



**EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF CONGOLESE MIGRANT
WOMEN IN DURBAN TOWARDS THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING
VIRGINITY BEFORE MARRIAGE**

BY
CECILE BULUNGU KANDA

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts (Gender Studies)
In the
Faculty of Humanities, Department of Social Sciences
University of KwaZulu-Natal
(Howard College Campus)

Supervisor: Dr GABISILE MKHIZE

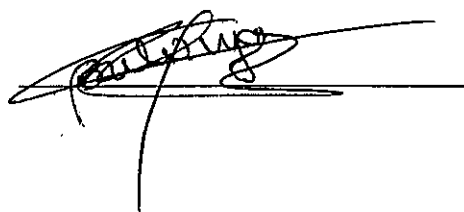
2017

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts (Gender Studies) in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any University.

BULUNGU KANDA

Student name & surname

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bulungu Kanda', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with loops and a long vertical stroke extending downwards.

27. 03. 2018

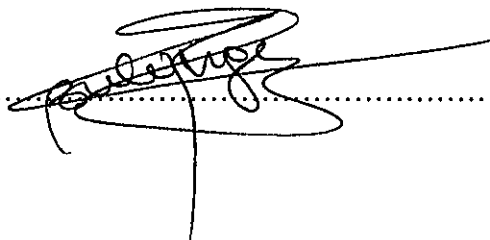
Date

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, Cecile BULUNGU KANDA 216068808 declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, and is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signed



DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my supportive and lovely husband, for allowing and encouraging me to go back to school. Despite his busy schedule, he manages to attend to the care of our 3 children, especially of our son Glory, whose health condition required my full attention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I give thanks to the almighty the creator of everything, Lord Jesus the source of my life, for strengthening me and helping me to carry out with this work despite all the hard and difficult times I went through while undertaking my MA studies

I am deeply grateful to all my research participants who granted me the opportunity to dig into their private lives – without them this work could not have been accomplished.

A huge thanks to my supervisor Dr Gabi Mkhize for all her exceptional assistance, motivation and support; this work couldn't have seen light without her specialised knowledge and input.

I owe special thanks to my husband Jean Didier Kanda for all the support, sacrifice, the love and much more to ensure that I finished this work. Thanks for encouraging me to never give up even though all the circumstances around me were pulling me down.

To all my precious children (Blessing, Praise and Glory), thank you for understanding each time when I could not give you all the attention you required while I was busy typing my work.

I am also grateful to my spiritual parents Apostle Benjamin and his wife Prophetess Lilian Lukola for the mountain of prayer and spiritual assistance in times of need.

Thanks to honourable Samuel Fikiri, Mr Sunday, Phd students and Mr Feruzi for their assistance each time I was stuck in my work.

Thank you to all my family; god children and friends : Mabika family; N'kulu family ;Alain Ntumba, ;Couple Fataki; couple Makanzu; Couple Mandango, couple Tshibwabwa; Nathan Kamalondo.

Thank you to all my family-in-law for their love, support; and for taking me as their own.

Lastly, my appreciation to all of you that walked alongside with me while undertaking my MA degree studies.

ABSTRACT

This study explored the perceptions of Congolese migrant women towards the practice of preserving virginity as a form of purity until marriage, by focusing on the opinions of Congolese migrant women living in Durban in South Africa.

Virginity has social and significant legal implications in many societies in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and women have responsibilities to protect their virginity in order not to be viewed by society as impure. In DRC, virginity purity before marriage is viewed as the key contributor to the true meaning of womanhood. Because of that, it is culturally expected that woman should not engage in premarital sex. Thus, a woman should enter into marriage as a virgin; she should “give up” her virginity to her husband in the act of consummating the marriage. The aim of this study was to determine whether Congolese migrant women living in South Africa, specifically in Durban, continue to engage in the practice of virginity preservation before marriage as they are now immersed in a new and different society than that of DRC. Also, the study sought to explore how Congolese migrant women view the practice of keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage. That is, do the migrant women reinforce or resist this culture while being in a foreign land, relative to being in the DRC?

In order to answer these key questions and address the objectives, the study used the qualitative research method. This method was chosen because it seemed to be the most appropriate to describe how the changes among Congolese women could possibly affect their perceptions of culture. The study used interviews and focus groups as its research instruments for gathering data from the sample size of 18 Congolese migrant women who reside in Durban. The findings of this study indicate that most Congolese found it difficult to maintain the gendered practice of preserving virginity before marriage as recommended in their culture and this could be attributed to mixture of cultures in their new environment.

Therefore, Congolese migrant ;women in particular need to be educated on how to protect themselves and stay safe from the danger of STIs and HIV/AIDS

Keys words: Virginity; Premarital sexuality; Marriage; Honour; Migration

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH BACKGROUND	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKROUNG TO THE RESEARCH	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	2
1.3 THE STUDY RATIONALE AND BROAD ISSUES TO BE INVESTIGATED	3
1.4 KEY QUESTION ASKED	4
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH.....	5
1.7 CONCLUSION	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 INTRODUCTION	7
2.1.1 INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION.....	9
2.1.2 CONGOLESE MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA	13
2.2 CONCEPTUALISING VIRGINITY PURITY FOR WOMEN	15
2.2.1 SYMBOLISM OF VIRGINITY	16
2.2.2 WOMANHOOD, MARRIAGE AND VIRGINITY	18
2.3 ENFORCEMENT OF VIRGINITY PURITY: TESTING AND CEREMONIAL RITES OF PASSAGE	20
2.3.1 VIRGINITY TESTING AND HIV	22
2.3.2 TRENDS IN MARRIAGE AND VIRGINITY.....	26
2.3.3 PREMARITAL SEXUAL ACTIVITY AMONG CONGOLESE WOMEN	27
2.4 WOMEN’S SEXUALITY AND VIRGINITY PURITY	29
2.4.1 SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN DRC.....	30
2.5 CONCEPTUALISING AFRICAN CULTURE, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND GENDER..	32

2.5.1	THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SEXUAL PRACTICE	32
2.5.1.1	THE ANTRHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE	34
2.5.1.2	RATIONAL ADAPTATION	35
2.5.1.3	SOCIAL DISORGANISATION.....	35
2.5.2	THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN SEXUAL PRACTICES	36
2.5.3	ROLE OF GENDER IN SEXUAL PRACTICE	38
2.6	THE SITUATION OF MIGRANT WOMEN	40
2.7	CONCLUSION	41
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK		43
3.1	INTRODUCTION	43
3.2	TRANSNATIONALISM THEORY.....	44
3.2.1	DEFINING TRANSNATIONALISM THEORY	44
3.2.2	UNDERSTANDING TRANSNATIONALISM	46
3.2.2.1	DIASPORAS	48
3.2.3	AGENTS OF TRANSNATIONALISM.....	48
3.3	SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM THEORY.....	50
3.3.1	SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT.....	52
3.4	CONCLUSION	53
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		54
4.1	INTRODUCTION	54
4.2	RESEARCH APPROACH.....	54
4.2.1	QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	54
4.2.2	RESEARCH DESIGN.....	55
4.3	TARGET POPULATION AND RESEARCH SITE.....	55
4.4	SAMPLE	56
4.5	DATA COLLECTION.....	59
4.5.1	IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS.....	60
4.5.2	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	62
4.6	DATA ANALYSIS.....	62
4.6.1	FAMILIARISATION WITH DATA	63
4.6.2	GENERATING INITIAL CODES.....	63
4.6.3	COLLATING THE CODES INTO OVERARCHING THEMES.....	63
4.6.4	REVIEWING THEMES.....	63
4.6.5	PRODUCING THE REPORT	63
4.7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	63
4.7.1	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	63

4.7.2	LIMITATIONS	64
4.7.2.1	THE CONSTRAINT OF TIME.....	65
4.7.2.2	THE CONSTRAINT OF FINANCE	65
4.7.2.3	THE CONSTRAINT OF CULTURE	65
4.7.2.4	THE CONSTRAINT OF SAMPLING	65
4.7.3	RELIABILITY	66
4.7.4	VALIDITY	66
4.7.5	CONCLUSION	66
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY AND DISCUSSION		68
5.1	INTRODUCTION	68
5.1.1:	PERCEPTION TOWARDS VIRGINITY WITHIN THE TRANSNATIONAL CONTEXT	68
5.1.2	GENERAL DEMOGRAPHY OF PARTICIPANTS	69
5.1.2.1	UNMARRIED WOMEN	69
5.1.2.2	MARRIED WOMEN	69
5.1.2.3	MARRIED MEN	70
5.2:	OVERALL PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS	70
5.2.1	DEFINING VIRGINITY	71
5.2.1.1	REASONS BEHIND THE CULTURE OF KEEPING VIRGINITY	73
1.	VIRGINITY FOR THE PROMOTION OF MARRIAGE (VALUE OF WOMEN)	74
2.	VIRGINITY FOR THE PROMOTION OF FAMILY (PATRIARCHAL EXPECTATIONS).....	75
3.	VIRGINITY FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIETY (SOCIAL CONTROL).....	76
5.1.1.2	NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS VIRGINITY LOSS	77
5.1.1.1	PREMARITAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR.....	83
5.1.1.2	VIRGINITY TESTING AND ITS IMPACT ON VIRGINITY PRESERVATION	86
5.1.1.3	MEN'S PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY BEFORE MARRIAGE AND GENDER INEQUALITY	88
5.2.3	INFLUENCE OF IMMIGRATION ON CULTURAL PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY	92
5.1.1.1	THE NEED OF REMAINING VIRGIN	92
5.1.1.2	DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH MAINTAINING VIRGINITY	97
5.1.1.3	FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY IN DURBAN	100

3.	SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS	100
4.	FAMILY INSTABILITY AND LACK OF PARENTAL SUPERVISION	101
5.	MEDIA	101
6.	ENVIRONMENT AND PROMISCUOUS	102
7.	SOCIETAL PRESSURE	103
5.2.4	ENFORCEMENT OF VIRGINITY VERSUS THE THREAT OF HIV/AIDS	103
5.2.4.1	VIRGINITY MOTIVATORS	103
1.	RELIGIOUS MOTIVATION	104
2.	CULTURAL OR TRADITIONAL MOTIVATION	106
3.	FAMILIAL MOTIVATION	107
5.1.1.2	THE PROMOTION OF VIRGINITY AND THE PREVENTION OF HIV/AIDS	108
5.3	CONCLUSION	110
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		112
6.2	OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH.....	112
6.3	CONCLUSION	113
6.4	RECOMMENDATIONS	115
REFERENCES.....		118
APPENDICES		138

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Distribution of the four main languages of the DRC	61
--	----

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: In-depth interviews	58
Table 4.2: Focus group interviews	59
Table 5.1: Themes emerging from the findings	71

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	: Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
DRC	: Democratic Republic of Congo
FMG	: Female genital mutilation
HIV	: Human immunodeficiency virus
HSRC	: Human Science Research Council
IOM	: International organization for migration
NGO	: Non-governmental organization
OECD	: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RSS	: Refugee social services
SAMP	: South African migration survey program
SANAC	: South African national council
SASFs	: Semiautonomous social fields
STDs	: Sexual Transmitted Disease
UNICEF	: The United Nation Children's Fund
USAID	: United states agency for international development
WHO	: World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKROUNG TO THE RESEARCH

This study intended to explore the perceptions of Congolese migrant women towards the culture of keeping virginity as a form of purity until marriage. It focused on the opinions of Congolese migrant women living in Durban, South Africa. Traditionally, as in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), most African cultures and religions oblige young women to remain virgins until marriage. This means that women are expected not to engage in sexual intercourse, defined as “penis penetration of the vagina”, before marriage (Nkosi 2013: 146).

In the DRC, keeping virginity pure before marriage is a culture that is linked to the concept of honour. This means that virginity loss before marriage is culturally considered to bring dishonour not only to the bride’s and the groom’s families, but also to their communities as a whole. Bosmans (2007) states that in the event that a non-virgin woman marries, the dishonour is brought upon the husband and his family. Therefore, practicing sexual intercourse out of wedlock could result in a woman being “ostracized by her family and her community” (Jean-Bouchard 2014: 364). This is because, in the DRC, the family is regarded as the foundation and a woman is regarded as the centre-piece in a marriage or her family and in her society. Therefore it is unacceptable and a sign of dishonour for her to be engaged in any form of immorality or sexual behaviour. The honour of a family or society is regarded as being the responsibility of female members.

However, some literature claims that upon immigrating out of the DRC into other countries around Africa and the world, the societal pressures that existed for Congolese women to uphold virginity are now changing (Stewart et al. 2008). Upon emigrating out of their countries of origin, the new communities of migrants comprise people from different nationalities and upbringings (Stewart et al. 2008). The new migrant communities comprise diverse migrants from different African and non-African nationalities, including citizens of the new countries of residence (Peters & Sundaram 2015). This diverse community consists of different cultures, which may strengthen or weaken the cultural practices of the migrants’ countries of origin. This is the reason why this study wants to explore if the practice of preserving virginity before marriage in Congo is being adhered to by Congolese migrants.

South Africa has been chosen because of its high cumulative number of refugees, which recent estimates place at 65,881 (United Nations Higher Commission on Refugees 2014; Smit & Rugunanan 2014). Also, South Africa is one of the African countries that promotes the preservation of virginity before marriage, although the practice is based on different reasons as compared to DRC. In the Zulu culture of South Africa, methods have even been devised to allow non-penetrative sex as a means of preserving virginity, preventing pregnancy, and preventing HIV (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui 2013). Despite this, however, the high rates of teenage pregnancy in Africa, including South Africa, mean that many women are “overstepping the accepted boundaries that define ‘proper’ female behaviour” (Leclerc-Madlala 2003: 17). It is not clear in the literature whether such local sexual practices are influencing the Congolese women who have migrated to South Africa, or their views or practice relating to keeping virginity purity until marriage. This directly contributes to the problem behind the study.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Virginity has social implications and significant legal implications in many societies in the DRC, and women have responsibilities to protect their virginity in order not to be viewed by society as impure (Kurtz, 2015 120). In the Congolese society, heterosexual marriage is a highly regarded institution that is viewed as contributing significantly to the true identities of women (Kondemo 2011). Traditionally, there has been a cultural expectation that women would not engage in premarital sex; that a woman would come to her wedding a virgin and that she would ‘give up’ her virginity to her new husband in the act of consummation of the marriage (Abdalla 2007).

It is becoming widely accepted, though, that rapid changes are taking place in Africa, and that traditional values and ideas are being abandoned, modified or coloured by the changing socio-political circumstances (Imbo 1998). For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, there has been a considerable trend, especially within urban areas, towards later onset of marital union (Shapiro & Gebreselassie 2014). However, at the same time it is unreasonable to believe that all traditional values are being changed or forgotten, or that there are no traces of these values remaining among individuals.

The DRC is one of the poorest countries in the world (United Nations Higher Commission on Refugees 2012). Since its independence, the DRC has gone through numerous political and economic crises (Lincoln 2011). These crises have profoundly affected migration patterns and

the traditional practices of Congolese nationals who travel to other countries as refugees (Schoumaker et al. 2013). In the past 20 years, South Africa has increasingly become a host society for many of these forcibly displaced individuals and families from across the African continent (Smit & Rugunanan 2014). The lifestyles and experiences of these migrant populations are being influenced by the practices of diverse cultures they find themselves in and their (the immigrants') economic, political and social status.

It is within such a context that this study intended to explore the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the practice of keeping their virginity and purity until marriage. The study aimed to find out if Congolese migrant women are still expected to practice premarital virginity in a foreign land, and to understand their views on this practice.

1.3 THE STUDY RATIONALE AND BROAD ISSUES TO BE INVESTIGATED

Traditionally, there has been a cultural expectation that women should not engage in premarital sex; that a woman should come to her wedding a virgin, and that she should 'give up' her virginity to her new husband in the act of consummating the marriage (Abdalla 2007). Since its independence, one of the poorest countries in the World, the DRC has gone through numerous political and economic crises (United Nations Higher Commission on Refugees 2012). These crises have profoundly affected migration patterns, and the traditional practices of Congolese nationals, who travel to other countries as refugees (Schoumaker et al. 2013). In the past 20 years, South Africa has increasingly become a host society for many of these forcibly-displaced individuals and families from across the African continent (Smit & Rugunanan 2014). Many of the lifestyles and experiences of these migrant populations are being influenced by the practices of diverse cultures, and by the economic, political, and social status of these migrants in their new societies. This study intends to determine whether Congolese migrant women generally continue to observe the practice of virginity preservation before marriage, once they are immersed in their new societies. Thus, the aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the practice of preserving virginity before marriage. The research objectives were:

- To explore the pre-marital sexual practices of Congolese migrant women in Durban;
- To establish the meaning that is given to pre-marital sexual life by Congolese migrant women in Durban;
- To define how Congolese migrant women in Durban view the practice of keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage;

- To understand how Congolese migrant women in Durban behave in order to reinforce or resist virginity preservation until marriage; and
- To understand how Congolese migrant women in Durban perceive the practice of virginity preservation while being in foreign land, relative to being in the DRC.

1.4 KEY QUESTION ASKED

The following key research questions were posed in order to achieve the above stated research objectives:

- What are the pre-marital sexual practices of Congolese migrant women in Durban?
- What meaning do Congolese migrant women in Durban give to pre-marital sexual life?
- How do Congolese migrant women in Durban view the practice of keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
- How do Congolese migrant women in Durban behave in order to reinforce or resist virginity preservation until marriage?
- How do Congolese migrant women in Durban women perceive the culture of virginity preservation before marriage, while being in foreign land, relative to being in the DRC?

In an attempt to answer these key questions and address the objectives, the study used the qualitative research method. This method was chosen because it seemed to be the most appropriate to describe how the changes among Congolese women could possibly affect their perceptions of cultures. The study used interviews and focus group discussions as its research instruments for gathering data from the sample size of 18 Congolese migrants residing in Durban. The findings of this study indicate that most Congolese found it difficult to maintain the gendered practice of preserving virginity before marriage as recommended in their culture and this could be attributed to mixture of cultures in their new environment.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

While much research has been conducted on the sexual practices of women while under the influence of their native societies, cultures, and religions (Lusey et al. 2014; Gallo et al. 2010; Djamba 2003, 1997, 1995), there is limited research to show how the sexual practices of young men and women change once these native controlling beliefs are altered through migration – specifically in the African and South African context. Furthermore, while considerable research exists to indicate how the survival, lifestyle, economic, and employment practices of migrant women from the DRC and other Africa countries alter within their new societies, such as South

Africa (Peters & Sundaram 2015; Smit & Rugunanan 2014), there is limited research to show how the sexual practices of the migrant women, specifically relating to the taboo topic of virginity purity, are altered once their native controlling environments are changed by migration.

Furthermore, there is no information describing how the changes in environment among Congolese women affect their sexual habits or perceptions of keeping virginity purity until the first night of marriage, specifically in the South African context. This study hopes to fill this gap in the research, by exploring the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban of the culture and practice of keeping virginity purity until the first night of marriage.

The results of this study will contribute to the existing knowledge on the topic. Further, the results may assist South African organisations dealing with women's health, women's sexual empowerment, women's rights and gender inequality, thereby providing an understanding that could improve the livelihoods of migrant women from all other African countries.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

This dissertation consists of six chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction – This provides the background to the study, problem statement, research aim, research questions, research objectives, and the dissertation outline.

Chapter 2: Literature review – This provides a comprehensive review of the knowledge base relating to research that has already been published on topics that are relevant and related to this study.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework – This outlines the principal theories upon which the research project has been constructed.

Chapter 4: Research methodology – This presents the details of the qualitative methodology that was conducted in order to achieve the aim of this study.

Chapter 5: Findings of the study and discussion – This presents the results following the thematic analysis of the qualitative data and discussions of the findings

Chapter 6: Summary and conclusions – This summarises the main findings of the study compared to the findings of previous studies, and provides recommendations for future research on the practice of preserving virginity.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the study of the practice of preserving virginity among Congolese migrant women residing in Durban, and outlined the study problem and objectives which aimed to explore the Congolese migrant women's sexual behaviour in the transnational context.

The following chapter analyses literature on virginity preservation and the perception of its implications among Congolese migrant women. It further reviews pre-existing literature concerning the practice of preserving virginity.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A literature review is an “information analysis and synthesis, focusing on findings and not simply bibliographic citations, summarizing the substance of the literature and drawing conclusions from it” (Randolph 2009)

Conducting a literature review allows me as a researcher to delve within previous knowledge regarding the perception of virginity and the meaning given to its loss including the key variables and phenomena that are linked to sexual behaviour among Congolese migrant women within the transnational space.

Sexuality in general will be discussed first in the context of religion culture, age, education, financial status, family stability, the media, and immigration, followed by an exploration of the perceptions of women regarding sexual practices globally and in South Africa, particularly those of migrant women in Durban.

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus is believed to have said: “There is nothing permanent except change” (Krebs 1999). This statement accurately reflects life and society and is commonly used as motivation in the pursuit of success. The 21st century marks an era of technological advancement in virtually every aspect of society. While much of this modernisation reflects progress, change can also have negative implications. For instance, there has been a rapid increase in the growth of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, despite advancements in medical research. Much of this growth has been attributed to the changing views of society towards sexuality and sexual behaviour (Acharya et al. 2015).

In earlier times, sexuality and discussions on sexual behaviour were off-limits, and these were viewed as immoral and private. This conservative attitude towards sexuality was generally heavily influenced by religion and culture (Stoppa et al. 2014; Twenge et al. 2015). Many religions including Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism abide by a strict moral code which advocates abstinence before marriage (Eriksson et al. 2013; Lusey et al. 2014; Stoppa et al. 2014). Traditional Zulu practices in African culture also honour virginity by practicing a ritual called *umhlanga* (Bhana 2016). Despite these religious influences, recent research has shown a decline in religiousness and cultural values, with most youngsters having a more liberal

attitude towards sexual behaviour (Lusey et al. 2014; Moodley 2016; Yip et al. 2013). This attitude has led to an increase in premarital and extramarital sex, both of which are major contributors to high-risk sexual behaviour (Eriksson et al. 2013; Moodley 2016; Yip et al. 2013).

Other circumstances which are perceived to have an influence on premarital sexual activity include an individual's age, and socioeconomic conditions such as education and financial status (Chirinda et al. 2012; Mutinta et al. 2014; Yip et al. 2013). The adolescent and emerging adult developmental stages have been shown to be pivotal periods with regard to sexuality (Moodley 2016; Mutinta et al. 2014; Stoppa et al. 2014; Yip et al. 2013). This age cohort represents students either at high school or at university, who have been shown to display high-risk sexual behaviour (Mbotho, Cilliers & Akintola 2013; Moodley 2016; Mutinta et al. 2014). This age range is also the period where students develop their individualism, including their religious beliefs and sexual identities (Stoppa et al. 2014). Many students have indicated that the university environment, peer pressure, and a lack of parental supervision are major influences in their decisions to engage in premarital sexual activity (Chirinda et al. 2012; Mbotho et al. 2013; Mutinta et al. 2014).

Education is another key factor, with those that are uneducated being more likely to engage in risky sexual activities (Chirinda et al. 2012). Some female students have reported financial gain as a motivation for engaging in risky sexual behaviour (Lusey et al. 2014). Young women indicated that having multiple sexual partners allowed them to support their education, with the added benefit of gaining luxuries (Lusey et al. 2014). While this sexual behaviour is not strictly classified as sex work, the financial motivation for such behaviour cannot be ignored. Thus, socio-economic conditions play an enormous role in the decision of women to engage in premarital and risky sexual behaviour. Parental influence was shown to have a significant effect on the sexual behaviour of teenagers and emerging adults (Chirinda et al. 2012; Erickson et al. 2013; Mbotho et al. 2013). In some cases, parental supervision was seen to deter students from sexual activity, resulting in a later sexual debut (Mbotho et al. 2013; Mutinta et al. 2014). However, other students viewed poor parental monitoring as a factor, and were therefore more likely to display early sexual behaviours (Erickson et al. 2013; Yip et al. 2013). In this regard, orphans and single-parenting, or divorced households were seen to be especially susceptible to this kind of behaviour (Erickson et al. 2013; Langley 2016; Yip et al. 2013). This therefore suggests that family instability may directly influence the sexual behaviour of young adults. The role of the media on the current behaviour of society cannot be over-expressed.

Anybody living in modern society is bombarded with media influences. Television, music, movies, the internet, and printed media are all categories that have become heavily sexualised, and have a profound impact on the sexual behaviour of society (Yarber et al. 2013). These influences have further increased with the advent of social media in this modern era. Many young adults have indicated that the media has had a strong influence on their sexual behaviour. Movies packed with sex scenes, hypersexual dance moves, skimpy fashions, and lewd lyrics have been reported to be influential in the sexual behaviour of young adults, making it more difficult to maintain abstinence (Acharya et al. 2015; Eriksson et al. 2013; Yarber et al. 2013).

As discussed earlier, religion and culture are crucial factors in the development of one's sexuality (Stoppa et al. 2014; Twenge et al. 2015). These values are usually firmly connected to parental upbringing and strongly aligned to the home environment. As seen with university students, the change in environment plays a significant role in influencing their sexual behaviour (Mutinta et al. 2014). Therefore, it is highly probable that immigrants are at a high risk for changing their sexual behaviour and adapting to the conduct of their new environment. In Durban, most of the unmarried Congolese migrant women are students who have changed their home environment and could possibly be influenced by the culture of their new place of residence, therefore are at high risk for changing their sexual behaviour. Thus, in this study the views on the practice of virginity of Congolese migrant women living in Durban, South Africa, are explored.

2.1.1 INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The dominant theory of migration at the individual level is neo-classical economics, which posits that rational actors migrate because they expect positive net returns from international movement. Migration is conceptualized as an investment in human capital: people move to places where they can be more productive, given their skills. However, before they can reap the higher wages associated with greater productivity, they must pay the costs of traveling, looking for work, learning a new language and culture, adapting to a new labour market, and cutting old ties (Cerrutti & Massey 2001).

In traditional societies, many people spend their whole lives in their native village neighbourhoods. Today, migration is becoming increasingly common as people move in search of security and a better livelihood: from villages to towns, from one region to another in their home country, or between countries and continents. Even those who do not migrate are affected as relatives, friends or descendants of migrants, or through experiences of change in their

community as a result of departure of neighbours or arrival of new comers. International migration means crossing the frontiers which separate one of the world's approximately 200 states from another (Castles 2000).

Over the last 25 years, there has been little concerted effort to incorporate gender into theories of international migration. This is despite the reality that gender is critical in the migration context. Because migration theory has traditionally emphasized the causes of international migration over questions of who migrates, it has often failed to adequately address gender-specific migration experiences. Without clear theoretical underpinnings, it becomes difficult to explain, for example, the conditions under which women migrate, or the predominance of women in certain labour flows and not in others. Furthermore, traditional theory fails to help us understand the circumstances that encourage women to become transnational migrants, to enter into trafficking channels, or to seek refugee resettlement.

Answering these questions and other more gender-sensitive inquiries requires demonstration of how a seemingly gender-neutral process of movement is, in fact, highly gender-specific and may result in differential outcomes for men and women. Today the question: "How can gender be incorporated into our understanding of migration?" remains only partially answered for a variety of reasons. For example, understanding migration and constructing useful theories must take into account many different types of migration, including temporary, permanent, illegal, labour, and conflict-induced migration. Developing a gendered theory of migration has been difficult because the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, demography, law, and history have tended to focus on only a few types of migration and stress different explanations. Also, incorporating gender as an explicit part of migration theory has more recently been influenced by developments in feminist perspectives in North America, which continue to challenge more orthodox views (Boyd & Grieco 2003).

International migration occurs when people cross state boundaries and stay in the host state for some minimum length of time. Migration occurs for many reasons. Many people leave their home countries in search of economic opportunities in another country. Others migrate to be with family members who have migrated or because of political conditions in their countries. Education is another reason for international migration, as students pursue their studies abroad.

Until recently, governments generally did not see international migration as a central political issue. Rather, migrants were divided into categories such as permanent settlers, foreign workers, or refugees, and dealt with by a variety of special agencies such as immigration

department, labour offices, aliens' police welfare authorities and educational ministries (Castles et al. 2013).

There are several different potential systems for categorizing international migrants. One system organizes them into nine groups: temporary labour migrants; irregular, illegal, or undocumented migrants; highly skilled and business migrants; refugees; asylum seekers; forced migration; family members; return migrants; and long-term, low-skilled migrants. These migrants can also be divided into two large groups, permanent and temporary. Permanent migrants intend to establish their permanent residence in a new country and possibly obtain that country's citizenship. Temporary migrants intend only to stay for a limited period of time; perhaps until the end of a particular program of study or for the duration of their work contract or a certain work season. Both types of migrants have a significant effect on the economies and societies of the chosen destination country and the country of origin (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2007).

The United States (US) has remained the most important migrant destination in the world. It is home to one fifth of the world's migrants and the top destination for migrants from some 60 sending countries. Migration to Western Europe has come largely from elsewhere in Europe. The oil-rich Persian Gulf countries emerge as important destinations for migrants from the Middle East and North Africa and South and Southeast Asia. Finally, although the global migrant stock is predominantly male, the proportion of female migrants increased noticeably between 1960 and 2000. The number of women rose in every region except South Asia (Özden et al. 2011).

In the early 1970s, Lesotho, Malawi, and Mozambique were the main suppliers of labour to apartheid South Africa. This pattern later changed, and the supply of workers from Lesotho increased steadily over the years to 50 per cent of the foreign labour in South Africa. The striking disparities in economic development and living standards between South Africa and other African countries, and the remarkable transition to post-Apartheid rule attracted migrants of all categories from Africa and beyond, despite the daunting problems of unemployment, crime, widespread poverty, and the spread of AIDS. It is estimated that nationals from some 100 countries now live in the Republic of South Africa. From West Africa came highly skilled professionals from Nigeria and Ghana to staff the universities and other professions, along with tradespeople from Senegal and Mali, including street vendors and small traders. These joined their counterparts from the DRC, Zaire and Zimbabwe to swell the informal sector in addition

to the traditional immigrants from Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Malawi, and Mozambique, whose nationals were mostly unskilled farm labourers and mine workers (Adepoju 2003).

In 2009, almost two-thirds of African immigrants to South Africa were from Eastern and Western Africa, but no individually reported country accounted for more than 14.1 percent of the foreign born from the Africa region. The top countries of origin for the African born were Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, and Kenya (McCabe 2011).

In Africa, labour migration, particularly over greater distances, tend to be dominated by young men. However, female migration is high in many places, including Ethiopia, Congo, Botswana, Kenya and Mali. Male migrants predominate in northern Benin, but women are predominant in the centre and south of the country. The number of women among international migrants is hardly less than the number of men: in 1990, world-wide an estimated 57 million women were 'foreign-born', forming 48 per cent of the total 'stock' of migrants. Some people have argued that female migration is increasing compared to men's. This is undoubtedly true for migrations for some kinds of activities (De Haan 2000). Thus, composition of migration streams is diverse, and may be changing over time. Also, both motivations for, and returns from, migration may differ. For example, in Mali, a polygamous society, female migration tends to be related to the desire to earn money for dowries, whereas male migration tends to be related to earning cash for the bride price. In China, a woman's age and marital status are more important in determining whether she migrates or not than a man's, and single female migrants in northern China tend to remit a lower proportion of their income than married male, married female and single male migrants (De Haan 2000)

The DRC is located in the centre of Africa bordering nine neighbouring countries which links it into multiple migration systems in different regions of Africa. Given that there are no roads across the country, for many people moving to a neighbouring country is much easier than trying to cross the length of DRC.

The brutality of the Belgian colonial regime established a pattern of forced migration that has continued to the present day. The chaos of independence, followed by ongoing political tensions and conflict in Central Africa have resulted in large-scale exchanges of refugee movements migration between DRC and most of its neighbours over decades. According to World Bank estimates, currently some 570,000 Congolese are living abroad, of whom 120,000 are in Europe and North America. However, the real number of Congolese abroad, in particular in African countries, is likely to be much higher because many migrants are not registered.

Although the vast majority of Congolese migrants stay within Africa, there have been significant movements to Belgium and, to a lesser extent, France to study or work. With increasing repression and economic decline in DRC, most of the migrants did not return.

However, each migratory movement has its own specific historical patterns. Given that the present study was conducted among migrants living in Durban, it is important to consider the history of migration in this province as well. The South African Migration Survey (SAMP) conducted numerous surveys focusing on immigration issues of the 1990s. One of these surveys was conducted in Durban in 1999. The Durban survey revealed that the average age of Durban's migrants was 34 years. A national survey revealed that the average age of migrants was 32 years (McDonald et al. 1999). In Durban, most of the migrants (70%) were in their economic prime, in other words between 25 and 44 years old. Only 15% were younger than 24 years, and a nominal 4% were older than 55 years. The majority (74%) of the migrants were males (Maharaj & Moodley 1999).

The migrants had a fairly good educational background. This is reflected by the fact that a significant number had secondary (45%) and tertiary (29%) educations. Sixteen percent had some form of primary education, and only a few (10%) had no formal education. Over 50% of the migrants were single (that is, had never married). A significant proportion (32%) was married. Almost equal proportions of those that were married had left their spouses in the country of origin or had brought them with to South Africa. It is interesting to note that, at the time of the survey, 78% of the spouses/partners of migrants were South African (Maharaj & Moodley 1999).

