

An explorative study on narratives and subjective meanings of black economically empowered women (BEEW) about black men's perceptions about BEEW

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DECLARATION

I declare that, except for references specifically indicated in the text and such help as has been acknowledged, this research report is wholly my own work. All sources I have used or quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged by complete referencing. The research report is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Community-Based Counselling Psychology (MACC) at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other tertiary institution.

Elizabeth Mapule Ratshefola

ABSTRACT

The primary focus of the research is to explore the narratives and subjective meanings of black economically empowered women (BEEW) about black men's perceptions about BEEW. The researcher explored the experiences of these women and identified some of the challenges that they may face as a result of such experiences. The theoretical frameworks used are based on the theories of empowerment and the Black Feminist theories, with both attempting to explore black women's experiences.

This study is exploratory and qualitative in nature, with the focus on the BEEW's subjective experiences which were gathered from each of the individuals who participated in this study. The interviews conducted were individual and face-to-face. The purposive sampling method was used to select the participants and all ethical considerations such as confidentiality and informed consent were taken into account.

The findings of the research suggest that BEEW tend to have similar experiences in relation to most black men perceiving them as threatening and emasculating. Many participants also experienced both internal and external struggles as a result of their economic empowerment. In addition, the study also suggests that most BEEW are not intending to emasculate men, but are rather searching for relationships that are collaborative and that acknowledge each other's strengths. Due to the small sample, generalizability of this study is limited.

Keywords: Black Economically Empowered Women (BEEW), Masculinity, Empowerment.

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“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you”

Dr Maya Angelou

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT FOR RESEARCH

The South African history, particularly during the apartheid era was characterised by amongst other things, the economic exclusion of the majority of its population. During this era, formally recognised as stretching from 1948 to 1994, the economic power was in the hands of the white minority. Black people were legally excluded from entering the economic market, except when providing menial work. Therefore, apartheid, through racial discrimination, resulted in both black men and women being less active in the economic market and holding none or very few managerial positions in places of employment (Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012). Furthermore, black women experienced triple oppression as a result of their race, gender and for belonging to a low socio economic class (Crenshaw, 1991). Being black meant that they were subjected to the apartheid discriminatory laws and belonging to a low socio-economic class as a result of the exclusion of black people from active economic participation. In addition, being women subjected them to both socio-cultural and legal subordination to their husbands. This was exacerbated to the extent that in some communities women were bound by tradition to secure permission from their husbands for any decision-making (Khumalo, 2005).

The flourishing of the mining industry and industrialisation as a whole created a growth spurt in the South African economy during the 1930's and 40s, which resulted in an increased demand for labour. This led to men as well as many women moving to urban areas to fulfil this need (Secretariat, 1980). However, the majority of the women were recruited in low paying jobs where limited education was required and career prospects restricted. Feminine skills were limited to caring and nurturing professions. Consequently, the state and employers were paternalistic towards employed women irrespective of their age, and they were treated as minors who were incapable of taking responsibilities for themselves (Berger, 1992). According to the labour union's estimates, about 90% of the domestic work force in the 1980s constituted of black women, with 36% being in companies and industries. However women were paid lesser than their male counterparts (SAHO, 2014).

The collapse of apartheid and the transition to democracy in 1994 has led the South African government to develop a number of policies in an effort to redress the inequalities in the economic market (Patel & Graham, 2012). Amongst those policies is the Gender Equality Policy which is stipulated in the South African constitution, subsection 9(1). The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all are equal and have equal rights to be protected and benefit from the law. This means that the state may not discriminate unfairly against anyone on the basis of race, gender, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, culture, belief, birth and conscience (Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012). Another important policy relevant to this study is the Employment Equity Act (1998) which aims to stop practices that discriminate against people based on race and gender in appointing, promoting or retaining them as workers. The Act informed the Affirmative Action Policy with its purpose being to ensure equitable representation of black people, especially black women in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce (Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012). The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 has among its key objectives to increase the number of black women owning, managing existing and new enterprises as well as to increase their access to infrastructure, skills training and economic activities (Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012).

As a result of the implementation of such policies, the last decade has witnessed a steady progression of women into the managerial, professional and technical roles. According to Statistics SA (2013), in 2001 statistics indicated that females held positions in the aforementioned sectors. These statistics showed that those occupying the above-mentioned positions aged 15 – 64 comprised of 23, 5% females and 21, 8% males. Ten years later, in 2011 females within the same age category were estimated to occupy 30, 7% of these positions, whereas males in the same age category constituted only 24, 6%. These figures indicate the significant growth of women in managerial, professional and technical roles in comparison to men. However, this growth or empowerment of particular women in the economic sector namely, those with higher scholastic and academic qualifications have come at a high cost for many. According to Arber and Ginn (1995), although women may be occupying positions of power in the economic sector, in their households, financial dominance is still equated with masculinity.

This study is a narrative exploration of the meanings that black economically empowered women attach to how black men perceive them. An economically empowered woman, as defined by the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003, is one who has management control over her own business or one who has management control in her chosen profession. The definition is also in line with that of (Walia, 2013) who regards economic empowerment of women as their ability to succeed, advance and also possess the power to act on economic decisions. This power to act on economic decisions is dependent on the acquisition of skills and resources to compete in the market place (Walia, 2013). The definitions mentioned above are critical to this study as they capture the essence of the women on which this study is based. For the purpose of this study, both the past and the challenges that women who chose to work outside the home and pursue careers experienced need to be explored to provide an understanding of the current position of working women.

When some scholars such as Hawley, as far back as in the 1970s decided to investigate the challenges experienced by working women, the results revealed that women made career decisions based on what they thought men would be able to tolerate. In addition, it was found that women were convinced that men are threatened by intelligent women, indicating that the so-called 'bright' women are in a double bind (Hawley, 1971). This double bind would mean that women were caught between the possibilities of threatening men around them or downplaying their own intelligence at the expense of experiencing career success. Some recent studies still refer to the same double bind that women were caught in so long ago (Herkelmann et al., 1993). These authors also found that a woman's departure from traditional sex role standards tends to increase her sense of general and work related empowerment. The latter is however accompanied by anxiety, guilt and uncertainty. As a result, these BEEW might have this conflicted sense of self in relation to work, finances and their social lives (Herkelmann et al., 1993). Many of them experience rejection by black men, which may bring a sense of aloneness and that they are at the bottom of the scale of desirability (Collins, 1990). Collins (1990) has also through her studies found that many African American women, who are single-handedly maintaining their families often feel they have done something wrong. The assumption is that their financial success might have contributed to them not being in a romantic relationship, or being married. Mama (1995) argues that for some women, the desire to be in a romantic relationship is so great that a lot of

black women end up tolerating an unsatisfactory relationship. This might mean that BEEW do in fact compromise their needs in order to be in a romantic relationship.

For some black men, when not in control, they perceive themselves to be emasculated and highly threatened by an assertive black woman, especially those in their household (Collins, 1990). The perception might be informed by society's clouded inferences of the weak male/strong female patriarchal paradigm, which Giddings (1984) claims influence how women perceive themselves. These clouded inferences of the weak male/strong female patriarchal paradigm forces women to socially regard themselves as inferior to their male counterparts. The climate then fosters a situation where some black women feel they must subordinate their needs to those of black men in order to help them regain and retain their manhood (Giddings, 1984). According to Mama (1990), in spite of single black heterosexual women living satisfactory lives, they still have an interest in being in a relationship, even though they may have their own ideas around the terms of that relationship. This assertion by Mama implies that despite of being successful professionally; women yearn to be in meaningful love relationships even if they may not necessarily want to conform to the traditional norms of conducting those relationships. This assertion also implies that there might be a need for a subsequent study which will look at the meanings that black men attach to women who may appear intellectually superior, financially independent and to a greater extent, self-sufficient. Ratele (2008) also suggests an in depth study to investigate the effect of little or no income on men. In the next section, societal influences on the hypotheses under discussion will be expanded to further illuminate the challenges that both men and women have to struggle with in their love relationships.

Baird (2012) theorizes that as boys develop, they 'masculinise' and 'live up to' existing versions of masculinity, consciously or unconsciously and that this behaviour is shaped by habitus. This means that boys consciously or unconsciously display the ability to become men through how they are socialized (Bourdieu, 2005). In relation to this current research endeavour, it is perceived that society's assumptions are that men are primary providers (Triana, 2011) and there is significant data showing that men are being viewed as the primary earners in their families (Henslin, 2007). Therefore, men who are not primary providers to their families may end up being negatively affected. Asbury (1987) asserts that those black men who wish to become dominant by fulfilling traditional definitions of masculinity and are unable to do so, can respond negatively towards those closest to them. Similarly, according

to Jaramillo-Sierra and Allen (2013), men who hold on to and enact the role of being good providers run a risk of being depressed, having high levels of anxiety, stress and low self-esteem in comparison to those who do not hold these ideas. Additionally, the psychosocial experiences plus the burden of masculinity might prompt violent reactions towards women who appear independent (Ratele, 2008). Orbach and Custer (1995) also conclude that women who are primary providers present a challenge to family roles that are viewed as traditional.

1.2 OBJECTIVES/AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The broad objective and aims of this study is to explore the subjective meanings that black South African women who are economically empowered attach to how black men perceive them. To achieve this, the following sub-objectives were pursued:

1. The influence of narratives on gender roles
2. The role of culture and religion in the socialization of the self; and
3. The role of patriarchy
4. The exploration of the empowerment and Feminist theories in relation to gender roles.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The struggle by black economically empowered women to be in meaningful and fulfilling romantic relationships has been attributed to black men perceiving them as threats. It is therefore essential that a study is conducted that explores the experiences of BEEW with a possible outcome of improved gender relations among both black men and women.

1.4 RATIONALE

Frahm-Arp (2010) asserts that the emergence of the black middle class community has resulted in the nuclear family growing in popularity, and is seen by many black South African men and women as a symbol of success. This results in a perception that singleness in a popular society is perceived in a negative light, causing internal conflict in women. Anecdotal narratives point to women seeing themselves as incomplete or lacking, unless they find a partner. Conversely, empowered women emphasize that men see them as 'intimidating' and 'unapproachable'. The results of a study Frahm-Arp conducted among Grace Bible church members in Soweto (a charismatic church that has a membership of over 8000), revealed that men found independent women threatening. Their feelings were that

women who have their own houses, own cars and earn their own salaries are very demanding and expected men to help around the house. Some indicated that it causes a sense of discomfort to associate with women who are high earners (Frahm-Arp, 2010). Consequently, many black men eliminate successful women as potential partners because of their own personal insecurities (Staples, 1980).

BEEW find themselves in a dilemma with regards to their role as women and choosing a career. It is further explicated by Arber and Gin (1995) that women find themselves wanting to fulfil traditional sex roles, yet at the same time are drawn towards the attraction of a successful professional life. In agreement, Mc Rae (1986) found that with couples where the women were the higher earners and highly effective in their occupations, the women still opt to maintaining traditional domestic and childcare roles to reinforce the image of themselves as good wives and mothers. These actions are performed to present the impression that their husband is the dominant one in the household. In such situations, women regardless of whether or not they earn more than their spouses, become more concerned with maintaining conventional gender roles instead of reversing the roles.

This study aims to highlight real or imagined male perceptions regarding black economically empowered women. It is envisioned that this may produce an outcome where economically empowered women's "subjective" experiences (may) count. It is also an "attempt at undermining the silencing of self which is seen as a problematic gender socialization and enactment of age-old gender socialization" (Tolman, 2012, p. 759). Collins (1990) also observed that when one speaks for oneself, one crafts one's own agenda which is important for personal empowerment. According to King (1988), when people impose their power for self-definition on others, they in essence re-enact the existing power hierarchies. The ability of black women to articulate their individual everyday consciousness then becomes crucial to their survival (Collins, 1990). Moya (1997) therefore argues that as women share their collective experiences, they begin to understand issues that sustain milieus of power in aspects of their society. Expressively, the study aims to uncover challenges faced by these women by addressing some of the paradoxes they face, i.e., while on the one hand they are respected for their achievements in their professional and business lives, they may also be perceived as not conforming and living up to socially constructed feminine roles.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of both empirical and theoretical studies conducted previously on gender relations, especially those that have examined female and male voices on this subject. The main objective of this chapter is to expose the gaps in knowledge that the study fills. The first section will review the conceptual and empirical literature on discourses around gender.

2.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Studies such as the one conducted by von Muhlen, Saldanha and Strey (2012) refers to the progressive decline of patriarchy which is said to be driven by, among other reasons, the current labour market and the feminist movement. These studies indicate that the current labour market has been informed by the end of the previously apartheid driven legislated labour market, which is mostly a result of the redrafting of the South African constitution (Burger & Jafta, 2006). As a result of the latter, the Employment Equity Act of 1998 was promulgated into law, requiring employers to have equal representation of all groups of people in the workplace. By representation, the Act refers to the inclusion of previously marginalised groups such as black women and people with disabilities. Secondly, focusing on an explication of the impact of the feminist movement, it is reiterated that feminist movements provide forums where women are able to confront issues that they face due to their gender (Hassim, 1991). Due to the enlightenment of the afore-mentioned, men and women began to perceive the traditionally polarized – constructed roles they used to play, dissimilarly. Some studies suggest that though there are changes in these roles, men perceive the progress to be too accelerated, whereas on the contrary, women perceive the progress as being protracted (von Muhlen et al., 2012). This may perhaps be due to the persistence of gender- based discrimination, for an example; the income discrepancies between men and women in the workplace still exist while only a few women are appointed at the senior executive level. In a census conducted by Business Women's Association of South Africa in 2012; out of 329 companies consisting of 252 JSE listed companies, 57 Alt-X companies and 20 State Owned Enterprises, 21.4% of executive managers are women, with more white

women than black women in executive manager positions (Sapa, 2012). These discrepancies tend to be attributed to gender discrimination and the influence and domination of patriarchy.

The concept of patriarchy has been viewed and employed in various ways in feminist literature. Some theorists have used patriarchy to refer to kinship systems where men could pick and choose women as a form of symbolic power that men commanded within these systems (Beechy, 1979). Others, like Hartmann (1997) have used it to refer to male power over women, a view held by most radical feminists. Though less robust than the past, patriarchy is still seen as prevailing. Feminist literature suggests that women are caught in a double bind - the departure from traditional sex role standards is perceived as increasing a woman's sense of competence on the one hand, but on the other, as also being accompanied by feelings of anxiety, guilt and uncertainty (Herkelmann et al., 1993). These feelings could be explained by sexism which suggests that a woman configures her private realities to include awareness of public image and what it might mean for others as put forward by Collins (1990). In relation to this study, this would imply that though women are getting empowered economically, their reality shows that their conduct in private is affected by how men perceive them. This suggests that if women consider themselves to be negatively perceived by men, they might find themselves making adjustments in order to correct such perceptions.

Similarly Collins (1999) observed the existence of constant negotiations and contradictions in a woman's life as a result of their definition of the self and objectification of the other. The latter implies that how one views oneself and others may predispose one to engage in adaptation due to one's redefinition upon interactions with others. When viewing it from a sexist or racist perspective, Collins (1990) argues that there tends to be constant struggles with most people living in a polarized way; i.e., one for 'them' and one for the 'self.' These constant struggles, may in some ways be attributed to women's need to fulfil traditional gender roles based on how they have been traditionally socialised, and on the other hand desiring freedom and independence from traditional societal taboos.

Historically, these perceptions of self and identification have been influenced by how women were socialised. Traditionally, a woman's place was in the home and her role subordinated to domestic roles (Berger, 1992). Her employment was regarded as peripheral, because it was sporadic and the payment was low (Arber & Ginn, 1995). In addition, according to Hassim

(1991), women's social and personal identities were regarded as deeply rooted in their familial roles. In South Africa, the fall of the apartheid regime and the introduction of policies directed at redressing the discriminatory laws of the past have seen prescriptions of the role of women changed drastically. The former South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, voiced this change in his address at the Women's Day celebrations, when he aptly made a comment on women's emancipation by suggesting that failure to take advantage of all South African people's creativity will be depriving South Africa of achieving its goals of growth, development and shared prosperity (Mbeki, 2007). With these changes, women began to assume positions of power. Herkelmann et al. (1993) described the departure from traditional sex role standards as a way to increase a person's sense of competence. However, as their sense of competence increased, some relationships were negatively impacted. According to Bell (1990), as women progress professionally, they are also met with difficulties that include dealing with stereotypical images. Black professional women for example, have to contend with managing community expectations of them such as being expected to be representational spokespersons and at a personal level, needing to build their own supportive relationships with their families and significant others (Bell, 1990). In this effort of gaining support, women might find that they have to conform in some way. For an example, their spouse might tell them to be more attentive to their family responsibilities or that they are becoming too aggressive (Bell, 1990).

As evidenced in the aforementioned section, gender discourses are complicated and multifaceted. In order to understand the internal discourses about gender even more, it is important to explore in depth how the gender narrative has played a role in influencing gender roles and in shaping the self.

2. 3 THE INFLUENCE OF NARRATIVES ON GENDER ROLES

Some studies alluded to the fact that gender is constructed even before the birth of a child, and informs the type of waiting that parents anticipate. For example, parents may begin to decorate their unborn child's room according to the sex of the child that they anticipate (blue for boys and pink for girls), thus propagating differences between masculinity and femininity (von Muhlen et al., 2013). This implies that gender narratives even though unconscious, precedes the child's birth. Subsequent masculine or feminine behaviours then originate from socially constructed narratives. According to Gergen and Davis (1997, p.33), "terming a transaction feminine or masculine is then agreed upon socially and reproduced through

participation in the transaction.” As a result, achieving gender equality would require participation of both men and women and would have to be socially co-constructed.

It can thus be suggested that narratives which manifest consciously or subconsciously, have been perceived by people of all cultures to be a way of organising their experiences and as a way of giving meaning to their lives (Hermans & Jansen, 1995). It is furthermore concluded that these narratives may be viewed as a way in which people organise their fantasies, daydreams, memories and unvoiced stories. A person’s narratives of their life become the basis of their personal identity and might assist them to answer questions about themselves such as “Who am I” (Neisser & Fivush, 1994). (Corey, 2013, p. 374) further argues that “the stories that people tell about themselves and that others tell about them, shape the reality, constitute and construct what people see, feel and do”. Narratives then play a significant role in constructing our view of the world. As our perceptions and view of the world changes, so do our narratives. Changes in our life history call for construction and reconstruction of our narratives. These changes are influenced by events that happen in our lives, for example divorce of parents or an encounter with a significant other (Hermans & Jansen, 1995). As a result, through narration, people are able to position themselves in a political or social manner (Shefer, Boonzaier & Kiguwa, 2006).

Despite the above seemingly positive attribution to narrative formations, Hermans & Hermans-Jansen (1995) indicate that not all narratives are accurate; even when people strive for accuracy, their narratives are not always truthful. They argue and question if people should believe their self-narratives, as an ordinary course of life rarely generates objective records. Though Neisser and Fivush (1994) also agree that established self-narratives are difficult to change, Becvar and Becvar (2009) contend that each person creates their own realities that are unique to themselves. As the theory states, each person has a reality that is different and is based on their own unique combination of experiences, heredity and presuppositions. This argument suggests that each person’s life experience is subject to more than one interpretation; their own and that of the other. How narratives are conceived often leads people to emphasise their own agency (effect of self-choices), but that occasionally a sense of one being a victim is also a possibility (Hermans & Jansen, 1995).

Fonchingong (2006) laments the minimal portrayal of women's positions in African literature and the subservient role in which women are portrayed. Female subordination as a result of tradition and culture is featured in most of the narratives. Fonchingong (2006) also argues that females are portrayed as occupying supportive roles with a few portrayed as powerful main characters. On the other hand, men's narratives are portrayed as protagonists, thus informing their narratives as leaders (Fonchingong, 2006). A further assertion by Kroska (2008) alludes to females being assumed to function in a role that is supportive of their husbands either as staying at home mothers or as earning less than their husbands, whereas men are generally assumed to be the primary providers. These suppositions, as Kroska (2008) highlights, are also supported by data that overwhelmingly show males as primary earners in their families. In relation to this study, this theory implies that early gender narratives could have played an important role in informing both black male and female's perceptions about the roles that each should play and the positions they should occupy in society. Therefore, to achieve this socially agreed upon gender equality as this research is meant to illustrate, acknowledgment that this outcome may be a tall order is necessary given that the most critical institutions in all societies are still largely controlled by male interests.

In this section we explored and highlighted the formation of gender roles with particular reference to the importance of narratives in influencing the formation of such roles. In the next section we look at how these narratives can inform a positive attribution and at how they could have an impact on whether women get empowered or not. We will also look at how empowerment is seen as one way of assisting women who are financially dependent. The aforementioned section also served as a background to exploring the narratives of these women who have become empowered at different levels.

2.4 NARRATIVES OF EMPOWERMENT FOR WOMEN

The empowerment of women is regarded as essential in the developmental growth of a country. As a result of being empowered, people tend to develop a sense of autonomy (Collins, 1990). The Oxford Thesaurus (2012, p.52) defines autonomy as "self-governance and freedom." Collins (1990) maintains that autonomy can also be perceived to emanate from a position of strength. When people are truly autonomous, they are able to deal with a multiplicity of differences and issues, because they have formed a solid base of strength. This sense of autonomy is also alleged as being derived from the women's ability to control economic resources, which are generally obtained through working outside the home, as well

as inside (Arber & Ginn, 1995). Yet, despite this, most women's early socialisation still restricts their lives to domestic settings since they are still concerned with maintaining conventional gender roles instead of reversing the roles. Arber and Ginn (1995) disagree with this assertion arguing that the spouse's earnings are linked to economic power, which increases a woman's control over finances and decision making in the marriage. A study conducted by Kabeer (2010) revealed that many women use their earning power to renegotiate their relations within marriage or to leave abusive marriages. Even though both of the above views seem contradictory, there is a possibility that though women may have economic power and the ability to support themselves, they may also be in a position where they are prepared to maintain certain conventional gender roles. Notwithstanding that, this study would be very constricted and skewed if academic reflections on male narratives are not considered.

2.5 MALE NARRATIVES

According to Ratele (2008, p. 520), the construction of gender, of turning boys into men originates in families and is enabled through "the help of available knowledge and power, saturates the bodies, psyches, desires and daily practices of youngsters with images of and ideas of masculinities." This entails the socialisation of boys into men as being deeply ingrained into their being. One of the roles assigned to men through socialisation, is that of being the provider. Consistent with Ratele's views is the theory presented by Boonzaier and De la Rey (2004) which states that successful masculinity is often equated with a man's ability to provide successfully for the family. In other words, a man who epitomises masculinity is one who is regarded as a good provider. This provider role is explained by Jaramillo-Sierra and Allen (2013) as one assigned to men to provide well for their families, to an extent that they do better than other men. The provider role is thus associated with traditional masculine gender norms with the expectation that a man should choose his work over his family and be competent, exercise a lot of power and also be a great success (Jaramillo-Sierra & Allen, 2013). In addition, Boonzaier and De La Rey (2004 p.455) suggest that "men who cannot provide for their families and women who are identified as the primary breadwinners seem to disrupt gendered practices." When wives possess more esteemed positions at work, conflict within the family and disharmony tends to prevail in the home which results in men viewing themselves as helpless and as failures (Arber & Ginn, 1995). In another study conducted by Orbuch and Custer (1995), it was found that in those cases where the husbands whose wives earn a wage out of economic necessity and family

survival, there is a reason for the husband to justify the wife's financial prominence, whereas when finances are no longer a problem, the power balance in the home may become an issue. The husband sees his identity of being a primary provider for the family as being challenged and as such is negatively affected by the wife's work and subsequent income (Orbuch & Custer, 1995). The study continues to signify that women who hold the ideology of seeing themselves first as wives and mothers and who see their employment as a necessity for their families, enable their husbands to better accept the women's employment as not threatening their role as primary providers. The implication is that women who are primary providers present a challenge to family roles if it's traditionally constructed (Orbuch & Custer, 1995). Boonzaier and De la Rey (2004, p. 455) further propose that such cases lead to the imbalance of gendered practices due to possible perceptions that the accomplishment of successful traditional masculinity is denied. Willott and Griffin (2004, p. 74) augments this view by stating that "even when men are unemployed, they still construct their gender around the breadwinner persona". This may explain why, according to Cazenave (1983), black men, particularly those ranking in a lower economic position often find themselves in a double bind; having to prove their manhood on the one hand, yet on the other, not having acquired the social resources to do so. Cazanave (1983) may be implying that all men have similar responses to social changes, yet according to Morrell (2001), not all men, irrespective of class, respond in a similar manner to changes that are happening socially. How men respond to women who are considered economically empowered by virtue of the roles they play in the economic market, may be influenced by various factors that will be discussed further in this study.

2.6. MASCULINITIES AND RESPONSES

Moolman (2012, p. 95) defines masculinities as "signifying multiple shifting, fluid practices and performances of gendered bodies and identities" which suggests that though masculinities have a set gender, they also tend to be dynamic in nature, having the possibility of being influenced by circumstances. Morrell (2001), in addition, sees masculinity as a collective gender identity that is not necessarily a natural characteristic but as socially constructed and dynamic. Moolman and Morrell's views suggest that "masculinity is always in the process of being renegotiated in the context of existing power relations" (Lindsay & Miescher, 2003, p.4). Further to this, Morrell (1998) reiterates that masculinity is not a natural attribute, but a gender identity that is collective, and socially constructed.

Ratele (2008) agrees as well and postulates that males are not by nature men, but that the process of converting babies into boys, and boys into men is one that usually begins in families where everything about them gets saturated with ideas and images about masculinity. In summary, masculinity is socially constructed and is likely to be negotiated and re-negotiated depending on existing power relations.

According to Walker (2005), scholars in the field of gender, sexuality and health studies posit that masculinity is in crisis. Some say that the crisis is characterised by the instability and uncertainty that comes as a result of one's identity, their sexuality, work and personal relationships (Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman, 2002). The notion confirms Morrell (1998)'s inference that masculinities are affected by changes and therefore affects the society. This may explain why some theorists advocate that the collapse of traditional men's work and the internal crafting of feminist issues among women have resulted in men experiencing a crisis. Theorists like Walker (2005) argue that South African masculinity, though in crisis, is also in transition as a result of the transition of the country to democracy and the adoption of a new constitution. According to Walker, though the past perception of masculinity might not have completely ruptured, the crisis of masculinity in contemporary South Africa is different, in such a way that confirms there may already be shifts in gender power. Ratele (2014) agrees with this theory by referring to studies conducted on African men, which revealed that as countries undergo political and economic changes, the re-alignment of social relations become inevitable. This can result in some groups of men finding it harder to achieve the concept of the traditionally termed masculinity. Theorists like Connell (2005), have classified masculinity into different categories.

2.6.1 TYPES OF MASCULINITIES

Connell (2005) refers to four categories of masculinity, namely; dominant, complicit, submissive and oppositional masculinity which are considered fluid, that is, one person can be able to occupy different masculinities at different times in their life time. To label a person as falling into a specific category or masculinity type may not necessarily be helpful, though it may help in making sense of their behaviour and responses in specific situations.

The type of masculinity appearing to be dominant in society is referred to as hegemonic masculinity which is said to embody what is revered to as "being a man" and allows for the domination of women by men (Connell, 2005). In Kimmel (1994)'s opinion, some men, due

to hegemonic masculinity might end up exaggerating all the traditional rules of masculinity in fear of not being perceived as real men particularly by other men. Men are constantly under scrutiny by other men, who tend to rank them and to accept them into the realm of manhood. Therefore, even men who may not personally have a problem with having a relationship with women who are economically empowered, might find themselves in a position where they feel 'pressurised' to avoid such relationships fearing to be seen as "lesser men" (Kimmel, 1994). Ratele (2014) speaks of African masculinity and discourses that may emanate as a result.

2.6.2 DISCOURSES OF AFRICAN MASCULINITIES

According to Ratele (2014), African masculinity is unsustainable, particularly when viewed from a context of a white patriarchal capitalist hegemony. Ratele (2014) views African masculinities as both hegemonic and insubordinate at the same time. In the context of this study, the above views may imply that African men may find themselves in a position where on the one hand they strive to advance themselves in a world that is capitalistic and patriarchal, which they are expected to uphold, and conversely they are dominated by this world. This seems to provide an explanation as to why African men find themselves in a position where they subscribe to patriarchal values of assumptions such as 'men are the providers,' to an extent that these assumptions dominate them, resulting in tensions and conflicts arising should the assumptions not be realised. The discourses that result from hegemonic African masculinity may also explain the tensions that tends to surface as a result of men encountering partners that hold more super-ordinate and higher wage positions at work than they do. These homilies may also perpetuate suppositions that the success of women is due to the failure of men, which may in turn result in some men reacting angrily as a way of maintaining and increasing their power and privilege. The phenomenon of high income earning women has also brought about the fear in most African communities, particularly among young black men, who assume that their own achievements are fundamentally jeopardised by the achievement and freedom of black women (Mc Fadden, 2000).

The achievement of freedom by women and the social construction of equality are questioned by McFadden (2000) who argues that women are still perceived to threaten black men even though both these two genders ironically shared the same racist violations historically. This fear is attributed to what is termed 'patriarchal claims' to the naturalised reproduction of

outdated notions and practices of masculinity, suggesting male endangerment. The conception points to the claims that men have been socialised into practices that encouraged their masculinity through the in-subordination of traditional female roles. The latter is done to enable (men) in the assumption that the “new feminine” roles are provoking masculinity (McFadden, 2000). To confront these ‘patriarchal claims’, Pease (2000) asserts that to create discourses that will give men reason to change and reposition themselves, political strategies need to be implemented, such as, increasing men’s understanding of the consequences of their structural power and privilege. Furthermore, the political task of pro-feminist men should be seen as the articulation of notions of non-patriarchal interests of men. This means that men who regard themselves as pro-feminist, may find it beneficial if they could commence by sharing and conducting discourses that promote interests of men, but that do not necessarily promote male domination over women (Pease, 2000). Others, like Messner (1997), clearly points out that masculinity is in crisis. They attribute this to the economic empowerment of women in the workplace, through ‘taking away’ (by women) of roles that were traditionally deemed to be men’s, thus eroding men’s authority. In addition, women’s economic and public power is seen as challenging the discourse of male superiority. Even though the assumption may be that men respond in a similar manner to discourses that seem to challenge men’s authority, theorists like Morrell (2001) believe that men respond differently to women who are assumed to challenge male superiority.

2.6.3 MEN’S RESPONSES TO CHANGE

Morrell (2001) has observed three categories under which men tend to respond, namely; reactive or defensive, accommodating and responsive or progressive. These responses are seen as permeable with an overlap between them being a possibility (Morrell, 2001 p. 26). The types of responses, as noted by Morrell (2001), are discussed as follows; reactive or defensive responses are an attempt by certain men to reverse changes in order to reassert their power. Related to this study, a defensive response might elicit feelings of anger and bitterness, which may result in acts of violence as an attempt to re-assert power in the relationship. Accommodating responses relate to a man overtly appearing as a traditionalist but attempting to resuscitate non-violent masculinities with no deliberate intentions to provoke violence. According to Hemson (1997), this type of masculinity portrays men who are not always relinquishing male power, but who are also not resisting all change. Responsive or progressive responses occur when men, in an attempt to challenge violent masculinities, have also developed new models of how to become a man. This has led to the

formation of national campaigns in South Africa such as the “Brothers For Life,” with the sole purpose of encouraging positive male norms. In order to have an appreciation of how some of the above-mentioned narratives have been informed, it is important to explore in the next section how culture, patriarchy and religion may have played a role in informing some of the roles and identity that women in this particular study may have assumed.

2.7. INFLUENCE OF CULTURE

There are different understandings and definitions of culture. Some scholars like Albertyn (2009) view culture as a particular way of life in a defined group. Winter (2006, p.382) describes culture as “constituted by and constitutive of human experiences and social relations.” As a result, culture as a construct, might be difficult to define. Albertyn (2009) regards culture as an important part of human existence that helps individuals make sense of their world and therefore becomes pivotal in shaping people’s experiences about themselves and the world. This suggests that there are no societies without the existence of power as culture is said to be bound up with power relations. The state becomes a key role player in that it tends to legitimize particular forms of social identity. This is endorsed through social powers established by means of political and economic power (Moolman, 2012). South Africa in particular, is largely considered a patriarchal society where men have been afforded the identity of being the main provider in the family. However, according to Moolman, men in South Africa occupy the position of dual legitimacies, where discourses of both modern and cultural discourses are sanctioned, as evidenced through the President of the country, Mr. Jacob Zuma who publicly presents his polygamous status (Moolman, 2012). Agreeably so, Winter (2006) indicates that most feminists question the hypocrisy of some governments who support human rights through legislation, yet still play covert cultural relativist games.

Culture is seen to shape men in different ways pertaining to their masculinities and power. One specific view is that of gender being regarded as an important part of culture, as it shapes how an individual understands the socially correct roles and responsibilities they should be fulfilling (Albertyn, 2009). As a result, the way in which different gender roles are performed comprises the essence of culture. This proposes that how people make sense of their ‘assigned’ gender roles tends to be informed by their culture particularly when women live by the cultural codes of what it means to be a “proper woman”, in other words, a woman that culture defines as a role model. Culture is also said to place different values depending on gender and to give unequal power and resources to men and women. The results are that

male power and interests tend to be maintained through culture, with women being placed in insubordinate positions (Albertyn, 2009).

Winter (2006) is cautious about the positive influence of culture, particularly upon women; she suggests that women's rights have the potential to be violated in the process of validating group cultural rights. Consequently, women who are economically empowered might have to compromise their personal rights for emancipation in an attempt to uphold cultural rites and rituals (Winter, 2006).

Conversely, as Winter (2006) suggests, some women may use culture as a way of resisting domination, implying that not all parts of cultures are oppressive to women. However, culture can also be used as a form of subordination. According to Winter (2006), where there are perceived threats to power, there usually is a tendency to make reference to values and an adoption of behaviours that may not necessarily be authentic or indigenous to the cultures in question. However, these are usually presented as tradition and as a way of averting the threat. This notion of culture also entails that it is something that is porous and that can be contested. For example, there tends to be cultural discourses that view the success of women as disrupting the traditional gender order (Walker, 2005). Even though this notion may be regarded as part of an African tradition, a number of African feminists like Taiwo (2010) dispute it arguing that traditionally men and women played complimentary roles in society.

The question of culture is particularly important in a new democracy like South Africa, because as the country transitions and moves from white and even male domination, a new culture is emerging that is accommodative of the changes that are unfolding. According to Frahm-Arp (2010), professional black women are undergoing a high level of identity change as they begin to undergo changes in their work experiences, religious lives and changes in their roles in the family. Both the modern and traditional ways of living may imply that many women will find themselves in a conundrum when they have to accept the cultural capital that will help create their sense of identity and inform meanings in their lives (Frahm-Arp, 2010). Another current influential discourse that economically empowered women find themselves in is one of narratives of patriarchy. In the first discussion on patriarchy we highlighted how men are impacted by patriarchal socialisation; the next section will discuss how patriarchy impacts women.

2.8 ROLE OF PATRIARCHY

The South African constitution is in many quarters regarded as one of the most inclusive and progressive constitutions in the world (Bauer & Taylor, 2005). The constitution has taken into account a wide variety of social and cultural rights and has also made a clear commitment to overcoming injustices of the past, whilst taking cognisance of multicultural diversity that exist in the country (Bauer & Taylor 2005). Furthermore, the country's constitution includes the right of human dignity and upholds a principle that assures non-sexism. Within this clause, the right of women and the right to freedom and security to a person and to autonomy are advocated (Manifesto, 2009). Additionally, the constitution seeks to recognize differences among women and promote gender and racial equality. It also expresses a strong commitment to gender equality as a foundational value in South Africa's new democracy (Manifesto, 2009). However, the implementation of such policies has not always been translated into action. According to Essof (2012), the existence of such policies is not an end in itself, what determines the government's commitment is their implementation. This may explain why it seems as though most people still regard South Africa as a patriarchal society, despite the existence of its constitution.

Some scholars view patriarchy as an element of culture that is responsible for women's insubordination and a major hindrance to the advancement and growth of women. One such scholar is Walby (1990), who defines patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. She also interestingly concludes that patriarchy is biologically determined. Even though other theorists like Sultana (2011) may not regard patriarchy as biologically determined, they nevertheless agree that a patriarchal system is one where there are different levels of domination. They further purport that the afore-mentioned ensure that men are in control and women subordinated. Subordination is referred to as "the act of placing in lower rank or position" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary, 2007).

Sultana (2011) further extrapolates that since the advancement of both genders is based on merit, when patriarchy is added to the mix, it is detrimental to women as it perpetuates the creation of barriers for women within society. This perception may therefore suggest that despite women being economically empowered, society still responds to them in a way that creates anxiety and self-doubt, due to society's enforcement of the sovereignty of men over women (Kruger, Fisher & Wright, 2014). The view is also shared by Oduyoye (1995), who

advocates the destruction of dialogues that classifies African men as patriarchal and also regards patriarchy as a social construction that can be outgrown. However, as Sultan (2011) states, this will be difficult to achieve, as the patriarchal ideology is so powerful that men end up securing agreement from the very women that they oppress. What it means is that somehow women support the very ideology that oppresses them and may even be threatened by the rules and norms that society imposes on them. This may result in women not challenging the unpleasant conditions under which they find themselves.

Essof (2012) stipulates that as it stands today, South Africa has new forms of patriarchy that are on the increase which are masked as conservative traditionalism and militarism. Examples cited are songs such as 'Umshini Wami/we baba/awuleth' Umshini Wami' (my machine gun/oh father/please bring me my machine gun) which has received increased popularity that has elements of both traditionalism and militarism. The song is regarded as President Zuma's signature song though historically associated with the liberation struggle. According to Essof (2012), the song carries heteronormative sexual connotations and thus draws on masculinity without much place for other gendered identities. The implication is that gender equality is easily constructed on paper, but difficult to implement. Frahm-Arp (2010) believes that though black women have risen to prominence, the changes that are seen in the public domain do not have as much impact on their private domain. They might appear successful and empowered in public, but privately they may still be faced with issues of patriarchy that other women may also be faced with. Some theorists like Frenkel (2008) even suggest that South Africa has normalised gender stereotypes that view women as insubordinates. In relation to black economically empowered women, this view may present difficulties that can be encountered in having meaningful intimate relationships. These difficulties may also be attested through religion, as it also appears to play a significantly influential role in many women's lives.

2.9 INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON IDENTITY

There are different theoretical and practical meanings attributed to the construct of religion. According to Njoh (2006, p.32) religion constitutes "meanings, beliefs, feelings, doctrines and practices that link people to a sacred higher level of spiritual being". Njoh and Akiwumi (2012) add that religion is an integral part of people's lives, with its ethos present in secular and non-secular states, suggesting that laws that exist are in some way influenced by religious ideology. Even though modernisation, globalisation and science have emerged as quite

influential in people's lives, these have not deterred religion from remaining an important and influential part in people's lives (Fox, 2002). As Silberman (2005) purports, even though organised religion might seem to be on a decline, particularly among Western nations, it still seem to shape how people's lives are conducted. Kimball (2002), in agreement, points out that the survival of religions such as Buddhism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity for thousands of years has been significant, as these religions continue to be influential and have managed to outlive other ideologies such as Communism. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to understand that people may be more likely to make meaning of their life situation, based on their religious orientation. For the purpose of this study, the view may suggest that decisions made by BEEW in relation to romantic relationships have the likelihood of being influenced by their respective religious orientations.

2.10 RELIGIONS AS A MEANING CREATING SYSTEM

People have a tendency to live their lives guided by personal beliefs they hold about themselves, others and the world they experience. These beliefs, according to Higgins (2000), enable people to give meaning to their life experiences and to how they experience the world. The beliefs also tend to influence a person in how they plan their life goals and in how they behave. Frahm-Arp (2010), in a study conducted on female managers in Pentecostal Charismatic Churches in Johannesburg South Africa, found that the message taught was one of career success, where people were reminded that God has a unique plan for their lives and that each person has been given potential by God. These messages, according to Frahm - Arp (2010), give young women the cultural and social capital that they might have lacked. As Silberman (2005, p.645) suggests, the meaning systems become vital in helping people find purpose in their lives; these meaning systems, have descriptive beliefs such as "I am competent", "good people should find reward" and other prescriptive beliefs that guide a person in how they should respond in order to have their heart's desires met. It is thus inferred that when people encounter difficulties, they would revert to using their faith by handing their 'problem' to God and asking him to solve it (Frahm-Arp, 2010). Furthermore, Silberman (2005) continues to state that meaning systems help individuals maintain the balance of pleasurable and unpleasant experiences, a balance in terms of their self-esteem and maintaining pleasant relationships with those that are significant in their lives. As a result, meaning systems are somewhat able to help in predicting individuals that may display resilience during times of adversity. Religion might by far act as a meaning system for some individuals and what is revered may be incorporated into one's beliefs about the self, others

and the world (Silberman, 2005). For example, acts of goodness, forgiveness, tolerance, how one should conduct themselves or of what is bad, may be influenced by what is revered in an individual's life. The study that Frahm-Arp (2010) conducted implies that the idea of a nuclear family has now been identified as a key sign of success particularly in urban living and is in line with the church's support of a nuclear family. This may explain why single, successful women might feel the tension as a result of not meeting eligible partners. The view also implies that religion, as a meaning making system, has the capacity to play a significant role in guiding one's role, even within marriage. Boonzaier and De la Rey (2004) theorises that religion has played a vital role in reinforcing strict compliance to stereotypical gender roles, suggesting that the submission of women and male domination are carved through women and men's religious constructions. For example, scriptural verses like "for the man is the head of the home as, Christ is the head of the church" (Ephesians 5:23); "Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, because they spend of their property (for the support of women)" and "So good women are obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded" (Qur'an 4:34) are regarded as reinforcing women's position as being subservient to their husbands. This view is shared by King (1995) who notes that women's position in religion is in most cases a true reflection of their status in society. King (1995) further cites scientists as having consistently held the view that as a result of religion, cultural values and social organisation are reflected and reinforced. Likewise, Frahm-Arp (2010, p.183) found that "in the churches, popular society and traditional African practices, singleness was regarded in a negative light, and it therefore became a source of tension in the lives of the women interviewed".

Though some researchers might find it difficult to understand that women would be willing to assume submissive roles in their homes as a result of their faith, Manning (1999) positions Christianity as a religion of paradox, for example, through the death of Christ, eternal life is promised. This could be a possible reason why some women who are successful and economically empowered would still be able to play a lesser role at home. For such women, the paradox is when on the one hand they subscribe to the submissiveness of women through their religious affiliation, and on the other, hold positions of dominance in the board room. For such women, submission may not be regarded as oppression, but as a gender role that they are meant to fulfil in accordance with their religious beliefs.

In contrast to the idea of religion as a source of oppression for women, some feminists like Njoh and Akiwumi (2012), see parts of religion like Pentecostalism, as not only promoting marriage, but also promoting economic wealth. They argue that through marriage, those that would otherwise remain poor, have the opportunity for economic growth. Furthermore, the gospel of prosperity teaches that God's wish is for every Christian to be wealthy and prosperous as a result of their faith.

2.11 CONCLUSION

The above has been surveyed as a way of exploring what may or may not be informing the meanings that black South African women who are economically empowered attach to how they are perceived by black men. Since there has not been extensive research regarding this topic, the following chapters hope to broaden existing literature. Chapter 3 will briefly look at the predominant theoretical frameworks that guide this study.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The current study investigates BEEW's narratives in relation to how they think black men perceive them. It is imperative to explore the construct of empowerment, as it conveys the sense that one has of being in control and also of having legal rights and social influence (Rappaport, 1987). The theoretical frameworks which formed the origins of this theory, the Black Feminist Theory, which has a particular focus on the concept of intersectionality, emphasising the multiple identities women within the same race and gender hold, will also be explored. Both of these theories are used in order to gain a better understanding of what true empowerment is about and to elucidate other challenges that BEEW may be faced with, even within their own gender and race, through the concept of intersectionality.

3.2 THEORY OF EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment as a concept emerged around the 1940s and 1950s through an approach that advocated participatory decision-making (Dambe & Moorad, 2008) and had an upsurge in popularity in the 1980s. Literature seems to differ in how empowerment is defined, but most definitions allude to empowerment being about individuals and communities having the ability to control their problems, master them and ultimately take responsibility for them (Seedat, Duncan & Lazarus, 2001). Rappaport (1984)'s definition, although dated, suggests that where empowerment is lacking, it is easy to notice and define because of its absence, yet it is not easy to define when it is in existence. Rappaport (1987, p.121) refers to empowerment as "a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights". According to Zimmerman (1990, p.169), "at an individual level, empowerment includes participatory behaviour, motivations to exert control and feelings of efficacy and control." This understanding is shared by Guitierrez (1994), who describes empowerment as consisting of an increase in self-efficacy and developing skills to be able to reflect and being involved with others who are similar to you. Another understanding stems from Zimmerman (1990), who regards empowerment as an interaction between an individual and the environment. This is in line with Eyben, Kabeer and Cornwall (2008, p.8) who define empowerment as "a process whereby people develop a sense of capacity for agency- individual power within and collective power with others". The

definition suggests that empowerment is not only about personal emancipation, but also about working with others in order to achieve what is rightfully theirs. Ali (2014), whose definition will serve as our working definition in this study, further proposes that empowerment is a process where constant negotiations take place based on circumstantial needs. Additionally, and especially pertaining to women Eyben et al. (2008) expounds that empowerment happens when an individual woman desires and struggles to bring a significant change in her life in relations to power. The definitions by both Ali (2014) and (Eyben et al., 2008) highlight the complexity of the empowerment process. Ali's definition was chosen because it illuminates the constant negotiations and contradictions that mark the lives of economically empowered women. These women seemingly have all their professional desires met, but may be experiencing challenges in their familial and social relationships.

Whilst the third global millennium goal's is to promote women in achieving set targets for empowerment, developing countries still lag behind in achieving their goals. This has resulted in women's empowerment being one of the important policy concerns for developing countries (Chakrabarti & Biswas, 2012). However, the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, concurs with the empowerment of women and is quoted as saying "if you empower a woman, you empower her community, you empower her children" (Mahajan, 2012). Theorists like Ali (2014) question the use of empowerment as they see it as encouraging the use of women as instruments of development; suggesting that women continue to be treated as tools that can be used by society to achieve its objectives. Despite this view, empowerment is still seen having the capacity to influence the direction of social change and as a way of creating a fair economic order (Mahajan, 2012). From this definition, it is evident that, like some feminists seem to suggest, the construct of empowerment that is viewed as real is something that only women can do for themselves (Cornwall & Edwards, 2010). From the aforementioned preferred definitions, it is evident that empowerment is not just about accumulation of wealth, it is also about a person realising their worthiness and believing in their own capacity to influence social change. Throughout this process, one engages in constant negotiations that may in certain cases require challenging of existing social norms.

There is a prevailing assumption that the empowerment of women through for example, education, will enhance self-worth and economic independence in the African continent, which will lead towards equality and a more inclusive society and way of life (Dibie & Dibie,

2012). Whilst this may be true, it is suggested that the achievement of empowerment by women may be more complicated due to women facing additional disadvantages that are mainly from the household and intra-familial relationships.

3.2.1 HINDRANCE TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

According to Chakabarti and Biswas (2012) women empowerment is likely to be limited by among others, existing cultural norms, religious laws and patriarchal influences. The argument corresponds with the observation that there is a prevailing belief that the empowerment of women imply that they will challenge and resist societal norms (Ali, 2014). As a result, women's empowerment becomes a painful process that denies them respect. This view confirms Frahm-Arp's (2010) findings in a study conducted with a group of black South African young men who said they find independent career women threatening. They cleave to the view that independent women are demanding and expect their husbands to help around the house, thus challenging prevailing societal norms. Frahm-Arp's findings also confirm the importance of individual empowerment. In certain communities, being female is regarded as a burden, or as needing extra care (Frahm-Arp, 2010). Within such contexts, empowerment becomes more about increasing an individual's self-reliance and intellectual strengths (Mahajan, 2012). Mahajan (2012) further purports that for a woman to be empowered, they do not only require financial control, but also need to have control over knowledge, information, political power and social equality among others, in acquiescence with this researcher's view.

3.2.2 OTHER FORMS OF EMPOWERMENT

Cattaneo and Goodman (2014) suggest that everyone needs to take cognisance of the fact that people may be empowered in some parts of their lives, but not in others. For some people, empowerment of one person is assumed to mean the loss of power for the other person (Dambe & Moorad, 2008). For those men who understand their primary role as that of being a provider, this assumption may explain why some women face resistance in having meaningful intimate relationships.

According to Zimmerman (1990), there are two forms of empowerment, namely; individual and psychological empowerment. Zimmerman (1990) regards individual empowerment as limited to a single paradigm and not taking into account contextual factors. Riger (1993) approves of this assertion, suggesting that personal empowerment is more superficial,

whereas political empowerment has the likelihood of filtering into other areas of an individual's life. Zimmerman (1990) underscores the importance of contextual factors and looks at intra-psychic factors such as cognitions, motivations and personality as a crucial part of the empowerment theory.

In the context of this study, empowerment involves an inter-play between the economic and social realms. The social experiences of economically empowered black women when it comes to black men have psychological consequences that will in turn shape their social interactions. As a result, empowerment is regarded by Cattaneo and Goodman (2012) as a concept that crosses the boundary between the self and the social world. Power dynamics that are enacted at a social level have the possibility of being internalized at an individual level, resulting in a profound impact on how people view their situation. For one to recognise these power dynamics, Guierrez (1995) proposes there should be a need for a fundamental change in a person's consciousness which enables a person to engage in empowering social action. This implies that the process of empowerment is one that requires a personal reflexive process by those seeking power (Carr, 2003). Carr (2003) sees empowerment as relating to the relationship between awareness and social change suggesting that for true empowerment to take place, a person's state of critical consciousness about the state of their society needs to be developed, so that they can feel the need to challenge the status quo. Batliwala (1994) concurs with this view asserting that the empowerment of women requires that women recognise the ideologies that may be up-holding patriarchal domination and how these continue to maintain the oppression of women.

Additionally, Mayekiso and Tshemese (2007) suggest that the environment where an individual lives should be held responsible for the creation of social structures that are disempowering. By implication, a person's inability to exercise control in their own environment may suggest that one is not fully empowered (Carr, 2003). In the current study, though BEEW may be economically empowered, matrices of power are still being upheld by society, through gender and class, resulting in some form of discrimination. Even though BEEW may no longer be part of the low socio-economic class, yet as females belonging to a new economic class, they may encounter challenges of a different type that may disempower them in other social ways.

Another form of empowerment derived from the psychological empowerment theory stipulates that for power to be developed and exercised, one needs to be involved in relationships (Christens, 2012). Zimmerman (1995) defines psychological empowerment as psychological processes through which people will have control over their lives and be able to participate in decision making that is democratic. Zimmerman (1995) further refers to psychological empowerment as integrating perceptions of personal control and an approach to life that is proactive. This approach would also include an understanding of one's socio-political environment. The notion suggests that those who are empowered have an awareness of important factors in the decision making process which will in the long run make a difference in the person or their community's well-being. Those that are psychologically empowered also have an awareness of what may hinder their efforts to achieve goals, they also have the belief that goals can be achieved and the idea of what is required for those goals to be achieved (Zimmerman, 1990). Consequently, according to Zimmerman (1990, p.175), "psychological empowerment is a contextual construct that requires an ecological analysis of individual knowledge, decision making processes and person-environment fit." Herewith, for one to be psychologically empowered, they need to have an understanding of their context (Zimmerman, 1990). Psychological empowerment is evidently shown to manifest in different perceptions and beliefs. It is Christens (2012)'s opinion that an empowerment orientation must be concerned with the power dynamics within interpersonal relationships that facilitate effective social action towards liberation and justice. The nature of this form of empowerment proves that how power dynamics play out in relationships, determines the level of empowerment at play; meaning that though a person may be economically empowered, the nature of power dynamics and how they manifest in their relationships will have a significant impact on the level and extent of their empowerment (Christens, 2012).

One of the difficulties with psychological empowerment, as noted by Zimmerman (1995), is that it may be difficult to measure and may fluctuate over time. As a result, during certain periods of a person's life, a person may experience empowerment and may feel disempowered at other periods in their lives. A person may also experience psychological empowerment in one domain of their lives and none in other aspects of their life. They may experience isolation or assume a main role at work and assume a submissive role at home which will be demonstrating an inability to transfer their skill to their home situation. Cornwall & Edwards (2010) warn against empowerment narratives that neglect relationships and which only focus on individual trajectories of self-improvement. They suggest that in

order to understand women's experiences of empowerment, it is important to not separate them from social and intimate relations that may be making their empowerment or disempowerment experiences possible. This implies, according to Zimmerman (1995) that the changing nature of empowerment means some individuals may feel less or more empowered than others. Zimmerman (1995) also describes psychological empowerment as an outcome that can be experienced in three different dimensions, the components demarcated as intrapersonal, interactional and the empowerment process. The following section discusses these components in full.

3.2.3 INTRAPERSONAL COMPONENT

This component refers to how people identify themselves and includes domain-specific control. Included in this component is the individual's belief about their ability to be influential in different areas of their lives, for an example, at work, in their families or in socio-political contexts. It also includes the individual's perceptions, since they tend to form the basic elements that propel people to engage in behaviours that may influence an outcome that is preferred (Zimmerman, 1995). It is likely that for those women who may be economically empowered, their perceptions that men view them as threatening may propel them from engaging in meaningful relationships for fear of being abandoned.

3.2.4 INTERACTIONAL COMPONENT

This component of psychological empowerment refers to the understanding that people have about issues related to both their socio-political environment and their community (Zimmerman, 1995). It is implied that people must first learn about the options they might have in a given context to enable them to control their environment. Knowledge and understanding about norms and values in a particular context, plus a critical awareness of one's own environment will then become a way in which change may be forged. For example, it may be important that black economically empowered women understand the factors influencing their decision making processes, which will then become an important way in which they can effectively interact in areas that are important to them. Furthermore, for a BEEW, a good understanding of societal norms and values may be important, as it may assist in engaging and challenging the current societal norms that may be further entrenching their status of being regarded as too strong and threatening. Furthermore, an element that has received little attention up till now is around rallying resources. This may be an important part of psychological empowerment, as it suggests that one has mastery of their environment.

Having such skills enables an individual to be independent and their own champions for taking control of their own emancipation, whilst strategically utilizing and rallying resources as the need arises. This may explain why Carr (2003) regards empowerment as a process that entails personal transformation.

