The role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities in the case of Pongola Rural Community.

By

Noxolo Gcebile Mamba

The dissertation is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the completion of a

Masters In Development Studies Degree

SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisor: Professor Oliver Mtapuri

December 2020

Supervisor's signature

…………………………………..

ABSTRACT

Non-heterosexual people also known as the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender experience difficulties in fitting into the heteronormative communities. As a result of their sexuality, they are faced with social exclusion, being judged and sometimes attacked. Cultural norms which are strongly against this phenomenon need to be put in place in order for there to be better inclusivity within society at large. The main aim of this study is to explore the role of culture in shaping societal attitude towards non-heterosexuality in case of Pongola rural community. The researcher used qualitative approach when collecting data regarding the experiences of non-heterosexual people in rural communities, the challenges they encounter, how they cope as well as how culture, media and religion has influenced people's perceptions on non-heterosexuality. The right based approach helped the researcher to understand how human rights have been used to normalize inclusion of non-heterosexuals in the community, how the law plays a role in protecting the lives of those people and giving hope for the eradication of homophobia. The queer theory helped the researcher to understand the coping mechanisms adopted by the LGBTs in a heteronormative environment.

The primary data was collected with the use of open-ended interviews which enabled each participant to voice out their views and beliefs in relation to non-heterosexuality. Open-ended interviews were conducted with ten participants at Pongola rural community. Results of the study showed lack of knowledge about other sexual identities as well as cultural beliefs standing as the main contributing factor to homophobia in the community. Results of the study also revealed the lack of resources aimed at assisting homosexuals in being regarded as active members of the community. Such resources included the lack of gay support groups which contributed to the vulnerability of the LGBTs in Pongola. The role of media in transforming the community is slightly in vain due to the slow development of this community.

The study has recommended some policy adjustments aimed at inclusion of non-heterosexual people in Pongola and to combat homophobia. Recommendations included educational programs to empower community members about non-heterosexuality so they are informed about it is and challenge assumptions.

DECLARATION

I, **Noxolo Gcebile Mamba** (Student number 213540020), declare that the dissertation titled: *An exploration of the role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality a case study of Pongola Rural Community* is my original work except where acknowledgements are made otherwise and that there is no part of the dissertation that has been, is being or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other tertiary education institute.

Sign   Date

……………………………   ……………………………

DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this dissertation to every non- heterosexual person in rural communities struggling with homophobia and social exclusion. As well as my parents (my mother, Miss I.G Ndlangamandla and my aunt, Miss M.N Ndlangamandla).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

The study was carried out under the School of Built Environment and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College, Durban, from January 2020 to December 2020, under the supervision of Professor Oliver Mtapuri. The dissertation represents original work by the author and has not otherwise been submitted in form for any degree or diploma to any tertiary institution. Where use has been made of the work of others it is duly acknowledged in the text and included in the reference list.

…………………………   ……………………………

Noxolo G. Mamba   Professor Oliver Mtapuri

ABBREVIATIONS

AU   **African Union**

LGBT   **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender**

KZN   **KwaZulu-Natal**

ANC   **African National Congress**

NP   **National Party**

SADC   **Southern African Development Community**

LIST OF APPENDIXES

Appendix one: Turnitin report

Appendix two: Ethical clearance

Appendix three: Zulu consent form

Appendix four: English consent form

Appendix five: Zulu interview schedule

Appendix six: English interview schedule

Appendix seven: Gate keeper's letter

Appendix eight: Social work services confirmation letter

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTIONAND BACKGROUND

1.1   Introduction

Non-heterosexuality remains a debatable phenomenon in South Africa even during the 21st century. Most non-heterosexual people in South African communities fail to live their homosexual life freely due to some structural and cultural societal norms and beliefs existing which hinder and are against same sex relationships. This study focuses on the role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality. It focuses on the history of non-heterosexuality in South Africa, contradictions between African cultures and homosexuality, policies implemented to combat social exclusion of non-heterosexual people in rural communities. According to Essen and Aderinto, (2009), history of non-heterosexuality in Africa is not easily found due to the shortage on scholarly research on this topic of which rises the belief that it is Western culture and abnormal.

The earliest image for homosexuality in Africa was found in Harare, about two thousand years ago and it showed two men intimate and engaging in anal sex (Epredcht:2013). In South Africa, non-heterosexuality was firstly found in the 18th century whereby the Khoikhoi men were recognized in a drawing being intimate with another men. Following that there was the prevalence of the so called "boy wives" marriages in the 1950s whereby men would have relationships with other men in the mines who would perform all the wifely duties for them. What differed about "boy wives" was that they did not engage in anal sex as per usual by gays nowadays, instead they placed each other's genitals between the thighs and non-heterosexuality was considered a criminal offence during the apartheid era, with up to 7 years imprisonment (Epredtch, 2013).

In the 1960s to 1980s, the South African Defence Force forced gay and lesbian soldiers to undergo medical cues aimed at curing their sexuality. In the 1970s Leon DeBeer from the National Party mentioned the recognition of gay rights in parliament for the first time, leading to the formation of Gay Association of South Africa in the 1980s and during this time non-heterosexuality was still a criminal offence in the country. It was until 1993 when the African National Congress endorsed the recognition of same sex marriages and stated the need for prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation. In 1994, Eugene Brockman designed the rainbow LGBT flag which symbolises the recognition of diversity. November 2005, the constitutional ruling which allowed same sex marriages was amended

and as notably former President Jacob Zuma publicly disclosed that he did not approve non-heterosexuality (Epprecht, 2013).

In her argument Sithole, (2019) mentioned that in African communities when one conceives a child with two genitals, then they were taken and hidden from the rest of the community since such was regarded a shame and disability. This serves as a justification for the untraceable history of non-heterosexuality in rural communities. She furthermore added that heteronormative structures in rural communities had a rule that infertile males and some were non-heterosexual would have their relatives to assist in ensuring that their wives fall pregnant and the family reproduction continues.

Despite the increasing numbers of non-heterosexual people coming out about their sexuality, many hate crimes and homophobia still exists in South African societies. According to Parvic and Turcin, (2011), most of the homophobia and misconceptions come from traditionalists who are deeply rooted in religious orientation, grew up in rural areas and have a lower level of education. It is those people who perpetuate their views and beliefs onto others in society. The misconceptions form negative connotations associated with non-heterosexuality, give rise to hate crimes and exclusion of non-heterosexuals in society.

The main aim of the research is to understand in depth the life of an LGBT person in a rural community. The role of culture in shaping attitude towards this phenomenon, how the society has transformed over time as well as some policies implemented to combat homophobia. This study is introduced by the background, problem statement, aim of the study, research objectives, research questions, underlying assumptions, theoretical framework as well as the value of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

Culture in the post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in the rural areas, plays a critical role and part in promoting discrimination against homosexual people. Lee and Quam, (2013), observed that non-heterosexual people in rural areas are often judged and discriminated as they are considered to be deviating from the societal norms and values. This has consequently resulted in situations in which non-heterosexuals find themselves feeling less recognised and ostracised in their communities. This has led to the creation feelings of low self-esteem,

social exclusion and gross violations of the rights of homosexual people in the post-apartheid South Africa.

According to Dlamini, (2006), many Africans have an ideology that non-heterosexuality comes from the Western countries Sithole, (2019), states that this is because there no mention of non-heterosexual identities in the African books of history, and such results in them showing negative attitudes towards this group of people. The nature of non-heterosexual lifestyle is associated with a westernized way of life as it was first legalized in Western countries before African countries. Dlamini, (2006), also mentioned that not identifying as "straight" is an African curse and describes the hate received from the community to being associated with culture and religion. Richardson, (2006), states that even though LGBT has been legalised, people are struggling to accept the differences in lifestyle and sexual preferences; many non-heterosexuals are abused, discriminated and socially excluded.

Some African leaders such as the former South African president Jacob Zuma as well as former Zimbabwean president have been vocal about their hatred towards non-heterosexuality as they were quoted and were cited in Tapfumanei, (2006) "*Same sex is a disgrace to the nation and to God. When I was growing up, unqingili could not stand in front of me*". Another homophobic quote by the Zimbabwean former president Robert Mugabe, "*…if dogs and pigs don't do it, why must human beings? Can human beings be human if they do worse than pigs? They can demonstrate but if they do it here in Zimbabwe, we will throw them in jail*".

In a study by Sutherland, (2016), it revealed that in South Africa there were approximately 530000 non-heterosexual people, with 72 percent of the total population believed that same sex relationships are wrong, 27 percent had a close family or friend who is non-heterosexual and half of the population believed that non-heterosexual should have same human rights like all other citizens. These statistics provide a rationale for the researcher to further explore on the livelihoods of non-heterosexual people specifically in a rural community.

The study was conducted in Pongola rural community. The area is one of the culturally conservative rural communities that still believes in the practice of culture as a key aspect of how the community and its people at large are expected to live and conduct themselves. Anything that runs contrary to this is seen as a desecration of the local culture and accepted norms which results in the discrimination of such people and the restriction of individual freedoms (Herek, 2000).

1.3 Problem statement

In rural, deeply cultured communities it is very rare to find non-heterosexual people who are open about their sexuality. Most of them relocate to cities while others remain in closet and hide their sexuality due to the fear of homophobia, social exclusion, and being judged about their sexuality. Traditional leaders are less informed and illiterate about other sexual identities existing within South African communities hence they are homophobic towards the LGBT community members and so they educate other community members and make non-heterosexuality a deviation to the local culture.

In most rural families, homosexuals get cut off by their friends, family and most of the community members after disclosing their sexual identity. This is due to their beliefs and ideologies that non-heterosexuality is a shame, disgrace and ungodly. According to Sutherland, (2016), homophobia can be as extreme as including corrective rapes, physical assault and being called offensive names such as *isitabani* or *inkonkoni*. All these forms of abuse are in violation of the South African Constitution of 2006 which states that no one should be discriminated on the basis of sex, gender or sexual orientation. Considering the non-declining cases of homophobia within the community, Pongola Local Municipality has introduced empowerment programs aimed at educating people about the recognition of human rights whereby they are taught about human rights and responsibilities as well as whom to report to once their rights have been violated.

As someone who grew up in the community, the researcher is interested in finding out the contributory issues to this, the challenges faced by the non-heterosexuals, the cultural and religious dimensions restricting the normalization and acceptance of such phenomenon. The researcher also seeks to assess what can be done to improve the inclusion of non-heterosexual community living in Pongola.

1.4 Aim of the study

The main aim of the study is to evaluate the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities.

1.5 Objectives

- Explore how culture contributes in shaping homophobic attitudes towards homosexual people.
- Uncover the challenges encountered by homosexual people in rural communities and how they overcome them.
- Understanding religious and cultural perceptions towards homosexual people in rural areas.
- Explore how the society has transformed its perceptions towards homosexuality and the limitations to that transformation.

1.6   Research questions

- How does culture influence societal behaviours towards homosexual people?
- What are some of the challenges encountered by homosexual people in a culturally conservative society and how do they overcome them?
- What are religious and cultural perceptions towards homosexual people in rural communities?
- How does the society transform its perceptions and attitudes towards homosexual people and what are the limits to that transformation?

1.7 Limitations of the study

The researcher had a difficulty in finding non-heterosexual participants in Pongola. Reason being that those found were too scared to participate in the study and to share their experiences and opted for telephonic interviews. The researcher also had to reduce the number of participants because of heterosexual participants being reluctant to discuss and share their personal views on this phenomenon. Some of them did not want to fully express their attitude towards homosexuality due to the stigma associated with non-heterosexuality.

The researcher struggled to obtain gate keepers letters because the community leaders were reluctant and felt that Pongola is not the right place to conduct a study related to such a sensitive topic with some denying the existence of non-heterosexual people in the area. The researcher had to convey the significance and benefits of the study as well as having to obtain

a suitable setting where all participants would feel safe to express their views and experiences without their identity being exposed within the small community of Pongola.

1.8   Significance of the study

1.8.1   Academicians

The significance of the study was to provide a deeper understanding on the role played by culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities. It also described the role played by the media in normalizing and empowering people on the different sexual identities across the world. Findings from this study can assist other scholars in broadening knowledge about non-heterosexuality in rural communities as it will provide insight on the experiences of non-heterosexual people, the challenges they come across, how they overcome them as well as the underlying structures leading to social exclusion of non-heterosexual people in rural communities like Pongola.

1.8.2 Cultural groups

The study can assist individuals from different cultural groups to understand homosexuality and not view it as a threat to the local culture. Since culture is learned and changes over time, cultural groups have the ability to adopt new knowledge and change cultural assumptions and beliefs regarding homosexuality in a manner that will not oppress those belonging to this group. The study aims to provide an understanding on the influence cultural beliefs have in relation to non-heterosexuality.

1.8.3 Religious groups

As much as technology came with colonizers, so did churches. The study aims on assisting people from different cultural groups in understanding the different sexual identities and not associate non-heterosexual with sin. In doing so, sermons associating homosexuality with sin or evil are avoided and a decrease in stigma and hatred towards homosexuality transpires. The study also creates an understanding that LGBTs are not cursed and they require as much love and acceptance as any other heterosexual church members.

This study provided an insight on the different church denominations and their beliefs concerning non-heterosexuality. The of beliefs around non-heterosexuality being of colonial evil doings is contradicting to a degree as one could highlight that churches too are a colonial product therefore, one colonial product (churches) cannot be used to justify another colonial product (non-heterosexuality).

1.8.4 Pongola community members

The study seeks to give the community members of Pongola a chance to share their views and question their beliefs about non-heterosexuality, a topic that has always been avoided in this community. The researcher provided participants with questions with the aim of understanding their assumptions and enabling the participants to express their views. The study can also be used to access the challenges faced by non-heterosexual people in this community as well as to identify their needs and make means to minimize homophobia and normalize non-heterosexuality.

1.9   Scope of the study

This study focuses on the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality. It makes use of Qualitative research approach as it will assist in meeting the set research objectives and questions. Qualitative research approach is also descriptive and resourceful in unpacking complex topics. Interview schedule was used for ten participants of which five of them are LGBT members and the other five are from the general heterosexual community members including community elders, church members, educators and the community youth. The study is intended to explore the role of culture in non-heterosexuality in South African rural communities.

1.10 Definition of terms [Conceptual framework)

The following terminologies are used in the study:

1.10.1Culture - According to Birukou, Blanzieri, Giorgini and Giunchiglia (2013), culture refers to the set of knowledge, customs and beliefs as well as socially transmitted behavioural characteristics of a society.

1.10.2 Non-heterosexuality - According to Laukkanen, (2007), this is a terminology which is the antonym of heterosexual, a name referring to someone who has sexual desires with opposite sex.

1.10.3 Coming out - According to Grov, Bimbi, Nanin and Parsons (2006), this refers to a process whereby a non- heterosexual individual begins to associate themselves with other non-heterosexual people and publicly discloses their sexual identity.

1.10.4 Media - DeNardis, (2015), refers to media as the applications which act as a central point on the internet with the aim of providing access to the public for example the radio, television, newspapers, social media platforms such as twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

1.10.5 Gender - according to Dlamini, (2006), it refers to the division between male and female as well as men and women.

1.10.6 Gender identity – Gates, (2011), states that gender defines one's identity in a way that refers to one's internal feeling in terms of their sexuality. This can be shown through behaviour, their voice as well as bossy characteristics and is called gender expression.

1.10.7 Sexual orientation – Rolleri, (2013), states that sexual orientation is the terminology that describes an individual's physical, emotional and romantic attraction to another person. It is divided into four types namely the same sex also known as homosexuality, opposite sex known as heterosexuality, then those who are attracted to both sexes namely bisexual as well as those who aren't attracted to anyone specifically, namely asexual.

1.10.8 LGBT - refers to the umbrella abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered sexual identities.

1.10.9 Lesbian - According to Koran and Guduld, (2015), a lesbian refers to a female that is sexually attracted to other females.

1.10.10 Gay - According **to** Koran and Guduld, (2015), this term refers to a male that is sexually attracted to other men.

1.10.11 Transgender - Gates, (2010), states that transgender refers to persons whose gender identity, behaviour and expression differs to that one they assigned at birth.

1.10.12 Heterosexism – Pharr, (1997), defines this phenomenon as the belief or ideology that only opposite sex relationships exists in this world. It also refers to the cultural ideology

within institutional practices aimed at oppressing and to work in disadvantage for sexually minority groups and to discriminate them.

1.10.13 Homophobia - Bernart, Calhoun, Adams and Zeicher, (2001), define this phenomenon as the self-reported negative attitude towards non-heterosexual people. Adebajo, Elulwa, Allman Myers and Ahonsi, (2012), states that it is the hatred and shame towards non-heterosexual people resulting from negative beliefs and prejudices about non-heterosexuality. Ronner, (2005), adds that homophobic attitudes can manifest into harassment, violence and verbal abuse as well as corrective rape of which Koran and Guduld, (2015), refers to as when non-heterosexual woman also known as lesbian gets raped by men with the aim of curing her lesbianism.