Research conducted by several researchers has shown a gender imbalance among African migrants to South Africa in general and in Durban in particular. This gender-related migration pattern may be due to the fact that in many African societies males are considered as the ones who are economically active and can save enough in a higher wage economy country in order to improve conditions at home. However, after staying for a period in the host country (Durban), some of these male migrants return home but others prolong their stay, get their spouses to join them or find partners in Durban. With the birth of children, settlement generally takes on a permanent character making migrant women economically male dependant.

2.1.2 CONGOLESE MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

Africa has been described as a continent prone to political turmoil as a result of its history of colonialism, oppressive military dictatorships, economic instability, corruption and ethno-

cultural civil war. The above issues have been part of the causes of conflict and violence, resulting in citizens being displaced and seeking refuge throughout the continent of Africa. South Africa has been the country of choice in terms of destination for most migrants. Since the early 1990s, refugees have been residing in South Africa (Assounga, 2014). Migration is often a result of economic and social development. In return, migration may contribute to further development and improved economic and social conditions, or alternatively may help to perpetuate stagnation and inequality. Much depends on the character of migration and the actions taken by the governments and other stakeholders concerned. Migration helps to erode traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic groups and nation-states. It therefore challenges cultural traditions, national identity and political institutions, and contributes to a decline in the autonomy of the nation-state (Boyle et al. 2008)

Congolese refugees represent the biggest group among the refugee community in Durban. In 2000; there were 787 Congolese refugees and asylum seekers in Durban, representing 29.5% of the entire refugee population in South Africa (Amisi 2005). Although current statistics are unavailable from Home Affairs officials, there is reason to believe that due to the successive wars, rebellions, inter-ethnic conflicts, riots, massive human rights violations, social and political instability in the African Great Lakes Region and the cumulative consequences of all these events in the DRC, the number of refugees from the Congo is likely to be higher than it was in 2000. This is particularly so if one considers the figures available for monthly arrivals at the Durban Refugee Reception Centre in 2003 were for only a few months of that year, from January to June 2003, the Durban Reception Centre received 582 asylum seekers including 383 adult males, 90 adult females and 109 children (Amisi 2005).

Most of the literature on migration deals with the differences between the automatic assimilation and the gradual integration of the migrant into the host society (Papastergiadis 2013). Congolese migrants' desire to integrate into the multicultural transnational space has demonstrated negative consequences on their own cultural identity. The cultural exchange experience in Durban has a dynamic role in the reshaping of Congolese migrant sexual behaviour.

In DRC and any other patriarchal societies women's primary roles are defined as wife and mother, dependant on a male bread winner (Castles et al. 2013) The breakdown of patriarchal control mechanisms that would have kept women anchored to a male authority figure (husband, father, priest, chief) opens opportunities for women to make autonomous decisions to migrate.

In many instances, the breakdown of control mechanisms is linked to men's inability to materially provide for their families. The withdrawal of this support without compensatory support for women in their communities also provides an incentive to move (Kihato 2007).

2.2 CONCEPTUALISING VIRGINITY PURITY FOR WOMEN

Although African societies differ in geography, ethnicity, religion and cultural practices, they all share the commonality of valuing virginity and upholding and enforcing norms of preserving virginity until marriage (Alaba 2004; Beckwith & Fisher 2002.).

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a virgin as one who has never engaged in sexual intercourse (Merriam-Webster 2016). Abdalla (2007) provided a definition similar to the one given by Merriam-Webster which states that virginity is the state of a person who has never engaged in sexual intercourse. From a medical point of view, Abdalla explains that "virginity is typically tested by checking for the presence of a hymen, which is a fold of mucous membrane that partly covers the entrance to the vagina, and which is usually ruptured when sexual intercourse takes place for the first time" (Abdalla 2007). Kefallinos (2012) states that an epithet the word 'virgin' means the unknown, the unattached, the unspoiled and the pure; as a noun 'virginity' means an intact hymen and the absence of sexual intercourse between male and female (Kefallinos 2012).

The classification of women into the two categories of *kadin* and *kiz* on the basis of the status of their hymen is still pervasive in Turkish culture, and clearly reflected in the vernacular. When describing or addressing an unmarried woman, the word *kiz* (girl, intact hymen) is used: the *kiz* becomes a *kadin* (woman, non-virgin) when she is married and her hymen is broken. Explicit in the notion of *kiz* is not only sexual purity and innocence, but also, particularly important, the desexualisation of unmarried women, and the normative expectation that the transition from girlhood/non-sexual to womanhood/sexual should occur within the institution of marriage. In short, a non-virgin unmarried woman has no place in the societal classification. The hymen, as a fold of flesh, has the power to rule the sexual identities of unmarried women (Ozyegin 2009).

Globally, virginity encompasses many different meanings (Bersamin et al. 2007). While virginity refers to the state of having "never had sex" (Carpenter & Kettrey 2015), Trotter and Alderson (2007:11) argue that not everyone means the same thing when they talk about "having sex". Therefore, there is ambiguity surrounding the definition of "having sex". For instance, in the US, young people have traditionally assigned different meanings to virginity, and

experienced virginity loss in different ways based on their gender. For example, Bersamin et al. (2007:2) found out that while almost all (99.5%) of the university students in their study perceived penile-vaginal penetration as “having sex”, 81% believed that penile-anal penetration did not constitute “having sex”. Oral-genital contact was also only considered to be “having sex” among 40% of the respondents. For the purposes of this study, sexual relations or “having sex” will be defined according to the definition of Trotter and Alderson (2007:11), as the penetration of the vagina by a penis. This study is focused, however, on migrant women and explore the perception on the practice of preserving virginity and the meaning given to loss of virginity. From the analysis of data collected on Congolese migrant women living in Durban, virginity is a state of a person who has never had sex before and having sex includes non-penetrative sexual practice as well as penile vaginal intercourse.

2.2.1 SYMBOLISM OF VIRGINITY

Aside from the strictly anatomical ideology of virginity, virginity has a considerable symbolism attached to it as well. A strong cultural and symbolic value is also attached to virginity and to virgin girls in many parts of Africa, where the term metaphorically represents fertility, health, vigour, and the future of the community (Leclerc-Madlala 2003). Traditionally, most African cultures and religions require young women to remain virgins until marriage, which means that women are expected not to engage in sexual intercourse, or experience penile-penetration of the vagina, before marriage. Among the Yoruba tribes of Western Nigeria, virginity is valued and encouraged prior to marriage, since marriage to a virgin female is said to enhance the legitimacy of her offspring (Alaba 2004). In South Africa, preserving virginity purity until marriage is also typically expected of women of various tribes and cultures (Scorgie 2002).

Studies among youth and young adults in South Africa have shown that the age of sexual debut has significantly decreased with most females having experienced sexual activity by the age of 15 years (Chirinda et al. 2012; Mbotho et al 2013). This indicates the diminished importance of preserving virginity until marriage. University students were shown to have the highest prevalence of increased sexual behaviour, due to changes in their home environment as well as increased independence (Moodley 2016; Mutinta et al. 2014). Although many students identified with the religious views regarding premarital sexual activity, they indicated difficulty in maintaining these restrictions in the university environment (Eriksson et al. 2013; Mbotho et al.2013, Moodley 2016).

Swanlek (2013⁴) argues that in Egypt virginity functioned to stifle public dissent. Swanlek states: “I utilize both a synchronic and diachronic analysis of the ideograph ‘virginity’ in Egypt, and argue that it is structured in both a religious and patriarchal meta-discourse used to demarcate the role of the ‘good women’” (Swanlek 2013). In Turkey, oppressive control over women’s bodies and sexuality prevails, as is often the case in the world. Patriarchal domination continues to suppress women as always with various discourses on their sexuality which is regarded to be closely connected with honour. Their body is still considered something to be possessed, kept in male control and talked about (Kalav 2013).

In Sweden several young women suffer from strong patriarchal chastity ideals, even to the extent that some undergo surgery to restore a lost virginity (Cinthio 2015).

Virginity as a concept in most countries of Western Europe and the US remains ‘old fashioned’, but in some countries of Africa, Asia, South America and South-Eastern Europe, it continues to be a taboo topic, bringing numerous problems for women who lose their virginity before marriage (Fejza et al. 2015). In the Kosovan society even today, for example, people primarily speak of the importance of female virginity and the need to remain a virgin until their wedding day (Fejza et al. 2015: 22).

Virginity has been presented antithetically as both anatomical and ideological, real and imagined, private and social/public, prestigious and an obstacle, sacred and profane, as well as a commodity and an artefact (Kefallinos 2012).

In the Congolese culture, virginity purity before marriage is linked to the broader concept of honour, whereby virginity loss before marriage is considered to bring dishonour not only to the woman’s family, but also to her community, her future husband, and his family as well (Bosmans 2007). If a Congolese girl is ever caught having sexual intercourse out of wedlock, it could result in her being “ostracized by her family and her community” (Jean-Bouchard 2014: 364). In the DRC, a girl is the centre piece of a marriage, and she plays an indispensable role in the success and respect of both her and her husband’s families. Bosmans (2007: 6) states that the DRC “is a society where a woman’s value is closely linked with virginity, marriage and child bearing,” and that any suffering by the woman “is often subordinate to the dishonour and frustration inflicted upon the husband, the family and the whole community”.

This study was conducted among Congolese migrant women living in Durban, on their perception of the practice of preserving virginity before marriage. The study reveals that

virginity is symbolized as something to be proud of and something that gives value and represents the importance of a woman and the honour of the family

2.2.2 WOMANHOOD, MARRIAGE AND VIRGINITY

The drive to modernize and the adoption of a free-market approach to economic and social development have clearly influenced women's gendered expectations and ideals. Market dynamics infuse social relations with values of self-sufficiency and individualism, which engender new roles and demands for women. At the same time, family and work responsibilities have created contradictions in the lives of women, generating a critical assessment and a redefinition of their social place (Mora 2006). A study conducted by Schaan et al. (2016) on personal views about womanhood amongst women living with HIV in Botswana revealed that womanhood in Africa is a socially constructed concept that can be said to have two central defining elements: being a wife and being a mother. This implies that women's social place is "marriage", also mentioned by Mora (2006). The dictionary definition of 'womanhood' is much broader, with the Cambridge dictionary defining it as the state of being a woman or the period of time when someone is a woman, or qualities that are considered typical of woman. (Cambridge Dictionary 2017).

An article written by Jaji (2015) on refugee women in East and Central Africa argues that femininity is a constraint in some instances and a resource in others, such that what exists among the refugee women is not a single femininity but a continuum of femininities. Sennott and Mojola (2017), in a study conducted in rural Mpumalanga (South Africa), argue that behavioural standards for respectable womanhood that reinforce the ideal femininity were focused on dress, manner and talk, and were particularly stringent for mothers. Thus, motherhood, marriage and home-life remain strongholds of womanhood. Based on traditional conceptions among Zulu, women play a role in the practice and maintenance of the custom and the custom sustains a widely desired and respected notion of womanhood (Rudwick & Posel 2015). In the DRC there is a traditional belief that a woman is a weak creature who cannot live by herself, playing a vocational role which is to serve within a family as a wife and a mother but with a main role of bearing and raising children. Congolese women's daily duties include cooking and doing other household chores. In Congolese culture, a woman is expected to represent an ideal and model by her behaviour. Women represent the dignity and cultural pride of the society with the main responsibility of promoting and contributing to upholding of the custom and the tradition to the next generation. There are differences, however, in the ways in

which many Congolese ethnic groups regard women. Some ethnic groups associate women with ‘motherhood’ and focus on their reproductive role while others consider women only as ‘mothers and/or sisters’ and others see a woman as ‘a man’s property’(Kondemo 2011).

Marriage is a key institution in many, if not all, societies. In some societies marriage is seen as a defining mark in transition from childhood to adulthood, and as a mechanism for how relationship and kin networks are formed. In Africa and in DRC in particular, marriage has a place of pride, marriage is very important because of its meaning which is rooted in patriarchal society. In these societies women have been taught to think that they need protection and financial security from men since birth, and are forced into marriage for economic security.

In Congolese society, heterosexual marriage is a highly regarded institution that is viewed as contributing significantly to the true identities of women (Kondemo 2011). A study conducted in Congo by USAID (2013-2014) on Congolese marital status reveals that the rate of unmarried was 26%, married 46%, staying together 17%, divorced 7% and widow and widower 2%.. Previously, Amisi (2006) conducted a study on Congolese migrant women living in Durban. Results reveal that compared to the study done in DRC, the rate of married was 26% (almost half of what observed in DRC), the rate of unmarried was 50% (almost double), widowed 6.6%, divorced 3.3%, and living together 13.2% (Amisi 2006). A study by Hosegood et al (2009) on marriage and partnership trends in rural Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa shows that marriage has continued to decline with a small increase in cohabitation among unmarried couples, particularly in more urbanised areas (Hosegood et al.2009).

In DRC, when a woman accepts a marriage proposal, she invites the man to go to see his parents for the payment of bride price. The man and the members of his family present the dowry, which is generally composed of a sum of money (the dowry proper), clothes and shoes for the parents of the bride, two goats (destined for the mother for the virginity of her daughter), drink and accessories (Mukenge 2010).

The significance of sexuality and reproduction within any particular social system can only be understood with reference to both biology and culture combined. For this reason, an understanding of biological facts is necessary in order to understand the position of women in society. Virginity is both a biological fact of life and a concept with multiple social meanings and consequences (Hastrup 1978). “Virgin” has really become a designation for a particular model of femininity and womanhood that marginalizes anyone who does not meet those very narrow standards (Valenti 2009).

In the light of the above, it is clear that the importance of virginity is linked to marriage and child bearing. Marriage defines the true identity of women. Cooper et al. (2007) state that motherhood is an important component of married women's identity and important for women's social status. Family, husbands' and societal expectations for childbearing were important influences on women's reproductive intentions (Cooper et al. 2007).

However, despite the importance given to marriage, the study conducted by Amisi (2006) shows a decrease in the occurrence of marriage. This could be due to an increase in women's education although it also appears to be largely a consequence of enduring economic hardship.

Premarital sex was reported among Congolese migrant women specially those who migrate for studies, due to changes in their home environment as well as increased independence. Data collected for this study reveal that in DRC women get married at an earlier age than their counterpart migrants. The late occurrence of marriage among Congolese migrants, in particular those living in Durban, could be one of the reasons why preserving virginity has been a challenge.

Among Congolese migrants residing in Durban, it has been argued that financial uncertainties, challenges in paying 'bride wealth', and difficulties in establishing households have been delaying people's entry into marriage. As a result, this is promoting premarital sexual behaviour among Congolese migrants.

2.3 ENFORCEMENT OF VIRGINITY PURITY: TESTING AND CEREMONIAL RITES OF PASSAGE

The enforcement of virginity purity is a global practice, which is most often prompted through the routine testing of young girls to ensure their virginity has not been compromised. At times, this is even enforced through the practice of various ceremonial rituals, or "rites of passage" (Gupta 2000)

Ultimately, the enforcement of virginity has been described as an "inter-generational struggle", where it is primarily the older men and women who are the most vocal proponents of preserving virginity, and enforcing virginity-testing (Leclerc-Madlala 2003: 23). According to Leclerc-Madlala (2003: 23), the generations comprising the middle-aged and elderly are the ones who constitute "the bulk of today's 'cultural revivalists' who are capitalising on a sense of lost control and desperation by calling for a tighter grip on virginity." In this respect, it is the elderly women in the community who typically act as the testers of virginity (Leclerc-Madlala 2003).

In KwaZulu-Natal, many young girls undergo virginity testing in their communities, where they participate in *Umkhosi wohlanga* (The Reed Dance) ceremony, which takes place in the Zulu royal palace with young maidens gathering carrying umhlanga (reed sticks) (Nkosi 2013). Virginity testing is also often performed by a traditionalist group of Zulu women or a team of women who are tasked to conduct virginity inspections or *ukuhlolwa kwezintombi* on young women (Scorgie 2002). These inspections typically follow the same procedure for all the girls: girls are lined up on their backs, on grass mats, among an assembled crowd of women (Scorgie 2002). The judge, or umholi, asks each girl, in turn, to part their legs, whereupon she makes her judgement by peering briefly at – or at times using her hands to part and observe – the girl's exposed genitalia. Each confirmation of virginity is accompanied by “cheers from the crowd” and a “printed certificate” of virginity purity is awarded (Scorgie 2002: 58). A “smearing of white clay” is also characteristically placed on the virgin's forehead to signify that they have passed the test (Scorgie 2002:58). Those who fail, are instead sequestered, questioned, and reprimanded.

Many other countries, such as Somalia, Egypt, Senegal, Sudan, and Mali also enforce female virginal purity through various ceremonial rituals and rites of passage. One such ceremonial rite of passage is performed through the act of female circumcision, which is widely regarded as a form of female genital mutilation (FGM) (Gupta 2013:21). Female circumcision is seen in many African cultures, for example, as a traditional ritual to ensure a girl's virginity and make her marriageable (Gupta 2013: 21). Female genital mutilation is the collective name given to several different traditional practices that involve the cutting of females' genitals. It was practiced by many ancient cultures including the Phoenicians, Hittites and the ancient Egyptians, as well as by modern physicians. Female genital mutilation is one of traditional rituals that prepare girls for womanhood (Toubia 1995).

Practices of FGM have been practiced in the DRC, which include ritual defloration, and, among isolated populations of the Kivu region of the DRC, widening of the vaginal canal is practiced (Gallo et al. 2010). Studies, such as by Gallo et al. (2010), have described the practice of stretching the labia minora among women in the DRC, as well as other expansive interventions of female genitalia. Genital stretching (GS), which constitutes the expansive modification of the labia minora, is commonly practiced in the African Great Lakes region, among which includes the DRC (Gallo et al.2010).

Although stretching of the labia minora is classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) (1996), cited in Gallo et al. (2010), as a form of FGM. Gallo et al. (2010: 112) argue that this is not an appropriate classification since there is “no sense of self-mutilation, but rather expansive manipulation of the genitalia.”

In DRC, the practice of FGM is known and observed in some regions of the country. However, the current research found no evidence of a similar practice among Congolese migrant women living in Durban. This may be due to social disorganisation or modernisation, which considers that various changes result in a collapse in the social control of older generations over the younger ones. As mentioned earlier, Congolese migratory movement has involved primarily economically active people who are often target earners who can save enough in a higher wage economy country to improve the conditions at home.

However, despite the value given to the practice of preserving virginity before marriage in DRC, there are surprisingly few sources of data describing how the practice is enforced. Could this be attributed to the fact that Congolese people are more religious than traditional? This may serve as a topic for further research. A study conducted in DRC by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) (2005) on the importance of marriage found that in Christianity marriage is very important because it is the only union of a man and a woman that lasts and brings happiness to both. According to the religion, it is through marriage that love and life are transmitted and also marriage brings together two families.

While collecting data among Congolese migrants living in Durban, most participants disagreed with the practice of virginity testing through ritual ceremony and recommended that mothers should only speak to their daughters about sexual abstinence and learn to trust them. It was revealed from the data collected that Congolese migrants do not observe any ceremonial rites of passage to reinforce virginity purity except for the presence of blood expected to be seen on the sheet the first night after the wedding. As stated in certain communities, the bed sheet, now soiled in blood is shown as proof that first sexual intercourse has taken place and the bride indeed was a virgin up to that point. The sullied sheet constitutes evidence that the “honour” of the woman and that of her family remain intact (Amy 2008).

2.3.1 VIRGINITY TESTING AND HIV

In South Africa, virginity testing is also gendered. There is a common belief that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is the result of women being sexually “out of control” (Leclerc-Madlala 2001: 533). With the social impact of AIDS starting to take its toll in the forms of increasing AIDS-related

deaths, and a growing population of orphans, it has been argued that virginity testing should be upheld in an attempt to manage the epidemic by exerting greater control over women and their sexual behaviour (Leclerc-Madlala 2001). It should be noted, though, that virginity testing of girls helps to draw attention away from the role of men in the maturing HIV epidemic. The practice of virginity testing has come under heavy criticism. Some researchers argue that virginity testing is used as a means of exerting control over women and their sexuality. Moreover, it draws attention away from the role of men and their abuse of sexual power and privilege (Leclerc-Madlala 2001).

Many regard virginity testing as the “only way to instil what they view as the lost cultural values of chastity before marriage, modesty, self-respect and pride” (Leclerc-Madlala 2001: 535). As the number of people dying of AIDS has increased, community leaders have shown interest in reviving the cultural tradition of virginity testing as a way to safeguard against HIV/AIDS. Kinoti (2005) argues that virginity testing is used as one method to check the onslaught of the pandemic in order to encourage abstinence, which is one of the strategies for preventing the further spread of the virus. Often those in favour of virginity testing claim that the benefits include not only the prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS, but also prevention of teenage pregnancy and the detection of children who are sexually abused, and that it relieves the burden on pensioners who are forced to take care of unplanned babies (Le Roux 2006). According to a national survey in South Africa among young people aged 15-24 years, the HIV prevalence was estimated to be 8.6% in 2005 (Shisana et al. 2009). The rate of new infection is also higher among young women than young men, and this is associated with various factors such as greater biological susceptibility, gender inequalities, sociocultural norms, lack of financial security, forced and early marriage, sexual abuse and human trafficking of young women (Shisana et al. 2009).

According to Kinoti (2005), in KwaZulu-Natal virginity testing is a practice in which girls aged 7 to 26 are examined to determine whether their hymen (commonly known as ‘eye’) is intact. Girls who pass the examination receive a white star pasted on their forehead and a certificate confirming their virginity. However, research conducted in Durban shows that a sizeable minority of adolescents become sexually active before the age of fifteen suggesting that there is a need for intervention to target young people before that age (Calvès et al. 1996).

Hunter (1936) argues that virginity testing, which is done in order to ensure that girls are virgins, has much broader significance. Virgins are seen as morally pure and more important

because they are able to maintain their virginity up until marriage. Engaging in sexual intercourse before marriage is regarded as unacceptable (Mhlongo 2009).

In January 2016, a row over virginity testing was reignited when the Mayor of uThukela District Municipality in Kwazulu-Natal, Dudu Mazibuko, instituted a Maiden's Bursary program. Sixteen scholarships for tertiary study were awarded to virgin females. These girls had undergone virginity testing previously. Their scholarships would be renewed as long as they maintained their virginity during their studies and to prove this they would need again to periodically undergo the test (Rafudeen 2016).

The mayor's intent was practical: she felt that far too many girls ruin their education by falling pregnant and so the award would incentivize them to focus on their studies. There was also the need to curb the high levels of HIV and simply abstaining from sex would certainly appear to promote that goal (Ngcobo 2016).

In South Africa, particularly in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, a girl who becomes pregnant before marriage is ostracised by girls who would have passed the test for the reason that she has brought shame and disgrace both upon herself and her peers. Nowadays the dignity and pride that virginity is believed to bestow on the individual girl continues to be linked with the avoidance of premarital motherhood. Sexual abstinence is constructed as an end in itself, quite separate from its role in enabling fertility control and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV transmission (Mhlongo 2009). "Adolescents who have sex are seen as people who have lost the vitality of youth and become old" (Scorgie 2002: 10).

In DRC, in the Luba ethnic group, a group of traditional experts, especially old women, will testify after seeing blood on the sheet after a bride's honeymoon night. It is a sign of purity in many religions especially Muslim and Judaism. In South Africa, virgins stand in the frontlines of the war against HIV/AIDS and many believe that virginity is one of the country's (DRC) biggest defence against HIV (Kabuya 2017).

In the current study it has been observed that migrants live in a higher HIV-prevalence region than their counterparts in the DRC.

A study conducted in KwaZulu-Natal by Wand et al. (2011) on the prevalence of HIV revealed that HIV prevalence was 43% among women who reported speaking Zulu or other languages compared to 29% among those who reported speaking English at home. Testing positive for HIV infection was more common among women who were not married (46%) and not living

with a sexual partner (46%) compared to those married (14%) and living with a sexual partner (31%). High risk sexual behaviors were also common among those who were HIV-infected at the screening visit compared with those not infected. More than 50% of the women who reported having had sex for the first time at age 14 or younger tested positive for HIV infection. Sixty percent of women who had at least four or more lifetime sexual partners tested positive for HIV infection compared to those with less than four lifetime sexual partners. Seventy percent of the women who reported having exchanged sex for money tested positive. Prevalence of HIV infection was also significantly higher among women who tested positive for gonorrhea and Herpes (HSV2). HIV prevalence was significantly higher among women who reported not using any contraception methods (or using only traditional methods) compared to those who reported using at least one of the contraception methods (47% vs 40%). The Ministère du Plan et Suivi de la Mise en œuvre de la Révolution de la Modernité (MPSMRM) (2014) conducted a study on the prevalence of HIV in the DRC among 9,264 women aged 15-49 and 8,374 men aged 15-59 who were tested for HIV. The results show that 1.2% of people aged 15-49 were infected with HIV, and the differences between provinces was not statistically significant. HIV prevalence among young people aged 15-24 was 0.7%. HIV prevalence was higher among women (1.6%) than men (0.6%). It was lower among those living in rural areas (0.9%) compared to urban areas (1.6%). HIV prevalence was highest among widows (7.9%) and divorced (2.9). The infection rate of women and men increased with age to reach a maximum of 2.9% at 40-44 years for women and 1.2% for men 35-39 and 45-49 years old. In women, HIV prevalence was lowest among those with no education. On the other hand, among men, HIV prevalence was lowest among those who have higher levels of education. In women the prevalence of HIV tended to increase when the level of economic wellbeing increased. The infection rate was highest among young women living in rural areas.

Comparing the above study conducted by Wand (2011) in KwaZulu-Natal and the one done by MPSMRM (2014) in the whole DRC, we can conclude that indeed in the DRC, women live in a lower HIV prevalence region than their counterparts the migrants in South Africa. These studies show that the lowest incidence is among young women aged 15-24 and married women in the DRC which is the opposite of the results in KwaZulu-Natal. Another study conducted by Shisana et al. (2014) in South Africa shows that there is a high incidence of HIV among young women aged 15-24 years.

2.3.2 TRENDS IN MARRIAGE AND VIRGINITY

Whilst efforts have persisted to enforce virginity purity until marriage in sub-Saharan Africa, there has been a considerable trend, especially within urban areas, towards later onset into marital union (Shapiro & Gebreselassie 2014). Authors such as Gurmu and Mace (2008: 339), for example, have used the term “retreat from marriage” as a label for the lower proportions of marriage that have been observed in the region over the past two decades. In support of this, Shapiro (2015: 258) observed that there has been “a sharp decline” in the union of women aged between 15 and 29 in the DRC capital of Kinshasa, since 1990. Djamba (2003) found that changes in the patterns of marital union formation and female education began to reduce the fertility rate; by 1990 this rate had reduced by over 1.5, to an average fertility of around 5.9 children per woman.

A study by Garenne (2004: 60) on more than 30 countries across sub-Saharan Africa found that higher incomes were associated with later ages at marriage, particularly on the part of the women. This was attributed, in principle, to “the effects of westernisation” and western influence on women in the labour force, higher levels of income among young women, and the ability – and inclination – of women to delay marriage. School attendance among women was also seen to delay the onset of marriage. Studies by Antoine (2006), Gurmu and Mace (2008), and Shapiro (2015) have each stated that issues with persisting economic difficulties are at the root of the trend to delay, or otherwise abstain from marriage in the DRC. It was argued that financial uncertainties, challenges in paying ‘bride wealth’, and difficulties in establishing households have been delaying people’s entry into marriage.

Findings from prior research on trends in premarital sexual activity have documented that in recent decades the vast majority of men and women are sexually active prior to marriage (Laurence et al. 2012). These descriptive findings are a starting point for further research on this subject. They fill a gap in the South Africa marriage and household literature, and provide a platform for exploring causative factors (Hosegood et al. 2009).

In many traditional societies, women’s age at marriage acts simultaneously as a gateway to new family roles and the likelihood of producing offspring. However, inadequate attention has previously been given to the broader health and social implications of variability in women’s marriage age in terms of public health. Biomedical scientists have primarily been concerned with whether the onset of reproduction occurs before the woman is adequately able to nurture her offspring and maintain her own health. Social scientists have argued that early marriage

prevents women from attaining their rightful education, accessing employment and training opportunities, developing social relationships with peers, and participating in civic life (Marphatia et al. 2017)

In the DRC, as well as many other parts of the Africa, marriage is still the main context for sexual intercourse. Getting married therefore signals the start of exposure to the chance of becoming pregnant and the earlier a woman gets married, the higher is the chance for her to escape from premarital sexual behaviour such as out wedlock childbearing, unwanted pregnancies and abortion. In this study Congolese migrants who have migrated to Durban for studies reasons have demonstrated that maintaining virginity until marriage seems to be not only impossible but also challenging.

2.3.3 PREMARITAL SEXUAL ACTIVITY AMONG CONGOLESE WOMEN

The DRC is the third largest African state in terms of demography (about 60,000,000 inhabitants) with a young population: half of the population is under 15 years of age, people aged 50 or older represent 7.5% of the population, women of reproductive age (15-49 years old) represent 23% of the total population and 45% of Congolese women. Of these women of childbearing age, just over 60% are married. Unmarried women represent more than 70% of women (Riva 2006).

The culture of the DRC reflects the diversity of the country's hundreds of ethnic groups and their customs. At the mouth of the river (Bas-Congo) there is a dense forest in the basin of the Congo River (Orientales provinces and Ecuador), and a savannah on the central plateau (Kasaï), the most densely populated region of the country beside the urban sprawl of Kinshasa. Since the end of the 19th century traditional lifestyles have changed as a result of the colonization, the struggles for independence, the seizure of the country by Mobutu Sese Seko, and more recently the First and Second Congo Wars. Despite these influences, Congo's traditional customs and cultures remain largely untouched (Malu-Malu 2002).

The virginity of a girl is still associated with the honour of the family. Therefore, in certain tribes of the Congo the fiancé must offer a goat to the parents if the bride is found to still be a virgin, this is called " *mbuji wa nyima*" by the Luba tribe of Kasai (Kabeya 2015).

In spite of efforts to test and preserve virginity purity in the DRC, numerous studies have indicated that in fact, the opposite is true. A study by Djamba (1995) on Congolese women in the DRC found that 52% of married women had engaged in premarital sexual intercourse. The

results of the Djamba (1995) study were also supported by a more recent study of 3,171 Congolese women by Gómez & Speizer (2010), who found that in 2007 58.5% of Congolese women had engaged in premarital sex, and only 41.6% had engaged in first-sex after marriage. Another study around the same time by Kayembe et al. (2008) considered the premarital sexual activity of 13,091 teenagers and young adults aged between 15-24 years in the DRC. These authors found a pre-marital sex rate of 64%, with around half of females (51.8%) and around three quarters of males (76%) being sexually experienced. The average age of first sexual intercourse for females in the Kayembe et al.'s (2008) study was 17 years.

In another landmark study by Djamba (2003: 328), the premarital sexual activity of youths was investigated. For most young Congolese women prior to the 1990s, it was observed that premarital sexual activity was based on “sporadic, no steady types of relationships”, while “premarital chastity was still widely accepted as the norm for young women in Congo”. By the 1990s, though, Djamba (2003) argued that delay in marriage, exposure to formal education and mass media, and other changes in the social and economic environment had reduced women's reliance on traditional norms, affecting the values placed on union formation among women. Djamba (1995) found that the rate of sexual activity before marriage was higher among educated women, and that the probability of a women having had premarital intercourse was 1.0, once the women reached an age of 27 years. Romaniuk (1967) state that the female celibate is more important in the city than in the villages. People get married relatively late in the city (23 years old) than in the village (20 years old), and low the province of Bas-Congo and Bandundu than in the Kasai. (Ngondo & Enyuka 1998).

There also appeared to be differences in sexual practices between ethnicities of Congolese women, where women from the more sexually-liberal Bangala tribe were more likely to have engaged in premarital sex compared to those from the less-liberal Baluba Tribe (Djamba 1995). It was also observed that those who had engaged in premarital intercourse married approximately four years later than those who had not..

The study by Djamba (2003), found that the premarital sexual practices of women was greatly affected by AIDS awareness, poverty, the patrilinearity of the society, and exposure to mass media – which significantly reduced premarital sexual practices. It was observed that social capital, as distinguished by the number of siblings in the household, was “positively correlated with sexual permissiveness”, which was argued to be because of the reduced attention of the adults in these large households to the behaviour of their children (Djamba 2003: 327). A later

study by Kayembe et al. (2008) on 13,091 premarital teenagers in the DRC found that factors that were statistically significantly associated with higher rates of premarital sex were whether the individuals were older, addicted to drug or alcohol use, school dropouts, living with friends or alone, involved in an income-generating activity, or who lived in a “sexually permissive milieu” (Kayembe et al. 2008: 585).

Most Congolese migrant participants in this study were resident in the suburb of Point which refers in the area of West Street around Spar, Mazepa Street, Winder Street, Pickering Street, Fischer Street and Point Road. This area was intentionally chosen by the researcher because of the high residential concentration of Congolese women there which is due to cheaper rental accommodation within poorly maintained buildings; most Congolese women in this area have a very precarious livelihood. According to Amisi (2006), Congolese refugees are residentially distributed in these areas since the apartments are cheaper than elsewhere due to poor maintenance, a high crime rate and high levels of insecurity, which decreases the propensity of South African middle-class people to reside in these locations.