3.2.5 THE EMPOWERMENT PROCESS

Rappaport (1984) regards empowerment as both a process and an outcome, suggesting that empowerment is a continuous variable that cannot be adequately assessed at any given point in time. Likewise, (Keiffer, 1983) sees empowerment as a process that is transformative through individual internalised goals and not as something that one can go out and acquire. Zimmerman (1995) defines empowering processes as those that give people an opportunity to create or control their destiny and influence decisions related to their lives. In line with this definition, Guitierrez (1995) posits that empowerment is a process where among others, personal or political power of individuals is increased in order to enable them to improve their circumstances. The above theories seem to allude to the journey towards empowerment being a process involving an individual's development and transformation; an increasing socio-political awareness and a will to take action.

3.2.6 EMPOWERMENT AS AN OUTCOME

Empowering processes are said to lead to outcomes where individuals appear empowered (Zimmerman, 1984). In identifying the presence of empowerment, it is important to have an understanding of what constitute an outcome that signifies being empowered. There needs to be a consistent and scientific way in which the construct of empowerment is defined. How empowerment is conceptualised differs even though themes of mastery and control tend to prevail and be a part of the empowerment definition (Zimmerman, 1995). It is through successful negotiation within a specific context that an outcome that is empowered, can be achieved (Ali, 2012). In summary, according to Cornwall and Edwards (2010), empowerment is not just a linear process, but one that requires constant negotiation enabling the one wishing to be empowered to reach possibilities of whatever they imagined themselves to be. The following section looks at how empowerment is viewed from a feminist perspective.

3.2.7 FEMINIST VIEWS ON EMPOWERMENT

Some theorists have criticised the notion of seeing empowerment in a linear way. According to Cornwall and Edwards (2010), outcomes are not always a result of an individual's choice.

For a successful career woman, choosing to lie to their partners about their income may produce an outcome of having a partner who feels non-threatened. The woman's actions in this regard have manifested in an outcome of lying, which she would not have chosen in differing circumstances.

In trying to conceptualise empowerment, Sardenberg (2008) proposes two approaches. The first approach focuses on individual growth and defocuses on power. The second approach focuses on self-emancipation as a way in which patriarchy can be eliminated with the aim to undermine patriarchy and the changing of the gender order geared towards promoting patriarchal authority. This approach encourages women to work as a collective in this regard. For some feminists such as Kuttab (2010), empowerment of women is a fundamental and ground breaking process which forms part of women's social struggle, i.e., the fight against a patriarchal system. Kuttab challenges existing concepts of empowerment arguing that such concepts alienates and distorts reality. Instead, suited definitions of empowerment should emphasize the adoption of radical change (Kuttab, 2010). Others like Stromquist (1995) are of the opinion that to define empowerment, four components need to be included - the cognitive, psychological, economic and political components. The cognitive component entails a woman's understanding of her position as a subordinate, what caused this condition and acquiring new knowledge to be able to challenge beliefs structuring the gender ideology. The psychological level refers to the feelings that women develop to enable themselves to act at a personal and societal level in order to improve the conditions they find themselves in. The economic component encourages women to engage in productive activities that will enable them to have a degree of autonomy. Lastly, the political component involves the ability to mobilize for social change. Stromquist (1995) emphasises that economic empowerment on its own is not sufficient for women's full emancipation. Instead, until women are also empowered politically, cognitively and psychologically they may not necessarily be fully empowered. On the contrary, African Feminist discourses, according to Zulu (1998), do not talk about disempowerment of women. Instead they speak about de-womanization which implies the dispossession of power and agency. Zulu (1998) further laments the acquisition of western education as instilling philosophies of disempowerment. For Zulu (1998), European and Arab male centered systems of authority, have through colonisation destroyed the African female lines of authority that had power bestowed on women.

Power is seen by Kuttub (2010) as being central to and at the root of empowerment; a view shared by Riger (1993) who cautions that an increase in the sense of empowerment does not necessarily mean an increase in power. According to Riger (1993), when an individual has a sense of empowerment, they may be under the illusion that they are free, when in reality they are controlled by either politics or practices at a macro level. For Riger (1993), there has to be a clear differentiation between an individual having the ability to control resources and having a sense of empowerment, an argument that is shared by Stromquists (1995). Mahajan (2012) encourages an individualistic approach to empowerment where an individual's self-esteem and self-confidence are increased. Riger (1993) suggests a cautious application since a sense of empowerment has the ability to produce a sense of efficacy or high self-esteem, whereas a person might still be unable to have control over resources. This means that true empowerment is not only about one's self-efficacy, but also focuses on equipping one to have the power over resources and policies.

In summary, one can interpret true empowerment for economically empowered black women as not only encapsulating self-efficacy and increase in one's material wealth, but as encouraging the development of critical awareness of dominant structures that uphold their subordinate positions. These are the areas where these women have no control over the nature of their desired relationships but also lack the capacity to challenge such dominant structures. In the next section, the Black Feminist theory and its views on empowerment of women is discussed.

3.3 BLACK FEMINIST THEORY

This research draws analytical insights from the concept of intersectionality which was created by Crenshaw (1991) and has since become a central principle of feminist thinking. According to Crenshaw (1991), intersectionality has its interest in the intersection of race and gender. Through intersectionality, conventional feminism's focus and claims of speaking for all women without paying attention to racial, ethnic, class, sexual difference and other identities came under criticism, with Feminist scholars like Nash (2008) criticising the notion of a universal woman.

Davis (2010, p.67) defines intersectionality as "the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination". Intersectionality therefore challenges the notion of a "universal woman" since certain Feminist scholars suggest there should be an

acknowledge that there are differences among women (Nash, 2008). According to Crenshaw (1991), through the notion of intersectionality, the intention is to focus on the fact that black women's experiences and struggles are not getting attention and need to be grouped together with feminist and anti-racist discourses. Crenshaw (1991) further proposes the concept of intersectionality as a discourse about identity that acknowledges how identities are constructed when multiple dimensions intersect. In Crenshaw's view, through intersectionality, the differences that exist within intra-groups have the likelihood of being exposed within the broad categories of 'women' and 'blacks.' This implies that even within race and gender there exist differences and these need to be discussed and brought to the fore, as ignoring such differences has the likelihood of creating tension. The paradigm of intersectionality suggests that categories of colour, class, gender and race should be seen as mutually supporting one another. Traditional feminist discourses do not accurately reflect how black women live; instead the argument is that the focus on race and gender has resulted in the issue of class being excluded, which suggests that the Black Feminist thought needs to highlight issues that concern differences among black women (Mahony & Zmroczek, 1997). Wilkins (2012) asserts that black women tend to be subjected to intersections of race, gender and class amongst others. However, when black women resist one controlling image, they are likely to at the same time activate another controlling image, making it difficult for them to occupy ordinary social positions. An example would be a black economically empowered woman who chooses to stay single and end up being perceived as cold and dominant.

King (1988), though an earlier theorist than Crenshaw, also spoke of multiple jeopardy, which suggested that there are many dimensions that tend to shape a black woman's life through race, gender, class, age, religion and in the form of other identities. This is in line with Jones and McEwen (2000) who have proposed a model of multiple dimensions of identity. In their conceptual model, the focus is on multiple identities and suggests that there may be a danger in ignoring an individual's identity development by only paying attention to singular dimensions of identity development (Jones & McEwin, 2000). Wilkins (2012, p.175) conceptualises intersectionality as a way in which "social actors can achieve coherent identities in the face of incoherent identity expectations". This concept presents the need to look at how the different intersectional identities can be managed in everyday life, considering the cultural factors that also exist. Nash (2008) understands Intersectional projects, as being about allowing voices that have been previously marginalised being heard. The intersectional approach assumes that those who have been discriminated against hold a

perspective that scholars should consider when building a vision for a just society (Nash, 2008). In the current study, the researcher hypothesises that BEEW may be facing social challenges of a different kind to other black women, therefore a focus on gender or class alone may ignore the effects of economic empowerment on their social lives. In engaging with a similar issue, Crenshaw (1991) pointed out ways in which different identities intersect and identifies economic empowerment as representational and political.

Representationally, women in this study, by virtue of being economically empowered, may be depicted culturally and by the media in a manner that positions them in a negative light. This is confirmed by Hancock (2008) who has discovered that the prevailing discourses accompanying these successful women are that no black man will ever marry women who are “too feminist”, “too much” or “too angry”. This suggests that these women have to achieve less; economically and academically or put up with an unpleasant relationship in order to avoid intimidating a black male who might end up feeling emasculated.

3.3.1 CRITIQUE OF INTERSECTIONALITY

Since intersectionality is rooted in feminist thinking, it is important to also consider other feminist viewpoints. Nnaemeka (2005) makes a distinction between African and Western Feminism. According to Nnaemeka (2005), even though there may be differences within the African continent in terms of strategies and how feminism is viewed, there also exist common features and beliefs among African feminists. Nnaemeka (2005) suggests that African Feminism differs from Western Feminism in that African Feminism is not radical feminism. For Nnaemeka (2005), the issue of intersection of race, gender and class does not need as much urgent attention as Western Feminists suggest, but that such issues tend to be addressed as they relate to one's context.

African Feminism is the type of feminism whose language is characterized by collaboration, negotiation and compromise between men and women. The aforementioned is contrary to the language of challenge, disruption and deconstruction that tends to characterize Western Feminism. African feminism resists the exclusion of men as partners in helping to solve problems and in effecting social change. Instead, inter-gender partnerships tend to be an important feature in African cultures (Nnaemeka, 2005). Gordon (1996) also concurs with this view and asserts that women from the Third World feel that they have a lot more in common with men from the Third World, thus tending to not regard gender discrimination as

the main source of their oppression. Instead these women see their main struggle as being similar to men in fighting poverty, racism and economic alienation. Zulu (1998) also concurs by regarding African cosmology as always recognising a woman as having a vital place in society and as having a dual sex system of socio-political power sharing as a man's equal. This is highlighted by Ngoyi (2005) in this African saying:

*The African woman is neither a mirror image of man nor a slave.
She feels no need to imitate men to express her personality.
Her work, her own genius, her preoccupation, her way of speaking,
And her manners mask an original civilization.
She has not allowed herself to be colonised by either men or male culture.*

In summary, Black Feminist theory draws attention to the fact that women, even though they may be from the same race and gender, hold different identities. The idea highlights the issue of class differences among black women, meaning that at any given point, black women, no matter what they have achieved, carry an image that dominates and hinders their social positions. Despite these iterations, some of the Black Feminists argue against the concept of subordination of black women, suggesting that black women hold prestigious positions within society. In this regard, men are viewed as collaborative partners in solving social problems.

3.4 CONCLUSION

As highlighted above, there is a number of dynamics that play out and that eventually influence the development and experiences of black economically empowered women. To further support the broad objective of this research which is to explore the meanings that BEEW attach to how black men perceive them, it is relevant that their experiences with black men be fully explored.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY SECTION

6.3 INTRODUCTION

This chapter builds on the preceding review of literature concerning the narratives of black economically empowered women and the meanings they attach to how black men perceive them. In this chapter, the methodology employed in this study is discussed in order to explore the broad objective of the study as well as the sub-objectives discussed in Chapter 1.

The chapter is divided into seven main sections that will describe the methodological and analytical framework. Section 4.2 specifies and discusses the research design employed to explore the narratives of BEEW and the meanings that they attach to how black men perceive them. Section 4.3 describes the research sample by looking at the participants who took part in the study and the sampling techniques that were used. Section 4.4 and 4.5 discusses the data collection procedure and the data analysis respectively, while section 4.6 discusses the ethics. Lastly, Section 4.7 concludes this chapter.

6.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

In this research a qualitative research design and an interpretive approach are used to make meaning of the experiences of BEEW in post-apartheid South Africa. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006, p274), “qualitative research focuses on developing explanations of qualities of social phenomena as they occur naturally. It is concerned with the opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals (what, how, when and where) and the descriptive manner in which these experiences are captured in words. Qualitative research refers to the diverse (sometimes contradictory) concepts, definitions, characteristics, perceptions, metaphors and symbols that people use to describe and create meaning of their experiences.” To understand the participant’s experiences, research was conducted using an interpretative approach. The interpretative approach is utilised when the reality of each participant’s experience is internalised and the meanings are used as ontology. An interpretive approach does not focus on isolating and controlling variables, but on harnessing and extending the power of ordinary language and expression to help us understand the social world we live in (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

6.5 SAMPLE

Permission was obtained from black women who have management control over their own businesses and those who hold executive management positions in their chosen professions. Due to the nature of the study, purposive sampling (non-random sampling) was used, which ensured that cases typical of the population under study are selected. This method allowed for good examples of the phenomenon under study (Terre Blanch et al., 2006). The two initial participants were known to the researcher at a superficial level. These participants were asked to introduce the researcher to others who fit the criteria and who may be willing to participate in the study. This process of gradually accumulating a sufficiently large sample through contacts and references is called snowball sampling (Terreblanch et al., 2006). This method helps facilitate access to participants and may also help in affording one trust, as participants facilitate access to others that they might know and that they would personally introduce to the researcher. Other than fitting the criteria of being black, female and economically empowered, the participant's ages ranged from 25 upwards. The sample size selected was 10. Participants were initially solicited telephonically and this was followed up by the distribution of a participant information letter (Appendix A), which provided details of the aims of the research in broad terms and also stated what was required of the participants.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

All participants were contacted telephonically and invited to be part of the study. Where necessary, meetings were arranged between the researcher and the individual participants, where the researcher further explained the aim of the research, as well as clarify any questions that the potential participants may have had. Those who were willing to participate in the study were required to sign two consent forms. One form was for acceptance to participate in the interviews and another for consenting to audio-taping. An appointment time and place for the interview convenient to the researcher and the participant were then set up. The interviews were approximately thirty to forty five minutes long and were audio-taped. Where necessary, due to insufficient data or time constraints, a second interview was scheduled. After the interview, each participant was debriefed and where necessary referred for counselling at the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand or LifeLine in the Norwood Johannesburg area. The contact telephone numbers of the counselling services were provided in the Participant Information letter (see Appendix A).

The audio-taped interview was transcribed verbatim and notes regarding emphases, changes in tone, pauses made by the participant, the researcher's comments and notes regarding the non-verbal communication of the participant such as display of nervousness, were made.

All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed for analysis. The researcher in this study was the primary instrument of both collecting and analysing the data. The interviews were semi-structured, which allowed for richness and depth during the interview (Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011). Though questions were prepared in advance, semi-structured interviews allowed for leniency with regards to these questions and for the emergence of new questions during the conversation as per the guidelines set out in Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011). Through collecting data and recording written and spoken language, the researcher was able to qualitatively analyse the data by means of identifying and categorising themes therein. This allowed the researcher to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the existing information and to identify new categories or themes emerging from the data (Terre Blanche, et al., 2006).

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher used thematic analysis or a 'template analysis' to analyze the data. According to Braun and Clark (2006, p.79), "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data". The purpose of this approach is to build an abundant description from collecting data, in view of the characteristics, processes, transactions and contexts of the phenomenon being studied (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Through thematic analysis, the researcher was able to reflect reality and to also unravel the surface in order to search for deeper meanings. Codes were used to identify a feature of the data that appeared interesting to the researcher. The interesting features were coded into broad themes to create an initial template. Each broad theme was then subjected to a more detailed manual analysis by the researcher, which lead to the formation of more specific categories within each theme. The hierarchical coding allowed the researcher to analyse texts at different levels of specificity. This process was in response to Braun and Clarke (2006), who suggest that six phases be followed when conducting a thematic analysis. The first phase entailed the researcher familiarizing themselves with the data. It involved immersion in the data, through reading and re-reading of the data. The second phase began to generate initial codes by starting to produce codes that appeared interesting from the data. This process involved organizing data into meaningful groups, and coding the data depending on whether

the themes were data driven or driven by theory. The third phase was about searching for themes; data that was initially coded, collated and analyzed. Analysis of the codes, which were organized through visual representations in order to help sort the different codes into themes, was carried out. The aim of this process was to allow the researcher to assimilate the data. In this process, no external coder was used. In the next phase the entire data was re-read to confirm the themes in relation to the data set and to ensure that all the data themes were coded. At this stage, themes were refined and others collapsed or separated into different themes. By the end of this phase, clear themes began to emerge. When a satisfactory thematic map of data began to emerge, themes that were going to be used for the analysis were defined and the data within them analyzed. What appeared significant about the themes was also identified. Each story that the theme tells was identified and analyzed to see how it fits into the broader story of the data.

Finally, the researcher analyzed and wrote up the results. This phase only happened when the researcher had a set of fully worked out themes. The task of the write-up of a thematic analysis was to tell the story of the data in a way that demonstrated validity of the analysis. The analysis was coherent, logical, non-repetitive and an interesting account of the story that the data told within and across themes. Extracts from the themes were embedded within a narrative that is analytic, compelling and that illustrated the story the researcher was telling about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher continuously checked and rechecked categories as a way of ensuring credibility of the research results to account for the subjective nature of a qualitative analysis (Zhang, 2006). It was important that the results provided an accurate representation of meanings communicated through the study.

To ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research, the researcher employed a number of strategies that have been described by Shenton (2003) which entail ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. To ensure credibility the researcher among others, adopted research methods that are recognised. The researcher also worked closely with her supervisor to ensure that any gaps in the analysis are explicable. To achieve triangulation, participants of different age groups were chosen in order to reduce the impact of factors that may be unique for a certain age group. In addressing the issue of conformability, the researcher endeavoured to reduce potential bias by acknowledging her own predispositions, stating the methods that were employed in the research and reasons why such methods were employed. Due to the tendency for qualitative research findings to be

specific to a small number of individuals, it tends to be impossible to conclude that the findings can be applicable to other situations. To allow the reader to make transferability inferences, the researcher endeavoured to provide rich descriptions of the phenomenon under study. This was done in order to enable the reader to have full understanding of the phenomenon under study and to also allow the reader to compare what is described in the study with phenomenon that they may have seen emerge in their situation. In order to allow the reader the ability to assess the extent to which proper research practices were followed, the researcher has endeavoured to report in detail the processes that were followed in conducting this study. The aim was also to assist any future researcher who may want to repeat the same study with the view of arriving or not arriving at the same findings (Shenton, 2003).

