



**To be or not to be out: Realities of how black
lesbian *dress* for the labour market**
**Narratives of lived lives of Black lesbians in Cape Town,
South Africa**

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Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vi
List of Acronyms	vii
Abstract	viii
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Justification and relevance	3
1.3 Research questions	3
1.3.1 To dress or address injustices on basis of sexualities	3
1.3.2 Woman and lesbian	4
1.4 Scope and limitations of the study	4
1.5 Organization of Research Paper	5
Chapter 2 Research Methodology	6
2.1 Data generation	6
2.2 Ethical issues	9
2.3 Data analysis	10
2.4 Feminist Approaches to knowledge generation	11
2.4.1 Situated knowledge	11
2.4.2 Stand point theory	12
2.4.3 Card Play and Photo narratives	12
2.4.5 Intersectional analysis	13
Chapter 3 Empirical Research and Theoretical connections	15
3.1 Primary and secondary data	15
3.2 Gendered power hierarchies of men and women	15
3.3 Discourses of sexuality and race in South Africa	15
3.3.1 Coping by association-masculinity and a case of misogyny	17
3.3.2 Power speaks to silence	19
3.3.3 Dressing for work through performing identities	20
3.4.4 Pros and cons of discrimination: Butch and femme identities	22
3.4 Problematizing the work place: modernity, self and organizational cultures	24
3.4.1 Politics of managing sexuality	25
3.4.2 Modernity and the self	26
Chapter 4 Discrimination in the Labour markets and positioning lived lives of working black lesbians	27
4.1 Labour markets	27
4.2 Disclosure analysis of the work place	28

4.2.1 Coming out or not	30
4.2.2 Staying invisible	30
4.2.3 Agency	30
4.2.4 Coming out-Personal, Professional and Political (P ³)	31
4.2.5 Compulsory silence	31
4.3 Discrimination	31
4.3.1 Silence as censorship in the work place	32
4.3.2 Reactive silence	33
4.3.3 Direct discrimination and Compulsory invisibility	33
4.3.4 Tastes discrimination	33
4.4 Coping	34
4.4.1 Job Tracking as coping mechanism	34
4.4.2 Out (of the closet)	35
4.4.3 Dis(comfort) in the closet-fear to come out	35
4.4.4 Self-protection and resistance	35
Chapter 5 Summary and Conclusion	37
5.1 Review of chapters	37
5.2 Further research	38
References	40
Appendices	46
Interview guideline questions	46
Transcriptions of interviews edited versions	46
Nombulelo Pamela Ngwabeni	46
Christie van Zyl	46

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Disclosure analysis in the Labour Market by Glenda Muzenda 2012	28
------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Card play photo by Glenda Muzenda	7
Figure 3.1 Dressing for work	21
Figure 3.2 Dressed for life at work	21
Figure 3.3 Pamella during Q&A Photo by Peter Hayes	22
Figure 3.4 Pamella Ngwabeni performing in 'Ncamisa' Kiss a woman- Photo by Peter Hayes	22
Figure 3.5 Christie on the mic-Photo by Christie	23
Figure 4.1 Coming out Model Source: Adapted Gusmano 2008 and Ward and Winstanley 2003	30

List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
EEA	Employment Equity Act
HIV	Human Indeficiency Virus
LGBTI	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex
UN	United Nations
WEG	Work Employment and Globalization

Abstract

This paper focuses on the experiences of lived lives of black lesbians in the South African labour market. It shows how in a heteronormative space they manage and perform their sexualities due to discrimination that exists from organizational culture that limit access for lesbians. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientations is underreported particularly in the context of employment in South Africa; this study reveals the existence further marginalization on basis of being black, a woman and a lesbian which is supported by investigations into daily lives of respondents in the work place- how they manage and cope discursively, actively and make decision about their identities.

Relevance to Development Studies

The development discourse has to some extent excluded or omitted sexuality within the political arena in regards to distribution, redistribution and material poverty. Sexuality and modernity in context has yet to consider implications on nonheterosexual identities as integral part of policy intervention because there is no empirical evidence that supports these limitations to socio-economic dynamics that are -hetero-normative.

The complexities negated towards sexuality marginalizes and further causes material and emotional deprivation, this study aims to show empirically the challenges faced and possible avenues for polity intervention- for fruitful development and social change for women hetero/homo.

Keywords

discrimination, coping, heteronormative, black, employment, lesbians, perform, sexuality, identities

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The struggle in South Africa is not only for material needs but also includes the right of women to their bodies and dignity.). The need for women to be able to participate in a free environment that does not threaten their livelihood and the issue of sexuality is a contentious one in this study. Without access to labour markets, development in terms of economic and security (socially, personally and politically) the cycle poverty remains especially where discrimination exists (van Donk 2000:5).

On the other hand the decisions that motivate workers in this study are also dependent on experiences in discursively and actively managing their sexualities under heteronormative norms. Perhaps directly or indirectly the on-going debates¹ on whether homosexuality is African or not are plausible in considering the threats to social livelihood, economic survival and dignity of those whose identities are non-heterosexual.

My hypothesis is that discrimination still exists in the South African work places and labour markets. I seek to prove this by investigating the realities of black lesbians and how they manage their sexualities-discursively or actively in order to remain employable. The study unveils and presents evidence generated through interviews that were conducted in South Africa-the only country in Africa to constitutionally insert provisions for same sex marriages in Africa. Therefore, this study focused on realities on the ground of women who deal on daily basis as black woman² and lesbians to resist through their agency, which I found in the study- a pivotal point in managing sexuality. Not only is being black a problem on its own in exacerbating discrimination but other variables such as class, sexual orientation play a role in further marginalization through an intersectional interaction of attributes. I posit that marginalization based on an interplay of these variables has limitations to how far lesbians can actually break the glass ceiling and reach positions of decision making in a professional setting and also in relation to exclusion of identities on basis of sexual orientation in salaries and benefits for spouses (Badgett 1995) . This argument on exclusion is supported by research in a post-apartheid South Africa on how little has been done to realize economic empowerment and

¹ In a local newspaper ([City Press, 6 May 2012](#)) headline an ANC Member of Parliament Patekile Holomisa told the ANC to stop protecting gays: "...great majority does not want to give promotion and protection to these things".

² Black woman refers to lesbians and woman who love woman to otherwise referring to them as lesbians. It is in this context that I refer to lesbians and woman accordingly hetero/homo.

redistribution within the academic institutions which were previously for whites only (Hames 2007:57).

Research shows that the majority of black women (van Donk 2005) are still living under harsh and inhumane conditions.

As much as South Africa has legislated provisions for diversity, sexual orientation as a social issue has thin published literature thus far. Much of the existing literature focuses on racial discrimination, gender wage gap between men and women, and education and professional skills. Exemplified by racial discrimination most white South Africans still receive higher salaries than their black fellows doing the same work and are comparatively the bottom race as Indians and Coloured people are structurally and socially ranked second and third respectively (Burger et al. 2006).

Much research is generated on this basis in the context of South Africa. Gender wage gap and lack of senior positioning of women in academia has men (black and white) still getting paid more and have much access for promotion than black women, which is worsened by sexual identities (Hames 2007).

Class privilege is alluded to within research conducted on the language of labour market in South Africa. I posit that class determines education levels to which the majority of black South Africans were denied during apartheid rule hence the languages of business (English and Afrikaans) are critical to accessing the labour market. (Cornell and Inder 2008).

It is realizing this research gap that sexual orientation has not been investigated in as much as there is heterosexually charged literature. On a personal note I wanted to find out how lesbians function on daily basis in an otherwise hostile environment considering that they spent most of their time at work and what actions they are willing to take to protect their livelihood. The invisibility of nonheterosexual literature and data motivated my study towards investigating the possibility of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the work place and labour markets.

The study findings reveal the realities of lived lives of lesbians working in several sectors (formal and informal employment) performing and working out mechanisms to control and survive under the heteronormative gaze justifying my decision to investigate the lives of black lesbian in a contemporary South Africa. and most importantly because there is no existing literature that focuses solely on the lives of black lesbians in the work place. Some respondents articulated their uncertainty over the commitment of the government and the labour department on implementing LGBTI rights in the work place. Paradoxically and hypocritically, the government of South Africa was commended on the international platforms by entities such as the UN for dignifying human rights and freedoms of people and for non-discrimination on the basis of sexuality- and yet the empirical reality is the opposite. Respondents made reference to lack of literature, political commitment, and studies to highlight the problems of LGBTI person in South Africa. One respondent also alluded to the idea that by lack of evidence- the *“world out there might actually think we are living happily ever after under the rainbow”* said Siya.

1.2 Justification and relevance

Firstly, in order to fulfil my study requirements, I had to complete this paper through fieldwork that I undertook and writing up with relevance to my specialization: Work, Employment and Globalization (WEG).

Secondly, this is a personal decision to write up on black lesbians in South Africa as I have mentioned before to study women and in particular their sexualities in the labour market to contribute to a body of knowledge which is currently very thin if not non-existent. The vast forms of discrimination do not particularly cover sexual orientation in South Africa; much focus is on race, class, ethnicity, HIV/AIDS across the board and on blacks in a very heterosexually driven environment (see Burger et al. 2006 and 2007, Skinner and Mfecane 2004, Cornwell and Inder 2008). In addition literature that exists is on non-African countries, I wanted to situate this research in Africa and in South Africa for the reason that it has a progressive constitution that recognizes same-sex relationships and sexual freedoms to citizens. As a black woman who identifies with the many women in this study in some respects, I felt that for (us) black women in my country, this research would make it possible to start thinking critically of the issues that we can put forward to better our positions and realizing what lessons there are to take on for social justice to prevail. As a *black wom[a]n scholar... [t]he process of empowerment cannot be simplistically defined in accordance with our own particular class interests. We must learn to lift as we climb* (Davis 1989:9) I took to study sexualities and understand how we as black women function in these heteronormative environments.

Finally as woman scholar, I wanted to be situated in the cracks of this research an opportunity to capture realities through qualitative methods that would add to a growing literature - useful to take the process forward in making us visible as black women. There is relevance to who produces the knowledge and how this is done- there is a need to further study black women and use this research to level up non-discrimination in the labour market and seek interventions for justice.

1.3 Research questions

1. What difference has the non-discrimination clause in the South African constitution made in the workplace experience of black lesbians?
2. What mechanism(s) do black lesbians use to continue in their working lives and with what consequences or opportunities do they face?

1.3.1 To dress or address injustices on basis of sexualities

In this study the word *dress* is used as a metaphor to reflect the dressing or masking when individuals or laws show a certain way for acceptance to the environment in society. In explaining the metaphor-*dress*, which I use to convey a communication feature in my research- I explore other forms of linguistic expression (Schaffner 2003:1254). There are complexities in using metaphors that can mean various interpretations in many languages once translate. Of concern is translation of metaphors which most scholars have

argued over issues of 'transferring metaphors from one language and culture to another (Schaffner 2003).

