The Link Between Masculinity and HIV Among The Basotho
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ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by a need for another phase / strategy that the Basotho have to adopt in the fight against the newly infected patients of HIV and the related illnesses. Regardless of many efforts that Lesotho government through the ministry of Health puts into place such as Know your Status’, ‘Kick for life’ Television dramas etc., there are still new infections of HIV among the Basotho. Most interestingly, Lesotho has a small population though it is second in HIV prevalence in the world. Therefore, there is a need for more strategies to be employed in order to help in the fight against new infections. This study focuses on the masculine language and its influence on HIV infections among the Basotho in Lesotho. As a direct consequence, this study intends to find out the contribution of masculine language on HIV and its related illnesses among the Basotho. The study adopts Cathexis Masculinity theory to unpack data. It collects data through interviews: both structured and unstructured. The study finds out that the language that is used to construct masculinity among the Basotho highly contributes to the new infections hence the need to propose another phase and strategy to tackle HIV and related illnesses.

KEYWORDS

Cathexis, Masculinity, HIV, language, Sesotho, proverbs and idioms

1- INTRODUCTION

Language links masculinity and HIV in societies including the Basotho. Many scholars define language as a vehicle that carries culture. Language can also be defined in a social way of life of the people as their way of life is used to coin new expressions and the existing expressions shape how a society lives. Khalanyane (1998:1) states that language can be mobilized to abuse, coarse, constrain, intimidate, silence, alienate, individualize, objectify, construct and classify people. Idioms and proverbs are part of language hence their ability to have the characteristics of language stated above. Therefore language links a society and its own way of life both positively and negatively. Different groups in a society have a language that is peculiar to them. For example Khotso (2017:37) indicates that Basotho men have their own language which is preferable in the absence of women and children. Therefore this study endeavours to define both masculinity and HIV to establish rapport for the study. Reeser (2010:51) defines masculinity in the following manner: “Masculinity is constructed, is built up through ideology, domination, practice, language and other related elements.” What is HIV? Conventionally HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. According to Killian et al (2009:123), when the HIV virus gets into the human body it replicates and mutates. It is these two characteristics that make this virus difficult to deal with hence lead to a weak body system which catches multiple diseases and consequently leads to AIDS. It is at this stage when some men infected cannot cope and feel that their masculinity is endangered resultantly from the language that they employed to pamper their masculinity. As a direct consequence this study focuses on the link between masculinity and HIV driven by the use of old and newly coined idioms and proverbs among the Basotho.

2- LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to tackle social epidemics, all disciplines have to make a joint venture as in Sesotho it says lešoelo le beta poho, (unity is strength), bohlale ha bo hahe tlung e le ‘ngoe (knowledge does not hang from one man’s belt), Mokitimi (1997:22). Therefore, this study finds it worth to review literature related to the study. The literature review is categorized into the following sub-sections: proverbs, masculinity, language and HIV.

Proverbs

The study of proverbs has attracted a number of scholars worldwide. The majority of these scholars have a positive perspective in the use of idioms and proverbs though most have denied themselves a chance to balance their arguments by also looking at the negative side in the use of idioms and proverbs.
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This category reviews studies on proverbs with both positive and negative perspectives.

Bazimaziki et al (2019) made a general study on proverbs from different languages namely Kinyarwanda, English, French and Swahili through Paremiological perspectives. Their focus is on positive proverbs which cut across a society. They find out that proverbs are useful in almost all spheres of human life such as education and social way of life. Their study is very important in that it explores on the positive side of proverbs for the benefit of a society. However, the present study is different from the above study in that it exudes that besides the positive side of proverbs, the negative side also exist which worth attention of the scholars with special focus on male-oriented idioms and proverbs in Sesotho. This study further shows that proverbs have a fluid character which makes it possible to acquire new meanings suitable in the context of the users. This study goes further to explore idioms and proverbs in health related issues such as HIV infections through Cathexis masculinity in order to propose concerted efforts by different specialists from different disciplines as one field (Health) is still struggling with this problem.

Gadilatolwe (2016) studied Setswana proverbs with a special focus on judicial- oriented proverbs to determine the role they play in the Batswana judicial system. Gadilatolwe discovered that though proverbs are no longer highly used in courts their use still exists as they are considered to model the society in acceptable ways of life. Gadilatolwe study is important in this study as it shows that there are different categories of proverbs which are used to address different issues in societies. However, this study is different of that on of Gadilatolwe as it focus on idioms and proverbs of a particular group among the Basotho which is masculinities and how their proverbs contribute in the HIV illness with the purpose of proposing another phase in the efforts to fight this epidemic in this society.