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All participants invited to be part of the study were over the age of 18 and acted in their private capacity. They therefore did not need parental or organisational permission. To conduct the study, permission was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Witwatersrand. Participants of the study were informed of the nature and purpose of the study through the information letter and were also informed that they were not going to be rewarded or penalized for participating in the study. Participants were also informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they had a choice at all times to participate, or withdraw from the study without any consequences. The participants were also informed that they can refuse to answer some of the questions that made them feel uncomfortable. They were informed of confidentiality of the information and to further protect confidentiality, pseudonyms were used and all responses have been kept confidential. Confidentiality was explained to the participants that only the researcher and her supervisor would have access to the collected data. The researcher ensured that the participants did not participate to their detriment, whether directly or indirectly, since the subject matter had the potential to be sensitive. Contact details of telephonic counselling services were provided to the participants. The participants were asked to sign a letter consenting to participate in the study, for recording of the interviews and to participate. Participants were informed that the data collected will be kept in a safe lockable place at the University of the Witwatersrand for a period of five years to allow for the data to be checked and for potential use in later studies. They also gave consent after informing them that the research and data obtained may be published in a psychological journal and the findings of the research may be presented at

future psychological conferences. Finally, the participants were informed that should they be keen to know about the research findings, that it would be available in a summary format on request.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the methodology and analytical framework which were employed in this study to explore the narratives of black economically empowered women and the meanings they attach to how black men perceive them. The focus was placed on describing the methods that were employed in the research design, sample and data collection procedures and analysis. These results are presented and discussed in the next chapters. Chapter 5 presents the results from each of the participants, while chapter 6 highlights all the themes that emerged from the data and discusses them in relation to the literature as a way of corroborating arguments.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study investigated the narratives and subjective meanings of black economically empowered women about black men's perceptions about BEEW.. In order to answer the research question, the results from this chapter were used to address sub-objectives as set out in Chapter one and the questions as set out in the interview schedule. This chapter is divided into four main sections. In section 5.2, the intra-relational findings are presented with each participant's biographic information and a description of their interview with their prominent themes extracted, using questions from the interview schedule as a guideline. Section 5.3 presents the inter-relational findings which constitute a summary of the findings and the common themes extrapolated from all ten participants in preparation for the discussion in the next chapter. Section 5.4 provides the conclusion to the chapter.

5.2. PRESENTATION OF INTRA-RELATIONAL FINDINGS

The intra-relational findings presented below are those of the participant's responses. These findings are presented on the basis of individual face to face interviews that took place with each participant. The findings are guided by the interview schedule. Each sub-section presented below starts with a table presenting the participant's biographical information. Thereafter, the discussion focused on the participant's background history and experiences relating to their interactions with black men. The amount of information presented was based on the relevance as well as the openness of the participant regarding the specific topic. Some participants were open and candid with their responses, while others were slightly more guarded.

5.2.1 Participant 1

- Biographical Information

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 1	Female	35 – 40	Divorced and currently engaged to remarry	MBA-HR Consultant (Business Woman)

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 1 mentioned that she is a divorced mother of two children and holds a Post-Graduate degree in Industrial Psychology and a Masters in Business Administration (MBA). She has held several management positions and played executive roles in some of South African's Blue-Chip Companies. At the moment, she runs her own Human Resources Company where she does Human Resources Support and Consultancy for different companies. She is currently engaged to be married again.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 1 understands economic empowerment as the ability to be self-sufficient and to also extend this to others. It also means to add value to a person's surroundings, maybe their work environment and to start contributing to strategic decision making. This also means that as an entrepreneur, a person may start by giving other people opportunities through employing them, growing and contributing to the growth of the economy of the country.

Participant 1 regards herself as economically empowered as she has been part of the executive team in previous roles and also due to her capacity to mentor and develop other people and to employ others when her company grows. She also posits that whenever she consults, she also recommends to her clients that they hire a junior Human Resources person to enable their growth and for them to "spread their wings".

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 1 reported having struggled to meet men that she considers to be her equal, as they are mainly unavailable. She says the reason for this is that men perceive black economically empowered women as threats. Another reason according to Participant 1 may be that women are ahead of some men in terms of professional and financial growth.

Participant 1 cited an example of her friends who are economically empowered and who stay with men who work at Pick and Pay (a local super-market). Even though that may be the case for her friends and may seem condescending, according to Participant 1, what she is looking for is not status, but someone who can challenge her intellectually.

- ***The following question is related to whether the dynamics of the Participant's relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment? Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

Participant 1's view is that studying for an MBA caused her the break down of her marriage. In her own words, "everything started getting out of order". Her unavailability due to her studies resulted in her husband feeling threatened and insecure. She is of the opinion that her leaving work and taking a severance package to finance her studies resulted in her husband subsequently resigning from his employment and deciding to run his own company, even though this was not their original plan. She attributes this to him 'competing' as a result of feeling insecure. She also reports that after accepting a previous role as a company executive, her husband committed to supporting her, yet she always felt as though he was always "pulling her down." Participant 1 also blames external influences for suggesting to her husband that she might leave or cheat on him.

In terms of traditional roles, Participant 1 regards this as one of the causal areas of conflict in her previous marriage. With growing responsibilities at work, Participant 1 felt compelled to excel at work, as she felt pressure to out-perform her male counterparts, who may have expected her to fail. As a result, her working long hours resulted in not being fully available to perform some of her 'female' responsibilities. To address this, she hired domestic help to assist with some of her responsibilities.

- ***Is the Participant an equal in their romantic relationship?***

In her current relationship, Participant 1 sees herself as playing a much more dominant role financially and in all spheres. For Participant 1, if a man is a visionary, she would be willing to assume a submissive role 'nicely', but would continue to state her opinions in a 'non-threatening manner' so that he (her partner) ends up thinking they are his. This is because she does not want to overpower a man, but subscribes to the notion that a man is the head of the household, as advocated by God.

- ***The next section related the following question: Is it a challenge for the Participant to have a meaningful romantic relationship?***

Participant 1 is now engaged to be married. Before she met her current fiancé, she found that other men who tried to pursue her, when seeing her drive a big car, tended to think that she can support them. She related an incident where a man she was dating asked to borrow her car. In her view, men see women as growing (professionally) quickly. This results in them wanting to take advantage of them. Participant 1 asserts that for her it is not about material acquisitions, as her fiancé earns less than she does, but that as in the previous case, it did not feel right to lend her car to someone. According to Participant 1, she will not financially support a man. In her own words, “she will never fall for any man who comes into her space and expects her to be his caregiver.” Participant 1 holds the opinion that men themselves have one voice saying: “I want someone to depend on me yet there is another voice that is saying no, that woman must support me”.

5.2.2 Participant 2

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 2	Female	30 - 35	Married	Head - Internal Communications (Multinational Company)

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 2 reported that she is a married mother of a 5 year old boy. She is responsible for Internal Communications for the Southern African Region in a Multinational company. Her husband is an Engineer of a mining company.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 2 understands an economically empowered woman as one who is financially independent and who holds her own. For Participant 2, Economic Empowerment is about working hard and not depending on hand outs. Participant 2 regards herself as economically empowered as she grew up in an environment where her mother was a ‘primary breadwinner and a fighter. Even though her father was unemployed for a good number of years, he was

always trying to empower the family in other ways. For participant 2, being financially independent means that even if she is married, she can still save her own money.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 2 holds the view that there are men who appreciate a woman who is economically empowered, yet there are those who are intimidated by her. She thinks that some men regard her as intimidating and as not needing them, though she feels that this is not true. As a result, according to Participant 2, if she was not yet married, she thinks it would be difficult for her to find a partner. According to Participant 2, black men have the wrong perception about economically empowered women: “There is no woman in her right mind that doesn’t want a man to take care of her”. In her opinion, women want a man who can take them out and not suggest that they split the bill. Participant 2 laments the fact that men have had to abscond their leadership role “men just relax now, like no, women are now independent, even if I stay at home and just look after kids, its fine you know, she will do everything”.

- ***The following question is related to whether the dynamics of the Participant’s relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment? Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles***

Participant 2 indicated that the fact that she is economically empowered means that her husband thinks of her as self-sufficient and as not needing to be pampered. In her words to her husband: “babe, you know, sometimes I want you to just buy me perfume, I don’t want to buy it for myself. I need you to be my provider and that’s what I want”. As a result, she regards the dynamics of her relationship as having changed. She also related how sometimes she dines out with her husband who ‘will just sit there until I volunteer to pay the bill’; and I’ll take out my card and then pay... I’m like, like ya I shouldn’t be doing this, but anyhow, you know, ya”.

In terms of traditional roles in the home, Participant 2 regards herself and her partner as independent people who still maintain their independent lives and who share tasks in the home, though he might refuse to do certain things like washing dishes and cooking, which she then does when their domestic helper is not around.

- ***Is the Participant an equal partner in their romantic relationship?***

Participant 2 pointed out that she believes that a man is the head of the household and must be respected. She also stated that not all women want to be leaders in the home. Participant 2 believes that a man must be the provider. In her opinion, a man is the king of the house. This she relates as similar to when she was growing up, where her father was unemployed, yet still regarded as the leader of the household. As a result, Participant 2 believes that having a man who earns less than she does would not be a problem, ‘as long as he works and has an ambition of sorts’. For her, a man must show that he has a plan, and must not rely on a woman to carry everything materially and financially.

5.2.3 Participant 3

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 3	Female	40-45	Divorced, Remarried	Building Surveyor and Quantity Surveyor. Businesswoman

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 3 is a Quantity and Building Surveyor and has worked in property development facilitation for leading property management companies in South Africa. She currently manages her own business in construction project management and property development facilitation. Though previously divorced, Participant 3 has since remarried.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 3 questioned the concept of empowerment, asking the question “empowered by whom?” Her understanding of empowerment implies the giving of opportunities and projects that people would not have ordinarily had in the previous dispensation. As far as she is concerned, she is definitely empowered by virtue of her level of income.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 3 reported that being in a white male dominated professional field where she works closely with architects, engineers, town planners, environmental consultants and quantity surveyors; she has found “white colleagues and Indians more problematic than black brothers.” In terms of relationships, she also does not think black men perceive her

differently. Part of the reason, according to her, could be that before her first marriage, she dated people that were her university counterparts. She then married someone who possessed a Master's degree. After her divorce, Participant 3 dated men that were older than her and who were "doing well for themselves". Now that she is married again, her current husband is someone who is professionally successful and whom she met when she was already running her own business. As a result, Participant 3 does not think that men are threatened by her position.

- ***The following question is related to whether the dynamics of the Participant's relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment? Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

According to Participant 3, her first husband had expected her to be a "stay at home mother" and she declined. In her opinion, his suggestion may have been influenced more by the fact that he was working in an Afrikaans environment, where most of his colleagues' spouses were "stay at home" mothers. She explained that this could be the reason behind her ex-husband's proposition.

In terms of traditional roles, she reported having played the traditional role where, amongst others, she brought her ex-husband food on a tray and packed his suitcases when he embarked on business trips. As far as she is concerned, such acts did not make a difference in her marital relationship. As a result, in her current marriage, she has hired domestic helpers who assist with all such chores in the house. She has also made the decision to not play any traditional gender roles in her interactions with her husband or her in-laws. In her words "she does not do female categorised roles and responsibilities, and would not expect her husband to do same".

- ***Is the Participant an equal in their romantic relationship?***

In her current relationship, Participant 3 sees herself as an equal and refuses to do anything that she does not feel comfortable doing.

5.2.4 Participant 4

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 4	Female	35 – 40	Married	Business Consulting, Building Construction and Hospitality Business

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 4 iterated that she is a married mother of two children. She has spent several years in the corporate world, where she held various senior managerial roles. Currently she and her husband are co-owners of their Consulting Business.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

According to Participant 4, economic empowerment is about “playing a role in the economic sphere of the country”. “It is about one being empowered, not only in talking about wealth, but also understanding the power of money itself”. Participant 4 regards herself as economically empowered, as she runs her own business and is independent, financially and in other areas of her life. For her, “being empowered is about owning herself and also about looking after other people and communities”. Participant 4 has currently adopted a school that she is helping through contributing to its needs, and soliciting sponsors.

- ***How do black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

In Participant 4’s opinion, men who are themselves empowered do not feel threatened by black economically empowered women, whereas those who have ‘ego issues’ feel threatened. She said her husband trusts himself, and knows his capabilities and as a result of this, he is not threatened by her. He has instead been her great supporter who pushed her to get to where she currently is. According to Participant 4, a man who is self-assured is less likely to be threatened, whereas those who do not believe in themselves are more likely to feel threatened by a BEEW. Participant 4 has also had experiences of men approaching her with the motive of taking advantage of her because they thought she had money and was single. In the business sphere, Participant 4’s experience is that some black men tend to not want to deal with a woman who is confident, as they expect women to be submissive.

- ***The following question is related to whether the dynamics of the Participant's relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment? Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

Participant 4 reported that she and her husband grew up together as they met at university. As a result of this, she does not think that the dynamics of their relationship has changed in any way. She regards herself as someone who has never been domesticated and someone who always hired domestic help, even before she became economically empowered. She also reported applying the same principle of outsourcing help even when it comes to family functions of her in-laws.

- ***Is the Participant an equal in their romantic relationship?***

According to Participant 4, their relationship is one of equals where they play complementary roles.

5.2.5 Participant 5

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 5	Female	40 – 45	Married	MBA – Marketing Services

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 5 has been working in the marketing industry for 15 years. She also ran her own business for 3 to 4 years and still runs one part of her business part-time. She has two school going children and is married. Her husband is an unemployed lawyer.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 5 understands an economically empowered person as being someone who benefits from the South African economy and who has the ability to enrich themselves and to create a livelihood for themselves and their families. Economic empowerment is also about a person's ability to contribute to the Gross Domestic Product of the country. Participant 5 regards herself as economically empowered as she pays tax, e-tolls, pays her house keeper and is able to provide for her children to eat and go to school.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 5 thinks that men are intimidated by black economically empowered women because they are used to women earning less than they do and as being in less influential positions. As a result, they tend to be afraid to approach women (BEEW) as they think that they are arrogant and hard “like they are almost a man”. Participant 5 suggested that men tend to classify women differently; those that belong to the boardroom that they cannot socialize with and those that they tend to befriend irrespective of whether they belong in the boardroom or not. For both of these two types of women, men tend to relate to them differently. Participant 5 is of the opinion that women must “present themselves as less smart than men”. In her social relations, she is always cautious of not intimidating someone and of letting the man take the lead in discussions. In a business setting, Participant 5 reports that “you don’t care to make them feel comfortable, because in a meeting you don’t want men to take advantage of you”, yet in a social setting, “you tend to take a neutral stance and firstly assess their professional position in order to determine at which level you can engage them”.

- ***The following question is related to whether the dynamics of the Participant’s relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment. Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

According to Participant 5, it is important that a couple be equally empowered as the nature of men and women’s relationships is such that they need to be equally empowered or that a man’s position be elevated. Participant 5 reported that her husband decided to stop working and has been un-successfully trying his hand at business. Although he has not had any luck in business, Participant 5 reports that ‘he is reluctantly looking for employment’. Having said this, she was adamant that his failure to accept low paying positions was as a result of her earning a high income. In Participant 5’s opinion, men are better equipped to lead materially, by providing and women are equipped to lead emotionally. According to Participant 5, being in a relationship where a woman is financially more empowered than a man causes the dynamics of the relationship to change, because the ‘woman ends up commanding and leading and as a result ends up emasculating a man. This tends to lead to a man losing his self-esteem and becoming insecure’. This issue has been the case for Participant 5 who has realised that men tend to be insecure, because of her economic status. She has navigated this by giving her husband respect ‘by doing what she has been taught, which is to respect and still honour him, listen to him and not ridicule him’. She also mentioned that she continues to cook for him and to do ‘things that she was taught to do’. In as much as she does this for her

husband, she finds it emotionally draining to make him feel like a man and to lead a home. For her, it is easier to lead in a corporate environment than at home. She finds it difficult to provide for a man, to add to the family income and build a legacy for the family, or to lead these discussions at home. Participant 5 finds this emotionally draining; because she plays a role that she feels must be led by a man. In addition, she hires domestic help to assist with household chores, but finds that when the housekeeper is not around, that she still has to ensure that there is food, that the washing is done and that the kids are ‘well taken care of.’

- ***Is the Participant an equal in their romantic relationship?***

Participant 5 is still of the opinion that her husband should take the leadership role in the home, as it is his position that he was born into, was socialized and created for. For Participant 5, it is also important that a man takes the lead and be the provider, financially.

5.2.6 Participant 6

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 6	Female	30 - 35	Married	Chartered Accountant, Partner (Auditing Firm)

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 6 is a qualified Chartered Accountant. She works as a partner at one of the top Accounting firms in South Africa. Participant 6 is the only woman partner in her division, and has been appointed deputy group leader, in charge of the human capital side for the banking and capital market division, with over a hundred people reporting to her. She is a mother of one child and is married.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment and are you economically empowered?***

Although economic empowerment is a broad term, Participant 6 understands empowerment to not exclusively be about purchasing power or being wealthy, but it also implies access to resources. According to her, “it is the ability to not only look after the self, but to also be free to have choices and to make decisions that are comfortable to oneself”. Participant 6 regards economic empowerment as a combination of what a person takes home (income) and what they are able to control. “It is therefore not only about a pay cheque”. “Having the ability to

control that pay cheque, having a say over what happens to it, is what economic empowerment is all about”. Participant 6 regards herself as economically empowered. The realisation that she has access to a variety of people and how they manage their wealth and lifestyles and that the more she progresses professionally “the more she understands the meaning of wealth and its importance to her, the more she realises her economic empowered status”. Having access to boards (sitting on company boards) and having an understanding of what money means to those that are wealthy, all contributed to this realisation. According to Participant 6, it is not only about knowing that she can go to a shopping mall and afford what she wants, but it is also about having an understanding of what her spending means in the context of a bigger economic world

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

According to Participant 6, men perceive you as a black economically empowered woman depending on your behaviour and self-presentation. Having said this, she finds that when she begins to introduce herself professionally, the conversations become awkward, as some begin to relate to her based on her title. She underscored the fact that it is about managing these views and interpretations, as some may begin to think “this person is playing in my space or the space that is beyond what I had expected”. It is at this point that according to Participant 6, one can make an individual comfortable or uncomfortable. Participant 6 finds that there are men that she would tell what she does (professionally) and who would be comfortable with this presentation. There are however men that she would want to have a personal relationship with. In such situations she tends to downplay who she is and what she does. The implication is that it depends on the type of man she is talking to or the context of their interaction.

