affects the very human experience of vulnerability. Kgaogelo says:

"…this thing of men have to be...always tough or - we have to cry you know, they say cowboy cry too. […] I started to be a human being before I can be a boy or a man, you know"

Conclusion

We are all dispositionally vulnerable – open to affect and be affected. Some face a higher risk of being harmfully / violently affected, and this is related to their occurrent vulnerability. Black men make up a significant portion of this group because of the level of exposure less access to resources produces. Acknowledging this does not serve to pathologise vulnerability through constructing as rendering someone wholly defenceless or incapable (Brown, Ecclestone & Emmel, 2017). There is some degree to which agency is present in vulnerability and this was demonstrated through the strategies undertaken by the men to psychologically prepare themselves and cope with the reality of their vulnerability. That discourse of invulnerability is so prevalent in masculinity is related to the extent to which men dis/allow their vulnerability to be visible socially and in their more intimate relationships.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

In beginning this research, I set out to explore men's constructs of vulnerability to violence in Johannesburg. This was in addition to discovering how participants describe their strategies for safety in relation to this vulnerability. Investigating their constructions of safety in physical spaces, the discussions revealed that all the men navigate different spaces with differential feelings of vulnerability. This was dependent on constructs and perceived readings of some spaces as dangerous and unsafe. For example, they mostly questioned their safety in under-resourced and unclean spaces. The more run-down an area is the more anxiety they experienced. Other factors such as their familiarity with a place made them feel less anxious, however, even within spaces that they were familiar with, they maintained they had to be aware at all times of what was happening around them. So, different to constructions that suggest men navigate space with feelings of invulnerability (Lazarus et al., 2009; Bruce, 2019), it was found that the men experience themselves as vulnerable to violent victimization at any time when navigating public spaces in Johannesburg, and other locations. They respond to their feelings of vulnerability through constant vigilance, reading bodies and what they describe as "the vibe" of a place as well as attempting to appear less vulnerable through using their bodies. They do this through either, concealing visible traces of anxiety, appearing as though they "belong" to areas they are less familiar with or "not looking lost" in public spaces.

These performative practices attest to the affective economies evident in the management of anxiety in relation to fear of violence and crime. I therefore attempted to demonstrate how the men in my research construct space in terms of their affective experiences of safety, threat, and vulnerability. Using discourse analysis, I sought to engage the dual intersecting role of affect and discourse in how men both construct and perform masculinity in relation to vulnerability

to crime and simultaneously surface their own and others' bodies via affective registers as part of this construct and performance. Their narratives were analysed as 'small stories', which allows the affective and descriptive nature prevalent in the men's talk to be constructed (De Fina & Johnstone, 2015). The experience of the participants corroborated Msimang's (2020) discussion of the city of Johannesburg as an anxious space. It was found that the conditions of space and situational factors associated with the Johannesburg space create an affective atmosphere of anxiety. This anxiety is linked to the entrenched practices that have "gathered to control" (Shaw, 2014, p.87) the Johannesburg city space. The practices associated are those of violence and crime. Conditions of space further influence people to associate a certain kind of person as belonging to unsafe spaces. "Threat" is associated with under-resourced and unclean spaces. The person to whom unclean and poor conditions is attached to, is the one constructed as threatening. So, anxiety emerges in the unclean conditions of the Johannesburg space. This, linked to the entrenched / normalized practices of violence and crime, has worked to set boundaries between the participants and the people that inhabit the city space.

It was further found that the boundaries that are set in space, are racially and socio-economically influenced. These boundaries are not necessarily racist; however, they are influenced by the racialization of violence and crime in South African society. The face of violence which was constructed in this research reproduced racialized conceptions of criminality which construct black, poor men as default perpetrators.

Another interesting finding in the research is the silence regarding the victimisation of men (Bruce, 2019). Although this silence is reproduced through broader social discourse and policies which fail to consider male vulnerability (van Niekerk et al., 2015), it is also influenced by men masking their vulnerability within their social relationships. Social relationships make up society, so the prevalent invisibility of male vulnerability within smaller social networks

reproduces discourse which fails to see male vulnerability to violence victimization in broader society.

Methodological and Theoretical Reflexivity

Besides the interview method, focus groups could have been deployed. Focus groups allow participants to build on each other's constructions of a topic (Kitzinger, 1995). With particular subject matters it can create a comfortable space to share, listen and generate ideas. Focus groups have a high potential for rich information to be gathered. Considering the nature of the topic, being related to vulnerability, the more private one-on-one interview space seems like a better fit. Especially when considering that many of the men prefer to make their vulnerability invisible.

The interviews being conducted online may have created issues of disconnect between the interviewees and interviewer. This is because there are elements of physical in-person engagement which cannot be created or replicated using an online platform. There may be disturbances in someone's environment, and this stands to heighten the risk of the interviewee and interviewer experiencing the interview in divergent circumstances. Having the interviews online, however, may have contributed to increased comfortability on the part of the participants, since they had the option to keep their videos on or off. All chose for them to be off, and this may have given them the illusion of anonymity, because they are not being seen as they disclose their experiences. This meant the interviewer had to put more effort for her presence to be felt by the participants throughout the engagement; this was done through consistent interjections. Furthermore, time was spent beforehand to build rapport with participants.