1.10.14 Sexual stigma - According to Herek, (2007), it refers to the powerlessness feeling, inferior status as well as a negative regard that a society creates towards non-heterosexuality. It also includes the socially shared knowledge and beliefs about the devalued status of non-heterosexual people in society. According to Scharbert, Brown, Mosely and Speight, (2013:02), stigma depends on the political, cultural, economic and social power differences between the oppressed and the oppressor.

1.11   Chapter outline

1.11.1 Chapter 1: This chapter focuses on the introduction of the entire dissertation whereby the researcher has outlined the background of the study, the aim and objectives, research questions, the problem statement, a brief methodology, the definition of some concepts that will be used in the study, the limitations of the study as well as the significance of the study to the various people as explained. In conclusion, this chapter highlights a brief summary on what each chapter will focus on.

1.11.2 Chapter 2: The literature review chapter looks at previous studies relevant to the topic of the study which is "The exploration of the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality, a case study of Pongola rural community". Cultural and religious beliefs as well as lack of knowledge are discussed as the major causes of homophobia whereby the researcher focuses on the prevalence of non-heterosexuality in Africa as a whole, South African context as well as Pongola. The chapter also focuses on the challenges faced by the LGBTs in rural communities. This chapter further discusses various strategies implemented

to minimize homophobia as well as the role played by the media in empowering the society on non-heterosexual identities as well as some government strategies that have been put in place to eradicate social exclusions of non-heterosexuals in South African communities. This chapter will also include the theoretical framework along with the theories that have been used in the study which are the queer theory as well as the rights-based approach.

1.11.3 Chapter 3: The methodological chapter of this study discusses how the researcher collects and analyses data. The chapter further explores the research design that was used, identifies the targeted population and the sample, explains the data collection approaches and the tools that were used to collect, analyse and interpret the data. The limitations of the study are to be included.

1.11.4 Chapter 4: The researcher presents and interprets data from the semi structured interviews with ten community members from Pongola, including LGBT members, church representatives, community elders as well as general heterosexual youth. Empirical qualitative data is collected and an analysis is conducted using thematic analysis. A detailed account of the demographic profile of the participants is presented. Interviews are transcribed, the comments were studied and themes identified.

1.11.5 Chapter 5: The chapter discusses the findings of the study from the qualitative research.

1.12 Conclusion

The study has been structured into five chapters, presenting the introduction and background of the research study as the first chapter which presents the following: research problem statement; aim; objectives; main research questions; significance of study with the summary outlining the structure of this study. This Chapter presented the aim and objectives of the study. It also presented the problem statement and significance of the study. The Chapter also presented the outline of the Chapters in the dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

The literature review chapter aims to highlight and to bring forth the thoughts of other scholars in relation to the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities. The primary topics discussed include African culture, South African culture, the history of non-heterosexuality in Africa and in South Africa, cultural and religious perspective on homosexuality and the challenges faced by non-heterosexual people in rural community. Theoretical framework will also be included with the aim of highlighting the theories used to guide the study.

2.2 An overview of culture

According to Idang (2012), culture refers to the characteristics shared by people including the traits, characters peculiar to them making them different from other groups of people. It also refers to the patterned way of life that a certain group of people follow which distinguish them from other groups and they claim its origin and descent. Aziza, (2001), describe it as the totality of behaviour of a particular group including everything that makes them different from other groups. This includes greeting habits, songs and dancing habits, rites of passage from birth through marriage to death, traditional occupations as well as religious and philosophical beliefs.

Aziza, (2001), states that culture can be changed over time due to exposure to other cultures and intertwined ways of living. Awoniyi, (2015), adds that culture can be inherited from generation to generation through role modelling, teaching the young about the expected way of life as well as drawing the line between what is considered a norm and deviant for that particular cultural group.

According to Ezedike, (2009), the term African culture refers to the total shared arts, beliefs, moral codes and practices that characterize Africans and can also be referred to as African heritage. Idang (2012) describes African culture as all the material and spiritual values of the African people in the cause of history and characterizing the historical stage that the African continent has attained in developments. Africans have strong morals and societal values which plays a role in regulating interpersonal relationships. There are certain norms and standards that are placed in order to ensure social cohesion as well as smooth running of the

community. These norms also play a role of preventing wars and ensuring peace and stability within the community (Igboin, 2011). According to Awoniyi, (2015), all African citizens share common values which are said to be hospitality, respect for the elderly and ensuring good character.

The African continent consists of different nationalities that have varying cultural norms and beliefs. Even though the cultures are different, there is one culture and unity amongst the African people for example the Spirit of Ubuntu, which is also known as Ubuntu (Idang, 2015). According to Birokou, (2013), Afrocentrism is what makes all Africans unique from other people because it is the relationship whereby all Africans believe they are related to one another, helping each other, and standing by each other despite which country one comes from.

According to Gomes da Costa, (2013), Africans believe in communalism of which can be described as maintaining mechanical solidarity and caring for one another. This includes maintaining good relations with each other and taking care of other people even if someone does not belong to the same citizen as theirs. Africans also adhere to interdependence which entails the sense of belonging to the entire community, which is also referred to as it takes a village. Reddy, (2013), states that most African citizens are led by chiefs which have the highest authority and are the decision makers. The chiefs are also accountable in ensuring peace in the community. Although African countries have Presidents and kings, they do have chiefs as community leaders whose role is to ensure that all the norms and standards are followed and there is peace and stability amongst the people in the community.

According to Awoniyi, (2015), even though the bill of rights may vary from each country to another, there are human rights that are common in all African countries. This includes the right to the lineage land, the right to food and protection and hunger, the right to fair trial as well as the right to own private property. This shows that even though there is diversity within Africans, there is a lot that we have in common and that is unique about being African. Gates, (2011), adds that the similarity amongst these African countries is mostly enhanced by the organisations that these countries share such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as the African Union (AU). Croucher, (2002), adds that it is through these organizations where the leaders conclude and share as to how they will govern the citizens through the implementation of policies that will sustain what they ought to believe as Africanism.

2.3 Culture in South Africa

Birukou, Blanzieri, Giorgini and Giunchiglia, (2013), defined culture as the set of knowledge, beliefs, customs and socially transmitted behavioural characteristics of a society. Dephny, (1993), adds that culture has an effect on how one's gender is lived in a way that it is the mother pillar for gender since gender is created through certain cultural norms. Culture consists of similar characteristic as gender due to its ability to evolve over time and it being learned or unlearned depending on the place or time. Therefore, both culture and gender are not fixed concepts and are susceptible to change.

South Africa has eleven official languages namely Zulu, Swazi, Ndebele, Xhosa, Sesotho, Sepedi, Venda, Afrikaans, Tswana, Tsonga as well as South African sign language, hence it is the reason behind the referral to South Africa as a rainbow nation. The nation also consists of different cultures which originate from the San and Koi Koi hunter gathers. The first cultural group is Zulu and is found in the KwaZulu-Natal hills. According to Awoniyi, (2015), the beliefs of cultural groups' are based on the presence of ancestral spirits, the belief of magic as and that illness and bad luck are caused by bad luck. The Xhosa cultural group of which many of its people are found in the Eastern Cape province, is well known for the initiation and circumcision of young men. The Ndebele cultural group on the other side is well known for decorating homes with vibrant geometric designs and women in this group wear striking coloured blankets and neck rings.

The Sotho cultural group is originally found both in South Africa and Lesotho. The people of this group are known for wearing bright coloured patterned blankets instead of coats. The Shangaan cultural group are known to have originated from Mozambique and famous for eating mopane worms. The Venda cultural group mostly originated from the Limpopo province and are known for farming. Other cultural groups are namely; Coloured, Indians, Caucasians and Chinese and they are found all South Africa. (Reddy: 2013).

As noted above that South Africa has various tribes, each cultural group has their own norms and standards. Most cultural beliefs are against non-heterosexual sexual orientation as stated by Richardson (2006), due to the legalization of same sex marriages, many cultural leaders and advocates are no longer vocal about their hatred towards non-heterosexuality, they only show it through the lack of support towards these people and ensuring social exclusion.

2.4 History of non- heterosexuality in African communities

African leaders, historians, anthropologists, clergyman, authors, and contemporary Africans alike have denied or overlooked the existence of homosexuality or same-sex relationships and persistently claimed that such patterns were introduced by Europeans. According to Reddy, (2013), Africa continent has the most number of countries that still regard homosexuality as illegal Homosexuality has been an existing phenomenon in rural communities since the early 1900s. Ibrahim, (2015), states that it is undeniable that non-heterosexuality has been existing in African countries way before colonization.

There is evidence showing not only that same-sex intimacy was tolerated in ancient Egypt, but that at certain periods same-sex relationships were legally recognised. Among the Azande, in precolonial Sudan, male same-sex marriage was legally recognised where dowry was paid to boy-wives and damages were awarded for infidelity. According to Newcombe, (2002), other precolonial non-heterosexual incidences were prevalent in Mombasa whereby one in twenty-five Muslims were homosexual. Other showings of non-heterosexuality was amongst the Semite Harari people engaged in uranism and sodomy, the Meru people of Kenya, the Bantu of Angola and the Zulu of South Africa all tolerated transgender men and allowed them to marry other men. Gay prostitution continued to be reported among the Hausa of Nigeria. Effeminate males among the Langi of Uganda were allowed to marry men. In Zimbabwe, LGBT affection, while being tolerated, not publicly displayed or discussed.

Whilst some leaders in West Africa have not been vocal about gay rights, their attitudes are represented eloquently by the anti-gay laws informing the judicial systems of their countries. Under Sharia law in Nigeria and most of North Africa, homosexuality is a criminal offence that is punishable by being hung. Laws across Africa do not recognise homosexuality as a way of life; it is generally perceived as unnatural and a crime. Those who classify as homosexuals are automatically turned into lawbreakers, social rejects and threats to society. It is impossible to separate the laws from the political leadership which sponsors such law (Reddy, 2013).

According to Newcombe, (2002), there are 10 countries that have officially legalised homosexuality, with 29 other African countries who made it illegally. Makofane, (2013), states that many African leaders believe that non-heterosexuality is un-African and not in their historical books. This is mainly because non-heterosexuality mostly adopts the Western

culture and leaders perceive the acceptance of non-heterosexuality as being encouragement of their citizens to lose their local culture and to be colonized. Countries like Somalia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Namibia do not have laws regulating non-heterosexuality with the worst hostile treatment LGBTs such as life sentence imprisonment as well as a death penalty for those disclosing their sexuality (Newcombe, 2002).

2.5   History of homosexuality in South Africa

Homosexuality was a common occurrence in the gold mines of South Africa during the 1950s and 1960s (Eppretch: 2013) whereby heterosexual men were isolated from their wives and saw it fitting to have young boys as wives. Although these men argued that they turned to homosexuality as a last resort, some chose to extend their stay at mines rather than return home in order to be with their "mine wives". This demonstrates that these relationships held significant meaning, and that some men even preferred to be with other men rather than women. The argument can be made that these men chose to return to their heterosexual lifestyle because they did not want to be ostracized by a disapproving society and had little opportunity to engage in homosexual activities outside of the mines.

According to Dlamini, (2006), the prevalence of non-heterosexuality became noticeable in the mines whereby men were staying in the hostels with other men while no women were allowed in the hostels and most of them have left their wives and children back home in the rural communities. Dlamini, (2006), adds that this led to men growing the sexual desire and wanting to have someone to take care of them and as a result they had no choice but to convince the men they were residing with at the hostel to perform all the wifely duties which included cooking, laundry and sexual intimacy.

The role of the "wife" in mine marriages was to clean the living quarters and to provide company for the "husband" (Dlamini: 2006). Mine marriages were usually terminated at the end of work cycles. In a study conducted by Rudwick (2011) it further uncovered that mine marriages were often terminated and kept discrete as it was seen as a disgrace in the outside community at large. The refusal to openly acknowledge their sexuality was indicative of their fear of the potential social and personal repercussions of losing their families and place in their communities. However, there were men who chose to remain in the gay subculture regardless.

Simon Nkoli (November 26, 1957- November 30, 1998), a prominent gay rights activist recounted his experience of coming out: "Ten years later I came out of my own closet when I met a man, fell in love with him, and told my parents. Ever since then, I seem to have been coming out of closets all the time... relationship. My mother's reaction showed concern. She didn't want to reject me. She wanted to rectify things...But in the end, I was lucky she was concerned. I've counselled lots of people whose parents weren't as concerned as she, whose parents just threw their clothes into the street or turfed them out of the house. My mother, at least, tried to help me, in the ways that she knew how." (Nkoli, 1995:252-253).

Most lesbians were affected by their ascribed role of being women in a patriarchal society. Circumstances and experience undoubtedly varied, and according to Tanya Chan Sam, (1995), lesbians were fearful of telling their families of their orientation. Some women also feared that their co-workers would ostracize them, and this would limit their earning potential (Sam, 1995).

Most LGBT people had to maintain a certain level of secrecy. Dlamini, (2006), stated that during the apartheid period gay life and culture took place behind closed doors. Homosexual people would frequent clubs that catered exclusively to them, or organized parties in their homes. LGBT formed communities in places like District Six, Cape Town and Sophia-town, Johannesburg South Africa. Urban areas offered homosexuals form townships more freedom, to be away from judgmental communities, to live around people who shared similar life experiences and who were accepting of them.

The Immorality Act of 1957 prohibited sexual intercourse between people of different ethnicities. Amendments were introduced to the Immorality Acts of 1957 that further restricted relationships between different races and only outlawing homosexuality if it occurred in public places (Gevisser, 1995). The political atmosphere was conducive for the spreading and strengthening of opposition movements, and LGBT rights groups began to incorporate the LGBT struggle into to the wider anti-apartheid cause. The creation of Gay and Lesbians of the Witwatersrand (GLOW) in 1988 provided marginalized groups, such as Black, Coloured and Indian people, a platform to express their needs, provide support to one another and create a unified front to battle homophobia as well as the apartheid.

HIV/AIDS appeared in South Africa in 1982 (Avert, 2011). Gevisser and Cameron, (1995), stated that the gay community was disproportionately hit by the virus (Gevisser & Cameron,

1995). Most people died from the disease due to the scarcity of healthcare facilities in communities, the expensive access to the anti- retroviral medication and those in rural communities suffered severely due to not knowing they had the virus along with the usage of inappropriate indigenous remedies.

One of the most disturbing statistics is the prevalence of corrective rapes against lesbians (Fihlani, 2011). The statistics showed that from 1998 to 2011 there were 31 lesbian murders and only two convictions. The LGBT rights group, Triangle said it recorded ten rapes per week in the Western Cape (Wesley, 2012). Many Lesbians lived in fear of getting raped. Fihlani, (2011), also mentioned that the community at large was astonished and concerned about the sudden increase of lesbian hate crimes. This shows that homophobia is still prevalent in South African communities.

2.6 Non-heterosexuality in Pongola rural community

Rudwick, (2011), states that to be Zulu and to openly express a non-heterosexual identity in South Africa is dangerous. This is due to the strong homophobic and patriarchal structures existing amongst the Zulu tribe. In her recent study, Sithole, (2019), confirmed that the likelihood of encountering someone who is non-heterosexual in South African rural communities, especially KwaZulu-Natal is very slim. She furthermore added that, in her own point of view non-heterosexuality is recognized in Zulu families whereby if parents give birth to a child with both male and female genitals also known as (hermaphrodite) *inqingili,* the child would be hidden from the entire community because it was considered as a shameful and abnormal occurrence. Hence reasoning behind non-heterosexuality being considered taboo and not openly spoken about.

Bree, Lynch, Nel and Mathews, (2016), quoted Zulu King Zwelithini when he expressed his views on non-heterosexuality saying, "homosexual behaviour is becoming a threat in our nation because it encourages people not to have proper families that have children". Expressions of such highlight that traditional leaders and leaders at large have a strong disapproving attitude towards non-heterosexuality, as quoted prior within chapter whereby former South African president Jacob Zuma, he too disapproved of non-heterosexuals. According to Rangan and Gilmartin, (2002), the community leaders also known as Induna in rural communities have the highest authority compared to the local communities since they are the ones owning the land, they are the ones governing the entire community and nothing

can be done without their approval. It is common that since most elders believe in heterosexuality, young individuals who are non-heterosexual find it difficult to survive in such environments where one is raised in a heteronormative community while struggling with gender identity, coming out and maintaining a healthy romantic non-heterosexual relationship (Parvic and Turckin, 2011).

Whipple, (2012), emphasized that countries where Christianity is the primary religion of choice are less likely to have legislation criminalizing Non-heterosexuality such as the Southern Africa. In her recent argument Sithole, (2019), states that most people in the KwaZulu-Natal province classify as Christian and follow Christianity norms and belief system. It was also noted by Locke, (2002), that Christianity consists of biblical verses which tend to be used in the debate around non-heterosexuality. The biblical verses view non-heterosexuality as a sin hence people viewed it as being ungodly.

Judge, (2008), unpacked findings that showcased that most LGBTs living in rural African communities are not open about being non-heterosexual in attempt of avoiding being discriminated against and labelled as deviant. As a result, even if they need help as well as information that can assist them in relation to their sexuality most of them prefer to remain in closet to avoid victimisation. McDemmot et al, (2008), stated that as soon as a heterosexual person becomes aware of their sexuality, they also become aware of the stigma and homophobia that will be directed to them. Cabag, (2000), further on said that in most communities, gays and transgendered people are most likely to suffer from homophobia compared to lesbians who are commonly known for suffering from corrective rapes.

According to Sibiya, Ngxongo and Bhengu, (2018), most South African communities are underdeveloped in a way that they lack infrastructure and resources aimed to make their lives easier. This includes libraries, easy access to health care facilities and water. As someone who was born and lives in Pongola, the researcher has seen the community not have access to water for almost week during the winter season and the entire community does not have internet services such as internet cafeteria. Acquiring knowledge on non-heterosexuality is a huge challenge in the community of Pongolo which has only one library about forty kilometres from the rural community.

The location of the community of Pongolo has an impact on the normalization of non-heterosexuality. According to Ibrahim, (2015), most African countries have decriminalized

non-heterosexuality and Pongola being very close to the borderline that separates South Africa and Swaziland, it is most likely that people from the Pongolo community adopt the cultural norms and attitudes regarding non-heterosexuality of the neighbouring country. Castro and Murray, (2010), stated that the infusion of other cultures is based on the fact that some of the community members are illegal immigrants who still live by the norms of their country of origin therefore, their cultural norms and beliefs are mostly likely not to change easily more especially adults.

2.7 Homosexuality and cultural beliefs

South African communities, particularly in the rural KwaZulu-Natal province are deeply rooted in the Zulu culture and way of life. This includes following all cultural practices such as *lobola*, reed dance, *umbondo* polygamy and so on. These practices are made to be compulsory for community members and failure to do so results to one being labelled as deviant. Zulu culture strongly condemns same sex marriages and community leaders strongly refuse to grant community members permission to marry or be involved in same sex relationships. (Awoniyi, 2015). Same sex marriages are perceived as non-African and violating cultural norms, Reddy, (2013), adds that although a handful number of community leaders may not disapprove of non-heterosexuality, it will continue not to be permitted due the fear of being scrutinized by other leaders.

Culture played a vital role in shaping the attitudes of a society. According to Fihlani, (2011), the term culture refers to the socially transmitted behavioral patterns and socially acceptable acquired lifestyle of a particular member of society Reddy, (2013), adds that it refers to the acceptable norms, beliefs and standards that each society holds upon to its members. Many rural communities in South Africa adhere to strong cultures and many African leaders believe that being non-heterosexual is not from Africa and has been adopted from the Western cultures. This resulted in homosexuals within the community to be considered as deviant, demonic and colonized by western spirits. Which consequently resulted in a high level of ill treatment of those who classify as LGBT since the community leaders were against their sexuality therefore, no one has greater power to protect and advocate for their human rights not to be violated, (Nkoli: 1995).

The presence of traditional healers and prophets in a rural community make it difficult for non-heterosexuals to survive if not live freely in a rural community. No one has the knowledge about their sexuality and they are considered as marginalized psychopaths who do

not respect the local culture. Cases of forced arranged marriages and incest still occurs within many families as Yarbrough, (2004), states that in some families who are aware of their gay family member, they force the gay family member into marriage with the aim of having another family member to impregnate. This act hides the sexuality of the gay family member from the entire community, is said to show masculinity and contributes to expand the family. Most families continue to struggle to understand what being LGBT means and as a result, at times the non-heterosexual family member would be taken to traditional healers or prophets with the purpose of curing them if not their sexuality or removing the demon of being non-heterosexual as they believe.

Even though there have been improvements in terms of traditional doctors getting educated and obtaining medical practice certificates, many of the traditional doctors in rural areas are still uneducated but are respected elders who are trusted in providing health care services in the rural communities. It is of rare occasion that anyone questions the traditional doctors or bother to provide them with programs aimed at broadening their knowledge about living in the 21st century alongside non-heterosexual individuals. Almost everything is believed to be linked to ancestors and this makes it difficult for the LGBT in rural communities to live freely because of the cultural oppressions as well as lack of resources that can rescue them, (Dlamini 2006).

2.8   Religion and homosexuality

According to Schoeman, (2017), religion refers to the set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency involving devotional and ritual observances containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs. It also refers to something that one believes in and follows devotedly. In South Africa, there are six types of religions namely Christianity, Buddhism, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish as well as the Traditional African Religions also known as ancestral tribal animist, with the KwaZulu-Natal province leading in the fellowship of Christianity and Traditional African Religions (Makofane, 2013). It is prevalent that the previously mentioned belief systems have an impact on the attitudes towards non-heterosexuality.

In some church denominations it is believed that non-heterosexuality is a sin and there have been biblical verses in support of this. The Bible makesreference to sexual intercourse involving two men as a detestable practice. Furthermore, the idea is reinforced in Leviticus chapter 20 verse 13; 'If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death'. Many scriptures in the New Testament also speak against homosexuality such as 1st Corinthians chapter 6 verses 9 to10; "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God".

The second argument against religion and homosexuality is that there are no examples of homosexual marriages in the Bible as homosexuality is unnatural and inconsistent with what God had intended for humans. Christians argue that there are no examples of gay marriages because in God's eyes all marriages are heterosexual and anything other than that is prohibited and not recognised (Schoeman, 2017). Gnuse, (2015, 70) believes that the scriptures are historically and culturally limited. As times change culture also changes. He purports that relying on scriptures which were written thousands of years ago can be limiting as they are not relevant to the culture of today due to culture and lifestyles revolving over time.

There has been a clash of churches amongst the Christian denomination, with other churches believing that God wants people to be loved and accepted as they are whilst other denominations believe that non-heterosexuality is a sin. Those who have accepted it believe that non-heterosexuality should be normalized because the Bible was originally written in Greek and Hebrew therefore there might have been a misunderstanding of the content or a translation error to other languages (Lings, 2013). This introduces a different dimension to the argument by the being Christians who believe that originally non-heterosexuality was accepted and that it was the translation Bible to other languages that caused the misinterpretation. Other liberal Christian groups argue that the rejection of homosexuality is not representative of God's love. They argue that in the New Testament Jesus speaks the gospel of love and acceptance. Liberal Christians believe that homosexuality cannot be separated from other sins and that needs to be understood within the context of the theology of sin. (Rolleri, 2013).

2.9   Media and non-heterosexuality

The evolution of technology has made the world more interconnected with the use of media to disseminate information throughout the world. According to Talbot, (2007), media refers to all the platforms used to pass a message from one person to another. This includes television, newspaper, radio, social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. It is the primary source for understanding the world and plays a vital role as a means of communication for people. Media platforms such popular television programs have been one of the ways in which gay visibility and the image of the gay lifestyle has been disseminated in South Africa (Reid, 2003:17). This is depicted by the representation of homosexuals on television in sexual scenes, the normalization of a homosexual community as well as characters who are open and unashamed by their sexuality. The media outlets present homosexuals enjoying their sex life within a society that fully accepts them (Riggle and Rostocky, 2011).

According to Kalichman et al, (2008), rural South African communities are known for their poor development in terms of resources as well as the lack of access to services. In addition, many people from rural communities' lack knowledge and awareness on events happening outside their contextual settings and the world. Non- heterosexuality has always been a taboo in rural communities due to the lack of historical background of it therefore, the inability to comprehend it. However, media has played an essential role in empowering community members on the different sexual identities existing throughout the world in a way that will normalize the phenomenon and encourage those who are marginalized to stand in their truth and be empowered (Dlamini, 2006).

According to Rome, (2010:13), "by depicting homosexuals as in-depth, multi-faceted human beings, no different from their heterosexual counterparts, media speaks to the equality we can hope to see championed within our very diverse society". Same sex people cannot have their own children as a couple, but they can adopt or one of them mates with someone of a different sex. Non-heterosexual couples tend to be subjected to having society imposing their perceptions upon them and questioning their parenting capabilities. In most cases non-heterosexual people have children before coming out of the closet about their sexuality and they are then not in relationships with the partner they had conceived the child with as they no longer in heterosexual relationship. Talbot, (2007), states that in such instances the media

plays a crucial role in illustrating LGBT characters who raise children; even celebrities sharing their life stories on parenting for instance Somizi Mhlongo (A famous South African gay celebrity) shares his parenting skills through his reality show called "Living the dream with Somizi" as well as through his social network handles.

In as much as the media has played a vital role in normalising non-heterosexuality. Gomillion and Guiliano, (2011), states that it has created a negative belief and attitude towards this phenomenon in a way that many people especially the elders hold up to a belief that non-heterosexuality is a Western and is a form of colonization that corrupts the young people. This is because it is not traceable in the books of African history and since technology comes from the Western therefore everything that comes with it is considered as a form of colonization. Richardson, (2006), states that many elders in rural communities blame social media for exposing young people to a non-African lifestyle and encouraging the young to abandon their culture. Negative teaching brought about by the media are said to vary form skin bleaching, nakedness, explicit programmes to even body size consciousness. Dlamini, (2006), concluded that media is putting pressure on young people to lose themselves and their values that they grew up adhering to and that the local culture is losing its true form whilst Western lifestyle is gaining momentum.

2.10   Challenges faced by homosexuals

Butter and Astbury, (2005), confirmed that there are many challenges experienced by non-heterosexual people in the South African communities. The main challenge they face is the lack of resources that will enhance their knowledge on the lifestyle of those we classify as non-heterosexual, which includes support groups as well as the internet access and technology at large. According to Yarbrough, (2004), the LGBT in most rural communities remain in closet due to the lack of support and advanced knowledge about their sexuality which bares consequences of them not understanding their own sexuality as well as the other members of the community not to understand them. Dlamini, (2006), states that in most cases non-heterosexuals become isolated from the society due to people not being able to understand them better since there is lack of support services within rural communities.

Another challenge is that of being discriminated against and isolated from the society. Butter and Astbury, (2005), states that they are labelled as deviant and even called by offensive names such as *isitabane* or *inkonkoni*. Yarbrough, (2004), mentioned that some family

members cut of their fellow family member after discovering that he or she is non-heterosexual and this is due to failure to accept them for whom they are because of lack of insight and understanding of non-heterosexual identities, the fear of being criticized by the society at large as well as societal and religious beliefs that do not conform to non-heterosexuality.

Fihlani, (2011), states that there is still a need for improvement of service providers in rural communities. Many of the people in the service sector are old in age, lack professionalism and knowledge about the special needs for homosexual people as well as what is expected of them when assisting non-heterosexuals. Some of the service sector providers have a phobia or judgmental attitude towards minority groups. According to Murray, (1998), when people require help they end up getting secondary victimization through denial of services that they need or the use of language that would make them feel even worse.

Many rural communities in South Africa are traditional and adhere to African male patriarchy which is strongly attached to homophobic stereotypes. Nkoli, (1995), states that many young homosexuals are assaulted in rural communities by heterosexuals with the belief of making them stronger if not straight. Dlamini, (2006), states that lesbians on the other hand are usually raped with the belief that forcing them into sexual intercourse with other men will change their sexuality. The hatred can go as far as being insulted through biblical sermons and verses which are usually quoted by religious priests who strongly condemn non-heterosexuality. Having said that, many LGBTs fear to come out about their sexuality since they are aware of the marginalization and ill-treatment that they are likely to face. Most of the LGBTs tend to relocate to the urban settings where they will face less humiliation. Butter and Astbury, (2005), adds that in some instances homosexuals often feel they have brought a sense of humiliation to their families by being homosexual.

In summary, most challenges faced by members of the LGBT are hate crimes, discrimination and not being taken seriously by professionally trained service sector providers within the community. According to Fihlani, (2011), Non-heterosexual crime victims viewed the police forces as being apathetic to their cause and did not take their cases seriously; nurses and doctors tend to be reluctant and insensitive when assisting them. Such actions put the non-heterosexuals in a state of extreme vulnerability, makes them susceptible to abuse and their human rights being violated. However, Dlamini, (2006), states that most individuals from the LGBT remained in closet as a way of protecting themselves against abuse and discrimination.

2.11   Coping mechanisms adopted to minimize the effects of homophobia

Valentine, Skelton and Butlers, (2012:13), homophobia can contribute to people's bad feelings about their own sexuality and developing low self-esteem or even self-loathing. These emotions can trigger self-destructive cycles of behaviour such as drinking, drug taking and self-harm. A number of practices adopted by non-heterosexuals to combat or cope with homophobia may include; expressing less concern of the negative ramifications of heterosexist and ignoring the forces of oppression by being vocal with the aim of gaining the momentum to bring about social change (Fine, 2011)

2.11.1 Withdrawal

Black men cope with heterosexism by changing the image they present to others, relying on faith for emotional comfort, standing up for themselves, and attempting to change their sexual behaviour and feelings (Sithole: 2019). Non-heterosexual people cope with homophobia through voluntary and involuntary disengagement whereby voluntary disengagement includes withdrawing from situations that leads to stigma whereby they are in denial or ignore the existence of homophobia in their surroundings; voluntary engagement on the other hand refers to a coping mechanism whereby one adapts to the situation and ignore its existence (Miller and Kaiser, 2001). Choi, Han, Paul and Ayala, (2011), states that stigmatized individuals cope well when they disassociate themselves from social settings which makes them feel unwelcomed for example churches, nightclubs and bars.

2.11.2 Role modelling and normalizing homophobia

Choi et al, (2011), mentioned that people experiencing social exclusions are most likely to dismiss their stigma, whereby they don't mind what other people think or feel about them. McDemmot, (2008), adds that this is a strategy that is mostly used by homosexuals and they do so in hope of the oppressive situation being over soon, for instance, when they know there are rules placed to protect their human rights as well as non-heterosexuals who are not depending from anyone for survival.

Another coping strategy is that they draw strength from external sources. According to Fine, (2001), non-heterosexuality is not a usual phenomenon more especially in rural communities

therefore, most LGBTs survive homophobia and coming out in their communities through role modelling whereby they draw inspiration and make use of peoples experience who have been through similar situations. The media is commonly used as a platform where one gets to know about lives and experiences of other people from around the world and uses their experiences to gain courage and advice in dealing with their own similar situations. Other non-heterosexuals deal with homophobia through direct confrontation whereby they set boundaries for people on what they are comfortable to talk about, they draw the line between their sex life and how they feel such as being vocal when they feel oppressed (Miller and Kaiser, 2001)

2.11.3 Relocating to the cities

According to Lewis, (2014), in most rural communities, LGBTs opt to relocate to places where they are not known, where they won't be judged for their sexuality. According to Harrison, (2003), this has created a debate on the prevalence, acceptance and normalisation of non-heterosexuality because it is not evidently in plain sight in rural communities and people who are indecisive or occasionally non-heterosexual contribute to the raise of questions to whether non-heterosexuality is natural or adapted from the Western culture. This also goes the same way with the uniqueness of the dress code and lifestyle of non-heterosexual people when compared to the rest of the community. According to Lee, (2002), LGBTs cope with homophobia by internalizing it and accepting that they are different from everyone, hence they want to be recognized for being different by dressing differently from other community members which in return tends to make elders to hold to that strong belief that non-heterosexuality is against their cultures.

2.11.4 Hiding in non-heterosexual relationships

Scholars like Wilcox, (2003), states that coming out to a community that hasn't fully accepted homosexuality can be quite difficult for many LGBTs. This is because they have to explain their sexuality to everyone and be exposed to a very high degree of homophobia and social exclusion. Sutherland, (2016), adds that the fear to undergo all such can lead to a non-heterosexual person opting to have a well- known heterosexual relationship that can be used as a defence to avoid their sexuality from being questioned. Wilcox, (2013), also adds that this is most likely to happen to someone who is still in denial about identifying as non-heterosexual and such relationships eventually end once the non-heterosexual person comes

out about their sexuality; it is through these situations whereby most people assume non-heterosexuality has been adapted, not knowing the reason behind the change.

2.11.5 Sexuality identity correlation to work ethic

According to Badget, (2003), homosexuals are always assumed to be hard workers. This is because they have the burden to showcase the entire society that they can be successful despite all the negative labels pinned against them. Valentine, Skelton and Butler, (2003), state that most LGBTs living in the closet and who are scared of being disowned after coming out have the pressure to work extra hard, to be successful and be independent so that they are be able to freely live their life and not be dependent upon someone else. In addition to that, Valentine et al, (2003), states that the dedication and success is often used by non-heterosexuals to prove they are not possessed by evil.

2.11.6 Dating people who are in committed heterosexual relationships

Scholars like Kertzner, (2001), state that homosexuals who do not wish for their sexuality to be known are most likely to date partners who are still in closet and usually those who have a well-known heterosexual relationship. According to Awoniyi, (2015), hiding in other people's relationships gives the non-heterosexual a way to be free from being labelled and judged while they also enjoy their lives. Baker and Beagan, (2014), further stated that it is mostly married men who are romantically interested in non-heterosexual young men and they financially take care of them which gives another assumption or justification as to why most of them are not poor.