- ***The following question is related to whether the dynamics of the Participant’s relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment. Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

When Participant 6 met her husband, she was still studying and he was working. At the time her salary was about R1, 500 00 per month. However she remembers that even then, they had open conversation about their incomes. Over a period of 8 years, she reported moving from R1, 500 a month to over a million rand in earnings. According to her, she still continues to assure him that theirs was a joint journey to success. She suggested that her economic empowered status and how her husband perceives her depend on her approach. If her

approach is based on her status as a BEEW and show that “I can do what I want and don’t need anything from you”, then she thinks that her husband’s reaction will be different. Participant 6 also posited that she is not subservient and does not go home and be pretentious about her sense of self. Yet, she also acknowledges that her identity is not just wrapped up in her BEEW status. Her sense of self encompasses other elements of herself such as being a mother and a wife. According to Participant 6, having a husband who has a mother who is a BEEW, has contributed to how he perceives ‘powerful’ women. According to Participant 6, she also has not allowed her status as BEEW to be a problem in her relationship. She mentioned the importance of being humble and the awareness that her professional contribution can also be made by somebody else. For her, “family relations are like a crystal ball that one cannot afford to drop as it stands the risk of breaking into shatters”.

In terms of traditional roles in the home, Participant 6 is adamant that the ability for her to bring a pay cheque means that her husband is aware of her contribution to the home and as such should not expect her to be home to cook dinner when she has to work late. This also means that he should be prepared to help with taking care of their son. Having said this, she also emphasises that there are certain roles and expectations when you become a wife, as society and culture dictates, like ensuring that he has a hot cooked meal as often as possible, and by ‘affording him his position as a man’. She does this by ‘allowing him to pay’ when they go out for dinner with friends, and by getting him a plate and serving him during functions. This also filters into how she relates with her in-laws; “being a deputy group leader stops when I get home. When I get there (at her in-laws) I roll up my sleeves and play my role as a daughter, if I have to wash dishes, I do, and I also serve his parents”.

- ***Is the Participant an equal in their romantic relationship?***

According to Participant 6, in as much as she regards herself as an equal in her relationship, she also does not “let her professional power translate into her home, because it is not the same thing”.

5.2.7 Participant 7

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 1	Female	40-45	Single	General Counsel in Parastatals

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 7 is a lawyer and the general counsel at a Parastatal. She is responsible for legal risk and compliance with focus on strategy and the turning around of the company. She is also a permanent attendee in the company board and board committees of subsidiaries. Previously, she was general counsel for one of the top 5 banks in South Africa. Participant 7 is single, does not have children and is a born again Christian.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 7 thinks that economically empowered women are those who are privileged enough to be earning significant amounts of money and are financially secured. She goes on to say that economically empowered women are privileged enough to reap the benefits of the struggle against apartheid, which ensured that black women also get their place in the corporate world and in the economy. She also believes black economically empowered women to be those who are players in the economy. For Participant 7, economic empowerment is therefore about the financial aspects and about impacting the economy in terms of the roles and positions that women hold in the work place or the type of businesses that women run. It is also about being a significant shareholder, or being part of the board of directors of an entity that impacts the economy.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 7's experience has been that there is a general acceptance of black economically empowered women in the work place, yet she reported having struggled to have meaningful romantic relationships. In her opinion there are two categories of men based on her observations in South Africa where she lives and the United States of America where she studied. There are firstly those who are resentful and will try and use you as a woman, as they view empowered woman as a means to an end. She cited an example of someone she invited for a date, who turned around after coffee and said "you asked for the coffee, you pay for it!" She has also had experiences of men who see a BEEW as "a cash cow" and who would constantly borrow money from them. This resulted in Participant 7 compromising her standards and "feeling guilty about everything." However, Participant 7 reported having male friends who are aware of her empowered status, yet would still volunteer to pay for a meal. She indicated that this behaviour of her counterparts makes her happy.

- ***The following question related to whether the dynamics of the Participant's relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment. Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

Participant 7 is not in a relationship at the moment; however she has in the past experienced instances which indicated the dynamics of her relationships to be contrary to her expectations. For example, she met men who would utter statements like “if I had the money or whatever.....” As a result, she has also wondered if her expectations are too high in terms of the type of man she is looking for. This she says has also been suggested by the church. Her experiences have also been that some of the men after having a meal with her would say “oh I do not have my wallet can you pay?” or “I do not have enough money do you mind paying?” Such encounters have resulted in Participant 7 questioning whether her expectations are too high and if she is being unrealistic (in expecting a man who would pay for expenses incurred by both of them). This has resulted in Participant 7 trying hard to hide how much she earns, but noted that it is inevitable that someone will find out where you live. In an encounter where she invited a man to her house, she got a response of a man saying “oh this house is so big, I cannot afford it, and...” which is contrary to her expectations of a man being the provider and being able to take care of the major bills. According to Participant 7, there have also been instances where she lent money to her previous partners and found that they expected more and did not offer to pay her back.

Regarding the traditional gender roles, Participant 7 declared herself a traditionalist who is also conservative. Her belief is that a man is the provider. According to her, she would prefer a man who earns more than she does, as she thinks it is difficult to meet someone who is secure enough in themselves to allow their wives/ spouses/ partners to earn more than them. Participant 7 views a wife who goes to work as a temporary measure of about 12 – 15 years or as a way of stepping in due to unforeseen circumstances happening to her husband, like a debilitating accident. Participant 7 suggested that her preference would be to stay at home and be a home maker, mother and nurturer. This is a sentiment that she suggests is shared by two of her other friends (one who holds a doctorate from Columbia University in the United States of America) and another who is a partner in a local law firm.

- ***Is the Participant an equal in their romantic relationship?***

Even though Participant 7 is not in a romantic relationship, she suggested that she would be willing to ‘submit to her future partner’ if he would be able to put his ego and pride aside, if he earned less than her. This she believes as being achievable if “God is in the mix”.

- ***The next section related to the following question: Is it a challenge for the Participant to have a meaningful romantic relationship?***

According to Participant 7 it is a challenge to be in a meaningful romantic relationship. This she attributed to having too high standards and being unrealistic in expectations by wanting a CEO whilst she is aware that ‘not every man can be a CEO’.

5.2.8 Participant 8

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 8	Female	25-30	Single	Pharmacist

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 8 is a pharmacist by profession. She works for a parastatal company, where she heads up a team of pharmacists who dispense medication on behalf of the parastatal. Participant 8 is unmarried and in a relationship but does not have any children.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 8 understands economic empowerment as being favoured by the economy, having financial independence and being able to afford luxuries. According to Participant 8, being empowered economically means that she has a voice and can, for example, negotiate roles and safe sex. She therefore regards herself as economically empowered.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

According to Participant 8, black men perceive her as being out of their league, with those around her age group seeing her as arrogant. She therefore finds that she prefers not to disclose her income so that they (men) may feel less threatened by her professional status.

- ***The following question related to whether the dynamics of the Participant's relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment? Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

Participant 8 is of the view that the dynamics of a relationship tend to change as a result of her BEEW status. In her view, currently the economy favours women and this has resulted in men finding it difficult to accept this current situation. In her current relationship, her boyfriend who is a research pharmacist has been retrenched. As a result, her experience is that an attempt at helping support him is interpreted (by him) as an attempt to control him. She also reports that in situations where she offers to take him out for a meal, he usually suggests they eat at inexpensive places, whereas this is usually not the case when he intends to pay the bill. Participant 8 experiences a constant need to reassure him.

In terms of traditional roles, Participant 8 made it clear that she will never tolerate abuse from her partner, yet she also believes that house work is for women. She however expects help from her partner in the domestic realm and in agreeing to hire domestic help. She believes that 'women are women' and must not forget their roles. To emphasise this, she pointed to the fact that 'when two powers meet, the lesser power has to bow, regardless of the money they earn, as they are still women'. Having said this, despite the aforementioned, she also believes that some roles in the home may be negotiated, even though others can never be, for an example that a wife must cook for her husband.

- ***Is the Participant an equal partner in their romantic relationship?***

Participant 8 reported that she will never see herself as an equal in her relationship, as the husband is the head of the family, as dictated by the Bible. This, according to her is the only way in which a relationship is going to work. In her opinion, "men will never change; men are men and not women".

- ***The next section related to the following question: Is it a challenge for the Participant to have a meaningful romantic relationship?***

Participant 8 suggested that in romantic relationships, the relationship is easier when a man still supports the woman financially; implying that challenges arise when a woman becomes financially independent. When that happens, she asserts men will become envious resulting in problems in the relationship. Participant 8 related an example of having dated someone who earned less than her and who spent extravagantly on her even though he could not afford

to do so. In her opinion this man avoided ‘feeling small’ by going out of his way to prove that he could afford her.

5.2.9 Participant 9

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 1	Female	40 – 45	Married	BCom Accounting Graduate Technology enablement and customer demand fulfilment

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what do you do professionally?***

Participant 9 is responsible for technology enablement and customer demand fulfilment for retail and commercial customers for a parastatal and has 20 people who report to her. She is married and has two children.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 9 understands economic empowerment primarily as the ability to support oneself and to understand what is happening in one’s country; having the understanding of how economics have an impact on one’s country and what it is that can make the country successful. It is also about understanding how economics have an impact at a personal level. She regards herself as economically empowered, because of the opportunities and responsibilities she has professionally.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 9 feels that when men realise her financial independence, and the extent of her material possessions, that they wonder if they would be able to afford her. This might lead to them feeling threatened.

- ***The following question related to whether the dynamics of the Participant’s relationship changed as a result of her economic empowerment. Has her economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

Participant 9 is in a space where her husband resigned from his place of work. Her view is that he did this, because he knows that she will be able to support him. She also cited

examples of some of her friends who are also in similar situations. According to her, this then tends to change the dynamics of a relationship. In her situation, she has found that her partner makes assumptions, that since he no longer earns an income, she regards him as ‘useless’. Even though they had discussions about their finances, she reported that her husband still continues to run expenses as if they have two salaries. This has also resulted in her making household decisions on her own, and ruling out his opinion. She also asserts that his non-contribution also extends to other areas of their life, where ‘he refuses to add any value’, such as helping with household chores and with their children. Even though Participant 9 has hired domestic help, she still continues to play the traditional roles that women perform like tending to her children and cooking the family meals, though she reports only cooking for herself and the children sometimes, ‘so that he can realise that he has pushed her too far’.

- *The next section related to the following question: Is it a challenge for the Participant to have a meaningful romantic relationship?*

Participant 9 has taken the lead in her relationship. This she attributes to the fact that he does not add value in their lives. She however still believes that men and women have different roles to play, without going beyond what they can accommodate.

5.2.10 Participant 10

- ***Biographical Information***

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 10	Female	50 – 55	Single	Independent Consultant, Technical and Advisory Services

- ***Can you tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?***

Participant 10 is a single mother. She is an independent consultant, providing technical and advisory services to a variety of organisations including Not for Profit organisations and also offers Technical advisory services.

- ***What is your understanding of economic empowerment? Are you economically empowered?***

Participant 10 described economic empowerment as the opportunity for women to get into a job and earn as much as a man, to be able to make choices about how much money is earned and how that money is spent. It is also about a cadre of women who can now live lives that

are comfortable without necessarily needing the material backing of a man. This kind of choice was not available to women in the past, due to how society was structured. Participant 10 regards herself as economically empowered. This is due to her earning her own income that she has worked for and for having the ability to support herself, raise and educate her son, support her extended family and still be able to look after herself. It also signifies to her the realization that she can quit fulltime employment when she wants to take things easier, whilst knowing that her income as a consultant may not be consistent, nor the same as her fulltime employment salary. The flexibility to make such decisions and choices for herself and her family, whilst she is materially competent, and to relatively have what she wants, needs and desires, is also what makes her realise that she is indeed economically empowered.

- ***How do you think black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?***

Participant 10 is of the opinion that men perceive her as arrogant and scared of commitment. She attributes this to the fact that economic empowerment results in a person having the power to give assent or dissent. According to her, when a person is empowered, their choice of a partner is not about who is going to look after them. They may have many reasons why they want to get involved with a man, but those reasons are not about needing someone to provide for them. According to her, the socialisation of men as primary providers often results in men labelling women who are able to provide for themselves “as arrogant and as not woman enough”. Participant 10 reported an experience where a man told her that “since she behaves like men, she might as well become one”. She therefore implies that the choices that women now make are in her words like “stepping on toes that are very sore,” as it challenges what men see as their self-worth. According to Participant 10, this is likely to elicit feelings of inadequacy in men who expect women to be dependent.

- ***The following question related to whether the dynamics of the Participant’s relationship changed as a result of their economic empowerment. Has their economic empowerment had a role in the playing out of traditional gender roles?***

According to Participant 10, by the time a woman is economically empowered, they are in a position where they have fought many battles outside the home, such as in the workplace. It also means that the women have made very important decisions about investing their money, which in a way has made them step into a world that is not traditionally seen as a woman’s world. Because of all these experiences, women learn to ‘square up’ to men in the

boardroom, which means they learn to fight like men and to lose their softness in pursuit of economic empowerment. Women end up building a façade of toughness, so that even where they need to be tender and caring and loving, they become incapable of displaying these traits. These traits tend to affect their romantic and other personal relationships, which are then bound to have an impact on the dynamics of a relationship. Additionally, according to Participant 10, men are definitely no longer the primary or sole providers. This has resulted in some men not understanding the role that they should play; conversely, there are also men who view women empowerment as a blessing to them. These men she perceives as lazy. Participant 10 has come across such men, which has resulted in her ‘being vigilant and be able to spot these lazy men from a distance’. Even though she does not want to be in a relationship where she has to count money in terms of how much she contributes, she is also wary of men who are looking to “just grab and grab,” and still want to control the resources and be abusive. According to Participant 10, these changes have impacted relationships in a complex way, as they are not easy to figure out.

In terms of traditional roles, Participant 10 cannot understand why some women would not want to play roles that are best suited for them, like nurturing the family, because economic empowerment have afforded them the opportunity to play these roles on their own terms and not by the rules prescribed by society. She was also clear to explain that the type of nurturing she refers to does not mean that one needs to be a doormat, or be like a man, as true empowerment is about being an authentic self. Where the problem lies, according to Participant 10, is “in how partners interpret women and the world we now live in.” The challenge is therefore for men and women to prevent the clash by engaging in how roles are redefined in this changing environment. “It is the communication and recognition of what is happening and trying to make sense of it that will prevent the clashes”.

- ***Is the Participant an equal partner in their romantic relationship?***

Participant 10 regards herself as an equal in relationships.

- ***The next section related to the following question: Is it a challenge for the participant to have a meaningful romantic relationship?***

Participant 10 thinks that men perceive her as arrogant, with some expecting to abuse her resources, which makes relationships a challenge. She also reported that it is sometimes difficult when she meets someone whose self-esteem is low or who for some reason has been

unsuccessful in whatever they are trying to do. Similarly, even those men who for whatever reason feel that it is wrong for a woman to command more resources than they do impact a relationship negatively. In such cases, she found that she had to do “a little brushing of the ego”. In her understanding of the “male-female game”, she relates having experienced not only in romantic relationships, but also with male friends and relatives, a situation where she offered to pay the bill and found that these men felt insulted. However, she was aware of their financial circumstances and inability to afford to pay. She also related an incident where she decided to buy herself a new car without consulting the person she was dating at the time, who happened to be driving an old car. When he saw her car he got upset with her, with his anger stemming from the fact that she did not ask for his permission. She argues that she did not see the point of checking with him first. She also found that during arguments, the accusations were related to her material possessions. She therefore finds it hard to be a single woman, as she suspects that men perceive an economically empowered woman as arrogant and therefore tend to treat the economically empowered woman negatively. In conclusion, Participant 10 perceived women sometimes as being obsessed with asserting themselves that: “we even fight for things that are not worth fighting for.”

5.3 SUMMARY OF INTER-RELATIONAL FINDINGS

In exploring the inter-relational findings, it emerged that all the participants regard themselves as economically empowered. Their economic empowerment means that they have a choice in how their money is spent and also have the ability to influence decisions around them. The majority of participants also referred to the difficulty in having and maintaining meaningful romantic relationships. This was attributed to most black men perceiving black economically empowered women as a threat, or as arrogant. The reason may also be due to men not knowing how to relate to these women. As a result, most black economically empowered women have resorted to not disclosing or even down-playing their professional status and/or income. The findings also make reference to some women expecting men to be the primary providers and leaders in the relationship, whereas others do not think a man’s financial status is important in a romantic relationship. However, most participants expected men to take a leadership role, be a visionary and have ambition. It also emerged through the study that most women who earn more than their partners feel compelled to ‘brush the man’s ego a little bit’ and reassure them of their status as head of the family. Most of the participants in the study indicated an openness to playing the traditional gender roles of providing emotional support and nurturance for the family, taking responsibility for the

efficient running of the home, overseeing household chores, cooking meals and maintaining the children's wellbeing. Findings also indicate that BEEW may be experiencing incongruence in terms of who they are and how they should be relating to those around them. This may also invoke feelings of guilt in these women. There is also an indication that men themselves may be having internal struggles in terms of how they relate to BEEW. Some may wish to be romantically involved with a BEEW, but may not know how to relate or define their roles in the relationships. Finally, some BEEW are of the opinion that men may view them as a means to an end and therefore expect a BEEW to support them financially. It was also noted that most candidates were open with their responses, whilst others became more candid after the recorded interview. These themes that have emerged will be discussed further in the next chapter. The themes will be corroborated in an attempt to address the objectives of the research, as stated in Chapter 1.

5.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter primarily examined the intra-relational and inter-relational findings which were based on the participants' responses. These findings are presented based on the individual face-to-face interviews that took place with each participant and that were guided by the interview schedule and the process of thematic content analysis. In terms of the inter-relational findings and the extraction of recurring themes from the data, it was found that most participants had similar experiences which resulted in a range of themes that will be presented and discussed in the next chapter. Chapter 6 of this report describes and discusses in detail the interpretation of the various themes that emerged from the data, through thematic content analysis. The themes are also supported by quotes from the raw data to qualify and validate them and are integrated with the existing literature.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the discussion and interpretation of the various themes which emerged from interviews that were mainly conducted with ten black economically empowered women. Seven of the participants were between the ages of 35 and 50, which, according to Piaget's stages of development, is a stage of adulthood, whilst two participants were between the ages of 19 and 35, a stage of young adulthood. One participant was between the ages of 50 +, a stage which, according to Piaget is mature adulthood (Brown & Desforges, 2006).. All responses from the participants were analysed thematically through the process of thematic content analysis (TCA).

6.2 BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Ten black women, who are economically empowered, were interviewed for the purposes of this study. The individuals were chosen on the basis of them having management control over their own businesses or management control in their chosen profession. These participants were between the ages of 25 and 55. They all reported certain key features that they think qualify them to be considered black economically empowered women. These features were about their earning capacity, the ability to provide for those around them, to have a voice and a choice in the decisions impacting their lives. Their biographical details are tabulated in the table below.