Khotso and Mashige (2011) studied Sesotho male oriented proverbs in order to find out how they influence masculinity among the Basotho through a masculinity approach. They discovered that male oriented proverbs influence both positive and negative attributes among the Basotho. Khotso and Mashige study is crucial in this study in that it is an eye-opener into the fact that the two sides of proverbs: positive and negative do exist. However, their study is different from this study in that it did not look for the new meanings acquired by the old proverbs, it also did not look at the new proverbs and how they can be said to contribute in the HIV epidemic which is the focus of the present study. Khotso and Mashige employed Masculinity approach to unravel data whereas the present study employs Cathexis masculinity approach.

Masculinity
Masculinity is associated with certain character traits or qualities in which males are expected to depict in order for one to be considered as a ‘real’ man. For Lumb (2012:242-243), men who demonstrate helplessness are described as feminine and women who surpass vulnerability were accepted as masculine. Khotso (ibid) asserts that besides language other qualities that express masculinity among the Basotho are virility and promiscuity. In addition to these characteristics, Skjellum (n.d.:1) indicates that masculinity is also defined in terms of character traits such as dancing around death to avoid their masculinity being questioned. It is through avoidance to questions of manhood which forces some men to go further to justify their masculinity by engaging into risky environments such as HIV infection to prove their masculinity.

Language
For Khotso (2017:4) Language can be said to be masculine or feminine. Qualities that are expected from a man by the society are expressed in language. Khotso (ibid) continues that it is a disgrace to hear a Mosotho man talking like women. A man can be praised for acting like a man or blamed for acting otherwise. This view can be translated into men’s language. For Basotho men, their language should not sound like that one of women. Therefore, it can be stated that languages in different societies express cultural ideologies. There is language that Basotho men are expected to use in the absence of women and children. This view is supported by scholars who indicate that language is guided by social reality. They point out that the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of a group. Mestherie (2000:225) indicates that in order to understand gender differences in language, one has to look into women’s language, their life styles, who they interact with and what motivates them to adopt certain varieties. The same ideology is equally important with the study relating to men. Their language, their life styles and who they interact with bear great significance.

Society and language are intertwined. Initiatives of addressing social problems leaving out their language shows a significant misunderstanding of what a society is. For Mestherie (ibid) society cannot be said to be “out there” independent of language whose task is to reflect. As a result investigations made on
Basotho language (idioms and proverbs) to find out how it contributes in the HIV epidemic are worth conducting.

It is also important for this study to provide a background of Sesotho as far as Basotho men are concerned, in order to establish rapport between the study and what would be subjected to nature masculinity among the Basotho. In the Sesotho culture, a Mosotho man is expected to engage in risky environment. Meloy (2009:99) asserts that a traditional man does not belong to a soft place; he belongs to a clear sun and the bright moon. Meloy (ibid) further indicates that a traditional man belongs to a place where he could sense a nestling cobra, a cutting scorpion and hear a howling hyena. The Sesotho language which pampers manhood adapts a real man has to acquire the stated characteristics. In this language, the general pattern of a real man life is supposed to be difficult. This is where the question of masculinity is indisputable. In this language, men are expressed in the animal, birds and natural phenomenon.

Khotso (2017) has dealt in depth with the limitations that masculine language poses in use. The question is what is masculine language? Masculine language is the language that is used to express what is regarded as manhood in societies. Societies have the stereotypical language that is used to encourage or discourage manhood. Basotho are not exceptional in their old and newly coined idioms and proverbs. It is in these idioms and proverbs that manhood is vividly expressed among the Basotho.

HIV

According to UNDP (2014), HIV epidemic is still critical in Lesotho and fundamental for achieving other development related goals. Basotho proverbs (old and newly coined) are analyzed to justify this fact.

Sikweyiya et al (2014) studied the impact of HIV and the constructions of masculinities among positive men in South Africa. They found that performance of risky masculinity influence acquisition of HIV. Khotso (2017:4) indicates that both positive and negative masculinity exists. In similar manners that scholars give attention to positive masculinity as portrayed by proverbs, negative masculinity needs to be given attention in order to attain a healthy society.