In the case of my study I use dress to highlight a facade or illusion of both people and legislation. I express the illusions as a way of people coping in a life that makes it impossible to be yourself-thus one has to assume another identity in order to be cohesive to a group or organization in which they work in for example. Other critiques of metaphors claim that is an 'individual flash of imaginative insight' a product of violating the linguistic system, and as such, highly culture specific'. Views in the use of metaphors have the function to shock and emphasize the issue in a way that 'creates aesthetic impact' for the reader-emphasising that a metaphor cannot be translated (Dagut1976:22).

Moore (Moore 2004:73) actually explains the use of conceptual metaphors adequately to my meaning in this thesis by explaining further the use of conceptual metaphors in overlapping in themes and can also be used universally. "Concept-metaphors like global, gender, the self and the body are a kind of conceptual shorthand, both for anthropologists and for others." Moore makes metaphor concepts be useful not only for academia but for sharing exchanges. She argues that meanings of metaphors cannot be understood before meeting with the text to actually explore the meaning in context and practice. She alludes to the criticalness of the mind's stimulus in such contexts of text. In the case of *dress* being used as a verb in how a person can *dress* to look different. This expression or identity in the metaphor is how I use dress in this paper. An example is how black lesbians *dress* to cover up pain, non-conformity to non-hetero-normative ideals and fitting in or a legislative law that is aimed at good practice and in reality is toothless and not functional.

The study uncovers these layers or masks through exposing realities of lived lives of black lesbians. In other words by virtue of a survivalist instinct or thought, black lesbians do not live their lives according to the Human Rights Charter that South Africa ratified. They *dress* to be invisible of their rights and dignity because of fear and being discriminated against (Sarda 2008). This not only implies clothing by actions through language and silencing of nonheterosexual persons through legitimate power.

1.3.2 Woman and lesbian

The research also considers women who do not label themselves as lesbians and are in relationships with women and not limit participants to a rigid or myopic understanding on sexuality (because of stigma and risks of being unAfrican by virtue of one's orientation some participants prefer not to use labels for confidential and protection of their identities and staying dressed in a heterosexual environment as a way of coping and belonging (Graziano, 2004:2).

1.4 Scope and limitations of the study

There has not been any published research on sexuality in South Africa in the work place that I came across during the course of this study and this made it difficult to assess this study from a local and national level. This is the reason

why I undertook this research to explore and perhaps for South Africa to start considering research in this area due to the literature gaps that exist. As much as there are many countries that are non-African to compare with it is important to locate the issues of sexuality in the labour markets; a political issue within the African context and specifically to South Africa because of challenges that women and lesbians have in achieving economic and social wellbeing through best practices in the employment. Central to the issue of sexuality is the freedoms that individuals are restricted to exercise - an important part of their wellbeing and identities that they seek to live-and function in the work place without being discriminated against.

Furthermore what exists in literature about work is much of the mainstream organizational theory (Hancock and Tyler 2001) and negates homosexuality in this context of work force (Burrell and Hearn 1989) and much of the literature used on discrimination and coping is based on experiences in USA, Europe and limited from South Africa. Gusmano and Ward & Winstanely works are heavily referenced through relevance to data generated. Thus despite the small sample size of my study in this research, this paper will be useful as a baseline to future research to comprehend further the implications on sexuality in the labour markets of South Africa.

Time was a constraint in the study resulting in the small sample of respondents. Narratives require much time to gain trust and confidence for the respondents to give out their life stories to a stranger despite the bond formed during the time spent discussing sensitive personal issues on sexuality .

1.5 Organization of Research Paper

The focus in this chapter related to the background of this study on discrimination and coping in what the problem state to this paper investigated the existence of discrimination under the gaze of a new democracy. The study focused on black women and lesbians in the labour market- an under researched area that is necessary to understand the magnitude of realized transformation in the context of nonheterosexuality and existing gaps.

Chapter two focuses on research methodology used in gathering and generating data-using feminist approaches to ground the issues of sexualities of black lesbians and this is particular salient to my research location. Studies in the west on sexual orientation within axes of race, gender and class – this is lacking in South Africa the only country in Africa with a legislation on same sex marriages and freedom to sexual rights.

Chapter three reflects on the narratives of lesbians and woman in the labour markets and several sectors that are covered- public, private, NGOS, etc. Gender and sexual and dominant discourses are captured and theoretical connections made with the data analysed. Chapter four briefs of discrimination in the labour markets for lesbians and coping mechanisms through active or passive agency. Chapter five concludes with reflections on the study and recommendations.

Chapter 2 Research Methodology

Narratives that were collected were used to answer questions that were raised in this research paper. Nine out of ten workers from different sectors of the formal and informal sectors including private, governmental, NGO, INGOS, academic and small business were interviewed at separate times conveniently scheduled to discuss their lives at work and how they perform their roles as workers who identify as women and lesbians. I managed to work with only ten because of time constraints. Respondents provided critical views over discrimination, need to be heard (visibility) and work experiences. I purposefully interviewed Fundani³ for reason that are (not to) obvious to readers on the lives of lesbians who are not employed and work as volunteers with INGOs and NGOs that absorb them (black lesbians) as a way to keep them occupied through volunteering, recreational activities such as football, ruby games and community safe house networks.

As mentioned previously women and lesbian are used in this paper as homosexually identifying persons only. Heterosexuality is specifically articulated as such were necessary to make a point in the context. Although I have used data to express poverty and economic injustices that affect women in the background notwithstanding limitations to this study, women (hetero/homo) generally in South Africa are found to be in the same position regarding issues of social injustices and inequalities. In this study the focus was solely on black working lesbian women(self-employed or underemployed) with interest on the effects discrimination on basis of sexual orientation and coping mechanisms devised to manage their sexualities and gender expression and identities.

The respondents' aged from 24 -49 were identified through snowball sampling. During the few weeks that I undertook the fieldwork in Cape Town, I met with over 20 potential respondents for the study, to which I made a decision to sample ten due to timing limitations. In order to test the efficacy of my research questions, that is how I arrived at taking only ten to interview. Questions in the section below were asked-not necessarily in the order in which they appear and respondents responded with narratives.

2.1 Data generation

The study combined qualitative research methods: Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI), photo-narratives with play cards. These methods encouraged in depth interviewing necessary to gather rich narratives. There are no existing recipes

³ Fundani is one of the respondents who works as a volunteer with an LGBTI organization in Cape Town.

for methodology and for that reason given the sensitivity of the research applied several qualitative methods to collect data (Patton 2000). To deepen the narratives and also gain greater insights to the lived realities of women in the formal and informal sectors I used photo narratives and play card with words and phrases that evoked emotions and memory to give rich responses to questions that I asked. I used the concept to capture women's embodied experiences through use of cards with words that relate to the body (Sutton 2011:177). My interest in this study was to generate thick descriptions from black lesbians based on their lives and explaining what they see of themselves in the photographs. Writing about women's bodies

brings out different stories to tell despite fragmentation-bodies narrate experiences lived. For reasons that the subject of sexuality is sensitive and the continued stereotyping of lesbians as 'lazy and unproductive', I used the card play to bring out issues that they felt society perceives of them in the work place and in society. There is a link to which the body has a lot to expose in relation to discrimination and mechanisms to cope in non-hetero-normative environments (Eisenstein 2001:40-41).



Figure 2.1
Card play photo by Glenda Muzenda

Fig 2.1.) shows some of the words that were used during interviews. The words and photos evoked emotions that were relevant and answered question asked. The use of contexts that are varied to explain the experiences of women in their daily lives and extraordinary events that are painful and emotionally charged is important. The methods can bring about issues that can be challenged over social injustices and

inequalities. Restrictions by power structures and hierarchies make is difficult to show inequalities of women and using complex narratives to expose concerns is another way of resisting oppression-by speaking out (Sutton 2010:1-2).

The data collected describes and explains the process of language and communicating issues that are not usually easy to narrate and using the mixed qualitative methods. Kvale and Brinkmann (2007) state the importance of bringing that which the respondents relate and that is true of their realities. The process of qualitative research using semi-structured interviewing with respondents brings out real issues that people might often not speak about in public or with people they are not familiar with. It is making sure that the respondents feel at easy to speak out.

The use of semi-structured interviews (SSI) is important to provide in-depth dialogue to create knowledge of their own learning and understanding of what makes them succeed in their work life and opportunities or challenges they have socially, economically, politically and any other ways as far a personal life (Wallerstein 1987). The context of South African black lesbians is sensitive and necessary to hear and the methods proposed using the standpoint theory are fitting to draw out realities on the ground –on marginalized groups. In

order to be creating accurate histories of black lesbians' deeper investigation into lived lives is important to document to capture progress of labour laws in a democratic South Africa for marginalized persons. Interview guidelines herein were used to gain insight into the daily working lives of lesbians and these are attached in the appendix.

. The research study is informed by interviews with respondents who were selected through snowballing for sensitivity to marginalized groups. This was a deliberate choice to consider snowballing because I preferred to work through key informants who had dealt with cases of discrimination or knew persons of interest to interview. I also chose snowballing to get access to black lesbians for security for both parties (myself and respondent) with an understanding of what my role as a researcher dealing with the sensitivity of sexuality (Patton 2000).

Patton informs of snowballing being rich in information gathering through new cases and broader areas covered in recommendations within networks of LGBTI organizations. Patton explains that the bigger the spread of snowballing the better to get participants who might be mentioned over and over by different key informants. For example Patton briefly explains snowballing as presented in the study of marginalized or groups of knowing people recommended on well-run companies and then the most mentioned companies were identified (Peters and Waterman 1982 as cited in Patton 1990). I used snowball method to reach an understudied field on sexual minorities. The method is applicable and relevant for reasons that the approach seeks to engage and gather rich and understudied cases for analysis. Snowballing is useful in identifying cases without seeming insensitive to certain issues that are limited or do not exist due to understudy (Patton 1990:176).

I took advantage of my professional relationships with LGBTI networks in South Africa; they were my key informants who led me to meeting many of my interviewees. As a South African woman loving women, I related the background of my research to my departure to the field and found that there was acceptance of a black researcher taking on the issue and my approach in using networks that existed on the ground through referral from previous colleagues made my approach to the study familial. I was aware of previous engagements that involved 'white' researchers whom some black lesbians resented for misrepresentation from previous engagements. I was aware of this bias and needed to be clear about my research being for my academic fulfilment and not raise expectations on funding projects and the like.