Table 6.2.1
Biographical Details of participants

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Professional Status
Participant 1	Female	35 – 40	Engaged	MBA – HR Consultant Business-Woman
Participant 2	Female	30 – 35	Married	Head – Internal Communications
Participant 3	Female	40 – 45	Divorced / Remarried	Quantity Surveyor, Businesswoman
Participant 4	Female	35 – 40	Married	Businesswoman
Participant 5	Female	40 – 45	Married	MBA- Marketing Services

Participant 6	Female	30 – 35	Married	CA – Partner
Participant 7	Female	40 – 45	Single	General Counsel
Participant 8	Female	25 – 30	Single	Head Pharmacist
Participant 9	Female	40 – 45	Married	BCom Accounts graduate, Technology Enablement
Participant 10	Female	50 - 55	Single	Independent Consultant, Technical and Advisory Services

6.3 FINDINGS BASED ON INTERVIEWS

Themes from the interviews conducted by the researcher were assessed and reassessed by the researcher and the supervisor for congruency and to establish trustworthiness by considering credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability of the data. Various themes, based on the narratives and subjective meanings that black economically empowered women about black men's perceptions about BEEW, emerged. These themes are grouped under:

1. The themes that emerged from questions asked about economic empowerment and if the participants saw themselves as economically empowered;
2. The themes that emerged from questions asked about how black economically empowered women think black men perceive them;
3. Themes that emerged with regards to BEEW's responses to black men's perceptions; and lastly,
4. Themes that emerged in terms of how the dynamics of BEEW's relationships have been impacted.

The predominant and overarching theme which emerged throughout the research related to the struggles and paradoxes that BEEW face both internally and externally, as a result of their economic empowerment. The predominant themes and their respective subthemes that emerged from the above grouping of themes are the following:

THEME 1: Internal Struggles of the BEEW's:

- a) The quest for a fitting romantic relationship
- b) Female responses

THEME 2: External Struggles of BEEW's:

- a) Changes in the dynamics of the relationship
- b) Conflict related to fulfillment of dual roles
- c) Men's responses; and
- d) Emic voices

The analysis of data presented in this study is embedded within the theory of empowerment which crucially looks at what empowerment is and what it means to be empowered. It also explored African perspectives on empowerment.

The central theme mentioned above, specifies both the internal and external struggles as well as the paradoxes faced by BEEW. This is in line with what has been mentioned in the theory of empowerment, where theorists like Ali (2014) highlighted the complexity of the empowerment process, with women finding themselves in constant negotiations both professionally and in their private lives. The erroneous perception is that when women attain economic empowerment, the other forms of empowerment such as cognitive, psychological and political empowerment will automatically be conquered as well, which is not necessarily the case. The consequence of this gap is the continued struggle towards the attainment of these other elements of empowerment described above. The notion of intersectionality within the Black Feminist Theory addressed the challenges that such women may be faced with, such as, discrimination on the basis of their newly acquired social status which again continues to evoke both internal and external struggles. This theory challenges conventional feminism in its claim to "speak for all women". The concept of intersectionality draws attention to racial, class and other differences that tend to co-exist for women, highlighting how different and similar the process of being empowered can be depending on the individual, their context and socialization processes. The critical voice of African Feminism emerged significantly as part of this discussion, especially the proposition that African Feminism is not as radical as Western Feminism, but that it tends to seek collaboration and negotiation with its male counterparts. Women who live inclusively in the Western and African worlds may find themselves constantly struggling between notions of Western Feminism and African Feminism. In order to re-engage with these viewpoints, the reader is referred to Chapter 3 of this report. Where applicable, these theoretical constructs will be integrated into the discussion on the different themes.

6.3.1 THEME 1: Black Economically Empowered Women's Internal and External Struggles and Paradoxes due to economic empowerment

Responding to Question 1 on what economic empowerment means for them, the following emerged from the participants:

Internal Struggles

The introduction of policies such as Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment and the government's legislated support for female owned and female controlled businesses meant liberation from male dominance; access to equal opportunities and an entry into a state of economic empowerment for black women. Through economic empowerment, many envisaged a future of not only financial freedom, but also the freedom to have a voice and the ability to influence affairs that relate to both their personal and professional lives. With greater significance, Arber and Ginn (1995) remind us that a spouse's earnings seem to be linked to economic power. As a result, when a woman's income is substantial, her level of control over the finances and decision making in the marriage gets elevated. This is evidenced through the participant's responses to what economic empowerment meant for them:

Participant 7: *"Those that are economically empowered are those of us who are privileged enough to be earning significant amounts of money, like financially secured".*

Participant 6: *"Economic empowerment is being able to be self-sufficient and independent so much so that you are able to make decisions that suit you, that you are allowed to make the choices that you feel are comfortable making".*

Participant 8: *"Whereas like it goes through for a lot of things, you have the power to negotiate a lot of stuff in your relationship, especially the power to negotiate sex".*

Participant 4: *"It is also being empowered yourself, you know."*

These views concur with the observation that at a personal level, empowerment is about behaviour that is involved where someone is motivated to exercise control and feelings of self-efficacy (Zimmerman, 1990, p.169). Due to their economic empowerment, women

envisaged a future where most of their dreams, aspirations and goals would be met, for example, Participant 10 said:

“The fact that I am never short of anything materially, that my heart wants or needs, I consider myself relatively empowered.”

Although this sentiment was echoed by most participants, it appeared that their economic success sometimes resulted in feelings of loneliness, anxiety and guilt. These feelings were mainly induced by the challenges that they faced in an attempt to maintain meaningful romantic relationships. According to Glasser (2001), when people value and desire social interaction they need to be able to receive and give love. The author further argues that the need to love and to belong is a primary need which is regarded as the most difficult to satisfy since it requires reciprocity. Mama (1990) attests to this by suggesting that even though black women live satisfactory lives without partners, many, excepting black lesbians are still interested in being in a heterosexual relationship with a partner. This happens despite them having differing ideas of relationship's construction. Many of the participants in this study reported that this primary need in their lives still remains unsatisfied, with many citing the struggles of forming or maintaining such relationships. However, Cornwall and Edwards (2010) intimate that women's narratives sometimes indicate a repudiation of their responsibility to make the relationship work; characterized essentially by a negation of reciprocity, with a sole focus on their individual trajectories of self-improvement.

i. THE QUEST FOR A FITTING ROMANTIC PARTINERSHIP AND THE ACCOMPANYING REJECTION

It is postulated by Sardenberg (2008) that women have to experience a form of “liberating” empowerment which is governed by self-determination and results in the likelihood of transforming the gender order. The repercussions are that the gender order that tends to encourage subordination of women might be eradicated as women begin to not only experience economic empowerment, but also begin, through the self-determination process, to challenge the deep-seated patriarchal norms. As specified by Arber and Ginn (1995), though women may be occupying positions of

power at work, financial dominance is still equated with masculinity. Therefore, the acquisition of economic power is accompanied by its own challenges. Our participants reported one of the resultant struggles as being the difficulty in meeting the right partner. Although Collins (1990)'s study was based on African American women, its results may also be applicable to South African BEEW who often have to single-handedly maintain their families and have a sense that they are somehow responsible for the challenges they face. These women assume that their demonstration of personal strength might have played a role in them being unable to be in a romantic or marital relationship. Many of the participants implied that their lack of meaningful romantic relationships could be as a result of black men perceiving them as arrogant, non-committed, bossy, threatening and intimidating. The responses to the question seem to support this perception amongst most BEEW as indicated:

Participant 8: *"Sometimes they see you as out of their league."*

Participant 9: *"I think eh....some men perceive me, eh...as this aggressive, you know."*

Participant 10: *"Black men perceive me as arrogant and scared of commitment."*

Such responses, as Collins (1990) suggests, have resulted in BEEW feeling rejected by black men and experiencing a sense of aloneness, which may leave them with an impression that they are at the bottom of the scale of desirability. However, there were also participants who reported different experiences such as the two who are married; who have reported pleasant experiences with their spouses:

Participant 4: *"I think I am fortunate with my partner because I think he, he's the one person that has, pushed me to where I am right now. He has helped me so much, and would always say 'you can do it'."*

Participant 3: *"From my current husband, who was also married before and I mean, I think he has done very well for himself in different ways, so we met when I had my first business, so I must say, from him all I get is support really."*

The above participants run successful businesses and they both described their spouses as supportive and encouraging. They also reported that their husbands run successful businesses of their own. The results therefore seem to highlight that if the men are also successful and economically strong, the struggles seem less or non-existent.

6.3.2 THEME 2 : FEMALE RESPONSES TO REJECTION

When asking the participants how they deal with men's perceptions, many reported different ways of navigating relationships with men. Some minimize their professional status and knowledge consciously, for example:

Participant 3: *"If you meet them (men) socially, eh, maybe you talk about..... Business would be the last thing that would come out. And even when you initiate it, you should make sure that you don't sound like you are smarter than them. You become very cautious, that you don't intimidate someone."*

The extra care that these women take to avoid offending, intimidating or possibly emasculating men is supported by Giddings (1984) who suggests that the women's specific contexts lead to some black women subordinating their needs to allow black men to retain and regain their manhood. Participant 6 articulated that men construct perceptions of women according to the women's behaviour and self-presentation. How women make men feel, she, hypothesized, determines men's responses to women,

"There is that conversation that gets awkward because you introduce title, and people start sitting back and gauging you. The minute you introduce that, there is an element of: Ok, this person is playing either in my space or in the space that is beyond what I would have expected. One can either make an individual comfortable or uncomfortable."

External Struggles

i) CONFLICT RELATED TO FULFILMENT OF DUAL ROLES

Women's behavioural and verbal responses seem to be linked to certain challenges associated with such responses. In line with the point made by Arber and Gin (1995), some women find

themselves wanting to fulfil traditional sex roles, yet at the same time are drawn towards a successful professional life:

Participant 6: *“I have ways of getting to the point to reassure him by knowing my place culturally. This means that even though I am economically empowered, there are certain roles and expectations from agreeing in that crucial contract to become a wife, I was participant in that, and I did not make or change rules when that was happening, I did not sit him down and go I am going to be your wife but I will not cook or I will not...”*

According to Albertyn (2009), the way people make sense of their assigned gender roles appears to be informed by their culture. Thus women may live according to cultural codes assigned to womanhood. This was evidenced by Participant’s 6 comments above and Participant 10’s and 7’s:

Participant 10: *“Then you spend a bit of time brushing the ego a little bit, you want to pay a bill and they feel insulted by that and they know that they cannot afford that - once they pay that bill, they don’t even have petrol in their car, if they have a car at all. So you spend a bit of time brushing egos and it’s not even just about a personal or intimate relationship, it’s a male- female game that gets played.”*

Mama (1995) suggests that the desire to be in a romantic relationship is so great for some black women that they are prepared to tolerate unsatisfactory relationships. Though this may not necessarily be applicable to all the participants, some reported having settled for relationships that are contrary to their desires and expectations. The responses of the following participants confirm this understanding:

Participant 1: *“We are threats and though we want to belong, I think it’s natural for a person to have a partner, but we struggle to find men of our calibre, and now you have to settle for whatever that you get. So for me that is my experience, and I mean I have got friends and they stay with people from Pick and Pay (local supermarket) whereas they are executives, but I think it works for them.”*

Participant 7: *“So you know what you then do is you open yourself to situations and people interactions where ordinarily you wouldn’t. So anyway I got into one of these situations and I said ok look I am not gonna look for a man who would treat me to the lifestyle I am used to and what I like and whatever, as long as he’s game, fully employed, he is ambitious and doing his thing.”*

Having decided to settle for men that were less economically empowered than them, participants also reported the challenges accompanying such relationships:

Participant 7: *“You get to a position where you have to force somebody to pay; he would say “oh I do not have my wallet can you pay? Or I do not have enough money do you mind paying?”*

Participant 5: (whose husband is unemployed and less economically empowered than she is) said: *“The roles change, because now what happens is that the woman commands and ends up leading, and it emasculates the man. In many ways they lose their self-esteem, they become insecure”*

Participant 8: (narrated an example regarding an ex-boyfriend who went to great extents to prove that he could afford supporting her, despite him earning much less than she did):

“And then my ex-boyfriend, who earned R8 900, I broke up with him because I felt like he was disabling himself financially, because he loved me and wanted to do anything (everything) for me but I felt it was too much to prove a point that he can take care of me. I said to him, one day when you are ok you can do all these things for me, you don’t have to do them now, but he would buy and end up having credit, so I had to break up with him because he was not stopping.”

According to Willot and Griffin (2004), even though men may be unemployed, they still tend to build their gender around the breadwinner persona. Participant 10 attested to having a similar experience with her boyfriend:

“Somebody would get cross because I bought a car and he is driving an old car and there is nothing he can do for me in relation to what car I want and the mechanics of a car. And I go buy myself a car and he is cross because I bought myself a car without asking, literally, literally without asking for

permission. It wasn't his language not even like you should have at least warned me or consulted me. No it was like how does a woman go and buy a car without checking with the man? "I know of people in my immediate circle who have live-in partners, whether it's a husband or a lover who doesn't do anything (doesn't bring any income), and yet they still want to control the resources and are abusive and every time a woman says anything its..., Oh because you have money you think you 're the boss of me (my boss)"

Collins (1990) attests that some black men who feel emasculated when not in charge, can be highly threatened by an assertive black woman, especially those in their household. According to Participant 7, even a well-meaning piece of advice may be misconstrued to be an attempt to dominate:

"He got very upset and would sulk." This is after an attempt by Participant 7 to give financial advice.

Participant 10 reported that even when she discovered some unacceptable action by the partner and attempted to address it, her partner's response reverted to her economic status:

"Oh just because you have a bit of money it doesn't mean that you are the boss in this relationship or just because you have paid for this meal you cannot talk to me like that."

One of the other challenges for BEEW is the belief that some men regard them as "cash cows" or may want to date them only so they can exploit them, as narrated by Participant 2:

"Like now I just feel like the guys are sponge bobs, like they wanna sponge off women."

Participant 7, reporting that an ex-boyfriend, who was a Christian from her same church tried to "fleece" her of her money, as he would request: *"lend me five grand..., can you lend me sixty grand... I need to invest it in my business, can you lend me twenty grand I need..., and you know it's for both of us I need to build my business."*

Participant 1: *"I remember once I went out with this guy and he said can I borrow him my car, he wants to take his mother (somewhere). I mean I nearly fell off (my chair), my jaw dropped."*

In response, some participants reported being a lot more vigilant now when meeting a man for the first time:

Participant 1: *“I am fortunate I can be able to discern, and I take my time before I can, what can I say? Read a person.”*

However, the struggle for some of the participants is to be able to discern whether the person that they regard as “a chancer” is indeed a real chancer, or someone who is just going through a difficult patch:

Participant 10: *“Even as I say that I have been vigilant and able to protect myself against that, how do you know that, that person who is a chancer now, has potential to, to change and be better just with, with maybe with the right relationship?”*

Participant 7 reported being left with feelings of guilt and condemnation after meeting people whom she perceived to be intimidated by her material possessions:

“(God) if you have blessed me in this manner why have you blessed me in this manner and then get me into a relationship where I’ve gotta scale down?”

Part of the struggles that BEEW are facing can be attributed to the assigned roles that have been informed by socialisation, culture and religious affiliation. According to Berger (1992), in the past, a woman’s place was in the home and she fulfilled a subordinated or domestic role. Her employment was regarded as peripheral and low paying. As a result, her social and personal identities were deeply rooted in her familial roles (Hassim, 1999). Boonzaier et al. (2004) debates that gendered practices are disrupted as women increasingly became breadwinners, sometimes the main or sole breadwinners and some men became unable to provide for their families. The sentiment resonates with Participant 5 who is Christian and finds her husband’s inability to provide leadership in the home challenging. This attributes to his unemployment and the results are contrary to what she was taught about a man being the primary provider.

Participant 5: *“The roles change, because now what happens is that the woman commands and ends up leading, and it emasculates the man. In many ways they lose their self-esteem, they become insecure.”*

Arber and Gin (1995) suggest that despite the above-mentioned challenges, women are still concerned with maintaining conventional gender roles instead of reversing the roles. This was demonstrated in the following responses:

Participant 1: *“I think the man must still take that lead, for me it’s very important.”*

Participant 2 commented that she uses her parent’s relationship as a yardstick.

Participant 8: *“I don’t think I can ever see myself as an equal with men, because I believe in the Bible and the Bible says God is the head of the church but the man is the head of the woman. So I always have to remember that he is the head and he has to take the major decisions because I’ve been brought up in such a way.” Like I’m saying, even though my mother provided a lot of stuff when we were growing, she knew that eh, that my father is the king of the house. She treated him like he was the leader. He was still the decision maker even though she was bringing in the bacon. Instead of men taking the lead and say, ok babe this is the direction we going now or this is what..., I am taking control of the situation and I am taking the family out or we going on holiday. Now it is like the roles have kind of changed.”*

Arber and Gin (1995) also assert that some women are likely to project the image of good wives and mothers to create the impression that their husbands are dominant in the household. This is displayed through, for an example, Participant 6’s comment that she never allows her power to translate into her home:

“I come home and cook his dinner, and all he sees is a lovely hot meal, he knows his wife cooked it, we sit down to dinner and to him...yoh, I’ve scored, I’ve got an awesome wife, household is great and she’s cooked me a meal.”

Furthermore, most women’s early socialisation tends to restrict their lives to the domestic milieu. The implication is that though BEEW may be successful professionally, their early socialisation may continue to influence their identity development (Arber & Gin, 1995).

Participant 7: *“I like the traditional role, the nurturer, the mother, the home maker, you know my ideal is, which is how realistic it is, we were talking about it with friends, interesting we were talking about it with 2 friends; 1 is a partner in a*

law firm, equity partner earning millions of rand, single like me. The other one is married and PhD graduate from Columbia University in the US. And she's like you know what, my ideal is to be a stay at home mom and she's like I know this sounds strange from a PhD graduate."