Lesotho is a small country with small population of two million people. Despite this small population, it is reported to be the second highest HIV prevalence in the world. According to Malebo (2016), the former minister of Justice and Correctional service in Lesotho:

“My advice to you is, focus on cutting the HIV web, avoid dwelling too much on morality and legal issues, as I said do your best to put public health in the forefront above all issues that are likely to hinder progress towards the prevention of new HIV infection, both in prison and in the general public.” [NODC]

Malebo (ibid) encourages everyone to participate in the fight against this epidemic. His speech can be interpreted to be a call to all disciplines to collaborate in the positive efforts to attain a healthy society. Looking at the barriers towards achieving a free HIV society as indicated in researches by health scholars, none has seen Language as a barrier in the fight against HIV. Studies on language and masculinity clearly indicate that there is a need for health departments to in cooperate language experts in their endeavor to reduce new infections in the Basotho society as the health concerns are expressed in language (idioms and proverbs most particularly). To buttress this point, masculine language (masculine old proverbs and the newly coined ones) among the Basotho encourage promiscuity, extra marital relationships, adult vs young relationships, no to condoms use etc.

3- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopts Cathexis masculinity. According to Connell (1995:337), cathexis masculinity is a social theory though unpopular as sexual desire is seen as natural. However, sex is prominent in the language that is used in the construction of social institutions including masculinity. Connell (ibid) continues that sexual desire is emotional energy attached to an object. She continues that social relations are in the body (sexual arousals and turn offs as bodily action in sexuality, sport and labour, muscular tensions and posture, as comfort and discomfort. Through Cathexis masculinity the researcher will unravel data to understand:

- the reproduction of gender power relations as portrayed in masculine language among the Basotho;
- pressures that all men should want sex;
- all men should desire to have sex with as many physically attractive women as possible;
- men should regard sex the ultimate form of physical pleasure;
- sex as the most important avenues for attaining psychological and emotional fulfillment;
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- sex should take place within the context of intercourse
- Reference to sex will be used to determine masculine characters

### 4- METHODOLOGY

The methodology proposed for the present study takes its departure from the theoretical framework proposed for it: Cathexis masculinity. The present study finds the theoretical framework as a direct influence of the methodology in any study. As thus the principles of the proposed theory have to be vividly shown in the theoretical framework and how they are going to be used to unravel it in order to build a strong foundation for the analysis.

Besides, Content semantic shift was used to find out the meaning of newly coined idioms and proverbs. Content analysis was also used to analyze data. Content analysis refers to a research methodology which takes into consideration social media: music, letters, diaries, newspapers, folk songs, short stories, literature, and messages from media, symbols and many more by examining the details and implications of the content, repeated themes and so forth. Some of the idioms and proverbs that this study is interested in can be found in music. Therefore, content analysis was relevant.

The old proverbs are found in Sesotho texts such as Mokitimi (1997), Sekese (1994) and Lesitsi (1994). In these texts only old meanings attached to the proverbs are found. The newly coined idioms and proverbs are not yet recorded in books. They can be heard in people’s daily conversations. They can also be heard on media: radios and newspapers. Prasad (2016:1) indicates that through content approach, a researcher studies with reference to content meaning, contexts and interventions contained in messages. Prasad (ibid) continues that inferences are about senders of the message, the message itself or the audience of the message.

Data gathering was done in accordance with Burns and Grove. Burns and Grove (2001:460) state that the researcher is free to choose appropriate instrument to collect data. Data required for the achievement of this research includes information affecting to newly coined idioms and proverbs among the Basotho. The researcher listened to the Basotho who use these idioms and proverbs and with their permission recorded them. Laldas (2008:9) states that the main purpose of content analysis is to change recorded text into data so that it can be worked out in a scientific manner.

WhatsApp facility was used to collect data from people in far places such as Maseru and Thaba-Tseka districts. Khotso (2014:83) recommends the use of this facility as she articulates that it is cost-effective. The responses in this devise are less costly both to the sender and recipient in Lesotho. The respondent is given opportunity to respond on her or his free time. The information collected through this device was transcribed later. The researcher posted a similar question to different people and groups in the Maseru and Thaba-Tseka district. When she received responses, she noted them and transcribed the responses which came in the form of a voice note. She also used telephone interviews with unstructured questions. Telephone interviews helped the researcher to gather more information as she allowed respondents to provide all necessary information in addressing her question. The researcher also had an opportunity to make immediate follow ups where she discovered that participants did not understand a question. Different age groups were interviewed to collect data that would respond to old and new idioms and proverbs together with their old and new meanings. Only male-oriented proverbs were collected as this study focuses only on them.

Lastly, the researcher used Sesotho language as an effective research tool. She used Sesotho as all the participants were Basotho who know Sesotho very well. In order for the researcher to avoid language barricade she found Sesotho language most appropriate.

### 5- RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Old and newly coined idioms and proverbs are important in all societies. According to many scholars including Bazimaziki et al (2019:22), proverbs allow various interpretations. It is this fluid characteristic of proverbs which justifies the existence of both positive and negative interpretations and employment in societies. On the positive note as indicated by Bazimaziki (2019:21) proverbs “… warn, caution, [and] teach about wisdom, respect, various human values…” They are used to express past experiences and the current situation of a society. Therefore their existence cannot be taken lightly. As a direct consequence, there is a need to analyze them and find out how they contribute in social issues including health in the 21st century. There are four categories in this study that will be analyzed below.

#### Categories

**a. Extra marital relationships**

Extra marital relationships are relationships which are outside marriage. This kind of relationships explicitly means that a man with an official wife has other partners who he engages with in sexual
intercourse as a form of entertainment. In the relationships of this nature, participants are justifying their behaviour by using popularly socially acceptable statements (idioms and proverbs). The categories below with Sesotho idioms and proverbs exemplify.

(i)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old proverb</th>
<th>Literal translation</th>
<th>Figurative translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>Monna ke mokopu oa nama</em></td>
<td>A man is a pumpkin he spreads all over</td>
<td>Man promiscuous behaviour is acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <em>Monna ke qati oa lomisanoa</em></td>
<td>A man is tripe, he is eaten by many people</td>
<td>A man is acceptable when he has multiple partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>Khomo ha li kae batho re ba ngata</em></td>
<td>There are few cattle for many people</td>
<td>People must learn to share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Ha habo monna ke hohle</em></td>
<td>A man belongs everywhere</td>
<td>A promiscuous behaviour observed from a man is acceptable among the Basotho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>Botle ba monna ke ho shoela nyatsing</em></td>
<td>Man’s beauty is to die at concubine’s place</td>
<td>Extra marital affairs practised by a Mosotho man are acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>Tau e lilao li ngata</em></td>
<td>A lion has many places at which it rests</td>
<td>A Mosotho man is acceptable in extra marital affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>Molamu oa monna o khaoela ntoeng</em></td>
<td>Man’s fighting stick gets broken at war</td>
<td>During sexual intercourse a penis gets infection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New proverb</th>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Figurative meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>Monna o oeloa ke 'maene</em></td>
<td>A mine falls on man</td>
<td>During sexual intercourse a man conducts sexual transmitted diseases (STDs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above proverbs call for cathexis masculinity theory. Through this approach there are pressures that all men should want sex. When one scrutinizes the proverbs in this category will find out that the society which employs them pressurizes men to desire for sexual intercourse with multiple partners. For example, proverb 1 *monna ke mokopu oa nama* (A man is a pumpkin he spreads all over), a man is compared to a pumpkin plant which spreads all over as it grows. Some men feel pressurized to engage in multiple sexual relationships by the use of this Sesotho proverb. For them, having many partners is like spreading all over like a pumpkin plant. It is in the use of this socially accepted statement that men enjoy their extra marital affairs without fear or disgrace. According to Luxolo narrative adopted in Sikweyiya (2014), African men are raised as males. Luxolo puts it thus:

> And we are raised in a manner that we are men, you find that we behave in a manner that we like and we socialize [party]... do you understand? And as men we have to smoke and drink [alcohol] do you understand? To sleep [have sex] whenever and wherever and with whoever you meet, do you understand? You are a man.

The ideology of the Basotho proverb *monna ke ke mokopu* (A man is a pumpkin he spreads all over), is vividly expressed in Luxolo (ibid) when he indicates that it was not a problem when, where and who he decided to have sex with. As an African man, all what it meant was that he is a man. He had to take a risk. Proverb 2 in (i) *monna ke qaati oa lomisanoa* (A man is tripe, he is eaten by many people), and 10 (ii) *Monna ke apole oa lomisanoa* (A man is an apple he is shared) mean that among the Basotho it is acceptable when a man has multiple partners.
Women who engage in sexual relationships with this man whether officially married or in the extra marital affair are forced to accept to “share” the love of this man. Proverb 2 is the old Basotho proverb while proverb 10 is newly coined from the observation that it is not wrong among the Basotho to buy one apple and share to all people: each having a bite. Proverb 3 *khomo ha li kae batho re ba ngata* (There are few cattle for many people) legitimates the social way of Basotho life of sharing whatever little they have for the common good of the whole society. However, this proverb has shifted its original meaning. According to Motsepa (2019), this proverb’s newly acquired meaning is that men are few while women are many and as a result married women have to understand that even the unmarried women need to have men to have sexual intercourse with. Therefore, like the above analyzed proverbs, this proverb legitimizes extra marital affairs among the Basotho. Proverb 4 *ha habo monna ke ho hohlile* (A man belongs everywhere) and 6 *Tau e lilao li ngata* (A lion has many places at which it rests), mean that it is socially acceptable for a Mosotho man to sleep wherever he decides to do so with whoever. Both proverbs pressurizes men to misbehave though they are silent about health and healthy conditions of a human being with regard to this behaviour that they encourage. Proverb 5 *Bole ba monna ke ho shoela nyatsing* (Man’s beauty is to die at concubine’s place), proverb 7 *Molamu oa monna o khaohela ntoeng* (Man’s fighting stick gets broken at war) and proverb 8 *monna o oeloa ke 'maene* (A mine falls on man, Khotso and Mashige2011:108) pushes the Basotho men into risky situations. One of them is engaging into sexual intercourse with multiple partners. When they are diagnosed as being HIV positive they use this kind of proverbs to justify that their status result from exercising their manhood therefore they are right to have acquired HIV status. In cases where men die or encounter serious injury when he had gone out to work for his family or exercise patriotism, then in Sesotho it is acceptable. The question is: can we translate the same understanding to a man who is infected due to carelessness? Can we achieve the goal of having a healthy and happy society in this current use of idioms and proverbs? Like all the above discussed proverbs, proverb 9 *palo e ema tsoe ka terata tse peli* (A pole is able to straighten up when it is supported by two wires), presses men to engage in more than one relationship.

b. Adult vs teenage sexual relationships

The old to teenage sexual relationships are popular among the Basotho. According to Lesotho ministry of Health (2016) in Lesotho 8% of young women (age 15-19) has sexual intercourse with men ten or more years older than them. These relationships are cemented by the language use in this society. The idioms and proverbs in this category exemplify.

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<tr>
<td>11. <em>Marabe a jooa ke bana</em></td>
<td>A puff-adder is eaten by its babies (Mokitimi 1997:44)</td>
<td>Parents sacrifice for their own children no matter what it takes (Mokitimi 1997:44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. <em>Khomo tse kholo li lisoa ke bashanyana</em></td>
<td>Old cattle is herded by boys</td>
<td>Extra marital relationships between boys and women are acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. <em>Nale e roka jase</em></td>
<td>A sewing pin is used to sew a coat</td>
<td>Adult to young extra marital relationships are acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. <em>Pitsa e pheha konyana</em></td>
<td>A big three legged pot is used to cook a lamp</td>
<td>Adult to young extra marital relationships are acceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This category calls for Cathexis theory for it helps one to understand the reasons behind men to desire to have sex with as many physically attractive women as possible. In reality, young women have beautiful looks and fit bodies than old ones. However, it should not be legitimized that old men should be looking for young women while dropping off their wives. It is in the idioms and proverbs in this category that old to teenage sexual relationships are legitimized. For example: Proverb 11 *marabe a jooa ke bana* (A puff-adder is eaten by its babies) has an old and new meaning. Its old meaning is that parents sacrifice for their own children no matter what it takes (Mokitimi 1997:44). It has lately acquired another meaning meant to suit the context it is employed in the 21st century. In the 21st century it means that an old man becomes happy when he engages in sexual intercourse with a younger person. According to Ntlopo (2019) it is in these old men vs young women sexual relations that young people are not brave to
negotiate the use of condom. They are forced into engaging into unsafe sex as they cannot verbally and physically defend themselves against abuse. Proverb 12 *khomo tse kholo li lisoa ke bashanyana* (Old cattle is herded by boys) communicates the same message as the previously discussed proverb. The difference is that the former addresses old men when the later addresses old women. It is through this proverb that women at the age of fifties and sixties justify their extra marital affairs with teenage males. Khotso (2017:268) indicates that there are proverbs and expressions in Sesotho popularly used among the Basotho to justify extra marital relationships of old men and women with teenagers. Both for men and women these expressions empower their masculinity. Khotso (2017:1) states that masculinity is not about sex. Masculinity is not synonymous with “man”. Khotso (ibid) states “Just like men can be feminine, women can also be masculine.” In line with Khotso it is not surprising therefore to find women who behave like men. For Lesotho Ministry of health 1% of young men have sexual intercourse with women. In other words to find women with masculine language and culture is therefore not surprising. There is nothing which prevents women to acquire masculine characteristics if they so wish. Rapeane (2003:175) says: “…males together with females who support their status quo on gender issues normally interpret these proverbs to mean men are incapable of changing their promiscuity as natural behaviour of theirs.” Mitì (2008:74) states that most proverbs directed to men justify their promiscuous behaviour and authorize them to behave as they wish. Proverb 13 *nale e roka jase* (A sewing pin is used to sew a coat) and 14 *pitsa e pheha konyana* (A big three legged pot is used to cook a lamp) communicate that old and young aged people in a relationship are acceptable.

### c. No to condoms

According to UNAIDS (2018), gender inequality is one of the major barriers to HIV prevention in Lesotho. Generally men do not think their wives have a right to negotiate a condom among the Basotho men. The same understanding in relation to condom use applies in extra marital affairs. It basically depends on a man decision on whether to use it or not. According to Lesotho ministry of health (2015) the main mode of HIV transmission is through heterosexual sex accounting for 80% of new infections. The idioms and proverbs in this category exemplify.

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<tr>
<td>15. <em>Phokojo</em> (animal) <em>lilomong e theoha feela</em></td>
<td>Jackal jumps off cliffs</td>
<td>A man engages into sexual intercourse without the use of a condom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. <em>Lenong</em> (bird) <em>ha le lapa lea solda</em></td>
<td>A hungry vulture flies about</td>
<td>A man whose sexual desires are not satisfied looks for extra marital affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. <em>Moko</em> (cock/bird) <em>o itsoalla lithole</em></td>
<td>A cock breeds its chicks</td>
<td>A man who engages into sexual intercourse with his daughters (incest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. <em>Monna ke ntja</em> (animal) <em>o rata mahlatsa</em></td>
<td>A man is a dog he is fond of his vomits</td>
<td>A man is fond of back love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. <em>Tshoene</em> (animal) <em>li rata koae</em></td>
<td>Monkeys are fond of tobacco</td>
<td>Women lust for penis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. <em>Mokhoabane</em> (bird) <em>o tšoasuoe</em></td>
<td>Dark crow is hooked</td>
<td>A man stays in the place of a concubine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. <em>Lesole le shoela likano</em></td>
<td>A soldier dies at war</td>
<td>Soldiers die for patriotism (Khotso 2017:108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. <em>Mohale o shoela ntoeng</em></td>
<td>A soldier dies at war</td>
<td>Soldiers die for patriotism (Khotso 2017:108)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This category calls for Cathexis masculinity theory to understand the reproduction of gender power relations. As men have power over women, they employ idioms and proverbs which compel women into agreeing with them even when women have a feeling that their lives are being at risk. Men employ these proverb to make their actions appear to be good. For Kunene (1971:103), a figure of speech is a term of avoidance. Kunene (ibid) indicates that figures of speech (metaphors) are used for aesthetic excellence. Idioms and proverbs have the same
characteristics as those of figures of speech hence in use they minimize disagreement while they maximize agreement. The examples in this part of the study exemplify. Proverb 15 *phokojoe* (animal) *lilomong e theoha feela* (Jackal jumps off cliffs), 16 *lenong ha le lapa lea solla* (A hungry vulture hovers about), 17 *mokoko o tsoaalla lithole* (A cock breeds its chicks), 18 *monna ke ntja o rata mahlatse* (A man is a dog he is fond of his vomits), 19 *tsøene li rata koe* (Monkeys are fond of tobacco), and 20 *mokoabane o tsoaauoe* (Dark crow is hooked) are the proverbs that refer to animal and birds metaphors. According to Khotso (2017:243), metaphors are powerful devices in language. The animal and birds metaphors are employed in the language that pampers masculinity to exude strength, intelligence and bravery. Mills (1995:161) points out that masculinists develop desired skills of animals such as mercilessness. Those attributes include trickery. Proverb 15 and proverb 23 in this category are employed to conceal trickery and justify that the refusal to the use of condom is right. Proverb 16 justifies extra marital relations with the employment of a bird metaphor. Proverb 17 justifies incest. Through the use of proverb 17, a daughter will not find it easy to negotiate a condom use with her father. Proverb 18 justifies resuscitated / revived relationships. Some of these relations existed and died before one got into marriage. After a long period of time, then the two, sometimes with the influence of problems in their current marriages, they revive the old relationship and term it “memorial service.” For Cathexis masculinity, It is these relationships that sex becomes the most important avenues for attaining psychological and emotional fulfillment. In the proverb 19 women justify their lust for sex. For the purposes of sexual intercourse, they do not choose who, where and when they can engage with in sexual intercourse. Proverb 20 is used to justify men who desert their families to stay in the concubine places. Much as these proverbs and idioms are used in Sesotho they expose masculine characters into health hazards thus the increase of HIV and its related illnesses among the Basotho. Therefore there has to be other initiatives to cab this behaviour including the careful study of language and how it contributes into social health.

(ii)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New proverbs</th>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Figurative meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. <em>Mpilo (name of a road in Masera town)</em> <em>likoloi lia lokolloa motho o hatooa mariki</em></td>
<td>At Mpilo road traffic flow well</td>
<td>During sexual intercourse there is no need for a condom use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mphilo (in full Mpilo Boulevard-name of a road in Masera town) *likoloi lia lokolloa motho o hatooa mariki* (At Mpilo Boulevard road traffic flows well, leave the breaks) is a newly coined proverb to justify the no use to condom. In this proverb the use of a condom is translated into traffic jam. In a traffic jam situation there are a number of setbacks including obstacles inhibiting traffic flow and time being wasted. The same ideology is implied in the use of this proverb which encourages no use to the condom in that by the time one inserts a condom there is time wasted whereas one is interested into quick enjoyment without obstacles in sexual intercourse.

d. Promiscuity

To lessen promiscuous behaviour and justify it, idioms and proverbs in Sesotho are employed. Old proverbs a given new meanings which suit the context so that their users feel comfortable. The same thing happens to those who are influenced by the same idioms and proverbs they enjoy the new meanings without realizing the risks they are exposing their lives into. This category exemplifies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New proverbs</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. <em>Ha habo monna ke hohle</em></td>
<td>A man belongs everywhere</td>
<td>A promiscuous behaviour observed from a man is acceptable (Khotso 2017:106)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This category as well calls for Cathexis masculinity in order to understand reference to sex in relation to masculine character. Reference to irresponsible sex is...
a sign of masculinity in many societies including the Basotho. When scrutinizing proverbs in this category one learns that this society uses idioms and proverbs to strengthen masculinity. For example, proverb 24 Motsamai o ja noha (Traveler eats snake) and proverb 25 Ha habo monna ke hohle (A man belongs everywhere) are proverbs which justify a Mosotho man’s promiscuous behaviour. Both proverbs have old and new meanings. Proverb 24 has both old and new meaning. Its old meaning is that a Mosotho man is not particular on what he takes. This includes what he eats and what he finds on his endeavours to work and bring ‘bread’ home for his family. The new meaning is that it should not matter with whom he engages into sexual intercourse with. Among the Basotho eating a snake is not popular. This study surmises that the reason behind not its popular eating it is because Basotho classify it as one of the rubbishes. The same understanding can be translated into a man who engages into sexual relationships with anyone, everywhere as engaging into rubbish. So to justify this misbehavior therefore this proverb is used to justify. The same thing happens with proverb 25. Proverb 25 used to mean that a Mosotho man does not choose a better place for working for his family. The quality that a man has of giving his self out for the benefit of his family makes his manhood unquestionable. The new meaning on the same proverb is that as a man he is acceptable for “sleeping” wherever he likes.

The human behaviour like that one of animals is dominant with masculinities. Brutal actions of birds and animals are used to explain and justify the behaviour of men. The proverb below illustrates.

### f. Miscellaneous

Both the old and newly coined idioms and proverbs are employed to justify that men lust for sex and they coin new meanings to suit their context. This category demonstrates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27.Lefu ha le na nyeoe</td>
<td>Death should not be questioned</td>
<td>Death should be accepted as a natural thing (Khotso 2017: 107)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28.Monna ke internet o tsamaisa virus</td>
<td>Man is an internet he passes on virus</td>
<td>Man should be accepted as a carrier and transmitter of HIV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proverb 27 Lefu ha le na nyeoe (Death should not be questioned) is an old proverb which has acquired a new meaning. Its old meaning was that death should be accepted and people closely related to the deceased should not take anyone to trial for death. The new meaning of this proverb according to Motsepa (2019) is that when one is HIV positive he should not be questioned as to how he acquired this disease. This is also extended as to when he intends to engage into sexual intercourse no one should question his status as by asking for his status it is like he is being put into trial. So in order to silence those who intend to make interrogations, infected men use this proverb to justify their situation. It is in this that way the HIV infections keep on increasing. In proverb 28 Monna ke internet o tsamaisa virus (Man should be accepted as a carrier and transmitter of HIV) men are justified to infect other people that they have sexual intercourse with as they are like internet which passes virus to all people’s cellular phones and computers.

### e. Brutality

The human behaviour like that one of animals is dominant with masculinities. Brutal actions of birds and animals are used to explain and justify the behaviour of men. The proverb below illustrates.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26.Sello sa tsuonyana ha se hlimole phakoe</td>
<td>A lamenting chick does not touch the hawk (Khotso 2017:106)</td>
<td>A complaint of a young one or someone vulnerable does not make the perpetrator feel guilty (Khotso 2017:106)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proverb 26 encourages brutality. It is in the use of this proverb where the users justify their adults and young rape. In reality hawks eat chicks. When chicks cry for their lives, harks never let them go. This view is translated into rapist’s life. They justify their behaviour by using this proverb. In rape, the rapist does not care about the health of a victim. This is another way in which new HIV infections occur.

### 6- CONCLUSION

As many scholars who study proverbs indicate that they have a positive influence in societies, this study concludes that negative side of proverbs also exists. Proverbs are fluid: they are capable of acquiring both positive and negative meanings depending on the context in which they are used. In this study, Basotho proverbs have been analyzed to find out if they can
be linked to the HIV new infections among the Basotho. The study has found out that the new meanings that are attached to the current usage of old proverbs promote new infections among masculinities. Therefore, this study concludes that there must be concerted efforts from different disciplines in the fight of this epidemic. The Health department has to include disciplines such as Language experts as it is shown in this study that language and society are intertwined. Through Cathexis masculinity theory, the study discovered that the language of masculine characters is contaminated with unprotected sex, sex in extra marital affairs and incest. Findings of this study compel the researcher to propose another phase in relation to HIV and other related illnesses that includes language experts in the fight of HIV and other related illnesses among the Basotho.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In any piece of research to come to the finish, there is need for courage and strength to carry on. I thank God for helping me to go through this work while I still carry on with the core business of my task at the National University of Lesotho. I also thank all the participants who were ready and willingly provided information in the form of data. In a special way I thank Dr. Peter Zenda (Hospital Medical Superintendent Paray Mission Hospital in the Thaba-Tseka Lesotho) for connecting me with Mrs. Mpho Motsepa (a Mosotho nurse) who was willing to help me to gather more relevant information for my study. Ms. Palesa Ntlopo (A senior nurse in the Thaba-Tseka health clinic) is also worth to be saluted for always being available to help with information both at requested and voluntary levels. I real thank all of them. My family support: my husband, his daughters and son cannot be taken lightly for always supporting me financially and understanding during some weekends when I cannot be at home while I work on my research articles.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Palesa Khotso is an expert in Languages, Linguistics and Literature, and aggressive researcher. She is an objectives and outcomes oriented professional with 20 years extensive experience in teaching Southern Sotho and English language and Literature, and significantly contributed in the training of versatile Sesotho language teachers for almost a decade at Lesotho college of Education. She joined National University of Lesotho September 2018, energetic and passionate in the lecturing and facilitating Literature courses, a linguistic course: Pragmatics in Sesotho and supervising student’s research projects. She is very keen to explore more and develop a legacy in the academic world by breeding more research articles, chapters and books in different genres. She is a versatile researcher, a publisher, fecund Scholar: Folklorist, Toponymist, Onomastician, vibrant scholar in Masculinity studies. She is an ardent reader. She is Open Distance Learning Facilitator with 6 years’ experience. She conforms to Quality assurance standards.

7- RECOMMENDATIONS

For future practice

- Health and language experts should come together in the fight of HIV and other related illnesses as issues relating to health are expressed in language. The society is intertwined with their language. The society believes in their language. so there is a need to address the language problem in relation to new infections of HIV;
- Ministries of health, arts and culture and education have to come together as a joint venture in the fight of HIV and related illnesses to emphasize on the fact that much as language is capable of constructing a healthy society, on the other hand if it is mishandled it can be very destructive;
- The government of Lesotho has to establish healthy language day awareness;
- The government of Lesotho should enact laws which will regulate masculine language use;
- Artists and authors should come up with new proverbs which are related to man’s health and healthy life for the benefit of a healthy society;
- The already existing proverbs which encourage healthy lifestyles should be documented and used in schools and institutions of higher learning including health;

For other researchers

- Find out if masculine idioms and proverbs in general in other languages are capable of displaying both positive and negative meanings;
- Other researchers should establish how departments can complement each other in order to construct a healthy society. The world is in need of concerted efforts of multi-disciplinarily, inter-disciplinarily and intra-disciplinarily to achieve its goal of healthy and happy societies. Lesotho and the Basotho are not exceptional;
Find out masculine proverbs which legitimize healthy masculinity and recommend for their use in different areas that nature masculinity.

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No author works


Informal Interviews

[31] Motsepa, M. on an informal interview 10 May 2019