2.12 Theoretical framework

2.12.1 Rights based approach

Van Vollenhoven and Els, (2013), state that the South African constitutional rights towards homosexuality have been prevalent even during the 1980s. The rights were against non-heterosexuality whereby the Sexual Offences Act of 1957 during that time prohibited same sex relationships even in private homes. Those found breaking the laws were sentenced two

years imprisonment with an option bail of four hundred Rands. In 1982, the military force recruited non-heterosexuals in communities to a military hospital for therapy. Dlamini, (2006), states that therapy failed and as a result the military force ended up torturing the non-heterosexuals to the point of others being killed.

However, overtime change came about about and laws favouring non-heterosexuals were passed. According to Thoreson, (2008), in 1996 post-colonial, the South African constitution changed with a new amendment of rights. Some of the human rights state everyone has the right to dignity, everyone has the right to privacy excluding public indecency as well as sexual behaviors offending minors, the right to freedom of expression and the right to security of the person.

Most South African communities don't follow the constitution, rural to be specific do not abide the constitution. Murray, (1998), states that the tribal authorities have their own rules which their people are expected to follow. An example is that Zimbabwean former president Robert Mugabe labelled non-heterosexuality as a disgrace whilst in 2006 South Africa's former president Jacob Zuma also made a homophobic statement encouraging citizens to attack the LGBT (Msibi, 2009). Such actions by head of states indicate that laws were made for formality and are not practiced in reality. In addition to that Awoniyi, (2015), states that the justice system of South Africa delivers poor service and that cases are not dealt with accordingly. The cases of sexual orientation related crimes directed to non-heterosexuals are overlooked or not made a priority. According to Dlamini, (2006), police officers tend to make light of the matter and very few arrests are made in comparison to cases reported by heterosexual people. Lack of knowledge on sexual orientation within the service providers stands as a strong threat to the fairness and quality of services they render.

Rowe, (2010), stated that institutional resistance to LGBT rights is amplified by the fact that some commissioners exhibit ignorance about LGBT issues or even show signs of homophobia. In rural communities, normally cases are reported to the community forum or chief who stands as a decision maker as to what punishment an offender receives. In deep rural communities it is believed that sexual related cases should remain within the family and not be reported or known by outsiders. Therefore, many rape cases remain unreported with multiple victimization. Some families do not report the cases due the fear of being discriminated against and the fear for the life of the victim more especially the LGBT persons who are often blamed for being subjected to the abuse. The tribal authorities have a hostile

attitude towards non-heterosexuality therefore they don't do anything to advocate for or protect these people (Nkoli, 1995).

2.12.2 The Queer theory

Queer Theory itself emphasizes the fluidity of sexuality or sexualities. The theory exists to question the established norms, categories, and statuses with a special focus on challenging sexual (hetero/homo), gender (male/female), class (rich/poor), and racial (white/non-white) categories, and international binary orders (liberal-democratic/pre-modern authoritarian). The queer theory constitutes of "any form of research positioned within conceptual frameworks that highlight the instability of taken-for-granted meanings and resulting power relations" (Nash & Browne, 2012: 4).

According to Sullivan, (2003), the queer theory focuses on the negative characteristics that one associates with others and that the perception of this theory is that many people in society accept the idea that sexuality is defined in terms of sex or gender of object choice with the belief that there is medication to cure non-heterosexuality through therapeutic intervention. Ibrahim, (2015), states that theorists believe that through psychiatric and psychoanalyst intervention homosexuality can be cured because people belonging to this group are heterosexual, just that they are on the wrong track and need professional help.

In rural communities of South Africa many people still believe in traditional healers as the remedy to heal them when in need of medical assistance. As a result, the community members believe in consulting and performing rituals as well as collecting herbal medication when ill or when things aren't going accordingly in their lives be it bad luck or any other problems affecting their wellbeing. This is due to their ancestral belief of the traditional healer acting as a mediator between them and ancestors (Awoniyi, 2015).

According to Reddy, (2013), families or parents of LGBT members often consult or refer their children to traditional healers to get cured for their sexuality after finding out that they are homosexual. This is because they believe that homosexuality is a disease, demonic and a curse that requires intervention to be cured. Yarbrough, (2004), adds that some families also opt to take LGBTs to hospitals and psychiatrists to get checked if they are sick whilst others refer them to rehab just to keep the homosexuals away from them whilst they try to accept

their sexuality whereas others send them away just to deal with denial and shame from the society.

According to Awoniyi, (2015), these theories both traditional and western don't change one's sexuality because non-heterosexuality is not a disease nor is it a curse therefore none of the remedies are effective. Mader, (1993), adds that Christian families always take LGBT members to prophets or pastors for spiritual healing with the belief that prayer is the remedy to change them from non-heterosexuality. In addition to that, Schoeman (2017), states that as a result of this, many church leaders and prophets end up discriminating against non-heterosexuals because they have failed to cure them and call them agents of the devil because of their sexuality. This theory basically focuses on the therapeutic interventions put in place to combat non-heterosexuality and as stated above that it is applicable in rural communities however, Richardson, (2006), states that it is not effective since homosexuality exists within a person and can never be cured therefore as much as many people believe in it, the future of this theory is deemed because people are getting to learn and accept that non-heterosexuality is neither an illness nor chronic condition.

Another critique of this theory according Thoreson, (2009), is that it makes the LGBT to feel like outsiders and uncomfortable to open up about their sexuality. This is because if one discloses their sexuality they receive special treatment and have to undergo questioning as well as stigma associated with extreme abuse. Dlamini, (2006), states that as a result many LGBTs in rural communities remain in the closet due to the fear of how society will perceive them after revealing their sexuality. Thoreson, (2009), also states that confusion as well as lack of knowledge amongst the LGBTs themselves in rural communities makes it hard for them to advocate for themselves and fight against the societal oppressive structures existing, instead they accept the hostile conditions.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter described in detail what other authors say in relation to the topic whereby the researcher focused on the history of non-heterosexuality in Africa as well the history of non-heterosexuality in South Africa. The researcher also discussed African and South African culture, the challenges faced by non-heterosexual people in rural communities, the role of culture, media and religion in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality, the challenges

faced by non-heterosexuals in rural communities and their coping mechanisms to minimize homophobia and lastly the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

To meet the main aim of this study which is to explore the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola rural community. The methodological chapter of this study focuses on how the researcher collected and analyzed data. The chapter explores the

research design used in the study, the identified target population, explains the data collection approaches and tools that were used in data collection, the data collection methods as well as the limitations of the study.

3.2 Location of the study

The notion of geographic context refers to a specific environment whereby the study took place (Hooloway, 2002). This research study took place in Pongola, a rural part of the KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. The area is located between latitudes -27 22' 59.99" S and longitudes 31 36' 59.99" E with a total population of 127 238. The main economic activities carried out in this area include sugarcane growing and milling, the Pongola game reserve which acts as a tourist attraction hotspot that includes the Big Five as well as the Pongola Poort dam which is regarded as the only dam in the country that has tiger fish. Thirty- five percent of the total population of this community is unemployed due to the high rate of illiteracy, thus contributing to the high levels of poverty and unemployment in the area (Statistics South Africa, 2011). The community has its deep roots in the Zulu culture that perpetuates the exclusion of non-heterosexual identities. All participants are community members who have been residing in the area for longer than five years. Below is a map showing the location of Pongola.
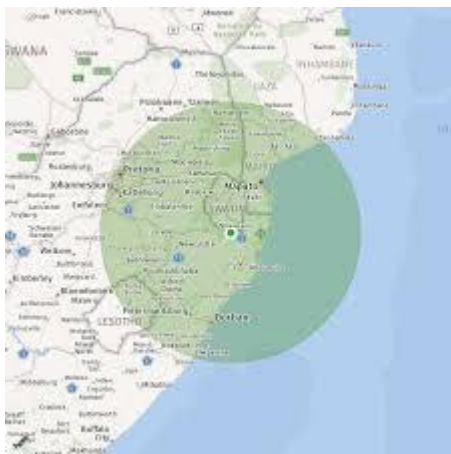
3.3 Research design

In terms of research design, this study adopted an exploratory case study design. According to Creswell, (1998), exploratory research studies are most used in investigating the full nature of the phenomenon that is being studied as well as other factors that may contribute to the issue under investigation. Therefore, the selection of this research design was based on the

fact that it enabled the researcher to develop a better understanding of how culture plays a role in shaping and influencing societal perceptions and attitudes towards homosexual people, as well as to understand some of the challenges they face in culturally conservative societies such as Pongola.

3.4   Research Paradigm

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. This is mainly because the researcher wanted to explore what role culture plays in creating and shaping homophobic attitudes, discrimination of homosexuals and the societal perceptions towards the LGBT. The study also aimed to understand some of the critical challenges faced by homosexual people in modern rural parts of South Africa, using Pongola as the study area.

Qualitative research, as an approach, was selected on the basis that it was an appropriate approach to studying behaviour, lived human experiences, feelings and societal perceptions through the use of both observations and personal one-on-one interviews with the relevant study subjects concerned so that the views of the research participants were not restricted (Bless et al, 2013). Therefore, this approach relied more on the points of views and perspectives of the people being studied which was of paramount significance to ensuring validity of the research findings. Mason, (1996) similarly states that unlike the quantitative research method which emphasizes the production of measurable statistical findings, the qualitative research method is "sensitive to the social context in which the data is produced". Thus, using qualitative approach, the researcher was able to have a better and deeper understanding of the challenges faced by homosexual people in modern South Africa also in terms of understanding how culture, religion and media led to the shaping and reshaping of societal perceptions towards homosexual people.

This study adopts an interpretivist paradigm as Odonogue, (2006), stated that with this paradigm, the researcher is interested in understanding the meaning behind the reason and also that the researcher uses their skill in order to understand other people's world. This is a suitable paradigm for this study because the researcher was interested in understanding the livelihoods of non-heterosexual people in a culturally conservative rural community and to understand the cultural impact on societal attitude towards non-heterosexuality. The researcher was mostly interested in the interpretation of the community members on their views about non-heterosexuality.

3.4   Sampling strategy and recruitment

A snowball sampling strategy was used to select the study subjects. According to Browne, (2005), snowball sampling refers to a method whereby the researcher finds one target participant then get referrals to other participants through the already approached participant of the same target group. The enrolment strategy involved approaching the few target participants that the researcher knew, they then led the researchers to others of a similar sexuality. In this instanced the researcher was interested in participants who have openly came out about their sexuality and not those who are still in closet. This included 10 homosexual people and 10 participants who were from the general heterosexual community.

All participants in the study were above the age of 18 and were residents of Pongola rural community. The study involved both male and female participants. From a gender participation perspective, the researcher ensured that both males and females participated in the study in order to balance gender representation. All participants were asked to share their perspectives on the role of culture, religion and media in influencing public perceptions and attitudes towards homosexual people. The researcher also asked participants to share some of the challenges faced by non-heterosexual people in their rural societies.

3.6 Data collection Techniques

Data was collected using an unstructured interview guide with open-ended questions. According to Foddy, (2003), open–ended questions allow participants to express their opinion without being influenced by the researcher. The list of questions was used to guide the interview and were prepared by the researcher. Unstructured interviews were undertaken from a one-on-one basis given the sensitivity of the matter with each interview lasting for 30 minutes. No focus group discussions were undertaken in this study due to the sensitivity of the study therefore one-on-one interviews were executed to protect each participant's privacy and to keep their information confidential any anonymous.

According to Babbie, (2008:35), "the data collection phase is of cardinal importance as all conclusions reached may be influenced by the type and quality of data collected". In this study, the researcher collected primary data using an interview guide. The researcher introduced herself to the participants via a community leader in this case. This was key point of entry into the community for establishing rapport with those targeted to be part of the research. The participants were informed about the purpose of the research. During each interview session with participants, the researcher-maintained open-mindedness in eliciting

relevant information and the climate was non-threatening hence it was conducive for one-on-one interviews that allowed the participants to feel safe, comfortable and maintained confidentiality of their information and anonymity of their names.

The interview techniques of probing (verbal and non-verbal) were used. This includes probing or exploring silences, prompting as well as summarizing. The researcher used phrases such as "Could you elaborate more on that point? Maintained eye contact to encourage participants to continue speaking. According to Holloway and Wheel (2002:84), "the researcher summarizes the last statements of the participants and encourages more talk". Therefore, the researcher summarized the interview proceedings by restating in his own words the ideas and opinions as well as experiences of participants to ensure understanding, confirm answers and sometimes seek clarity.

A tape recorder was used during the interviews to ensure that no important information was left out. This was done only after obtaining consent from the participants. The researcher also took notes during the interviews. The interview lasted for about forty-five minutes per participant in order to give research participants enough time to talk and take a break if they want to. After the interview, the researcher took all the data collected, which include the field notes, tape recorded material and interview transcripts for further processing.

3.7 Method of data analysis

Thematic analysis was used as a method of data analysis to explore the role of culture, media and religion in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in a rural community. According to Babbie, (2008: 356), a thematic analysis is particularly well suited to the answering of classical questions of communication research such as what, why, and to whom regarding the phenomenon being studied. Qualitative data analysis was used in the study because the community members including LGBT, church leaders' perspectives, experiences and interpretations relating to homosexuality will be 'meaningful properties of social reality which the qualitative research questions seek to explore' (Mason, 1996: 6). To make sense of the data, responses during the interview were transcribed verbatim and read over and over again to familiarize with the data (Parahoo, 1997:235). Significant statements that pertain to perspectives and experiences under the investigation were extracted. Statements were used to formulate meanings.

3.8   Ethical considerations

3.8.1 Autonomy and respect for person's dignity - the researcher ensured respect for participant's dignity by keeping all information discussed confidential. The researcher explained in detail the purpose of the research to each participant and all of them had to sign the consent form as per agreement to participate in the study.

3.8.2 Respect non-maleficence - the researcher ensured a harmless study by not using people's real names and used letters instead when referring to each person. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, all interviews were conducted individually, in a place comfortable for each participant to ensure that they feel safe and free to express their views.

3.8.3   Justice - all participants in this study were voluntary with each one of them allowed to quit participating if they feel they are no longer safe or see danger to be caused by their participation in the study. The researcher used participants from different age groups, different educational levels and different sexual identities to avoid biased findings.

3.8.4 Beneficence - the study was beneficial to the participants because it enlightened them about non-heterosexuality in rural communities; the challenges, coping mechanisms to homophobia as well as the role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality.

3.9 Trustworthiness

3.9.1Validity, Reliability and Rigour

In order for every research to be successful, it should gain trust from participants so that the researcher is able to collect quality information for the purpose of the research. Quality information, refers to the primary information that will be collected directly from the research participants. The researcher respected the dignity and rights of the participants and was well represented to them to gain trust. Bless et al., (2013: 28), states that, "there should be mutual respect during the research where everyone treats one another as equals. All interview sessions maintained high credibility and objectivity to ensure 'trustworthiness' in the data being collected. To ensure trustworthiness in this study, the researcher used researcher triangulation which is "a method that uses more than one researcher for collecting data" (Bekhet and Zeuszniewski, 2014: 40). Therefore, methodological triangulation ensured

trustworthiness integrated because data was collected using different researchers in close consultation with experts in the field including the supervisor.

According to Bless et al., (2013: 236), research trustworthiness is determined in terms of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability of the results obtained. Bless et al., further argued that "credibility seeks to represent the truth of the study, dependability seeks to represent carefulness when collecting data of the study, transferability implies the applicability of study results to same situations or individuals, and confirmability seeks to verify that other studies are able to obtain similar results by following similar processes in research of the same situation". Similarly, "trustworthiness of the research considers human behaviour that is influenced by emotions from their surrounding environments" (Rolfe, 2006: 305). To ensure the credibility of the study, the researcher used emerged themes that were discovered during the interview and allow participants to check and confirm their points of view. The researcher also kept audio recordings and interview transcripts to confirm that the study was conducted and is real.

3.9.2 Dependability can be defined by Cope, (2014), as when the researcher's findings even if another person conducted the study with the same participants, they would retrieve similar findings. The researcher ensured dependability in this study by paraphrasing and asking open ended questions which enabled the participants to explain in detail their views.

3.9.3 Confirmability - refers to the researcher's ability to demonstrate and narrate the views from the participants without being biased. In this study the researcher ensured that the views of respondents were confirmable using direct quotes and emerging themes.

3.9.4 Transferability - Polit and Beck, (2012), describes transferability as the researcher's ability to produce a study which can be used or has meaning to other people who are not involved in the study. The researcher used participants from different age groups, different sexual identities as well as different educational levels to explain the livelihoods, sexual orientation and role of culture in shaping societal attitude towards non-heterosexuality.

3.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study used qualitative data and this chapter has detailed the methodology used by the researcher in collecting data which includes the research paradigm, the research design, the location of the study, sampling strategy and recruitment, the data collection techniques, data collection methods, ethical considerations and lastly trustworthiness.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses and interprets the data collected from the open-ended interviews held with ten community members from Pongola representing both heterosexual and non-

heterosexual identities. A detailed account of the demographic profile of the participants will be presented. All ten interviews were transcribed and themes identified. Categories were developed and the data was fed into categories. Data was interpreted and the literature has been reviewed in chapter two. The findings of the study are presented in the following order: various actions implemented by the local municipality in response to homophobia and social exclusion of non-heterosexual people. The chapter concludes by presenting findings on attitude towards non-heterosexual people in rural communities. The names of all participants were changed to protect their identities.