Certain contradictions might stem from religious underpinnings that men should be "the head of the household", which extends to men being the primary provider of his family. BEEW find that even though they are in a position where they are primary providers, the expectations as prescribed by their socialisation and religion to be submissive to their partners still prevail. The struggle may then be viewed in a polarized way to either totally submit or maintain own power:

Participant 6: *"I make sure I do not emasculate him, right? But at the same time I maintain my power by driving those conversations" (conversations of when a new salary letter arrives and what it means for the family)."*

The above comment shows yet another aspect related to difficulties to balance the different roles. Herkelmann et al. (1993) hypothesizes that the departure from traditional sex roles have resulted in an increase of a woman's sense of general and work empowerment. However, the aforementioned gets to be accompanied by feelings of anxiety, guilt and uncertainty which usually results in a conflicted sense of self in relation to work, finances and social life:

Participant 5: *"Where you give him the respect, you won't go the extra mile, but you will do what you have been taught, you give him the respect and still honour him. You know, there are times where you want to throw in the towel, you know, its emotionally draining, very draining."*

Participant 10: *"Umm, it's a fine line between nurturing and allowing the brushing of the ego to go too far, for too long. Because you could brush that ego until you are also not able to sustain it and end up bursting up, or you would... you could completely be heartless about who the boss is here."*

Part of this struggle may be attributed to Collins's suggestion that women configure their private realities to include an awareness of her public image and how it is constructed by

others. The supposition is that women live in a society that expects them to be subservient to their partners on the one hand, yet they are also supposed to meet the demands of a business world that values assertiveness and a can-do attitude to succeed (Collins, 1990). These expectations may pose internal conflicts and may have an influence on the dynamics of women's relationships.

ii) CHANGES IN THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIPS

The participants were asked if the dynamics of their relationships have changed as a result of their economic empowerment. With the exception of three, all reported that they believe that the dynamics of their relationships have changed. This is in line with Orbuch and Custer (1995) who posit that there is a likelihood of having issues related to a power imbalance in a relationship where a husband may see his identity as a primary provider being challenged negatively by his wife working and earning an income. It may impact him even more if her income surpasses his. For example, Participant 1 believes that her decision to do an MBA caused her husband to become threatened, which resulted in him leaving his full time employment to start his own business. According to Participant 1, his response was prompted by him feeling threatened:

“And for me, where I am sitting now, I think my MBA broke my marriage, ‘cause that is where everything started to, you know what, get out of order”.

Participant 2: *“Yes the dynamics have changed just a little bit, like I’m saying like, my husband like, he probably doesn’t see the need to spoil me, to pamper me anymore because he’s like she probably does it on her own anyway, so let me not bother her.”*

She also reported that her husband does not always offer to pay the bill:

“Sometimes when we go out like he’ll just sit and I’m like, ok I’ll pay the bill.”

Participant 8 reported that her boyfriend refused to take money from her fearing the possible outcome of relinquishing control to her:

“So they feel like if you start doing things for them you start controlling them.”

Conversely, Participant 6 reported the dynamics of her relationships remaining unchanged. She attributes this partially to having met her partner while she was still earning a low salary, whilst his income was solid and surpassed hers.

Overall, the above discussion indicates that the majority of BEEW, in pursuit of independence, forged a persona that is perceived by most men as being controlling, self-sufficient and therefore not needing any support. The afore-mentioned deduction is supported by Wilkins (2012). As a result, the dynamics of BEEW's relationships do change subsequent to their economic empowerment. Even though men were not participants in this study, in the next section we will explore their emic voices.

6.4 MEN'S RESPONSES – EMIC VOICES

Even though black men did not participate in this study, the next theme that will be discussed emerged through the exploration with BEEW regarding their understandings of black men's perceptions about them. According to Hermans and Hermans-Jansen (1995), even when people strive for accuracy in their narratives, not all narratives are accurate. Though this might be the case, these narratives are real for participants and therefore true for them. Ratele (2008) asserts that the construction of gender begins in families, with ideas and images of masculinities being instilled through daily practices of youngsters. One of the roles assigned to men through socialization is related to them being providers. With the transition of the country to democracy, a shift in gender power took place. Ratele (2014) attributes this change to political and economic changes that resulted in the re-alignment of social relations. The transition also resulted in masculinity being in a state of crisis (Walker, 2005). Relating to this study, BEEW perceive most black men as falling within the category of hegemonic masculinity, which is described as a form of masculinity that allows for power being abdicated by men (Connell, 2005).

Some of the participants reported that their partners responded negatively when they were not consulted in decision making even in situations where the men were not married to the participant. Participant 10 reported the following, after buying a car without consulting her partner: *"I've had, I've had a man tell me I might as well have become a man because I behave like one."*

In this case, the participant's partner expected her to respect him by consulting with him prior to her buying a car, by virtue of him being a man. This is in line with Asbury (1987)'s assertion that those black men who wish to become dominant by fulfilling traditional definitions of masculinity and are unable to do so, can respond negatively towards those closest to them.

Two of the respondents who are married reported that their husbands are unemployed. Due to the men's unemployment status, both participants deduced that their husbands were negatively impacted by their lower economic status. This may be due to both men having constructed their masculinities around the provider roles. Jaramillo-Sierra and Allen (2013) suggest that men who hold on to the good-provider role run a risk of being depressed, having high levels of anxiety, stress and low self-esteem in comparison to those who do not hold these ideas. The two participants both revealed that their husbands may be suffering from low esteem and even depression as a result of their inability to be primary providers of their families:

Participant 9: *"You know it becomes a challenge at times you know for them to be around you, 'cause the person feels so very small that they are useless, you know."*

Participant 5: *"It emasculates the man, in many ways they lose their self-esteem, they become insecure."*

Both men, as Orbuch and Custer (1995) propose, might have perceived their identities of being the primary providers for their family being threatened, which may have negatively impacted them. The economic empowerment of women may thus cause some men to question their roles in relationships or result in them feeling emasculated. This viewpoint is substantiated by Arber and Ginn (1995), who affirm that if wives hold higher positions than their husbands in the workplace, conflict may prevail at the home, as men may perceive themselves as helpless and as failures. It could be as a result of this conception why Participants 5 and 9, above reported their husbands as having stopped pursuing their careers.

Moolman (2012) hypothesizes that some men in South Africa occupy positions of dual legitimacies, where discourses of both modern and cultural discourses are sanctioned. A man might for an example be comfortable with his partner's economic empowerment status, but might still expect the re-enactment of traditional gender roles. For example, Participant 3 reported her husband as being encouraging and supportive of her business. On the other hand, he will urge her to perform certain traditional roles that are viewed as feminine, particularly during extended family events:

Participant 3: *"Sometimes there were incidents where he would say... just do it (perform a task as traditionally expected of a daughter in law) and I would say no."*

Such discourses imply that men themselves may be finding themselves in a double bind; where the social benefits of having an economically empowered partner are attractive, yet this may imply the 'loss' of their status as being dominant in the relationship. Dambe and Moorad (2008) argue that, to some people, empowerment of one person is assumed to mean the loss of power for the other person. This might result in men feeling endangered by their partners' success. It may also be that, like Mahajan (2012) stipulates, an empowered woman does not only acquire financial control, but also other forms of control such as social equity. In this regard Participant 10's report of her ex-boyfriend's typical response during arguments, apply:

"Oh just because it's your house, doesn't mean that you are the boss in this relationship" or "just because you have paid for this meal, you cannot talk to me like that."

Participant 1: *"Men have one voice saying. I want someone to depend on me and the other voice they are like saying no...that woman must support me". They want to have their cake and eat it. It is nice to go out with a trophy girlfriend, someone who can wear the shortest mini, but obviously he has to pay all the time. Whereas if he goes out with you, everything ...maybe you go to Cape Town, you share costs of flights, at least there is that common, you help each other."*

In the same context, Participant 7 reported that she had an ex-boyfriend who constantly borrowed money from her, but took exception to being given advice:

"And he got very upset and he would sulk."

The above concept may explain why von Muhlen et al. (2012) posit that there are studies that advocate that even though men and women are changing roles, women see the progress as being protracted, whilst, conversely, men view progress in this domain as developing too fast. This implies that men may understand the transition that is happening economically, but may still be grappling with the handling of changes that they perceive as happening too rapidly. For example, Participant 3 reported that her husband was being encouraging and supportive of her business, yet he would urge her to perform certain traditional roles that are viewed as feminine, particularly during extended family events.

“Sometimes there were incidents where he would say ‘just do it’ (perform a task as traditionally expected of a daughter in law) and I would say no.”

6.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Stromquist (1995) describes empowerment as entailing four components, namely : cognitive, psychological, economic and political. The author suggests that for a person to be empowered, these components need to be evident in their lives. The emerging themes of this study, which reveals both internal and external struggles and paradoxes, indicate that though many of the women are economically empowered, the realisation has dawned on them that their economic empowerment is not all encompassing. They may therefore still find themselves lacking in other areas of their lives such as social equity, or in the political or psychological sphere, as put forward by Stromquist (1995). Many of the participants reported that men seem to be threatened by their empowerment, resulting in difficulty in finding suitable partners. Due to the aforementioned, many BEEW feel rejected by black men, resulting in feelings of aloneness. In response to this issue, many BEEW have resorted to either downplaying their own status or being careful to ensure that they do not offend the men they meet. These women’s natural human desire to be in a romantic relationship forces them to compromise in order to ensure their men’s comfort and security. Some participants also reported challenges that seem to be accompanied by such compromises, for example, having to take the lead in the relationship even though that is a role that they would not normally subscribe to.

The themes have also indicated factors that tend to influence the participant’s point of reference, which is their socialisation through religion and culture. It was also evident in the themes that the dynamics of most relationships do change as a result of the participant’s status, with most implying that their high economic status tended to negatively impact on their relationships. Though this may have been the case, those who reported that dynamics are the same are likely to have husbands who are themselves economically empowered. This suggests that since these husbands are successful; their wives’ success may not pose any threat to their masculinities. However, one of the participants reported that even though her husband earns far less than she does, he is highly supportive of her. In this regard, one may attribute this response to among others, his socialisation, as his mother is also a BEEW.

These findings may also be confirming Morrell (2001)'s theory that men do not necessarily respond in a similar manner to encounters in their social context. The conclusion is that men's responses tend to be determined by various factors, such as in the latter case, where the man's early socialization may have played a role in how he views a BEEW.

6.6 FINDINGS ON OUTLIERS

Most of the participants fell within the 30-40 age range, with two outliers who were in the 25 to 30 and 50 – 55 age range. Though they had somewhat similar understandings of what economic empowerment means at a personal level and also in how men perceive BEEW, they both held different views regarding their roles in a relationship. Participant 8, who is in her 20's, viewed her role as a woman being subservient to men and voiced her willingness to play the traditional role. On the other hand, Participant 10 who is in her early 50s was adamant that she should be an equal partner in a romantic relationship. She also reported that the role that she assumes is mostly a nurturing one. In this case, the researcher surmises that the differences are purely as a result of socialisation of each of the participants, confirming Becvar and Becvar (2009)'s contention that each person creates their own realities that are unique to themselves. Invariably, each person has a reality that is different and is based on their own unique combination of experiences, heredity, presuppositions and socialization which may apply to Participants 8 and 10.

6.7 REFLECTIVE COMMENTS

Even though this study is based on the perceptions that BEEW cleave to, it was worth conducting as these perceptions are viewed as reality to those that hold them. Based on the discussion of the emerging themes, it is evident that most BEEW's experiences informed their perception that the majority of black men are intimidated by their economically empowered status, and thus shy away from engaging in romantic relationships with them. As was evident in the results, most participants saw their economic empowerment as an opportunity for not only financial freedom, but also as a way of being empowered in other areas of their lives, for an example, having the ability to have a voice in matters related to their lives. The realization that economic empowerment does not necessarily equal social equity, might have astonished them or served as an illumination of their position as BEEW.

6.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the discussion and interpretation of the findings presented in Chapter 5, by presenting various prevalent, emergent themes within this study. The latter appears to be consistent with existing literature on the experiences of black empowered women. These themes therefore confirmed BEEW to experience both internal and external struggles as a result of their economic empowerment, with these struggles eliciting feelings of rejection and loneliness. The findings in the study furthermore suggest that most BEEW are willing to play the traditional gender role where the man is the head of the household, even though they (women) still want to pursue successful professional lives. Even though the latter may be the case, many regard mutual respect, compromise and negotiation paramount to the success of their romantic relationships. The findings indicate a willingness to have men as leaders with whom they can collaborate. What needs to be emphasised here is that these women do not regard themselves as subservient to men but as equally competent. The need to have men assume a leadership role in the relationship is therefore not a sign of weakness, but a form of collaboration where each other's strengths are acknowledged. This idea also rings true for participants who do not necessarily recognise men as the head of the household, yet still see their role as one that is nurturing and overseeing of the household, thus acknowledging the collaboration and recognition of each other's strengths as important for a fulfilling relationship. An ideal romantic partner is therefore one that is a visionary and leader, who is able to comfortably live in the presence of a successful BEEW.

CHAPTER 7: STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as a concluding chapter and includes a brief discussion of the strengths and limitations of the study. It recommends areas that may require future exploration.

7.2 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

South Africa as a country is currently experiencing a period of economic transition related to gender, with the emergence of BEEW. This study explored how gender relations may be strained as a result of this transition. The research also specifically served to voice some of the challenges that black women face as BEEW. Possible solutions to the aforementioned challenges might be applicable to the South African or other societies with similar socio-cultural, political and economic conditions. The study has therefore provided further theoretical knowledge on the experiences of women, specifically providing useful insights related to how BEEW think black men perceive them. Resultant recommendations may be used to advocate for further research on BEEW's experiences, as well as exploring men's narratives on the topic.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to the fact that qualitative research, especially thematic content analysis is largely subjective, it is possible that the findings presented could present with some biases from the researcher. However, the researcher avoided the latter through constant supervision and by using a self-reflective journal during the research process. Finally, the research was one-sided in that it only focused on BEEW's experiences.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that further studies may explore narratives and perceptions of black men about BEEW and that a larger sample size be interviewed. It is also recommended that conversations between black men and women be conducted through among others, social and public forums as a way of improving gender relations. This is in line with some African Feminists who see the role of both men and women as complementary.

7.5 CONCLUSION

This study explored the perceived narratives and subjective meanings that black economically empowered women (BEEW) about black men's perceptions about BEEW. The study further investigated the accompanying feelings and responses that tend to emerge as a result of such perceptions. Research that explores these narratives and perceptions was limited and existing research on the topic was limited to the United States of America. The overall findings of this research study indicate the importance of having dialogues among both Black men and women around the current economic transitions and how this may impact gender relations. This study is therefore relevant in the South African context, as it has the possibility of encouraging debate and improving gender relations.

THE END

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Appendix A

Participant Information Letter



School of Human and Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa

My name is Mapule Ratshefola and I am currently completing my Masters in Community-based Counselling Psychology degree at the University of the Witwatersrand. For the purposes of obtaining my degree, I need to do research and submit a research report. I opted on conducting research into Black South African men's attitudes and perceptions towards Black Empowered South African Women. The purpose of the study is to explore the narratives of Black Empowered women in their experiences with Black South African men. I would like to invite you to participate in my research.

Participation will be via a one-on-one interview with the researcher. Each interview is scheduled to last for approximately 1 hour. The participation process is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any point, without any negative consequences. Please note that you will not be rewarded or penalised in any way due to participation in this study. You are free to not answer questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. If you experience any distress as a result of the interview, the details of free telephonic counselling services will be made available to you.

Confidentiality of the interviews will be maintained, though complete anonymity will not be possible in this context as you will be interacting with me. However, no identifying information will be requested from you, or included within the research report. While direct quotes from interviews may be used within the research report, no identifying information will be attached to these. Should you grant permission, Interviews will be audio-recorded, to ensure accuracy, with my supervisor being the only one with access to both the audio interviews and interview transcripts. The data collected will be kept in a safe place at the University of the Witwatersrand for a period of five years, to allow for the data to be checked and for potential use in later studies. The research and data obtained may be published in a psychological journal and the findings of the research may be presented at future

psychological conferences. The overall findings of the research will be made available to you should you so wish.

Should you feel after the interview that you would like someone to talk to about any issues that may have arose for you during the interview, you may consult with the researcher and she will refer you for counselling to the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand (contact number 011 717-4513); or for free counselling, to LifeLine (contact numbers: Johannesburg - 011 728-1331, National share call number - 0861 322 322)

Your participation in the study would be greatly appreciated. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me for additional information.

Kind regards,

Mapule Ratshefola (Mrs)

Cell number: 0824043231

Email: mapulita@gmail.com

Appendix B

Participant consent form

I, _____, having read the participant information sheet, consent to participate in this study. In doing so, I understand that:

- My participation is completely voluntary.
- I may choose to withdraw from the study at any stage.
- I may decline from answering any questions which I am uncomfortable with.
- The information which I provide below will be used solely for the purposes of acquiring information for the research and will be kept confidential.
- Only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor will have access to the interviews and interview transcripts.
- My interview responses will be anonymous and no identifying information will be included in the research report.
- Direct quotations from my interview may be included in the research report, but no identifying information will be attached to these.
- The data will be kept in a safe place at the University of the Witwatersrand for a period of five years, at which point it will be destroyed.
- The data collected from this research may be published in a research journal or presented at future research conferences.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix C

Participant Consent Form for Interview

I understand that my participation in this research involves participating in an interview.

I understand that I may decline answering any questions that I am not comfortable with answering.

I understand that I may withdraw from this research at any time.

I understand that all responses that I have supplied will remain confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report.

I consent to participate in this study.

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)

Appendix D

Participant consent form (tape-recorded interview)

I understand that this interview will be tape-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. I understand that no identifying information will be included in the transcripts or final research report. I understand that the data will be kept in a safe place at the University of the Witwatersrand for a period of five years, at which point it will be destroyed. The data collected from this research may be published in a research journal or presented at future research conferences.

I consent to have my interview recorded in this study.

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)

Appendix E

PROPOSED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- 1) Tell me about yourself and what you do professionally?
- 2) What do you understand Economic Empowerment to be?
- 3) Do you see yourself as Economically Empowered? Please explain?
- 4) How do you think Black men perceive you? How do they relate to you?
- 5) Do you think they would be relating differently if you were not financially empowered?
- 6) In your relationships with men, have you found that the dynamics of the relationship have changed? Please explain.
- 7) Has your role as a mom/wife/Black woman changed as a result? Are there traditional roles that you would never play now that you are economically empowered?
- 8) Do you see yourself as an equal in your romantic relationships? Please explain
- 9) (If single) Are you finding that you have a challenge in having meaningful romantic relationships? What do you attribute that to? How do you respond?
- 10) Do you find that you have to compromise who you are in order to accommodate and make someone feel better about themselves? Please explain.