Such a location could possibly influence their perceptions of the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

2.4 WOMEN’S SEXUALITY AND VIRGINITY PURITY

Women’s sexuality in the DRC is subject to a range of societal structures, norms and expectations, which are founded on a variety of groupings of social structures, or semiautonomous social fields (SASFs) (Moore 1973; Jean-Bouchard 2014). SASFs are defined as “networks that are superimposed on varying scales and interact with one another through the agency of actors” (Moore 1973: 719). Simply defined, SASFs are different networks of people that interact and affect one another (Moore 1973). A basic type of SASF is the family structure, while another is the community, and yet another is the state (Le Roy 1999). Local churches and associations are also types of SASF, since they also act upon their communities of members (Moore 1973). SASFs are said to have a central role in shaping women’s lives in the DRC, even defining the norms of what constitutes acceptable women’s sexuality (Jean-Bouchard 2014).

A study by Jean-Bouchard (2014) discussed the sexuality of women in the Kivu region of the DRC, and asserted that the social status of women was typically enforced through three sexuality-based criteria, which were their marriage, reproductive function and their social standing. It was found that there is a strong social control over women, which limits their

individual freedom and autonomy (Jean-Bouchard 2014). Indeed, due to the strong social control that prevails over women at a community level, various activities, such as the undertaking of income-generating tasks, can result in women losing their social status within the community (Jean-Bouchard 2014). Community members have even been seen to label “merchant women” as “prostitutes”, meaning that contrary to the thought that economic autonomy would lead to the emancipation of women, it has, instead “threatened the social control over their sexuality and, consequently, lead to a social drop in their community” (Jean-Bouchard 2014: 367).

Since virginity purity is revered with such a primary importance among much of the Congolese culture, there is an expectation that a woman who loses her virginity should marry the man who took her virginity (Jean-Bouchard 2014). In many circumstances, this is upheld irrespective of the manner in which the sexual act was undertaken; in many societies in the DRC, the forced marriage of rape-victims to their perpetrators has been observed (Lincoln 2011). In other cases, such as in the Kivu region, widespread cases of the practice of ‘marriage by abduction’ is upheld (Jean-Bouchard 2014: 363).

During field work for the current study, such cases among Congolese migrant women in Durban were not reported. However, most participants reported that parents would force their daughters to marry their boyfriends if she became pregnant because, according, to Congolese culture; she is “no longer a girl”.

2.4.1 SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN DRC

In the wake of multiple war conflicts in the DRC, rape and sexual violence has become widespread, such that during the course of two international armed conflicts and following protracted fighting in the region, women and children have become victims to unprecedented levels of sexual violence (Nelson et al. 2011; Lincoln 2011). In a country where virginal purity is given such importance, and extra-marital sex is so frowned upon, the act of rape is used both by foreign armed militias and Congolese public security forces as “a weapon of war” (Hayes & Perks 2012: 539). Even UN peacekeepers, and those in positions of governmental authority, are among those who have perpetrated acts of sexual violence (Lincoln 2011).

Although accurate statistics on the frequency of sexual assaults do not exist, authors such as Bosmans (2007) have described the acts of rape as occurring “on a massive scale”. A recent paper by Zihindula and Maharaj (2015: 736) placed the risk of sexual violence among women in the DRC as “highly prevalent”, citing a nationally representative survey that placed the

number of Congolese women being raped in their lifetimes at between 1.69-1.80 million. In addition, these sexual assaults are accompanied by “appalling cruelty”, where girls and women aged between 23 months and 84 years have been targeted (Pratt et al. 2004: 6).

The effects of sexual violence are wide-spread, and primarily felt by the woman through infection with sexually transmitted diseases, permanent bodily damage, marital breakup, family rejection, mental trauma, and loss of future opportunities (Hayes & Perks 2012: 539). As described by Lincoln (2011: 147): Congolese women who survive such assaults must bear not only the physical, emotional, and psychological consequences of the attack but also socio-cultural effects that extend well beyond the act of violence itself.

Bosmans (2007) states that, particularly in the case of girls, rape may have far-reaching consequences. Bosmans (2007) recounts an exchange with young HIV/AIDS peer educators which “left little doubt about the future of raped girls”. In answer to the question of how boys in the society felt about these girls, some answered: “We are boys, and we satisfy our physical [sexual] needs with her ... there is our culture [sic]. One should respect our culture.” Fear, shame and stigma often prevent raped girls from finishing their educations, and often the girl will become the second or third wife of a married man – described in the DRC as ‘le deuxième ou troisième bureau’, ‘the second or third office’. Raped girls also run a high risk of being rejected by their families and societies (Bosmans 2007).

The violence and brutal human rights abuses that have increased in the DRC, as well as the insecurity and instability in the region, has pushed people to abandon their property and relocate elsewhere. The major violence occurred in the eastern and northern parts of the country, where women and girls were raped, and more than one million people were forced to flee their homes (Lincoln 2011; Amisi 2006), the vast majority having only limited or with no access to humanitarian assistance. The rate of flight by refugees from the DRC to more stable countries such as South Africa (Smit & Rugunanan 2014) is therefore understandable. Through studies such as this, it is hoped that the perceptions, or any altered ideologies of women toward the practice of virginity before marriage, will become clearer.

Mulumeoderhwa (2017) found that DRC men are disappointed when they marry non-virgin girls. In fact, most male and female participants perceived girls who were virgins as trustworthy individuals. They believed that a girl’s virginity loss brings shame to her family. However, some female participants clearly dissociated themselves from societal views or norms about virginity, and remarked that virginity itself is not the key to a successful household nor a

guarantee for remaining faithful after marriage. Such traditional norms – in the context of high levels of rape – place enormous pressure on young women and cause them to lie about virginity because they fear losing their fiancés. They indicated that they would lie about it regardless of any consequences they may encounter (Mulumeoderhwa 2017).

During the current study, rape cases were not reported. However, some participants acknowledge that lying about women's virginity status was common among Congolese migrants living in Durban.

2.5 CONCEPTUALISING AFRICAN CULTURE, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND GENDER

2.5.1 THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SEXUAL PRACTICE

South Africa is acclaimed for being a rainbow nation, with diversity across race, religion, and different cultural heritages; however, the modernisation of society has led to a decline in adherence to traditional practices. In most religions and cultures in South Africa, sexual behaviour is seen as sacred, and abstinence is encouraged until marriage (Bhana 2016; Lusey et al. 2014; Stoppa et al. 2014). Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and traditional African culture all condemn premarital sexual activity. However, the modern era has encouraged a more liberal interpretation of religion and culture (Mbotho et al. 2013; Moodley 2016). For instance, Moodley (2016) held a focus group discussion on the views of students regarding sexual practices and religion, and female students indicated that sexual behaviour is no longer viewed as in “old times”, where arranged marriages were common and premarital sex was seen as scornful. Studies among youth and young adults in South Africa have also shown that the age of sexual debut has significantly decreased with most females having experienced sexual activity by the age of 15 years (Chirinda et al. 2012; Mbotho et al. 2013). This indicates the diminished importance of preserving virginity until marriage.

Numerous theories have been presented to explain the sociocultural changes that are taking place in Africa, and how these have affected the sexual behaviour of women (Djamba 2003). The term culture has different meanings according to whether one considers the development of an individual, a class or a whole society (Eliot 1949). Culture refers to “the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religions, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving” (Hofstede 2001: 11). Thus, culture is the sum total of the beliefs, behaviours,

objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society; which is the way of life of the community, including the languages, customs, values and common goals for survival of that community (Rukundwa 2004: 142).

University students were shown to have the highest prevalence of increased sexual behaviour, due to changes in their home environment as well as increased independence (Moodley 2016) Mutinta et al. 2014). Although many students identified with the religious views regarding premarital sexual activity, they indicated difficulty in maintaining these restrictions in the university environment (Eriksson et al. 2013; Mbotho et al. 2013; Moodley 2016). Students' main concerns were peer pressure and the influence of the media (Eriksson et al. 2013; Mbotho et al. 2013; Mutinta et al. 2014). Many young women felt pressured to engage in sexual activity while in a relationship, which sometimes resulted in coerced sexual debut (Chirinda et al. 2012). In contrast, women who had strong religious affiliations were able to maintain their virginity by ending the relationship and distancing themselves from friends with different values (Eriksson et al. 2013; Mbotho et al. 2013).

A study conducted by Maharaj and Cleland (2011) in Durban, concluded that there were distinct differences in abstinence levels among women of different racial groups. Indian women were shown to have the highest rate of abstinence (approximately 68%) as compared to White (50%) and African (31%) women. This could be attributed to cultural values, since it was argued that Indian women generally live at home with their parents until marriage (Maharaj & Cleland 2011).

On the other hand, the African tradition of '*lobola*', or bride wealth, may negatively influence African women in preserving their virginity. This tradition requires the male to make a payment to the bride's family before marriage (Posel & Rudwick 2012). Although the '*lobola*' tradition places value on virginity, young men are generally unable to afford this until later in life, which may influence African couples' decisions to partake in premarital sexual activity. Furthermore, African cultures place great emphasis on female fertility, which may supersede marriage; possibly explaining the high incidence of non-married African mothers (Posel & Rudwick 2012).

Thus, it can be seen that there has been an increased incidence of premarital sexual activity among young women in South Africa in recent years. This supports a study by Garenne (2016) which showed that there has been a decrease in the frequency or incidence of marriage over time, and society's increased acceptance of premarital sex may be a basis for this result. A

study conducted in Senegal by Lagarde et al. (1996) describes recent socio-demographic and behavioural changes in a rural community in Senegal and find that age at first marriage increased in the study area from 25 to 32 years for men and from 21 to 24 years for women. At the same time, age at first sexual intercourse decreased by ≈ 10 years on average for men. As can be expected, this has led to an increase in premarital sexual activity (Lagarde et al 1996).

The culture of the DRC is extremely diverse, reflecting the great diversity and different customs which exists in the country. Congolese culture combines the influence of tradition in the region, but also combines influences from abroad which arrived during the era of colonization and has continued to have a strong influence, without destroying the individuality of many tribal customs (Wikipedia2018)

Among Congolese migrants living in Durban, it has been observed that women as well as men postpone marriage to pursue their academic ambitions. On the other hand, hardships and economic difficulties may lead them to decide to cohabitate rather than go straight into marriage. The major reasons why people decide to cohabitate are: to combine their resources, to avoid enormous responsibilities that come with marriage, and men want more freedom and are not ready to settle down with one woman. Thus, preserving virginity in this transnational context becomes difficult and almost impossible.

2.5.1.1 THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The anthropological perspective considers the influence of local cultural norms and values in shaping female sexual behaviour, such as through the interrelation between “religiosity” and the prevailing system of “kinship” (Djamba 2003: 328). For instance, it has been observed that in patrilineal societies, where males are in a position of more authority and power than women, attitudes towards the non-marital sexual behaviour of women is harsh (Goethals 1971). Conversely, matrilineal societies have been found to be less restrictive towards non-marital female sexual activities (Murdock 1964). Cheldelin & Eliatamby (2011: 29) note that in patriarchal systems, women are valued “most for their reproductive identity and virginity”. Since many African countries, such as the DRC, are organised along either matrilineal or patrilineal kinships, the patrilineal bias hypothesis has been used to test differences in female sexual behaviour between these cross-cultural divides (Djamba 2003). Indeed, in a quantitative study by Djamba (2003) on women in Kinshasa, it was observed that patrilineal societies were far more restrictive, and women in matrilineal societies were significantly more likely to have

had premarital sexual intercourse, irrespective of their socio-demographic characteristics or other ethnic affiliations.

In DRC not everybody upholds the practice of preserving virginity before marriage. Mongo, a tribe in Congo, believe that sexual experience helps women to keep their husbands. The Mongo let girls have sex outside marriage. Experienced, they feel that they will be better able to satisfy their future husband. Extra-marital relationships are considered by the partner as evidence of sex appeal (Kondemo 2011)

Mongo women are not required to arrive as virgins at marriage. Like the Tetela, the Baboa or the Muyombe, this ethnic group in the North of the Democratic Republic of Congo has nothing against the fact that young girls and boys have sex before having a rope on their necks. “In these societies, marriage is not an event, but a process. As soon as a fiancé comes to the girl's family and pays a pre-dowry, he can receive the girl at home and have sex without it being an offense” (Banza 2007).

2.5.1.2 RATIONAL ADAPTATION

Rational adaptation argues that economic conditions significantly affect premarital sexual activity, where the sexual behaviour of unmarried women is greatly motivated by economic intentions – particularly among women with limited financial resources (Elias & Heise 1993). As a possible explanation for sexual motives, it has been argued that in most societies of the DRC, women are in a disadvantaged position, economically (Djamba 1997). Contrary to the theory of rational adaptation, though, a study by Djamba (2003: 332) on women in Kinshasa found that the opposite was in fact true; whereby “those from economically advantageous families were more likely to have sexual relations before marriage than women from poor families”. In the current study, participants were drawn from a very poor environment characterised by very high levels of economic stress which could possibly be a cause of premarital sexual behaviour among Congolese migrant women.

2.5.1.3 SOCIAL DISORGANISATION

Social disorganisation or modernisation, considers that various changes that result in a collapse in the social control of older generations over the younger ones, correlates to an increase in premarital sexual activity (Djamba 1997; Pillai & Barton 1998). Such factors as mass media, migration, and formal education have been cited as affecting the social control of the older generations over the younger across the global (Brockerhoff & Biddlecom 1999). Using

variables relating to the education of girls and their families in Kinshasa, Djamba (2003) found that girls who were exposed to modern education were more likely to engage in premarital sexual intercourse than those who were not. Djamba (2003: 333) attributed this to “liberal attitudes” that were brought on by education; where parents were seen to have relaxed their parental control over their daughters’ sexual behaviours. Djamba (2003: 333) also found that larger “sibship” was significantly associated with increased premarital sexual activity, while an increased exposure to newspaper, television and radio all reduced premarital sexual intercourse (Djamba 2003)

In the DRC, migratory movement is performed more commonly by younger people than older ones; thus, most Congolese migrants in Durban are young students or active people with no parental control; only a minority of people have migrated to join family. Whatever the reason for the migration, there seems to be a liberal attitude among Congolese migrant women living in Durban, and a relaxed parental control over daughter. Parents seemed to have abandoned the sexual education of their daughters leaving this to the mercy of media. They do not have time to sit and talk to their daughters anymore as it used to be in our cultures, says participants. And this could possibly be the reason why there is growing abandonment of the practice of preserving virginity among Congolese migrant women in Durban.

2.5.2 THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN SEXUAL PRACTICES

Africans are well known for being religious, and each societal group has its own religion system, sets of beliefs and practices (Imbo 1998). Religion is difficult to define, especially from an African perspective; but according to Mbiti (1990: 1), “religion can be discerned in terms of beliefs, ceremonies, [and] rituals.” The author continues to argue that religion “is the strongest element in traditional background, and exerts probably the strongest influence upon the thinking and living of the people concerned” (Mbiti 1990).

Although religion plays a focal role in shaping the views of young people regarding premarital sexual activity, some students have indicated poor leadership by religious leaders as a primary reason for disregarding their previous beliefs (Moodley 2016). Students stated that religious leaders were quick to preach, while having double-standards – since they often failed to adopt their own teachings. This phenomenon has led to distrust, and a decreased sense of morality, which makes it more acceptable for students to disregard their religious beliefs, despite admitting that they are wrong for doing so (Moodley 2016). Students that were able to preserve virginity were often seen to have support from like-minded peers, and these students also

possessed deep-seated religious affiliations that were key factors in maintaining sexual abstinence (Mbotho et al 2013). Parental monitoring and sport were also seen to be strong positive influences.

The population of the DRC comprises an assortment of religious affiliations, including Catholic (31%), Protestant (30%), other Christian churches (34%), Muslims (2%), and the remaining 3%, who are members of indigenous and syncretic religions (Macro International 2007). As such, religion plays an important role in the daily lives of most people in the DRC (Lusey et al. 2014). Religion is the strongest element in people's traditional backgrounds, and it exerts probably the greatest influence upon the thinking and living of the people concerned (Imbo 1998). Therefore, considerable research has been conducted on the role of the church and religious practice, on sexual behaviour. Indeed, according to Campbell et al. 2011: 1204), "religion is a significant social force in Africa", and it holds with it the power to encourage private sexual trust and assurance. A study by Maman et al. (2009) found that many people in Kinshasa disclosed their HIV-positive status to their church pastors, and that church leaders were central in supporting women through their decisions to disclose their HIV status, even to their husbands, families and others. Using religion as a unique variable for measuring women's sexuality has, however, been argued to be a poor indicator of sexual habits, since "most religions are conservative regarding women's sexuality" (Djamba 2003: 328). Thus, studies on female sexuality, for example in the DRC, which relied on religion alone, produced inconclusive results (Djamba 1995). This has caused researchers such as Djamba (2003: 328) to recommend rather using the variable of "religiosity", which measures the extent of belief and practice of religion. In this respect, in a qualitative study of premarital sexual activity of youths in Kinshasa, Djamba (2003) found that increased religiosity was indeed associated with reduced premarital sexual activity, supporting evidence of other researchers

On the contrary, despite the church's central role in societal guidance, much evidence also exists to suggest that the church does not have a very significant impact on the decision of young people to engage in premarital sex (Lusey et al. 2014). In a qualitative study conducted by Lusey et al. (2014) on unmarried young church-going boys and girls, it was found that while all of them had heard the messages, and knew of the churches' teachings against premarital sex, many were still sexually active. Reasons presented by the males were that sexual potency and masculinity had motivated their sexual activities; while it was found that the young women had engaged in premarital sexual activities through "transactional and intergenerational sex for economic reasons" (Lusey et al. 2014: 84). Participants in the current study informed the

researcher that religion (church) did help to promote the Congolese culture concerning the practice of preserving virginity, but at the same time encouraged premarital sexual behaviour because after church meetings older people who are economically stable were taking advantage of poor girls.

2.5.3 ROLE OF GENDER IN SEXUAL PRACTICE

We have known for at least a decade that gender and sexuality are significant factors in the sexual transmission of HIV, and we now know that they also influence treatment, care, and support. Gender is not a synonym for sex. It refers to the widely shared expectations and norms within a society about appropriate male and female behaviour, characteristics, and roles. It is a social and cultural construct that differentiates women from men and defines the ways in which women and men interact with each other (Gupta 2000).

Gender is a culture-specific construct – there are significant differences in what women and men can or cannot do in one culture as compared to another. In some places women suspected of engaging in premarital sex and women accused of adultery are murdered (Dhar, 2005). But what is fairly consistent across cultures is that there is always a distinct difference between women's and men's roles, access to productive resources, and decision-making authority. Typically, men are seen as being responsible for the productive activities outside the home while women are expected to be responsible for reproductive and productive activities within the home. And we know from over 20 years of research on women's roles in development that women have less access over and control of productive resources than men – resources such as income, land, credit, and education. While the extent of this difference varies considerably from one culture to the next, it almost always persists.

Sexuality as a concept represents a gendered word where men and women are separately responsible for distinct behaviours, and men's oppressive control over women's bodies and sexuality prevails (Kalav 2013). Sexuality is distinct from gender yet intimately linked to it. It is the social construction of a biological drive. An individual's sexuality is defined by who one has sex with, in what ways, why, under what circumstances, and with what outcomes. It is more than sexual behaviour; it is a multidimensional and dynamic concept (Gupta 2000) and in a patriarchal system a man must "deserve" to be the first sexual partner of a virgin daughter.

Even though the word seems genderless researchers mainly argue for the idea that it is highly gender-biased ascribing no importance to women or right to choose as an individual (Peristiany & Pitt-Rivers 2005). Patriarchal domination continues to suppress women as it always has with

various discourses on their sexuality which is regarded to be closely connected with honour. Their body is still considered as something to be possessed, kept in male control and talked about (Kalav 2013).

In many societies there is a culture of silence that surrounds sex that dictates that “good” women are expected to be ignorant about sex and passive in sexual interactions. This makes it difficult for women to be informed about risk reduction or, even when informed, makes it difficult for them to be proactive in negotiating safer sex (Carovano 1991). The traditional norm of virginity for unmarried girls that exists in many societies, paradoxically, increases young women’s risk of infection because it restricts their ability to ask for information about sex out of fear that they will be thought to be sexually active. Virginity also puts young girls at risk of rape and sexual coercion in high prevalence countries because of the erroneous belief that sex with a virgin can cleanse a man of infection and because of the erotic imagery that surrounds the innocence and passivity associated with virginity. In addition, in cultures where virginity is highly valued, research has shown that some young women practice alternative sexual behaviours, such as anal sex, in order to preserve their virginity, although these behaviours may place them at increased risk of HIV (Weiss et al. 2000). Because of the strong norms of virginity and the culture of silence that surrounds sex, accessing treatment services for sexually transmitted diseases can be highly stigmatizing for adolescents and adults.

In the DRC, abortion is illegal and it is only permitted to save the life of the woman. The general prohibition of abortion contained in the 1867 Penal Code of Belgium was incorporated into the Penal Code of the DRC in the late 19th century. In 1933, a decree established the prohibition of the sale, display, distribution, manufacture, importation and advertisement of contraceptives and abortifacients. These laws have never been revoked. Therefore, under articles 165 and 166 of the Penal Code, in its most recent version of 31 May 1982, a person who performs an abortion is subject to 5 to 15 years’ imprisonment. A woman who voluntarily has an abortion is subject to 5 to 10 years’ imprisonment

A study conducted in South Africa by Macleod et al. (2011) found that abortion was constructed as killing and being inevitably destructive of cultural values and traditions. Abortion was equated with colonialist interventions and as something that should be opposed in the preservation of culture. Furthermore, cultural opposition to abortion was rooted in fears around the breakdown of gendered and generational power relations.

Moreover, the stigmatization of abortion as a crime and its unlawfulness (illegality) in many African countries makes it difficult to collect data and to measure the prevalence of abortion (Chr tiennes & du Nord-Ouest 1994).

In the Congolese migrant community; the value of virginity as a sign of honour and purity push women to consider all modern measures established by the South African government in the prevention and the decrease of the risk of diseases or of unwanted pregnancies, such as contraception and abortion. Sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS are regarded as a disgrace or a shame.

Among the Congolese migrants living in Durban there is a gender-based analysis which considers non-virgin women as a dishonour and disgrace to the family and the community while non-virgin men are unheard of. It seems like women use sexual partnership as a means to integrate and achieve a more modern life or also to cast out poverty, but for men premarital sex is motivated by the desire to overpower women or to gain sexual experience and satisfaction. For men, sexual behaviour means gaining social status and respect among peers while for women sexual experience is a disgrace.

2.6 THE SITUATION OF MIGRANT WOMEN

Studies exploring the perceptions of migrant women in South Africa regarding sexual behaviour are limited.

Due to the high incidence of HIV/AIDS within South Africa, the majority of research focuses on the impact of migration on sexual health. South Africa has become a haven for migrants from neighbouring African countries for various reasons, including the possibility of better work and study opportunities (Fasselt 2016; Oliveira & Vearey 2015). Previous studies have generally focussed on male migration and the impact on the sexual health of their non-migrant partners. However, in the recent past, increasing numbers of migrant women have been coming to South Africa (Ulicki & Crush 2000).

Many female migrants living in South Africa were shown to be sex workers, partaking in high-risk sexual behaviour (Richter et al. 2014; Schuler 2013). Migrant women who did not engage in the sex trade were still shown to be at a much greater risk for HIV than non-migrant women (Giorgio et al. 2016; McGrath et al. 2015; Townsend et al. 2014). These factors could be attributed to increased sexual activity, which may be driven by socioeconomic factors such as poverty and poor health services compared to local residents in South Africa. Furthermore,

feelings of loneliness and isolation can also be motivators for partaking in sexual activities (Weine & Kashuba 2012), and this has also been seen in migrants within South Africa (Giorgio et al. 2016). These studies show an increased risk for HIV due to the high-risk sexual behaviour of migrants that move into the country.

While much research has been conducted on the role of society, culture and religion on the sexual practices of men and women, there is limited research to show how the sexual practices of young men and women change once these controlling beliefs are altered, as in the situation of migration. Research exists to indicate that the survival, lifestyle, economic, and employment practices of women alters among migrant women to accommodate their new societies (Peters & Sundaram 2015; Smit & Rugunanan 2014).

A study by Amisi (2006), for example, considered the livelihood strategies of Congolese refugees in Durban, and found that social networks were central to the livelihood strategies of Congolese immigrants, and that these social networks had both positive and negative impacts on the immigrants. Amisi (2006) also observed that social exclusion, exploitation and xenophobia were the main problems facing the Congolese migrants in Durban on a daily basis.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the vast and growing body of literature surrounding the research topic on the perception of virginity in the transnational context. It discussed the historical background of international migration, migration within and to South Africa, and also the Congolese migration to South Africa. It commented on different concepts related to the meaning and value of virginity among Congolese migrant woman in Durban. The focus was to determine how the sexual practice or the perception of Congolese migrant were altered once they migrate to Durban, how the change in environment could alter their beliefs or perceptions regarding the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

Research of the relevant literature is helpful to establish how previous researchers have dealt with the issues of premarital sex among migrant women; as a consequence, it smooths the path for identifying the gap in our understanding of premarital sexual behaviour in the transnational context.

Moreover, the literature helped to understand the meaning given to virginity and its loss, the perception and the value reserved for virgin women, their role and their place within a family (wife and mother), especially in a patriarchal system. The literature review also highlighted the

factors that have lead women to immigrate. The literature also revealed that marriage plays a central role in Africa in general, and in the DRC in particular, and the gender imbalance in the way premarital sex is define within the community.

Lastly the researcher revealed that change of home environment, education, socio-economic situation, the media, relaxed parenteral control, age, and decline in the frequency or incidence of marriage could alter the perception or beliefs about premarital sex.

The following chapter will provide frameworks for understanding the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the practice of preserving virginity before marriage; and particularly, what may have caused any such changes in their perceptions and practices.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the dissertation. It begins by outlining the definition of transnationalism theory, which is followed by a discussion that presents a deeper understanding of transnationalism and its applications in the literature. The terms diaspora and the agents of transnationalism are also discussed. The chapter then turns to the second theoretical framework of this study, social constructionism. In this second part of the chapter, social constructionism is defined, along with a discussion on the philosophical perspectives of the theory. The terms social constructionism and social constructivism are discussed, before outlining the applications of social constructionism in research contexts, with a focus on research using social constructionism in the South African context. The final section of the chapter considers the theories of transnationalism and social constructionism, and how they apply to this study.

This section will take into account the general theoretical understanding about the theories that are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions (Abend 2008).

This chapter demonstrates an understanding of theories and concepts that are relevant to the topic of the research study that relate to the broader areas of knowledge being considered (Torraco 1997). One of the challenges of theory-building research in applied disciplines is making the logic used to build the theory explicit and accessible to the user of the developed theory. Although different methods of theory building advocate different theory-building research processes, there is an inherently generic nature to theory building (Lynham, 2002).

Any text is built on some kind of theoretical or conceptual framework that may or may not be made explicit. However, the value or advantage of working within the confines of a theoretical framework “places the knowledge presented in a broader epistemological and ontological field” (Hughes 2002).

In common sense the term theory means ideas, propositions, explanations that get to an essential “truth” behind something that is often hidden (Miller & Brewer 2003). Whilst acting as the origin of ideas, theories also help to facilitate the “connection of ideas”. This correlation

of ideas concerns itself with facilitating and consolidating the link between a researcher's concerns, aims and objectives with particular aspects of the tangible realities of their studies. Theory therefore helps to sustain various structured ideas within this research and serves as a point of origin for the ideas and views contained in this discussion.

This chapter provides the theories that sustain migrant women's practice of preserving virginity before marriage. The study will apply transnationalism and socio-constructionism theories.

3.2 TRANSNATIONALISM THEORY

As the global economy has grown and increased the flows of labour, capital, commodities and ideas across the world, so too have the connections between different populations and cultures become connected, resulting in the increasing importance of the concept of transnationalism (Valentine et al. 2013). In response to the recent increase in speed and frequency of border-crossings by people from different nation states, so too has the volume of research on transnationalism increased (Yeoh et al. 2003). Indeed, the theory of transnationalism is still relatively young, and has only in the past 15 years, or so, been developed as a more rigorous and well-defined theoretical framework (Yeoh et al. 2003). Transnational theorizing began its development in the early 1990s, when a group of US-based anthropologists found that the migrants with whom they worked had developed transnational practices that conventional migration theories did not adequately capture (Levitt & Nyberg-Sørensen 2004).

For many migrants, a sense of home is no longer neat or easy to define as they live or interact with more than one spatial and cultural location, thus undermining the sense of one nation. Their cultural practices are therefore often no longer primarily constituted around essences (of nation, tradition, religion), but relationally, connecting different cultural spaces in ways that defy simplistic mapping (Dopacio, 2013).

This study of Congolese migrant women living in Durban found that living as a migrant is never an easy option, because in order to survive you may have to relinquish some past behaviours and be obliged to identify yourself in the host country.

3.2.1 DEFINING TRANSNATIONALISM THEORY

Transnational communities are defined as dynamic networks that exchange information, cultural practices, values and ideas across national borders (Olson 2006). The definitions of transnationalism vary, but the general consensus is that transnationalism refers to the connections and interactions that link people, institutions and practices across national borders,

thereby surpassing the ideology of national boundaries being primary reference points for human identities or activities (International Organisation for Migration [IOM] 2010). Through the practices of human migration, interactions and exchanges occur across the borders of nation states, in the form of ideas, practices, values, and economic or political contributions. As noted by the IOM (2010), transnationalism is therefore a different way of perceiving migration, and it can be defined, simply, “as a system of examining the connections that migrants establish between countries [thereby] serving as an angle of analysis for the wider issues of migration and social change.” Stated differently, transnationalism is the study of the effect that migration has on people and societies.

From the perspectives of migrants, any migrant can be a subject, and/or an agent of transnationalism, depending on the extent of interaction and influence they either receive from a country, or the extent of interaction and influence they impart on a nation space, respectively (IOM 2010). In certain cases, second or even third generation migrants have been observed to be agents of transnational activity – at times even more than their grandparents or parents who initially migrated (Lee 2011; Wessendorf 2016). This is because, as agents of transnationalism, second or third generation migrants have become vocal proponents of their ‘motherlands’, acting to impart knowledge, ideas and practices from their motherlands on their assumed societies of residence. Conversely, as subjects of transnationalism, second or third generation migrants have tended to assume more of the standard practices of their new localities, and thereby lost much of the mannerisms, traditions and practices of their parents or grandparents who originally migrated (Levitt 2015).

Transnationalism theory is defined as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement (Basch et al. 2005). An essential element of transnationalism is the multiplicity of involvement that migrants sustain in both home and host societies (Basch et al. 2005). Therefore, the theory of transnationalism allows this researcher to observe how the lives of Congolese migrant women may be transformed based on the practices of their country of origin and that of their host country. This theory successfully highlights the significance of migrants’ attachments to people and places transcending the confines of nation-states. However, this theory tends to overlook the full complexity and meaning of migrants’ extra local socio-cultural relations (Olwig 2003).

Transnationalism has been connected in this study to the practice of preserving virginity among Congolese migrant women in Durban, because of the contrasts observed between the home culture and the culture in the host country.

3.2.2 UNDERSTANDING TRANSNATIONALISM

While transnationalism was initially focused on the flows of people, and exploring the ways in which families, social networks and identities have become embedded in multiple societies (Yeoh et al. 2003), transnationalism has also become further established as an important concept in the field of many different fields of society, including geography (Valentine et al. 2013), social sciences (Yeoh et al. 2003), politics (IOM 2010), economics and business (Seidman 2000), and religion (Sheringham 2010; Olson 2006; Kong 2006). For instance, in the modern global economy, state policy makers must contemplate beyond the borders of just their own nation states, to consider the effects, scope and influences that these policies could have on a more global scale (IOM 2010).

At its core, transnationalism draws much of its understandings from the work of Basch et al (1994), who defined the term as “the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement ... [thus] building social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders”. Pries (1999) recoded the term ‘fields’ from the Basch et al.’s definition as ‘spaces’, thereby introducing the concept of ‘transnational social spaces’, which Pries defined as the actual living spheres occupied by migrants, which extend across multiple geographical and residential locations. Pries (1999) outlined four dimensions of transnational social spaces, namely: the social institutions of trans-migrants; the legal and political frameworks that occur during the migration process; the material infrastructure of trans-migrants; and the life projects or identities of trans-migrants. As described by Pries (1999), this suggests that transnational social spaces typically comprise the social networks in which migrants associate, the government-imposed regulations that affect migrants, the infrastructural facilities and possessions available to migrants, and the ambitions and intentions of migrants which, combined, form the broad range of categories that affect trans-migrants and drive transnationalism.