I suggested meeting respondents at their convenience as I had my time open for interviews and meetings to discuss the research project. I met with a few outside of the platforms that took place in the days after my arrival. Under discussion on my arrival in South Africa was a debate over the removal of sexual orientation in the constitution. The networks that I had contacted informed me of these meetings and indicated that it would also be a great space to meet with potential respondents. After interviews I kept in touch to ask questions or get better understanding of issues that I needed clarity on as I transcribed.

The study relies on primary data, literature reviewed, and articles written in media on discrimination of lesbians to draw conclusions respectively. The

study is informed heavily on the narratives of ten black lesbians with situated knowledge of their lives-which, recorded during interviews with the exception of one. The respondent did not feel comfortable with the recordings. I also did not shoot photographs of persons who did not want this process.

In this study, whilst I opted to have in depth interviews to highlight the real issues that exist through semi-structured open-ended questions, at times the narratives were long and seemed irrelevant (at times) because some of the respondents do not use English as their mother tongue. Some found it difficult to articulate themselves without use of their mother tongue who sometimes were silent and could not correspond easily and with some resentment to speaking a different language from what is expected as typified in that society (Visser 2005: 231-232).

I encouraged use of other languages this in realizing that the intersections of discrimination in South Africa in regards to education access and being respectful to respondents to express themselves as they wished. As a South African familiar and learning languages like Zulu and Xhosa, I took advantage of my Ndebele(my mother's language) which I learnt growing up and is very similar in conversation. I recorded and, the recordings were transcribed verbatim for further analysis, which I confirmed with respondents and scholars who speak the same language for clarity and verification in the abovementioned languages.

The photo-narratives enabled me to gain background to the issues that are faced by black lesbians in regards to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Because sexual orientation is a sensitive issue- I chose to use semi-structured interviews to gain insights into the way of life on a daily basis which included-at some point silence (pausing to think or get clarity to questions) during and in conversations, as well as during further interviews and card play (Sutton 2011) engagement. This was also critical to emerging themes on silences which were also shared during interviews and some captured during transcription. Silence refers to discrimination in the work place as a form invisibility to respondents (Ward and Winstanley 2003)- not to silence in regards to conversations stopping or being interrupted by long pauses of silence.

2.2 Ethical issues

Respondents were concerned about their identities and issues of confidentiality hence, I ended up not taking photographs or occupying the work place as I had previously envisaged doing prior to my travels. I found that it would have damaging implications to their work and security to their employment as well and for these reasons I opted to have photographs that they chose to hand out. It is with this complex to their safety and confidentiality to being outed (forced to reveal their sexual orientation/identities) that I resolved to receive photographs of choice from the respondents. The participants described themselves at work and their coping mechanisms came in the photographs and what the pictures meant to their lives as working lesbians. The photographs are of respondents at work in

respect to what my research is focusing on and as I had requested that they be relevant to the study.

Through consent forms I managed to confirm use of the information and data gathered through the respondents. I asked respondents on whether what they preferred the use of photographs openly or with their faces blurred out. Most respondents said they preferred not to have photographs used in public and those who gave me their photos wanted them used openly and as well as blurring the face. This has been done accordingly in respect with the respondents' wishes. Consent was granted for the data collected to be used at as appropriately needed for this study as long as names and places are changed accordingly. Other respondents considered the use of pseudo names in order to protect their identities as this paper will subsequently be open to public use in future in South Africa and not limited to other uses such as generating article and journal material.

2.3 Data analysis

Grounded theorists like Glaser and Strauss (1967) use categories, codes, and calls expressions- incidents respectively and many more-not mentioned in this study. "*Conceptual labels placed on discrete happenings, events, and other instances of phenomena*" are linked between expressions and themes (Miles and Huberman 1994, Dey 1993:96, Opler 1945 as cited in Strauss and Corbin 1990). I concur with Opler's argument that cultural expressions are used in certain spaces by particular individuals to discretely communicate issues that are not often spoken in public.

In analyzing data time was invested in finding repetitions of words and phrases. Ryan and Bernard suggest repetition as one of the easiest way to capture themes. Biklen (1982:165) suggested reading over transcribed notes from verbatim records. Searching for themes is a continuous process involving close reading of transcripts and listening to audiotapes or digital recording to hear how words or phrases are repeated and used again in many instances (Bogdan and Taylor 1975:83).

Themes can be found in local terms that are used in familiar and unfamiliar way. These themes are also referred to as "indigenous categories" as coined by Patton (1990:306,393-400).

Thus selected participants were able to relate adequately to the process and narrate their realities and reflections. In analyzing collected data, I used techniques in research methods to identify themes within the narratives. I am purposefully sampling a particular group in order to find and identify themes and subthemes; identifying common themes over and over in texts; building hierarchies of these theme or codes and creating theoretical models of linked themes (. The advantages and disadvantages of identifying themes which are shared by many social scientists and that they are drawn from epistemological and disciplinary boundaries (Ryan and Bernard 2003:85).

The importance of themes in research is critical to description, comparison and explanation of findings in data analysis. Thirdly it helps to eliminate jargon in reports to communicate across disciplines and

epistemological positions and further describes the process to highlight new ways of seeing data (Ryan and Bernard 2003:86).

Anthropologist Opler (1945) noted that in analyzing cultures, the discovery of themes was crucial to particular expressions that might have been hidden in data; making it possible for themes to be visible and discoverable. Opler in discovering themes as key steps to analyzing cultures, states,

"...are found a limited number of dynamic affirmations, called themes, which control behaviour or stimulate activity. The activities, prohibitions of activities, or references which result from the acceptance of a theme are its expressions. . . ."
The expressions of a theme, of course, aid us in discovering it. (pp. 198-99)

Lastly Opler noted the importance of themes in ways that they systematically comprised of inter-related themes:

- i. how often themes appeared;
- ii. how pervasive themes were across diverse cultural ideas and practices;
- iii. reactions to a violated themes and;
- iv. specific contexts to which the degree of control is used to express the force, number and variety of each theme (ibid).

In addition to Opler's contributions, today social scientists use different terms though they relate to linkage between themes and expressions as such Ryan and Bernard.

In the final analysis I use triangulation; strategy that not only validates data collected from different- sources, time, space- where different people , of diverse age and working different sectors are speaking to a central issue of discrimination and coping mechanisms.

2.4 Feminist Approaches to knowledge generation

2.4.1 Situated knowledge

Haraway argues that the stand point theory is critical knowledge production which over time has been a battle ground with most domineering and highly influential authorities taking control of knowledge created as their own (1991). In order to avoid error and gross misrepresentation of knowledge to sciences one has to be in the presence and belonging (to feel the essence of inequality) to the cause and have some of the agency that the object possesses. Therefore, positing is '*key practice* in situated knowledge organization than seeing this through smoked screens or screens as some western scientists have imagined (Haraway1998:587). Haraway says that '*situated knowledges requires that the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor and agent, not as a screen or a ground or a resource, [and] never finally as a slave to the master that closes off the dialect in [her] unique agency and [her] authorship of 'objective' knowledge* (1988:592). It is this background that I use feminist approaches to investigate the realities on the ground and I also understand that knowledge from this perspective written by researcher needs to be viewed with partiality (Clifford1986).

2.4.2 Stand point theory

The Stand Point theory claims superiority in how knowledge generation from the perspective of marginalised groups is obtained. The theory brings out issues from the people who live these lives and can thereby bringing visibility to issues that are tabooed to speak openly (Harding 1987). The issue of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Butler 1999) and gender expression is critical to a group that is never heard (made invisible) because of the social orders on deviant sexual behaviour (Foucault 1979) and due to heterosexuality as the normative order that is accepted.

The use of standpoint theory aims to give unknown knowledge of lived lives of lesbians in the context of the labour markets to unveil the issues (Harding 1987, 2004:31). Harding emphasizes that the approach gives power of process to knowledge to the people who have lived these lives to narrate it the way they see themselves and that which conflates their expected freedoms and rights in social relations.

Harding explains how by locating the issues that have caused oppression and deprivation of material and political participation, the approach clearly shows the hierarchical powers that exists in the process of laws(2004). Standpoint theory makes claims for the advancement of knowledge from social relations and political struggles as an important discourse of regulations and laws. An argument by Collins (1991) queries sexuality and describes it as deviance of black women out of order instead of questioning sexist and racist structures that impoverish women of their rights and dignity as women.

Stand point theory as a method to collect information is critical to consciousness and to produce knowledge that is relevant to a group(Harding 2004); this is empowering to have their own stories reflected respectfully without misrepresentation.

The lack of research on the matter is evidence of these voices not being realized by essentialist feminist that either misrepresents women in the South and makes claims them as vulnerable and needing to be emancipated (Mohanty 1988) through distorted history. This research study is an attempt at producing knowledge (Harding 2004) through the lived lives of lesbians in South African relevant to African sexualities in the labour markets. Standpoint theory is not without controversy, Harding has been criticized by social scientist and feminists alike on how issues of location cause tension to how hidden issues are revealed through the use of this natural science. Social scientists have criticized the hypothesis that has often made research seem racist and essentialist in its approach (Haraway 1987) I concur with this argument of knowledge production as proffered by Harding (2004) on marginalized groups be located in the location of issues as does the situated knowledge which actually compliments this research study.

2.4.3 Card Play and Photo narratives

I sought to bring out the silences that are emerge in this study to consider further research on psycho-analyzing the effects of being silenced, voluntarily and involuntarily through card playing to evoke emotions on lack of dignity and respect.

I used photovoice- a participatory research tool that can easily be used for its flexibility and adaptability to diverse groups of people [and individuals] to reflect issues of inequalities and social injustice towards black lesbians. There are three main goals to photovoice: (i). to give an opportunity for people to document concerns within a community and it strengths towards change through reflecting on their photographs; (ii). to generate critical awareness through dialogue and knowledge exchanging ;(iii). to reach out to policy makers in working towards better development strategies (Wang and Burris 1997:370)

I chose to use photovoice to articulate issues that are not necessarily visible to the eye in the case of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the works place. The purpose of such a tool as photovoice is that it brings out the real issues that people see as a concern for them through visualizing their lived lives and be able to critically reflect on challenges are faced with on daily basis -political and social influences towards inequalities (Wang and Burris 1997).

2.4.5 Intersectional analysis

In this study I focused on three aspects of intersecting sources of oppression. In South Africa the issues of oppression are relevant not only to race but other variables inter-relatedness of gender, class and sexual orientation as alluded in conversation with Isaack by Gqola in 2006⁴. It is relevant to consider Isaack's argument in this study for it raised in the interviews conducted as to how hard it is being black, then a woman- and to add insult to injury-a lesbian. In societies where racial structures are in place and marginalization through policy that legitimize these racist practices cannot be read away from sexuality and gender (Ratele 2011:29). Ratele presents the difficulties in a country like South Africa that previously had legislated racism and which challenges dealing with sexuality and gender away from racism. This argument was supported by respondents who revealed how difficult it was to separate these forms of discrimination into categories that one could actually claim as one form of marginalization-one being worse than other. The problem of inter-relatedness of these variables as argued by Isaac are profoundly frightening in regards to the prevalence of racism and class oppression (2006).