A number of themes emerged during data collection from the questions asked. There were some follow up questions used by the researcher for clarity.

i) Discrimination and maltreatment of non-heterosexual people in rural communities.
ii) Cultural clash against homosexuality.
iii) Lack of knowledge about the existence of other sexual identities.
iv) Resources and professionalism in inclusion of LGBTs.
v) Religious perceptions against non-heterosexuality.
vi) Various actions that participants engage in response to the threat of homophobia.

4.2 Demographic profiles

The profile of the participants consists of their age, gender, educational level as well as economic status. A total number of ten Pongola community members involving both males and females. All ten participants were above eighteen years of age. The participants consist of LGBTs, church members, community elders, civil servants from the local community as well as the youth. The different participant categories were done in order to get views from different participant groups. All participants have been residing in Pongola for more than five years.

4.3 Emerging themes

4.3.1 Discrimination and social exclusion of non-heterosexual people

All participants mentioned that they are aware of discrimination of non-heterosexual people at Pongola. Below are some of the participant's quotes explaining the incidences of abuse and discrimination as well as some of the contributing factors to homophobic attitudes.

"There are lots of challenges, firstly it is the confusion of identity because they grow up in a community that had only male and female sexual identities. They also had difficulty in coming out of

the closet which in most cases results in some of them being cut off by their families because they have brought shame into the family. The other challenge is that they were not taken seriously and were considered deviant by the entire community and were called offensive names such as **inkonkoni**. What was even more painful is that they were assaulted and gang raped and their cases were not reported because the justice system is not fair for them. The last challenge they face is that they cannot date in public even if they want to and I have never heard of any of them getting married in this community" (Interviewee 5).

Another participant had this to say in support of the same sentiments.

"... from my encounter many homosexuals in this community have a challenge of coming out of the closet and letting the entire community know about their sexuality. This is because they fear rejection, discrimination and being cut off by their families after disclosing their sexualities. The other challenge is that they don't have support groups or organizations within the community to help them with sexual identity related issues. They also face a challenge in maintaining relationships because in most cases they have to hide their partners just to protect their identity and not date publicly". (Interviewee 6)

According to Auraujo, (2009), in South Africa the homosexual people are often humiliated and mocked by community members as a result of their sexuality. Homophobic violence is largely based on the notion that "effeminate gay men betray the superiority of masculinity, and masculine lesbian women challenge and try to usurp male superiority and therefore these individuals are punished for being a threat to the 'natural' social order" (Wells, 2006). Akhan and Barlas, (2013), state that homophobic attitudes are influenced by patriarchal structures of a country.The previous state president, President Jacob Zuma, before his election into office stated that same-sex marriages were a "disgrace to the nation and to God," and that when he was growing up an "ungqingili" (derogatory for gay man) would not have stood in front of him as he would "knock him out" (The Sunday Times, 23 December 2007).

According to Herek (2002), the attack of non-heterosexual people also known as gay bashing is commonly done by heterosexual males than females. As evidently shown from the participant's remarks, none of them in this study mentioned to be discriminated by females. According to Bahns and Branscombe, (2011), those who hold more traditional gender role beliefs are most likely to be homophobic because they already have it in mind that non-heterosexuality is deviant and feed the desire to attack anyone who is going against what they perceive as the norm.

Baruch- Dominguez, Infante- Xibille and Saloma Zunga, (2016), highlighted that coming out as a non-heterosexual person comes with some drastic negative changes socially which includes loss of friends, being disowned by family as well as feeling less worthy. Riggle,

(2011), stated that the exposure to such a stressful event might cause emotional and psychological issues to those affected such as paranoia, anxiety, insomnia and chronic depression in adulthood.

4.3.2 Cultural clash against non-heterosexuality

Participants in the study indicated that cultural leaders and elders were against the normalization and inclusion of homosexual people. This was because they believed that homosexuality is from Western culture and who engages in it is in violation of the Zulu culture since non-heterosexuality is not found in the written history of the Zulu culture. As contradictory as it may seem, participants did confirm that non-heterosexuality has always been there just that it was done privately since it was known as a shameful act. Below are some of the participants views.

> "This thing of human rights is really destroying our children. They are losing their roots and Ubuntu. I mean how someone can allow such to happen in our African soil. Our forefathers are turning in their graves that is why we have incurable diseases like cancer and HIV/AIDS because we are cursed, our ancestors are angry. I always see them modelling around the community trying to earn all the attention available. As a Zulu man who strongly believes in his cultural origins I am strongly against this thing''. (Interviewee 3)

Another participant said:

> "…our elders would have taught us of such if it was something good and the mere fact that we were never told about it, it shows that it is not a good thing". (Interviewee 4)

Emphasizing the same point from a cultural; perspective, another participant said:

> "…this is completely against our culture. I'm a Zulu young man and I've been taught that I have to be man enough have a girlfriend and get married when I get older. This is a violation to of our culture and it shows one is not man enough. I really don't understand how they get to the decision of dating someone of the same sex". (Interviewee 1)

According to Masuku (2015), in Africa, children are prepared for marriage using proverbs that encourage non-heterosexual relationships and since marriage is considered as a ceremony for the society whereby all members of the community gather together and participate and failure to get married in the acceptable heterosexual way is regarded as deviant. In addition to that Rudwick, (2011), stated that in African societies, one gains recognition through producing offspring therefore, since non-heterosexuals are not able to naturally produce offspring from their relationships, they are regarded as a threat to the

African norm since homosexuality encourages improper families with no children, unless it's through adoption.

In the past, Africa was composed of structures aimed at demolishing the influence from the western traits. Non-heterosexuality in Africa was known after colonization of which made many Africans to believe that it is not originally an African way of life. Another problem that made researchers struggle with obtaining the actual statistics related to non-heterosexuality is that some cultural groups allowed crossdressing, making it uneasy to identify if one is homosexual or not and was justified with 'it being just a traditional attire' (Essien and Aderinto, 2011).

4.3.3 Lack of knowledge about the existence of other sexual identities

Illiteracy and lack of awareness amongst members of a community resulted in them being less informed about other sexual identities. Some participants revealed that they do not have much knowledge about non-heterosexuality.

> " I grew up knowing that "isitabane" refers to someone with both male and female genitals" (Interviewee1).

Another participant describes how he feels about LGBTs.

> "I personally am scared of dealing with them one on one because I feel like I am going to be judgmental because I have less knowledge about the LGBT hence I have assigned educators to mentor and assist them"(Interviewee5).

According to Berry, (2013:40), members of the public are generally not educated about and lack an understanding of homosexual people; once they discover that someone is homosexual, their attitude changes and they start looking down upon the individual. Lane, Mogale, Struthers, McIntyre and Kegeles, (2008), stated that non-heterosexual professionals also face the problem with rendering services because they receive judgment from colleagues as well as the service users. Interviewee five who was a lesbian confirmed that as an educator, she has experienced high levels of homophobia as well as judgement from other educators and learners because they lacked knowledge about her sexuality.

In some polls and studies of heterosexual people's attributions for homosexuality, it has been demonstrated that when individuals believe that homosexuality is a matter of personal choice, their attitudes toward gay men and lesbians tend to be more negative; whereas more positive

attitudes toward gay men and lesbians are associated with attributing homosexuality to something people are "born like that." (Lipkin, 2018:115).

According to Mucherah, Owino and McCoy, (2016) lack of knowledge as well as lack of exposure to diversity contributes highly to homophobia. It should also be noted that someone who had close contact with a non-heterosexual individual is less likely to show homophobic attitudes as compared to those who have not. Mucherah et al., (2016), added that, it is the superstitions that make people to have hatred towards non-heterosexuals. This included sayings such as non-heterosexuality being a sin, non-heterosexual people being said to be agents of the devil, non- heterosexuality and non-heterosexuality came in a form of colonization. Once one learns that all such is not true and that non-heterosexual people are just normal like any of us, then they stop discriminating them.

Dlamini, (2006), states that, what makes it difficult for homosexuality to be easily normalized in South Africa is that the whole education system is established upon Christianity and condemns non-heterosexuality therefore no one is ready to challenge the topic since it is not even deeply included in the school syllabuses and educators as well are not well informed on how to unpack this phenomenon to learners. As stated by interviewee 5, it would be difficult to educate the old community elders on something they perceived as a violation to their culture, as noted that in rural areas there were strong cultural beliefs to adhere to and the community elders were there to ensure that culture is restored and never loses its value.

4.3.4 INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES AND LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM IN THE TREATMENT OF LGBTs.

Almost all participants mentioned that there were no gay facilities within the community. Some participants also stated that they received hostile service after disclosing their sexual orientation. These includes services from the nurses, social workers, educators, police officers and to name a few.

> "Nurses and police whenever our children consult them they always blame their sexuality for all problems and help that they require. It is too disturbing because they are educated and should be the ones leading by example in the community". (Interviewee 2)

Another participant was quoted showing his dissatisfaction with the poor service delivery in the community.

"…also wish government can at least give the professional service providers workshops where they will learn on equality despite any gender one falls under. The old grannies in hospitals and social workers can be so horrible at times". (Interviewee 9)

Almost all participants in the study showed dissatisfaction with the service received from those working within the service sector after revealing their sexualities. Another participant below described how he feels about programs aimed at ensuring the inclusion of non-heterosexual people in the community.

"I have been invited by the local councilor for a once off program for the LGBT but unfortunately I couldn't attend it because I felt like it was only done because they want votes and its impact won't be much because the community at large wasn't involved". (Interviewee 4)

Cele, (2015), in his study revealed that members of the public and service providers treat non-heterosexual people differently. Evidence for this was shown by the way they were asked questions and were in disbelief when they received the answers pertaining to their sexuality. The manner in which service providers reacted to them whenever they required assistance was another tell sign of their disapproval. Cele, (2015), further added that service providers often show negative emotion towards LGBTs. Rounds, (2013), added that non-heterosexual people are most likely to receive substandard care or help from service providers and further made an example that sometimes service providers would swear and click tongues when talking to non-heterosexuals, they ask them ridiculous questions about non-heterosexuality such as how they engage in sex and their gender.

Due to the hostile treatment that LGBTs experience in the hands of service providers who should be assisting them, they end up not seeking for help since they feel unsafe to disclose confidential details (Luvuno, Mchunu, Ncama, Ngidi and Mashamba- Thompson, (2019).

Pongola being one of the underdeveloped rural community lacks resources aimed at catering to the needs of non-heterosexual people. According to Reid, (2003), minority groups of people need each other in order to cope and try to combat oppressions. The lack of gay night clubs, no gay support groups in the community and lack of recognition by the entire community, it proved to being very difficult for an LGBT person living in this community to live their sexuality freely because of the oppressive structures and lack of support. Sithole, (2019), mentioned in her recent study that the fear to become upfront in supporting homosexuality in a cultural preservative community like Pongola usually becomes a factor contributing to the lack of resources. She furthermore stated that community members fear to

be considered as deviant and be judged for supporting something that majority of the community is strongly against.

Baker, (2013), stated that non-heterosexual victims are most likely to be treated differently when acquiring services. Some service providers would be too harsh, some would focus on their sexuality instead of rendering them services while others would bash them out for being exposed to such situations added that sometimes the service providers would not just ask because they are homophobic, but only do so because they do not have the proper knowledge about non-heterosexuality and seeing someone who is like that gives them a chance to acquire knowledge about it. Fine, (2011), added that it is most likely that someone who has had close contact with homosexual people to be less likely to be homophobic compared to those who knows them from a distance.

Mavhandu, (2017), stated that most non-heterosexuals are very sensitive when it comes to their sexuality. This makes them notice even the smallest remarks made towards them, as a result some professional service provider would decline them services due to their attitude of demanding and expecting everyone to understand them. Other service providers referred them to others who can handle their situations better, to avoid being exposed to situations which might have led them to being labelled as homophobic, irrational and patriarchal. This corresponds to an argument made by interviewee who works as a principal. Below is his response in relation to rendering services to non-heterosexual learners.

> "I never considered it as an issue requiring attention and I feel bad because even the curriculum that we are educating the learners does not cover or give educational lessons about other sexual identities. I feel like we are biased. I personally am scared of dealing with them one on one because I feel like I am going to be judgmental because I have less knowledge about the LGBT hence, I have assigned educators to mentor and assist them". (Interviewee 5)

The above quote showed that the policies and professionalism towards non-heterosexual people in this community is poor. Participants responses showcased that service providers are also not willing to challenge the social stigma since they were the ones who should be advocating for minority groups.

4.3.5 Religious perceptions on homosexuality

Biblical quotes and verses against non-heterosexuality were used to criticize their sexuality and support that non-heterosexuality. Most church representatives avoided being associated with openly gay people or those who were open about accepting gay people. Some of the

responses from participants showed that some churches did accept non- heterosexuals without judging them. Participants also mentioned that usually attended churches in urban areas that were accepting of LGBTs. Below are some of their responses.

> " They are cursed. They live a fake lives, I mean everything about them just doesn't make sense. They love attention and no one takes them seriously in this community and most of them end of being drunkards because of the demons that have possessed them". (Interviewee7)

Another participant described the relationship between coming out of the closet as well as church attendance as follows:

> "Openly gay people don't attend local churches, instead they attend churches in town where nobody knows them and nobody will judge them because with the local churches our pastors believe that non-heterosexuality is a sin and therefore, it's not easy for them to attend such churches where they will be labelled as sinners" (Interviewee 1).

To agree with what interviewee 1 said, Interviewee 8 who is non-heterosexual described how their experience in church after coming out as well as the attitude they get from church people.

> "Zionists don't want us together with the Nazareth congregation. They call us little devils. (Laughs). Girl its funny how your fathers go after us at night after they called us demons during the day! Let me just say Zulu people don't want to face the reality because it's only the educated pastors who accept us then the rest always quote Bible verses which tarnish us. They contradicting themselves because they saying we are colonized by evil spirits whereas they are colonized too and for quoting something they don't even know who wrote it, when and where it was written that alone shows their level of stupidity" (Interviewee 5).

According to Mavhandu, Mudzusi and Sandy, (2015), in most African countries including South Africa, Christianity is considered a religious society with a scale of 8 to 10 who strongly believe in religious customs and belong to a religious group and only one in ten is not religiously affiliated. According to Matolino, (2017), since many Africans profess to be Christians, therefore their sexual vies are informed by the Bible. In addition to that Whipple, (2012), states that in countries where Christianity is the dominant faith, there is a less likelihood for legal criminalization of homosexuality and taking into consideration that in Southern Africa Christianity is the most dominant, more homosexual people are likely to be excluded or judged. Mavhandu et al affirms that homosexuality is banned in most denominations linked to the view that it's a sin'

Msibi, (2011:69), highlights that there is an apparent contradictory acceptance and use of Christianity which clearly presents a dilemma in understanding the debate about a sodomite free Africa. If Africa rejected the ideologies brought from the west, then surely religion brought from the west cannot be used to reject something that is being rejected for its foreign roots. Garcia, Gray-Stanley and Ramirez-Valles, (2008) added that it is common that homosexual people become more religiously affiliated to hide their sexuality in a way that everyone including the priest won't know anything about their love life. Below are some of the responses related to homosexuality and religion.

> "Church is their hiding place. Many gays around the community are holding very high positions in churches. I feel like they do so to avoid the pressure of dating at a young age and in return they use the Bible as camouflage quoting sex before marriage is a sin and when they're grown up they relocate to the cities where they openly live their gayness" (Interviewee 7).

In correspondence to interviewee 7 in the quote above, another participant was able to classify the church denominations in the community that accepted non-heterosexual people.

> "…same thing applies with churches, in this community we have the Nazareth churches, the Zionists as well as the evangelical churches. What normally happens is that no LGBT attends the other church denominations because of the strict rules and because those churches are against non- heterosexuality. It is only the evangelical free gospel churches that allow them because they don't have strict rules, such as woman attending church wearing a trouser". (Interviewee 10)

Pongola rural community functions in solidarity, mostly all community members knew each other and had relations amongst each other and to include all other minority groups the government requires strong policies aimed at eradicating discrimination of any kind

4.3.6 Intervention strategies to combat homophobia

Participants mentioned a once off program by the local municipality aimed at educating the community about the normalization of non-heterosexuality. In order to avoid or minimize the effects of homophobia participants mentioned that they relocated to urban environments or to another community where they are unknown and preferably a place where non-heterosexuality is accepted and a norm. They mentioned that a less deeply rooted in culture community allows them to live their sexual life free without the fear of being labeled as deviant and colonized. Participants also mentioned that others end up hiding their same sex relationships by having well known opposite sex partners as a cover up until they were brave

enough to come out of closet. Participants explained their means of coping with homophobia as follows:

> "It is very rare to find a grown LGBT member in their old age who permanently resides in this community, most of them relocate to the cities where they will get their freedom. Those who are still in the community get coping mechanisms as well as empowerment from the social networks such as Facebook, Instagram and newspapers" (Interviewee 10).

Another participant described how socializing with other people of the same group as hers has helped her shape her own identity.

> "I met people who understood and willing to assist me gain confidence about my sexuality. Even that had a lot of criticism back home because people thought education has made me forget about my original identity and I have been colonized. I have been invited by the local councilor for a once off program for the LGBT but unfortunately, I couldn't attend it because I felt like it was only done because they wanted votes" (Interviewee 4).

Non-heterosexual participants revealed some of their coping mechanisms against homophobia and below is another example on how they maintain their love lives.

> "Eish it's not easy at all. I'm going to tell you my little secret. In this community everyone thinks am straight because I act like a guy and become a gay at university. Funny right? That's my little secret. I decided to do that because I'm avoiding being discriminated and I fear my parents might disown me if I disclose to them. My biggest worry now is that they never see me with a girlfriend and I don't even know how I am going to tackle this. I might just find myself a girl from around the community because girls are falling for me and will impregnate her. "(Interviewee 9).

As interviewee stated that homosexual relationships are kept private and below is his explanation.

> "…in most cases they have to hide their partners just to protect their identity and not date publicly" (Interviewee 6).

Baker, (2013), asserted that gay children grow up with no one recognizing their sexuality and as soon as they become aware of this, they also become aware of the stigma associated non-heterosexuality. Msibi, (2006), stated that young homosexuals from rural communities confirmed that they try by all means not to be regarded as non-heterosexual due to the threat that homosexuality presents to normative forms of masculinity. This supported what interviewee 6 said when he described how he hides his sexuality. In having attained the rationale from other scholars behind non-heterosexuals hiding their sexuality enabled the

researcher to establish a firm understanding of one of the coping mechanisms towards homophobia.

Fine, (2011) states that most young people become aware of their sexuality in their adolescence. This was the age where some of them were almost finishing their secondary education and ready for tertiary; it was more likely that once they relocated to cities to further their studies they got exposed to an environment that allowed them to live freely despite their sexuality. When non-heterosexuality met others like them it helped those from rural communities to come out and not hide their sexuality. Munt, (2000), states that in most cases homosexuals from rural communities live a double life whereby they are straight back home and gay in the cities. As stated by interviewee 5, this helped them to be accepted and be recognized by the community whilst they were also living their lives as pleased in the city. McDemmot (2008), states that some non-heterosexuals even relocate permanently to the cities after coming out.

Another coping mechanism adopted by non-heterosexuals to reduce the exposure to homophobia is through being highly devoted in church. According to Mavhandu-Mudzusi and Sandy, (2015), non-heterosexuals who are in fear of disclosing their sexuality often use church as a scapegoat. Ayvazo and Sutherland, (2009), adds that even the pastors and priests would not know anything about their sexuality and this prevents them from being questioned about when they having children or on any info related to dating due to biblical rules of no sex before marriage. One of the participants mentioned that he was a devoted Christian and nobody questioned him about kids and dating because they believed he will get married first. Below is his response.

> "Church is their hiding place. Many gays around the community are holding very high positions in churches. I feel like they do so to avoid the pressure of dating at a young age and in return they use the Bible as camouflage quoting sex before marriage is a sin and they're grown up they relocate to the cities where they openly live their gayness" (Interviewee1).

Internalizing and accepting the hatred and homophobia directed towards them is another strategy, Miller and Kaiser, (2001), state that once someone realizes that they are homosexual, they become aware of the stigma and discrimination associated with it. They added that those strong enough accept that their lives will be associated with being insulted and that they need to be careful because not everyone likes them. It is then some decided to be less outgoing and kept a small circle of friends. In their argument, Choi et al., (2011), mentioned that because society treats non-heterosexual people differently, some of them end

up trying to look different from everyone else which includes their dress code, hairstyle and sense of fashion. This was because they had been made to believe that they did not belong in the community and by so doing, they are proving that they have accepted the exclusion.

Valentine and Skelton, (2003), state that being educated and independent is one of the strategies one can use to overcome social exclusion in an underdeveloped community and further added that young homosexuals escape the discrimination by being highly educated and working very hard to become independent. High levels of work ethic and drive to be successful were associated with non-heterosexuals, they made use of their success as means of inspiration for the young and as an act that showcased their capabilities because they had been cut off by their families and had no one else to look up to.

Dlamini, (2006), previously women were oppressed and a no if not minimum say regarding decision making with the belief that they should bear children and not embark on other ventures to empower themselves; nowadays women have equal rights as men and most of the women are highly educated, independent and not married. This was of similar reference as interviewee 5 in her argument where she mentioned that she had to work hard and be successful in order to prove wrong those who were looking down upon her and to bring about hope to those who were still in the closet by being an example of that there is a brighter future despite one's sexuality becoming an issue to the community.

4.3.7 The role of media in transforming communities

According to Pullen, (2014), the media plays a vital role in providing an update on what is going on around the world. All participants confirmed that they used social media to acquire knowledge. In the case of non-heterosexuality, participants had different views, many blamed the media for encouraging homosexuality and corrupting the youth while others appreciated how useful social media was, and the educational role modelling social media provided that has contributed in normalizing non-heterosexuality in the community. Below are some of the participant's responses.

> "I never knew of gays and lesbians till I saw them on magazines, televisions and social media platforms. I think that has helped us as a community to understand and reduce the fear and phobia towards them but on the other hand the media is encouraging and influencing people to lose their values and adopt the western culture and look down upon our cultural way of life. Media has a negative

impact to the society more especially the youth because it puts them under pressure and exposes them to things that might be harmful to their wellbeing such as drugs" (Interviewee 1).

Elderly participants showed their dissatisfaction with media, most of them mentioned its negativity to the livelihoods of the young people in the communities. Below is an example of how elderly people felt about media and technology.

> "To be honest with you the media is corrupting and destroying our youth through encouraging them on substance and drug abuse and explicit sex but with homosexuality it has played a huge role in changing the mindset and ideologies about non-heterosexuality through illustrating that being homosexual is a norm and educating non-heterosexuals more especial those in rural areas with human rights as well as the alternative services available to assist them with their sexual identity related issues" (1nterviewee 2).

Gomillion, (2011), states that media has a huge role in assisting homosexuals with their sexual identity development through role modelling. Gomillion, (2011), further explains that the media portrays characters who share similar characteristics with a person and therefore the person changes their self-perceptions through following the character's lifestyle. Pullen, (2014), stated that since non-heterosexual people do not have a formal institution to assist in cultural adaptation, most of the time the media is used as a platform where they share stories of their experiences on homophobia, coming out and bullying. Pullen (2014) added that stories shared on social media are used in order to give affirmation to other non-heterosexual people who are experiencing the same situation that they will overcome oppressions.

Some of the non-heterosexual participants expressed how helpful the media has been in their self- discovery journey as well as coming out about their sexuality. Below are some of their responses.

> "…the only problem with media is that it exaggerates their lifestyle and makes it too western of which is why most elders are strongly against it. I like the fact that the media has channeled a space where homosexuals get an opportunity to view their role models" (Interviewee 10).

Another participant describes how helpful the media has been to him with issues pertaining to gender.

"From personal experience, I can tell you the media more especially twitter and Instagram has helped me throughout the journey of coming out of the closet as well as overcoming daily challenges because that's a platform where I get to interact with people of similar situations. Even with the society the media has and still is educating them and helping improve the situation through educational programs on the radio and television. The entertainment industry has done a lot for us as gays and I believe soon or later all the discrimination will be over" (Interviewee 8).

Taking from the above participant's responses, it is clear that the community of Pongola is underdeveloped and as someone who grew up in the community, it has been lacking lots of basic needs such as water and scarcity of resources and all that has been normalized. The maltreatment of non-heterosexual people in this community and the access to social media itself is scarce because it did not have even computers in schools or at least a local internet café. A need for the improvement in terms of access to internet which will make learning easier for all community members

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on data presentation and interpretation. Findings obtained during data collection are rich in detail and contributed in providing rich information about the role of culture in shaping societal attitude towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola rural community. The researcher used open ended questions in seeking information or views from each participant. Data was collected using research questions and objectives which includes: How does culture influence societal behaviours towards homosexual people? What are some of the challenges encountered by homosexual people in a culturally-conservative society and how do they overcome them?What are religious and cultural perceptions towards homosexual people in rural communities?How does the society transform its perceptions and attitudes towards homosexual people and what are the limits to that transformation? Emerging themes were created with each being supported by relevant literature.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to understand in detail the role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola rural community**.** The problem is that many non-heterosexual people were discriminated, marginalized and socially excluded by the society due to their sexuality regardless of how successful and respectful they can be. Such treatment was a result of strong cultural and religious beliefs which were against non-heterosexuality. This chapter provides an overall summary of the entire study. It also provides the summary research findings as well as possible recommendations. The researcher also discusses some limitations of the study as well suggestions for future research. This chapter concludes by a brief summary of all topic combined and a conclusion.

5.2 Summary of the study

This study was divided into five chapters. The first chapter was an introduction of the study which included the research background, the research problem statement, objectives of the research as well as the research questions. This chapter also provides a brief summary of the research project, draws conclusions from the findings of the study and recommendations that can bring about change were be presented.

The second chapter discussed previous studies relevant on the topic of the study "An exploration of the role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola rural community". Then culture and religion were discussed as the main issues encouraging the high levels of homophobia in rural communities. This chapter also provided statistics of homophobic incidences in South African communities. This chapter further discussed various strategies that non-heterosexual people engage in to overcome homophobia.

Chapter three presented the research methodology used in this study. This chapter gave a detailed account of how the field research was done which include a detailed explanation of the research design, study area, sampling of participants and data collection methods used in the research. Ethical considerations and principles which were observed in the research were also explained in this chapter.

With the research being done following the procedures in chapter three, data from the research was then presented and analysed in chapter four. Thematic data analysis was employed in analysing the data collected during the research.

Finally, the concluding chapter presents the discussion of the research findings, recommendations and limitations of the study. Some areas which need further research are also highlighted.

5.3 Research findings and discussion

5.3.1 The education level or illiteracy has an impact on the attitude towards non-heterosexual people.

The research findings of this study revealed that most community members especially the elders are illiterate and that illiteracy makes it difficult for them to know about other things since all they know is their lived history and culture. Findings of the study also revealed a high level of homophobia from the elderly people compared to young people. The study also shown that most people from rural communities, including the young and literate do not have sufficient amount of knowledge about non-heterosexuality since most of them mentioned that they had no idea exactly as to what exactly it was. These findings are corresponding to Coetzer, (2018), who mentioned that in rural communities, most people are illiterate and deeply into culture and them being illiterate means not having much knowledge about technology, human rights as well as cultural evolutions and developments going on around the world.

5.3.2 Patriarchy has a role to play in the manner in which non-heterosexuals are treated in the community.

Findings from the study highlighted that the patriarchal systems ruling in the community of Pongola had a negative impact on the inclusion of non-heterosexuals. This was due to patriarchy being strongly against same sex relationships and believes in the reproduction between male and female. Some participants from the study strongly expressed their anger towards non-heterosexuality claiming that "it increases broken families" (Interviewee 7). These patriarchal views go together with the assumption that non-heterosexuality is non-African or came with colonisers. Findings from the study revealed that the patriarchal attitude came from the belief that non-heterosexuality is from the western and a violation to the African cultures. Scholars like Sithole, (2019), mentioned in her recent study that most community leaders in the Kwa-Zulu-Natal province are patriarchal, strongly believe in polygamy and that non-heterosexuality has always been considered a disability and a shame whereby when one discovered to have both male and female sex organs they were hidden from society.

5.3.3 The lack of resources and lack of professionalism in services rendered to non-heterosexual people

Pongola in generally is still a developing community with most of its basic services being scarce. Findings from the study showed that the scarcity of homosexual friendly services such as gay night clubs as well as gay support groups is slowing down the process of normalizing of non-heterosexual identities in the community. Findings from the study also revealed that lack of professionalism which includes denial to services and a judgemental attitude had a negative impact on the livelihoods of non-heterosexual people in rural communities. This is the same as stated by Bullrough, (2019), that most people are generally not educated about homosexuality, hence their attitude towards these people is based from their assumptions and beliefs. As shown in the findings of the study, service providers fear non-heterosexual people, others hate them because they are not professionally trained about this group of people.

5.3.4 The effect of deep religious beliefs towards non-heterosexual people in Pongola rural community

Findings from this study revealed that most community members in Pongola were Christians and they strongly believed in the Bible teachings to guide their way of life. The researcher also noted from the study that there are some Biblical verses which were commonly used to justify the exclusion of non-heterosexual people. Religious people refer to non-heterosexuality as a sin while the researcher also noted that there were contradictions with the use of the Bible verses since those who were judging other people would be preaching about not judging one another. Findings from the study also revealed that some church denominations in urban settings accepted non-heterosexuality without being judgmental. The researcher also found that it depended on the attitudes and beliefs of the church leaders on whether a certain group of individuals were welcomed or not.

5.3.5 Remaining in closet and keeping a private love life are main coping mechanisms to minimize homophobia

Most non-heterosexual people in Pongola keep their love life private. Findings from the study showed that they did not date publicly in order to avoid being discriminated as well as to protect their partners. Findings of the study also revealed that most LGBTs in this community remained in the closet due to the fear of being cut off by their families, discriminated and being labelled as deviant. It has also been shown in the study that other non-heterosexuals

remain in closet because of identity confusion and once they have acquired the strength they come out and disclose sexuality.

5.4 Conclusion on findings

The concluding remarks are that people from Pongola are not homophobic per say, they lack knowledge and understanding about other sexual identities. The history, nature and environment they reside in has no tangible proof of non-heterosexuality history therefore, it seems like a new phenomenon for the entire community in a way that they do not have enough knowledge about it. In the study it was prevalent that people in rural communities have negative attitudes towards non-heterosexuality and the oppressed non-heterosexuals have adopted some coping mechanisms to live with their situation.

During the investigation, the role of the community leaders in ensuring unity in diversity was considered a complete failure. Drawing from literature of Albertyn, (2009), South African community leaders are traditional, mostly illiterate, homophobic and patriarchal therefore chances of them fighting for the inclusion of non-heterosexuals are very slim. This is because they, themselves see non-heterosexuality as deviant from the local culture hence they cannot support something they strongly despise. Findings from the study showed that the community leaders and elders are the most homophobic compared to young people.

There is still a need to educate the public about other sexual identities. Most people in rural communities do not know much about non-heterosexuality. Educating people will be helpful since they will be aware of different sexual identities and this would also challenge their superstitions and assumptions around non-heterosexuality.

Service providers lack professionalism more especially when rendering services to non-heterosexual people. They use their own beliefs and assumptions of which has an effect on the lives of the homosexual people. Others fear being exposed to non-heterosexuals whilst others are homophobic. Educating them through workshops will ensure that they stop their homophobic attitudes and render services in a holistic approach, despite what sexual identity one classifies themselves onto.

5.5 Realisation of objectives

5.5.1Exploring how culture contributes in shaping homophobic attitudes towards homosexual people.

The study's findings proved that this objective was met. The data collected revealed that Zulu culture which is consists of high degree of patriarchy and is strongly against non-heterosexuality as it's emphasises that a real man must have a wife and a woman must have a husband hence dating someone of the same sex means deviating that norm. The data collected also revealed that the reason behind the hatred towards homosexuality is that it is believed that being non-heterosexual is non-African and originated from the western countries therefore allowing such would mean allowing colonization to attack them again. Data collected also showed that there is little or no traceable history of non-heterosexuality in Africa and that has made it difficult to defend its existence before colonization.

5.5.2 Uncover the challenges encountered by homosexual people in rural communities and how they overcome them.

This objective was met because data collected revealed that non-heterosexual people in rural communities undergo severe abuse, are called by offensive names, physically and sexually assaulted, disowned by their families, gang raped and isolated. The consequences of the ill treatment being that non-heterosexuals in rural areas remain in the closet to avoid being judged and discriminated. They also hide their same sex partners and some relocate to cities where homosexual people are accepted. Data collected also showed that other non-heterosexuals living in a culturally conservative community like Pongola would normalize the homophobia and hatred directed to them as soon as they realize that they are not heterosexual.

5.5.3 Understanding religious and cultural perceptions towards homosexual people in rural areas.

The objective was met as data collected revealed that religiously non-heterosexuality is a sin. Most churches in Pongola do not accept homosexual people because they believed to be possessed by demonic spirits. Data collected also showed Biblical verses which are strongly against homosexuality and are used to discriminate against non-heterosexuality. The main reason many community members feel non-heterosexuality is abnormal is that non-heterosexual couples cannot conceive naturally and therefore they believe it is abnormal. The stigma comes from the nature of their relationship.

5.5.4 Exploring how the society has transformed its perceptions towards homosexuality and the limitations to that transformation.

This objective was achieved because data collected revealed that there are improvements with regards to the way people perceive non-heterosexuality. Even though there still high levels of homophobia more especially in rural communities, participants mentioned that they have gotten to learn a lot about non-heterosexual people; and that there are such people in communities that need to be loved and accepted. Data collected also revealed that the media has played a vital role in making non-heterosexuality a common phenomenon and that has broken the fear of many community members to talk about it because they are now aware of it if not informed about it. Data collected also concluded that some service providers are just scared of non-heterosexual people, they fear being in contact to them because they do not know how to react to their issues in a holistic approach.

5.6 Recommendations

In order to build a community that is inclusive for all people despite their differences a several strategies must be implemented. Firstly, the whole community needs to be educated about the existence of other sexual identities. This would make everyone to understand what non-heterosexuality is and contribute to eliminating the assumptions and superstitions about non-heterosexual people. In schools, curriculum is recommended which covers the understanding and normalization of other sexual identities. Learners will grow up knowing non-heterosexuality is not a shame and consider it a norm.

Service providers such as nurses, educators, social workers need to attend workshops to enhance their professionalism towards people of all walks of life and help them with principles such non-judgemental attitude, confidentiality and individualization. This would help in ensuring excellent service delivery and that they render services in a holistic approach despite differences in sexual identities.

In future, the community of Pongola needs to focus on creating social groups aimed at supporting, empowering each other in overcoming some issues that affect their livelihoods, more especially the youth. This includes career guidance support groups to help with getting access to higher education as well as Gay movements whereby they will learn about their human rights, coping mechanisms as well as knowing they have each other and they know of another person undergoing similar situations. The support groups will assist in creating solidarity amongst the community members.

Community leaders need to attend governing workshops that will educate them about the human rights of their people. This will enhance their leadership skills and remove their patriarchal ideologies. As seen from data collected, older people are more homophobic than the young, therefore, there is a need for elders to obtain knowledge on the array of sexual identities existing in the community.

Church leaders are recommended to attend seminars whereby they are reminded on not being judgemental. This would help in creating a mind set in them which allows all members of the community to feel welcomed in the church without any fear of being called sinners or deviant.

5.7 Conclusion

The study focused on understanding the role of culture in shaping societal attitude towards non-heterosexuality. The researcher used qualitative research and focused on each participant's experiences and views in relation to the discussed phenomenon. The entire research is comprised of five chapters. The researcher got an insight of the livelihoods of non-heterosexual people in Pongola rural community. The study revealed some of the challenges faced by homosexual people in rural communities and mostly how the cultural rules in that place oppresses the lives of LGBTs. The study also revealed some of the coping mechanisms adopted by non-heterosexual people in that community to minimize the effects of homophobia. The researcher learnt from this study that in rural communities such as Pongola the law is not taken into consideration in way that people have less knowledge about human rights and responsibilities

Another lesson that the researcher got from this study is that it is not easy being a non-heterosexual person in rural communities such as Pongola. This is because of the insults, being cut off by family and being considered as deviant. This made the researcher realize that discrimination still exists in communities and change is very far from occurring since most abuse is considered a norm. The researcher also learnt that service providers in the community lacks professionalism and that causes the increase in discrimination since it is done by people who are supposed to be advocating for the minority groups. In conclusion, this study can be used by future scholars who are interested in learning about non-heterosexuality in rural South African communities.

REFERENCES

Adebajo, S. B., Eluwa, G. I., Allman, D., Myers, T., & Ahonsi, B. A. (2012). Prevalence of internalized homophobia and HIV associated risks among men who have sex with men in Nigeria. *African journal of reproductive health*, *16*(4), 21-28.

Akhan, L.U. & Barlas, G.U. (2013) 'Study of health care providers and attitudes against homosexual, bisexual individuals', *International Journal of Human Sciences* 10(1), 434–445.

Araújo, M.A., Montagner, M.A., Da Silva, R.M., Lopes, F.L. & De Freitas, M.M., (2009), 'Symbolic violence experienced by men who have sex with men in the primary health service in Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil: Negotiating identity under stigma', *AIDS Patient Care and STDs* 23(8), 663–668. PMID: 19630518, http://dx.doi. org/10.1089/apc.2008.0123

Awoniyi, S. (2015). African cultural values: The past, present and future. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, *17*(1), 1-13.

Ayvazo, S., & Sutherland, S. (2009). Uncovering the secrets: Homophobia in physical education. *Action in Teacher Education*, *31*(3), 56-69.

Badgett, M. L. (2003). *Money, myths, and change: The economic lives of lesbians and gay men*. University of Chicago Press. Badgett, M. L. (2003). *Money, myths, and change: The economic lives of lesbians and gay men*. University of Chicago Press.

Bahns, A. J., & Branscombe, N. R. (2011). Effects of legitimizing discrimination against homosexuals on gay bashing. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *41*(3), 388-396.

Baker, K., & Beagan, B. (2014). Making assumptions, making space: an anthropological critique of cultural competency and its relevance to queer patients. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, *28*(4), 578-598.

Baker, J. M. (2013). How homophobia hurts children: Nurturing diversity at home, at school, and in the community. Harrington Park Street, New York. 13904-1580.

Baruch-Dominguez, R., Infante-Xibille, C., & Saloma-Zuñiga, C. E. (2016). Homophobic bullying in Mexico: Results of a national survey. *Journal of LGBT youth*, *13*(1-2), 18-27.

Bernat, J. A., Calhoun, K. S., Adams, H. E., & Zeichner, A. (2001). Homophobia and physical aggression toward homosexual and heterosexual individuals. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *110*(1), 179.

Birukou, A., Blanzieri, E., Giorgini, P., & Giunchiglia, F. (2013). A formal definition of culture. In *Models for intercultural collaboration and negotiation* (pp. 1-26). Springer, Dordrecht.

Breen, D., Lynch, I., Nel, J., & Matthews, I. (2016). Hate crime in transitional societies: The case of South Africa. *The globalization of hate: Internationalizing hate crime*, 126-141.

Browne, K. (2005). Snowball sampling: using social networks to research non- heterosexual women. *International journal of social research methodology*, *8*(1), 47-60.

Bullough, V.L (2019). Homosexuality A History (From Ancient Greece to Gay Liberation). Routledge.

Butterfield, N (2018). Imagined rural/ regional spaces. Non-normative sexualities in Small towns and rural communities in Croatia. Journal of Homosexuality, 65(ps)1709-1733.

Buttler, A.H and Astbury, G (2005). South Africa: LGBT Issues in James. Sears (Ed.), Youth, education, and sexualities. An International Encyclopaedia.Pp 810-814. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group. *https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/history-lgbt-legislation*

Cabaj, R. P. (2000). Substance abuse, internalized homophobia, and gay men and lesbians: Psychodynamic issues and clinical implications. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy*, *3*(3-4), 5-24.

Cameron, E.(1995). Gays and lesbian and the law in South Africa. (In Gevisser, M. and Cameron, E. (eds.), Defiant Desire. New York NY: Routledge. pgs. 89-99).

Castro, F. G., & Murray, K. E. (2010). Cultural adaptation and resilience. *Handbook of adult resilience*, 375-403.

Cope, D. G. (2014). Methods and meanings: credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. In *Oncology nursing forum* (Vol. 41, No. 1).

Cele, N. H., Sibiya, M. N., & Sokhela, D. G. (2015). Experiences of homosexual patients' access to primary health care services in Umlazi, KwaZulu-Natal. *Curationis*, *38*(2), 1-9.

Chitando, E., & Van Klinken, A. (Eds.). (2016). *Christianity and controversies over homosexuality in contemporary Africa*. Routledge.

Choi, K. H., Han, C. S., Paul, J., & Ayala, G. (2011). Strategies for managing racism and homophobia among US ethnic and racial minority men who have sex with men. *AIDS Education and Prevention*, *23*(2), 145-158.

Coetzer, J. (2018, December). Application of HCI design principles in overcoming information illiteracy: case of a m-health application for a rural community in South Africa. In *2018 International Conference on Intelligent and Innovative Computing Applications (ICONIC)* (pp. 1-7). IEEE.

Croucher, S.(2002). South Africa's democratisation and the politics of gay liberation. Journal of Southern African Studies. 28 (2): 315-330.

Delphy, C. (1993) 'Rethinking Sex and Gender', Women's Studies. International forum 16(1):1-9.

DeNardis,L.,& Hackl, A. M. (2015). Internet governance by social media platforms. *Telecommunications Policy*, *39*(9), 761-770.

Dlamini, B. (2006). Homosexuality in the African Context. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity,* (67), 128-136.

Epprecht, M (2013). Hungochani: The History of a dissident sexuality in Southern Africa. McGill queen's Press-MQUP.

Essien, K & Aderinto, S (2009). Cutting the head of the Road Monster. Homosexuality and Repression in Africa. The Center for African Area Studies, Kyoto University. Volume. 30 No:3

Fine, L. E. (2011). Minimizing heterosexism and homophobia: Constructing meaning of out campus LGB life. *Journal of homosexuality*, *58*(4), 521-546.

Gates, G. J. (2011). LGBT identity: A demographer's perspective. *L*oyola of Los Angeles Law Review, 45 (3), 693-714.

García, D. I., Gray-Stanley, J., & Ramirez-Valles, J. (2008). "The priest obviously doesn't know that I'm gay": The religious and spiritual journeys of Latino gay men. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *55*(3), 411-436.

Gomillion, S. C., & Giuliano, T. A. (2011). The influence of media role models on gay, lesbian, and bisexual identity. *Journal of homosexuality*, *58*(3), 330-354.

da Costa Santos, G. G. (2013). Decriminalising homosexuality in Africa: lessons from the South African experience. *Downloaded from the Humanities Digital Library*, 313.

Grov, C., Bimbi, D. S., Nanín, J. E., & Parsons, J. T. (2006). Race, ethnicity, gender, and generational factors associated with the coming- out process among gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. *Journal of sex research*, *43*(2), 115-121.

Harrison, T. W. (2003). Adolescent homosexuality and concerns regarding disclosure. *Journal of School Health*, *73*(3), 107-112.

Ibrahim, A. M. (2015). LGBT rights in Africa and the discursive role of international human rights law. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, *15*(2), 263-281.

Idang, G. E. (2015). African culture and values. *Phronimon*, *16*(2), 97-111. Retrieved November 30, 2020, from http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1561-40182015000200006&lng=en&tlng=en..

Igboin, B. O. (2011). Colonialism and African cultural values. *African Journal of History and Culture*, *3*(6), 96-103.

Jackson, S. (2006). Interchanges: Gender, sexuality and heterosexuality: The complexity (and limits) of heteronormativity. *Feminist theory*, *7*(1), 105-121.

Kalichman, S. C., Simbayi, L. C., Kagee, A., Toefy, Y., Jooste, S., Cain, D., & Cherry, C. (2006). Associations of poverty, substance use, and HIV transmission risk behaviors in three South African communities. *Social science & medicine*, *62*(7), 1641-1649.

Lane, T., Mogale, T., Struthers, H., McIntyre, J., & Kegeles, S. M. (2008). "They see you as a different thing": the experiences of men who have sex with men with healthcare workers in South African township communities. *Sexually transmitted infections*, *84*(6), 430-433.

Laukkanen, M. (2007). Young queers online: The limits and possibilities of non-heterosexual self-representation in online conversations. *Queer online: Media technology & sexuality*, 81-99.

Lee, C. (2002). The impact of belonging to a high school gay/straight alliance. *The high school journal*, *85*(3), 13-26.

Lennox, C., Waites, M., Kirby, M., Cowell, F., Kinsman, G., Willett, G. & Tabengwa, M. (2013). *Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the The Commonwealth: Struggles for Decriminalisation and Change*. Human Rights Consortium, Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

Lewis, N. M. (2014). Rupture, resilience, and risk: Relationships between mental health and migration among gay-identified men in North America. *Health & Place*, *27*, 212-219.

Lings, K. R. (2013). *Love lost in translation: Homosexuality and the Bible*. Trafford Publishing.

Lipkin, A. (2018). *Understanding homosexuality, changing schools*. Routledge.

Locke, K. A. (2005). The Bible on homosexuality: Exploring its meaning and authority. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *48*(2), 125-156.

Long, S., Brown, A. W., & Cooper, G. (2003). *More than a name: State-sponsored homophobia and its consequences in Southern Africa*. Human Rights Watch. United States of America. NY10118-3299.

Luvuno, Z. P., Mchunu, G., Ncama, B., Ngidi, H., & Mashamba-Thompson, T. (2019). Evidence of interventions for improving healthcare access for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in South Africa: A scoping review. *African journal of primary health care & family medicine*, *11*(1), 1-10.

Mader, D.(1993). Exclusion, toleration, acceptance, integration:. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 25 (4), 101-120.

Makofane, K. (2013) Unspoken facts: a history of homosexualities in Africa, Culture, Health & Sexuality, 15:sup1, 114-116, DOI: 10.1080/13691058.2012.732749

Masuku, N. (2015). Folklore and its influence on homophobic behaviour in the Zulu Culture: a brief analysis of Umamba Kamaquba. *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies*, *25*(Supplement), s128-s137.

Matolino, B. (2017). Being gay and African: a view from an African philosopher. *Phronimon*, *18*(1), 59-78.

Mavhandu-Mudzusi, A. H., & Sandy, P. T. (2015). Religion-related stigma and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students at a South African rural-based university. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, *17*(8), 1049-1056.

McDermott, E., Roen, K., & Scourfield, J. (2008). Avoiding shame: Young LGBT people, homophobia and self- destructive behaviours. *Culture, health & sexuality*, *10*(8), 815-829.

Miller, C.T., & Kaiser, C.R. (2001). A theoretical perspective on coping with stigma. Journal of Social Issues, 57, 73-92.

Msibi, T. (2009). Not crossing the line: Masculinities and homophobic violence in South Africa. *Agenda*, *23*(80), 50-54.

Munt, S. R. (2000) Shame/pride dichotomies in Queer As Folk. *Textual Practice*, 14, 531–46.

Muchera, W.Owino, E.& McCoy, K. (2016). Grappling with the issue of homosexuality: Perceptions, attitudes and beliefs among high school students in Kenya. Psychology research and behaviour management, 9, 253

Murray, S. O. (1998). Homosexuality in'traditional'sub-Saharan Africa and contemporary South Africa: An overview. *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands. Studies on African Homosexualities*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1-18.

Nash, K. & Browne, C. (2010) Queer Methods and Methodologies. New York: Ashgate.

Nkoli, S. (1995). Coming out as a black gay activist in South Africa. (In Gevisser, M. and Cameron, E. (eds.), Defiant Desire. New York, NY: Routledge. pgs. 249-258.

O'donoghue, T. (2006). Planning your qualitative research project: An introduction to interpretivist research in education. Routledge. Madison Avenue, New York. NY 10016.

Pharr, S. (1997). *Homophobia: A weapon of sexism*. Berkeley, CA: Chardon Press.

Probyn, E. (2005) Blush: Faces of Shame. University of Minnesota Press. Third Avenue South, Suite 290. Minneapolis. MN55401-2520.

Pullen, C. (2014). *Queer youth and media cultures*.

Rangan, H., & Gilmartin, M. (2002). Gender, traditional authority, and the politics of rural reform in South Africa. *Development and Change*, *33*(4), 633-658.

Reddy, V. (2002).' Perverts and Sodomites: homophobia as a hate speech in Africa' in Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies 20:163-175.

Riggle, E. D., & Rostosky, S. S. (2011). *A positive view of LGBTQ: Embracing identity and cultivating well-being*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Richardson, E. M. (2006). Researching LGB youth in post-apartheid South Africa.135-140.

Rispel, L.C., Metcalf, C.A., Cloete, A., Moorman, J. & Reddy, V., (2011) 'You become afraid to tell them that you are gay: Health service utilization by men who have sex with men in South African cities', *Journal of Public Health Policy,* 32(1), S137–S151. PMID: 21730987, http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/jphp.2011.29.

Rounds, K.E., McGrath, B.B. & Walsh, E., (2013) 'Perspectives on provider behaviors: A qualitative study of sexual and gender minorities regarding quality of care', *Contemporary Nurse* 44 (1), 99–110. PMID: 23721392, http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.2013.44.1.99.

Rolleri, L. A. (2013). Understanding gender and gender equality. *Research fACTs and Findings*. Incomplete reference

Ronner, A. D. (2005). *Homophobia and the law*. American Psychological Association. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/11107-000

Rowe, A. T. (2010). Media's Portrayal of Homosexuality as a Reflection of Cultural Acceptance. Undergraduate Research Awards.8. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/univ_lib_ura/8

Rudwick, S. (2011). Defying a myth: A gay sub-culture in contemporary South Africa. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, *20*(2), 90-111.

Schabert, J., Browne, J. L., Mosely, K., & Speight, J. (2013). Social stigma in diabetes. *The Patient-Patient-Centered Outcomes Research*, *6*(1), 1-10.

Schoeman, W. J. (2017). South African religious demography: The 2013 General Household Survey. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, *73*(2).

Sedgwick, E. (2003) Touching, feeling: affect, pedagogy, performativity Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Semugoma, P., Nemande, S., & Baral, S. D. (2012). The irony of homophobia in Africa. *The Lancet*, *380*(9839), 312-314.

Sibiya, M. N., Ngxongo, T. S. P., & Bhengu, T. J. (2018). Access and utilisation of antenatal care services in a rural community of eThekwini district in KwaZulu-Natal. *International journal of Africa nursing sciences*, *8*, 1-7.

Sithole, S. G. (2019). *An exploration of religio-cultural concepts of transgender identities in Ethiopian Zionist churches in the Midlands, KZN* (Doctoral dissertation).

Stepleman, L. M., Yohannan, J., Scott, S. M., Titus, L. L., Walker, J., Lopez, E. J., ... & Eldridge, E. D. (2019). Health needs and experiences of a LGBT population in Georgia and South Carolina. *Journal of homosexuality*, *66*(7), 989-1013.

Sullivan, N. (2003). *A critical introduction to queer theory*. New York University Press. Washington Square. New York, NY1003.

Sutherland, C., Roberts, B., Gabriel, N., Struwig, J., & Gordon, S. (2016). Progressive prudes: a survey of attitudes towards homosexuality & gender non-conformity in South Africa.

Theo G.M. Sandfort & Vasu Reddy (2013) African same-sex sexualities and gender-diversity: an introduction, Culture, Health & Sexuality, 15:sup1, 1-6, DOI:10.1080/13691058.2013.797218.

Thoreson, R. R. (2009). Queering human rights: The Yogyakarta Principles and the norm that dare not speak its name. *Journal of Human Rights*, *8*(4), 323-339.

Thoreson, R. R. (2008). 'Somewhere over the Rainbow Nation: Gay, lesbian and Bisexual activism in South Africa'. Journal of Southern African Studies, 34(3), 679-697.

Tweneboah, S. (2020). Religion, International Human Rights Standards, and the Politicisation of Homosexuality in Ghana. *African Journal of Gender and Religion*, *24*(2). Tweneboah, S. (2020). Religion, International Human Rights Standards, and the Politicisation of Homosexuality in Ghana. *African Journal of Gender and Religion*, *24*(2).

Valentine, G., Skelton, T., & Butler, R. (2003). Coming out and outcomes: negotiating lesbian and gay identities with, and in, the family. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *21*(4), 479-499.

Valentine, G., Skelton, T. and Butler, R. (2002). The vulnerability and marginalisation of lesbian and gay youth: ways forward. Youth and Policy, 75, 4–29.

Van Vollenhoven, W. J., & Els, C. J. (2013). The human rights paradox of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students in South African education. *De Jure*, *46*(1), 263-284.

Wells, H. (2006). Homophobic hate crimes. Consequences and the impact of Gender. Paper presented at the Gender Studies Conference, Convened by FOTIM CSIR Convention Centre, Pretoria.

Wilcox, M.M (2003). Coming Out In Christianity: Religion, Identity and Community. Indiana University Press. 601 North Morton Street. IN474043797.

Whipple, S. (2012). Homosexuality in Africa: The Causes of State Discrimination based on Orientation. Incomplete reference

Winkler, S. (2019). Media's Influence on LGBTQ Support Across Africa. *British Journal of Political Science*, 1-20. Winkler, S. (2019). Media's Influence on LGBTQ Support Across Africa. *British Journal of Political Science*, 1-20.
Yarbrough, D. G. (2004). Gay adolescents in rural areas: Experiences and coping strategies.

Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 8(2-3), 129-144.

Appendix One

Appendix Two

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

15 January 2020

Ms NG Mamba (213540020)
School of Built Environment and Development Studies
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Mamba

Protocol reference number: HSS/1770/018M
Project title: An exploration of the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal

Approval Notification – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

This letter serves to notify you that your response received on 02 December 2019 to our letter of 08 November 2019 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) 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.

This approval is valid for one year until 29 November 2019.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

Yours faithfully

Professor Urmilla Bob
University Dean of Research

/ms

cc Supervisor: Prof O Mtapuri
cc Academic Leader Research:
cc School Administrator: Ms A Msomi

APPENDIX THREE

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

For research with human participants

Informed Consent (IsiZulu)

Incwadi yesivulelwano socwaningo

Igama lami ngingu **Noxolo Mamba**, ngingumfundi waseNyuvesi yakwaZulu-Natali (inombolo yokuba umfundi ithi: **213540020**). Ngenza ucwaningo ukuqonda ngendima edlalwa ezamasiko maqondana nezokuthandana kwabantu abanobulili obubodwa; izimbangela nemiphumela. Umgomo ukuhlaziya izingqinamba ezibhekene nabantu abathandana nababobulili obuibodwa nokuthi abokholo, amalungu omphakathi kanye nezokuxhumana zinamthelela muni ngendlela nezinqinamba ababhekana nazo emphakathini waso Pongola, KwaZulu.

Ngiyabonga ukuthi uvume ukuba yingxenye yalolu cwaningo. Imibuzo izoba inkulumo nje esuselwa emibuzweni ebhalwe phansi. Inhloso yemibuzo ukuthi kube nengxoxo phakathi kwethu, ngizocela ukhululeke ukuzwakalisa imibono yakho ngokuphelele. Imibuzo izothatha isikhathi esingange hora. Ngicela imvumo yokuba ngiqophe inkulumo yethu. Engikutholayo kulolu daba esikhuluma ngalo ngizokusebenzisa ukubhala umbiko.

Lolu cwaningo lusingethwe ngu**…………..** ngaphansi kwesikole seBuilt Environment and Development Studies eNyuvesi yakwaZulu-Natali lapho engifunda khona. Imina ozobe enza ucwaningo, uma unemibuzo ungabuza:

Isikole seBuilt Environment and Development Studies, eNyuvesi yakwaZulu Natali, Howard College, eThekwini. Imininigwane yami ukuze ngithinteke ungathumela umyalezo wombani kuleli kheli: gcebzah@gmail.com noma 213540020@stu.ukzn.ac.za.

Uma udinga ulwazi oludlulele ungathinta **u…..**kuleli kheli:…………. Inombolo yocingo: ……... Noma ungathintana nehhovisi lakwa **HSSREC Research Office:** Ms. P. Ximba. Tel: +27312603587/ ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Ngaphambi kokuba siqale ngithanda ukugcizelela ukuthi ukuvuma kwakho ube ingxenye yocwaningo kukuwena. Esikukhulumayo kuphakathi kwethu, igama neminingwane yakho ngeke idalulwe.

Ayikho inkokhelo noma ingozi ekubeni ingxenye yalolu phenyo. Ungahoxa noma inini futhi uvumelekile ukungaphenduli enye yemibuzo uma ungakhululekile. Ungabuza noma imiphi imbuzo noma inini.

Ngicela usayine isivumelwano ngenzansi.

Mina …………………………………….. (igama) ngiyakuqinikisekisa ukuthi ngiyifundile futhi ngayiqondisisa imibandela ethulwa ngu**Noxolo Mamba** mayelana nocwaningo lwakhe. Nginalo ithuba lokubuza imibuzo futhi ngiyagculiseka

ngezimpendulo ezibekiwe. Nginalo ulwazi lokukhetha ukuba inkulumo iqoshwe.

Nginalo ulwazi ukuthi ngingahoxa noma inini

Ngiyaqonda ukuthi awukho umnikelo engizowuthola kulolu cwaningo

	YEBO	CHA
Ngineminyaka engaphezulu kuka-18 futhi ngivumelekile	☐	☐
Ukuzimbandakanya kulolu cwaningo		
Ngiyavuma ukuzibandakanya kulolu cwaningo	☐	☐
Ngiyavuma ukuba inkulumo iqoshwe	☐	☐

Igama   _____

Isiginesha   _____

Usuku   _____

APPENDIX FOUR

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

<u>**Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research**</u>

My name is Noxolo Mamba, a Masters of Development Studies candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College campus.

My contact details

- contact number: 0743588347
- email address : 213540020@stu.ukzn.ac.za

You are invited to consider participating in a study that involves research on the role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities. The aim and purpose of this research is to uncover the challenges faced by homosexual people in rural communities, to understand the cultural perceptions towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities as well as the societal transformations towards homosexuality. The study is expected to enroll twenty participants, of which ten of them are homosexuals and the other ten will be general heterosexual community members and all participants will be interviewed using an interview schedule. The interview settings will differ, with each participant interviewed alone in a setting where they feel comfortable and safe to talk. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be thirty minutes maximum.

The study may involve the following risks and/or discomforts, not being comfortable to answer some of the questions. We hope that the study will create a better understanding of non-heterosexuality and how culture influences attitudes towards this phenomenon. Describe the scientific/other benefits hoped for from

the study). The researcher must disclose in full any appropriate alternative procedures and treatment etc. that may serve as possible alternate options to study participation.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSS/1770/018M).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at (0743588347) 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

PLEASE NOTE:

- the study is completely voluntary and may withdraw participation at any point
- in the event of refusal/withdrawal of participant, the participant will not incur penalty or loss treatment or the benefits which they are normally entitled to
- on withdrawal, please do inform the researcher as to make arrangements
- should the participants do not co-operate, participation will be terminated
- there are no cost's and incentives for participation

CONFIDENTIALITY

 In ensuring confidentiality

- the name(s) of the participant will be kept anonymous or pseudo names will be used
- the researcher will inform the participant, that whatever is being said will remain confidential
- asking for consent if any records will be taken
- the use of a space where the research will be comfortable to talk

NB// Information and data being collected will be given to the supervisor to safe keep, who will lock the information away.

CONSENT (Edit as required)

I ……………. have been informed about the study entitled: "Role of culture in shaping attitudes towards non-heterosexuality in rural communities" by Noxolo Mamba.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study. I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I have been informed that if I develop psychosocial issues due to the study I will get professional assistance from social workers at Pongola Service Office.

I declare that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at 0743588347 / gcebzah@gmail.com.

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   YES / NO

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature of Witness   **Date**

(Where applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Translator   **Date**

(Where applicable)

Appendix Five

Interview schedule

Introduction

A) Igama lami nginguNoxolo Gcebile Mamba, umfundi waseUniversity of KwaZulu Natal. Nginesicelo sokuthi ube ingxenye yocwaningo lwami ngoba uyilungu lomphakathi wasoPongola futhi unolwazi ngokuthandana kwabantu abanobulili obufanayo (LGBT) kulomphakathi.

B) Ngizothanda ukukubuza imibuzo eqondene nendima edlalwa usiko esimeni sokuthandana kwabantu abanobulili obubodwa kulendawo.

C) Ngiyethemba ukuthi ulwazi lwakho luzokwengeza kakhulu ocwaningweni olukhona kwezokuthandana kwabantu abnobulili obufanayo futhi kuzosiza ukwandisa ulwazi ngezinqinamba ezihlangatshezwa iLGBT nokuthi bazinqoba kanjani lezinqinamba.

Ngicela ukuthi sihloniphane futhi singasebenzisi ulimi oluxhemile. Ucwaningo lwethu luzothatha imizuzu engamashumi amathathu.

Imininingwane yakho

Iminyaka:

Ubulili

Marital status

Iholo ngenyanga

Ibanga lokugcina lemfundo

Manje ngicela ukukubuza maqondana nokuthandan kwabantu bobulili obufanayo emphakathini wasoPongola:

- Ngabe ukhona umuntu oke wambona okwiLGBT?
- Ngokombono wakho, ungayichaza kanjani LGBT?
- Yiziphi izindlela usiko olunomthelela ngazo maqondana nokuphathwa kwabantu beLGBT emphakathi wasoPongola.
- Ngabe yiziphi izinqinamba ezingahlasela umuntu okwiLGBT endaweni egxile kakhulu osikweni nokuthi bangazinqoba kanjani.
- Yiluphi usizo olucwephesha olutholakalayob kulomphakathi ukusiza labo abahlangabezana nezinkinga eziphathelene nezokuthandana.
- Ngabe ikhona into ofise ukuyisho maqondana nalesihloko esikhulume ngaso noma ocabanga ukuthi kungasiza kulocwaningo.

Kube intokozo kumina ukukhuluma nawe. Ngizofinqa inkulumo yethu kanje:

Igama lakho ungu …..(**use letters only)…**uyilungu lomphakathi wasoPongola futhi unolwazi ngokuthandana kwabantu abnobulili obufanayo kulomphakathi. Enkulumen yethu sichaze indima edlalwa usiko ukushintsha indlela umphathakathi obhekana ngakhona nesimo seLGBT. Siphinde sakhuluma ngezinqinamba ababhekana nazo nokuthi bangazinqoba kanjan lezinkinga. Ngiyabonga ulwazi lwakho, ngifisa ukwazi ukuth ngabe kukhona yini obufisa ukushintsha noma ukukusho ngokwengezekile kulokhu esikhulume ngakho. Kubonakala ngathi sengithole lonke ulwazi bengiludinga kulengxoxo yethu. Ngiyabonga ukungnikeza isikhathi sakho, inhlonipho kanye nolwazi lwakho. Sengivala nje benginesicelo sokuthi ngixhumane nawemangabe kukhona engikudingayo okuqondene nalengxoxo yethu.

Ngiphinde ngizibongele futhi, iNkosi ikubusise.

Appendix Six

Interview Schedule

Introduction

A) My name is Noxolo Mamba, a Development Studies Masters candidate from the University of KwaZulu Natal. With all due respect I would like you to be a participant in my research under the topic 'The role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola. I have specifically chosen you because you are a community member and have some knowledge about non-heterosexual identities in this community.

B) I would like to ask you to tell me what are your views on the role of culture in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality in this community.

C) I can assure you that your participation in this study will provide more insight about non-heterosexuality, especially the challenges that they encounter due to their sexuality.

I would like us to respect each other throughout the interview which includes refraining from vulgar language. Our interview will take thirty minutes.

Biography

Age :…

Gender:…

Marital status:..

Monthly income

Highest educational level

I would like to ask you some questions about non-heterosexuality in Pongola

- Do you know or have you ever seen anyone who is non-heterosexual?
- In your own words, how would you describe non-heterosexuality?
- In what way does culture and religion influences attitude towards non-heterosexuality in Pongola?
- Can you please name the challenges faced by non-heterosexual people in Pongola and how they overcome those challenges?
- Please explain the role of media in normalizing non-heterosexuality.
- Is there anything you would like to add in relation to our topic that you think might be helpful?

Thank you so much for the information that you have provided. I will summarize our conversation just to make sure I got the right content.

Your name is……(**use letters only**), a community member of Pongola and have agreed to share your knowledge and opinion on non-heterosexuality in this community. In our discussion you have mentioned the role of culture and religion in shaping attitude towards non-heterosexuality. We also discussed the challenges faced by non-heterosexual people in this community as well as their coping mechanisms. Lastly, we have discussed the role of media in transforming our community. Thank you once again for your participation, I would like to know if there is anything you want to add or clarify in relation to our topic. It seems like I have acquired all the information that I needed. Thank you for your time, respect and knowledge. In conclusion I would like you to provide me with your contact details if you don't mint so I can be able to contact you in relation to our interview.

Thank you so much, God bless you.

Appendix Seven

MEMO

Itshelejuba Local Community
Pongola City
3170

SIR / MADAM

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I CLLR S.V. NDLANGAMANDLA UNDER UPHONGOLO
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY WISH TO CONFIRM THAT I
MET WITH NOXOLO MAMBA AND SHE TOLD
ABOUT THE RESEARCH SHE WANT TO CONDUCT
IN THE COMMUNITY, SHE SEEK MY APPROVAL
SO I GAVE HER MY BLESSING TO DO IT AS
PER HER ASSIGNMENT. I FULLY UNDERSTAND
THE CONTENT OF HER STUDY (THE ROLE OF
CULTURE IN SHAPING ATTITUDES TOWARDS
HOMOSEXUALITY IN PONGOLA RURAL COMMUNITY)
I HOPE IT WILL HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT
IN THE COMMUNITY.

I HOPE YOU FIND THIS IN ORDER.

REGARDS
S.V. NDLANGAMANDLA

UPHONGOLO MUNICIPALITY
CLLR S V NDLANGAMANDLA
WARD 12
CONTACT NUMBER: 072 591 8690

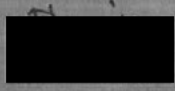**Appendix Eight**

DEAR SIR/MADAM

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

THIS LETTER SERVES AS A CONCENT THAT THE PONGOLA SERVICE OFFICE WILL BE RENDERING PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES AS WELL AS REFERALS TO CLIENTS WHO WILL REQUIRE SUCH SERVICES AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED BY MISS N.G MAMBA, TITLED THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SHAPING ATTITUDES TOWARDS NON-HETEROSEXUALITY IN PONGOLA RURAL COMMUNITY.

FOR ENQUIRIES CONTACT SOCIAL WORKER T.I DLAMINI EMAIL ADDRESS; Pongola@ kznsocdev.gov.za, TELEPHONE 034 413 1553 AND CELLPHONE; 083 744 7600.

YOURS SINCERELY

MR T.I DLAMINI
SENIOR SOCIAL WORKER PONGOLA SERVICE OFFICE