Faist (1998) established the concept of transnational morphologies, or transnational transformations, based on the notion that transnational social spaces, as described above, exist as fluid social processes that are established on the dynamic flow of various forms of capital or resources that migrants possess, on the one hand, and the opportunities, constraints and

regulatory forces that are imposed on migrants by the nation-state, on the other. This suggests that transmigrants with larger amounts of capital, financial, or supposedly other forms of resources available to them, or with more opportunities, or with fewer regulatory constraints would be subject to differing degrees of transnational transformations than those with less capital, fewer opportunities, or more regulatory constraints. In addition, Faist (1998) proposed that the extent of transnational social interaction by transmigrants could be graded on four levels, or topographies, relative to the degree of spatial and temporal stability that exists between the migrants and the nation-state, as follows (Faist 1998):

- 1) Dispersion and assimilation: Where there is a weak mutual embeddedness between the 'sending' and 'receiving' nations, graded as limited spatial and temporal embedding of the transmigrants, as well as only short-lived, or fleeting transnational social ties between the transmigrants and their new societies of residence;
- 2) Transnational exchange and reciprocity: Where there is a strong mutual spatial and temporal embeddedness between sending and receiving nations, but where transnational social ties between the transmigrants and their new societies of residence still remain only fleeting;
- 3) Transnational networks: Where there is a weak mutual spatial and temporal embeddedness between sending and receiving nations but far more long-term transnational social ties, and social changes that become far more lasting; and
- 4) Transnational exchange and reciprocity: Where there is a strong mutual embeddedness between sending and receiving nations, as well as long-term transnational social ties.

Described simply, transnational morphologies or transformations outline the notion that the effect of migration patterns of individuals vary greatly in terms of the length of stay across national borders, and the degree of spatial resources and infrastructure that they occupy. As a result, the connections and social ties that result from these migratory interactions can be permanent or temporary, long-term or short-term, or consisting of multi-staged itineraries that include back-and-forth travel between nation states (IOM 2010). In this regard, it can be argued that the extent of the transnational activities and practices in which transmigrants participate, is greatly affected by the extent of their transnational transformations, and the permanence and extent of their stays (IOM 2010).

Most Congolese migrant women, no matter the reason behind their migration intend to spend permanent stays in their transnational space and this could possibly explain the premarital behaviour participation in the transnational space; also, the lower parental involvement seems

to further add to the declining popularity of transnational sexual behaviour. However, despite these changes, a minority percentage of people continue to uphold the practice.

3.2.2.1 DIASPORAS

The term ‘diaspora’ has been defined as a distinct transnational community, where there is a remembrance and ideology of a lost homeland among that community, which is evoked and practised by that community in the receiving nation (Willis & Yeoh 2000). Willis & Yeoh (2000) argue that diasporas are usually accompanied by rejection from the receiving societies, which refuse to fully accept the cultural distinctiveness of the diaspora community members. These informal migrant networks are often manifestations of transnationalism, which also act to facilitate and foster the transnational connections described previously (IOM 2010). The ways in which diasporic identities are constructed is dependent upon how ‘traditional’ culture is incorporated and how the group itself is inserted into the country of settlement (Samuel 2010).

In Congolese traditions marriage are an important part of immigrant identity construction and brings attention to the intersections of various social identities which structure the lives of immigrant women. Marriage practices and gender norms play a central part in how the immigrant experience unfolds and how identities are constructed across social boundaries which intersect and impact on one another.

Within the transmigrant community, during the course of this study, it was noticed that there has been a decrease in the the frequency or incidence of marriage, therefore an increase in premarital sex.

3.2.3 AGENTS OF TRANSNATIONALISM

Numerous scholars have attempted to quantify transnationalism in terms of different levels that are established according to the social status of migrants involved (Smith & Guarnizo 1998; Itzigsohn & Saucedo 2002). Based on the research of scholars focusing on global cities, the term ‘transnationalism from above’ has been used to define the growth and effects of a global group of elite, highly skilled, highly paid managers and entrepreneurs who ‘globetrot’ for career or business prospects (Uesugi 2007; Roudometof 2000). Conversely, ‘transnationalism from below’ has considered the border-crossings that occur among unskilled, lowly-paid refugees, exiles, and opportunistic workers (Smith & Guarnizo 1998).

Bridging the two, the dichotomy of these two levels of transnationalism has also been superimposed with a 'middle' level of transnationalism, typified by a growing body of middle-class individuals, such as working-holiday makers, who frequent different corners of the globe for work and pleasure (Willis & Yeoh 2000). Indeed, in relation to the extent of transmigrants' transnational transformations, people who have moved for higher education, intra-corporate employment, or retirement purposes, typically undergo vastly differing transnational experiences compared to those who have migrated as less-skilled migrants (Guo 2016). Affecting the extent of transnationalism, therefore, are agents or barriers that act to improve, or impede transnational activities, such as the presence or absence of services or facilities, or a presence or lack of human intentions to participate in any such transnational transformations (Thorpe 2014).

Transnational transformation is affected not only by the migrants who have travelled across national borders, but also by the people who have stayed behind in the country of origin, or by the people native to the new nation state (Morawska 2013; Schmid 2017). Families of migrants, for instance, who have remained behind in the country of origin, and their political and economic circumstances, can have bearings on the extent to which transmigrants will affect, or be affected by transnational activities, and this can act to instil or hinder transnationalism across various different stakeholder platforms (Hellgren & Serrano 2017).

This study is closely supported by the theoretical framework of transnationalism, which further aids in providing the researcher with answers as to why the sexual practices of young men and women change once their surrounding circumstances are altered through migration. As noted during this chapter, numerous connections are formed between transmigrants and their receiving societies, in varying temporal and spatial degrees (Faist 1998). As a result, numerous societal practices and perceptions of receiving nations will be transferred to the transmigrants, and vice versa. Concurrently, however, numerous agents, such as barriers or facilitators, in the form of strong familial cultural practices, financial and infrastructural resources, and political and economic circumstances will affect the extent of change that occurs among the individuals (Hellgren & Serrano 2017). This therefore provides impetus for offering answers to why the sexual perceptions and practices of young Congolese migrants living in Durban, as included in this study, have changed; as well as the factors that have facilitated or impeded this change.

3.3 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM THEORY

Social constructionism rests on the belief that reality is socially constructed (DeLamater & Hyde 1998). This theory accepts that there is a subjective reality. It is concerned with how knowledge is constructed.

Social constructionism considers the principle that people construct their knowledge and understandings through their daily interactions with the people in their societies, and argues that the way in which people commonly understand the world, and the concepts that they use to define their world, are historically and culturally specific (Burr & Dick 2017). Social constructionism accepts that reality is subjective, and that the variability of one's experiences determines how one's knowledge and truth is constructed and understood (Berger & Luckmann 1991). The decrease in occurrence of marriage in South Africa is a life experience that could determine and generate knowledge about the preservation of virginity before marriage as a constructed truth which can be understood as old fashion within South African societies.

Social constructionism is often observed from a philosophical perspective, where authors such as Andrews (2012) argue that social constructionism has an epistemological perspective rather than an ontological one. It is rather focused on understanding the theory of how knowledge is created, as opposed to understanding the nature of being. The social constructionism theory is therefore a sociological theory that considers the relationship between society and knowledge. According to Berger and Luckmann (1991), knowledge is created by the different interactions of individuals within a society. To Owen (1995) social constructionism contends that all aspects of humanity and society are produced, sustained and destroyed through the interactions of individuals over time. This is further explained by Burr and Dick (2017) who state that what is regarded as truth is simply the current accepted ways of understanding the world. According to Burr and Dick (2017), this is not because of objective observation, but due to social processes and interactions between individuals within the society. Social constructionism is therefore a vastly complex theory focusing on the construction of knowledge through social interaction. The idea of purity is used as a means to control and manipulate women into following social norms, especially gender norms. Virginity is treated as a commodity that can be lost. So according to this concept, when a woman has sex, she loses her value.

Social constructionism is a type of interpretivist theory which is typically compared with positivism, when considering a suitable approach for undertaking research in the social sciences (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). Social constructionism is, an applied philosophical

framework in relation to various fields. An interpretivist approach in a social paradigm considers that there is a degree of contextualism to any situation; whereby, an individual dynamically interacts with his or her environment through a range of contexts, termed micro- and macro-contexts (Schegloff 1987). Social constructionists believe that the variations in the interactions of an individual within these micro- and macro-contexts lead to a viewpoint, or understanding within that individual that is unique and inextricably linked to their particular experiences (De Fina 2008; Schegloff 1987).

De Fina (2008) explains that interactions on a micro-level – within a micro-context – describe individual exchanges that occur at a local level, such as between children or teenagers in social settings. Conversely, interactions within a macro-context involve the interactions that exist, for instance, between men and women at the level of the general society at large. De Fina (2008) further affirms that the structure of narratives and discourses, which occur at micro- and macro-levels, such as in social gatherings, family dinners, classroom events, workplace meetings, legal proceedings, and so forth, are context-dependent, while the micro-and macro-contexts have far-reaching connections. Described differently, narrative roles and styles, such as storytelling and vocalisations are significantly affected by factors at a micro-level, which in turn are affected by macro-level factors such as the divisions of labour that exist between men and women, or between different age groups, or between different cultures or racial backgrounds (De Fina 2008). Research by authors such as by Kiesling (2006), has illustrated how stereotypes and shared ideologies along associated social categories is a source of identity construction, and a means of driving local self-positioning among groups and individuals; thereby emphasising the important role of conversation and dialogue construction in the shaping of personal identities and viewpoints.

Fox (1977) states that there are 3 basic strategies used to regulate the freedom of women and to exert control over their behaviour in the world:

1) Confinement

- a. This restricts a woman to the boundaries of her home and proscribes to a large degree independent traverse in the world beyond the home.

2) Protection

- a. In which women have access to the world but are guarded and regulated while in it by one or more designated protectors, those may be male kinsmen but can also be older female relatives or family friends.

3) Social control

- a. This is a form of control over the social behaviour of women embodied in such value constructs as ‘good girl’ or lady or nice girl.
- b. These value constructs connote virgin, clean, above suspicion and reproach. The concept ‘nice girl’ is both an instrumental and terminal value, both a standard for, and goal of, behaviour.

3.3.1 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Social constructionism has been applied to various fields within the South African context. Geldenhuys (2015), for instance, performed a study on how social constructionism can be applied as a paradigm in organisation psychology, especially in organisational development. Reuben and Bobat (2014) focused on the topic of affirmative action in the workplace, where their main focus was on discourse and the role it plays in constructing knowledge, as well as on how this leads to the way people perceive affirmative action in the South African workplace. Danver (2016) considered how social constructionism can be used in education, with a specific focus on its application in the information and technology (IT) field. The applications of social constructionism are therefore broad, as it provides a framework upon which the varying opinions and attitudes of individuals may be observed. Furthermore, it allows the varying understanding and viewpoints of individuals in society to be understood from a social anthropological perspective that factors in aspects related to past experiences, discourses, and social interactions of the individuals.

Society, culture, and religion are believed to play a significant role in the sexual perceptions and practices of men and women, though there is limited research to show how the sexual practices of young men and women change once these controlling beliefs are altered through migration (Peters & Sundaram 2015; Smit & Rugunanan 2014). Social constructionism provides one possible framework for understanding the effect that societies have on individuals, and in the case of this study, the effect that social alterations – which occur through migration – have on young men and woman. This is based on the understanding that people construct their knowledge and understandings through their daily interactions with the people in their societies (Burr & Dick 2017). Thus, following various social interactions that occur among migrants with new social groups, family ties, peers, and infrastructural mechanisms in their new societies, it is expected that their sexual perceptions and practices will change. However, while it is largely accepted that the sexual perceptions and practices of young

migrants will change by various degrees, social constructionism provides a framework for understanding why this change occurs.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Transnationalism and social constructionism provide two well-established frameworks for understanding the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban regarding the culture of preserving virginity before marriage, and, particularly, what may have caused any such changes in their perceptions and practices. The next Chapter outlines the methodology that was used to answer the research questions of this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

We all possess the vital instinct of inquisitiveness. When the unknown confronts us our inquisitiveness makes us probe and attain fuller understanding of the unknown. This inquisitiveness is the mother of all knowledge and method, which humans employ for obtaining the knowledge of whatever is the unknown. Such inquisitiveness can be termed 'research' (Kothari, 2004).

The aim of this particular Chapter is to present the methodology that was used to collect information for this study. It discusses the research approach, the sampling strategy and procedures, as well as the methodology that was used to collect and analyse the data. In short, the Chapter discusses the process that was followed to study the topic under view, which informs the reliability and validity of the study.

4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The objective of this study was to determine whether Congolese migrant women generally continue to observe the practice of virginity preservation before marriage, once they are immersed in their new society which is Durban. A second objective was to find out if migration has had an impact on how Congolese migrants behave in Durban.

The methodology for this study was chosen to assist the researcher to find answers to questions about virginity perceptions among Congolese migrant women in Durban.

4.2.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research in this study sought to provide answers to questions about how the social experience of Congolese migrant women is perceived by them and how the meaning given to the practice of preserving virginity before marriage has been socially constructed.

Qualitative research refers to studies that rely on the principles of 'social interactionism', 'phenomenology', and 'hermeneutics' to draw meaning from the exploration of social relations, by describing reality as it is experienced by individuals within that environment (Adams et al., 2007). Qualitative research methods are useful in discovering the meaning that people give to their experience (Bogdan & Biklen 2003; Denzin & Lincoln 2000). Since the

purpose of this study was to explore the intimate perceptions of Congolese migrant women on the taboo topic of sexual practices before marriage, I chose a qualitative research method because it could provide insights into the matter under study and help to uncover trends in thought, opinions about the perception of virginity before marriage. Such an approach would also assist to dive deeper into what could be the motivation behind the observation of the culture of preserving virginity before marriage. The qualitative approach provided a snapshot into Congolese situational constraints that shape the inquiry and explore the real experiences of women instead of emphasizing the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between participants and researcher presumptions that establish, frame and reinforce the value-laden nature that defined or identified womanhood.

It is therefore due to the sensitive and complex nature of this study that a qualitative methodology was considered to be the most appropriate means of gathering information to answer the study's research questions.

4.2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Exploratory research is the most optimum strategy to follow, as it is first-and-foremost based on discovering ideas and insights, rather than simply collecting statistically significant data.

Exploration, with its open character and emphasis on flexibility, pragmatism, and the particular, biographically specific interests of an investigator, is arguably a more inviting and indeed accurate way of presenting social research than treating it as a narrowing, quasi rule-bound and discipline-based process that settles and confirms rather than unsettles and questions what one knows (Stebbins 2001).

In terms of definition, exploratory research is defined as initial research into a hypothetical or theoretical idea. Exploratory research allowed me to seek to understand more about the idea or the phenomenon observed which is "preservation of virginity before marriage" among Congolese migrants living in Durban.

4.3 TARGET POPULATION AND RESEARCH SITE

In research, a population is defined as the complete group or 'universe' that holds all of the properties that allow it to supply data to answer the research questions of a study (Zikmund et al. 2013: 387).

The population of Congolese women in Durban is diverse and heterogeneous regarding their education, ethnic and socio-economic background. This study focused on Congolese women between 18 and 50 years old who were born in the DRC, were single or married, had been in Durban at least four years. Also in the DRC virginity perception is different among ethnic group as stated by Riva (2006) who said that in Kasai, the Luba do not tolerate sex outside marriage, while the opposite is observed in Tetela and Kuba.

Specifically, the study focused on Congolese migrant women living in the Durban suburb of Point and the Refugee Social Services (RSS) at the Diakonia Centre, Diakonia Avenue, Durban. The Point area refers to the area around refers in the area of West Street around Spar, Mazepa Street, Winder Street, Pickering Street, Fischer Street and Point Road. This area was intentionally chosen by the researcher because of the high residential distribution of Congolese women in this area which is due to cheap rental accommodation due to the buildings being poorly maintained. Most Congolese women in this area live a very precarious livelihood which exposes them to circumstances which may cause them to reconsider their perception of the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

The RSS is a South African not-for-profit organization which was registered in June 2008. Prior to this time the organization was a project of the Mennonite Central Committee and was known as MCC: Refugee Project. Refugee Social Services is a social implementing partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Their vision is to be a global leader in providing a holistic, quality and innovative service that develops the capacity of refugees to attain integration and independence. RSS was ideal in terms of finding participants as my target population was women who have been living in Durban for less than four years and this organisation targets all newcomers. The population of Congolese migrant women in Durban constituted the population for this study with most participants selected from the Point area and RSS.

4.4 SAMPLE

This study relied on a non-probability sampling technique. According to Given (2008), nonprobability sampling is the most common sampling technique in qualitative research. Purposive sampling is one of the types of non-probability sampling (Ritchie et al. 2013). Purposive sampling was used to select my sample frame by choosing the sample based on who I thought would be appropriate for the study. Sarandakos (1998: 152) describes purposive sampling as a technique where researchers “choose subjects who in their opinion are thought

to be relevant to the research topic”. Thus, purposive sampling consists of intentionally selecting the sample based on the “researcher’s interests” because they meet a number of criteria for insertion in the research (Amisi, 2005). In this study, the inclusion was based on pre-established criteria such as being a Congolese migrant woman or man who had been living in Durban (Point area) for a minimum of four years, single or married, educated or not, different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, and different occupations. These criteria were relevant in terms of people’s day-to-day challenges in the practice of preserving virginity before marriage and the perception of this practice by married women. The researcher used her own judgment to assess participant’s suitability based on the levels of engagement that the participants showed during discussions about the study.

It is often not practical or possible to study an entire population so it becomes necessary to make general findings based on a study of only a subset of the population known as a sample (Mungela, 2011). This research explored the perception of Congolese migrant women by means of interviewing a sample of unmarried and married migrant women and men. My sample frame was thus drawn from a pool of Congolese migrants living in Durban. Their ages ranged from 18 years old and above.

The sample was originally intended to be 20 migrant Congolese women living in Durban from the different cultures so as to provide a rich understanding of their perception about virginity. However, while on the field work, I only managed to interview a total of 14 women and four men. In terms of composition, the 18 interviewees consisted of three married men and one unmarried man participated, along with eight unmarried women and six married women. This makes a total of 18 participants. This was because many women were not willing to consent to be interviewed due to deepened patriarchal Congolese cultures and religions. Therefore most women were scared to open up about their sexual life to a stranger as they also feared for their marriages and family well-being. Rosaldo (1974) states that cultural and religious expressions of sexual asymmetry may be associated with patriarchal economic occupations, but they are often found in other social domains as well. Therefore in an attempt to obtain to the targeted sample size, readily available men who willingly consented to be interviewed were then included in the study. This did not only assist to attain the required sample size but it also facilitated the collection of gender diversified data which helped to address the study’s objective – determining if Congolese migrant women continue the practice of virginity preservation before marriage in foreign societies.

The sample consisted of two subgroups to provide comparative information on the perceptions of Congolese migrant women on the culture of preserving virginity until marriage. The first sample comprised 8 younger, unmarried Congolese women and one unmarried man between the ages of 18 and 43, who had been living in Durban for a minimum of four years. This subgroup was in a position to discuss first-hand what their perceptions were of preserving virginity until they were married. The second sample comprised 6 married Congolese women and 3 married men of any age over 18, who had been living in Durban for a minimum of four years. It was expected that this second subgroup would be in a position to discuss from experience, what their perceptions were, and still are, of preserving virginity until they were married. This second subgroup also provided the researcher with an insight into the efforts they put into place to reinforce their daughters' practice of preserving virginity until marriage

Faith ministries premises at 45 Morrison Road was used to conduct interviews with the participants. The researcher chose this church because of its location (Point area) and also because it is the biggest Congolese church within this area with 20 years of existence. Most Congolese women residing in Point area belong to this church. The location was accessible, safe and convenient to most participants and the researcher. Eleven participants were interviewed at the church. It is no secret that most African churches are patriarchal; women are still restricted to normalised feminine gender roles and expected to be passive and loyal. Bearing those gendered religious boundaries, during data collection process, that could potentially limit participants to voicing out their sexual affairs and bring about religious-biased data, I decided to include some voices from outside of the church. As a result, three participants did not belong to the church research site but were, instead, drawn from the RSS¹ offices and four from their homes. This is, out of the 18 participants interviewed, a total of 11 participants were sampled from the Church and a total of 7 from outside of the Church.

Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 show the profiles of the in-depth interviews and the focus group interviews respectively.

Table 4.1: In-depth Interview Participants

Name of participant	Sex	Age	Level of education	Employment	Marital status
Charlotte	F	18	Matric	_____	Unmarried
Antoinette	F	19	1 st year student	_____	Unmarried
Josee	F	32	Graduate	Unemployed	Unmarried
Georgette	F	21	2 nd year student	_____	Unmarried
Ilunga	F	29	_____	Hair dresser	Married
Germaine	F	26	Graduate	Unemployed	Unmarried
Melanie	F	40	_____	Hair dresser	Unmarried
Innocente	F	43	Graduate	Unemployed	Unmarried
Marie	F	20	Matric	Hair dresser	Unmarried
Jacob	M	24	3 rd year student	_____	Unmarried

Table 4.2: Focus Group Interview Participants

Name of participant	Sex	Age	Level of education	Employment	Marital status
Armandie	F	Early 30's	Matric	Unemployed	Married
Judith	F	Early 40's	Graduate	Unemployed	Married
Gracia	F	Early 40's	Matric	Unemployed	Married
Adele	F	Early 30's	Matric	Hair dresser	Married
Nadine	F	Late 30,s	Matric	Hair dresser	Married
Jean	M	48	_____	Car guard	Married
Pierrot	M	40	_____	Car guard	Married
Claude	M	31	_____	Car guard	Married

4.5 DATA COLLECTION

This research used in-depth interviews and focus groups as the main research instruments for gathering data. For qualitative research methodologies, data may be collected from various sources; although six primary methods are generally accepted: interviews, documentation, participant-observation, direct observation, archival records, and physical artefacts (Yin 2003). Given (2008) discusses interviews, questionnaires, and participant-observation methods as being appropriate for qualitative research.

The questions for both the in-depth interviews and focus groups were semi-structured and open-ended to allow specific and detailed information to be gathered on the respondents' perceptions. This allowed the respondents not only to answer specific questions, but also to discuss further and in greater depth if they wished. An audio and video recording device was used after consent was granted during the data gathering process, to make sure that all data was gathered in full. In addition, a paper-and-pen format of recording the respondents' answers was used to gather written documentation for data analysis.

4.5.1 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In-depth interviews are a way of gaining information and understanding of individual on a focused topic, and is a very particular kind of interaction similar to a conversation (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). The purpose of the in-depth interviews was to gain an understanding of the life experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience.

Preserving virginity before marriage among Congolese migrant women is a taboo topic. In depth interviews were useful as they allowed me to access subjugated knowledge from those who are often marginalized in most societies and in particular in DRC society where men have power over women. In-depth interviews are important for the study of women because learning from women in this way is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men speak for them (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2010).

The identity of a nation is forged by its language. The DRC is a country with more than two hundred dialects but four national languages (Lingala, Tshiluba, Kikongo and Swahili) and the French language (sont les Camerounais) (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Distribution of the four main languages of the DRC



I am fortunate to be able to speak three of the four national dialects and French, which made the interaction between me and the participants very easy. The fact that I could speak more Congolese languages instilled confidence in me on the part of the participants because as Gumperz (2009) states, language is by far the most powerful and versatile medium of communication. Seidman (2000) states that to understand people and their culture, you need to be interested in their stories.

The interviews were conducted in French most of the time, although Lingala and Swahili were also used in cases where participants could not understand the questions in French. Swahili, Lingala and Tshiluba are the most popular languages that DRC immigrants in Durban use to communicate among themselves. Open-ended questions were used to gain information and to allow participants to express themselves more freely. A recorder was used for those who gave permission for it to be used during the interview. Each interview lasted between 15 to 30 minutes in duration.

The real names of the participants were not used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. In place of their real names, pseudonyms were used instead.

However in-depth interviews can be limiting. At times, people are unable to articulate their experiences well, whilst others simply forget to mention important things. As a result, some important information does not get revealed. This was why I also decided to engage in participant observation to be able to get information that the interviews were not able to give.

4.5.2 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The aim of focus group interviews is to gain a broad range of views on the research topic (Hennink 2013). In focus group interviews the role of the moderator and the method of recording data are crucial considerations. In particular, the moderator's personal skills and attributes have a considerable influence on the nature and quality of the data gathered (Sim 1998).

Two focus groups which included five married women and three married men were conducted to gather relevant information that would enable the researcher to achieve the purpose of the study.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The aim of the qualitative data analysis in this study was to examine the data gathered from the participant interview in order to clarify the concepts and constructs, and to identify patterns, themes and relationships in accordance with the research aims.

I use thematic analysis to manage data produced from the transcription after these were translated into English. Thematic analysis is defined as an independent qualitative descriptive and is "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke 2006: 79). It is qualitative descriptive method that provides core skills to researchers for conducting many forms of qualitative analysis (Vaismoradi et al 2013).

I audio-recorded the in-depth interviews after permission was granted, and video-recorded the focus group interviews after permission was granted. Each interview was assigned a code, with different interviews being identified by an alphabet character from A-J and 'P' for participants in the in-depth interviews and 'MM' or 'MW' for respectively married men and married women. The alphabet letter was followed by a number from 1 to 5. I labelled each recording with the assigned interview code. As soon as possible after each interview I listened to the

recording and made notes. I transcribed key words, phrases and statements in order to allow the voices of research participants to speak.

In this study, the qualitative data analysis was done according to the thematic analysis process recommended by Vaismoradi et al. (2013). Where necessary, recorded responses from the participants were transcribe into Microsoft (Ms) Word format, and once the data had been gathered in Ms Word it was analysed using thematic analysis. The steps followed to accomplish the thematic analysis of data are outlined below, as per Braun and Clarke (2006)'s guide.

4.6.1 FAMILIARISATION WITH DATA

As the researcher of this study, in order to familiarise myself with data obtained, I transcribed and repeatedly study the data obtained before analysing it. I actively read data by noting down ideas and emerging themes, which helped prepared me for data analysis.

4.6.2 GENERATING INITIAL CODES

I did the coding manually by using a highlighter and systematically coding all the data based on recurring patterns across the data. I identified as many potential codes and themes as possible and then collected together all the data identified by the same code.

4.6.3 COLLATING THE CODES INTO OVERARCHING THEMES

From the different codes collected, potential themes were created. Some codes formed main themes or sub-themes.

4.6.4 REVIEWING THEMES

I re-read all the data extracts to make sure that they fitted into each theme and provided a coherent pattern. I also established the relationship between the theme and the data.

4.6.5 PRODUCING THE REPORT

The analysis was followed up by the writing a report.

The thematic analysis process was presented in detail in Chapter 5.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

4.7.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to conducting the study, and after my proposal being approved by the Cluster and the School of Social Sciences Higher Degrees Committees, Research Ethical Clearance

Application (together with the research proposal and all other required documents) was submitted to UKZN² HSSRE³. In response to this application, HSSRE approved this research to be conducted by granting the researcher the Research Ethical Clearance Approval attached (check Appendices). Informed consent was gathered from the research participants. Informed consent, as Neuman (2000) states, means informing the research participants about the overall purpose of the investigation and the main features of the design, including any possible risks and benefits from participating in the research project. Informed consent involves getting voluntary participation of the subject and establishing her/his right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Written consent was collected from the participants. Permission was asked, and consent was given, by each participant before any of the interviews or focus groups were recorded. Confidentiality was ensured which, according to Neuman (2000), means that no private information was or will be reported that may, in any way, identify the subjects.

4.7.2 LIMITATIONS

This study deals specifically with the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban regarding the culture of preserving virginity before marriage. It did not consider perceptions regarding criminal acts involving sexual intercourse such as rape, or other sexual acts and behaviours that involve genital contact other than penile-vaginal penetration, such as oral-genital contact, or anal penile contact. Finally, it did not consider the perceptions of Congolese migrant women who live outside of the Durban Metropolitan Area.

This study was not supposed to include men's perceptions and was supposed to have 20 participants but due to sensitivity of the topic, and people's fear of engaging with South African institutions, most women even after explaining to them the aim and objectives of the study were not willing to share their perception about the practice of preserving virginity before marriage. The fear of engaging with South African institutions (in this case the university I was registered with), may have been since the wave of xenophobia migrants experienced in Durban in 2015 (Ebrahim 2015) and on other occasions. Other limitations are explained below.

² UKZN refers to The University of KwaZulu-Natal

³ HSSRE refers to Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

4.7.2.1 THE CONSTRAINT OF TIME

I spend three months trying to figure out how to gather participants for focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. This was due to the fact that those who wanted to participate were discouraged by their community. Most of the participant had been living in Durban for less than 4 years and depended most of migrants who have been in Durban for a long because the community presumes that they have experience on how things happen or are done in Durban. Also, participants questioned the researcher's trustworthiness on the topic.

4.7.2.2 THE CONSTRAINT OF FINANCE

It was very difficult to convince my participant that the research was self-funded, and was for academic purposes. Most of them believed that I received finance to do the project and they wanted a share. I understood the fact that participants could not leave their small businesses (hair salons) just to come and attend an interview session which would not even profit them. I did organise bus fare so that we could meet at the place of interview. This constrained me financially since I am not employed.

4.7.2.3 THE CONSTRAINT OF CULTURE

In the DRC, sexuality is a taboo topic that should not be discussed with a stranger. I only overcame this cultural limitation when I realised that my being able to speak many Congolese languages gave confidence to the participants. This is because a person feels more confident when you speak the same language. In Congo, it is easy to identify which part of the country a person come from, because names are linked to tribe and region.

4.7.2.4 THE CONSTRAINT OF SAMPLING

The research sample proposed 20 Congolese migrant women with 10 unmarried and 10 married who had been living in Durban for 3 years. However, when I was in the field I noticed that women (mainly the married ones) were not willing to share their sexual perceptions. For instance, even after signing a consent form, one participant asked for her interview and deleted the video recorded data before data analysis. Also even if it was after, I could not proceed using the participant's data after requesting to be excluded from research irrespective that data was already obtained. This is in line with research ethics that as the researcher I committed myself and this research to. Also, as a DRC citizen, I am aware that publicly talking about sex and sexuality is taboo to many women who are perceived as "women of good morals or well raised women". Therefore women are not supposed to publicly engage in sex topics. However, as

researcher in this case and worried about shrinking research sample size, I ended up including *available and willing to consent participants*; in this case there were Congolese migrant men who, beside gender, met research requirements. It was in this capacity that this research study ended up including male participants who were originally not part of the target sampling population gender - women. This turned out to be an advantage as I managed to get men's views on the perception of preserving virginity before marriage. It was interesting to discover the perceptions of those whose culture has privileged, and given advantages to.

4.7.3 RELIABILITY

The subject of sexual life is a taboo topic among Congolese women, and should not be discussed publicly, which is why Congolese women are very secretive concerning their sexual lives (Djamba 1995). As this was found to be a primary issue in previous studies by Djamba (1995) on Congolese women, it was expected to be a reliability concern here. In order to overcome this problem, Djamba (1995) used an indirect approach to gather data relating to premarital sexual practices. For example, instead of asking whether women had engaged in sexual intercourse before marriage, the questionnaire asked for information on "age at first marriage" before asking about the "age at first sexual intercourse" (Djamba 1995: 459). A similar approach was taken in this study to extract information in an indirect manner, in order to extract the maximum possible truthful information.

4.7.4 VALIDITY

The research approach and the sampling method were effectively assessed to verify for validity. Validity is concerned with the meaningfulness of research components (Drost 2011). The main concern is whether the researcher is measuring what he/she intends to measure, and that the appropriate methods are used. Kumar (2011) states that validity is a concept of appropriateness, accuracy and quality of the procedures adopted to obtain answers to the research questions. The data collection methods and research methodology employed in this study were suitable for the purpose of gathering information that reflects the meaning of the concept under study, namely, "exploring the perception of Congolese migrant women in Durban toward the practice of preserving virginity before marriage"

4.7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the qualitative research approach and the methods used for data collection, sampling and data analysis, and ethical considerations in order to study the

perceptions of Congolese migrant women towards the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

The following chapter describes and discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study from the data collected from the in-depth and focus group interviews carried out with research participants. In this chapter, the captured data from the qualitative research was presented, analysed, described and interpreted in a systematic manner as the next step of the research process discussed in Chapter 4. It analyses the perceptions of Congolese migrant women and their observations about the practice of preserving virginity before marriage within the transnational context. The analysis sought to discuss thoroughly the practice and the difficulties associated with maintaining virginity within a transnational context as perceived by the study participants. The intention was to supply sufficient understanding of the sexual behaviour which participants find themselves in; compared to the political, socioeconomic, and cultural conversion from the home country into the host country. This chapter also included the presentation of major themes deduced from data collected from the interview of unmarried Congolese migrant women and Congolese migrant married men and women. Lastly this chapter included the results of the researcher's participant observation, and discussed the study results.

5.1.1: PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS VIRGINITY WITHIN THE TRANSNATIONAL CONTEXT

In the section; the researcher pointed out how the practice of preserving virginity in transnational space and the desire to practice this culture through “abstinence” has been ignored.

The practice of preserving virginity in transnational context have been accorded less consideration than they deserve compare to transnational practices of migrant families such as remittances and other economic activities. At the same time, women ‘sexual empowerment or women’s sexual life has been considered to be one of the weapons used to fight against STI and HIV/AIDS within African countries.

Studying the livelihoods of Congolese migrant women in their transnational context has helped to understand that even though the practice of preserving virginity was perceived as an honourable culture by most Congolese migrant women; the effectiveness of the intention to remain virgin until marriage is hypothetical or almost impossible and difficult as many young

people who intent to practice abstinence fail to do so (this was well elucidated in the second section of this chapter)

5.1.2 GENERAL DEMOGRAPHY OF PARTICIPANTS

5.1.2.1 UNMARRIED WOMEN

My target was to interview 10 unmarried Congolese women within the Congolese community living in Durban but because of the limitations mention in the section 4.7.2, eight unmarried women and one unmarried man were selected. Ten participants were interviewed in-depth including eight unmarried women, one married woman and one unmarried man, with the youngest being 19 years old and the oldest being 43 years old. Most of these participants were students, three were hairdressers, two were graduates and one was waiting to gain admission at university. Employment information is not something a really needed to ask to my participants because once you meet a Congolese women it is obvious to know what they do for living.

5.1.2.2 MARRIED WOMEN

The married women were interviewed in a focus group interview and were asked the same 23 questions answered by unmarried women except for three questions that were only specific for married women. As I mentioned above in section 4.7.2, it was a great challenge to find married Congolese migrant women willing to take part in this research, the main reasons being: taboo topic, lack of knowledge, xenophobic fear and also time constraints (most women work in hairdressing salons and after work they rush to do their domestic duties). Even after explaining to them the purpose of the interview, and having already granted consent for video recording, they started arguing and requesting to be only audio-recorded; which was done for half of the interview. Nevertheless, after the interview, one of the women deleted the half that was video recorded and said it was a mistake. This serves as an evidence of how secretive Congolese women can be about their sexual life. I overcame this challenge by interviewing some married men. I finally had 2 focus groups consisting of a group of 5 married women and 3 married men. One married women was interviewed alone, not in the group because on the day of the appointment she was the only one who showed up. This gave us a total of nine married participants.

My youngest participant in the group was 29 years old and was born in Mbuji Mayi, and the oldest was in her forties. All were born in the DRC and most of them have been living in Durban for less than 5 years.

5.1.2.3 MARRIED MEN

Although the purpose of this study was to give a platform to women so that they could express their views on the Congolese gendered practice of preserving virginity before marriage, because of the limitations elucidated in section 4.7.2, a group of three men was included, with the youngest being 31 years old and the oldest 48 years old. They had been living in Durban for 1 to 5 years.

All the participants were born in the DRC but in different provinces. Four were born in Kinshasa and spoke Lingala, four were born in Katanga (Lubumbashi, Likasi) and spoke Swahili, and two were born in Mbuji Mayi and spoke Tshiluba.

The researcher purposely selected participant from different ethnicities because Djamba (1995) had stated that there appeared to be differences in sexual practices between ethnicities of Congolese women; Women from the more sexually-liberal Bangala tribe were more likely to have engaged in premarital sex compared to those from the less-liberal Baluba tribe.

5.2: OVERALL PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings from the focus and in-depth interviews about the practice of preserving virginity before marriage are summarised into four main themes, presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Themes emerging from the findings

Themes	Sub-themes
Defining virginity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reasons behind the culture of maintaining virginity• Negative perceptions towards virginity loss or virginity lost and its social implications
Perspectives on virginity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Premarital sexual behaviour• Virginity testing and sexual responsibility• Male perspective towards the practice of preserving virginity = gender inequality towards virginity preservation
Influence of immigration on cultural perceptions towards the practice of preserving virginity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The need for remaining virgin• Difficulties associated with maintaining virginity• Factors behind the difficulties of maintaining virginity in Durban
Enforcement of virginity considering the threat of HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Virginity motivators• The promotion of virginity considering the prevalence of HIV/AIDS

5.2.1 DEFINING VIRGINITY

In this study, participants were asked to define virginity and the meaning they give to the loss of virginity, in other words participants were asked to provide their perceptions regarding virginity and the value attached to it. The practice of preserving virginity before marriage (*bien se garder* in French) is a well-known cultural practice amongst the Congolese migrant community in Durban where I conducted my study. All participants (100%), regardless of their gender, agreed that while they were in the DRC they were brought up in the culture that recommended keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage, and confirmed that the Congolese community in Durban upholds that a woman should be a virgin until she got married. Responding to my question concerning this issue, some of the participants confirm this in the following statements:

Virginity scientifically, it's to keep the hymen intact. (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

Charlotte's definition is the same as Ozyegin's (2009) when he states that the hymen is a fold of flesh which has the power to rule the sexual identities of unmarried women.

From what I have learn from school, virginity it when someone hasn't lost her hymen and didn't have sexual practice. (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

Various definitions emerged from the interviews, with each participant having his/her own way of defining virginity. For instance, Jacob, the only unmarried male participant, said:

Virginity for me, being virgin either for a woman or a man is someone who never had sex before, for a woman it evident because they will be absence of the hymen but for a man only his conscience will tell. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

According to Germaine, virginity is sexual inexperience. This definition of virginity is backed up by Kefallinos (2012) who states: “As an epithet the word ‘virgin’ means the unknown, the unattached, the unspoiled and the pure; as a noun ‘virginity’ means an intact hymen and the absence of sexual intercourse between male and female.”

The above definitions show that virginity is a socially constructed concept that functions to commodify women.

For some participants, virginity means more a lot than biological or physical status; virginity is far more than just the presence of the hymen. In the same connection De Vault et al. (1962) note that virginity “is not the notion of physical virginity, but rather that of the spirit of virginity; not a de facto physical integrity, but a mind-set variously manifested, virginity it not only something physical or biological but mostly spiritual”. Marie confirms De Vault’s quote by defining virginity as follows:

Virginity is just a mind-set; a state of the spirit, it’s what characterised women personality. (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

These definition reveal that virginity is a mind state (etat d esprit) and not just a physical or biological state.

Alaba et al. (2004) argue that while African societies differ in geography, ethnicity, religion and cultural practices, all share the commonality of valuing virginity and upholding and enforcing norms of preserving virginity until marriage. Bosmans (2007) argue that; in the DRC, keeping virginity before marriage is a culture that is linked to the concept of honour. This quote from Bosmans (2007) was confirmed by most of the participants while providing their definitions of virginity.

Virginity is our value and our dignity (Charlotte interview 20/07/2017).

A state of purity. (Germaine interview 18/07/2017).

It’s the importance of a woman. (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

Virginity for us it something very important. (Ilunga interview 20/10/2017).

Pierrot and Jean, who are married men said:

Virginity it's when a woman didn't have any man in her young age. (Pierrot men's group interview 01/11/2017).

Virginity is when a woman didn't have any sexual relation before the right time. (Jean men's group interview 1/11/2017).

The researcher asked Pierrot to clarify: "What do you mean 'didn't have any man in her younger age', and when is the right time?" Pierrot responded:

It's not to engage in sexual intercourse before marriage. (Pierrot men's group interview 1/11/017).

All the married women participants confirmed that virginity is related to someone who does not know men, someone with no sexual experience.

Virginity is when a woman decide to abstain herself from sexual relation before time. (Claude men's group interview 1/11/2017).

All the definitions provided by married men participants (Jean, Pierrot and Claude) imply that the right time for knowing a man is within wedlock. Their definitions show that virginity preservation is linked to social appearance.

Findings from all my participants show that diverse ideas emerged when it came to defining the concept virginity; they all, however, agreed that virginity is a state of sexual inexperience, it's someone who has never had sex. They were all in agreement that virginity is a sign of purity, a sign of honour not only for the woman but also her family and her community.

In the light of the above definitions, virginity is therefore a socially constructed concept because it has control over the social behaviour of women and it simply means clean, above suspicion and above reproach. The concept 'nice girl' is both an instrumental and terminal value, both a standard of and a goal of behaviour (Fox 1977).

5.2.1.1 REASONS BEHIND THE CULTURE OF KEEPING VIRGINITY

In this study, the majority of the participants revealed that the honour of women was not the only reason why the practice of virginity was upheld, but also for the family and the society.

Bosmans (2007) states that in the DRC, family is the foundation and a woman is regarded as a centre-piece in a marriage or her family and in her society, therefore it is unacceptable and a

sign of dishonour for her to be engaged in any form of immorality or sexual behaviour. The honour of a family or society is the responsibility of female members. The statement by Bosmans gives three reasons why virginity is being promoted within the Congolese community: to promote the value of women (for marriage); to promote the value of the family (patriarchal expectation) and to promote the value of the society (social control).

1. VIRGINITY FOR THE PROMOTION OF MARRIAGE (VALUE OF WOMEN)

When answering to the question: “In your opinion, why did your community in the DRC uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she got married?” the majority of participants confirmed that virginity in the Congolese community was upheld to promote the value of women for the purpose of marriage. Josee said it is to show the value of a woman (Josee interview 10/08/2017), however, Ilunga said:

In our community, they uphold that culture because of the difference they have observe between the one that get married as a virgin and the one that knew men before, will not respect the husband. (Ilunga interview 20/10/2017).

According to Jean, in the DRC upholding virginity is a recommendation from the bible:

Even in the bible I know someone who send his son in his natal village to look for a virgin woman, I think our culture did inspire from that, it is better to have a virgin woman for marriage because, this is a kind of “garde fou” for a woman, she will never going to be insulted one day that she wasn’t a virgin before marriage, this culture help to preserve the pride. (Jean men’s, focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Valenti (2009) emphasises that virginity promotes the value of a woman when he states that, “‘Virgin’ has really become a designation for a particular model of femininity and womanhood that marginalizes anyone who doesn’t meet those very narrow standards.”

Thus, the answers provided by Josee, Ilunga and the Valenti shows that promoting women’s value for the purpose of marriage is one of the reasons why Congolese migrants practice the culture of preserving virginity before marriage. Tsui and Nicoladis (2004) add to this by stating that historically, a woman’s virginity was crucial to marriage in terms of both honour and value.

2. VIRGINITY FOR THE PROMOTION OF FAMILY (PATRIARCHAL EXPECTATIONS)

To promote the value of the family is another reason why the DRC community in Durban uphold the practice of preserving virginity. Kabeya (2015) states that the virginity of a woman is still and often associated with the honour of the family. Therefore, in certain tribes of the Congo, the fiancé must offer a goat to the parents if the bride is found to still be a virgin. This is called *mbuji wa nyima* by the Luba tribe of Kasai.

Marie, a participant from Mbuji Mayi province in the DRC confirmed Kabeya's statement when she said:

The only reason virginity is upheld is because it's very important, it's an honour for parents. (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

Win (2004) adds that, in Kenya it is considered very shameful for parents if their daughter is discovered to have lost her virginity. A girl is expected to remain a virgin until marriage (Win 2004).

Jacob has almost the same perception when he said:

Being African, we have been taught that a woman should preserve her virginity because it a sign of honour and a pride for the family (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

Jean's and Jacob's responses confirmed two reasons why virginity is upheld in DRC; that is, to promote the value of women; and to promote the value of family.

Georgette shared the same idea as Jean and Jacob when she explained:

The only reason why the culture is upheld is because it's an honour not only for the parent and the woman herself but mostly for the family that will marry that woman, she insisted that the basic of the all reasons is 'honour' (Georgette interview 04/08/2017).

However, Innocente answer indicated that not everybody in the DRC upholds the practice of preserving virginity before marriage as a culture that should be respected when she said:

But it's not everywhere in Congo that observe that culture, other tribe aren't even interested like Mongo in Equateur province. (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

The answer provided by Innocente is supported by Chrétien and du Nord-Ouest (1994) who state: "In sub-Saharan Africa, not all societies affirm the existence of an African culture that

does not tolerate sexuality and procreation out-of-wedlock.” The societies they mention in support of their statement are Beti-Fang, Mongo, Tetela, Zandé-Nzakara, and Banganda among others.

Innocente further said:

But the majority of parents will wish the young girls to keep their virginity, because it's an honour for parents to send their daughter a virgin into a marriage, it a sign of purity also because it's culture and culture is a link or a tie. (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

González-López (2004) emphasizes that in the patriarchal family a man ‘deserves’ to be the first sexual partner of a virgin daughter. Charlotte do not agree with González-López’ view:

I agreed with this culture but I would like to say that being virgin doesn't give any guarantee for marriage because nowadays when you find someone that really loves you, it can be possible to grow that love regardless being virgin or not. It's just that I grew up in the community that promote virginity and I agree with this culture because it's a sign of honour not only for the woman but also for her family and the family of the man that will marry her. And up until now there are some tribes that are very strict about it, the woman must remain a virgin (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

Looking at the responses provided by participants, patriarchal domination continues to suppress women with various discourses on their sexuality which is regarded as being closely connected with honour. Their body is still considered something to be possessed, kept in male control and talked about (Kalav 2013). Family value is one of the reasons why the practice of preserving virginity is upheld. In the DRC, a girl is the centre piece of a marriage, and she plays an indispensable role in the success and respect of both her family and her husband's family.

3. VIRGINITY FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIETY (SOCIAL CONTROL)

In this study, some participant argue that virginity was not for the value of women and family only but also the community or society. Antoinette for instance said:

The only reason why the culture is upheld it's only because the community want a woman to keep her value (Antoinette interview 18/08/2017).

Uecker et al. (2008) argues that preserving virginity is more common among virgins who are driven by a desire to avoid potential life-altering consequences like pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. This point was supported by Charlotte who said:

The only reason the community uphold virginity is to avoid abortion, pregnancies and STI. (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

In the DRC abortion is illegal and it is only permitted to save the life of a woman. The general prohibition on abortion contained in the 1867 Penal Code of Belgium was incorporated into the Penal Code of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the late 19th century. In 1933, a decree established the prohibition of the sale, display, distribution, manufacture, importation and advertisement of contraceptives and abortifacients. These laws have never been abrogated. Therefore, under articles 165 and 166 of the Penal Code, in its most recent version of 31 May 1982, a person who performs an abortion is subject to 5 to 15 years imprisonment. A woman who voluntarily has an abortion is subject to 5 to 10 years' imprisonment

A study done in South Africa by Macleod et al. (2011) found that participants regarded abortion as a form of killing and inevitably destructive of cultural values and traditions.

Moreover, the stigmatisation of abortion as a crime and its unlawfulness (illegality) in many African countries makes it difficult to collect data and to measure the prevalence of abortion (Chr tiennes and du Nord-Ouest 1994).

In Congolese society, heterosexual marriage is a highly regarded institution that is viewed as contributing significantly to the true identities of women (Kondemo 2011). Traditionally, there has been a cultural expectation that women would not engage in premarital sex; that a woman would come to her wedding a virgin and that she would give up'' her virginity to her new husband in the act of consummation of the marriage (Abdalla 2007). In the same connection, Germaine said:

I didn't create that culture but I think it was a good idea, because it's not good to try here and there before marriage because you can end up doing the same thing when you will be married''. (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

The DRC ''is a society where a woman's value is closely linked with virginity, marriage and child bearing'' (Bosmans 2007: 6).

5.1.1.2 NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS VIRGINITY LOSS

In this study participants were asked the meaning of a woman losing her virginity before marriage. The study found that virginity loss of virginity before marriage among Congolese

migrants in Durban was considered as a sign of dishonour to the family. Responding to this question, Ilunga said:

For me a woman who lose her virginity is full of nonsense, she is like a liar, someone who doesn't think straight even the husband will consider her like she is not really important, she doesn't have value. (Ilunga interview 27/10/2017).

In the DRC, loss of virginity before marriage is culturally considered to bring dishonour not only to the woman's and the groom's families, but also to their communities as a whole.

Bosmans (2007) states that, in the event that a non-virgin woman marries, the dishonour is conveyed upon the husband and his family. Therefore, practicing sexual intercourse out of wedlock could result in a woman being "ostracized by her family and her community".

Jean-Bouchard (2014: 364) agrees with Bosmans (2007) as is evident in the following statement: This is because, in the DRC, family is the foundation, woman is regarded as a centre-piece in a marriage or her family and in her society, therefore it's unacceptable and a sign of dishonour for her to be engaged in any form of immorality or sexual behaviour. The honour of a family or society is the responsibility of female members.

Most of the participants agree with Bosmans and Jean-Bouchard although Claude, one of the male participants in the focus group said:

For me someone who has lost her virginity, its normal because that was then when I was still a child loss of virginity was a very big problem but now in this new generation for me it's normal. (Claude men's group interview 1/11/2017).

Claude was quickly contradicted by Pierrot who said:

It depends, for me it's not normal, a woman should remain virgin until marriage. (Pierrot men's group interview 1/11/2017).

All other participants were not happy with Claude's point of view, as represented by the following two excerpts:

Women that has already lose a virginity is like someone with no value at all. (Josee interview 4/08/2017).

The woman who lost her virginity before marriage has little morality, and have lack of seriousness and she is very irresponsible. (Antoinette interview 18/08/2017).

Ozyegin (2009) argues that a non-virgin unmarried woman has no place in societal classification.

Some of the participants linked the loss of virginity with a woman's behaviour, attitude and appearance. For instance, Germaine said:

A woman that has lost her virginity can appear as innocent that the virgin one but we can easily recognise the non-virgin one by the way she talk, the state of her spirit, most of them are insolent, they look at men differently just because they already have experience. (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

Melanie pointed in the same direction when she confirmed that:

According to our culture, a young woman who lose her virginity will be considered as a bad girl, she has no value (Melanie interview 16/10/2010).

Jacob, the only unmarried men participant said

A woman who lost her virginity before marriage, for me she is a very impatient women because she fall in the trap of her emotion. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

However, according to Innocente, anyone can decide what to do with their own body:

For me I don't judge those who have decided to lose their virginity, because anybody can decide willingly to keep or to lose her virginity. (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

Jean acknowledge that:

To have a virgin woman in our days it's not easy, the world has changed and the world is upside down, young woman no longer preserve themselves, they are giving themselves away before time, it's weird and it's very sad. (Jean men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

According to Rwandan tradition, virginity is a fundamental characteristic of a desired bride (Banyanga 2017).

Various ideas emerged from Congolese migrants living in Durban, but most of them agreed that the loss of virginity before marriage is linked to dishonour, to loss of social value and respect towards women, and can reduce the prospect of getting married (Banyanga 2017).

5.2.2 PERSPECTIVES ON VIRGINITY VERSUS OTHER SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Considering the value that participants attributed to virginity before marriage, the researcher asked whether participants were still virgins and whether their friends in Durban were still virgins. In the DRC and Africa in general, the sexuality of a woman is regulated by the family, society and religion, making sex outside of marriage shameful and taboo.

Having this question in my research is what delayed my field work, because not everyone was ready to share this sensitive matter with a stranger.

Freud (1918) explained that there is a taboo which demands when a woman is getting married to a man she must not bring memories of sexual relations that she has had with other men.

When the researcher asked the following question: As far as you know, are many of your unmarried Congolese female friends in Durban still virgins? Participants were divided on this matter. Although they had different opinions, all of them agreed with the fact that virgins among Congolese migrants in Durban are in the minority. Charlotte said:

From what I can see from far even though I only have 1 month, from what I have been observing, there are still a minority of virgin Congolese women in Durban. I know, it's hard to determine from appearance if someone is virgin or not, but the behaviour and the attitude (personality) of someone can lead you or give you an idea. (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

The married women in their focus group were nearly unanimous when they said: "There is no virgin in Durban; they have been destroyed with the culture that they found here in Durban."

Armandie was the exception who said:

Recently I took part to a wedding ceremony where a girl here in Durban was a virgin and her mother said that she was happy because this one (girl) was the third one and the last one that she was giving away for marriage; she is very proud that in this community where young women find difficult to preserve their virginity, all her three daughters got married being virgin. (Armandie women's focus group 25/10/2017).

Other married women were not convinced about Armandie's statement and asked her: "Do you have any proof?" Armandie responded:

The mother was talking in front of all the guest and even the girls and their husbands were present. (Armandie women's focus group 25/10/2017).

Jean who is a married man said:

Yes, they still some, but it depends with family; the education of the family because exception does exist but it's a minority. (Jean men's focus group interview 25/10/2017).

The above realities describe that individual and societal beliefs and values as constructed by the community play a major role in the preservation of virginity before marriage within the transnational space.

Though I explained to the participants that the following question was just for research purposes and the information they provided to me would be anonymous and private, many migrants withdrew themselves from participating to this research because they were not willing to answer this question.

The question: "Are you a virgin?" was asked to unmarried women participants, and the study find that most of them confirmed that they were virgins, except for Josee and Melanie. Josee, who is 32 years old, said:

No, I am not, I have a child already (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

The researcher asked: "How come you have a child because you said you were brought up in the culture of keeping virginity until marriage?" She answered:

I was married and I lost my husband, I am a widow (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

Melanie, 40 years old participant said that she is not virgin anymore (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

Djamba (2003) argued that delay in marriage, exposure to formal education and mass media, and other changes in the social and economic environment had reduced women's reliance on traditional norms, affecting the values placed on union formation among women. A study conducted by Kayembe et al. (2008) on 13,091 premarital teenagers in the DRC found that one of the factors that were statistically significantly associated with higher rates of premarital sex was that the individuals were older. This could be the case for Melanie.

Chirinda et al. (2012) state that other circumstances that have been influential on premarital sexual activity include an individual's age, and socioeconomic conditions such as education, and financial status.

The subject of sexual life is a taboo topic among Congolese women and should not be discussed publicly; Congolese women are very secretive concerning their sexual lives (Djamba 1995).

For this reason, reliability can be a concern when asking direct questions in this regard. In order to overcome this problem, Djamba (1995: 459) used an indirect approach to gather data relating to premarital sexual practices; instead of asking whether women had engaged in sexual intercourse before marriage, the questionnaire asked for information on “age at first marriage” before asking about the “age at first sexual intercourse”. In order to extract the maximum possible truthful information, I first asked how old participants were when they lost their virginity then I asked how old they were when they got married.

The research question “How old were you when you lost your virginity”, was like a bomb in participants’ ears. I presume it was the reason why the video was destroyed or deleted. However, Judith and Ilunga said they lost their virginity when they got married and both were 29 years old by then. When I Asked the rest of the group the answer I got was like a kind of murmur and then one of the participants said: “All of us we lost our virginity when we got married” (laugh).

The researcher asked whether participants got married in the DRC or in Durban. Ilunga said:

I was in Mbuji Mayi (DRC) when my husband send the bride price then
I came to join him (Ilunga women’s group interview 20/10/2017).

Judith and Gracia got married in the DRC Armandi and Adele are newlywed here in Durban (women’s focus group interview 25/10/2017).

Nadine said:

I was married, I still am, I don’t know? My husband went overseas when I gave birth to our first child but he never write or send anything to me, now I realise that maybe it’s because I was not a virgin by the time he marry me. I wonder, he never even ask me if I was a virgin, we never talk about it, I thought he didn’t mind as we met in Durban and I was already 30 by that time. (Nadine women’s focus group interview 25/10/2017).

I asked the same questions of the married men. I asked them: “How old was your wife when she lost her virginity and where did you marry her and how old was she?”

Jean said:

I was the first man for my wife, when I marry her she was 16 years old, we get married in DRC. (Jean men’s focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Jean’s answer really astonished Claude:

Wow you were very lucky man! Me I met my wife here in Durban when she was 22 years old and she told me that she lost her virginity when she was 18 years old. (Claude men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Claude's answer is consistent with Kayembe et al. (2008) who found that the average age of first sexual intercourse for females in their study was 17-18 years.

5.1.1.1 PREMARITAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

In cultures where virginity is highly valued, research has shown that some young women practice alternative sexual behaviours, such as anal sex, in order to preserve their virginity, although these behaviours may place them at increased risk of HIV (Weiss et al. 2000).

Weiss et al. (2000)'s statement was discussed with my participants. The researcher asked: "Do you think it is acceptable for young girls to engage in any non-penetrative sexual practices with boys, which do not harm their virginity, to preserve their virginity before they are married?"

The fact is that the pressure of keeping virginity is mostly imposed on women so they are the ones who should share their experience about other sexual practices. Men have nothing to lose after they engage in sexual intercourse.

All the virgin participants confirmed that they never engaged in other types of sexual behaviour in order to preserve their virginity; except for Charlotte who said:

Yes I did other practice than vaginal penile but I never use anal sex.
(Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

In order to discover more about the practice of preserving virginity and what the participants did to preserve their virginity within the transnational space, I asked the following question: "Have you engaged in any practices in order to preserve your virginity; and if so, what have you done to preserve your virginity?"

The virgin participants gave various explanations on how they have behave in order to preserve their virginity.

I will not say that I have a very difficult mother but I am very lucky to have her, I never been really exposed to that kind of situation, I never had the opportunity to go out with friends, I never had that bad luck. Now that I'm here, I can say it by God grace that I'm still a virgin because I knew when to run away and when to say no, can feel when I am in danger and will take a good decision and at the right time.
(Georgette interview 4/08/2017).

Telling the truth I never had the opportunity because of my background. Coming from a Christian family and also by my own decision. (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

I just preserve myself because those practice will one day push you far. (Innocente interview 19/10 /2017).

The answers provided by Georgette, Germaine and Innocente show that the practice Congolese migrant use in order to protect their virginity in most of the cases is abstinence

A study conducted by Maharaj and Cleland (2011) in Durban, concluded that there were distinct differences in abstinence levels among women of different racial groups. Indian women were shown to have the highest rate of abstinence (approximately 68%) compared to White (50%) and African (31%) women. This result could be attributed to cultural values, since it was argued that Indian women generally live at home with their parents until marriage (Maharaj & Cleland, 2011).

Another factor is religious affiliation. Eriksson et al. (2013) and Mbotho et al. (2013) found that women who had strong religious affiliations were able to maintain their virginity by ending the relationship and distancing themselves from friends with different values. Virginity as a concept in most countries of Western Europe and the U.S. remains “old fashioned”, but in some countries of Africa, Asia, South America and South-Eastern Europe, it continues to be a taboo topic, bringing numerous problems for women who lose their virginity before marriage (Fejza et al., 2015). In Kenya premarital sex is a taboo and there is pressure on young women to maintain their virginity until marriage. Families and communities try and keep young women and girls ignorant about sexual matters (Win 2004).

This study revealed that Congolese migrant women uphold the practice of preserving virginity as a norm. Djamba (2003) also found that premarital chastity was still widely accepted as the norm for young women in the DRC.

As a researcher, I wanted to confirm if abstinence is the only sex education that Congolese migrant women promote in order to preserve themselves from premarital sex, so I asked the following question: “Do you have any boy friends?” All the virgin participants had no boyfriends and were not in any relationship, except for Marie who had a fiancé.

I asked Marie: “How do you do, your fiancé doesn’t touch you?” Marie said:

Not at all. He come to visit me we sit together with everybody around, I don't even go out with him, when he is about to leave I don't see him out. (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

Carpenter (2001) argues that not everyone means the same thing when they talk about “having sex”. Therefore, there is ambiguity surrounding the definition of “having sex”. For instance, in the U.S, young people have traditionally assigned different meanings to virginity, and experienced virginity loss in different ways based on their gender.

The above participants' answers show that for Congolese migrant women abstinence is the only premarital healthy behavioural option perceived and accepted. Other sexual behaviour were considered to be unacceptable among Congolese migrant women; most of them didn't agree with the practice of non-penetrative sexual behaviour and gave various reasons when this question was asked. I asked: “Do you think it is acceptable for young girls to engage in any non-penetrative sexual practices with boys, which do not harm their virginity, to preserve their virginity before they are married?”

Georgette said:

No, no way it is unacceptable; it very bad, even the bible forbid it. (Georgette interview 4/08/2017).

Georgette's answer was supported by all the other participants. Germaine had this to say:

For me virginity as I said before is a state of purity and of sexual inexperience, I think it not good to do those kind of practice because it's give you an idea of what it feel to be with an opposite sex. Virginity means you don't have any idea about sex and you never pay visit to see what its looks. Again once you have tested something sweet, will definitely go after it, it's better to wait until marriage. (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

Josee said:

It not good, it's better to wait for your time and keep yourself from those practice. (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

Innoncente disagreed completely with those practices, as follows:

No I disagree completely with those practice because that habit will not satisfy sexual desire; and it will not be easy to control ourselves. (Innoncente interview 19/10/2017).

For Marie:

Other non-penetrative practice still mean the same thing as having sex, It's not normal, it still the same thing because you have to get marriage before a man touch you, only the bride price will allow a man to touch you. (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

The answer provided by Marie, may lead us to conclude that virginity is not something that a woman let go easily; there are some requirement and principles for a woman to give away her virginity and even more for a woman to let a man touch her. This supports the definition of virginity as being a form of purity.

Ilunga, a married woman, said:

It's not good, you have to remain virgin in everything and if you can have that courage to give away your body for a man to touch that means you can even do sex. (Ilunga interview 20/10/2017).

Jacob the only unmarried men among participants had this to say about those practices:

I will not encourage those kind of practice because, women should understand that preserving virginity it's not for the family honour only but for their own dignity, those practice will lead slowly towards the very thing they are trying to protect. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

The answers provided by the participants strongly disagreed with non-penetrant sexual practice as a way of preserving virginity, showing that abstinence is the only sexual education given to women in DRC in general and to migrant women in Durban in particular.

5.1.1.2 VIRGINITY TESTING AND ITS IMPACT ON VIRGINITY PRESERVATION

According to Win (2004), virginity testing is common in sub-Saharan African countries including Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa

In South Africa, according to Kaarsholm (2006), virginity testing is seen as part of Zulu cultural identity and is strongly associated with self-respect, modesty, and pride. One of the key missions of virginity testing is to keep a record of how many virgins there are in a particular society and also to identify the young girls who are no longer virgins. In addition, virginity testing is seen as a means of safeguarding fertility.

In the same connection Barker (2012) states that many girls who undergo virginity testing place colourful dots on their heads afterward to show the community that they are pure, but this can often lead to dangerous consequences. Many people in these cultures believe that having sex with a virgin will cure them of the HIV/AIDS virus, so young women who display their

virginity to the community are often victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence in the hopes that they will be the cure for the disease.

Data collected from the Congolese migrant women in this study provided various conception and perceptions about virginity testing. According to the participants, virginity testing could be a good or bad practice. They were answering the research question: “Do you think virginity testing is a good or bad way to encourage or enforce young girls to remain virgins until they are married, and why?”

It’s a good idea, but I know the hymen can break even in another way than intercourse and some can use some herb after intercourse and the hymen will regenerate. (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

I think it a good idea because it help people to identify good person to involve in marriage. It help to see those who did keep themselves, those are the one who are worthy to marry. (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

Melanie has the same view as Josee, that virginity testing is for marriage orientation:

Virginity testing it’s a good thing, it’s allow us to confirm that the person still a virgin and it will help a man who is looking for virgin women for marriage (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

Virginity testing it a good practice because it a motivation for women to continue being virgin, because they look at them as people to be proud of. (Georgette interview 04/08/2017).

Gracia (married woman), thought that:

It’s a good way because it will help the mother on how to further advise the child on her behaviour, to encourage the child if she still a virgin and to council on the danger she might face if she continue to be sexually active. (Gracia women’s focus group interview 25/10/2017).

However some participants thought that virginity testing is not a good practice and do not encourage the practice. These are the reasons they provided in order to explain their opinions.

It for village women and it’s hard to convince modern women (Jean men’s focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Virginity is a private and personal matter not public. (Antoinette interview 18/08/2017).

For Marie, Ilunga and Innocente, talking to the child should be enough; the test is a sign of lack of trust. The child has a conscience and moreover the mother doesn’t really need the virginity

test because she should be able to tell from the behaviour of the young women – the way she talks will show if she still a virgin or not.

Virginity testing should be voluntary because the way it's done here in South Africa it really exposes women, according to Pierrot, who also said:

I even heard one day that, the Zulu king himself always choose his next wife from those who are virgin against their own will (Pierrot men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

For the participants, if virginity testing is done it has to be for a very good reason, such as for marriage. This is reinforced by the following quotations: "In Congolese society, heterosexual marriage is a highly regarded institution that is viewed as contributing significantly to the true identities of women" (Kondemo, 2011), and "Traditionally, there has been a cultural expectation that women would not engage in premarital sex; that a women would come to her wedding a virgin and that she would "give up" her virginity to her new husband in the act of consummation of the marriage" (Abdalla, 2007).

It's surprising that there is no rite of passage in the DRC or among Congolese migrant women in Durban that allows reinforcement of virginity. The only healthy sexual education is abstinence. The absence of the ritual to reinforce virginity among Congolese migrant women contrasts with the value and the importance given to the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

5.1.1.3 MEN'S PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY BEFORE MARRIAGE AND GENDER INEQUALITY

Virginity, a form of sexual purity, is a commitment that is culturally expected of, associated with, and even demanded, of women. Sexual abstinence is not something assumed of men unless he is a Christian or from a good family. According to Caravano (1991), "In many societies, there is a culture of silence that surrounds sex that dictates that "good" women are expected to be ignorant about sex and passive in sexual interactions".

Mernissi (1982) states that, "Like honour, virginity is the manifestation of a purely male preoccupation in societies where inequality, scarcity, and the degrading subjection of some people to others deprive the community as a whole of the only true human strength and self-confidence. The concepts of honour and virginity locate the prestige of a man between the legs of a woman".

Bearing this in mind, I asked my respondents this question: “What do Congolese men say about the practice of preserving virginity, can you compare Congolese perceptions here in Durban and in Congo?”

Perceptions revealed were that some men are concerned, some do not care, and others pretend not to care but deep inside would be happy if they married a virgin.

Jacob the only unmarried male participant said:

To tell the truth, all my friends wish to marry virgin women while they are busy sleeping around with women. Congolese man here in Durban goes around with women like it was something very simple and easy to do and they don't care. In Congo man sleep with women but there are some boundaries set by families (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

A study conducted by Mulumeoderhwa (2017) indicated that men are disappointed when they marry non-virgin girls. In fact, most male and female participants perceived girls who were virgins as trustworthy individuals. They believe that the girl's loss of virginity brings shame to her family. However, some female participants clearly dissociate from societal views or norms about virginity, and remark that virginity itself is not the key to a successful household nor a guarantee for remaining faithful after marriage.

According to Germaine:

Men are different, others they don't mind about virginity but there are those that are very strict about it. For them being virgin qualify a woman for marriage. I think Congolese men in Durban should not except to find only virgin women because the mentality has changed, and we are in the modern society (globalisation), people (woman) can easily fall or make mistakes. In Congo I think we should accept finding some virgin women (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

Melanie said:

In Congo there are some who would like to marry virgin women, I think those are really Christians but Congolese man here in Durban, do not like virgin women because they know nothing. (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

Innocente also said:

Men between them they pretend like this was an old fashion but deep inside them if they get married to a virgin, they will be very happy. (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

Marie said:

Men that still in Congo I think they will prefer virgin women but those here, they are just following SA steps (Marie interview 20/10/017).

Tsui and Nicoladis (2004) argue that women who were found to not be virgins on the wedding night (often determine by the presence of blood at first intercourse) were seen as worthless in many cultures. In contrast “proof” of male virginity is unavailable physically and less important culturally.

In African society, and in the DRC in particular, women are limited regarding their ability to control their own sexuality because of their low economic and social status, thus there is a power imbalance in the way virginity is socially constructed for women and men. Due to the fact that women are generally economically weak, men exercise power over their sexuality. For this reason, for example, out of fear of losing their fiancé and because of the enormous pressure placed on them, some women will lie about virginity regardless of any consequences they may encounter.

In my experience of being a church marriage counsellor board member, I have encountered many Congolese women who lied to their partner about being a virgin when they were not, and some were lucky to stay married whereas some were not. In both cases there was lack of trust from the husband and conflict resulted.

The answer provided by the participants shed light on the gender inequality regarding sexual behaviour and the practice of preserving virginity. According to Dhar (2005), “Gender is a culture-specific construct – there are significant differences in what women and men can or cannot do in one culture as compared to another, in other places women suspected of engaging in premarital sex and women accused of adultery are murdered”. What is fairly consistent across cultures is that there is always a distinct difference between women’s and men’s considerations regarding sexual behaviour.

In order to shed more light on these inequalities, I turned my attention to married participants that have children to find out how they will pass on this gendered culture of preserving virginity. All the participants with children agreed that they would teach them about the culture.

I asked the following question: “Do you have kids? Are you going to encourage them to preserve their virginity before marriage?”

Jean and Pierrot said they had four and two girls respectively.

Yes we will encourage them because it's our culture. I just talk to my girls as if they were my friends and I always make sure that I have time for them. (Jean men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Judith who have one girl said:

I will encourage my daughter to keep her virginity because it will give her value even before GOD. (Judith women's focus group interview 27/10/2017).

I also asked: "What do you tell your sons about the practice of women preserving virginity before marriage?"

Judith said:

Even my boys I will teach them to respect other women virginity because if he destroy they will also destroy his own kids. (Judith women's focus group interview 27/10/2017).

Gracia disagree with the above perception, saying:

For a men we don't really insist the way we do for women, men can sleep around with women; the impact of keeping virginity is not the same them as for women. (Gracia women's focus group interview 27/10/2017).

Nadine agreed with Gracia:

Sometimes it's good to see your son running after women, it reassures you as parent that your son is normal but the role of parents it's to give him advises. (Nadine women's focus group interview 25/10/2017).

Jean did not share the same idea as Gracia and Nadine:

We ask our sons to abstain themselves from sex and wait for the right time (men's focus group interview 1/11/201).

I then asked the question: "What is that time?" The answer from the men in the focus group was until they are mature to get married to virgin women. (Men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

My follow-up comment was: "But there is a saying that encourages men to sleep around with women before marriage, to reassure parents that they are sexually okay." The men's group answer was along the lines that no, they do not teach their sons to go after women, but it they do advise them to abstain, even though they know it is hard to abstain. (Men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Throughout history, female virginity has been depicted in different forms of media as the pinnacle of femininity, while men are not depicted the same way. Women are idealised with much value placed on female virginity and they are expected to maintain their virginity and abstain from sexual desires to remain respectable. At the same time, especially in western culture, men are made to feel embarrassed if they remain virgin for too long. Transnationally female sexuality is perceived differently, however virginity is almost always held in high esteem.

In many cultures, especially African ones, women are taught not to show signs of being interested in sexual desire, while men are not given this same restriction. Thus, male virginity is not held with high esteem maybe because only women can have ‘proof’ when they lose their virginity and not men. This cultural perception regarding virginity requirements among Congolese migrant women living in Durban is therefore gendered.

5.2.3 INFLUENCE OF IMMIGRATION ON CULTURAL PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY

In this study the majority of participants reveal that immigration played a big role in the Congolese migrant practice of preserving virginity before marriage and data collected in Durban confirms that immigration alters Congolese migrant perception towards the practice of preserving virginity until marriage.

Stewart et al. (2008) found in their literature search that upon immigrating out of the DRC into other countries around Africa and the world, societal pressures that existed for Congolese women to uphold virginity within their local societies, are now changing. Upon emigrating out of their countries of origin, the new communities of migrants comprise fresh assortments of people from different nationalities and upbringings. This finding is verified by the findings from in this study from the interviews conducted among Congolese migrants living in Durban.

Most of participants acknowledge that the need to remain a virgin was still a preoccupation within some migrant families, but this need encountered many challenges that make the practice of preserving virginity not only difficult but also almost impossible.

5.1.1.1 THE NEED OF REMAINING VIRGIN

Burr and Dick (2017) state: “Following various social interactions that occur among migrants with new social groups, family ties, peers, and infrastructural mechanisms in their new

societies, it is expected that their sexual perceptions and practices will change” (Burr & Dick 2017).

Through migration, numerous connections are formed between transnational migrants and their receiving societies, in varying temporal and spatial degrees (Faist 1998). As a result, numerous societal practices and perceptions of the receiving nations will be transferred to the transnational migrants, and vice versa.

However, Congolese migrants in Durban continue to believe that the need for preserving virginity before marriage is a patrimony or a culture that they are required to keep. This was revealed while participants were responding to the following question: “Now that you are in South Africa, do you think there is more or less of a need for a woman to preserve her virginity before she is married, and why?”

All the married women thought that the need of keeping the practice of preserving virginity is still there because if their daughters marry as a virgin, this gives the mother value (Married women focus group interview 25/10/2017).

Pierrot also acknowledged that the need is still there but said:

The only chance to remain virgin is through prayer, if parents are Christians otherwise it's impossible. (Pierrot men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Claude said:

Prayer only will not help, preserving virginity require the participation of women; they need to use their conscience. (Claude men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

But this answer from Claude was quickly rejected by the group who said that in this generation conscience does not work and only prayer can help a woman to preserve herself.

According to married men that I interviewed the only remedy for Congolese migrant to practice virginity preservation before marriage is through prayer or being Christian.

Georgette said:

I will say the need is constant, no matter the place here or in Congo, challenges are still the same bad or good friends. So, the need of preserving virginity should not change according to the place or the new environment, that need is permanent or constant. (Georgette interview 04/08/2017).

Jacob said:

Yes the need of preserving virginity is still there, for the own value and also as a gift to the husband, if there is anything of value a woman should offer to her husband it's her virginity. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

I asked Jacob: "What if it happened to you that you marry a woman who already lost her virginity?" He answered:

I will be very disappointed, I will take her for a liar. Because she have to tell me before I decide to marry her. There are two ways to approach the truth, if you discover by yourself the pain will be unbearable, but if she reveal to me before marriage then I will judge if I should marry her or not (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

I then asked him: "What do you mean by 'I will judge?'" He answered:

I will still going to marry her if she have other good moral value. Virginity should not also erase all other good value. I can marry a non-virgin one but a virgin one will be a gift for my marriage. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

I asked Jacob: "Do you have a girl friend?" He answered:

No I don't have any. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

As a follow-up question I asked: "Have you ever have sex with a virgin before?" He answered:

I never had sex before. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

Jacob answers show that he is coming from a Christian family background. Most of the participants said that the need to remain a virgin should be constant and should not depend on external factors.

Foreign migrant women who do not engage in the sex trade are at a much greater risk for HIV than non-migrant women (Giorgio et al. 2016; McGrath et al. 2015; Townsend et al. 2014).

Charlotte echoed the above point when she said that:

I think there is more need, because; being far from family can easily attract men towards young women and expose them to premarital sex this could increase or speed up the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and STI; the whole situation is scary; therefore a woman need to remain virgin until marriage (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

Within the participants the need for remaining a virgin was perceived differently; some truly believed in the culture and accepted it and understood why they should keep their virginity.

Positive keepers Like Antoinette who said:

I tell myself if a man found out that I'm still virgin and if he is the first one to discover my body, he will respect me (Antoinette interview 18/08/2017).

Marie agreed with Antoinette's perception when she said:

The husband should be the first person to discover you sexually because you are called to spend your all life with him. I am not happy with the way us African we are behaving now, what is good for Western is not necessary good for us. We have to preserve our own culture (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

South Africa has become a heaven for migrants from neighbouring African countries for various reasons, including the possibility of better work and study opportunities (Fasselt 2016; Oliveira & Vearey 2015).

Germaine in connection with the above point, said:

I think people came for study; some come to look for better life, remaining virgin is the only thing that will protect them against some disease, also will allow them to get good husband, I think that the reason why some family still observing our culture (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

Talking about the need of keeping virginity in the transnational space, Germaine argued that:

Yes of course the need is more here in Durban than in DRC because in life we have the original and the fake, a man who is really serious will always look for what is original, but it depend. Nobody likes what is fake, for their pride; man will always prefer virgin (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

According to Georgette remaining a virgin it very important. She said:

I don't keep my virginity only because I would like to honour my parents, no I do it for myself, for my pride. I remember one day I had a dream that I became pregnant, I wake up crying than I realise how important remaining virgin was for me. (Georgette interview 04/08/2017).

Other participants believed in the culture and really accept and understand why they should keep their virginity but because of challenges that they came across in the host country they

find it difficult to hold tight to the recommendations. According to Weine and Kashuba (2012), increased sexual activity may be driven by socioeconomic factors such as poverty and poor health services compared to local residents in South Africa. Furthermore, feelings of loneliness and isolation can also be motivators for partaking in sexual activities.

Melanie supported the above view when she argued that:

Here in Durban people are coming to look for better life, things are very hard, others accept to remain virgin no matter the reality and for some of them it's just very hard. (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

Melanie's argument implies that although the person would like to preserve her virginity, life could be very challenging and the power to overcome it become very hard so to succumb could be the only way out.

Some women I talked to during focus group discussion said to me while recording that they lost their virginity on the night of their marriage and then later on, with the recorder off, they were laughing between them and saying they were not virgin at their marriage. This shows that among Congolese migrant women the need of remaining or preserving virginity could lead to a narrative shift as stated by Ozyegin (2009) that in the process of negotiating often contradictory expectations of their sexual behavior, young women cultivate purposefully ambiguous identities related to their state of virgin hood. The author calls these identities 'virginal facades' and explores their complex and contradictory implications. The author highlights an important normative shift from a focus on the physical reality of virginity to a focus on the moral expression of virginity, and emphasizes the intricate connection between social class and women's sexuality experienced by some young women as sexual guilt (Ozyegin 2009).

Some Congolese migrant women are not observing the practice of preserving virginity even though they have realised that the need for maintaining virginity is more here in Durban than in the DRC. Those are migrants who are assimilating the culture found in Durban, not because of circumstances but they willingly choose to do so. Most of them think of virginity as 'old fashioned'.

The following excerpt illustrates the point made by Ozyegin (2009):

I will say 80% of migrant; we don't respect any more our cultural value of preserving virginity, we are now behaving like it was just normal to lose it. Most of us young men and young women we are now leaning on western culture. People that have immigrate to Durban, have

realised that the way of seeing things in their new environment is practically different from what they left in the country, so for them to be accepted, the only thing to do is to adopt what young women and men are doing, by trying to do what everybody is doing here in Durban, they have now abandoned our culture. Only those who are very strong could resist (Jacob interview 24/10/2017)

The need for maintaining virginity is more required here in Durban than in the DRC and Congolese migrant women are divided in different categories according to the way they understand this need. Some are positive keepers, people that understand the importance of the culture and have accepted to abide by it no matter the circumstances. Migration or not, the requirements of the culture should be observed. Others are negative keepers of the culture, those who consider the practice of preserving virginity as 'old fashioned'. Lastly, there are those that understand the importance of keeping the practice but feel the guilt of their sexual life and live a contradictory narrative experience that they could not share in public, therefore shift narrative.

5.1.1.2 DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH MAINTAINING VIRGINITY

Congolese migrant women experience a number of challenges regarding their reproductive health issues, including, difficulty accessing supportive services and sexual health awareness, domestic violence, poor job quality, and legal documentation. Many of these women usually lack the language and skills necessary to secure well-paying prestigious jobs. These challenges could weaken the desire for Congolese migrant women to maintain their virginity.

Economic circumstances (poverty) in the lives of the majority of immigrant families makes it necessary to seek a secure environment which is consistent with the culture and in this context, marriage is therefore seen as an important aspect of social fulfilment for most migrant women.

Women are at the centre of all life transitions whether the transitions are within the family, such as maturation, or because of national modernization or a move to an urban centre, or because of relocation to another nation. Ironically, women's roles in these transitions are ignored at best and misrepresented at worst. What we need is a raising of consciousness, an awareness of these women among us who are struggling with the being-versus-becoming dilemma of living in a new culture, and who would like to solve it by integrating but still being true to the values of their country of origin and becoming a valued citizen of the host country both for themselves and for their family (Meleis & Rogers 1987).

To explore these concerns further, I asked the following question: “How is the culture in your new Durban community, regarding keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?”

The general impression of all the participants was that in Durban young women are very light in behaviour, the saddest part being that some Congolese are trying to imitate the lifestyle found in Durban

Charlotte when answering this question said:

My first impression was that here young women are very light in behaviour, even Congolese are easily imitating national young women. (Charlotte interview 27/07/2017).

Ilunga said:

In Durban many don't have that education (culture), because, I have noticed that women get involved with man at early age and some even have kids while they still at school. (Ilunga interview 20/10/2017).

Josee said something similar:

Here in Durban, girls are influenced to have boyfriend, grade 8 girls they know already about boyfriends (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

Germaine said:

It's not easy, the way I see people being influenced willingly, other are just victims, they succumbed easily, just because of the kind of friends they entertained. It's like being in a new environment with a new culture different with what you have learn, other are just naïve and fall in the trap (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

One hundred percent of my respondents state that in Durban they don't observe the culture of preserving virginity before marriage as it is in the DRC and attest also that Congolese migrants have been influenced by what they see, instead of keeping their culture.

A Study conducted in South Africa by Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui (2013) found that South Africa is among the African countries that promote the preservation of virginity before marriage, for different reasons. In the Zulu culture of South Africa, for example, methods have even been devised to allow non-penetrative sex as a means of preserving virginity, preventing pregnancy, and preventing HIV (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui 2013).

However, despite the promotion of virginity, the high rates of teenage pregnancy in Africa, including South Africa, mean that many women are “overstepping the accepted boundaries that

define ‘proper’ female behaviour” (Leclerc-Madlala 2003: 17). The reasons behind this overstepping could be a concern for further research.

From the view of my respondents, they all disagree completely with what they see as behaviour among young women in Durban. I asked: “Do you agree or disagree with the views of this culture in your new Durban community, and why?”

Germaine said:

Here in Durban or in South Africa there is a mixture of culture (rainbow nation) but Congolese didn’t really keep their culture regarding keeping or preserving virginity as it’s in Congo, people think it’s an old fashion, From what I have noticed here in Durban people don’t give any value to that culture but I don’t really know all the Congolese families residing in Durban (Germaine 18/10/2017).

Antoinette added:

Keeping virginity is our mark (what characterise us as Congolese), why losing our culture because of others. Culture must not die, must not disappear, we have to keep our culture being outside our country or not the culture must not die. (Antoinette 18/10/2017).

South Africa has been a host country for many, which means there is an agglomeration of culture, beliefs and sexual practice which makes it difficult for Congolese migrants to maintain the practice of preserving virginity. As stated by Stewart et al. (2008), upon emigrating out of their countries of origin, the new communities of migrants comprise fresh assortments of people from different nationalities and upbringings. Peters and Sundaran (2015) note that the new migrant communities, comprise diverse migrants from different African and non-African nationalities, including citizens of the host nation.

The diverse community consisting of different cultures weakens the practice of the cultures of origin for Congolese migrants and becomes a big challenge for them to carry on outside of the DRC with the culture of preserving virginity before marriage.

Hellgren and Serrano (2017) state that numerous agents such as strong familial cultural practices, financial and infrastructural resources, and political and economic circumstances affect the extent of change that occurs among individual migrants. I believe that Congolese migrant women’s limited financial resources, political and economic circumstances affects the extent of change that occurs among them and makes the practice of preserving virginity difficult.

5.1.1.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY IN DURBAN

In this study, data collected among Congolese migrant shows that participants generally believed that Congolese migrants have been negatively influenced by the culture or the practices that they find in their new community, Durban. They explain during the interview sessions how this influence was taking place among them and the difficulties they face on a daily basis in the sexual education of their children.

I asked: “Do you think the Congolese community in Durban still upholds much of its former culture regarding virginity until marriage, as it did in the DRC?”

The answer I got from participants was that 80% of Congolese migrants do not uphold that culture anymore.

I also asked: “How has the Congolese community been influenced by the new community in Durban towards the culture of a woman preserving her virginity before she is married?”

From this question emerged various factors that hinder Congolese from preserving their virginity before marriage, as discussed below.

3. SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

Socioeconomic conditions play an enormous role in the decision of women to engage in premarital and risky sexual behaviour (Chirinda et al. 2012; Erickson et al. 2013; Mbotho et al. 2013). One of the participants emphasized that poverty can negatively influence the practice of preserving virginity.

I think Congolese in Durban are not upholding that culture anymore, I don't know if it's due to the level of suffering or envy but they are not following our culture anymore or maybe it's modernisation (Josee interview 10/05/2017).

Other circumstances that have been seen to have an influence on premarital sexual activity include an individual's age, and socioeconomic conditions such as education and financial status (Chirinda et al. 2012; Mutinta et al. 2014; Yip et al. 2013). Among Congolese migrants the occurrence of marriage has decreased due to the difficulty of paying the bride price, which increases the risk of premarital sex. Moodley (2016) held focus group discussions on the views of students regarding sexual practices and religion. Female students indicated that sexual behaviour is no longer viewed as in the 'old times', where arranged marriages were common

and premarital sex was seen as scornful. Studies among youth and young adults in South Africa have also shown that the age of sexual debut has significantly decreased with most females having experienced sexual activity by the age of 15 years (Chirinda et al. 2012; Mbotho et al. 2013). This indicates the diminished importance of preserving virginity until marriage.

4. FAMILY INSTABILITY AND LACK OF PARENTAL SUPERVISION

Using variables relating to the education of girls and their families in Kinshasa, Djamba (2003) found that girls who were exposed to modern education were more likely to engage in premarital sexual intercourse than those who were not. Djamba (2003: 333) attributed this to 'liberal attitudes' that were brought on by education, where parents were seen to have relaxed their parental control over their daughters' sexual behaviours (Djamba 2003).

According to Germaine:

Congolese don't maintain that culture anymore, from families, parents have accepted everything, instead of choosing the good side of things that happened in Durban, and they just took the whole packet, good and bad. They have abandoned kids. (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

In the same connection Melanie added:

In Congo parents watch their young girls (women), once here, alone far from parents they feel free and out of prison, the fear of being monitored or watched by parents is no longer there, which is the main reason why women are losing their culture. Another thing is those parents that are here with their kids, they are very busy with trying to meet their needs, therefore they have abandon their kids at the mercy of media (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

5. MEDIA

Yarber et al. (2013) argue that anybody living in modern society is constantly bombarded with media influences. Television, music, movies, the internet, and printed media are all categories that have become heavily sexualised, and have a profound impact on the sexual behaviour of society.

Mass media has been pointed to as a factor that promotes premarital sex and therefore decrease the chance of observing or keeping the practice of preserving virginity before marriage as stated by Melanie during her interview:

Parents have abandon their kids at the mercy of media. (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

Many young adults have indicated that the media has had a strong influence on their sexual behaviour. Movies packed with sex scenes, hypersexual dance moves, skimpy fashions, and lewd lyrics are all said to have influenced the sexual behaviour of young adults, making it more difficult to maintain abstinence (Acharya et al. 2015; Eriksson et al. 2013; Yarber et al. 2013).

6. ENVIRONMENT AND PROMISCUOUS

Social constructionism provides one possible framework for understanding the effect that societies have on individuals, and in the case of this study, the effect that social alterations, which occur through migration, have on young men and woman. This is based on the understanding that people construct their knowledge and understandings through their daily interactions with the people in their societies (Burr & Dick 2017).

Daily interactions between Congolese migrant women, South African nationals and the mixture of people living in Durban has contributed to influencing the Congolese migrant culture of preserving virginity before marriage, as stated by one of the participants:

Here a 14 years girl can already have a child which is unacceptable in our culture, now at school our children interact with those kind of girls, easily they will be influenced, the environment influenced really. (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

Jean had the same view as Innocente:

At school, our girls in the absence of their parents, they talk about everything, but their main conversation it around “boyfriend” and the one who said that she doesn’t have boyfriend, will be seen like she is missing a lot she will be insulted (Jean men’s focus group interview 1/11/2017).

According to married women participants, a young woman doesn’t need too much freedom. This freedom perception from South African women create a clash between the education provided on the practice of preserving virginity by migrant parents to their children and the knowledge children get from their interaction with other young people.

Here to help our kids to keep their virginity is very hard because parents are very busy, they don’t have time to talk to their young children (girls) even pastor’s kids, it’s a pity, the culture here is different from DRC, a 17 years old can call police when a mother shout at her, there is too much freedom, human rights. A child doesn’t need too much freedom, a 12 years girl have her own key to enter the house (Nadine; women’s focus group interview 25/10/2017).

Congolese migrant women are influenced by the sexual socialisation behaviour of other African societies living in Durban.

7. SOCIETAL PRESSURE

It can be tough to keep the practice of preserving virginity before marriage; one might have to deal with peer pressure to become sexually active, or might be involved in an intimate relationship where sex seems to be the next step.

Among married men interviewed, one said:

Not at all Congolese communities do not maintain their culture here in Durban anymore, SA culture have strong influence on us (Claude men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Similarly, Jean argue that:

Congolese community has been influenced by 80% by SA community mostly because of the fusion from different culture. At school, our girls in the absence of their parents, they talk about everything, but their main conversation it around "boyfriend" and the one who said that she doesn't have boyfriend, will be seen like she is missing a lot she will be undermine, mocked or insulted by her peers. (Jean men's focus group interview).

In most of the cases, both genders identified peer pressure as one of the hardest things they had to face as a teenager. Peer pressure seems stronger for females than males.

Among Congolese migrant women living in Durban perceptions of peer pressure were significantly associated with dating attitudes, sexual activity, use of drugs and alcohol.

Parental and peer influences are among the key mediator for both risk and protective factors that directly impact young people's behaviours and it is necessary to understand the communication gaps, how families and peers influence the sexual behaviour of young people, and their own risk perception (Negeri 2014).

5.2.4 ENFORCEMENT OF VIRGINITY VERSUS THE THREAT OF HIV/AIDS

5.2.4.1 VIRGINITY MOTIVATORS

South Africa is acclaimed for being a rainbow nation, with diversity across race, religion, and different cultural heritages; however, the modernisation of society has led to a decline in

traditional practices. In most religions and cultures in South Africa, sexual behaviour is seen as sacred, and abstinence is encouraged until marriage (Bhana 2016; Lusey et al. 2014; Stoppa et al. 2014). Religion and culture are crucial factors in the development of one's sexuality (Stoppa et al. 2014; Twenge et al. 2015). These values are usually firmly connected to parental upbringing and strongly aligned to the home environment.

The analysis of the data collected from Congolese migrants living in Durban revealed that religion, culture and family, especially mothers, are the most important motivators of the practice of preserving virginity in the community back home and in their new environment.

1. RELIGIOUS MOTIVATION

The population of the DRC comprises an assortment of religious affiliations, including Catholic (31%), Protestant (30%), other Christian churches (34%), Muslims (2%), and the remaining 3%, who are members of indigenous and syncretic religions (Macro International 2007).

Regarding the influence of religion, the focus is on the impact on decision making concerning the practice of preserving virginity before marriage. To explore this I asked the following questions: "Who or what among your community in Durban /DRC is the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they get married?"

Most participants agreed that the church play a very important role in the motivation of preserving virginity before marriage especially here in Durban where most parents' difficult livelihood doesn't allow them to spend time with their children.

Georgette stated:

...the church is trying to assist family so that our culture could be protected (Georgette interview 04/08/2017).

For Melanie, people who are not attending any local church here in Durban are the most vulnerable, this is what she meant when she states that:

Here in Durban; only the church can motivate us in keeping our virginity, but for Congolese who doesn't attend any church I feel pity for them, only the grace of God will protect them to raise their kids. (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

I asked her: "Why are you saying that?"

...because when you look the way kids are raised here, they teach them that it's a free country; at the tender age they already have boyfriends, which is unacceptable in our culture. (Melanie interview 16/10/2017).

Religion plays an important role in the daily lives of most people in the DRC (Lusey et al. 2014). Religion is the strongest element in people's traditional backgrounds, and it exerts probably the greatest influence upon the thinking and living of the people concerned (Imbo 1998). Considerable research has been conducted on the role of the church and religious practice, on sexual behaviour.

Referring to religion, Mbotho et al. (2013) and Moodley (2016) state that Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and traditional African culture all condemn premarital sexual activity. Thus, religion plays a focal role in shaping the views of young people regarding premarital sexual activity (Moodley 2016).

Lusey et al. (2014) point out though that despite the church's central role in societal guidance, much evidence exists to suggest that the church does not have a very significant impact on the decisions of the youth to engage in premarital sex. Their study on unmarried young church-going boys and girls found that while all of them had heard the messages, and knew of the churches' teachings against premarital sex, many were still sexually active. Reasons presented by the males were that sexual potency and masculinity had motivated their sexual activities, while it was found that the young women had engaged in premarital sexual activities through "transactional and intergenerational sex for economic reasons".

A startling finding in this study was that although religion can motivate women in the preservation of their virginity, it can also encourage premarital sexual behaviour among young unmarried women. Adele, a married woman, disagreed with other participants concerning the role played by the church to enforce virginity. She said:

The same church is helping and destroying at the same time. (Adele women's focus group interview 25/10/2017).

I asked her: "What do you mean?" She replied:

Because after the youth meeting, young people on their way back home; nobody have control on them anymore, the older one take advantage on the youngest and touch their breast or kiss them; and offer them small gift to attract their attention. No for me; the church doesn't only help, but also destroy. (Adele women's focus group interview 25/10/2017).

A study conducted by Uecker et al. (2008) on American adolescents found that religious adolescents are less likely than less-religious ones to opt for non-vaginal sex over total abstinence. Abstinence pledgers who are virgins are neither more nor less likely than non-pledgers who are virgins to substitute non-vaginal sex for intercourse. Moreover, religion and morality are actually the weakest motivators of sexual substitution among adolescents who have not had vaginal sex.

2. CULTURAL OR TRADITIONAL MOTIVATION

Culture and religion complement each other in giving meaning to a given society. In the African society culture cannot exist without religion and there is no religion without a culture. Historically, religion is one of the institutions every society has perpetuated in an attempt to work out the meaning of existence

In the DRC only 11.5% of Congolese follow indigenous beliefs; these traditional belief systems are often intermingled with forms of Christianity.

Data collected from Congolese migrant women revealed that cultural demands play an essential role in the question of virginity before marriage; but above all it is religious demands. One hundred percent of my participants agreed that they were brought up in a culture that upholds virginity before marriage as sign of purity.

Responding to the interview, a 43 year old unmarried women argued that:

I agree with the culture of keeping virginity until marriage, that's the way I was raised, this was not imposed on me, but they only teach me the benefit of keeping virginity and the inconvenience of losing it. From what I have learn from women who lost their virginity before marriage, how they end up in their life compared to those who did keep. I think it's a good thing to keep this culture. Even at the university I saw the way men think about virginity, a man will respect a woman that was virgin at the time they met than the one who had previous experience. Then I told myself so it a good thing to preserve virginity until marriage. (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

According to another participant; a married man, the culture of preserving virginity is inspired from the church:

I agree with this culture; because it a recommendation, even in the bible I know someone who send his son in his natal village to look for a virgin woman, I think our culture did inspire from that, it is better to

have a virgin woman for marriage because, this is a kind of “garde fou” for a woman, she never be insulted one day that she was a virgin before marriage, this culture help to preserve the pride. (Jean, men’s focus group interview 1/11/2017).

For Jacob

Culture is a link or a tie that we cannot get rid of. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

Rukundwa (2004) says that culture is the sum total of the beliefs, behaviours, objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society; which is the way of life of the community, including the languages, customs, values and common goals for survival of that community

For Congolese migrant women, the practice of preserving virginity before marriage is a religious recommendation and/ or a cultural patrimony that needs to be preserved and carried from one generation to the next. Therefore, Congolese culture constitutes a motivating factor that reinforces the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

3. FAMILIAL MOTIVATION

Apart from religions and culture as motivators of the practice of preserving virginity, family play a key role in the motivation of women to preserve premarital virginity. In this study, data collected from Congolese migrant women revealed that parents, mostly mothers talk to their children about the practice of preserving virginity.

I asked the question: “Who or what among your community in Durban /DRC is the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they get married?”

One of the male participants said:

Mostly mothers, that’s why in the ancient time, our grandparents marry only virgin women because of the instructions that our grandmother were giving to their children who are our mother today; therefore, at that time it was very rare to marry a non-virgin women. (Jacob; men’s focus group interview 1/11/2017).

Another married participant said that her mother almost threatened her to death:

Me before I get married no man did touch me, my mother told me that when a man touch you while being in my house, and you drink water

you will die, this statement really scared me and help me to keep my virginity (Ilunga interview 20/10/2017).

Supporting Ilunga's statement, Jacob said the motivation or the enforcement of virginity is done by mothers:

It's our mothers, that is why we are saying "if educate a woman, you educate the all nation". A woman play a very important role in the education of a nation or family. (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

5.1.1.2 THE PROMOTION OF VIRGINITY AND THE PREVENTION OF HIV/AIDS

In this study participants revealed various arguments concerning the practice of preserving virginity as one of strategy for the prevention of HIV/AIDS. These emerged in response to my interview question: "Do you think the threat of HIV/AIDS in South Africa has any different role (as it did in the DRC) towards the need for women to remain virgins until they get married?"

Jacob, who was the only unmarried man participant said:

HIV is not even a reason for someone to preserve her virginity, because there are so many precaution in order to avoid being infected of HIV such as condom (Jacob interview 24/10/2017).

Another participant shared the same idea with Jacob and said:

I cannot say that in Congo we should motivate that culture more than here because of HIV; but HIV rate is higher here than in Congo, girls at primary school already they know man, the motivation or raising awareness of keeping virginity should start at primary school (Innocente interview 19/10/2017).

Agreeing with Jacob's and Innocente's view concerning the promotion of virginity as a strategy to control or reduce HIV/AIDS infection, Germaine said:

Here there is a lot of precaution against HIV, I don't think that in Durban HIV should be a reason for a women to keep their virginity because, condom and ARV are free and you can get them everywhere. It's not like in Congo where they sell condoms, and ARV. I will advise all Congolese women to keep their virginity as our mark and our culture (Germaine interview 18/10/2017).

However, for other participant the practice of preserving virginity before marriage should be considered as an effective strategy against the spread of HIV/AIDS infection.

Leclerc-Madlala (2001: 533) notes that there is a common belief that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is the result women being sexually “out of control”. In the same vein, married women attested that:

Here the fact that they are teaching kids to use condom is not good, we telling kids to abstain from sex and not use condoms. We have to teach kids the need of remaining virgin before marriage not the use of condom (Armandie women’s focus group interview 25/10/2017).

A study conducted in Kinshasa (DRC) by Ayikwa (2017) on sexual behaviour concluded that the spreading of HIV/AIDS on the African continent and related discrimination and stigmatisation towards people living with the virus have become a major issue to be addressed by communities, health organisations and governments in Africa.

Data collected in Congolese community living in Durban revealed that in the DRC and among Congolese migrant; there is a strong discrimination and stigmatisation towards people living with HIV/AIDS For instance, Josee an unmarried participant argued that:

Here HIV is too much and people who are affected are not worried; most of them are in good state and they encourage themselves by saying HIV it just like any other disease, the one who doesn’t have HIV can still die earlier; while you with HIV you remain strong and alive, I have heard that the government even give grant to those who have HIV. People doesn’t even care, therefore, but in Congo if you have HIV you are ashamed of it and you hide yourself from people, because it not something to be proud of. (Josee interview 10/08/2017).

Similarly to Josee, Georgette emphasized that:

In Congo when you have HIV, you lose the desire to live and you die faster and earlier not because of HIV but because of the shame; which is not the case here in South Africa; someone with HIV will be in very good appearance, joyful. People doesn’t fear HIV. (Georgette 04/08/2017).

However, some participants argued that the promotion of virginity could help in the prevention of HIV/AIDS in the Congolese migrant community. Marie said:

Me; I will only tell people or all women to preserve themselves that the key for not contracting HIV/AIDS. Preserving virginity it’s the first key and then the next step is the prayer for God to give a good husband who doesn’t have HIV or even do the HIV test before marriage. (Marie interview 20/10/2017).

Antoinette said:

It's here that we need more to keep our culture because the exposition is bigger than in Congo and we are far of parents. (Antoinette 18/08/2017).

One of the married man participants said:

Seeing the rate of HIV here in SA, this can scare women and push them to preserve their virginity. Come to think of it, in our culture if you're a victim of that disease you might be excommunicate from the community. If you tell that to a young woman, she might preserve herself from sex before marriage (Jean men's focus group interview 1/11/2017).

The above participant responses give a clear picture of Congolese migrants' perception toward HIV/AIDS prevention and their limited knowledge concerning protective measures required in order to promote safe sexual behaviour in the community. Some participant believe that virginity only is the key to HIV/AIDS. But it is important to provide sexual education and other safe sexual behaviours to sexually active women within the community.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the findings of the study and given an analysis of the data that was collected from the interviews that were carried out with the research participants. It explored the practice of preserving virginity before marriage within the transnational space and examined the socio-cultural life experiences of South African women as well as their influence on Congolese migrant women's sexual behaviour. How this behaviour has been managed in order to reinforce or resist virginity preservation until marriage in the host country was discussed.

Analysis of data has revealed that the practice of preserving virginity among Congolese migrant women is a cultural patrimony facing a number of challenges and realities that make the culture difficult to uphold within the Congolese migrant women's community in Durban. Analysis of the different definitions of virginity given by the participants revealed the gendered nature of the practice of preserving virginity, and that it is a socially constructed concept that is linked to cultural influences, societal pressure, and male power dominance over women. Findings revealed that most participants were brought up in in the DRC in a culture that recommended keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage and they still agree with it because it is a sign of honour, dignity and pride not only for them but also for their family.

Marriage constitutes the biggest motive for keeping virginity although South Africa is a country where marriage is rare. According to Darbes (2014), South Africa has low rates of marriage compared to many other sub-Saharan African countries, and also has a high level of partner cohabitation couples.

This study revealed that the decrease in the occurrence of marriage has increased premarital sexual behaviour, and this reality has affected Congolese migrant women living in Durban. Other reasons were related to livelihood difficulties among Congolese migrant women and the desire to integrate into the South African community by assimilating South African women's behaviour which is sustained by two concepts – freedom and human rights.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

For many migrants, a sense of home is no longer neat or easy to define as they live or interact with more than one spatial and cultural location, thus undermining the sense of one nation. Their cultural practices are therefore often no longer primarily constituted around essences (of nation, tradition, religion), but relationally, connecting different cultural spaces in ways that defy simplistic mapping (Dopacio 2013). Migration is often a result of economic and social development. In return, migration may contribute to further development and improved economic and social conditions, or alternatively may help to perpetuate stagnation and inequality. Much depends on the character of migration and the actions taken by the governments and other stakeholders concerned. Migration helps to erode traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic groups and nation-states. It therefore challenges cultural traditions, national identity and political institutions, and contributes to a decline in the autonomy of the nation-state (Boyle et al. 1998).

Migration occurs when people cross state boundaries and stay in the host state for some minimum length of time. Migration occurs for many reasons. Many people leave their home countries in order to look for economic opportunities in another country. Others migrate to be with family members who have migrated or because of political conditions in their countries. Education is another reason for international migration, as students pursue their studies abroad.

Congolese migrant represent the biggest group among the refugee community in Durban. (Sabet-Sarghi 2000). This study sought to determine whether Congolese migrant women generally continue to observe the practice of virginity preservation before marriage, once they are immersed in their new societies.

This chapter will provide a report on the outcomes of the study arising from the interview conducted on 18 Congolese migrants living in Durban and recommendations ensuing therefrom.

6.3 CONCLUSION

A woman's sexual purity is very important because it the most important and unique thing about her that makes her sexuality a 'taboo' topic. It is not only the first sexual intercourse with the woman which is taboo – all sexual intercourse is. The whole women is taboo – menstruation, pregnancies, deliverance and layers (Freud 2003).

Virginity is something we all know of, something we've all talked about. It's something we, as a culture, obsess over. It's a very valuable thing to have, if you're a woman, and a very perplexing thing to have if you're a man. Female virginity is valuable to society, but a man's isn't really worth anything. In fact, it's better for a man's social status if he is not a virgin and this ties into what is known as the sexual double standard: women are shamed for having sex and men are praised for it (Marks 2006).

Historically, virginity was tied predominantly to women. Through biblical texts and societal perpetuation, the 'virgin' was defined as a woman who is yet to have sex, as proven by her 'unbroken' hymen. Women's virginites were seen as a necessity in marriage, because women who weren't pure were considered damaged goods. Marrying a 'virgin' woman would also ensure that any future offspring were truly yours, an important point in a time that placed such a heavy emphasis on inheritance. And today the 'virgin' may have gone out of style, but the stigma surrounding virginity has continued to live on.

Many lifestyles and experiences of Congolese migrant community are being influenced by the practice of diverse cultures which make the high rate of premarital sexual activity in countries a major public health concern today, mostly because of the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents.

Also, economic, political, and social status in their new societies has exercised a very strong influence on the practice of preserving virginity among Congolese migrant women living in Durban.

This study intended to determine whether Congolese migrant women generally continue to observe the practice of virginity preservation before marriage, once they have become immersed in their new societies. Thus, the aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the practice of preserving virginity before marriage by exploring the pre-marital sexual practices; establishing the meaning given to pre-

marital sexual life; defining the perception of the practice of keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage; understanding the behaviour adopted by Congolese migrant women in Durban in order to reinforce or resist virginity preservation until marriage; and, lastly, understanding how Congolese women perceive the practice of virginity preservation while being in foreign land, relative to being in the DRC.

The finding emanating from the data analysis of the present study reveal that Congolese migrant women perceive the practice of preserving virginity as an honourable culture, a sign of honour and purity for the family and the society which gives or determines the true value to women. Virginity is perceived as a very precious and prestigious gift that a woman should give to her husband on the night of their honeymoon. Congolese reserve a place of pride for heterosexual marriage because is the only union that lasts and brings happiness to both; it is through marriage that love and life are transmitted. On the other hand it is a shameful act for a women to be engaged in premarital sexual activity; it's a sign of impatience, immorality, and lack of seriousness.

The study also reveals that preserving virginity before marriage or abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS among Congolese migrant women living in Durban and yet Congolese migrants find it difficult to maintain this practice of preserving virginity in a foreign land. Excruciating poverty, promiscuity, lack of parental supervision, family instability, lack of social pressure (compared to the DRC), mass media, and peer pressure are major factors. The effectiveness of the intention to remain a virgin until marriage among Congolese migrant women living in Durban is hypothetical or almost impossible and difficult as many young people who intend to practice abstinence fail to do so. The failure in the practice of preserving virginity before marriage among Congolese migrant women in Durban is high, considering the number of unmarried women who are involved in premarital sexual behaviour which increases from time to time. Therefore, African countries that promote virginity before marriage (through abstinence from sexual intercourse), and restrict information about sexual education, should shift toward a comprehensive approach to sex education that could include the practice of preserving virginity before marriage as a behavioural goal as well as including the education of safer sex (usage of condoms) and also promote accessibility to contraception.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study provides information and knowledge on the factors explaining Congolese migrant women' issues and difficulties linked to the practice of preserving virginity purity in Durban. This knowledge could be useful for the implementation of policy in order to improve the sexual health of migrant women in South Africa.

This study provides pertinent result that could be useful for further research. The results of this study can benefit Universities in South Africa, in the DRC and elsewhere in the world, by bringing a humble contribution to the existing knowledge on the topic. Moreover, it is expected to assist several NGOs dealing with women rights or gender inequality, as well as other South African organisations addressing women's sexual empowerment or sexual health matters by providing an understanding that can improve the livelihoods of migrant women from all other African countries.

Premarital sexual activity increases the risk of STIs including HIV/AIDS, and unwanted pregnancy, and leads to early motherhood which tends to cripple young women's school or academic performance and the completion of school education. This could result in reducing the economic opportunity of women.

Therefore, I suggest that:

Government authorities, communities mayors; churches, policy makers, program managers, planners and program providers should implement programmes that promote sex education and empower women on when, how and with who to decide about giving away their virginity. Government should develop policies that promote marriage and dissuade divorce. I believe this could help in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

To develop platforms that promote the need for communicating and supporting students on how to make informed and safer decisions on their sexual behaviour.

Establish policy guidelines on resources for adolescent comprehensive sexual education at the state level and in schools. School sexual education programs should be improved in order to increase the quality of apprenticeship, and provide strong arguments in favour of participatory sex education focusing on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of students associated with dual prevention of STIs/HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancies and should empower young

people with critical thinking skills for both education outcomes and reproductive health. Abstinence should be taught along with safe sex practices.

Sex education should also be provided to pregnant women attending ANC (ante natal care) and other occasions, especially in regard to parenting teens.

While conducting this study and hearing participants' concerns, it appears that there is a need for awareness concerning the practice of preserving virginity among Congolese migrant women and should be associated with the teaching about safe sex and HIV/AIDS information.

It is recommended that NGOs dealing with gender inequality, as well as other South African organisations addressing women's sexual empowerment or sexual health matters, should provide and develop strategies on how to improve the livelihoods of Congolese migrant women and women of all other African countries. The NGOs dealing with migrant matters should develop policies reinforcing the practice of preserving virginity before marriage on one hand and the other hand promote the practice of safe sex, STI and HIV/AIDS awareness, and access to contraceptives. Young people need access to accurate and comprehensive sexual health information to protect their health and lives.

Further research should be conducted with a main focus on how to promote sexual health education within the department of education and this should be implemented from primary school by identifying potential motivators within the community and empower them with sufficient information required for the supervision of women, especially younger ones.

Promote and teach young people about the value, the importance and the place of heterosexual marriage in a healthy society as well as the importance of abstinence for young women as well as young men.

Women's sexuality remains a taboo among Congolese migrant women and in their community. Abortion is illegal in their mind and is regarded as a shameful act. Accessibility to contraceptives is very poor and almost inexistent among unmarried women. HIV/AIDS is a taboo and a stigma. Access to health facilities is subject to a lot of frustration because of language limitations and xenophobia.

Virginity preservation is the only tool that migrant women observe (through abstinence) to protect themselves against all these scourges.

This study will assist NGOs dealing with Congolese migrant women and the key stakeholders in the South African National Council (SANAC) in developing comprehensive strategies about Congolese migrant women's socio-behavioural attitudes that could contribute to the prevention of HIV/AIDS infection in the community.

Lastly, the sexual behaviour of Congolese migrants is changing as a result of their exposure to different cultures in Durban. Women in particular need to be educated on how to protect themselves and stay safe from the danger of sexual abuse, STIs and HIV/AIDS.

REFERENCES

- Abdalla, M. 2007. *Beach politics: gender and sexuality in Dahab*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Abend, G. 2008. The meaning of 'theory'. *Sociological Theory*, 26(2): 173-199.
- Acharya, D.R., Regmi, P., Simkhada, P. and van Teijlingen, E.R. 2015. Modernisation and changes in attitudes towards sex and relationships in young people. In: Wasti, S.P., van Teijlingen, E.R. and Simkhada, P. (eds.). *The dynamics of health in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Himal Books, 63-94.
- Adams, J., Khan, H.T., Raeside, R. and White, D.I. 2007. *Research methods for graduate business and social science students*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Adepoju, A. 2003. Continuity and changing configurations of migration to and from the Republic of South Africa. *International Migration*, 41(4): 3-28.
- Alaba, O. 2004. *Understanding sexuality in the Yoruba culture*. Understanding Human Sexuality Seminar Series. Lagos: African Regional Sexuality Resource Centre.
- Amisi, B.B. 2005. *Social capital, social networks and refugee migration: an exploration of the livelihood strategies of Durban Congolese refugees*. Unpublished master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Amisi, B.B. 2006. *An exploration of the livelihood strategies of Durban Congolese refugees*. New Issues in Refugee Research. Working Paper no 123. Geneva: The United Nations Refugee Agency, UNHCR.
- Amy, J-J. 2008. Certificates of virginity and reconstruction of the hymen. *The European Journal of Contraception & Reproductive Health Care*, 13(2), 111-113.
- Andrews, T. 2012. What is social constructionism? *Grounded Theory Review*, 11(1): 39-46.
- Antoine, P. 2006. Analyse biographique de la transformation des modèles matrimoniaux dans quatre capitales Africaines: Antananarivo, Dakar, Lomé et Yaoundé. *Cahiers Québécois de Démographie*, 35(2): 5-37.
- Assounga, K.G. 2014. *Personal is political: a photo-narrative study exploring young refugee women's identity development and experiences of womanhood in South Africa*. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Cape Town.
- Banza, B.K. 2007. *Sexualité des jeunes et*

comportements sexuels à risque à Kinshasa (RD Congo). Unpublished master's thesis. Belgium: Université catholique de Louvain.

Ayikwa LC and Jager JW. 2017. Advocating social marketing as ultimate weapon to fighting HIV/AIDS propagation, and related discrimination and stigmatisation. *Journal of Public Affairs* 17.

Banyamulenge of the Democratic Republic of Congo: A cultural community in the making. *HTS: Theological Studies*, 60(1_2), pp.369-383.

Barker R. 2012. The female prerogative: an investigation into African culture and the sexual rights of women. Unpublished paper. Available at: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~acareywe/samplerachelbarker.docx>

Basch, L., Schiller, N.G. and Blanc, C.S. (eds.). 2005. *Nations unbound: transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states*. New York: Routledge.

Berger, P.L. and Luckmann, T. 1991. *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. London: Penguin.

Bersamin, M.M., Fisher, D.A., Walker, S., Hill, D.L. & Grube, J.W. 2007. Defining virginity and abstinence: adolescents' interpretations of sexual behaviors. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41(2): 182-188.

Bhana, D. 2016. Virginity and virtue: African masculinities and femininities in the making of teenage sexual cultures. *Sexualities*, 19(4): 465-481.

Bogdan, R.C. and Biklen, S.K. 2003. *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theory and methods*. 4th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Bosmans, M. 2007. Challenges in aid to rape victims: the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Essex Human Rights Review*, 4(1): 1-12.

Boyd, M. and Grieco, E. 2003. Women and migration: incorporating gender into international migration theory. *Migration Information Source*, March 1. Available at: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/women-and-migration-incorporating-gender-international-migration-theory/>

Boyle PJ, Kulu H, Cooke T, et al. 2008. Moving and union dissolution. *Demography* 45: 209-222.

- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77-101.
- Brockerhoff, M. and Biddlecom, A.E. 1999. Migration, sexual behaviour and the risk of HIV in Kenya. *International Migration Review*, 33: 833-856.
- Burr, V. and Dick, P. 2017. Social constructionism. In: Gough, B. (ed.). *The Palgrave handbook of critical social psychology*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 59-80.
- Calvès, A-E, Cornwell, G.T. and Enyegue, P.E. 1996. *Adolescent sexual activity in sub-Saharan Africa: do men have the same strategies and motivations as women?* Population Research Institute, Working Papers in African Demography. April 24. Pennsylvania State University.
- Campbell, C., Skovdal, M. and Gibbs, A. 2011. Creating social spaces to tackle AIDS-related stigma: reviewing the role of church groups in Sub-Saharan Africa. *AIDS and Behaviour*, 15(6): 1204-1219.
- Carovano, K. 1991. More than mothers and whores: redefining the AIDS prevention needs of women. *International Journal of Health Services*, 21(1): 131-142.
- Carpenter, L.M. and Kettrey, H.H. 2015. Virginitiy and virginity pledges. *The International encyclopedia of human sexuality*. Hoboken NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Carpenter, L.M. 2001. The ambiguity of “having sex”: the subjective experience of virginity loss in the United States. *Journal of Sex Research*, 38(2): 127-139.
- Castles, S. 2000. International migration at the beginning of the twenty-first century: global trends and issues. *International Social Science Journal*, 52(165): 269-281.
- Castles, S., De Haas, H. and Miller, M.J. 2013. *The age of migration: international population movements in the modern world*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cerrutti, M. and Massey, D.S. 2001. On the auspices of female migration from Mexico to the United States. *Demography*, 38(2): 187-200.
- Chirinda, W., Peltzer, K., Ramlagan, S. and Louw, J.S. 2012. Early sexual debut and associated risk factors among male and female youth in South Africa. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 22(4): 601-606.

Chrétien, F. and du Nord-Ouest, R. 1994. Cadre theorique de l'étude. In: Kouande, W.C. *Stratégie marketing pour une vente efficiente de Funtones d'Orange Côte d'Ivoire*. Saarbrücken: Éditions Universitaires Européennes..

Cinthio, H. 2015. "You go home and tell that to my dad!" Conflicting claims and understandings on hymen and virginity. *Sexuality and Culture*, 19(1): 172-189.

Cooper, D., Harries, J., Myer, L., Orner, P. and Bracken, H. 2007. "Life is still going on": reproductive intentions among HIV-positive women and men in South Africa. *Social Science and Medicine*, 65(10): 274-283

Danver, S.L. 2016. *The Sage encyclopaedia of online education*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Darbes LA, van Rooyen H, Hosegood V, et al. 2014. Uthando Lwethu ('our love'): a protocol for a couples-based intervention to increase testing for HIV: a randomized controlled trial in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Trials* 15: 64.

De Fina, A. 2008. Who tells which story and why? Micro and macro contexts in narrative. *Text and Talk*, 28(3): 421-442.

De Haan, A. 2000. *Migrants, livelihoods and rights: the relevance of migration in development policies*. Social Development Working Paper no. 4. London: Department for International Development.

De Vault, J.C., Lunn, L.M. and Shields, J.L. 1962. Selective remote position control servosystem. U.S. Patent 3,043,998.r.

DeLamater, J.D. and Hyde, J.S. 1998. Essentialism vs. social constructionism in the study of human sexuality. *Journal of Sex Research*, 35(1): 10-18.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. 2000. *Qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dhar, R. 2005. Violence and women. *Social Change*, 35: 125-132.

Djamba, Y.K. 1995. Premarital sexual experience of married women in Kinshasa, Zaire. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 27(4): 457-466.

Djamba, Y.K. 2003. Social capital and premarital sexual activity in Africa: the case of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 32(4): 327-337.

Dopacio, M.J.C. 2013. Devotion and transnationalism: simultaneous Guadalupan landscapes. In: Martín-Junquera, I. (ed.). *Landscapes of writing in Chicano literature*. New York: Springer, 137-150.

Drost, E.A. 2011. Validity and reliability in social science research. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 38(1): 105-123.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P. 2012. *Management research*. 4th ed. London: Sage.

Publications Ltd., London.

Ebrahim, S. 2015. SA apologises for xenophobia shame. IOL, 17 April. Available: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/sa-apologises-for-xenophobia-shame-1846914> (Accessed 17 April 2015).

Elias, C.J. and Heise, L. 1993. *The development of microbicides: a new method of HIV prevention for women*. Programs Division Working Papers No. 6. New York: Population Council.

Eliot, T.S. 1949. *Notes towards the definition of culture*. London: Faber & Faber.

England, P. and Bearak, J. 2014. The sexual double standard and gender differences in attitudes toward casual sex among US university students. *Demographic Research* 30, 1327.

Erickson, P.I., Badiane, L. and Singer M. 2013. The social context and meaning of virginity loss among African American and Puerto Rican young adults in Hartford. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 27(3): 313-329.

Eriksson, E., Lindmark, G., Axemo, P., Haddad, B. and Ahlberg, B.A. 2013. Faith, premarital sex and relationships: are church messages in accordance with the perceived realities of the youth? A qualitative study in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 52(2): 454-466.

Faist, T. 1998. Developing transnational social spaces: the Turkish-German example. In: Pries, L. (ed.). *Migration and transnational social spaces*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 36-37.

Fasselt, R. 2016. Making and unmaking 'African foreignness': African settings, African migrants and the migrant detective in contemporary South African crime fiction. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 42(6): 1109-1124.

- Fejza, H., Tolaj, I., Telaku, S. and Alilaj, M. 2015. Viewpoints on female virginity among students in Kosovo. *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 12: 264-264.
- Fox, G.L. 1977. "Nice girl": social control of women through a value construct. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2(4): 805-817.
- Freud, S., 1918. Le tabou de la virginité. *La vie sexuelle*, pp.66-80.
- Freud, S., 2003. Totem and taboo. Routledge.
- Gallo, P.G., Mbuyi, N.T. and Bertoletti, A. 2010. Stretching of the labia minora and other expansive interventions of female genitals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In: Denniston G., Hodges F. and Milos M. (eds.). *Genital Autonomy*. Dordrecht: Springer, 111-124.
- Garenne, M. 2016. A century of nuptiality decline in South Africa: a longitudinal analysis of census data. *African Population Studies*, 30(2).
- Garenne, M. 2004. Age at marriage and modernisation in sub-Saharan Africa. *Southern African Journal of Demography*, 9(2): 59-79.
- Geldenhuys, D.J. 2015. Social constructionism and relational practices as a paradigm for organisational psychology in the South African context. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 41(1): 1-10.
- Giorgio, M., Townsend, L., Zembe, Y., Cheyip, M., Guttmacher, S., Kapadia, F. and Mathews, C. 2016. The relationship between social support, HIV serostatus, and perceived likelihood of being HIV positive among self-settled female, foreign migrants in Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 19(4): 883-890.
- Given, L.M. (ed.). 2008. *The Sage encyclopaedia of qualitative research methods*. London: Sage.
- Goethals, G.W. 1971. Factors affecting permissive and non-permissive rules regarding premarital sex. In: Henslin, J.M. *Studies in the sociology of sex: a book of readings*. New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, 9-26.
- Gómez, A.M. and Speizer, I.S. 2010. Community-level intimate partner violence and the circumstances of first sex among young women from five African countries. *Reproductive Health*, 7(11).

- González-López G. 2004. Fathering Latina sexualities: Mexican men and the virginity of their daughters. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66: 1118-1130.
- Gumperz, J.J. 2009. The speech community. In: Duranti, A. (ed.). *Linguistic anthropology: a reader*. Malden, MA: Wiley, 61-73.
- Guo, S. 2016. From international migration to transnational diaspora: theorizing “double diaspora” from the experience of Chinese Canadians in Beijing. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 17(1): 153-171.
- Gupta, G.R. 2000. Gender, sexuality, and HIV/AIDS: the what, the why, and the how. *Canadian HIV AIDS Policy Law Review*, 5(4): 86-93.
- Gurmu, E. and Mace, R. 2008. Fertility decline driven by poverty: the case of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 40(3): 339-358.
- Hastrup, K. 1978. The semantics of biology: virginity. In: Ardener, S. (ed.). *Defining females: the nature of women in society*. New York: Wiley, 49-65.
- Hayes, K. and Perks, R. 2012. Women in the artisanal and small-scale mining sector of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In: Lujala, P. and Rustad, S.A. (eds.). *High-value natural resources and post-conflict peacebuilding*. New York: Routledge, 529-544.
- Hellgren, Z. and Serrano, I. 2017. Transnationalism and financial crisis: the hampered migration projects of female domestic workers in Spain. *Social Sciences*, 6(1): 1-18.
- Hennink, M.M. 2013. *Focus group discussions: understanding qualitative research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N. and Leavy, P. 2010. *The practice of qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. 2001. Culture's recent consequences: using dimension scores in theory and research. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 1(1): 11-17.
- Hosegood, V., McGrath, N. and Moultrie, T. 2009. Dispensing with marriage: marital and partnership trends in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa 2000-2006. *Demographic Research*, 20: 279-312.

- Shisana, O., Rehle, T., Simbayi, L.C., Zuma, K., Jooste, S., Pillay-van Wyk., Mbelle, V.N. and van Zyl, J. 2009. *South African national HIV prevalence, incidence, behaviour and communication survey, 2008: a turning tide among teenagers?* Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Hughes, C. 2002. *Key concepts in feminist theory and research*. London: Sage.
- Hunter, M. 1936. *Reaction to conquest: effect of contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Imbo, S.O. 1998. *An introduction to African philosophy*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.
- International Organisation for Migration. 2010. Migration and transnationalism: opportunities and challenges. *International Dialogue on Migration: Migration and Social Change*. 9-10 March. Geneva: International Organisation for Migration.
- Itzigsohn, J. and Saucedo, S.G. 2002. Immigrant incorporation and sociocultural transnationalism. *International Migration Review*, 36(3): 766-798.
- Jaji, R. 2015. Normative, agitated, and rebellious femininities among east and central African refugee women. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 22(4): 494-509.
- Jean-Bouchard, É. 2014. The (in)visible subject: women's normative strategies in eastern Congo. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 46(3):357-373.
- Kabeya, F. 2015. 'Maria' et 'Lolita', personnages atypiques du théâtre congolais contemporain. *Africultures*, 3-4: 108-117.
- Kalav, A. 2013. Women as an embodiment of honor. *11th European Sociological Association Conference: Crisis, Critique and Change*. Torino, Italy, 28-31 August.
- Kaarsholm P. 2006. Culture as cure: Civil society and moral debates in KwaZulu-Natal after apartheid. *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* 18: 82-97.
- Kabuya, R.K. 2017. Male circumcision and virginity testing in Southern Africa: advantage and disadvantage in the battle against HIV/AIDS. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/male-circumcision-virginity-testing-southern-africa-advantage-kabuya> [Accessed 20 April 2017].
- Kayembe, K.P., Mapatano, M.A., Busangu, F.A., Nyandwe, K.J., Mashinda, K.D., Musema, M.G., Kibungu, J.P., Matamba, T.L. and Mayala, M.G. 2008. Correlates of ever had sex and

of recent sex among teenagers and young unmarried adults in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *AIDS and Behavior*, 12(4): 585-593.

Kefallinos, E. 2012. Eternal hymen: Greek-Australian female narratives of virginity in the post-modern epoch. *Modern Greek Studies*, 15: 165-186.

Kiesling, S.F. 2006. Hegemonic identity-making in narrative. In: De Fina, A., Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.). *Discourse and identity: studies in interactional sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 261-287.

Kihato, C.W. 2007. Invisible lives, inaudible voices? The social conditions of migrant women in Johannesburg. *African Identities*, 5: 89-110.

Kinoti, K. 2005. Virginity testing and the war against AIDS, a look at the implications of adopting virginity testing as a tool in preventing HIV transmission, South Africa. Toronto: The Association for Women's Rights in Development.

Kondemo, M.M. 2011. *Women's security through heterosexual marriage in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: an African woman's reading of the book of Ruth*. Unpublished master's dissertation. University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Kong, L. 2006. Religion and spaces of technology: constructing and contesting nation, transnation, and place. *Environment and Planning A*, 38(5): 903-918.

Kothari, C.R. 2004. *Research methodology: methods and techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International.

Krebs, R.E. 1999. *Scientific development and misconceptions through the ages: a reference guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Kumar S. 2011. *Research methodology, a step by step guide for beginners*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Kurtz, M.M. and Kurtz, L.R. eds., 2015. Women, War, and Violence: Topography, Resistance, and Hope [2 volumes]: Topography, Resistance, and Hope. ABC-CLIO.

Lagarde, E, Pison, G. and Enel, C. 1996. A study of sexual behavior change in rural Senegal. *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, 11(3): 282-287.

- Langley, C. 2016. Father knows best: paternal presence and sexual debut in African-American adolescents living in poverty. *Family Process*, 55(1): 155-170.
- Le Roux, L. 2006. *Harmful traditional practices (male circumcision and virginity testing of girls) and the legal rights of children*. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Western Cape, Cape Town.
- Le Roy, É. 1999. Le jeu des lois: une anthropologie "dynamique" du Droit: avec des consignes et des conseils au "jeune joueur juriste". Paris: LGDJ.
- Leclerc-Madlala, S. 2001. Virginity testing: managing sexuality in a maturing HIV/AIDS epidemic. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 15(4): 533-552.
- Leclerc-Madlala, S. 2003. Protecting girlhood? Virginity revivals in the era of AIDS. *Agenda*, 17(56): 16-25.
- Lee, H. 2011. Rethinking transnationalism through the second generation. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 22(3): 295-313.
- Levitt, P. 2015. Second-generation transnationalism and roots migration: cross-border lives. *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, 44(1): 132-133.
- Levitt, P. and Nyberg-Sørensen, N. 2004. *The transnational turn in migration studies*. Global Migration Perspectives, Research Paper no. 6. Geneva: Global Commission on International Migration.
- Lusey, H., Sebastian, M.S., Christianson, M., Dahlgren, L. and Edin, K.E. 2014. Conflicting discourses of church youths on masculinity and sexuality in the context of HIV in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. *Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS*, 11(1): 84-93.
- Lynham, S.A. 2002. The general method of theory-building research in applied disciplines. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 4(3): 221-241.
- Macleod, C., Sigcau, N. and Luwaca, P. 2011. Culture as a discursive resource opposing legal abortion. *Critical Public Health*, 21(2): 237-245.
- Maharaj, P. and Cleland, J. 2011. HIV protective strategies among college students in Durban, South Africa. *Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS*, 8(3): 100-106.
- Malu-Malu, J-J.A. 2002. *Le Congo-Kinshasa*. Paris: Karthala.

- Maman, S., Cathcart, R., Burkhardt, G., Omba, S. and Behets, F. 2009. The role of religion in HIV-positive women's disclosure experiences and coping strategies in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. *Social Science and Medicine*, 68(5): 965-970.
- Marphatia, A.A., Amable, G. and Reid, A.M. 2017. Women's marriage age matters for public health: a review of the broader health and social implications in South Asia. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 5: 269.
- Marks MJ and Fraley RC. (2006) Confirmation bias and the sexual double standard. *Sex Roles* 54: 19-26.
- Mbiti, J.S. 1990. African religions and philosophy. 2nd ed. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Mbotho, M., Cilliers, M. and Akintola, O. 2013. Sailing against the tide? Sustaining sexual abstinence among Christian youth in a university setting in South Africa. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 52(1), 208-222.
- McCabe, K. 2011. African immigrants in the United States. *Migration Information Source*, July 21. Available at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/african-immigrants-united-states>
- McGrath, N., Eaton, J.W., Newell, M.L. and Hosegood, V. 2015. Migration, sexual behaviour, and HIV risk: a general population cohort in rural South Africa. *The Lancet HIV*, 2(6): e252-e259.
- Meleis, A.I. and Rogers, S. 1987. Women in transition: being versus becoming or being and becoming. *Health Care for Women International*, 8(4): 199-217.
- Mernissi, F. 1982. Virginity and patriarchy. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 5(2): 183-191
- Merriam-Webster.com. 2016. 'Virginity'. Available at: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/virginity>. [Viewed 10 July 2016].
- Mhlongo, S.P., 2009. Reasons for undergoing virginity testing: A study of young people in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.
- Miller, R.L. and Brewer, J.D. 2003. *The A-Z of social research: a dictionary of key social science research concepts*. London: Sage.

Ministère du Plan et Suivi de la Mise en œuvre de la Révolution de la Modernité (MPSMRM), Ministère de la Santé Publique (MSP) and ICF International, 2014. *Enquête Démographique et de Santé en République Démocratique du Congo 2013-2014*. Rockville, MA: MPSMRM, MSP et ICF International.

Mkasi, L. and Rafudeen, A. 2016. Debating virginity-testing cultural practices in South Africa: a Taylorian reflection. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 29(2): 118-133.

Moodley, C.G. 2016. Perceptions of South African emerging adult FET college students on sexual practices in relation to religion. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 56(5): 1515-1536.

Moore, S.F. 1973. Law and social change: the semi-autonomous social field as an appropriate subject of study. *Law and Society Review*, 7(4): 719-746.

Mora, C. 2006. The meaning of womanhood in the neoliberal age: class and age-based narratives of Chilean women. *Gender Issues*, 23(3): 44-61. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-000-0022-1>.

Morawska, E. 2013. The impact of past and present immigrants' transnational engagements on their home-country localities: exploring an under-investigated aspect of transnationalism-migration relationship. *Studia Migracyjne-Przegląd Polonijny*, 1(39): 7-31.

Mukenge, T. 2010. Family and religion in Luba life: centrality, pervasiveness, change and continuity. *Challenge*, 16(1): 4.

Mulumeoderhwa, M. 2017. Virginity requirement versus sexually-active young people: what girls and boys think about virginity in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 1-11.

Mungela, M. 2011. *Renegotiating masculinities in a transnational context: the use of sex-enhancing substances (dawa za nguvu ya mapenzi) amongst heterosexual men of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) living in Durban*. Unpublished master's thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Murdock, G.P. 1964. Cultural correlates of the regulation of premarital sex behaviour. In: Manners, R.A. (ed.). *Process and pattern in culture: essays in honour of Julian H. Steward*. Chicago: Aldine, 339-410.

- Mutinta, G., Govender, K., George, G. and Gow, J. 2014. The influence of biological factors on students' sexual behaviour at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 13(4): 321-329.
- Negeri EL. 2014. Assessment of risky sexual behaviors and risk perception among youths in Western Ethiopia: the influences of family and peers: a comparative cross-sectional study. *BMC Public Health* 14: 301.
- Nelson, B.D., Collins, L., Van Rooyen, M.J., Joyce, N., Mukwege, D. and Bartels, S. 2011. Impact of sexual violence on children in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. *Medicine, Conflict and Survival*, 27(4): 211-225.
- Neuman, W.L. 2000. *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Ngcobo Z. 2016. KZN Mayor defends virginity testing for maidens bursary programme Njogu, K. and Orchardson-Mazrui, E. 2013. *Gender inequality and women's rights in the Great Lakes: can culture contribute to women's empowerment*. UNICEF policy document. Available at: <http://africainequalities.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Culture-Womens-Empowerment.pdf> [Accessed 5 June 2016].
- Nkosi, G.S. 2013. Umkhosi womhlanga (reed dance) as a tourism enterprise in KwaZulu-Natal: Perceptions, policies and practices. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Zululand.
- Oliveira, E. and Vearey, J. 2015. Images of place: visuals from migrant women sex workers in South Africa. *Medical Anthropology*, 34(4): 305-318.
- Olson, E. 2006. Development, transnational religion, and the power of ideas in the high provinces of Cusco, Peru. *Environment and Planning A*, 38(5): 885-902.
- Olwig, K.F. 2003. "Transnational" socio-cultural systems and ethnographic research: views from an extended field site. *International Migration Review*, 37(3): 787-811.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2007. International Migration Outlook 2007. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/els/internationalmigrationoutlook2007.htm>
- Owen, I.R. 1995. Social constructionism and the theory, practice and research of psychotherapy: a phenomenological psychology manifesto. *Boletín de Psicología*, 46: 161-186.

- Özden, Ç, Parsons, C.R., Schiff, M. and Walmsley, T.L. 2011. Where on earth is everybody? The evolution of global bilateral migration 1960–2000. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 25(1): 12-56.
- Ozyegin, G. 2009. Virginal facades: sexual freedom and guilt among young Turkish women. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 16(2): 103-123.
- Papastergiadis, N. 2013. *The turbulence of migration: globalization, deterritorialization and hybridity*. Cambridge: John Wiley.
- Peristiany, J.G. and Pitt-Rivers, J. 2005. *Honor and grace in anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Peters, A.C. and Sundaram, A. 2015. Country of origin and employment prospects among immigrants: an analysis of south-south and north-south migrants to South Africa. *Applied Economics Letters*, 22(17): 1415-1418.
- Pillai, V.K. & Barton, T.R., 1998. Modernization and teenage sexual activity in Zambia A multinomial logit model. *Youth & Society*, 29(3): 293-310.
- Posel, D. and Rudwick, S. 2012. Attitudes to marriage, cohabitation and non-marital childbirth in South Africa. Paper presented at the *Micro-Econometric Analysis of South African Data Conference*, November, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Pratt, M., Werchick, L., Bewa, A., Eagleton, M.L., Lumumba, C., Nichols, K. and Piripiri, L. 2004. *Sexual terrorism: rape as a weapon of war in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo*. Assessment Report. Washington, DC: Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, USAID.
- Pries, L. 1999.. *Migration and transnational social spaces*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Rafudeen A. 2016. Debating virginity-testing cultural practices in South Africa: a Taylorian reflection. *Journal for the Study of Religion* 29: 118-133
- Randolph, J.J. 2009. A guide to writing the dissertation literature review. *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation*, 14(13): 1-13.
- Riva S. 2006. *Nouvelle histoire de la littérature du Congo-Kinshasa*: L'harmattan.

- Reuben, S. and Bobat, S. 2014. Constructing racial hierarchies of skill-experiencing affirmative action in a South African organisation: a qualitative review. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 40(1): 1-12.
- Richter, M., Chersich, M.F., Vearey, J., Sartorius, B., Temmerman, M. and Luchters, S. 2014. Migration status, work conditions and health utilization of female sex workers in three South African cities. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 16(1): 7-17.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M. and Ormston, R. 2013. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.
- Riva, S. 2006. *Nouvelle histoire de la littérature du Congo-Kinshasa*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Romaniuk, A. 1967. *La fécondité des populations congolaises*. Paris: Mouton.
- Rosaldo, M.Z. 1974. Woman, culture, and society: a theoretical overview. In: Rosaldo, M.Z. and Lamphere, L. (eds.). *Woman, culture, and society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 21.
- Roudometof, V. 2000. Transnationalism and globalization: the Greek orthodox diaspora between orthodox universalism and transnational nationalism. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*. 9(3): 361-397.
- Rudwick, S and Posel, D. 2015. Zulu bridewealth (*ilobolo*) and womanhood in South Africa. *Social Dynamics*, 41(2): 289-306.
- Rukundwa, S.L. 2004. The Banyamulenge of the Democratic Republic of Congo: A cultural community in the making. *HTS: Theological Studies*, 60(1_2): 369-383.
- Samuel, L. 2010. Mating, dating and marriage: intergenerational cultural retention and the construction of diasporic identities among South Asian immigrants in Canada. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 31(1): 95-110.
- Sarantakos S. 1998. *Social Research*. 2nd Edition (1993). London. MacMillan
- Schaan, M.M., Taylor, M., Gungqisa, N. and Marlink, R. 2016. Personal views about womanhood amongst women living with HIV in Botswana. *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 18(2): 171-183.
- Schegloff, E.A. 1987 Between micro and macro: contexts and other connections. In: Alexander, J., Giesen, B., Munch, R. and Smelser, N.J. (eds.). *The micro-macro link*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 207-234.

- Schmid, C.L. 2017. The past is ever present: transnationalism old and new - Italian and Mexican immigrants in the US. *International Migration*, 55(3): 20-37.
- Schoumaker B, Flahaux M-L, Mobhe M, et al. 2013. Changing Patterns Of Congolese Migration
- Schuler, G. 2013. *At your own risk: narratives of Zimbabwean migrant sex workers in Hillbrow and discourses of vulnerability, agency, and power*. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
- Scorgie, F. 2002. Virginity testing and the politics of sexual responsibility: implications for AIDS intervention. *African Studies*, 61(1): 55-75.
- Seidman, G.W. 2000. Adjusting the lens: what do globalizations, transnationalism, and the anti-apartheid movement mean for social movement theory. In: Guidry, J.A., Kennedy, M.D. and Zald, M.N. (eds.). *Globalizations and social movements: culture, power, and the transnational public sphere*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 339-357.
- Seidman, I. 2013. *Interviewing as qualitative research: a guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sennott, C. and Mojola, S.A. 2017. Behaving well: the transition to respectable womanhood in rural South Africa. *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 19(7): 781-795.
- Shapiro, D. and Gebreselassie, T. 2014. Marriage in sub-Saharan Africa: trends, determinants, and consequences. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 33(2): 229-255.
- Shapiro, D. 2015. Enduring economic hardship, women's education, marriage and fertility transition in Kinshasa. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 47(2): 258-274.
- Sheringham, O. 2010. Creating alternative geographies: religion, transnationalism and everyday life. *Geography Compass*, 4(11): 1678-1694.
- Shisana, O., Rehle, T., Simbayi, L.C., Zuma, K., Jooste, S., Zungu, N., Labadarios, D. and Onoya, D. 2014. *South African national HIV, behaviour and health survey 2012*. Pretoria: HSRC Press.
- Sim, J. 1998. Collecting and analysing qualitative data: issues raised by the focus group. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 28(2): 345-352.

- Smit, R. and Rugunanan, P. 2014. From precarious lives to precarious work: the dilemma facing refugees in Gauteng, South Africa. *South African Review of Sociology*, 45(2): 4-26.
- Smith, M.P. and Guarnizo, L.E. (eds.). 1998. *Transnationalism from below*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction.
- Stebbins, R.A. 2001. *Exploratory research in the social sciences*. London: Sage.
- Stewart, M., Anderson, J., Beiser, M., Mwakarimba, E., Neufeld, A., Simich, L. and Spitzer, D. 2008. Multicultural meanings of social support among immigrants and refugees. *International Migration*, 46(3): 123-159.
- Stoppa, T., Espinosa-Hernandez, G. and Gillen, M. 2014. The roles of religiousness and spirituality in the sexual lives of heterosexual emerging adults. In: Barry, C.M. and Abo-Zena, M.M. (eds.). *Emerging adults' religiousness and spirituality: meaning-making in an age of transition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 186-203.
- Swanlek, A.G. 2013. *Virgin politics: an ideographical analysis of "virginity" in the Egyptian [sic] virginty [sic] tests*. Unpublished master's thesis. Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC.
- Thorpe, H. 2014. *Transnational mobilities in action sport cultures*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Torraco, R.J. 1997. Theory-building research methods. In: Swanson, R. and Holton, E. (eds.). *Human resource development research handbook: linking research and practice*. San Francisco: Berrett-Keohler, 114-137.
- Toubia, N. 1995. Female genital mutilation. In: Peters, J. and Wolper, A. (eds.). *Women's rights, human rights: international feminist perspectives*. New York: Psychology Press, 224-237.
- Townsend, L., Giorgio, M., Zembe, Y., Cheyip, M. and Mathews, C. 2014. HIV prevalence and risk behaviours among foreign migrant women residing in Cape Town, South Africa. *AIDS and Behavior*, 18(10): 2020-2029.
- Trotter, E.C. and Alderson, K.G. 2007. University students' definitions of having sex, sexual partner, and virginity loss: the influence of participant gender, sexual experience, and contextual factors. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 16(1/2): 11.

- Tsui, L. and Nicoladis, E. 2004. Losing it: similarities and differences in first intercourse experiences of men and women. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 13(2): 95.
- Twenge, J.M., Sherman, R.A. and Wells, B.E. 2015. Changes in American adults' sexual behavior and attitudes, 1972-2012. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 44(8): 2273-2285.
- Uecker, J.E., Angotti, N. and Regnerus, M.D. 2008. Going most of the way: "technical virginity" among American adolescents. *Social Science Research*, 37(4): 1200-1215.
- Uesugi, T. 2007. Re-examining transnationalism from below and transnationalism from above: British Gurkhas' life strategies and the Brigade of Gurkhas' employment policies. In: Hiroshi, I., Gellner, D.N. and Mawa, K. (eds.). *Nepalis inside and outside Nepal: social dynamics in northern South Asia*. New Delhi: Manohar, 383-410.
- Ulicki, T. and Crush, J. 2000. Gender, farm work, and women's migration from Lesotho to the new South Africa. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 34(1): 64-79.
- UNICEF 2005. Early Marriage: A Harmful Traditional Practice: A Statistical exploration. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Early_Marriage_12.lo.pdf. Accessed November 28, 2014
- United Nations Higher Commission on Refugees. 2012. *South Africa: country operations profile*. UNHCR. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-in/texis/vtx/page?page=4ec230fe16> [viewed 5 June 2016].
- United Nations Higher Commission on Refugees. 2014. *UNHCR global appeal 2014-2015*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/ga14/index.xml>
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H. and Bondas, T. 2013. Content analysis and thematic analysis: implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 15(3): 398-405.
- Valenti, J. 2009. *The purity myth*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.
- Valentine, G., Vanderbeck, R.M., Sadgrove, J., Andersson, J. and Ward, K. 2013. Transnational religious networks: sexuality and the changing power geometries of the Anglican Communion. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 38(1): 50-64.

- Wand H and Ramjee G. 2011. Combined impact of sexual risk behaviors for HIV seroconversion among women in Durban, South Africa: implications for prevention policy and planning. *AIDS and Behavior* 15: 479-486
- Weine, S.M. and Kashuba, A.B. 2012. Labor migration and HIV risk: a systematic review of the literature. *AIDS and Behavior*, 16(6): 1605-1621.
- Weiss, E., Whelan, D. and Gupta, G.R. 2000. Gender, sexuality and HIV: making a difference in the lives of young women in developing countries. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 15(3): 233-245.
- Wessendorf, S. 2016. *Second-generation transnationalism and roots migration: cross-border lives*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Wikipedia contributors. "Culture of the Democratic Republic of the Congo." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 12 Feb. 2018. Web. 20 Mar. 2018
- Willis, K.D. and Yeoh, B.S. 2000. Gender and transnational household strategies: Singaporean migration to China. *Regional Studies*, 34(3): 253-264.
- Win, E. 2004. Virginity testing as HIV/AIDS prevention strategy: clutching at straws. *Sexuality in Africa Magazine*, 1(1): 13-17.
- Win, E.J. 2004. Not very poor, powerless or pregnant: the African woman forgotten by development. *IDS Bulletin*, 35(4): 61-64.
- Yarber, W.L., Sayad, B.W. and Strong, B. 2013. *Human sexuality: diversity in contemporary America*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Yeoh, B.S., Willis, K.D. and Fakhri, S.A.K. 2003. Introduction: transnationalism and its edges. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 26(2): 207-217.
- Yin, R.K. 2003. *Case study research: design and methods*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yip, P.S.F., Zhang, H., Lam, T-H., Lam, K.F., Lee, A.M., Chan, J. and Fan, S. 2013. Sex knowledge, attitudes, and high-risk sexual behaviors among unmarried youth in Hong Kong. *BMC Public Health*, 13: 691-700.
- .

Zihindula, G. and Maharaj, P. 2015. Risk of sexual violence: perspectives and experiences of women in a hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Journal of Community Health*, 40(4): 736-743.

Zikmund, W.G., Babin, B.J., Carr, J.C. and Griffin, M. 2013. *Business research methods*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning

APPENDICES

APPENDICE 1

APPENDICE 2

APPENDICE 3

APPENDICE 4

APPENDICE 5

5 July 2017

Mrs Bulungu Kanda 216068808
School of Social Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mrs Kanda

Protocol reference number : HSS/0203/017M

Project title: Exploring the perception of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the practice of preserving virginity before marriage.

Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

In response to your application received 6 March 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Gabi Mkhize
cc Academic Leader Research: Prof M Naidu
cc School Administrators: Ms N Radebe, Mr N Memela & Mr S Ehiane

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

Dear Mrs. /Miss

My name is BULUNGU KANDA I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College /school of social sciences, department of Gender studies.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research on Congolese migrant and the topic of the research is **EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF CONGOLESE MIGRANT WOMEN TOWARD THE PRACTICE OF PRESERVING VIRGINITY BEFORE MARRIAGE**. The aim and purpose of this research is to find out if Congolese migrant women are still expected to practice the culture of preserving pre-marital virginity even in the foreign land and to understand their view on this practice. The study is expected to enroll 20 participants in total. 10 unmarried women and 10 married residing in Durban cbd with our site being the diakonia center (Refugee social services) and Faith ministries international church in Point Suburb. It will involve the use of interviews and focus groups semi-structured and open-ended questions. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be 30-45 min and the information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.

Considering the sensitivity of the topic, we believe that some distress or discomfort may arise during the interview, reason why psychosocial intervention will be available at Refugee social Service (Contact: Diakonia center Durban. cellphone: 0313103578.)

This study will provide no direct benefits to participants, but it believe that the result of this study will benefit Universities in South Africa, in the DRC and elsewhere in the world and it will assist several NGOS dealing with Women rights or gender inequality, as well as other South African organizations addressing women's sexual empowerment or sexual health matters.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at Email: ceceliakanda@gmail.com and cellphone 0730413908 or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

The participation in this research is voluntary and the information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only. Your participation is entirely voluntary, you have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such in action. But if the participant become demanding, the participation will be terminated.

Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study. The records as well as the items associated with the interview will be held in the password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisor.

After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.

If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures).

CONSENT

I Have been informed about the study entitled Exploring the perception of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the practice of preserving virginity before marriage by BULUNGU KANDA CECILE Master's candidate at University of KwaZulu -Natal, Howard College, school of social sciences, department of gender studies.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study is to find out if Congolese migrant women are still expected to practice the culture of preserving pre-marital virginity even in the foreign land and to understand their view on this practice.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at Email:ceceliakanda@gmail.com or 0730413908

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

7 June 2017

To whom it may Concern

Re: Request from MS. Bulungu Kanda to Conduct research at Refugee Social Services.

Ms. Kanda requested permission to utilize our organisation to identify participants for her master's research in gender studies titled "**Congolese migrant women perception about the practice of keeping virginity before marriage**"

The organisation will allow Ms. Kanda access to identify potential participants in this study and to interview them with their informed consent.

We are aware that the research involves completion of a questionnaire with employees and/or clients of Refugee Social Services.

We also understand that all information collected from individuals will be conducted with duly informed consent from the participating individuals and members can refuse participation with no negative consequences for the said individual. All personal information about participants will be kept confidential.

We have also agreed that Ms. Kanda will refer those participants who she deems to be in need of psychosocial counseling (as the subject is sensitive) to the organisation for these services.

Refugee Social Services will be provided with the results of the investigation and will be able to utilise the said results for any purpose deemed to be in the interest of the refugees and the organisation.

Refugee Social Services supports the research , and we look forward to the results of this study.

Yours faithfully



Yasmin Rajah
Director

October 19th 2010

Hi, Cecile Bulungu Kanda

It's an honor on our side to allow you to conduct your research in our church facilities.
I will then refer you to the head of ladies ministry in order to discuss the feasibilities.
Wishing you the best on your studies

Kind regards
Rev. J Benjamin Lukola



FAITH MINISTRIES DURBAN
157 PINE STREET
(CNR PINE & ALIWAL)
DURBAN, 4001
SOUTH AFRICA



45 Morrison Road
POBox 49216 East End 4018
e-mail: faithmdu2000@yahoo.com
Tel & Fax: +27 76 341 1200

MASTERS DEGREE QUESTIONS FOR DEPTH INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS.

Exploring the perceptions of Congolese migrant women in Durban towards the culture of preserving virginity before marriage.

QUESTIONS FOR SAMPLE 1: UNMARRIED CONGOLESE WOMEN LIVING IN DURBAN (BEFORE MARRIAGE)

General demographics

1. How old are you?
2. Where were you born?
3. How long have you been living in Durban?

Discussing the culture of virginity

4. In your opinion, what is the definition of virginity, and what constitutes a woman losing her virginity?
5. While you were in the DRC, were you brought up in a culture that recommended keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
6. Did you agree or disagree with this culture, and why?
7. In your opinion, why did (or didn't) your community in the DRC uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she got married?
8. Who or what among your community in the DRC was the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they got married?
9. How is the culture in your new Durban community, regarding keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
10. Do you agree or disagree with the views of this culture in your new Durban community, and why?
11. In your opinion, why does (or doesn't) your new community in Durban uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she gets married?

Personal details and perspectives on virginity

12. Do you think it is acceptable for young girls to engage in any non-penetrative sexual practices with boys, which do not harm their virginity, to preserve their virginity before they are married?
13. Now that you are in South Africa, do you think there is more or less of a need for a woman to preserve her virginity before she is married, and why?

14. As far as you know, are many of your unmarried Congolese female friends in Durban still virgins?
15. Are you still a virgin? Remember, this is private and anonymous information, and your name will not be published in any way or form. This question is just for research purposes.
16. Have you engaged in any practices in order to preserve your virginity; and if so, what have you done to preserve your virginity?
17. Do you think virginity testing is a good or bad way to encourage or enforce young girls to remain virgins until they are married, and why?

Influences of immigration on cultural perceptions towards virginity

18. Do you think the Congolese community in Durban still upholds much of its former culture regarding virginity until marriage, as it did in the DRC?
19. How has the Congolese community been influenced by the new community in Durban towards the culture of a woman preserving her virginity before she is married?
20. Who or what among your community in Durban (if any) is the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they get married?
21. Do you think the threat of HIV/AIDS in South Africa has any different role (as it did in the DRC) towards the need for women to remain virgins until they get married?

QUESTIONS FOR SAMPLE 2: MARRIED CONGOLESE WOMEN LIVING IN DURBAN
(AFTER MARRIAGE)

General demographics

1. How old are you?
2. Where were you born?
3. How long have you been living in Durban?

Discussing the culture of virginity

4. In your opinion, what is the definition of virginity, and what constitutes a woman losing her virginity?
5. While you were in the DRC, were you brought up in a culture that recommended keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
6. Did you agree or disagree with this culture, and why?
7. In your opinion, why did (or didn't) your community in the DRC uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she got married?
8. Who or what among your community in the DRC was the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they got married?
9. How is the culture in your new Durban community, regarding keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
10. Do you agree or disagree with the views of this culture in your new Durban community, and why?
11. In your opinion, why does (or doesn't) your new community in Durban uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she gets married?

Personal details and perspectives on virginity

12. Do you think it is acceptable for young girls to engage in any non-penetrative sexual practices with boys, which do not harm their virginity, to preserve their virginity before they are married?
13. Now that you are in South Africa, do you think there is more or less of a need for a woman to preserve her virginity before she is married, and why?
14. As far as you know, are many young unmarried Congolese women in Durban still virgins?
15. How old were you when you lost your virginity?
16. Did you get married in the DRC or in Durban?
17. How old were you when you got married?
18. Did you engage in any practices before you were married in order to preserve your virginity; and if so, what did you do to preserve your virginity?
19. Do you think virginity testing is a good or bad way to encourage or enforce young girls to remain virgins until they are married, and why?

Influences of immigration on cultural perceptions towards virginity

20. Do you think the Congolese community in Durban still upholds much of its former culture regarding virginity until marriage, as it did in the DRC?
21. How has the Congolese community been influenced by the new community in Durban towards the culture of a woman preserving her virginity before she is married?
22. Who or what among your community in Durban (if any) is the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they get married?
23. Do you think the threat of HIV/AIDS in South Africa has any different role (as it did in the DRC) towards the need for women to remain virgins until they get married?

QUESTIONS FOR SAMPLE 3: MARRIED CONGOLESE MEN LIVING IN DURBAN (AFTER MARRIAGE)

General demographics

1. How old are you?
2. Where were you born?
3. How long have you been living in Durban?

Discussing the culture of virginity

4. In your opinion, what is the definition of virginity, and what constitutes a woman losing her virginity?
5. While you were in the DRC, were you brought up in a culture that recommended keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
6. Did you agree or disagree with this culture, and why?
7. In your opinion, why did (or didn't) your community in the DRC uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she got married?
8. Who or what among your community in the DRC was the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they got married?
9. How is the culture in your new Durban community, regarding keeping virginity as a form of purity before marriage?
10. Do you agree or disagree with the views of this culture in your new Durban community, and why?
11. In your opinion, why does (or doesn't) your new community in Durban uphold that a woman should be a virgin until she gets married?

Personal details and perspectives on virginity

12. Now that you are in South Africa, do you think there is more or less of a need for a woman to preserve her virginity before she is married, and why?
13. As far as you know, are many young unmarried Congolese women in Durban still virgins?

14. How old was your wife when she lost her virginity
15. Did you get married in the DRC or in Durban?
16. How old was your wife when you married her
17. Do you think virginity testing is a good or bad way to encourage or enforce young girls to remain virgins until they are married, and why?

Influences of immigration on cultural perceptions towards virginity

18. Do you think the Congolese community in Durban still upholds much of its former culture regarding virginity until marriage, as it did in the DRC?
19. How has the Congolese community been influenced by the new community in Durban towards the culture of a woman preserving her virginity before she is married?
20. Who or what among your community in Durban (if any) is the biggest enforcer or motivation for women to remain virgins until they get married?
21. Do you think the threat of HIV/AIDS in South Africa has any different role (as it did in the DRC) towards the need for women to remain virgins until they get married?



PRINCIPALES QUESTIONS POUR LES INTERVIEWS INDIVIDUELLES ET DES GROUPES

«Explorer les perceptions des femmes émigrantes congolaises sur la pratique de préserver la virginité avant le mariage ».

QUESTIONS POUR L'EXEMPLE I: Les femmes congolaises non mariées vivant à Durban (avant le mariage)

A. Données démographiques générales

1. Quel âge avez-vous?
2. Où êtes-vous né?
3. Depuis combien de temps vivez-vous à Durban?

B. Discuter de la culture de la virginité

4. À votre avis, quelle est la définition de la virginité, qu'est ce qui caractérise une femme qui perd sa virginité?
5. Alors que vous étiez en RDC, avez-vous été élevé dans une culture qui recommandait de garder la virginité comme une forme de pureté avant le mariage?
6. Avez-vous accepté ou pas d'accord avec cette culture, et pourquoi?
7. À votre avis, pourquoi (ou pas) votre communauté en RDC a-t-elle soutenu qu'une femme devait être vierge jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit mariée?

8. Qui ou quoi parmi votre communauté en RDC était le plus grand imposeur ou la motivation pour que les femmes restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles soient mariées?
9. Comment est l'actuelle culture dans votre nouvelle communauté de Durban, en ce qui concerne le maintien de la virginité comme forme de pureté avant le mariage?
10. Êtes-vous d'accord ou pas d'accord avec les opinions de cette culture dans votre nouvelle communauté de Durban et pourquoi?
11. À votre avis, pourquoi (ou pas) votre nouvelle communauté à Durban confirme-t-elle qu'une femme devrait être vierge jusqu'à ce qu'elle se marie?

C. Détails personnels et perspectives sur la virginité

12. Pensez-vous qu'il soit acceptable pour les jeunes filles de s'engager dans des pratiques sexuelles non pénibles avec les garçons, qui ne nuisent pas à leur virginité, pour préserver leur virginité avant leur mariage?
13. Maintenant que vous êtes en Afrique du Sud, pensez-vous qu'il y a plus ou moins un besoin pour une femme de préserver sa virginité avant sa date de mariage et pourquoi?
14. Pour autant que vous le sachiez, beaucoup de vos amies féminines congolaises non mariées à Durban sont encore vierges?
15. Êtes-vous toujours vierge? Rappelez-vous, ceci est une information privée et anonyme, et votre nom ne sera pas publié sous aucune forme. Cette question est uniquement à des fins de recherche.
16. Avez-vous engagé des pratiques pour préserver votre virginité? Et si oui, qu'avez-vous fait pour préserver votre virginité?
17. Pensez-vous que les tests de virginité sont une bonne ou mauvaise façon d'encourager ou de faire en sorte que les jeunes filles restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles soient mariées et pourquoi?

D. Influences de l'immigration sur les perceptions culturelles envers la virginité

18. Pensez-vous que la communauté congolaise à Durban maintient encore une partie de sa culture antérieure en ce qui concerne la virginité jusqu'au mariage, comme cela a été le cas en RDC?
 19. Comment la communauté congolaise a-t-elle été influencée par la nouvelle communauté à Durban envers la culture d'une femme qui préserve sa virginité avant qu'elle ne soit mariée?
 20. Qui ou quoi parmi votre communauté à Durban (le cas échéant) est le plus grand imposeur ou la motivation pour que les femmes restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles se marient?
 21. Pensez-vous que la menace du VIH / sida en Afrique du Sud a un rôle différent (comme cela a été le cas en RDC) en ce qui concerne la nécessité pour les femmes de rester vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles se marient?
-

QUESTIONS POUR L'EXEMPLE II: Les femmes congolaises mariées vivant à Durban (après le mariage)

A. Données démographiques générales

1. Quel âge avez-vous?
2. Où êtes-vous né?
3. Depuis combien de temps vivez-vous à Durban?

B. Discuter de la culture de la virginité

4. À votre avis, quelle est la définition de la virginité, qu'est ce qui caractérise une femme qui perd sa virginité?
5. Alors que vous étiez en RDC, avez-vous été élevé dans une culture qui recommandait de garder la virginité comme une forme de pureté avant le mariage?
6. Avez-vous accepté ou pas d'accord avec cette culture, et pourquoi?
7. À votre avis, pourquoi (ou pas) votre communauté en RDC a-t-elle soutenu qu'une femme devait être vierge jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit mariée?
8. Qui ou quoi parmi votre communauté en RDC était le plus grand imposeur ou la motivation pour que les femmes restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles soient mariées?
9. Comment est l'actuelle culture dans votre nouvelle communauté de Durban, en ce qui concerne le maintien de la virginité comme forme de pureté avant le mariage?
10. Êtes-vous d'accord ou pas d'accord avec les opinions de cette culture dans votre nouvelle communauté de Durban et pourquoi?
11. À votre avis, pourquoi (ou pas) votre nouvelle communauté à Durban confirme-t-elle qu'une femme devrait être vierge jusqu'à ce qu'elle se marie?

C. Détails personnels et perspectives sur la virginité

12. Pensez-vous qu'il soit acceptable pour les jeunes filles de s'engager dans des pratiques sexuelles non pénibles avec les garçons, qui ne nuisent pas à leur virginité, pour préserver leur virginité avant leur mariage?
13. Maintenant que vous êtes en Afrique du Sud, pensez-vous qu'il y a plus ou moins un besoin pour une femme de préserver sa virginité avant sa date de mariage et pourquoi?
14. Pour autant que vous le sachiez, beaucoup de vos amies féminines congolaises non mariées à Durban sont encore vierges?
15. Êtes-vous toujours vierge? Rappelez-vous, ceci est une information privée et anonyme, et votre nom ne sera pas publié sous aucune forme. Cette question est uniquement à des fins de recherche.
16. Avez-vous engagé des pratiques pour préserver votre virginité? Et si oui, qu'avez-vous fait pour préserver votre virginité?
17. Pensez-vous que les tests de virginité sont une bonne ou mauvaise façon d'encourager ou de faire en sorte que les jeunes filles restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles soient mariées et pourquoi?

D. Influences de l'immigration sur les perceptions culturelles envers la virginité

18. Pensez-vous que la communauté congolaise à Durban maintient encore une partie de sa culture antérieure en ce qui concerne la virginité jusqu'au mariage, comme cela a été le cas en RDC?
19. Comment la communauté congolaise a-t-elle été influencée par la nouvelle communauté à Durban envers la culture d'une femme qui préserve sa virginité avant qu'elle ne soit mariée?
20. Qui ou quoi parmi votre communauté à Durban (le cas échéant) est le plus grand imposeur ou la motivation pour que les femmes restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles se marient?
21. Pensez-vous que la menace du VIH / sida en Afrique du Sud a un rôle différent (comme cela a été le cas en RDC) en ce qui concerne la nécessité pour les femmes de rester vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles se marient?

QUESTIONS POUR L'EXEMPLE II: Les hommes congolais mariées vivant à Durban
(après le mariage)

Topic : «Explorer les perceptions des femmes émigrantes congolaises sur la pratique de préserver la virginité avant le mariage ».

A. Données démographiques générales

1. Quel âge avez-vous?
2. Où êtes-vous né?
3. Depuis combien de temps vivez-vous à Durban?

B. Discuter de la culture de la virginité

4. À votre avis, quelle est la définition de la virginité, qu'est ce qui caractérise une femme qui perd sa virginité?
5. Alors que vous étiez en RDC, avez-vous été élevé dans une culture qui recommandait de garder la virginité comme une forme de pureté avant le mariage?
6. Avez-vous accepté ou pas d'accord avec cette culture, et pourquoi?
7. À votre avis, pourquoi (ou pas) votre communauté en RDC a-t-elle soutenu qu'une femme devait être vierge jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit mariée?
8. Qui ou quoi parmi votre communauté en RDC était le plus grand imposeur ou la motivation pour que les femmes restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles soient mariées?
9. Comment est l'actuelle culture dans votre nouvelle communauté de Durban, en ce qui concerne le maintien de la virginité comme forme de pureté avant le mariage?

10. Êtes-vous d'accord ou pas d'accord avec les opinions de cette culture dans votre nouvelle communauté de Durban et pour

C. Détails personnels et perspectives sur la virginité

11. Maintenant que vous êtes en Afrique du Sud, pensez-vous qu'il y a plus ou moins un besoin pour une femme de préserver sa virginité avant sa date de mariage et pourquoi?

12. Pour autant que vous le sachiez, beaucoup de vos amies féminines congolaises non mariées à Durban sont encore vierges?

1. Avez-vous des enfants ? Combien des filles ?

2. Encouragez-vous à vos filles de préserver leur virginité jusque au mariage ? Pourquoi ?

3. Qu'est-ce que vous dites à vos fils par rapport à la pratique de préserver la virginité chez une fille

13. Quel âge avez votre femme quand elle a perdu sa virginité ?

14. Où est-ce que vous vous êtes mariée, Au Congo ou à Durban ?

15. Quel âge avez votre femme quand vous vous êtes marié

16. Pensez-vous que les tests de virginité sont une bonne ou mauvaise façon d'encourager ou de faire en sorte que les jeunes filles restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles soient mariées et pourquoi?

D. Influences de l'immigration sur les perceptions culturelles envers la virginité

17. Pensez-vous que la communauté congolaise à Durban maintient encore une partie de sa culture antérieure en ce qui concerne la virginité jusqu'au mariage, comme cela a été le cas en RDC?

18. Vous pensez que la communauté congolaise a subi l'influence de son nouvel environnement Durban, en ce qui concerne la culture ou la pratique de préserver sa virginité avant de se marier. Si oui alors répondait à la question 21

19. Comment la communauté congolaise a-t-elle été influencée par la nouvelle communauté à Durban envers la culture d'une femme qui préserve sa virginité avant qu'elle ne soit mariée?

20. Qui ou quoi parmi votre communauté à Durban (le cas échéant) est le plus grand imposeur ou la motivation pour que les femmes restent vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles se marient?

21. Pensez-vous que la menace du VIH / sida en Afrique du Sud a un rôle différent (comme cela a été le cas en RDC) en ce qui concerne la nécessité pour les femmes de rester vierges jusqu'à ce qu'elles se marient?

22. Pour vous quel est le rôle que joue la menace du VIH en Afrique du Sud comparer à la nécessité pour une femme de rester vierge jusqu' à ce qu'elle soit marier