The notion of intersectionality is thus critical in that it is subjective to varying sources of oppression and its impacts dependent on variables combined: race, gender, class, and sexuality' (Nash 2008: 2). Nash argues that gender studies and anti-racist scholars have found intersectionality a primary theoretical tool. A concept that emerged in the late 80s through Crenshaw has become useful in analysing challenging empirical studies (Denis 2008:685).

⁴ In Conversation. Pumla Dineo Gqola Speaks with Wendy Isaack

Intersectionality in this research addresses core and pivotal issues that are central to theoretical and normative concern.

McCall explains three methodological tools in examining intersectionality: 'anticategorical complexity' that deconstructs analytical category, 'intracategorical complexity' that looks at lived lives of marginalized groups' experiences that are complex and 'intercategorical complexity' which is used for inequality analysis amongst social groups. Thus I use intracategorical and intercategorical complexities for the study-for individual perspectives on discrimination and coping within and externally(McCall in Nash 2008).

Chapter 3 Empirical Research and Theoretical connections

3.1 Primary and secondary data

Data used herein is from primary data that was collected during the field visit in July-August 2012 in Cape Town, South Africa. Below, the analysis of this data I made in reference to theoretical literature reviewed to comprehend discrimination and coping mechanisms that lesbians and women use to remain in the labour market systems.

3.2 Gendered power hierarchies of men and women

Gender is a system of power (Lorber 2010) in that it privileges some groups of people over others-racial categories, ethnicity, social class and sexual orientation. Lorber speaks of these divisions within social orders of gender and thus constructing similarly a place where one must conform to the role assigned as with ruling masculinity. **Mtsetwa** argues 'the possibility that a woman who transgresses social and cultural norms can be accused of being a lesbian has the effect of paralysing the expression of all women's sexuality, including that of heterosexual women' (2003: 24) who voluntarily or involuntarily belong to the social order that is heterosexual. The narratives focus on sexuality, identities and gendered aspects of discrimination.

3.3 Discourses of sexuality and race in South Africa

Isaack (in Gqola 2006:96) argues for the relevance of lesbians attaining their rights because of our progressive constitution and yet this is not realized because of racism and class oppression. She presents this as the realities of gays and lesbians (with much occupation to sexual orientation and gender identities) who have not been recognized because of socio-economic inaccessibility due to deliberate obstacles whilst legal rights are guaranteed by the constitution and other progressive legislation whilst there is much more happening that needs to be addressed globally. I concur with this argument and in fact this has become a derailment to moving forward in many cases with politicians and traditional leaders who often sideline progress through lack of clout and hate speech. Whether directly or indirectly there is evidence showing that these take a back seat when leadership does not show encouragement and influence in political will to realize these recognitions for nonheterosexuals in South Africa.

Studies have shown that the discourse of homosexuality is only limited to white sexualities in South Africa (Ratele 2006). It is much of what I posit as an obstacle from my personal view in stalling and holding up progression to recognition in socio-economic aspects of black women and lesbians when this becomes the bigger agenda than committing to the process of recognition. In addition there is concern over state-sponsored homophobia (Reddy 2004) and ultra-masculinity that impedes on progress towards gender equality. It is a lack

of political will in reference to hate speech by traditional leaders-whom the state has not questioned on account of the legal standpoint. Research shows how professional men find cultural ascendancy to promiscuity as natural whilst neglecting the right of the woman in the course of desires to have sex-conquering (simulating popular culture). Masculinity and heterosexuality are revealed in the study with professional men who feel they are entitled to women's bodies. In simpler terms women are not only in the work place to actual earn an income but to provide sexual pleasure as well by virtue of being in the same space that is gendered for men and women thus are sexualized for reproductive work only (Ratele 2006:21).

It is through this reference point that I argue of sexuality being boxed in heterosexual norms, patriarchal order and some policies confining persons in South African in regards to work. In South African despite a constitution (Constitution Republic of South Africa 1994, South African Human Rights Council 1996) that delivers on paper-right to sexual freedoms-in reality South Africa remains homophobic and very heterosexist towards reforming and integrating same-sex sexualities in the economic and social justice spectrum. The reference on heterosexuality in regards to sexuality discourses in South Africa is related in this study through analysis of data provided by black lesbians who claim and support heterosexual dominance in the work place and loss of psychological integrity, self-esteem and dignity through systematic abuse and violence-verbally and physically or silence by state and other actors.

In an conversation with Gqola, Isaack expresses the same argument on heterosexuality and dominance over women's bodies. The denial of women to express their sexualities in the private and public spaces under heterosexual norms is deeply rooted in masculine ruling and sexual order. And any reasons to not conform are met with moralistic condemnation, exclusion and violence to put up with women's gendered roles. I concur with Isaac and further this argument on debates over sexuality as tabooed in African culture only when it involves women and nonheterosexuality; an argument made as early as the 1970s by feminists who critiqued the construction of gender and power relations between women and men (Gqola 2006:93). In fact, it is this within this framework that women's sexuality was subordinated towards heterosexuality and thus *accepted* men's exploitation of female bodies and subsequently labor too (Butler 1999; hooks 1987; Scott 1986,1999). Respondents and research empirically presents data that refers to men feeling entitled to abuse/use women's bodies for sexual gratification (Ratele 2006, Fundani 2012, Nomzamo 2012⁵) in order to keep jobs.

⁵ Fundani and Nomzamo are respondents in the 2012 study

3.3.1 Coping by association-masculinity and a case of misogyny

In this section the focus is on how women like Keneliwe⁶ cope in the work place by assuming masculine (one of the boys) roles so that they are part of the team that is in 'power'. Active construction describes masculinities achieved through everyday conduct, life organization, as a social practice (Connell 2000) in order to satisfy the commitment to groups by individuals that have power over others that one follows. Keneliwe is the only black 'woman' and a lesbian who works for a law firm, in Cape Town. She is the last of three two male siblings who are also qualified and skilled professionals in their own right- one brother is a chemical engineer and the other an advocate. She is a university graduate who studied law at the University of Cape Town.

For this education and that her status as a lawyer has made her who she is and she has also chosen who she wants to hang out with. She related to serious conversation she has with the 'boys' and she as one of the 'boys' has managed to show that he is as strong and intelligent like the male colleagues. She associates with them and competes with them on equal basis. Kenne's gestures of superiority over the girls in administration for example fans her dislike towards the heterosexual women, some of who are married with children and yet she refers to them as girls and shows her preference to male colleagues.

'...I am actually one of the boys in this office-as the only woman who can actually be in the same space with men without feeling like I need to behave like a girl. In fact I really don't like that behaviour of being girly (gets up and walks swaying her hips side to side) it disgusts me to see women lessen themselves to be girls-, lipstick, fake nails and shit like that. So you know, I actually prefer being with men here-we are just tight nyazi⁷' (Keneliwe; Transcript: Interview)).

Masculinities are presented as not fixed to personalities or bodily state of masculinity. This is an act of doing-gender, which sheds light on masculinity. These forms of power vary from economical, racial, physical strength, and several institutions that can enable or restrict persons who access and engagements have specific functions. These specific forms of practices are relegated to favoured groups by virtue of this hierarchy Ratele (2008) explains further and I take ruling masculinity for use in this paper is used to show male dominance and at the same time in analysing data collected –with a narrative that is of masculinity-new masculinities and contextualized within butch and femme concept of misogyny with '...specificities of highly inequitable economic relations, political arrangements, culturally embedded relations and colonial histories observable in societies such as South Africa shape how men behave, think and relate to others [women and lesbians]'.

⁶ Keneliwe or Kenne (pronounced as Kenny) as she affectionately known by her peers and colleagues.

⁷ Uyazi is Zulu-meaning you know as to concur/understand with an idea.

Conduct patterns in society can be defined as 'masculine' and others 'feminine' (Connell 2000) which, can apply to both man and woman. Keneliwe affirms her masculine role in that she plays with the boys, competes with the boys and thus she is one of the boys. Even when I can ask her about fear of discrimination should the 'boys' find out that she is a lesbian. She relates that her relationship with the 'boys' is not compromised because she is educated and that girls who are not educated are the vulnerable ones as they are the ones who have to "give it up"- implying having sex with men for job favours.

I am one of the boys (beating her chest) and I don't want to confuse that relationship- and have these guys think I want to sleep with them or something. Some girls are all about that. I mean you know if you want a decent job and you are not educated you will pay dearly, (gestures and points below her belt implying sex). Like I said, I am educated and do not need to be someone's bitch to get into this space. (Keneliwe).

Keneliwe also exhibited what is explained as misogyny-a conception that has been solely perpetuated by "men" hating "women" written broadly on the subject of '...femme/butch bar cultures...' (Stafford 2010:81). The discourse of gender representation is indoctrinated into dominant cultures such as those that are powerfully placed in society (heterosexuality, androgyny and masculinity) which lesbians can take on for reasons that fit the bill at the time (Stafford 2010, Ratele 2006, 2011). Lesbians and feminists scholars previously wrote off the idea that women are capable of misogyny. which I found to be of interest in the narratives and performances of masculinity and misogyny by Keneliwe.

Although she established that she had not discussed or disclosed her sexual orientation with the male colleagues whom she referred to as the 'boys' and found it interesting that she has to assert herself as one of the boys and functions and performs her roles to the masculine ideal in how she speaks of women – a way of associating with men and doing what they do as part of gaining that legitimacy to the group. By way of belonging (with male colleagues) she has found a way to cope by communicating her stance on her sexuality-even using the 'boys' language to talk about the 'girls' in administration. By remaining unknown to her colleagues, she protects herself through resisting (Gusmano 2008) the gendered role of women per se.

This is a way of protecting and managing her identity within a group that is dominant in the work place. She explained that it was the girls in the administration who made her feel like she was 'weird or something' to which she emphasizes that people had talked about her gender expression since she was a young girl and that it does not bother her. Her performance of masculinity ideals shields her from the comments and those that the administration staff make towards her and she also invalidates their questions as insignificant by calling them 'girls' and undermining them as 'girls' who are not as educated as she is. Thus they are subordinates to men-including herself as one of the 'boys'.

3.3.2 *Power speaks to silence*

In this section the narratives focus on how structures can silence those who speak out. Gusmano argues that, '[t]he context of workplaces could be defined as heteronormative, from a structural, discursive and practical point of view' (2008:473). She argues that sexual orientation remains under researched. Critical to research are themes of silencing to make nonheterosexuals invisible through threats and authority that uses power to assert any misgivings of deviant behaviour (ibid). The work place is described as restricting through regulations and creates relations (Acker 1990) that are not diverse.

For Siya⁸ a 28 year old lesbian, the truth was further than she had been made to see by the human resources (HR) personnel. Siya works for parastatal⁹ HR knew that she was a lesbian through her application when she applied for the call agent position, because as a bread winner to her family she hoped to access benefits available as her friend who worked there (hetero) was receiving benefits for partner. Siya is well spoken and is an asset to such companies that need articulate young women to work in the call center- strong communication skills.

Whilst she worked late one night her manager (male) asked her why she was not interested in sexual relationship with men. Siya said she just remained silent and yawned to show disinterest. He proceeded to touch her thigh lifting her skirt and she asked him to stop- he did not. She asked him to drop her off at her house and instead left her in the middle of nowhere –he pushed her out of the car. She fell, was hurt and walked home not even sure she would make it there.

After reporting the matter to HR-days later she was called to be informed she had successfully been appointed to new post through the 'interview'.

'I was amazed at how things moved and changed without my knowledge and acknowledgement to the whole saga. How do I get a job to move to another department when I did not apply for the position?' (Siya).

HR informed her that the move was for her benefit and it was the best solution for her. HR assured her that the manager had been dealt with accordingly as per her complaint. Months later the manager who had been fired after a second complaint by a hetero girl, called to verify departmental issues- a process that requires identification in the organization. It turned out he was transferred to another province- with complete benefits.

Legitimacy of the restrictive model of (hetero) sexuality identity by society which reproduces these restrictions (Gusmano 2008) in the organizational spheres is emphasized through the narratives. It is from this stance that I argue that nonheterosexuality can be silenced within an organizational culture that

⁸ Not her real name

⁹ State owned company

understands and protects those in higher positions (Schuyf 2000) especially when they fall into the accepted sexual identities- leaving the individual vulnerable to potential job loss; a concern that Siya has yet she has dependents who expect her to keep the job despite such violation to one's dignity.

In an article 'Onveiliger thuis dan op straat' translated in English 'Less safe at home than on the street' by Evbota (2012:23)¹⁰who , refers to how lesbian foreign students in the Netherlands felt safe on the Holland streets than at original home. . They lesbian foreign students reported that they were harassed and abused by their families. Siya commented,

I know they will call me names 'a useless, istabane'¹¹ and lazy as soon as I announce that I have left the job because of discrimination (2012).

3.3.3 Dressing for work through performing identities

Sabie is 31 year old woman is identified herself as a lesbian during the interview. At work she refers herself as Sabie. She works for an NGO as an administrator. She was hired an intern to take the position and has been working with the organization for just a year. Sabie explained that when she started this new job she wanted to blend in (fit in) and not stick out like a sore thumb as she had done at the previous organization where he ended up leaving after being exposed and she had to express her sexual orientation. Sabie related that she wanted to belong and yet in time she felt frustrated at the type of hair and clothing she wore to *dress* like any normal girl- someone who is heterosexual. 'After a while I was like who is this person? I stopped wearing those makoti¹² dresses (fig.3.1) and cut my hair-cheese kop¹³ you know. And then the questions started flowing about why I dressed like a tomboy(see fig. 3.2)', (Sabie 2012).

Sabie explained that despite being pulled out of the closet on daily basis through personally intrusive questions that female colleagues bombarded her with she vowed not to come out. Sabie related how she feel awkward being another person at work and how she look forward to getting home to be self again. Self-identifying mechanism in order to cope-clothing worn by workers to appear in a certain way that allows one to fit into spaces of the work place that require gender and sexuality to be performed accordingly; whether it is to

¹⁰ in Erasmus magazine

¹¹ Istabane refers to derogatory for lesbian

¹² Refers to a bride and in this context- her dressing is like that of a young married woman-respectfully traditional dressing that a woman wears without exposing her knees when married-according to Sabie (2012).

¹³ Shaved bold head with a typical marine look is referred to as cheese kop in South African slang-most popular with male football players. In Fig. 3.2 unfortunately Sabie wanted to remain unknown and requested that her photograph be blurred-hence the cheese kop is not visible. Fig. 3.1 shows an outline of her hair in braids. I attest to the fact that during out interview she had a cheese kop-which she has decided to keep.

pass as 'heterosexual' and, using gender neutral nouns to describe partners, how one wears their hair and jewellery is necessary to see the way workers dress (Skidmore 1999). Umberto Eco's maxim on how he spoke through his clothes is not to be taken lightly in how people dress themselves to belong and self-identify as Sabie argues about her identity in the workplace (Eco 1972 as cited in Skidmore 1999).

Sabie who now keeps her short explains the difficulties with colleagues who keep questioning her about her sexual orientation. Sabie informed me of how she had felt violated and harassed by a female colleague who is very aware of information policies in regards to sending pornographic material to work emails. Sabie explained that away from the questions about how she probably was the same as (similar to) a homosexual couple featured on a daily soapie – Generations to which she chooses to ignore or laugh off; there are also images that are sent to her to provoke. I asked her what processes existed to protect lesbians and nonheterosexuals in the work place she gestured with her hands- nothing. She said she would never consider reporting such an incident because it will only fuel the ideas that already exist about her- that she must be a lesbian. 'I know that if I say anything to HR, they will ask me why I am offended and that will lead to them actually interrogating why –*a naked women are offensive for another woman*', (Sabie 2012).



Figure 3.1
Dressing for work



Figure 3.2
Dressed for life at work

Dress is an important part of gender construction in strategies used by gays and lesbians (Wilson 1988:53). Clothing is principal element of coping in environments that are heterosexual in nature to keep up appearances of gender binary-hetero/homosexual (Hawkes 1995). It is a way that one expresses themselves within and amongst peers or colleagues in the work place as a way to counter intersectional categories (McCall 2008).

The levels of communication may be a way to express underlying concerns of the (in)visible self or to suppress being outed as Ward and

Winstanley in regards to themes of silence (2003). There are three levels for communicating messages by the person who wears them to (i) inform of their sexuality those who can read the message at large, (ii) communicate to those who are familiar to their status and (iii) to self-identify within oneself (Skidmore1999:513).

He adds that wearing undergarments should not be seen as perverted but a way of personally getting in touch with the inner self and affirmation and anyway that makes one feel comfortable as they personally feel their identity or expressiveness as does Sabie; thus uses pronouns in Xhosa referring to her partner (yena), which is the same for him/he and dresses down her butch identity a with soft and feminine touch of colour.

3.4.4 Pros and cons of discrimination: Butch and femme identities

‘My name is Nombulelo Pamella Ngwabeni. I am 27 years old. I am a professional performer I’m not just an actress –I am a writer, singer, poet and I do everything as long as it is performing arts. I am a black lesbian obviously. I come from a not so rich family but affording. I could say middle class family I am the ninth child of 10 kids. My father died when I was like four years old’.

Q. How did you come to work as an artist? Tell me more about how that has been for you?

‘I got into the Arts industry a while ago to use my energy, talent and skill to share issues that concern us, my community, and my people. And found it difficult to find work. There as much discrimination in this industry as anywhere else-more so when you are butch like me it is really difficult- at least that is what I was told when I started. After casting myself for long and without much work-to earn an income- it was hard. I even worked for an organization dealing with abused women and I had to leave after four months of being tortured by lunch time preaching from the psychologist at the shelter who took time to inform me about my identity and homosexuality –it was a bad thing- unAfrican and the rest of that ignorant business. Luckily for me most of the people in this industry know that I am a lesbian especially here in Cape Town and so through networks I got my big gig in 2009 with ‘[Ncamisa’- Kiss a woman](#). I am very talkative and I always have an answer but not to discrimination though. I got my big break in 2009, working with Arts and Ice to take a role of black lesbians in the township- I was free I had to act as a butch lesbian it was great and that gave me exposure in the world [UK, USA, South Africa and regionally]of arts’ (Ngwabeni 2012).



Figure 3.3
Pamella during Q&A Photo by
Peter Hayes



Figure 3.4
Pamella Ngwabeni performing in
'Ncamisa' Kiss a woman-Photo by
Peter Hayes

This brief excerpt from Pamela is context of discrimination on the basis of gender expression through identities- butch/femme (Halberstam 1998) established to overcome extreme heterosexuality in construction for visibility. The concept of fluidity as in a space has been contested and through social interactions it emerged. Lesbians have strategically made themselves visible in this space to problematize structures that make them invisible 'Butch and femme aesthetics are examined as tactics in resisting heterosexual space and demanding lesbian presence[...] and entitlement' by lesbians take on identities theorized a contingency, changing and positioned by 'discursive structures rather than as fixed properties of the individual'(Eves 2004:480). Pamela (fig. 3.3-3.4) who has been able to take work as an administrator as taken her identity to the make and break-and this is reflected in the job tracking for jobs that would be tolerant or accepting of her identity. She has not always been met by applause and excited audiences as she relates of an incident during Q&A session in London in 2010. '... *this true that you are showing us here of South Africa? You guys[lesbians] you are still young, you can get married and have kids. You are preaching wrong things coming from SA,*' said an Angolan man in the audience. He was so angry he started coming towards the stage, cursing me out and "fortunately", security reacted quickly-they removed me from the stage. I asked why me and not the guy causing the fracas? The audience was angry and started shouting my name- for me to be left alone. My director was fuming' (Pamella 2012).



Figure 3.5
Christie on the mic-Photo by Christie

Christie (fig 3.5) a poet and activist expresses her frustration towards heterosexist ideologies that seem to follow through her work. Christie works with human rights activist with much of her work through [transmogrify](#)- way of making sensitive issues be through visual images without provoking graphic images to rape of women as an example. She is often asked about her sexuality and why she writes about struggles of black lesbians when she is real woman (hetero),

which her audiences inform her about because of how she presents herself-femme. '*Hayisuka andizumamela ithethwa yilesbian wazini lona Oke vagina monologue oko, ingathuthetha ngemoto yakho*'(Christie, 2012).¹⁴

¹⁴ Translated from Xhosa-Get away I won't listen to what is being said by a lesbian and what she know anyway? Too sensitive with these human right, always are fighting for

Whilst an idea of adventures for women in the 70s in recent times it is used to react and to resist sexual conformity to structures (Faderman 1992:59) that order these and terms the women as Pamella and Christie do in order to show their validity through their identities- which can be taken seriously or not. For lesbians to be seen and be visible is important as it would be for anyone- hence patriarchy and masculinity (Ratele 2006) as an institution reproduces oppressive measures to protect heterosexuality- culturally, socially, politically and economically practices in organizing structures and spaces even using reactive and censorship silence (Ward and Winstanley 2003) to keep nonheterosexual in 'order'.

'They did not make a fuss about it and I like that it was subtly handled. [...] People just don't mind about my sexuality, I mean now and again when I wear lipstick my (male) colleagues make reference to me trying to confuse them', (Treasure 2012). Treasure is a butch lesbian who is out and on many occasion colleagues have made comments towards her gender expression despite the fact that she claims they *'working towards diversity'*. A matter that she raised over sharing sleeping arrangements (workshop and travel) with another female staff member was handled "subtly" raises ambiguity over department's commitment to diversity. The reactions present censorship to the space and taste of discrimination (Becker 1957). Treasure works for State Security-where women were not presented in management a reason for her hiring at the time-to meet the quota of black women's representation. .

3.4 Problematizing the work place: modernity, self and organizational cultures

Modernity in the case of policy and laws is contested for double standards that conflate this discourse. Modernity and (the) self have become blurred in the context of traditions remaining stagnant deliberately in the case of organizations that control and regulate 'social relations across indefinite time-space distance' (Giddens 1991:16).

women's rights. Always vagina monologue always, you can talk about a vagina like a toy- a car!

3.4.1 Politics of managing sexuality

In this section the focus is on politics of coming out to the point of no return. Zethu is a PhD graduate working at research Institute¹⁵ in Cape Town. In the narratives in the study a case of modernity in regards to polity and the discourse of law at times conflate. South Africa is unique in this discourse that at times clashes despite good willed intentions. Zethu's excerpts on discrimination are astounding and shocking from the magnitude of how racism is blatant and in your face. She explains, *'we play our critical, radical, role on queer-research for a queer agenda- a very black lesbian agenda. My role is to organize events round the city meeting communities. As personnel in this team I know that we are capable and able to work together and make the face of the institute- with all bases covered- religion, sexuality and race. I am openly out disclosed my sexual orientation, my partner is known and families within the team, we know each other. Families are included in the work social activities and functions. I have always been out and even when I was working in the corporate sector I made it clear that I was a lesbian and that meant my agenda would be reflective of that too,'*(Zethu 2012)

Modernity in the case of policy and laws is contested for double standards that conflate this discourse. She relates on how her sexuality has become a non-issue (censored) external staff members whom she works with regularly interacts with, *'On a personal level I feel that I would do not be confronted by discrimination in my face as I used to! It is no longer that I am a lesbian because on that level I can take anyone on, on any level; moreover, they actually prefer that I do not say that I am a lesbian because they do not want me to talk about lesbian discrimination. It is beyond lesbianism that they external staff cannot comprehend once we start talking,* (Zethu 2012).

Organizational cultures and the differences of one from the other according to how gender is conceived (Gherardhi 1995:4). Sexuality, in contemporary organizational theories (Hancock and Tyler, 2001) is still regarded as a taboo and yet it plays a significant role in marginalizing non-heterosexual in many forms-cultures. Resources are activated and mobilized on daily working life- in accordance to gender and (hetero) sexual practices in response to culture of organization (Bruni 2006:303).

Interest to the organizational aspect is raised by the what has become intellectual order to conform seeing that Zethu's sexuality such a tenured issue not worth discussing-lest she gives education on the subject. There is a form of of discrimination that emerged in the narratives that she related. *"Outside of my work there are limitations obviously. My literature is stigmatized, the fact that it is on black sexualities, lesbians and trans [gender] issues it is difficult to be published. Scholarly I find myself very alienated and stigmatized, those with power in the academy want to have a certain framing, that I must conform to- until then they are not satisfied. What they want is for black sexualities to be framed in the western ideologies. And when I challenge that scholarship as a black woman my literature only filters few avenues that it is allowed to*

¹⁵ Institute of Research- nameless to protect institution

access. There are still more white scholarships than black and white people support each other, (Zethu 2012). Modernity and (the) self have become blurred in the context of traditions remaining stagnant deliberately in the case of organizations that control and regulate ‘social relations across indefinite time-space distance’ (Giddens 1991:16). As does policy work for black women academics- access to the next level is restricted indicated by Zethu. Discrimination like heterosexism reproduces and manifests (Giddens 1991) in many forms under the guise of *modernity-dressed policies*.

3.4.2 Modernity and the self

There are numerous positions that contest identity as identity as fluid and that it can be negotiated or shape as a virtual thing that cannot be defined in empirical terms and perhaps even a trap constructed by society (Brubaker and Cooper 2005:89, 2009); defines identity as fictional (Munoz 1995), thus it does not exist. The complexities of identity have been ‘associated with changes in trust mechanisms and risk environments’ since the introduction of modernity introduced ‘an elemental dynamism into human affairs’ (Giddens 1991:32).

Changes from traditional into progressive and modern ideologies in the lives of individuals has changed over time not only in the context of locations that we live in but also in the global sphere in regards to the discourse of laws and policy in particular to sexuality national¹ and universality. The existence of modern tools such as policy do not actually bring the realizations of democracy as freedoms for people- the majority of whom are black women. *‘The important part is for those who have jobs, it means that they can gain economic and social justice. And of course those who are unable (and there is too many) to have jobs particularly black lesbians- who do not finish school because they drop out. Because right from the educational system they are discriminated –which makes policy have little influence for black people in this situation. That implies the clause has done little for those who still experience discrimination at educational level to reach the stage for employment,’* (Zethu 2012). In the case of policy and legislation that is not implemented-recognition and realization of opportunities is just a dream especially for many black lesbians-who drop out of school because of discrimination. The discourse of sexuality in the much of South Africa that negates rights of nonheterosexual women I interviewed expressed that men at work expected them to give sexual favours so often in order to keep their jobs and gain economic empowerment.

Chapter 4 Discrimination in the Labour markets and positioning lived lives of working black lesbians

4.1 Labour markets

In this section the focus is on the experiences of employment for black lesbians. Briefly, I will explain the labour markets as basis of this research to relate characteristics of multi-segmented labour markets that exist in a developing country like South Africa and the effects of discrimination. The 2009, International Labour Organization (ILO) and World Trade Organization (WTO) report, 'Globalization and Informal jobs in the developing countries shows that workers access to certain segments due to their related bargaining power and social networks-which relates the individual's characteristics-'education level, and skills, professional experience, gender, age and not limiting to *sexual orientation*' (ILO and WTO 2009, Gagnon 2008).

I emphasise sexual orientation because it is the core of this research on how discrimination on that basis causes to either move from one job to another in search for a tolerant space to work in without compromise of the sexual identities. Respectively decisions made in the labour market are specific to what is favourable within the formal or informal employment from the organizational cultures' that Hancock and Tyler allude to in their arguments on restrictive measures to create homogeneity amongst worker (2001). The multi-segmentation of the labour market presents the realities that are plausible and possible in the way workers transition from formal to informal employment; these possible and plausible realities dependent on several factors such as the institution, individual, firm specificities, market conditions, and labour movements (ILO and WTO 2009:45-47). Transitions in these segments differ to motivations (decisions to come out or not) that lead workers to move from one job to the next for reasons that could include discrimination in the environment and 'job tracking' is used as a mechanism to cope as this study reveals from several lesbians interviewed. social visibility and participation are-greater part of dignity and respect for one's self to be able to care for their families. Social identity (Alvesson and Willmott 2001; Giddens 1991; Levitas 1965 as cited in Ward and Winstanley 2003) is critical to several roles lesbians take up-mother, sister, partner and breadwinner.

Name ¹⁶	Age	Sector	Education level	Occupation	OUT ¹⁷	Human Resources ¹⁸	Class
Siya	28	Parastatal	Matric ¹⁹	Call center agent	yes	no	M
Sabie	31	NGO	Diploma	Administrator	no	no	M
Treasure	38	Government	Degree	State Security	yes	yes	M
Zahara	33	Academia	Degree	Lecturer	no	yes	M
Zethu	42	Academia	Degree^	Research Officer	yes	yes	M
Christie	24	Arts	Matric	Artist	yes	no	M
Pam	27	Arts	Diploma	Artist	yes	no	M
Nomzamo	49	Farmer	Matric	Small scale farmer	yes	no	M
Fundani	25	INGO	Matric	Volunteer	yes	no	W
Keneliwe	35	Private	Degree	Lawyer	no	no	M

Table 4.1
Disclosure analysis in the Labour Market by Glenda Muzenda 2012

4.2 Disclosure analysis of the work place

Table 4.1) reflects this through sectors of work in regards to disclosure of sexual orientation. The sectors above link in regards to the decision one makes to come out. Zethu is P³ in the academic world and being out is critical to her work and personal satisfaction as she clearly details of the politics in the previously white institutions. She away from the establishment ‘racist drama’ with the research Institute’s agenda on sexualities in the margins-her agenda as one of the few black academics. The university is grateful to her presence as partners (through the Institute)towards integration of blacks, transformative policies (Employment Equity Act of 1996) and equality in South Africa.

The levels of tolerance as on lesbians is relevant to spaces, time and policies that work towards recognition. Class privilege which allows one to articulate themselves better-education as a component that sustains this argument through to tastes of discrimination. Although many of the

respondents allude to interactions with human resources management they fear being outed. For example Sabie will not report the sexual harassment (emails with pornographic and explicit content) from her female colleague because she fears she might lose her internship and has had experiences from previous employers who were not tolerant of her gender expression. Sabie said that she understood what sexual rights and equality meant though she also said it was not a ‘ticket’ to expose herself.

Nomzamo who has had much experience in unskilled labour said she as out and had nothing to lose at her age. *‘I knew if I reported my to the labour office, it*

would take forever, even the Unions are not serious in protecting workers rights especially lesbians that is why I am here working for me' (Nomzamo 2012). On to the contrary In considering collective action women are not valued as members due to the reproductive work and thus they have less bargaining power (Gusmano 2008).

Fig 4.1) demonstrates the process of coming out relative to the respondents experiences at work (Gusmano in 2008; Ward and Winstanley 2004). The square only reflects what I generally found to be concerns with respondents who are not in out in the work place and those who are and what it does to individual; job tracking, loss of employment, further harassment and stresses of being outed continue to be a nightmare on daily basis. Despite being active or passive in how one manages their sexuality, it is clear that it is a decision that lesbians make and whether is it forced out on them they still find a way to give the facts as they true to their survival (not necessarily) in all the contexts of truth. It is a way to protect the self from a society that believes (it) has the right to control others (homosexuals/ nonheterosexual) to be institutionalised in a normative space in work place to keep uniformity (Hancock and Tyler 2001) as with organizational cultures.

Sexuality does matter to the wellbeing of any human being and without one's wellbeing through being visible and working it is partly a psychological process that could lead to vulnerable behaviours as this study presents. Young unemployed lesbians- some who are opting to have sex to find employment in labour market risk much more than this research can present without evidence that can investigate –how these young women are coping. Including those in the work place who are being forced to pass as heterosexuals.

It is with this background of limitations for women (hetero/homo) that within the collected data I found links to continued poverty of materials of even access to better jobs-web of poverty (Chambers 2005:46). The linkages lead to a vicious cycle of poverty (Correa and Jolly 2006)for some who have no choice but to stay in the hostile and homo-negative work places. For example Siya who is afraid to complain about discrimination and harassment fears losing her job to which she would find further harassment by her family who want her to take care of them. It is a vicious cycle for she also related that some of the girls at work had fallen pregnant after sexual advances in another department. Once the pregnancy was announce the young woman lost her job- most of the staff have 6-12 months contracts which are renewed on basis of meeting sexual needs of managers. Most of these girls head into the welfare system which is fully loaded in South Africa due to under employment. Thus the girl who fell pregnant at Siya's office has an extra mouth to feed and highly unlikely to keep up financially to be competitive on the market- hence in time she will not be marketable due to lack of experience and skills.

And as related by Fundani that young women end up having sex with older men to secure jobs; instead like Fundani they hope to be absorbed by the NGOs- and as days move ahead so does the need for better qualified workers and with no pay to her name- Fundani remains being a volunteer. These are issues of concern in the cyclical aspect of poverty and deprivation of material needs.

4.2.1 Coming out or not

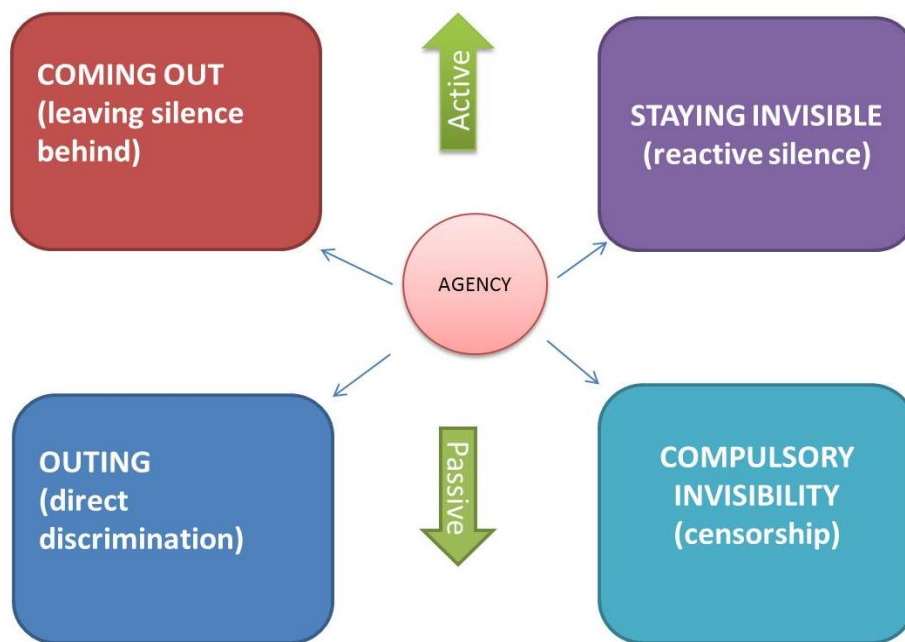


Figure 4.1 Coming out Model Source: Adapted Gusmano 2008 and Ward and Winstanley 2003

4.2.2 Staying invisible

Agency of respondents in making their lives liveable and manageable in difficult and challenging circumstances that only the women and lesbians who tackle these issues can relate and detail the issues on the ground (Haraway 1991). The modes of coping maximise interest to be part of the economy- participate and to be able to take care of household and families responsibilities (Long 2001:59) through discursive and 'playing' the heterosexual card- passing.

4.2.3 Agency

The respondents who disclosed their sexualities have much to gain in that through agency exercised. It refers to respondents who are aware of their rights as citizens in South Africa and making a choice to interrogate that organizational cultures to realizing equality. There are difficulties of having to reconsider information that one tells of themselves especially when they are

not openly out (Goffman 1963). A decision to come out is always (from a personal point of view) an agentic move towards that true self within and this is about time, space and moment that one feels completely confident to leave the silence behind (Ward and Winstanley 2005).

4.2.4 Coming out-Personal, Professional and Political (P³)

The study argues that the respondents despite personal choices they make in managing their daily lives- they exercise their agency, knowledge and ability (Long 2001:16) to decide when faced with a crisis. Agency is thus 'embodied' (Long 2001:17) through the agent who tackles an issue and it is not the outcome of the action that validates to agency.

4.2.5 Compulsory silence

A personal experience of having introduced my partner (female) several times- in person and still when having discussions with one colleague, he insisted on how he would like to meet my husband. When I referred to my partner like, '*She is not my husband*'. I was met with howling laughter-I just stopped trying to explain myself. Eva's of coming out was met with resistance to stay in the closet (Gusmano 2008) or be forced to be invisible. Individual the respondents mention that even when colleagues have never seen their partners, the assumption is that they are heterosexual relationships. As a lesbian some just coast as lesbians and even.

4.3 Discrimination

Labour market discrimination is separated into segments, often along the lines of class, ethnicity, and sex. These dimensions of discrimination vary from race, geographic origin, sex, handicap and sexual orientation and determine functionings within organizational culture such income earning, wellbeing, identity (Badgett1995; Flatt 1998). The fear homosexual and homosexuality, and heterosexism as superior Badgett (1995) -show that there is a culture of discrimination. The fact that at work homosexual people can be discriminated against because they resist to work within the borders of gendered norms and thus they are side lined through exclusion and discrimination; performances of heterosexuality as homosexuality are constructed(Butler 1999) and yet in the contest of organizational theories heterosexism is superior (Badgett 1995). Plug and Berkhout explain that in certain markets 'characteristics of occupation and industry explain wage differentials among homosexual and heterosexual workers' and this relevant to differences in tastes and skills (2004:120).

The preference of discrimination or taste of employer is what makes discriminating norms acceptable to some in the case organizational culture as informed by Hancock and Tyler (2001)on the contemporary organizational theories. It is a preference of creating a homogenous sector or uniform according to labour needs that are embedded in the types of discrimination that would be taken (Anker 2001).Discrimination in the labour market is suggested by economists to take place because minority workers are assumed

to be less skilled, not qualified and generally cheaper to hire than most groups who fit the tastes of employers (Drydakis 2012).

From as early as the 1950s discrimination has been presupposed as an issue that limits access of employees in the work place on various issues such as race, age, gender, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation and the list goes on (Becker 1957; Phelps 1972; Arrow 1973; Becker 1993; Arrow 1998; Baumle and Fossett 2005; Brueet al., 2006; Charles and Guryan 2008 as cited in Drydakis 2012). It is by virtue of one being different or appeals best as per employers.

Earnings differentials and sexual preferences as suggested by Plug and Berkhout on sexual orientation and how affect labour market outcomes in the Netherlands(2004). Plug and Berkhout say that '[i]n the tradition of most economic studies on wage differentials we distinguish three mechanisms that explain differences in pay: Effects of sexual preferences on earnings (i) differences that are just a matter of differences in tastes; (ii) differences that arise from specific differences in skills; and (iii) differences that come from discrimination against homosexual workers'(2004:121) .

Despite sexual orientation being very invisible studies exist showing empirical findings on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Data from the United States America in 1990s shows gay and bisexual male workers earned 11-27% less than heterosexual male workers; in fact the workers had the same experiences, education levels, occupations, marital status (homo/hetero), and area of residence. Apart from direct discrimination such as disabilities and race there is indirect discrimination because of higher expectation of HIV infection among homosexual males. In addition to HIV+ status there are higher levels of discrimination against male homosexuals than against female lesbians (Colvin 2004, Badgett 1995).

Feminist labour market theory includes dichotomies of male/female, weak/strong. The dichotomies determine the work women can do by virtue of biological gender man /woman. Acker explains clearly the gendered theory that continues to have women treated as second class citizen under men because feminist writing about organizational structure understood it to be gender neutral (1990:139). Acker relates to the fact that women on daily basis without as much of recognition like men who are the power base of the labour market(1990). Sorenson (1984) argues in reference to women who play the masculine games to get ahead in the organizational ladder of power(1984).

Levin and Leonard note the difficulties that gay and lesbian workforce face in pinning down discrimination because the subject has had minimal attention in research and empirical evidence that shows realities and verifying the cases of discrimination combined minority groups makes it difficult to separate the research in understanding variable to the problem (1984:701).

4.3.1 Silence as censorship in the work place

Discrimination through censorship understood clear were power dynamics in organizations play up to protect those in senior positions of those favoured and conform to the organizational culture (Hancock and Tyler 2001) in the work place. Censorship is dominant where authority can make a decision

on what staff or workers can be presented with in regards to information or access to benefits too. The discourse of silence uses concept of deconstruction as it allows understanding the truth that is reproduced (Derrida 1989) in ways that reinforces marginalization. This emphasis is on constitution's legislation on homosexuality without implementation and reconciliation to socio-economic gains; lack of recognition and further marginalization with labels such as 'sexual orientation'- othering.

The discourse of power plays a role in asserting dominance (Fairclough, 1989) over all other decisions that can be made in the work place. Power to protect the majority through silencing those that are deviant (Schuyf 2000) is a clear consistence to 'Silence protects power' (Foucault 1976) and [lesbians] homosexuals have always been seen as disrupting the social order and hetero-norms, and that they are not to be trusted.

4.3.2 Reactive silence

Reactive silence and the blank responses are experiences (Ward and Winstanley 2003:1268) many lesbians and gays have had when they have come out and heterosexual colleagues whom they have often spoken to or shared suddenly or abruptly end conversations on their arrival or when they speak about their lives. It is without recognition to the silence that follows of what a nonheterosexual individual would have expressed there by making them invisible. It is a social reality that work colleagues are quick to bring homosexuals to realize that they are not welcome in the circle or sometimes people remain silent in order not to offend and also just not wanting to hear much about personal relations.

Coming out for some of the respondents were met with negativity and not necessarily one that can point out as discriminatory and yet the strategy is meant to shut the person down in exposing their sexuality to work colleagues. Butler describes as a form of language whether it is silence or negative responses- it is injurious. '*Too much information*' (Hall 1989) is by way of stereotyping gays and lesbians as highly sexually charged, diseased at time and that they share way to much sexual and private information that makes heterosexuals uncomfortable in the office space

4.3.3 Direct discrimination and Compulsory invisibility

Compulsory invisibility (Gusmano 2008:489) the act of passiveness in a way colleagues may not recognize nonheterosexuality by ways of not responding to your identity (Ward and Winstanley 2003) as though it is insignificant. Direct discrimination by colleagues or co-workers whom disclosure is not activated yet they will work towards invisibility of nonheterosexual identity (Schneider 1982 as cited in Levin and Leonard 1984).

4.3.4 Tastes discrimination

Neo-classical economists have presented discrimination taste model (Becker 1957:59) to preferences of workers they chose to hire at their discretion. These groups (Bergmann and Darity 1981 as cited in England 1984)

of people hired under discretion include woman and the homosexuals whom might be considered for their professional skills and policy measure to adequately work towards equity.

4.4 Coping

Analysis by several researcher in the 1980s serves as grounding research on discrimination, socio-sexual dimensions and effects on invisibility that lesbians made decisions to either remain in the closet or come out. A necessary study at the time-reflects the mechanisms of coping and also organizational cultures that deny discrimination of this kind for reasons the researchers argue-empirically plausible to pin down (Schneider 1982 and 1986, Brooks 1981, Chafetz 1974 as cited in Levin and Leonard 1984)

Disclosure (Woods 1993) is a way to benefit from heterosexual bias towards benefits. Economical injustices impact incomes, benefits such as spousal benefits, tax breaks, compensations and other economic incentives (Badgett 1995). Potentially even those who pass at entry point and disclose their sexuality later are excluded in social activities for fear of gay identity versus problematic behaviours. These create potential discrimination by other employees and co-workers even with intense policy in place against discrimination.

In many cases lesbians fear for their lives and find places of work that do not expose them- *dressing* to fit in or they choose to in back rooms or job tracking to select jobs that have uniforms for staff that are unisex in appearance and to remain invisible in androgynous clothing (Sarda 2008).

Justifying coming out lesbians are willing to take the risks to gain better control of their work lives (sexuality) and satisfaction through using their agency to come out and face repercussions (Ward and Winstanley 2003) to decisions made with mechanisms to cope. Herein this study, I focus on coping mechanisms; job tracking, coming out, staying in the closet, and self-employment.

4.4.1 Job Tracking as coping mechanism

Levin and Leonard (1984) describe tactics that lesbians employ to cope in hostile work places. Lesbians prefer to run own businesses in order to avoid being harassed and being discriminated. 'Job tracking'(Levin and Leonard 1984:704) is another way that lesbians use their nose to find lesbian accepting working sectors they would fit into or are tolerant to lesbians or elaborates decisions to become self-employed Schneider 1982, 1986)to avoid humiliation and shame. Researchers (Schneider, Chafetz) reported in the 1980s on working lesbians fearing losing their jobs if they came out and those who did looked at having small businesses and became self-employed running various projects- arts and so on; whilst those who suffered anxiety over their sexuality also took on job 'tracking' to find spaces that are tolerant and accepting of their orientation (Levin and Leonard, 1984:703).

4.4.2 Out (of the closet)

There are three reasons why people come out at work according to these levels: (i) personal-'honesty and integrity'; (ii) professional-open relationships with colleagues; (iii) political-'education-to others and yourself'(Humphrey, 1999:139); Gusmano, 2008). Identity as part of knowledge towards achieving goals in life, integrity and social relationship form part of reasons why one comes out to be visible and dignified in their own right. Nonheterosexuality is not in its ways wholesome to sexualities- though it cannot be separated and it is thus relevant in terms of organizational arrangements (Daniela 1999 as cited in Humphrey, 1999:139)and not limited to policy either-from the perspective that (Giddens 1999) gives on self-identity and society.

4.4.3 Dis(comfort) in the closet-fear to come out

Oftentimes, the ability for one to do their job is linked to the environment they work in. Derogatory comments have an effect towards individuals who are nonheterosexuals when they hear "the guy's a fucking faggot and he's still trading" (Woods and Lucas 1993). Individuals hearing such comments are more likely to remain silent for reasons that one continues to pass as a heterosexual-thereby also making up partners of the opposite sex to remain invisible (Croteau 1996).

Accounts of passing as heterosexual for most lesbians are reported of lesbians living dual live in their daily working lives to avoid being outed-'imaginary boyfriends in the week and homosexual relationships on weekends (ibid). The anxiety over this type can lead to silence (Gusmano2008), overtime in the work place as suggested where one finds it safer to be quiet than express and confuse issues with people that are in the know to those who are restricted as Skidmore argue of levels of communication. In bringing these forms of discrimination- I want to emphasize desperation and frustration on one's identity to be or not be. The cost of some is higher in deciding whether to come out-leaving the silence behind or take on another form of coping.

4.4.4 Self-protection and resistance

In spite of a decision to remain unknown to your work colleagues without disclosing your sexual orientation it could lead to split personality types of lifestyles. An identity may become one of crumbling and cracking to expose one in the public *dress* and reality and by any means will be preserved through silencing the private and professional spaces occupied to function in both spaces- by way expressions, body language and demeanour to protect their identity (Ward and Winstanley 2003:1272). Even in cases where it becomes compulsory (Gusmano2008)to come out lesbians resist through coping and 'passing' in nonheterosexual environment such mechanism.

Chapter 5 Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Review of chapters

In the study the difficulty of inter-relatedness of these variables in the context of South Africa are inseparable. At first glance it might seem less complex and once within the layers of unveil- issues from ethnicity, race, class, sexuality and gender become entwined- making the process identifying the root cause challenging- living in poverty and unable to access institutions that would afford them gainful employment. The sample size herein reflects a few women and yet most indicated knowing many more under employed lesbians due to lack of skills and professional qualifications-due to discrimination from educational policies that have yet to recognize diverse sexualities in South Africa.

In reflecting on the research study in South Africa empirical data shows the existence of discrimination. The magnitude of the labour markets' discrimination tastes and preferences has an impact on black women on gaining employment. It is merely not an issue of discrimination in the basis of sexual orientation that gives but much more to education in order to be learn the language of the labour market. The possibilities are limited to in terms of skills because most lesbians drop out of school due to discrimination at that level. Dropping out of school leads to the preferences of discrimination and for a black woman the odds multiply with the complexities of gender, race class and sexuality. The idea with policy in the case of affirmative and equity actions is requires that disadvantaged people during apartheid be part of the employment or workforce. As a black academic- one of the few at this point she has been confronted with several forms of discrimination including ageism-which I do not discuss in this paper for obvious reasons-that the paper limits much in writing and another variable as age would make the research too broad and not deep. Though despite legislation and provision in the institution academically, blacks would still find discrimination on gained democracies to access previously whites only spaces.

Discrimination in the work place and yet the gaps seem to have grown larger than I anticipated. The study exposes a lot more that South Africa, in its current state has yet to realize of the inequalities on the ground. Hearing respondents respond to questions in conversation saying, 'You know how it is!' 'That the way it is we just go on', is disheartening-for it feels as though the fire within-a democracy dreamt of fades without being realized and lived.

The desire to fight for what is right and be a dignified citizen is moving further and further away from the grasp of young nonheterosexual women, black lesbian and heterosexual women in South Africa. The self and society great tensions due to internal and external negotiations in the work place. External negotiations are difficult because of norms that reproduce oppression through homophobia, patriarchal and heterosexual norms make life difficult to personal expressions of identity and dignity. The analysis herein backs the narratives made by respondents on effects of discrimination and

socialization in the labour market and finding mechanism to survive to respond to circumstances differently to experiences that are similar in structural processes (Long, 2001) which in reality are *dressed* policies.

The cultural aspects related by respondents are very hetero-sexist and I am left with little understanding of what our country implies towards diversity, equality and dignity. Most western feminists globally view culture in Africa as a negative aspect that impedes on progress and human rights (Tamale 2008) and perhaps a question to ask and necessary to consider reviewing and identifying these unifying cultural aspects of Ubuntu-an African philosophy (Ramose 2002) is what we Africans want to do with our *Africanness* in the context of comprehending diversity and sexualities that are deemed deviant-homosexuality. There is no existing platform that has been created to discuss sexuality without bringing out hostility. The work places function as ‘normally’ with much aggression towards nonheterosexuals- whose participation is monitored and evaluated without relevance to performance.

It is not without gains that we can stride and strive in discussing that which itches diversity to start speaking about sexuality in Africa as part of what Ubuntu is all about. In fact, a question (Has modernity on the part of sexualities made progress for South Africa?) to be answered in part of this research is to explore whether a progressive constitution and development markings that are Eurocentric flavored have made sexuality better or worse in the South African.

It is unknown to date the number of people unemployed on basis of sexual orientation. Education plays a key role as an undertone in this study, the level of study for most- indicated in chapter 3. Determining employment outcomes for black lesbians is harder a task without a complete understanding of the hindrance for participation.

My study reflects this in regards to discrimination tastes and skills, highly sexualized heterosexist spaces and organizational cultures that limit self-identities in the industry. The issue of education on many levels extends to limitations that still exist in South African for the majority of black people to realize their ambitions. and many other South African researchers consider the issue of education and skills as a problem (Burger 2006, van Donk 2005, Cornwell & Inder 2008) that leads most black people to the race to the bottom and much of this work does not touch on the organizational structures and their favoured mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination towards black lesbians and GBTI persons

5.2 Further research

Reflecting on the field work to collect data to find out:

- It is important and necessary to consider the impacts of visibility in the labour markets in South African to expose discrimination on lesbians?
- Empirically speaking there is much work that must be done to actualize the forms of discrimination and base these findings to respond to the above point;
- Discriminatory tastes and transformation in South Africa;

- Investigating the favoured occupation and find out the professional levels of black lesbians to counter drop outs in school through policy intervention at earlier level;

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Appendices

Interview guideline questions

Below are some of the guide line questions used to get insight into the lived lives of working lesbians and woman in South Africa:

- I. How do you as a black lesbian organize yourself in the work place in homo-negative work environments?
- II. Can you explain to what this describes or shows of your lived life as a lesbian in the work place?
- III. What examples can you give in regards to relationships in the work place with other colleagues toward your gender expression or sexuality?
- IV. To what extent has employers or Human Resources taken diversity on sexuality into consideration in your work place?
- V. What do equality and human dignity mean for you as a citizen that is employed in your sector in South Africa?
- VI. How do lesbians function and perform their agency in coping actively and passively? How do you manoeuvre within the oppressive structures to some extend manipulate, pass and fail to gain-what decisions do you make that are beneficial for survival and keeping their dignity intact.

Transcriptions of interviews edited versions

Nombulelo Pamela Ngwabeni

Trailer of Pamella in Ncamisa on youtube
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EG2HKaj-5uE&feature=share&list=PLA89643D670810F51>

Christie van Zyl

Recording of Christie on Youtube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4pW2GD0bxs>