Non-representational (NR) theorists of affect might find issues with the interview method deployed in this study. This is because of the over-reliance on spoken word to understand the

lived experience of safety, threat, and vulnerability. Recent NRT methods are trying to work more closely in situations and "talk" is relegated as simply a part of the process - at most – of understanding affective experiences. To make use of the useful concept of affective atmospheres, which belongs to NRT, I broke down the concept of anxiety to focus on it as a bodily sensation of arousal as a way to try explaining the lived experience of it. Nonetheless, I recognize that in the moment of speaking their emotions, the participants' enter the terrain of the symbolic and discursive and in a way that deviates from purist leanings of NRT approaches to affect. In this instance I move between both non-representational and representational modes of analysis and interpretation (Wetherell, 2013) that allows for a much broader reading of affect and discourse.

The use of narratives to understand the men's constructions of safety, threat and vulnerability was appropriate because reality is constructed through the use of stories (Scollon & Scollon as cited in DeFina & Johnstone, 2015, p.158). Since the men did not always talk using narratives, sequencing was not always relevant in their responses. Instead of focusing on sequencing, an alternative method of approaching their talk as "small stories" was deployed. Approaching their talk as small stories allowed the researcher to construct the affective and descriptive aspects in the men's talk (DeFina & Johnstone, 2015). This allowed the analysis to engage with the hypothetical events expressed, which had an important contribution to constructing the men's self-presentation.

Personal Reflexivity

Prior to the interviews, I was concerned of the possible barriers that our differences in sex could instigate. I am a 26-year-old, black, middle-class woman who interviewed men who fell between 23 and 30 years of age. Being in a similar age group may have increased our rapport however, the sex difference may have influenced the men to alter their responses for social

desirability. This may have come across in instances when the men switched to discuss gender-based violence against women, or the vulnerability of women which was constructed as more important than theirs. I tried to address the sex difference through being direct in asking them about their experiences as men, and how they feel their masculinity affects it. Simultaneously I tried to connect to and speak about emotions as a human experience which is influenced by gendered constructs. Creating a judgement-free space was my priority, and this was done through unconditional acceptance of the men's responses and instead I focused on questioning them on why they expressed content as they did.

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Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Opening: Introduce self and establish rapport. Then researcher will re-explain the purpose of the research as well as offer participants a chance to ask any questions or mention any concerns they may have. It will be reiterated that general crime is not the concern of this research but rather concerns and thoughts regarding male-on-male violence.

Ethical information: Researcher will reiterate ethical considerations (such as confidentiality and comfort with audio recording). Furthermore, participants will be reminded that they may withdraw at any moment.

Transition into questions:

1) Do you ever think about yourself as vulnerable to violence?

2) Can you recall a time when you were concerned for your safety? What was happening and where were you?

3) Talk me through how you ensure/d your safety then or more generally?

4) In what contexts would you feel a sense of anxiety about violence?

5) How do you cope with feelings of anxiety about violence against your person?

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Good day sir,

My name is Angeline Amombo Mveng and I am currently completing my Master's in Psychological Research at The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. Part of my studies require that I complete a research project under the supervision of Professor Peace Kiguwa. The research is trying to find out about men's perceptions of safety and vulnerability in relation to male-on-male violence.

If this interests you, you are invited to take part in a virtual interview that will take between 20 or 30 minutes. If you allow, the interview will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription. The recording will be safely stored on a password protected computer and deleted after 3 years.

There will be no direct benefits from participating in the research, and no problems or penalties should you choose to withdraw after showing interest. You can withdraw at any moment as well as decline answering any question you do not wish to. I can guarantee you confidentiality in that your name along with any identifying information will be excluded during the analysis process and in the final report; in lieu of your name, a false name will be used to represent your participation. Furthermore, the details you share with me will not be disclosed to anyone else. If you experience distress or discomfort during the interview, we will stop or resume at a later time. Even if you may not have had direct experiences with violence in the past 5 years, discussions of violence vulnerability may be triggering, so for this reason if you find yourself needing support following the interview, free counselling services are provided through the Emthonjeni centre at Wits (call: 011 717 4513/ email (Paballo): Paballo.Lepota@wits.ac.za) or for free telephonic counselling, LifeLine is available (call: 011 728 1331).

If any questions concerning this research surface, you are free to contact me on the details listed below.

This study will be written as a research report and made available online through the university library website. If you would like a summary of the report, I will gladly send it to you. The data collected from this project will be stored on my password protected laptop. It will be kept for 3 years, unless with your permission, the data collected from this research project may be used by other researchers in an anonymized format. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za

Yours Sincerely,

Angeline Amombo Mveng

Researcher: Angeline Amombo Mveng , 892148@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor: Professor Peace Kiguwa , Peace.Kiguwa@wits.ac.za , +27(0) 11 717 4537

Appendix C: Informed Consent

Masculinities in relation to male-on-male Violence: Exploring Male Perceptions of Safety and Vulnerability in Public Spaces

Angeline Amombo Mveng

I, _____, agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree to what follows:

(Please circle the options that are relevant below).

I agree that a pseudonym will be used to represent my participation	YES	NO
I agree that the researcher may quote me under my pseudonym in her research report	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	YES	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used in an anonymized format after this project has ended, for academic purposes by other researchers, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained.	YES	NO

_____(signature)

_____ (name of participant)

_____(date)

_____(signature)

_____ (name of researcher)

_____(date)

Appendix D: Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE:	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MAPSYC/21/08**
PROJECT TITLE:	Masculinities in relation to male-on-male Violence: Exploring Male Perceptions of Safety and Vulnerability in Public Spaces.
INVESTIGATOR	Mveng Angeline (892148)
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SHCD/Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	19 October 2021
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	Low Risk
EXPIRY DATE	31 December 2023

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 25 October 2021 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Prof. Peace Kiguwa)

cc: Prof. Peace Kiguwa (Supervisor)

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature _____ **Date** 04 / 11 / 2021

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES