

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO GENDER PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
INSTITUTION STUDENTS IN NELSON MANDELA BAY**

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Jessica Smit

18049149

Lecturer: Sasha Boucher

Supervisor: Dr Carlien Jooste

Research Methodology

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I, *Jessica Smit*, hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the IIE Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology degree to the Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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## ABSTRACT

Gender interacts with many important aspects of human life, including one's career paths, social barriers, opportunities, and personal perception. This mixed-methods investigation aims to discover what kinds of gender perceptions 18-25 year-old students ( $N=16$ ) from higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) might have. Furthermore, this investigation aims to define and explain how these factors shape gender perceptions and, in turn, how this influences students' gender expressions. Different factors and the severity of their influences on gender perceptions and expressions were determined by the compilation of a comprehensive literature review. Each factor was hypothesized in a mixed-methods online questionnaire; respondents were obtained through social media platforms. Respondents demonstrated their gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles, and perceptions in different questions, before indicating which factors and the severity of each one's influence on their gender perceptions and expressions. Data was analysed by means of descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis. The respondents indicated different factors as holding different levels of influence on their perceptions and expressions. The most prominent factors identified are the parents (81.25%;  $n=13$ ) of respondents. Additionally, factors such as television and movies (68.75%;  $n=11$ ) each; and friends, religion, education, social media, and books (62.5%;  $n=10$ ) each, are deemed influential. Other factors include music and culture (56.25%;  $n=9$ ) each; communities and celebrities (50%;  $n=8$ ) each; and family and toys (43.75;  $n=7$ ) each. The findings of the questionnaire corroborate with research compiled in the literature review: parents, family-inclusive, amongst other factors, plays a crucial role in shaping and maintaining students' gender perceptions and their resultant expressions.

**Keywords:** Gender, gender perception, gender expression, HEI students, NMB.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|                 |                                                   |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| APA             | American Psychological Association                |
| CG&TA           | Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs    |
| CHHs            | Child Headed Households                           |
| GSIT            | Gender Socialisation and Identity Theory          |
| HEI             | Higher Education Institution                      |
| IDs             | Identity Documents                                |
| IIE             | Independent Institute of Education                |
| IMAGE           | International Men and Gender Equality             |
| LGBT Foundation | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Foundation |
| NLTA            | Newfoundland & Labrador Teacher's Association     |
| NMB             | Nelson Mandela Bay                                |
| NMBT            | Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism                        |
| NZ              | New Zealand                                       |
| PE              | Port Elizabeth                                    |
| QCA             | Qualitative Content Analysis                      |
| QR code         | Quick Response code                               |
| SA              | South Africa                                      |
| URL             | Uniform Resource Locator                          |

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Contextualisation

Gender interacts with many important aspects of life, including one's career paths, social barriers, and opportunities and personal perception (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Williams, 2018). This mixed-methods investigation aims to understand what types of gender perceptions students from higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB), South Africa (SA) have. Furthermore, this investigation aims to define and explain what factors shape these gender perceptions and how this influences students' gender expression. This will be achieved with an in-depth examination of Carter's Gender Socialisation and Identity Theory (GSIT) (Carter, 2014) to explain gender. Gender, gender perceptions and the gender spectrum will be examined using a mixed-methods survey completed by NMB HEI students. The data collected from this survey will aid explanations of students' perceptions of gender, as well as any influences on their gender expression.

### 1.2 Rationale

This investigation is relevant to SA as the country holds negative views on gender, especially on gender perceptions and variations (Müller, 2016). Many African leaders view gender variance as a deviation from normative gender roles; a deviation brought upon by colonialism (Abolafia Anguita, 2012; Vickerman, 2018). This view shares similar sentiments with the Apartheid government, where deviating from normative ideals was a threat to Apartheid ideals (Vickerman, 2018). The government's radical patriarchal views were endorsed by churches and schools; the population was conditioned into thinking such views were normal and natural (Sutherland, 2016; Vickerman, 2018). Issues like this increased the prejudice and perceptions of gender variant people (Luvuno, Ncama & Mchunu, 2019). These negative attitudes are still present, and deeply rooted, in modern SA and her people (Hart & Padayachee, 2013; Mahomed, 2016; Sutherland, 2016; Vickerman, 2018; Luvuno et al., 2019).

People who violate gender norms are often sanctioned by society (Good & Sanchez, 2010; Jiang, 2019). In many cases, the mere perception of gender variation, let alone transgender identity, puts these people at risk for violent behaviours such as murder,

rape, physical attacks, torture, denial of basic rights and discrimination in employment, health and education (Pillay, 2011; Frieden & Laffrin, 2019). Children with any gender variance, of any form, are much more likely to suffer from school violence than others (Frieden & Laffin, 2019; Jiang, 2019). However, Sehoole, Mudarikwa, May, Clayton, and Smit (2017) stipulate the legal recognition of transgender and intersex individual's gender descriptions. The Alteration of Sex Description and Sex Status Act (Act 49 of 2003) allows for transgender and intersex individuals to alter their legal gender in the National Birth Register and in their Identity Documents (IDs) (Sehoole et al., 2017).

Gender roles and norms are taught to children from young ages, through media, parents, other family and friends, which teaches children to act in gender-normative ways, creating gender perceptions for the sexes (Bussey & Bandura, 1992; Egan & Perry, 2001; Good & Sanchez, 2010; Hussain, Naz, Khan, Daraz & Khan, 2015; Jiang, 2019; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Children thus develop the belief that certain activities are for boys and others are for girls. This results in children not being willing to partake in activities deemed not for their gender (McCloskey, 2011; Jiang, 2019; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Some of these gender roles can have a positive role in young children's mental health; however, others can have a negative impact on them, regarding their gender and gender relations (Jiang, 2019). Women who behave in more masculine ways are less favoured than men who do so, and vice versa (Good & Sanchez, 2010; Frieden & Laffin, 2019). Thus, the gender norms formed in childhood are maintained into adulthood and are once again different for men and women. Serving to create and maintain differences between the sexes; these norms are experienced as a part of a daily life (Eagly & Wood, 1991; McCloskey, 2011; Jiang, 2019).

The significance and contribution of this study is as follows:

- To understand what kinds of gender perceptions NMB HEI students may have,
- To define and explain factors that shape these gender perceptions; and,
- To understand how these factors influence HEI students' gender perceptions and gender expressions.

### 1.3 Problem Statement

Gender as social construct is well understood in SA; the country is one of the most progressive on the topic of gender, as well as the rights of people with variations of gender identity (Klein, 2008; Mahomed, 2016). However, these rights that people with gender variations are granted are often not enforced by citizens of the country. In all regions of SA, people experience “violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity” (Mahomed, 2016; Müller, 2016, p.2). This violence and discrimination are increasing in different communities, and students tend to emulate behaviours that are reflective of their community (Nduna, Mthombeni, Mavhandu-Mudzusi & Mogotsi, 2017).

As the individuals surveyed will fall somewhere on the gender spectrum; and, based on the results of the data analysis, the following problem is being investigated: NMB HEI students are deeply affected by several factors that influence their gender perception and gender expression.

### 1.4 Research Purpose

This investigation examines NMB HEI students’ gender perceptions their resulting gender expression. Potential influences affecting these concepts are explained through analysis of an in-depth questionnaire. The aim is to add onto the existing basis of knowledge relating to gender, gender perceptions and gender expression. This is done by explaining factors that could influence HEI students’ gender perceptions. Additionally, by establishing how the shaping of HEI students’ gender expressions influence the resulting expression of their gender, further knowledge into this field can be provided.

### 1.5 Research Questions

Table 1 lists the main research question, as well as the relevant secondary research questions and their subsequent objectives.

Table 1: Main and secondary research questions and objectives.

**Main Research Question (RQ<sub>m</sub>)***What factors influence NMB HEI students' gender perceptions?***Secondary Research Questions (RQ<sub>s</sub>)****Secondary Research Objectives (RO<sub>s</sub>)**RQ<sub>s1</sub>:*How do gender perceptions influence the expression of NMB HEI students' gender?*RO<sub>s1</sub>:*To determine how gender perceptions influence the expression of NMB HEI students' gender.*RQ<sub>s2</sub>:*How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their family?*RO<sub>s2</sub>:*To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their family.*RQ<sub>s3</sub>:*How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their friends?*RO<sub>s3</sub>:*To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their friends.*RQ<sub>s4</sub>:*How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their education?*RO<sub>s4</sub>:*To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their education.*RQ<sub>s5</sub>:*How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their community?*RO<sub>s5</sub>:*To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their community.*RQ<sub>s6</sub>:*How are the concepts of gender, gender perception, gender expression and gender variance defined in theory?*RO<sub>s6</sub>:*To determine how the concepts of gender, gender perception, gender expression and gender variance are theoretically defined.*RQ<sub>s7</sub>:*Are there negative implications on NMB HEI students, resulting from factors that influence their gender perception and expression?*RO<sub>s7</sub>:*To determine if there are negative implications on NMB HEI students, which result from factors that influence their gender perception and expression.*

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

To understand concepts, as well as answer the main and secondary research questions, a literature review is provided. A literature review puts the research into perspective and identify models and theories relevant to the investigation (du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014). For this investigation, the literature review encompasses a theoretical foundation consisting of Carter's theory of gender socialisation and identity (Carter, 2014), which is studied in-depth. Key terms relating to this investigation are also defined. Lastly, a critical review of current literature pertaining to the history of gender and its perception; gender roles and childhood perceptions; and transgenderism, gender variance and their societal perceptions is provided.

### 2.2 Conceptualisation

Table 2 identifies and conceptualises the key concepts relating to this investigation. The concepts that are described underpin the value of the study, along with the critical analysis of literature and the theoretical framework.

*Table 2: Key concepts.*

| <b>Concept</b>           | <b>Definition</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Gender</i>            | The attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a particular culture associates with a person's biological sex (APA, 2012).                                                                                                                              |
| <i>Gender perception</i> | The social and cultural views of males and females (IGI Global, 2020).                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Gender expression</i> | An individual's presentation — including physical appearance, clothing choice and accessories — and behaviour that communicates aspects of gender or gender role. Gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identity (APA, 2015). |
| <i>Gender variance</i>   | An umbrella term used to describe gender identity, expression, or behaviour that falls outside of culturally defined norms associated with a specific gender (Simons, Leibowitz & Hidalgo, 2014).                                                     |

|                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Gender spectrum</i>                             | Refers to the idea that there are many genders. Examples include male, female, agender, gender-nonconforming and transgender. The spectrum also acknowledges that there is range of gender expressions (Newfoundland & Labrador Teacher's Association [NLTA], 2011). |
| <i>Higher Education Institution (HEI) students</i> | Adolescents between the ages of 18 and 25 who are studying at private and public HEIs.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB)</i>                    | A region of the Eastern Cape which encompasses the cities of Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Despatch and Colchester, as well as their surrounding rural areas (Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism [NMBT], 2020).                                                                 |

### 2.3 Theoretical Foundation – Gender Socialisation and Identity Theory

A theoretical foundation is a framework based on an existing theory, which relates or reflects the hypothesis of a study, serving as the foundation upon which research is constructed (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). This investigation makes use of Carter's Gender Socialisation and Identity Theory (GSIT) (Carter, 2014) to substantiate its view on gender, gender perception and gender expression. This theory focuses predominantly on the sociological facets of gender and gender socialisation, from both a familial and societal viewpoint.

The notion that gender is learned through socialisation is predominant in sociological literature on gender (Stockard, 1999; Coltrane, 2000; Carter, 2014; Levant & Rankin, 2014). Socialisation is a continuous process of learning, relying on the social experience and enlightenment which differs in the different societies (Chandio & Ali, 2019). The prevalent viewpoint stemming from such sociological literature is the rejection of 'biologically deterministic explanations' for the accounted differences in gender and gender-driven behaviour (Wilson, 2000; Carter, 2014).

#### 2.3.1 Familial Construction of Gender

Coltrane (2000) and Carter (2014) postulate that gender socialisation and the family have an extensive and varied literature. Research on gender in childhood, adolescence and adulthood encompasses different stages each, this is unique to human development (Carter, 2014). Carter also emphasises that males and females

learn their gender and gender roles through family or primary group interactions, as well as how these are socialised into “dichotomous, traditional gender roles” (Carter, 2014, p. 2).

Carter (2014) hypothesises four traditions, which research has focused on. This investigation will employ two traditions, the parents-effect and systemic-ecological traditions. The parents-effect tradition addresses how the different styles, behaviours, and dispositions of parents socialise traits and behaviour in children” (Carter, 2014, p.2). The systemic-ecological tradition considers that gender and familial socialisation are neither parent-to-child nor child-to-parent processes. Familial socialisation is instead imbedded in the environment or context that impacts socialisation. This makes socialisation a social system in which multiple sources of socialisation simultaneously impact both the parents and the children (Carter, 2014).

Before examining gender development in families, a definition for ‘family’ must be provided. Carter (2014, p.2) defines a family as “any primary group of people who share an obligatory relationship with each other”. This inclusive definition is provided to expand the scope of what a family is; it also emphasises that socialisation occurs in every individual in society, regardless of their familial surroundings. Families are the first and primary influence on the nurturing and socialisation of children and their gender identities (Carter, 2014; Barni, Ranieri, Donato, Tagliabue & Scabini, 2017; Dworkin & Serido, 2017). Childhood socialisation often occurs informally as the result of normal everyday interaction between parents and their children (Foote, 2000; Aransiola, 2016; Axpe, Rodríguez-Fernández, Goñi & Antonio-Agirre, 2019).

The primary socialisation process encompasses four aspects: a source of instruction, a learning process, a target, and an expected outcome (Foote, 2000). The source of instruction most often comes from the parents or other family members, and is meant to educate the child, likely on their culture or family values. A learning process can be one of several; however, based on developmental literature, children appear to learn best when they use the process of observational learning (Groenendijk, Janssen, Rijlaarsdam & van den Bergh, 2013; Rymanowicz, 2015; Foti, Martone, Orrù, Montuori, Imperlini, Buono, Petrosini & Mandolesi, 2018; Cherry, 2019; Schwartz, 2020). Observational learning, for the purpose of this investigation, is the act of a child observing their elder perform an activity, of which the child should be able to

successfully re-create that activity. The child, in such a scenario, is seen as the target. Finally, as stipulated earlier, the outcome of socialisation is for the child to be able to repeat the seen activity (Rymanowicz, 2015; Cherry, 2019; Carcea & Froemke, 2019). This occurs as children internalise norms for accepted behaviours through observation and first-hand learning (Foote, 2000; Ford, Stevenson, Wienir & Wait, 2002; van der Sluis, van Steensel & Bögels, 2015; Olsson & Martiny, 2018; Tokhrve, 2018). Thus, they develop ideas about what it means to be a specific gender and then use these ideas to categorise new information, make decisions, and regulate their behaviour to match that of the context around them (Starr & Zurbriggen, 2017).

Primary socialisation begins with early learning, which includes moral support, accomplishment of basic tasks, social awareness, and a child's maturity within the close association of their families. Holistically speaking, this builds up a child's personality. Such comprehensive personalities emerge via a child's healthy growth, biologically, psychologically, emotionally, and economically (Aransiola, 2016; Chandio & Ali, 2019). Familial socialisation socialises a generation to cultivate through its culture's education, ethical values, positive attitude, confidence, good health, and material welfare. Lastly, primary socialisation is effective in its suggestions of socialisation and drawing of attention to factors which impact a child's overall development (Chandio & Ali, 2019).

### 2.3.2 Using Identity Theory to Understand Gender

Carter applies identity theory to explain how gender stereotypes emerge and remain throughout one's life. Identity theory is defined as a social psychological theory that emerged from structural symbolic interactionism, working on the assumption that society is a "patterned, stable social structure" (Carter, 2014, p.7). This theory addresses how individuals create and maintain the roles they play in society. Once individuals develop meanings related to their identity, they become more motivational towards its consequential behaviour. In identity theory, the self is seen as a "reflexive process" (Carter, 2014, p.7) that is revealed in different social interactions and portrayed to other individuals through identities that fit those situations. By employing identity theory in gender studies, one can better comprehend why a gender identity is so important for individuals. Additionally, the use of identity theory explains why gender identities are preserved throughout life once they are formed.

### 2.3.3 Doing Gender

Socialisation begins at one's birth, with families treating new-borns different according to their gender (Carter, 2014; Aransiola, 2016). Even in hospital delivery rooms, new-borns are dressed in colours symbolically attached to gender. From the moment a child is born, they are inundated with symbols and language that will shape their conception of gender roles and stereotypes (Carter, 2014; Leaper & Farkas, 2015; Jiang, 2019; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Language that families use to describe male children is often centred on their physical characteristics, looking at themes such as strength and agility. On the other hand, language used for female children centres on emotion, affection, daintiness, or fragility (Carter, 2014; Hussain et al., 2015). Using such language shapes behaviour patterns and defines boundaries, which the developing child ultimately internalises; this becomes an identity standard. Identity standards are the references, or examples, in which relationships, situations and interactions are used by the developing individual to compare themselves to other individuals (Burke & Stets, 2009; Carter, 2014).

Gender as concept and role is created and maintained when individuals play out gendered roles in society. Examples of gendered roles include yard work, cooking, and caring for children. Each of these carry some form of gendered meaning, for both the individual performing that role, and for any potential witnesses to this event. When individuals fulfil these gendered expectations, they are 'doing gender' (Carter, 2014). Thus, gender is maintained in practice, and performing gendered tasks and roles perpetuates meanings that define individuals as a specific gender, or what masculinity and femininity mean. Gender is therefore seen as a psychologically ingrained social construct (APA, 2012; Carter, 2014; Smith, 2016; Davis & Preves, 2017; Manisha & Mangla, 2019). Carter (2014) further states that the act of 'doing' one's gender is a routine accomplishment. From this, one can infer that the non-subscription to, or unfavourable ingrained gender of individuals, presents them as people committing an act of social deviance (West & Zimmerman, 2009).

### 2.3.4 Gender as a 'Person', 'Social' and 'Role' Identity

Culture and socialisation impact the dimensions of meanings that form one's 'person' identity. Carter (2014, p.10) defines a 'person' identity as a "salient, individually characteristic" identity that incorporates many traits associated with a specific gender and the ensuing behaviour. These behaviours emerge from multiple sources, but

initially occur in the familial setting (Carter, 2014). Males learn that dominance, autonomy, and aggression are linked to their gender; females learn collectivism, expression and connectedness are linked to theirs (Chaplin & Aldao, 2013; Carter, 2014; Endendijk, Groeneveld & Mesman, 2018). As previously mentioned, socialisation along traits like these begin to occur from birth, and the families help mould 'person' identities for their family members according to their gender. A principal point of one's 'person' identity is its saliency. Carter (2014, p.9) writes that these identities are "triggered in many situations and figure into many interactions, relationships and behaviours". Adding on to this, the characteristics of 'person' identities vary according to gender. The familial setting is thus that in which gender differentiation is first learnt and internalised (Carter, 2014; Aransiola, 2016). Children who are taught certain values are seen to maintain those values throughout life; 'person' identities thus perpetuate and solidify themselves over time.

'Role' identities are the more socialised identities; where the meanings of the roles that individuals play are learned through consideration of the role's context and the social surroundings in which it is played (Carter, 2014). Akin to 'person' identities, 'role' identities are learnt early in life, with many of the roles based on discerned expectations for the demonstrated behaviour, which is often gendered. Carter (2014) hypothesises that the familial setting is one especially defined by role identities. The role of mother, father, son, daughter, grandmother, grandfather, husband, and wife etc. are all examples of familial roles (Carter, 2014). The roles in the familial context all share a common theme: they are based on sex, which is highly correlated with gender. The identity role of 'mother' might involve meanings of nurturing and caring; the performance of this role matches meanings of engaging lovingly with her children (Stets, 2006; Carter, 2014). The identity role of 'husband' may include meanings of powerfulness or control, and the behaviour of the individual in this role should match the meanings by being the one who makes major familial decisions (Stets, 2006; Carter, 2014). The developing child learns what it means to be their gender in reference to and against the other gender. Therefore, learning behaviours is then a form of role-taking (Carter, 2014). Boys that identify with the roles their fathers play are likely to learn those roles as being defined by prevalent behaviour which they deem acceptable. Socialisation like this operates in a similar fashion for girls (Carter, 2014). Linking this information to identity theory, the theory shows how gender becomes

socialised across many situations, in families, and throughout one's life. Gender becomes socialised into 'person' identities, and gender "operates while assuming roles as well" (Carter, 2014, p.11).

One's 'social' identity represents the group memberships and an individual's participation in such memberships (Carter, 2014). Categories of memberships include affiliations, religions, or nationality. Socialisation influences the meanings of group memberships and provides ideas for behaviour that each group deems appropriate (Stets, 2006; Carter, 2014). Social categories refer to identities assumed in adulthood; however, the familial group is often the primary group that nudges its people towards the groups one eventually becomes a part of. Some groups are gender-based, and various groups are defined by gendered behavioural norms and expectations (Carter, 2014). An individual's gender identity is socialised from early in their lives; early stages of development are where individuals learn how being their sex means more than a role or gendered behaviour. Individuals are also taught to share similar viewpoints and behavioural expectations with a larger group of similarly gendered individuals (Carter, 2014). This type of gender socialisation occurs within the familial setting, but also in other group-based settings such as schools. 'Social' identities are not universally developed by all individuals. Instead, 'social' identities are like 'person' and 'role' identities in that gender socialisation determines how each identity is formed and maintained (Carter, 2014). The socialisation that developing children receive from their familial group align them into separate categories dependent on gender.

### 2.3.5 Critiques of GSIT

While Carter's (2014) theory does consider other socialisation factors that could influence the developing child's gender identity, such as schools or extra-familial groups, this is not emphasised. Additionally, the adolescent stage of life is not referenced. Sawyer, Azzopardi, Wickremarathne and Patton (2018) define adolescence as the time between puberty and adulthood where a child grows and matures. The emphasis is rather on the familial unit and primary socialisation (Klaus, 2016). GSIT makes little reference to secondary socialisation, which could prove limiting to the research, as there is not much indication of secondary socialisation and how this could affect gender, gender identity and gender expression. Instead, much of the focus is shifted onto the familial unit and how this creates and maintains childhood gender identity. There are many forms of secondary socialisation, including friend

groups, schools, religious organisations, mass media and the sports (Aransiola, 2016). Foote (2000, p. 12) writes that school friends and extra-familial groups are just as influential in the “acquisition of norms and other social qualities”. In recent times, online components such as social media and networks present themselves as a form of socialisation (Ibáñez-Cubillas, Díaz-Martín & Pérez-Torregrosa, 2017). Additionally, Massey (2016) identified music as having a profound effect on childhood socialisation.

## 2.4 Critical Review of Current Literature

The following discussion focuses on gender perception by defining the concepts of gender, gender perception, and gender expression. In addition, a theoretical discussion of these concepts is provided. Gender roles, transgenderism, and gender-variance are discussed, relating all these concepts to the developing child and how socialisation of gender identities affect them.

### 2.4.1 Theoretical Discussion and History of Gender and its Perception

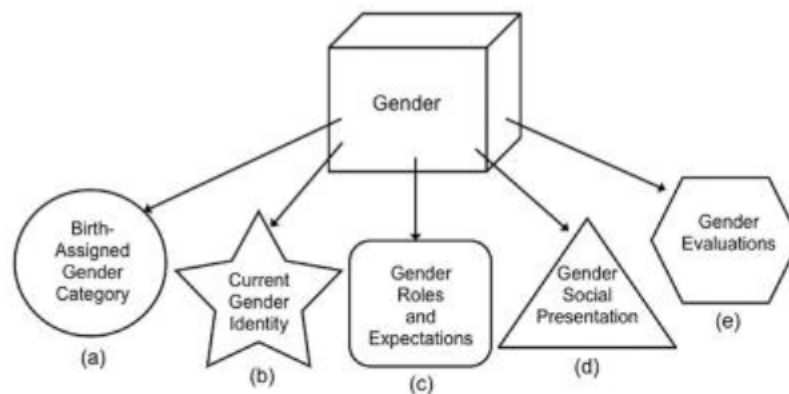
Although the terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ can be used in the same context, these terms are different in meaning (Tharp, 2015; Hyde, Bigler, Joel, Tate & van Anders, 2018; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). The American Psychological Association (APA, 2012) defines biological sex as one’s biological status; typically categorised as male, female, or intersex. Indicators of one’s biological sex include the sex chromosomes, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia (APA, 2012). As previously mentioned, the concept of gender are the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours a culture associates with a particular sex (APA, 2012). Behaviours that are incompatible with what people associate with a specific gender, constitutes gender non-conformity (APA, 2012). An individual who is cis-gender is one whose gender identity and expression matches the sex assigned at birth (APA, 2012).

Rad, Shackleford, Lee, Jassin and Ginges (2019) postulates gender as being determined at birth due to some visible characteristic, or one which could be self-described, concerning that individual’s sense of self and life history. Social psychological research posits gender as a product of social, cultural, and situational forces interacting with biological and physical attributes of the sexes (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Wood & Eagly, 2010; Rad et al., 2019). This defines specific roles and

expectations for different genders, fostering the belief that men and women differ in disposition and belong to separate categories (Rad et al., 2019). Conversely, Parpart, Connelly and Barriteau (2000) that sex and gender are difficult to extricate from each other as they intertwine; one phenomenon cannot exist without the other (Parpart et al., 2000). The gender binary approach concerns a core belief constituting two genders only, with one's gender being biologically determinant, apparent at birth and meaningful to the self (Hyde et al., 2018). The predominant system of beliefs that designates an individual as man or woman is currently undergoing both a cultural and scientific transformation to recognise gender as a spectrum. Additionally, the primary role for determining one's gender now lies with oneself (Guillamon, Junque & Gómez-Gil, 2016; Hyde et al., 2018; Rad et al., 2019).

#### 2.4.1.1 Analytic Model of Gender

Tate, Youssef and Bettergarcia (2014) hypothesise an analytic model of gender (see Figure 1) as one group of interlinked facets which together comprise gender. These facets are organised around the intra- and inter-personal ways in which gender is described in a social world. Each facet (numbered a through e) is presumed to function as separate entities from other facets, but each one together makes up gender as a construct (Tate et al., 2014).



*Figure 1: Analytic model of gender (Tate et al., 2014).*

One's birth-assigned gender category (a) is simply based on the genitalia the physician sees during one's birth. One's current gender identity (b) is the individual's authentic gender identity (Hyde et al., 2018). Gender roles, ideologies, and expectations (c) are the social expectations that individuals find relevant (or not) to their gender identities. A gender social presentation (d) is the set of signals that identify one as a gender; this includes clothes, voice, and choice of name. Lastly, gender

evaluations (e) are the social world's evaluation of an individual's gender identity (Hyde et al., 2018). In this figure, when an individual is 'doing gender' as described in the theoretical foundation; two facets depict such behaviour. These are the gender roles, expectations, and ideologies (c), as well as the social presentation of gender (d) (Hyde et al., 2018).

#### 2.4.2 Gender Roles and Perceptions on Childhood

Gender roles and norms are taught to children from young ages, through media, parents, other family, and friends. This teaches children to act in gender-normative ways (Bussey & Bandura, 1992; Egan & Perry, 2001; Good & Sanchez, 2010; Hussain et al., 2015; Jiang, 2019; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Children develop the belief that certain activities are for boys and others are for girls. This results in children not being willing to partake in activities deemed not for their gender (McCloskey, 2011; Jiang, 2019; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Figure 2 by Cole (2019) depicts gender stereotypes in children's books.



Figure 2: Gender stereotypes in children's books (Cole, 2019).

In terms of the developing child, and referring to Figure 2, gender stereotypes are reinforced through children's toys, through the way they are advertised. Toys are advertised to market the values the media and society place on each gender (Valiulis, O'Driscoll & Redmond, 2007; Carter, 2014; Hussain et al., 2015; Kambouri-Danos &

Evans, 2019). Differences in how toys are aimed to accommodate a gender highlights explicitly different messages in terms of how each gender should behave and what attitudes are associated with it (Valiulis et al., 2007; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Children play with toys which the media geared towards their gender from an early age. The consistency of research findings suggests gender differences in preferences to be both social and innate (Todd, Fischer, Di Costa, Roestorf, Harbour, Hardiman & Barry, 2018). This correlates with research by Jiang (2019) and others. When gender differences evolve into discriminative limitations, it affects the child's confidence, opportunity, achievement, health, and relationship over a long-term period (Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019); possibly life-long effects. Research by Egan and Perry (2001), Carver, Yunger and Perry (2003), as well as Good and Sanchez (2010) elucidate pressure for gender conformity experienced by children negatively affects their self-esteem. However, one must also consider how gender is reinforced by immediate role models, such as the parents. Wingrave (2016) enforces the idea that adults reflect their own expectations and views of a certain sex, of which it is highly likely to affect their children. Contrastingly, Kambouri-Danos and Evans (2019) suggest modern parents to be reinforcing – and thus promoting – a more flexible understanding of gender, as opposed to traditional gender stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes are continuously being reinforced as individuals progress through the lifespan. Gender stereotypes are defined as standard representations of men and women within a specific culture, particularly relating to mass media, which polarises differences between them. This is most noticeable in terms of physical appearance, traits, behaviours, and occupations (Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). Gender stereotypes are both descriptive and prescriptive in nature. Its descriptive components are the beliefs about what roles men and women would typically do. The prescriptive components encompass beliefs about what men and women *should* do (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Koenig, 2018). These gender stereotypes share the perception, evaluation and treatment of the sexes in gendered ways, generating those behavioural patterns that confirm the initial stereotype (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Valiulis et al., 2007; McCloskey, 2011; Wigfield, Eccles, Fredricks, Simpkins, Roeser & Schiefele, 2015; Koenig, 2018).

#### 2.4.2.1 Gender Roles

Sinnott (2002) and Richards (2015) describe gender roles as being different from sexual identity, sexuality, or even masculine and feminine behaviour. This is where this investigation achieves the notion of a 'gender spectrum'. The gender spectrum refers to the idea that there are many gender identities, while acknowledging a range of gender expressions, or external ways gender is communicated (NLTA, 2011; Tharp, 2015; LGBT Foundation, 2017). Gender roles may at various times be ambiguous, polarised, combined into an androgynous identity, reversed, or even transcended (Sinnott, 2002; Eagly, Nater, Miller, Kaufmann & Sczesny, 2019). Like the construct of gender itself, gender roles are socially constructed by a culture (Richards, 2015).

#### 2.4.3 Transgenderism, Gender Variance, and their Societal Perceptions

When one's biological sex does not match their gender identity, one is said to be transgender (APA, 2012). Gender variance is used as an umbrella term, which encompasses all genders besides that which matches one's birth-assigned gender (Simons et al., 2014). This therefore includes terms such as transgender and nonbinary, the rejection of any gender itself. Genderqueer, a term describing individuals who do not identify solely as man or woman (APA, 2012), is also included, as is genderfluidity, where individuals simply move between different genders. The APA hypothesises that people who identify as genderqueer may redefine gender or decline to define themselves as gendered (APA, 2012).

In terms of the developing child, gender-variant expression, behaviour and identity can present in childhood and adolescence, and gender-variant youth have unique health needs (Simons et al., 2014). For those experiencing gender dysphoria – the distress encountered by a discrepancy between their biological sex and gender identity (APA, 2012; Simons et al., 2014), puberty is often the most challenging time, due to all the physical changes that occur during this developmental phase. Even though the acknowledgement of multiple genders and the transformation of thought continues, transgender and gender variant individuals still face resistance from others. They seemingly pose a threat to the notion that gender is determined at birth and based on physical characteristics (Rad et al., 2019). Transgender people and people who are gender variant can face hostility from their communities, simply for being themselves. Such individuals might seem deviant from society's 'natural' biological order, and thus be evaluated negatively by their communities. Arguably, this would be because

transgender individuals seem to 'distort signals' when their communities view them as trying to 'pass' as a gender other than their birth-assigned one (Serano, 2013; Mock; 2014; Rad et al., 2019). Societal gender norms have the capacity to reward and punish behaviour it deems good and bad. This leads to subjective pressure felt by gender-variant individuals; pressure to meet these gender ideals (Good & Sanchez, 2010).

Negative attitudes like the above are alarming for the SA population, as findings of a report undertaken by Sutherland (2016) found that almost 430 000 men and nearly 2.8 million women present themselves in public in a gender-nonconforming way (Sutherland, 2016). It is likely then that their communities or societies could perceive them as threatening or undermining a "natural system of social and biological organisation" (Rad et al., 2019). Sutherland (2016) states that 450 000 SA citizens have physically harmed women "who dress and behave like men in public" in the 12 months before the study took place (Sutherland, 2016, p.4).

## 2.5 Conclusion

Carter's (2014) theory is instrumental to the understanding of gender in the developing child, as well as familial and other environmental factors which influence the child. The theory might not have substantiated further into adolescent factors; however, research hints gender socialisation to be life-long. Gender and its history, perceptions, and roles are identified and discussed, relating each back to Carter's (2014) theory through familial socialisation and its impacts. Lastly, gender roles, transgenderism and gender variance have been discussed, relating these concepts to the developing child and how familial socialisation of gender perceptions and identity can affect them.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Paradigm

In research, the paradigm is a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between a scientist and how their investigated problem should be understood and addressed. Research paradigms are characterised by the way scientists respond to three fundamental elements: ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Urus, 2013; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Ontology is the philosophy of reality, using its nature to constitute legitimate researchable questions (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge, what constitutes knowledge and how it is formed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Urus, 2013; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Methodology refers to the procedures that researchers use to investigate what they believe to be known and the rationale behind these procedures (Sarantakos, 1998; Urus, 2013; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

This investigation will be conducted within the interpretivism paradigm. Interpretivists believe that data or information cannot be removed from its context; therefore, promoting the generation or discovery of knowledge (Yanow, 2014; Dean, 2018). Societal constructs such as gender form the basis for this investigation; with gender being a construct, it has no specific definitive definition, it can only be subjectively explained. Furthermore, this investigation relies on the experiences of willing respondents, who desire to share these experiences, makes this investigation a subjective one.

#### 3.2 Research Design

This investigation follows on from previous research by Bussey and Bandura (1992); Egan and Perry (2001); Good and Sanchez (2010); Hussain et al. (2015); Frieden and Laffrin (2019); Jiang (2019); and Kambouri-Danos and Evans (2019). In developing a research strategy, Saunders and Tosey (2013) find their research onion (see Figure 3) useful, as its adaptability to any form of research methodology can be used in a myriad of contexts. Table 3 illustrates this investigation's research design.

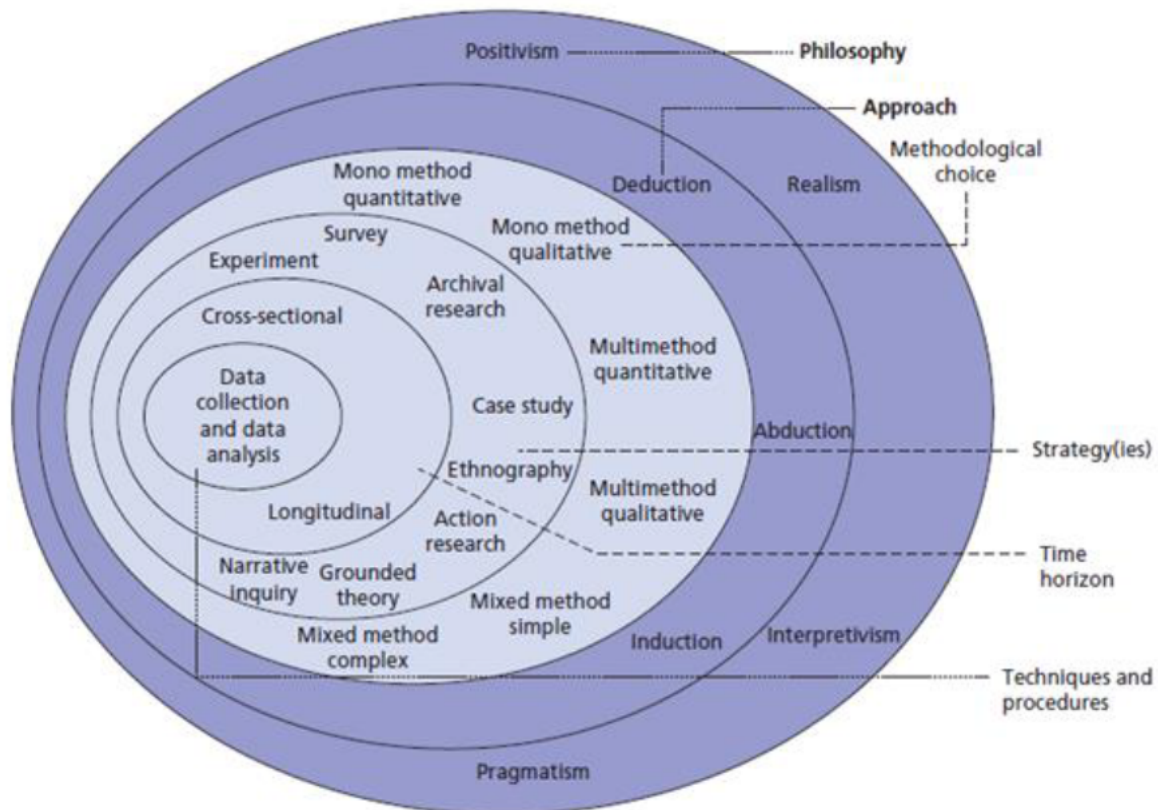


Figure 3: The research onion (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

Table 3: Research design.

| Design layer        | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Research philosophy | A research philosophy is a set of beliefs concerning the nature of the reality being investigated (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014; Pupuma, 2018). This investigation is conducted within the interpretivism paradigm, which allows for greater opportunity to understand the perceptions people have of their own activities in their social contexts or natural environments (Maree, 2020). This paradigm relies on a range of methods, tools, and techniques for in-depth understanding of the construct being investigated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). |
| Research approach   | This investigation is conducted within the inductive approach, which uses a specific set of observations to reach an overarching, general conclusion (Wilson, 2016). This approach is based on finding a conclusion most likely to fit the premises and is used when “making predictions, creating generalisations and analysing cause and effect” (Wilson, 2016, p. 2).                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Methodological choice</i>     | <p>This investigation uses a mixed-method simple choice for data collection and analysis. The mixed-methods approach allows for interpretation of data in both quantitative and qualitative formats, which enhances the accuracy of the results (Creswell &amp; Plano Clark, 2018). The use of quantitative analysis avoids the subjectivity posed to qualitative studies. Yet, qualitative analysis is needed to elicit truthful and accurate responses from respondents. This enhances the questionnaire's accuracy. The instrument for data collection, a questionnaire, is designed and based on questionnaires concerning gender perception. These include Pearson Education's Gender Roles Questionnaire (2010); the IMAGE Survey (Men + Gender Equality Policy Project, 2016); and Gender Equal New Zealand's Gender Attitudes Survey (2018).</p> |
| <i>Research strategy</i>         | <p>A research strategy is how the researcher intends to carry out the planned work (Saunders &amp; Tosey, 2013). This research investigation uses a questionnaire as a non-experimental research design. Questionnaires as research method are useful for obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data, which can be used to explore topics such as gender and gender perception.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Time horizon</i>              | <p>A cross-sectional questionnaire collects data to make interpretations about a specific population at one point in time (Pupuma, 2018). This investigation employs a cross-sectional questionnaire, as it collects data on a population of HEI students in NMB, questioning them on their gender perceptions. The survey was made available to potential respondents for 24 days, from 19 August to 11 September 2020.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <i>Techniques and procedures</i> | <p>Data collection and analysis is dependent on the methodological approach followed (Pupuma, 2018). This investigation makes use of an online questionnaire consisting of 32 questions based on gender perceptions, roles, stereotypes, attitudes, and influences. The questionnaire contains of closed-ended questions, analysed quantitatively, and open-ended, exploratory questions, analysed qualitatively. Questions comprise short and long answer, multiple choice, checkboxes, dropdown lists and multiple-choice grids. Certain questions are also Likert scales, which is analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively; these are used for gender perceptions and stereotypes, as well as potential forms of influences on these constructs.</p>                                                                                           |

### 3.3 Research Plan

#### 3.3.1 Population

The unit of analysis is students at HEIs in SA. The accessible population for this investigation is students aged between 18 and 25 years, of any gender, studying at different HEIs in NMB. This emerging-adult age bracket is chosen as, despite continued brain development, individuals possess a cognitive maturation advanced enough to understand the nature of the questionnaire (Spear, 2000; Wood, Crapnell, Lau, Bennet, Lotstein, Ferris, & Kuo, 2018). Additionally, these students are just venturing out into the world, trying to find themselves as young adolescents. It is often only at this stage when individuals, particularly those presenting with gender-variance or non-heterosexual sexual orientations begin to explore their gender and sexuality (Arnett, 2000; Wood et al., 2018) and are able to look back on their upbringing from a stable and neutral viewpoint.

#### 3.3.2 Sampling

Sampling is described as the process of selecting certain members of a population to make statistical inferences and estimate characteristics of the entire population (Bhat, 2020). As per IIE guidelines, a minimum sample size of 12 is required. The sample size must conform to time constraints placed on the investigation. The questionnaire was marketed on different social media platforms; this is discussed further in section 3.3.3.2. The size of the accessible sample was different from the size of the target sample. Across its time horizon, the questionnaire recorded 17 responses. The final response pool consists of 16 respondents and is determined by the respondents being students from NMB and the sufficiency of their completed responses. The disregarding and deletion of responses is explained further in section 3.3.5.2.

##### 3.3.2.1 Sampling Methods

This investigation uses non-probability sampling methods, which focus on smaller samples and real-life phenomena (Yin, 2003; Taherdoost, 2016). Non-probability sampling does not require representative or random samples, provided explanations are given for the inclusion of some individuals above others. Techniques of non-probability sampling that this investigation employs includes convenience, snowball, purposive and quota sampling. Table 4 summarises the sampling methods.

Table 4: Sampling methods.

| <b>Method</b>               | <b>Explanation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Convenience sampling</i> | Respondent selection based on proximal range availability.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>Snowball sampling</i>    | Respondents and other individuals encouraged to share the questionnaire with other eligible individuals. Additionally, it is an approach applicable to small societies due to its sensitive nature.                                     |
| <i>Purposive sampling</i>   | Respondents included or excluded from participation based on meeting eligibility requirements.                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Quota sampling</i>       | Choosing respondents is justified as the investigation aims to elucidate information from students aged 18-25 in NMB; therefore, the accessible population must have the same distribution of characteristics as the target population. |

### 3.3.3 Data Collection Method

The data collection method for this investigation is an online questionnaire created on Google Forms. This cross-sectional questionnaire encompasses both quantitative and qualitative questions. These place emphasis on different gender perceptions, stereotypes, roles, and attitudes. Different factors which are likely to influence a respondent's gender perception and expression was discovered throughout the research process; these were included in the questionnaire and the extent to which these were influential was explained by the respondents. Its structure and the marketing thereof are discussed below.

#### 3.3.3.1 Questionnaire Structure

Respondents are encouraged to answer the questionnaire honestly, as there is no correct answer. To protect against this topic's sensitive nature, only the consent question is marked as 'required'. Five checkboxes are provided, along with a notice explaining that all five must be ticked to proceed. The 32-question questionnaire is split into five sections, which utilises multiple-choice, checkbox, Likert-scales and short answer questions, bar the last section, which contains one Likert-scale and several paragraph questions. The first section utilises bio- and demographical information and is predominantly quantitative in that it contains drop-down multiple-choice questions.

The second section concerns the respondent's childhood experiences and family and is also predominantly quantitative. Drop-down multiple-choice questions are used again, along with multiple-checkbox questions. The third section concerns the roles, attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes of gender. This section takes a mixed approach in that it employs a quantitative 7-point Likert-scale and three qualitative complete-the-sentence questions. The 7-point scale provides an array of predetermined descriptions, in order of severity from "*strongly agree*" to "*strongly disagree*". The scale and complete-the-sentence questions are used to measure the respondent's own perceptions, stereotypes, roles, and attitudes of gender, before external influences are taken into consideration.

The fourth section incorporates these external influences and is predominantly qualitative. It encompasses seven paragraph-questions on the influence of grouped factors likely to influence gender perceptions and expressions. This is preceded by a 6-point Likert-scale, again structured according to severity, but inclusive of an option for uncertainty. This scale determines the extent to which individual factors are likely to influence the respondent's perception and expression of gender. The last part of this section comprises three questions focusing on the respondent's interpretation of gender and sex. These three questions, along with the preceding seven paragraph questions, are questions requiring a more detailed response from the respondent. These questions concern their gender perceptions, attitudes, roles and stereotypes, and the extent to which respondents are affected by external influences. Google Forms was chosen as the user-interface is clean and user-friendly, and data can be extracted easily into a spreadsheet for analysis. Google Forms has a basic data analytic structure built into its design, which provides pie charts and bar graphs for quantitative data.

### 3.3.3.2 Questionnaire Marketing

The questionnaire is marketed on different sections of the researcher's social media platforms, using a URL and QR code. These platforms are Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Respondents are asked to share the provided link with other eligible individuals. Annexures G to L demonstrate examples of posts, shares, status updates, and group-, rejected- and shared posts. Table 5 explains the roles of each platform in terms of marketing the questionnaire.

Table 5: Platforms used in marketing.

| <b>Platforms</b> | <b>Explanation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Facebook</i>  | Posts made on the researcher's profile gathered 11 likes/reacts and 18 shares. A link to the survey was placed in the researcher's biography. Multiple status updates were made as each was only available for 24 hours. The updates gathered 105 views. A post created for Facebook's Marketplace was declined as it infringed Facebook's rules on promoting services. Nine groups related to advertisements, NMB cities, HEIs and students in NMB were approached. Barring one group, a student group, no other group produced any likes/reacts or shares. The student group, an official one from an HEI in the area, produced 3 likes/reacts and 1 share. No permission by way of consent was asked. Groups have admins who approve joining groups and posts. When these groups were joined and posts were approved, consent was then granted. |
| <i>LinkedIn</i>  | Posts made on the researcher's profile gathered 133 views. A featured post was made, which remained on the researcher's profile. The researcher is connected to many students from different HEIs in NMB on these social media profiles, thereby maximising the questionnaire's reach and accessible population. LinkedIn was chosen because the questionnaire was promoted to connect with potential researchers in the same or similar fields, and boost the overall validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the measure and investigation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>Instagram</i> | Posts made on the researcher's profile gathered 14 likes. A link to the survey was placed in the researcher's biography. Multiple status updates were made as each was only available for 24 hours. The updates gathered 212 views.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>WhatsApp</i>  | Multiple status updates were made as each was only available for 24 hours. At least 30 views per status were achieved.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

### 3.3.4 Data Analysis Methods

Table 6: Data analysis methods.

| <b>Design</b>                | <b>Method</b>          | <b>Explanation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Quantitative analysis</i> | Descriptive statistics | Descriptive statistics such as the mean, mode, frequency, min values, max values and percentages encapsulate available data and provide interpretation (Surendran, 2020). Google Forms provides pie charts and bar graphs of the quantitative data. These explain the potential influence of factors, as well as demonstrating the bio- and demographical information. |

|                             |                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Qualitative analysis</i> | Qualitative content analysis (QCA) | QCA is the subjective interpretation of text data through systematic classification process of coding and identification of themes or patterns (du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014). Themes relating to gender, its perception and how different factors influence it, are identified. ATLAS.ti 8 is used for analysing qualitative questions. The process of data analysis involves creating codes to summarise data into categorised groups. The data is mostly in-vivo-coded, reserving open-coding for when it is deemed necessary. This is done to keep the data retrieved trustworthy: the respondent's own words are used instead of the researcher's interpretation thereof. |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 6 demonstrates the two data analysis methods used in this investigation. The mixed-methods approach is helpful in gaining in-depth understanding of trends relating to different factors. This includes an understanding of the extent to which each factor occurs and influences the respondent's gender perceptions and expressions. Evidence of the existence of several factors influential to gender perceptions is found; this evidence correlates with information originally derived from literature. Thus, the relationship between each factor and its influence can be explained. New factors emerged from the data analysis as well; these factors have at least some influence on the respondent's gender perceptions and expressions. The mixed-methods approach is also helpful in developing an in-depth case analysis, while identifying and taking appropriate actions to improve the practical problem of negatively influenced gender perceptions (Maree, 2020). These negatively influenced perceptions are the result of gender stereotypes and ill-informed environmental factors. Thus, the researcher is to identify multiple realities present in the data.

#### 3.3.4.1 Data Cleansing

Data cleansing is defined as a process wherein data is examined, and abnormalities are removed from the set to obtain data that is consistent and accurate towards the given population. Errors or missing values will produce skewed data results (Müller & Freytag, 2003; Gu, 2010; Ridzuan & Zainon, 2019). During this process, a unique numerical identifier is provided for each respondent, replacing the aliases respondents provided. Respondents are given a unique number in the format R####; R standing for 'respondent' and the hash symbols for digits, beginning with 001.

#### 3.3.4.2 Disregarding and Deletion of Respondent Data

The survey received 17 responses during its time horizon, more than the minimum requirement. Disregarding and deleting respondents' responses begins at the conclusion of the data collection process. Here, the occurrence of incomplete or inadequate responses are taken into consideration. Two respondents did not indicate whether they were students; one response was deleted, the other was kept as that respondent indicated a year of study. It is possible for the respondent to submit a questionnaire without answers; however, no such responses were recorded. Only one respondent left the paragraph questions blank; two respondents filled in only select questions. These responses were retained as the preceding Likert-scale, also based on different factors which can influence gender perception, was fully completed by all respondents and this scale determines the severity of influences. The answers to the paragraph questions were used as supporting evidence for the Likert-scale answers, demonstrating the nature of the influence on a student's gender perception and expression. These paragraph questions are also utilised when answering the research questions and outcomes in section 5. Deletion of a respondent's information automatically adjusts the data and graphs to match the data of the new respondent tally. The final sample size is therefore 16 respondents.

#### 4 FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

This investigation employs descriptive statistics and QCA in the interpretation and discussion of the questionnaire's findings. Descriptive statistics encapsulate quantitative data and provide interpretation (Surendran, 2020). Pie charts and bar graphs illustrate the collected data and findings. Open-ended questions are coded with QCA to create codes and themes related to gender, gender perceptions and how different factors influence it. Where possible, this data is also illustrated in graphs.

##### 4.1 Presentation of Results and Discussion of the Findings

###### 4.1.1 Demographic Information

The questionnaire (Annexure A) for this investigation is designed to attain multiple respondent profiles. This is based on the investigation's research problem, which states that NMB HEI students are deeply affected by several factors that influence their gender perceptions and expressions. Such profiles therefore include respondents' ages, ethnic backgrounds, geographical location, gender, and year of study. Nkosi and Mulaudzi (2017), and Piatek-Jimenez, Cribbs and Gill (2018), authors of established research papers on gender use these demographic variables in their studies. Therefore, these variables as the most important ones when investigating this research problem.

###### 4.1.1.1 Age

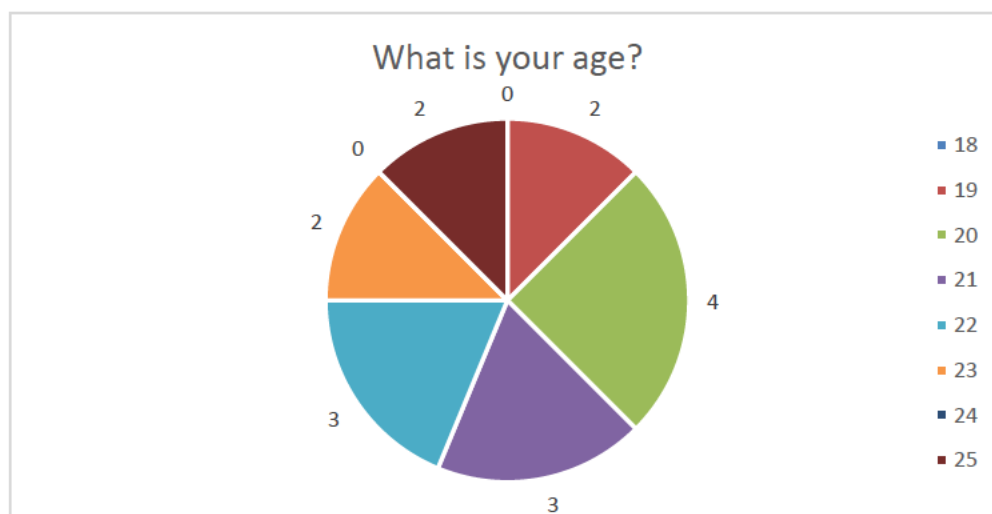


Figure 4: Age.

The NMB metro consists of a young population; the average age is 26 (Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs [CG&TA], 2020). The age group of 10-19 makes up 18% while the age group of 20-29 makes up 17% of the metro's population (CG&TA, 2020). The chosen age group, namely 18-25 year-olds, for this investigation constitutes the average SA age of university students (Pupuma, 2018). Figure 4 demonstrates the rate of respondent ages. Within this age group, at least one respondent per age from nearly every age is sampled, making this a representative sample.

#### 4.1.1.2 Ethnic background

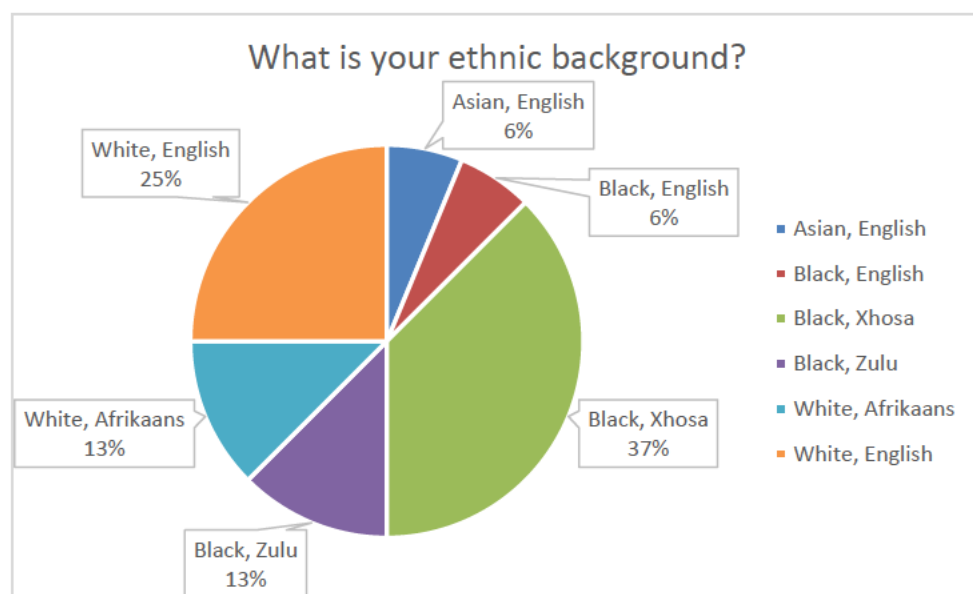


Figure 5: Ethnic background.

Figure 5 demonstrates respondents' ethnic backgrounds. Data analysis found that Black Xhosa individuals constituted 37% of the respondent pool ( $n=6$ ), followed by White English individuals (25%;  $n=4$ ). The total count of Black African individuals ( $n=9$ ) accounts for just over 56% of the target population. This correlates with the CG&TA survey, which states that in 2016, the racial distribution was approximately 60% Black African, 15% White and 1% Indian/Asian (CG&TA, 2020). Drawing on an accessible population that is representative to the area under study increases the investigation's validity and reliability.

#### 4.1.1.3 Geographical location

It is vital that all respondents be from the NMB area; 87.5% of respondents indicated their location as being within Port Elizabeth ( $n=14$ ); see Figure 6. One response was recorded for both Uitenhage and Despatch. These three cities constitute the NMB area. Figure 6 demonstrates the geographical spread of respondents; the suburbs of Central (18.75%;  $n=3$ ) and Lorraine (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) providing the most responses, in terms of responses indicating suburbs.

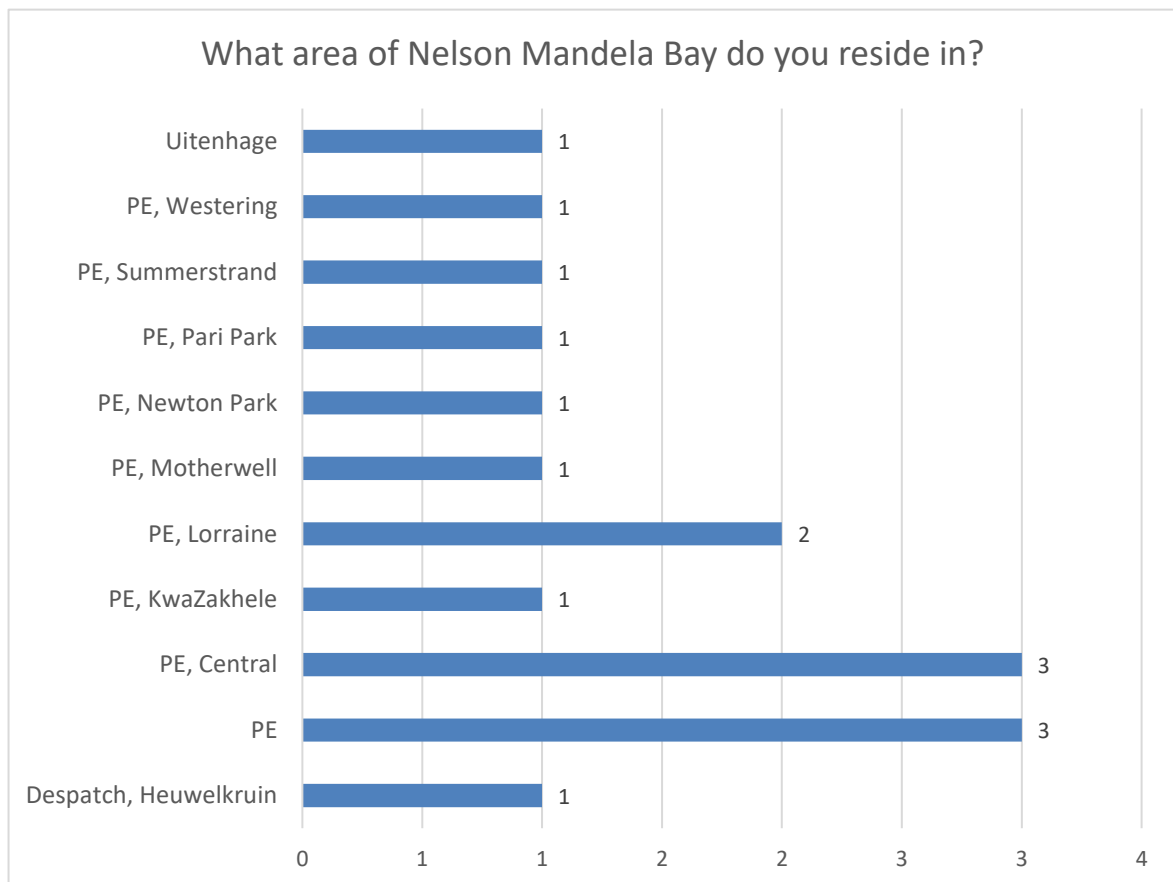


Figure 6: Geographical location.

#### 4.1.1.4 Gender

The questionnaire produced respondents who mostly indicated their gender as cis-gender (68.75%;  $n=11$ ); meaning that their gender identity matches their biological sex assigned at birth. Figure 7 demonstrates the different genders respondents selected in the questionnaire. One respondent indicated they identified as gender non-conforming, while another identified as genderfluid. 18.8% of respondents ( $n=3$ ) indicated they prefer to describe their gender themselves.

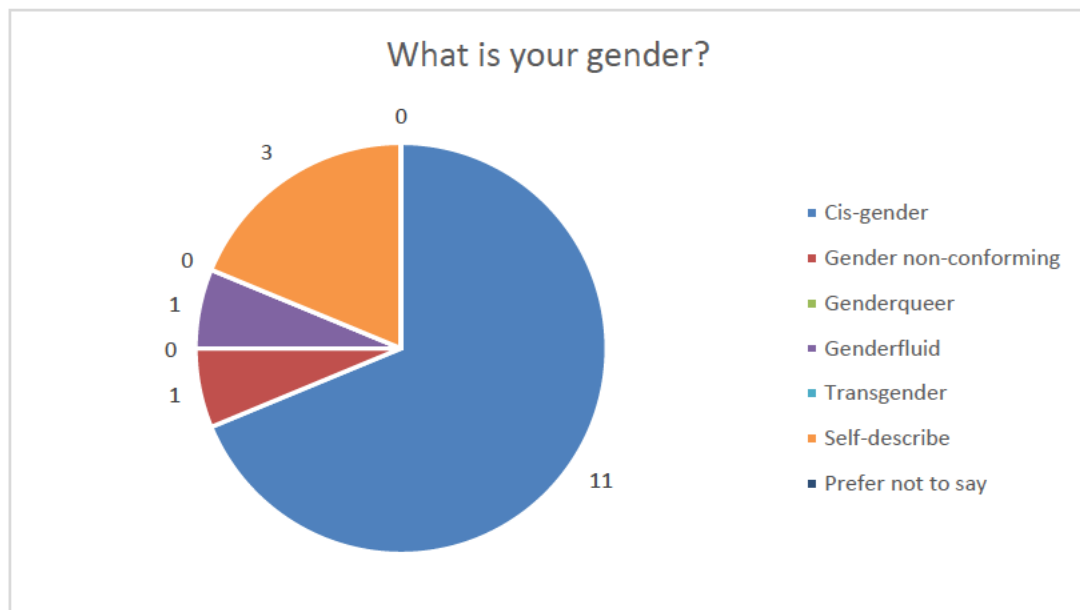


Figure 7: Gender.

#### 4.1.1.5 Year of study

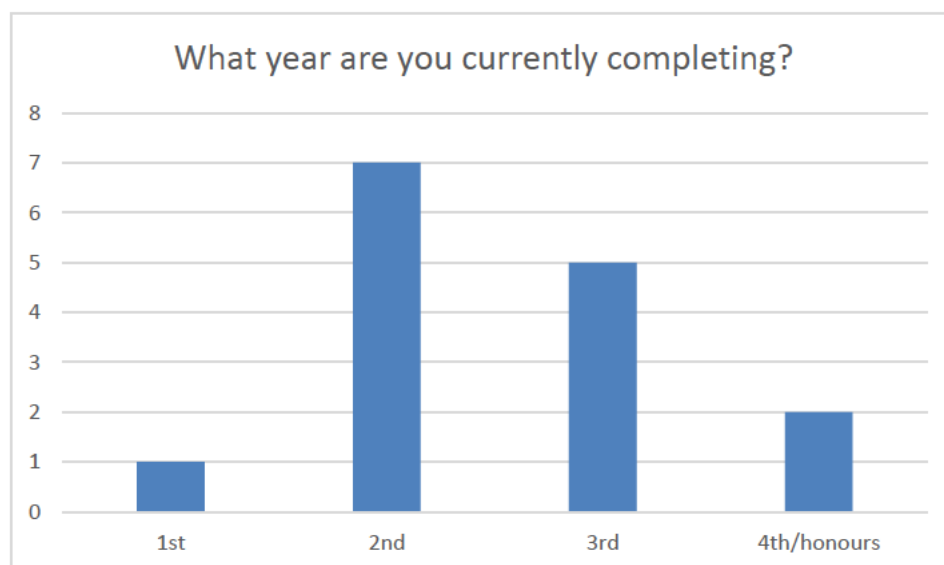


Figure 8: Year of study.

The questionnaire produced respondents who were mostly second- (48.3%;  $n=7$ ) or third-year (31.3%;  $n=5$ ) students. A respondent in their first-year was recorded, and two responses for fourth/honours were recorded. One respondent did not disclose their year. Figure 8 demonstrates the different years of study.

#### 4.1.1.6 Other demographic information

Most respondents attended a public mixed-gender high school (81.3%;  $n=13$ ). Private mixed-gender high school (12.5%;  $n=2$ ); and private single-gender high school (6.3%;

$n=1$ ) were also identified; see annexure C. This is a confounding variable for the investigation as the type of high school attended does not influence students' gender perceptions. Rather, it is the teachers in their classes who play the influential roles in terms of schooling and education. Schooling and education are discussed further in section 5.1.5.

A significant number of respondents were biologically female (81.3%;  $n=13$ ), the rest biologically male; see annexure D. This correlates somewhat with data retrieved on biological sex within the NMB population, where females outnumber males 52% to 48% (Statistics SA, 2017; Pupuma, 2018; CG&TA, 2020). The investigation therefore does not represent the gender population of NMB, which can result in a gender bias.

In terms of sexual orientation, respondents indicated they were heterosexual (68.8%;  $n=11$ ); bisexual (12.5%;  $n=2$ ); and pansexual (6.3%;  $n=1$ ); see annexure E. Analysis of respondents' questionnaires found sexual orientation to be of little influence when viewing data from heterosexual respondents. Respondents who indicated otherwise all referenced their sexual orientation to some degree, whether it played a negative or positive role in influencing their gender perceptions and expressions. All also described themselves in terms of sexual orientation when asked to.

#### 4.1.2 Childhood Experiences

##### 4.1.2.1 Family life

Figures 9 and 10 demonstrate a list of different caregivers that respondents were requested to select from in terms of who took care of them, as well as who lived with them during their childhoods. Respondents indicated that they were raised by both parents (60%;  $n=9$ ); by fathers only (6.67%;  $n=1$ ); by mothers only (13.3%;  $n=2$ ); and by a parent and another family member (20%;  $n=3$ ). Respondents were raised in households with fathers (62.5%;  $n=10$ ); mothers (87.5%;  $n=14$ ); brothers (81.3%;  $n=13$ ) and sisters (31.3%;  $n=5$ ). Respondents also indicated that a grandfather (6.3%;  $n=1$ ); grandmothers (25%;  $n=4$ ); aunts (18.8%;  $n=3$ ); an uncle (6.3%;  $n=1$ ) and a cousin (6.3%;  $n=1$ ) were residing with them in their childhood homes. One respondent, in response to explaining what other family members they lived with, explained 'other' as being their parent's partner who has been with the family since the respondent's childhood. They did not connote any terms relating to 'father' to that individual, as the term 'father' had negative connotations for that respondent. The respondent indicated,

however that the partner provided positive perceptions to their view of family. This respondent also indicated that the parental figure is identified as another caregiver throughout their questionnaire.

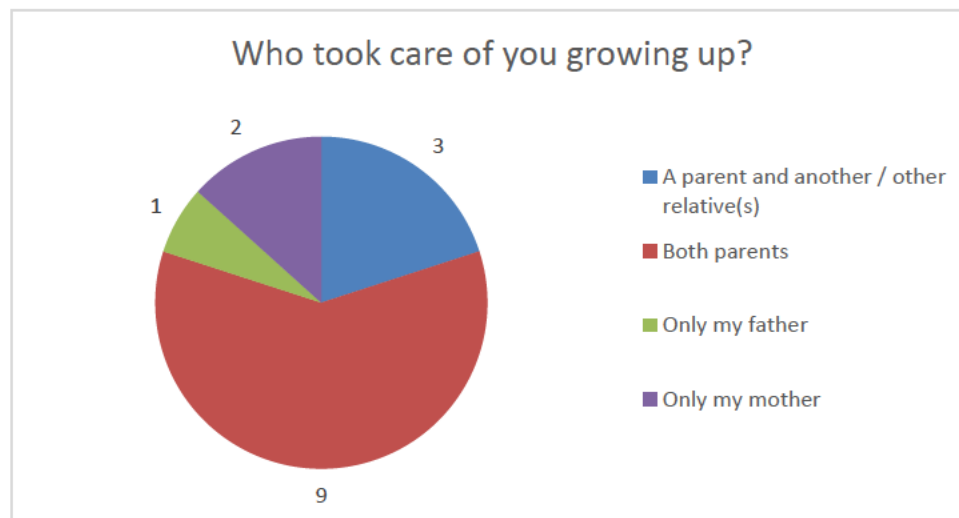


Figure 9: Caregivers

What members of your family did/do you live with?

16 responses

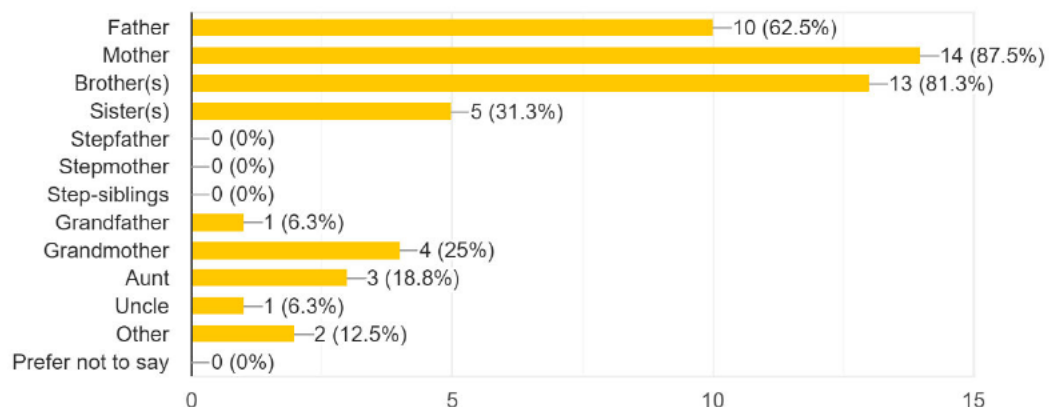


Figure 10: Who did you live with?

#### 4.1.2.2 Childhood experiences

Figures 11 and 12 indicate different household chores. Respondents were asked to assign themselves or their family members to these roles based on who performed them in the house.

When you were a child or teenager, who in the home did the following:

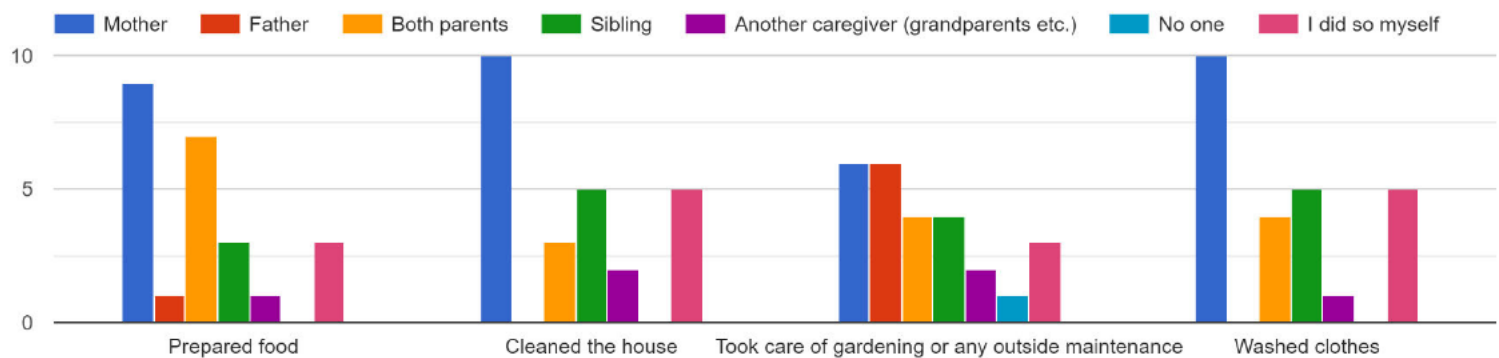


Figure 11: Household chores.

In Figure 11, respondents indicated that either the mother only (37.5%;  $n=9$ ) or both parents (29.1%;  $n=7$ ) prepared food. Interestingly, siblings (10.3%;  $n=3$ ) and respondents themselves (10.3%;  $n=3$ ) also prepared food, which equates to 38% of the sample population. It was previously thought that this trend could be due to child-headed households (CHHs), but all respondents indicated some form of parental caregiver, negating the idea of CHHs. In terms of cleaning the interior of a house, respondents indicated that it was mostly their mothers (40%;  $n=10$ ) who cleaned. No respondent indicated fathers solely as cleaners, but respondents indicated both parents as responsible for cleaning (12%;  $n=3$ ). Siblings (20%;  $n=5$ ) and respondents themselves (20%;  $n=5$ ) were responsible for cleaning as well. When it came to maintenance outside the home, mothers (23.1%;  $n=6$ ) and fathers (23.1%;  $n=6$ ) individually were equally identified. Both parents together (15.4%;  $n=4$ ) were also identified.

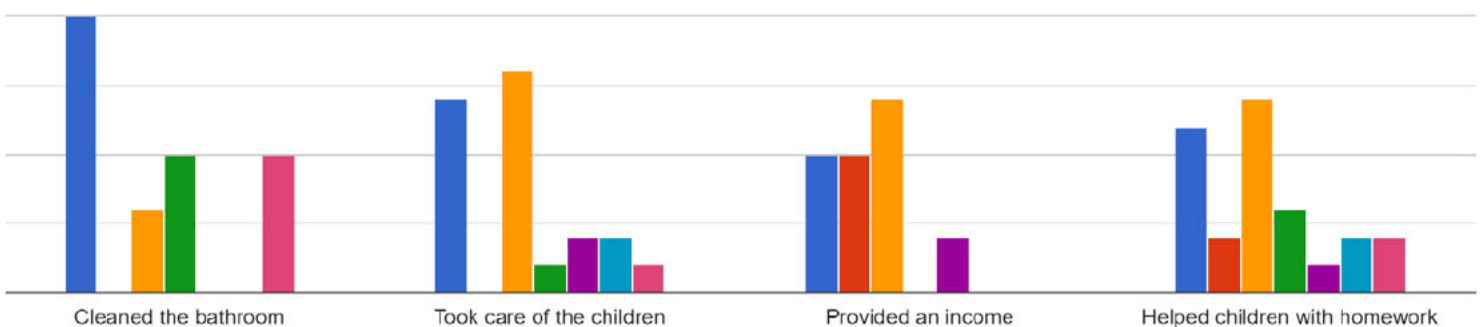


Figure 12: Household chores

In Figures 11 and 12, mothers alone (40%;  $n=10$ ) were preferred for washing clothes and for cleaning the bathroom; fathers alone were not credited at all. However, respondents indicated that both parents washed clothes (16%;  $n=4$ ) and cleaned the bathroom (13%;  $n=3$ ). Siblings washed clothes (20%;  $n=5$ ) and cleaned the bathroom (21.7%;  $n=5$ ), as did respondents themselves (20%;  $n=5$ ) and (21.7%;  $n=5$ ) respectively. Seen in Figure 12, a question that sparked investigation into traditional gender roles was who took care of children. While mothers alone (33.3%;  $n=7$ ) were identified, the questionnaire found that respondents relatively highly indicated both parents as taking care of children (38.1%;  $n=8$ ). This subverts the traditional gender role of child-rearing being a female's job (Carter, 2014). Fathers alone were not identified. Respondents indicated that no one took care of children (9.5%;  $n=2$ ); siblings were caregivers (4.76%;  $n=1$ ); other family members were caregivers (9.5%;  $n=2$ ); and a respondent cared for themselves (4.76%;  $n=1$ ). In terms of providing income, mothers (26.3%;  $n=5$ ) and fathers (26.3%;  $n=5$ ) alone were indicated equally, while other respondents indicated both parents (36.9%;  $n=7$ ). Lastly, mothers only (26.1%;  $n=6$ ); fathers only (8.7%;  $n=2$ ); and both parents (30.4%;  $n=7$ ) were identified as helping children with homework.

#### 4.1.3 Gender Roles, Attitudes, Perceptions and Stereotypes

In this 18-question 7-point Likert-scale, respondents were tasked with identifying the severity to which they agree or disagree with these statements on different gender roles, attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes. Figures 13 to 18 demonstrate this scale-question and the responses recorded.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

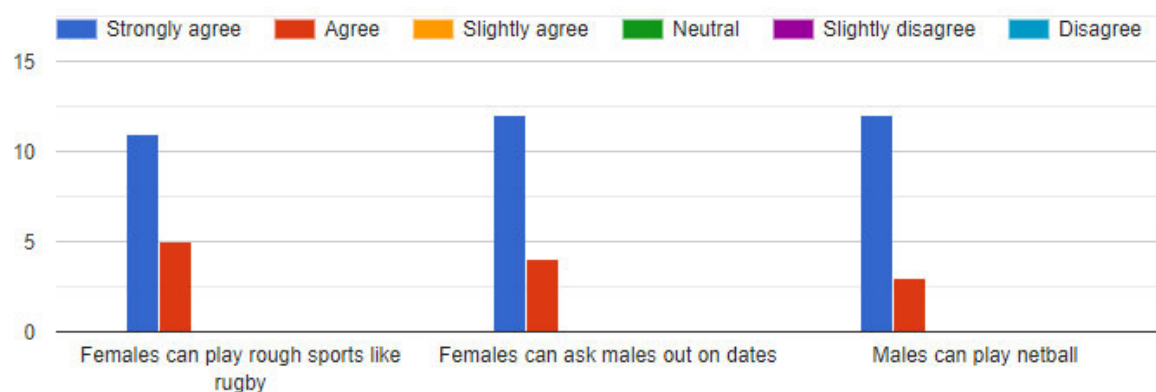


Figure 13: Gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles, and perceptions.

Figure 13 illustrates data on questions related to sports and dating. Respondents strongly agreed that females can play tough sports (68.75%;  $n=11$ ); that females can ask males out on dates (75%;  $n=12$ ); and that males can play netball (80%;  $n=12$ ). Other respondents agreed to these three questions (31.25%;  $n=5$ ); (25%;  $n=4$ ) and (20%;  $n=3$ ) respectively. Children are socialised to take part in sports based on their gender (Jooste, 2007; Plaza, Boiché, Brunel, & Ruchaud, 2016; Reynolds, 2018). Traditional gender roles based on socially accepted behaviours for the genders are often relied upon (Hall, Howard, Sawyer & Abebe, 2017). The findings for these three questions demonstrated a complete subversion of traditional gender roles in terms of dating and sports.

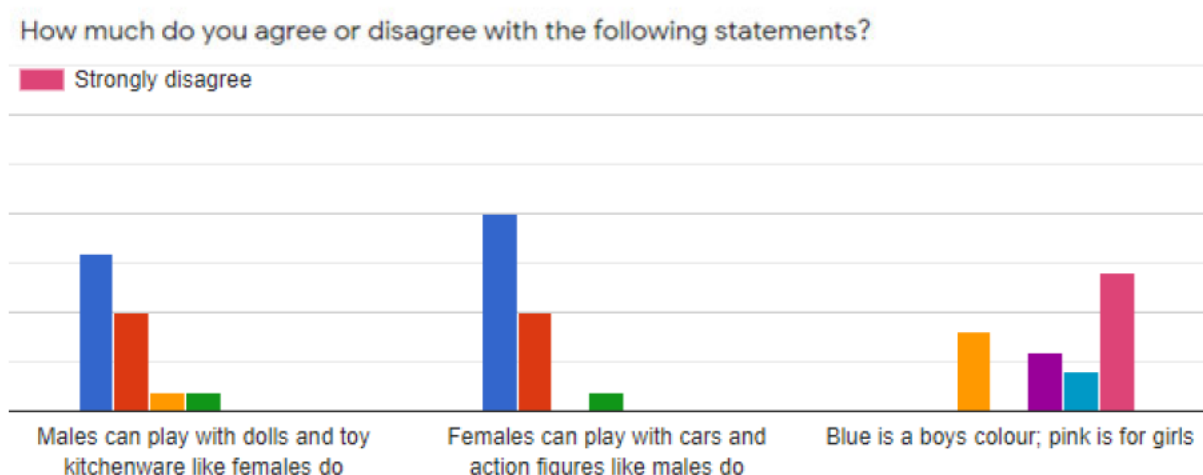


Figure 14: Gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles and perceptions.

Figure 14 illustrates questions based on toys and gender perceptions. For the question 'males can play with dolls and toy kitchenware like females do', respondents strongly agreed (53.3%;  $n=8$ ); agreed (33.3%;  $n=5$ ); slightly agreed (6.7%;  $n=1$ ); and were neutral (6.7%;  $n=1$ ). Similarly, respondents strongly agreed (62.5%;  $n=10$ ); agreed (31.25%;  $n=5$ ) and were neutral (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) on 'whether females could play with cars and action figures like males do'. Respondents indicated that they slightly agreed (25%;  $n=4$ ); slightly disagreed (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); disagreed (12.5%;  $n=2$ ); and, strongly disagreed (43.75%;  $n=7$ ) that blue was a boy's colour and pink was for girls. Respondents who indicated positively towards these questions demonstrate subverting the traditional gender roles attributed to children's toys. The subverting of these gender roles contrasts with research compiled in the literature view, including Jiang, (2019). However, Kambouri-Danos and Evans (2019)'s suggestion of parents as reinforcers was matched by these findings. Parents as reinforcers and promoters

elucidated more flexible understanding of gender, as opposed to traditional gender stereotypes (Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019).

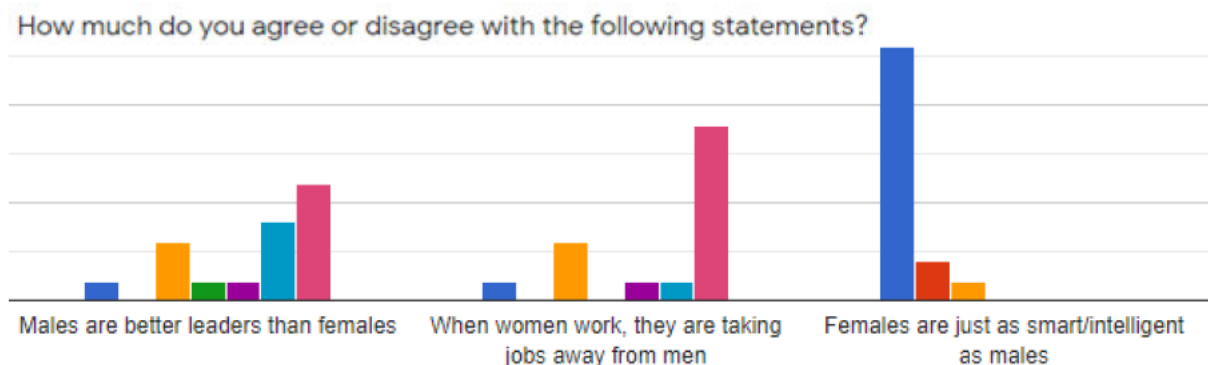


Figure 15: Gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles, and perceptions.

Figure 15 illustrates questions on leadership, work capabilities and intelligence. Respondents strongly agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); slightly agreed (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); were neutral (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); slightly disagreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); disagreed (25%;  $n=4$ ); and strongly disagreed (37.5%;  $n=6$ ) that men are the better leaders. Respondents strongly agreed (6.66%;  $n=1$ ); slightly agreed (20%;  $n=3$ ); slightly disagreed (6.66%;  $n=1$ ); disagreed (6.66%;  $n=1$ ); and strongly disagreed (60%;  $n=9$ ) that women take employment away from men when they work. An overwhelming number of respondents strongly agreed (81.25%;  $n=13$ ) that females were just as intelligent as males. Others agreed (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) and slightly agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ). These answers correlated with research by Samuel and Mokoaleli (2017), Yadav and Yadav (2018), Graves (2018) and Koenig (2018) which contrasted traditional gender perceptions with modern perceptions.

Figure 16 demonstrates questions on freedom, university access and finances. Majority of respondents strongly agreed (87.5%;  $n=14$ ); agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) and were neutral (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) that females should have the same freedom as males. Respondents agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); slightly agreed (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); disagreed (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); and strongly disagreed (56.25%;  $n=9$ ) that families should encourage males above females to attend university. Respondents overwhelmingly strongly agreed (81.25%;  $n=13$ ) that females should be allowed to be breadwinners in their families. Agreement (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) and slight agreement (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) were also indicated. More demonstrations on the subversion of traditional gender roles and perceptions were

found in the data for these questions, particularly the last one on finances. This correlates with research by Almy and Sanatullova-Allison (2016).

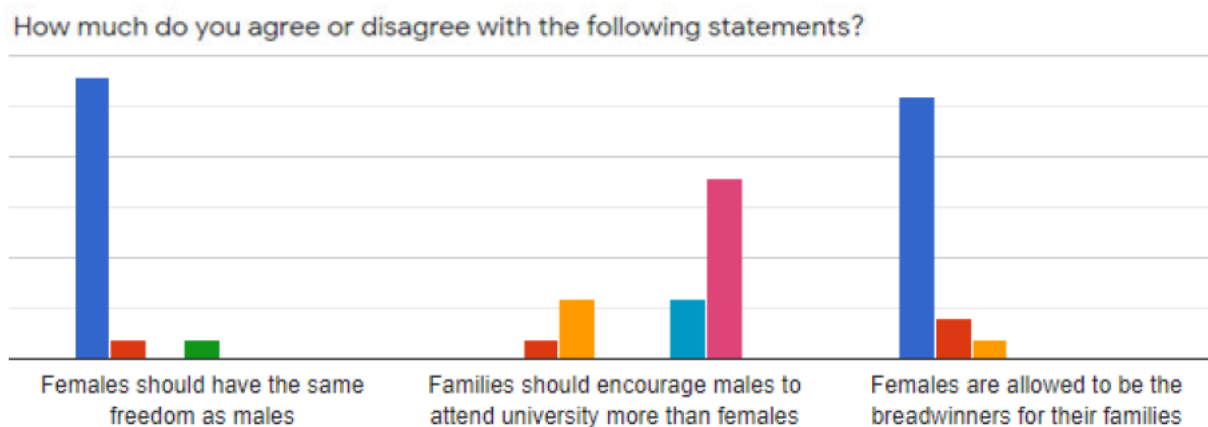


Figure 16: Gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles, and perceptions.

Figure 17 demonstrates parental responsibility and employment in gender-minority fields. All respondents strongly agreed (100%;  $n=16$ ) that raising children is the responsibility of both parents. Additionally, respondents strongly agreed (87.5%;  $n=14$  for both) that males and females should be allowed to work in fields dominated by their opposite sex. Agreement (6.25%;  $n=1$  each respectively) and slight agreement (6.25%;  $n=1$  each respectively) were also recorded. This contrasts with research by Stamarski and Hing (2015), which demonstrates hostile working environments because of unfair gender discrimination. Child-rearing as responsibility of both parents subverts the traditional notion of it being a female's responsibility. This correlates with research by Sekścińska, Trzcińska and Maison (2016).

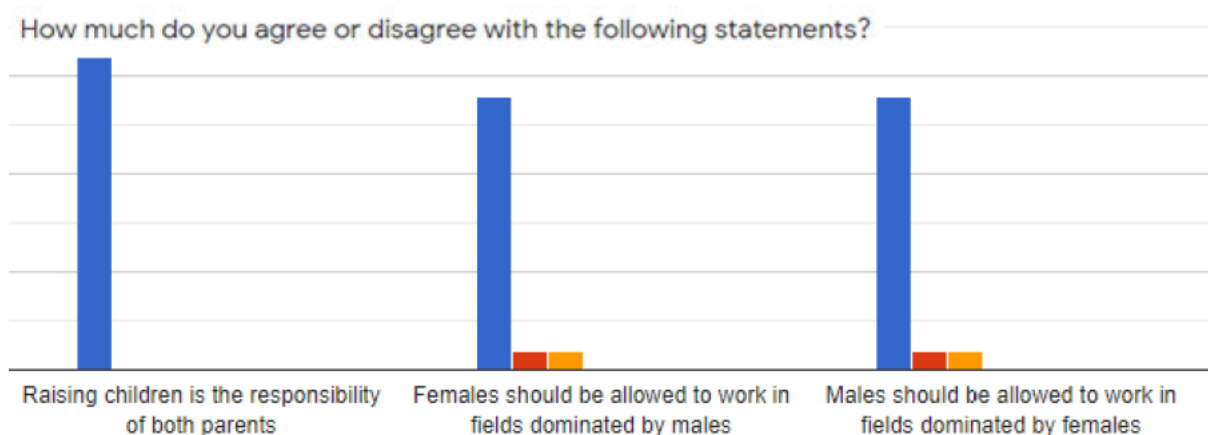


Figure 17: Gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles, and perceptions.

The last three questions of this scale-question, seen in Figure 18, focus on gender and sexual orientation perceptions. Respondents overwhelmingly strongly disagreed that 'males are strong and do all the work' (46.7%;  $n=7$ ), 'any feminine-acting male is gay' (60%;  $n=9$ ); and 'any masculine-acting female is a lesbian' (62.5%;  $n=10$ ). However, interesting notes were made. Respondents slightly agreed (20%;  $n=3$ ); were neutral (13.3%;  $n=2$ ); slightly disagreed (6.7%;  $n=1$ ) and disagreed (13.3%;  $n=2$ ) that men are strong and do all the work. Respondents also slightly agreed (13.3%;  $n=2$ ); slightly disagreed (13.3%;  $n=2$ ) and disagreed (13.3%;  $n=2$ ) that feminine-acting males are gay. Finally, respondents strongly agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); slightly agreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); slightly disagreed (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) and disagreed (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) that masculine-acting females are lesbians. It is felt that these notions expressed here contrast the communal view in SA that individuals who do not act in manners akin to the traditional perceptions attached to their gender are interested in same-sex relationships or that same-sex behaviours stem from profound prejudice (Nyoni, 2020).

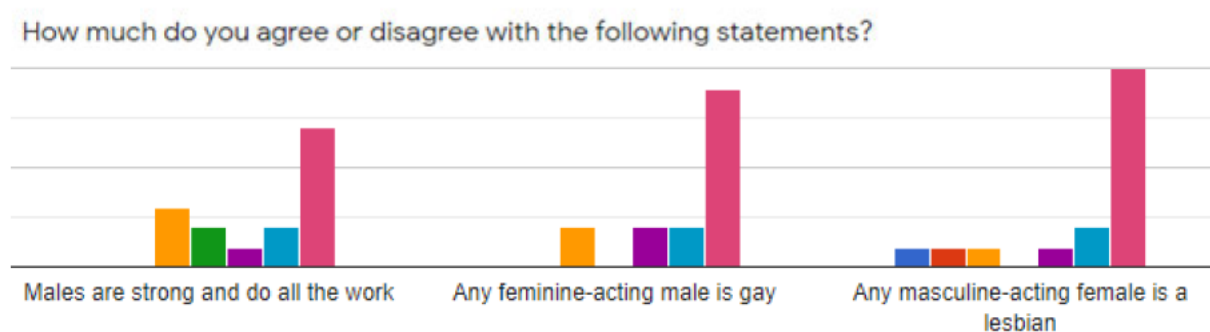


Figure 18: Gender stereotypes, attitudes, roles, and perceptions.

#### 4.1.4 Different Influences on Gender Perception

This section of the questionnaire is predominantly qualitative in nature; therefore, the use of thematic coding is employed when analysing respondent answers. These codes were organised into groups in a spreadsheet, and bars and graphs are made for illustration.

Careful analysis of the answers to this question determined childcare (18.2%;  $n=4$ ) and communication (18.2%;  $n=4$ ) to be what women were deemed best at. These responses fall in line with traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Women were also good at managing their emotions (13.65%;  $n=3$ ), as well as cleaning (9.1%;  $n=2$ ) and

cooking (9.1%;  $n=2$ ). Figure 19 demonstrates these findings and highlights other aspects women tend to be better at. The answers of Figure 17 contrasted with explanations of the responsibility of child-rearing. While it was demonstrated that child-rearing was indeed the responsibility of both parents, respondents identified women as being better at this task. This question thus demonstrated how traditional gender perceptions are ingrained into respondents, which correlated to research conducted by Manisha and Mangla (2019) and Davis and Preves (2017).

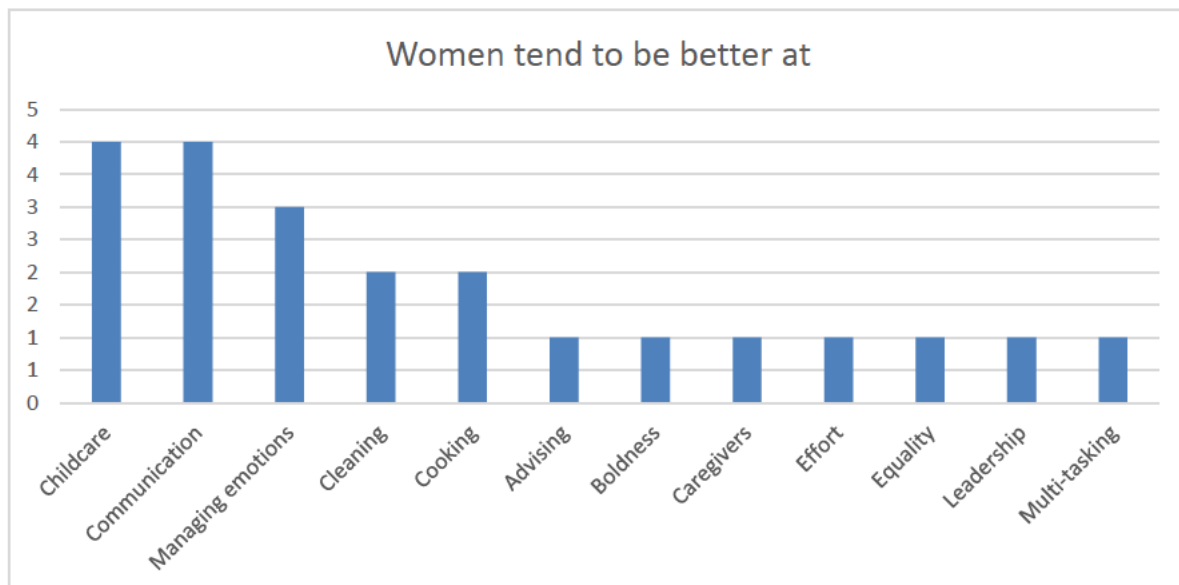


Figure 19: Women tend to be better at.

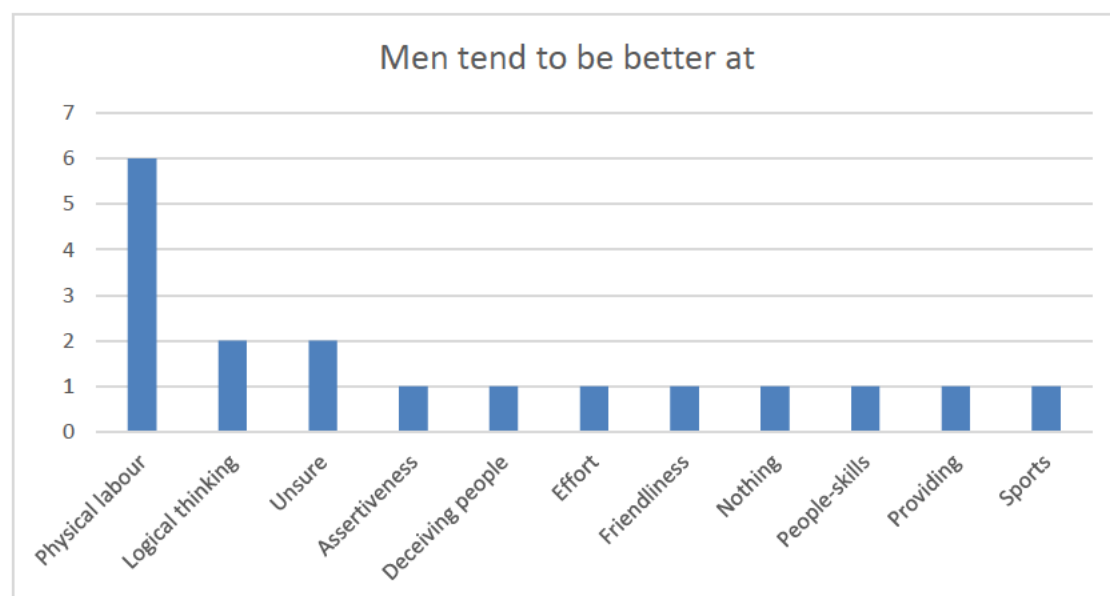


Figure 20: Men tend to be better at.

Men, on the other hand, were deemed better at physical labour (33.3%;  $n=6$ ), which included manual work. In contrast to women, men were deemed better at one aspect only, as opposed to a similarly spread variety of aspects. Figure 20 illustrates the different aspects respondents identified men as being better at. Relating this explanation to Figure 19's explanation, for this question on men and their aspects of expertise, child-rearing was not noted. The closest aspect to child-rearing was providing, which correlated to the traditional notion that men provide for their families financially while women raise children (Sekścińska et al., 2016).

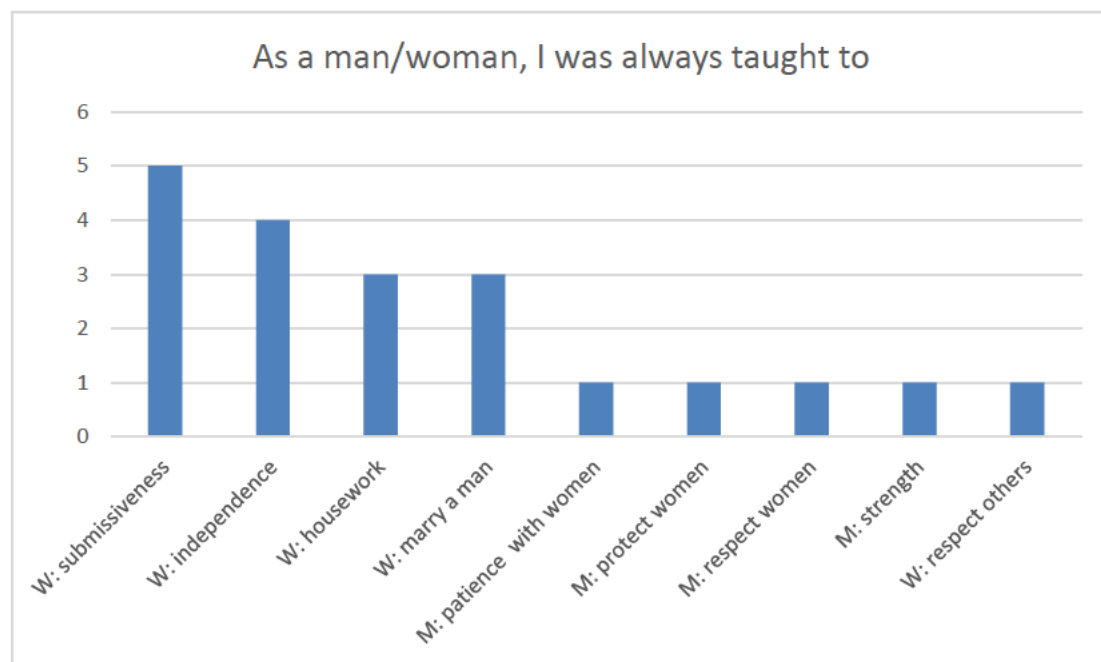
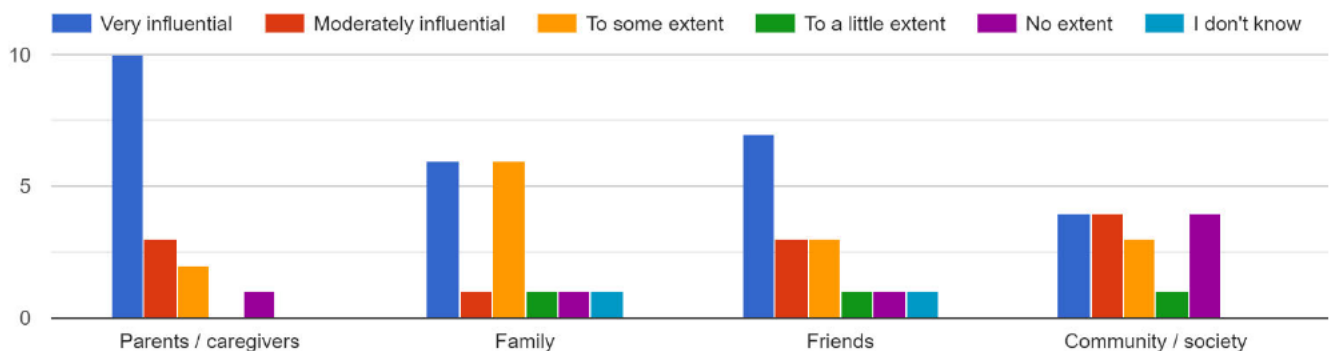


Figure 21: What men/women were taught to do.

Figure 21 demonstrates aspects each of the sexes were taught to do or be whilst growing up. For women, most were taught to be submissive (25%;  $n=5$ ) yet independent (20%;  $n=4$ ) which was an interesting contrast as this question seemed to both defy and correlate to traditional gender perceptions. However, women were also taught to do housework (15%;  $n=3$ ), marrying a man (15%;  $n=3$ ) and respecting others (5%;  $n=1$ ). For men, despite being in slim minority for the questionnaire, they were taught to be strong (5%;  $n=1$ ); have patience with (5%;  $n=1$ ); respect for (5%;  $n=1$ ); and be protective of women (5%;  $n=1$ ).

For the following question, another Likert-scale was presented. This question focuses on different aspects which can influence the respondent's perception of gender. Respondents were asked to rate the severity of each factor. Figures 22-25 demonstrate the different influences and the severity thereof. Each of these influences are discussed further throughout section 5.

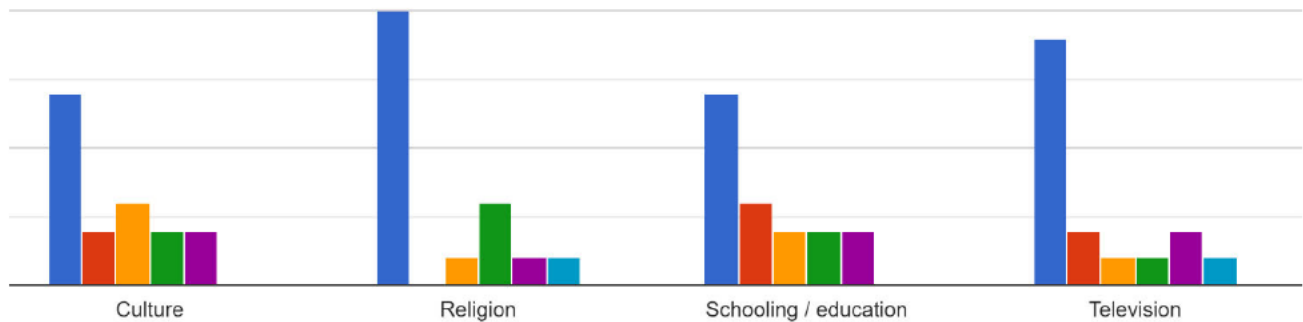
*To what extent do you think have the following influenced your perception of gender?*



*Figure 22: Different influences on gender perceptions.*

As seen in Figure 22, respondents rated their parents and caregivers as being very influential (62.5%;  $n=10$ ); moderately influential (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); to some extent (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) and to no extent (6.25%;  $n=1$ ). This correlated with data retrieved in the literature review, as well as proving Carter's (2014) GSIT theory correct in that the familial unit is most influential on children, including their gender perceptions. This phenomenon could also be seen when viewing the data for familial influences. Respondents indicated family as being very influential (37.5%;  $n=6$ ); moderately influential (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); to some extent (37.5%;  $n=6$ ); little extent (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); no extent (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); and uncertain (6.25%;  $n=1$ ). Friends were viewed as very influential (43.75%;  $n=7$ ); moderately influential (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); to some extent (18.75%;  $n=3$ ); little extent (6.25%;  $n=1$ ); no extent (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) and uncertain (6.25%;  $n=1$ ). A respondent's community or society was also rated as very influential (25%;  $n=4$ ); moderately influential (25%;  $n=4$ ) and to some extent (18.75%;  $n=3$ ). Contrastingly, some respondents indicated that their community or society had little (6.25%;  $n=1$ ) to no influence (25%;  $n=4$ ) on their gender perceptions.

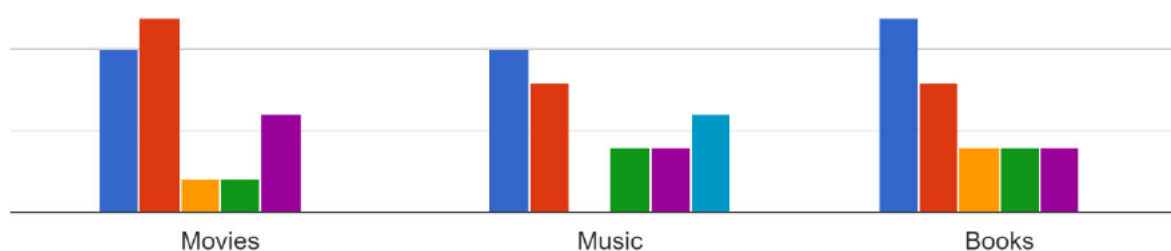
*To what extent do you think have the following influenced your perception of gender?*



*Figure 24: Different influences on gender perceptions.*

Figure 23 demonstrates that culture was rated as very influential (43.75%;  $n=7$ ), moderately influential (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) and to some extent (18.75%;  $n=3$ ) on a student's gender perception. The remaining respondents felt culture had little to no influence (25%;  $n=4$ ). Religion, overall, was rated as very influential (62.5%;  $n=10$ ) for gender perceptions. The remaining respondents argued it held some influence (6.25%;  $n=1$ ), or little to none, including uncertainty (31.25%;  $n=5$ ). Similar to culture and religion, schooling/education and television were deemed either highly influential (62.5%;  $n=10$ ) and (68.75%;  $n=11$ ) respectively or barely influential (37.5%;  $n=6$ ) and (31.25%;  $n=5$ ) respectively. Culture and religion played a seemingly vital role as secondary socialisation processes (Thompson, 2017).

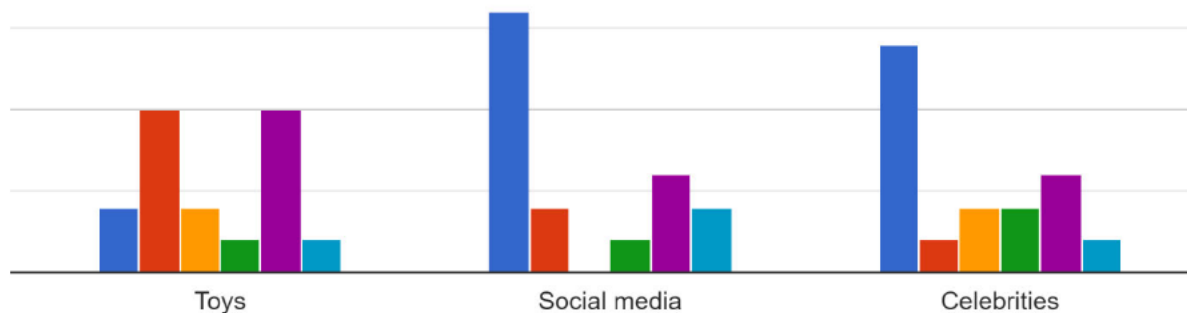
*To what extent do you think have the following influenced your perception of gender?*



*Figure 23: Different influences on gender perceptions.*

Figure 24 illustrates movies music and books. While these influences were rated as very influential (33.3%;  $n=5$ ), (33.3%;  $n=5$ ) and (37.5%;  $n=6$ ) respectively, and moderately influential (37.5%;  $n=6$ ), (25%;  $n=4$ ), and (25%;  $n=4$ ) respectively, the influence levels of these factors were different than the previous four. Movies, music, and books were found as likely to be major influences as the data demonstrated less responses indicating little to no influence (25%;  $n=4$  each).

*To what extent do you think have the following influenced your perception of gender?*



*Figure 25: Different influences on gender perceptions.*

The last three questions of this Likert-scale focused on toys, social media, and celebrities. Figure 25 demonstrates these influences. Toys were rated mostly as moderately influential (31.25%;  $n=5$ ) or no influential extent (31.25%;  $n=5$ ). The findings of this question correlated with information retrieved in the literature review. Social media was rated surprisingly high in terms of influence (50%;  $n=8$ ), which, if viewed from the age-bracket in question, makes sense as most 18-25-year olds are on at least one social media platform. Celebrities were also rated very influential (43.75%;  $n=7$ ), which correlates with the data retrieved on social media, television, movies, music, and books. Populations consuming media tend to idolise those performances and shape their own lives accordingly.

The last set of questions related to influences on gender perceptions were the paragraph-based questions; these were designed to elucidate further expression of respondents' views. Each of these questions were analysed thematically, and the resultant codes illustrated in bar graphs. These graphs and the resultant discussion are demonstrated in section 5.

## 4.2 Validity and Reliability

### 4.2.1 Validity

The validity of a research investigation and its instruments refers to the extent to which the research and instruments measure what they are supposed to measure (Pupuma, 2018; Maree, 2020). This investigation ensures face validity as its measure instrument directly measures what it intended to measure. Content validity is ensured through using questions in different formats, which gauge responses on different topics directly related to factors that influence gender perceptions. Construct validity is ensured as the instrument contains both primary and secondary socialisation factors, in continuum with research in the literature review, to cover all important factors potentially influencing gender perceptions. Concurrent validity is ensured as the instrument is based off other established surveys, in terms of structure, scoring and design.

### 4.2.2 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a measure is repeatable and consistent and whether it can be generalisable (Hunter, 2019; Maree, 2020). For this investigation, reliability focuses on internal consistency, which is a measure of how consistently each item measures the same construct (du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014; Hunter, 2019). To ensure validity and reliability in this investigation, the researcher chose constructs that have been researched in previous studies. Additionally, the use of a survey as measurement instrument follows suit from the instruments used in previous research (Pearson Education, 2010; Men + Gender Equality Policy Project, 2016; Gender Equal NZ, 2018). This keeps the research consistent and repeatable, which enhances this investigation's validity and reliability. Drawing on an accessible population that was representative to the area under study increased the investigation's validity and reliability.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this research investigation is to determine different factors which could influence a student's gender perception and its resulting expression. Additionally, the severity with which each factor is influential was also to be determined, and how these factors influence students' gender perceptions. In this section, the research questions and objectives of this investigation are addressed and answered.

### 5.1 Discussion of Research Questions and Objectives

#### 5.1.1 RQ<sub>M</sub>: What factors influence NMB HEI students' gender perceptions?

The investigation found, through its literature review and detailed questionnaire, several factors that influence NMB HEI students' gender perceptions. These include respondents' parents, television, movies, friends, religion, education, social media, books, music, culture, communities, celebrities, family, and toys. The primary influential factors included Carter's primary socialisation – the parental unit (Carter, 2014). Television, religion, education, and friends were the most influential secondary socialisation factors. Positive influences are indicated throughout the influential factors, which includes promoting a sense of self; women as being strong, assertive, and compassionate; respect for women and sharing similar gender perspectives as friends. Interesting to note, and including the secondary factors as well, is a common theme: respondents identified traditional gender roles and expectations as influential. These roles and expectations were found in every factor determined, bar social media and celebrities. This should come as no surprise, as modern-day social media and the celebrities that use it tend to focus on modern approaches to gender (Ahlgrim, 2020).

#### 5.1.2 RQ<sub>1</sub>: How do gender perceptions influence the expression of NMB HEI students' gender?

RO<sub>1</sub>: To determine how gender perceptions influence the expression of NMB HEI students' gender.

To answer this research question, an in-depth search into the questionnaire's last three questions: *"do you believe biological sex and gender should be separated, or are they the same thing?"*, *"do you believe that your biological sex influences the expression of your gender (and vice versa)?"* and *"how do you see yourself?"* were achieved.

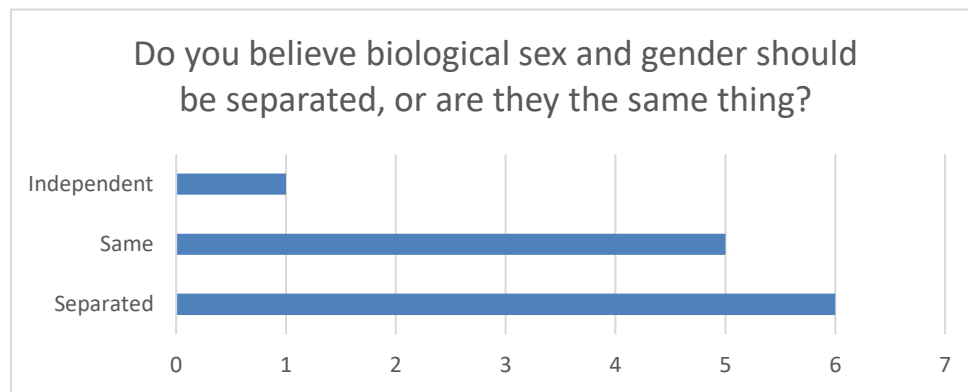


Figure 26: Should sex and gender be separate or not?

Figure 26 illustrates answers to the question posed 'should biological sex and gender be separate or not?' A response indicated that these two concepts are independent (8.3%;  $n=1$ ) and should thus be separate entities. Responses recording separation (50%;  $n=6$ ) and being the same thing (41.7%;  $n=5$ ) were also recorded. Thus, by slight margin, respondents indicated that the concepts of biological sex and gender were indeed different concepts and should be managed as such. This finding correlates with the idea of gender present within the investigation itself.

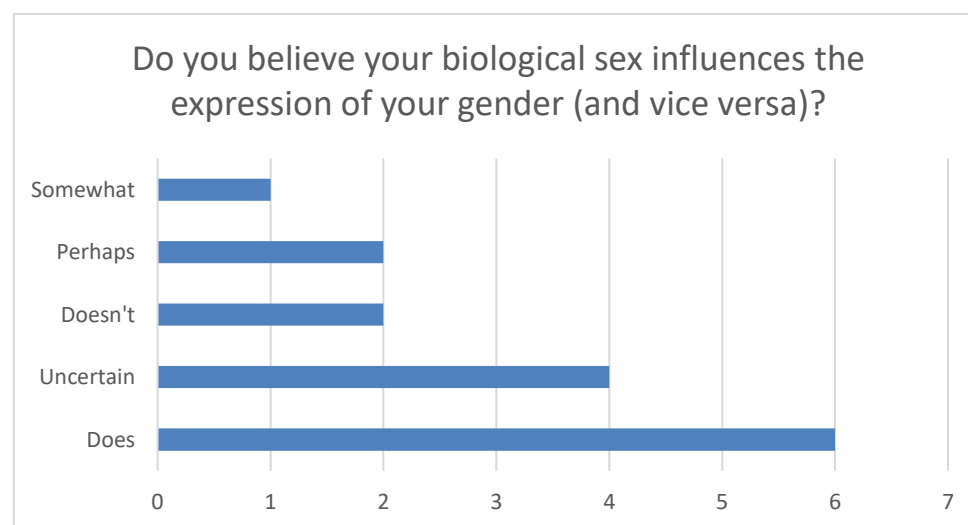


Figure 27: Does biological sex influence gender or not?

The question posed, of which the answers are illustrated in Figure 27, 'does biological sex influence gender?' provided deeper insight into gender perceptions and their resulting expression. Mixed results were gathered, with responses ranging from yes, it is influential (40%;  $n=6$ ) to no it is not influential (13.3%;  $n=2$ ). Several respondents were uncertain (26.6%;  $n=4$ ). Biological sex as influence on gender could be attributed

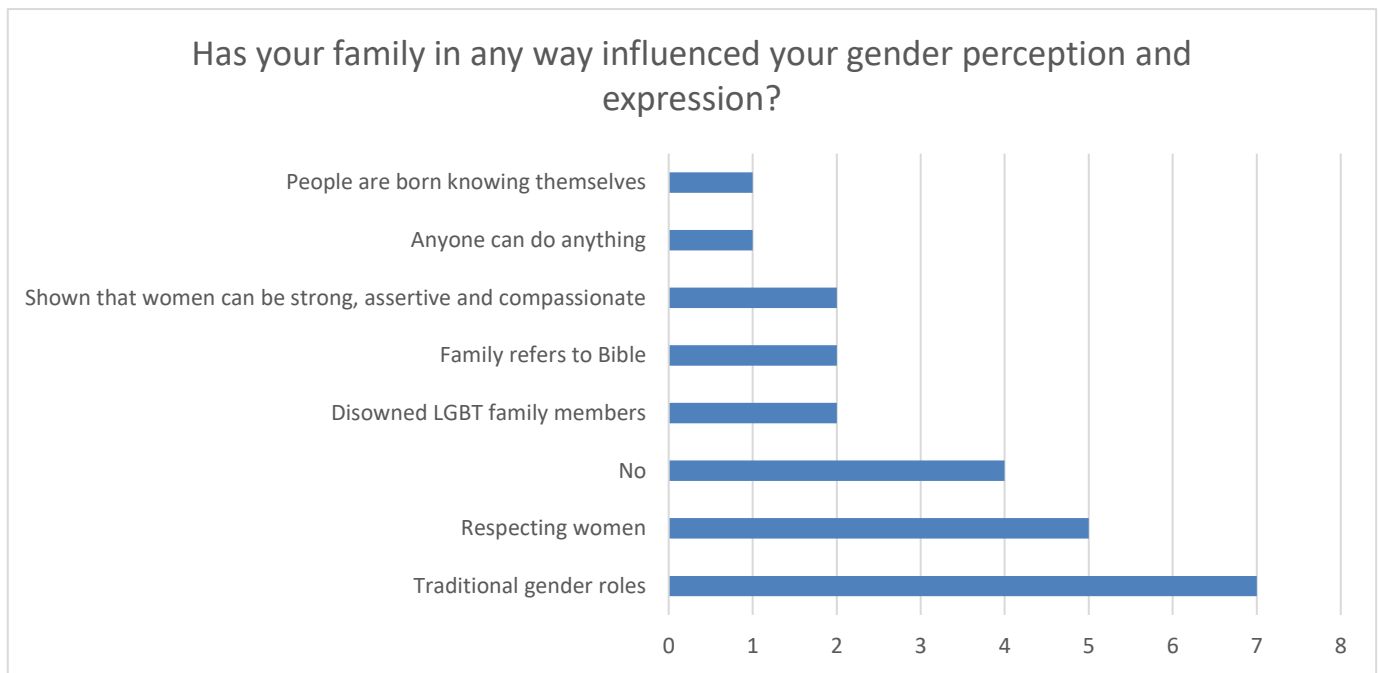
to the gender perceptions and stereotypes attributed to the sexes from birth (Jiang, 2019; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019).

Summarising the above two questions leads the discussion that respondents overall express themselves in relation to their biological sexes and the genders which they present. Combined with an overview of the questionnaire, the investigation found that respondents answered question “*how do you see yourself?*” according to the different demographic questions at the start of the questionnaire. These include referring to biological sex, sexual orientation, and gender. Some respondents describe themselves with respect to their ethnic backgrounds. In terms of gender, some respondents discuss themselves in terms of how they subvert traditional gender roles and stereotypes, while others emphasise what they have been through or what makes them stand out above other individuals. Others indicate being afraid of adventuring into their true selves. Evidence suggests that those who are not heterosexual and/or not cis-gender have struggled to accept themselves before, but that they have persevered and are now happy with themselves. Respondents refer to their religious beliefs in shaping their perception of themselves; however, most respondents’ gender expressions are influenced by their families and other forms of socialisation.

#### 5.1.3 RQ2: How are NMB HEI students’ gender perception and expression influenced by their family?

RO2: To determine how NMB HEI students’ gender perception and expression are influenced by their family.

Figure 28 demonstrates various elements of familial influence, which respondents indicate as being influential to their gender perceptions. The questionnaire found that traditional gender roles (29.2%;  $n=7$ ) were emphasized the most by respondents. This indicates that most of the respondents identify traditional gender roles and its application as influential to their gender perceptions. These roles and perceptions are related to submissiveness and weakness; majority of respondents are female and emphasized that as children, they were taught that they are the less strong ones and need to be protected.



*Figure 28: Familial influences.*

Respondents indicated that men and women were taught to do different things based on gender; this includes certain actions and jobs being for a specific gender only. Women are taught how to carry themselves and even to dress like women. Women are taught that marriage is important and that they must know how to clean to impress their potential in-laws. The findings of this question correlate with Carter's familial construction of gender, and gender is socialised into "dichotomous, traditional gender roles" (Carter, 2014, p. 2).

One respondent indicated that their family and parents have shown them healthy and functional relationships. Another respondent indicated that her mother defied all negative stereotypes of what women are presumed to be, thereby subverting the respondent's own perception of women, warping it away from traditionally patriarchal perceptions. This included teaching her to define her own femininity, and never seeing women as being lesser to men. This is an example of modern parenting identified by Kambouri-Danos and Evans (2019), which reinforces and promotes a more flexible understanding of gender, as opposed to the traditional gender stereotypes.

Traditional gender roles extend to toys as well. Figure 29 demonstrates elements that respondents indicated as aspects of how these media and toys are influential to their gender perceptions. Respondents are taught, in equal measure, that independence (20%;  $n=3$ ) and traditional gender expectations (20%;  $n=3$ ) are most important. Toys

that cater to specific genders (13.3%;  $n=2$ ) such as dolls for girls and cars for boys, are emphasized; respondents stated that these beliefs were instilled in them. Children are taught to act in ways 'normative' to their gender, which creates an ill-perception of what gender is to them. Toys are advertised to market the values the media and society place on each gender (Valiulis et al., 2007; Carter, 2014; Hussain et al., 2015; Kambouri-Danos & Evans, 2019). However, the subversion of these traditional roles (13.3%;  $n=2$ ), as well as gender awareness (13.3%;  $n=2$ ) were also found. These, along with independence, demonstrate a shift away from the more traditional gender roles. Media has made respondents more aware of different genders and their perceptions, while still encouraging independence and being oneself. This leads to a discussion on social media and celebrities.

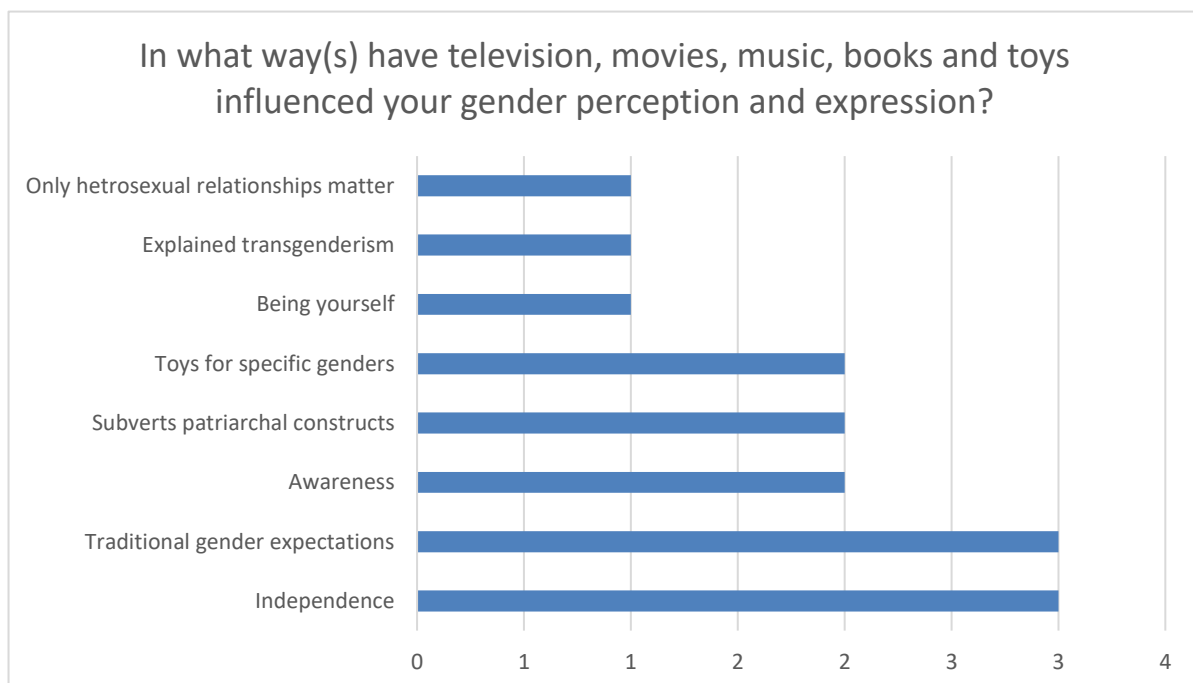


Figure 29: Media and toys as influence.

Figure 30 illustrates two elements of social media and celebrities which influences respondents' gender perceptions. Negative responses (33.3%;  $n=3$ ) were recorded, but respondents found social media and celebrities to be an inspiration (11.1%;  $n=1$ ) and educational (55.6%;  $n=5$ ) in terms of informing them of gender roles, attitudes, stereotypes and perceptions. Social media also allows individuals to express their true happiness. Celebrities and influencers help respondents to understand that non-traditional gender roles, such as men who wear nail polish, is in fact, normal. This correlates with research conducted by Ibáñez-Cubillas et al. (2017), which demonstrates that online components like social media and networks present

themselves as viable elements of the secondary socialisation process. A respondent also indicated specific artists like Alanis Morissette, Bowie, Prince, Years and Years, and Alicia Keys who had been instrumental in promoting the environmental, politics and the belief that femininity was natural and could be self-defined. Such a response was deemed important for this investigation as it viewed celebrities as influential factors while providing respondents with celebrities they can relate to. These celebrities and artists in turn become positive role models for the youth.

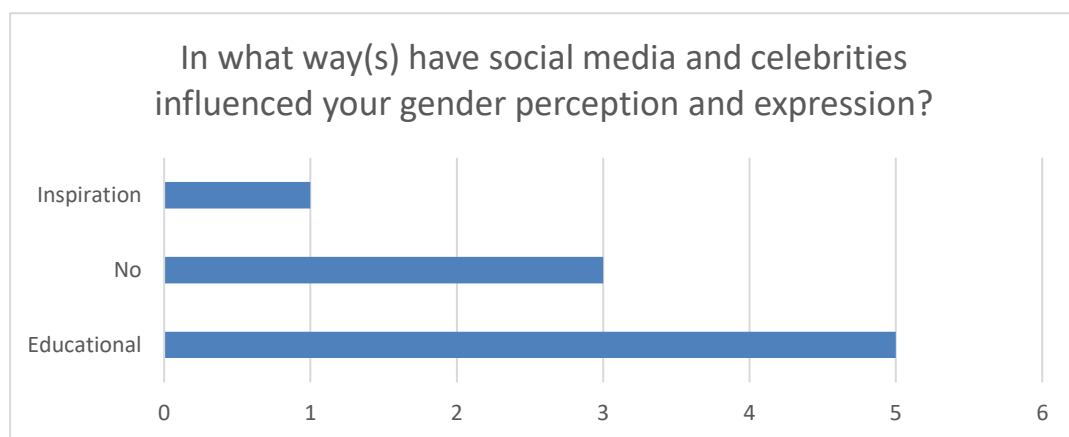


Figure 31: Social media/celebrities influences.

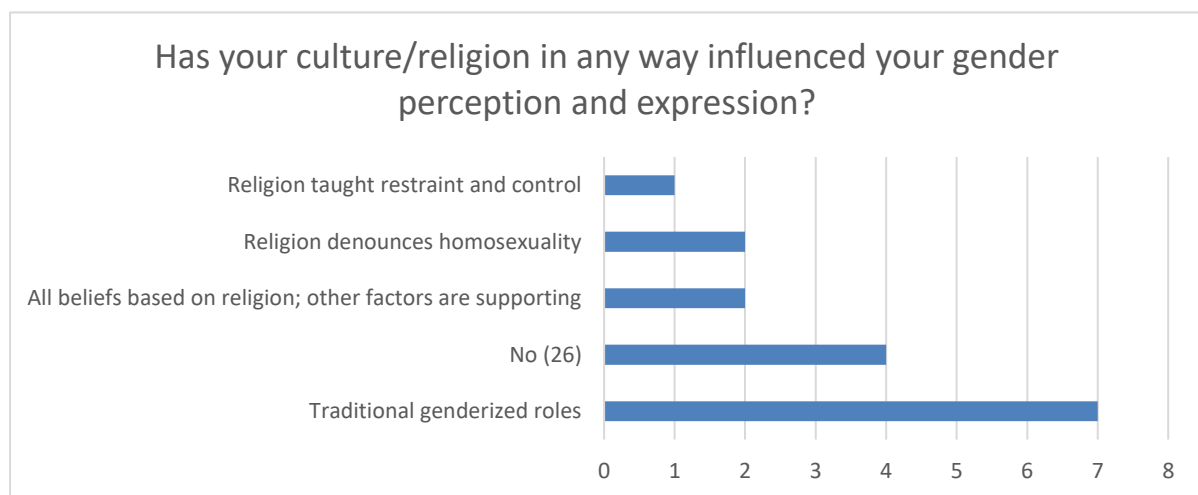


Figure 30: Cultural/religious influences.

Figure 31 illustrates the different elements that respondents have hypothesized as being attributed to religious or cultural influences on their gender perceptions. Despite respondents responding with no (26.67%;  $n=4$ ) to the question, consensus was achieved: traditional gender roles (46.67%;  $n=7$ ), enforced upon individuals by their religion or culture, played a big influence on their gender perceptions. Religion is influential to the point where it pushes traditional gender roles onto cultures and

families, with women having to submit to and obey men, view men as superior and hold them responsible for protecting women. Respondents indicated disagreeing with these practices, inferring that they used their own views to subvert what they have been taught traditionally. Carter's (2014) socialisation processes and memberships include religion and culture. Driven by traditional values and paradigms, these memberships play a vital role in the development and maintenance of traditional gender roles. Religion also has positive influences; a respondent indicated that their religion was the main source of their beliefs. Influences such as family and friends were deemed additional knowledge and human experience.

Religion was explained as the tutor of restraint and control; being held responsible for denouncing homosexuality as well (6.67%;  $n=1$ ). Two respondents indicated that their families held negative views and stereotypes of homosexual individuals, including those from their own family. One respondent explained that a family member was disowned because she came out as a lesbian. Another respondent explained that religion makes individuals see homosexuality as being wrong, and culture follows suit by shunning homosexual individuals and seeing them as demon-possessed.

This links back to the traditional gender roles discussed, and the findings for this question correlate with Carter's (2014) theory. Elements of the primary socialisation process are demonstrated by respondents in how they are taught gender roles from a young age, especially from observing their family's cultures and values. Children also learn about these gendered expectations when they observe their families 'doing' gender, whereby each role has some form of gendered meaning attached to it (Carter, 2014). Children thus learn what it means to be their gender and they use this information to regulate their behaviour to match the context around them. Gender is therefore maintained in practice in these primary socialisation processes.

#### 5.1.4 RQ3: How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their friends?

RO3: To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their friends.

Friends were described as not influential (47%;  $n=8$ ) by nearly half of the respondents. Figure 32 demonstrates this, as well as elements other respondents identified of friends being influential to their gender perceptions. These respondents went into

detail on their views of friends being influential. This includes friends helping them overcome insecurities (5.9%;  $n=1$ ) and sharing similar perspectives on gender and its fluidity (5.9%;  $n=1$ ). A response indicated that bullying took place in school; and it took university friends with similar beliefs on gender and the fluidity thereof before respondents could identify with peers their own age. Positively, this combatted insecurities they once had because of the bullying. Friends also showed respondents how genders act and perceive the world (5.9%;  $n=1$ ), and why these friends are a particular gender (5.9%;  $n=1$ ). A respondent explained how confused they were about gender until a male friend who enjoys the 'typical' female things of make-up, dressing up and hair, explained why he liked these things. Another respondent indicated that one of their male friends identified as female instead, sitting with the girls at school instead of with the boys. Carter's theory (2014) makes little reference to secondary socialisation processes, of which friends form part. However, authors such like Foote (2000) and Aransiola (2016) explain that friends and extra-familial groups are just as influential in acquiring norms and gender perceptions.

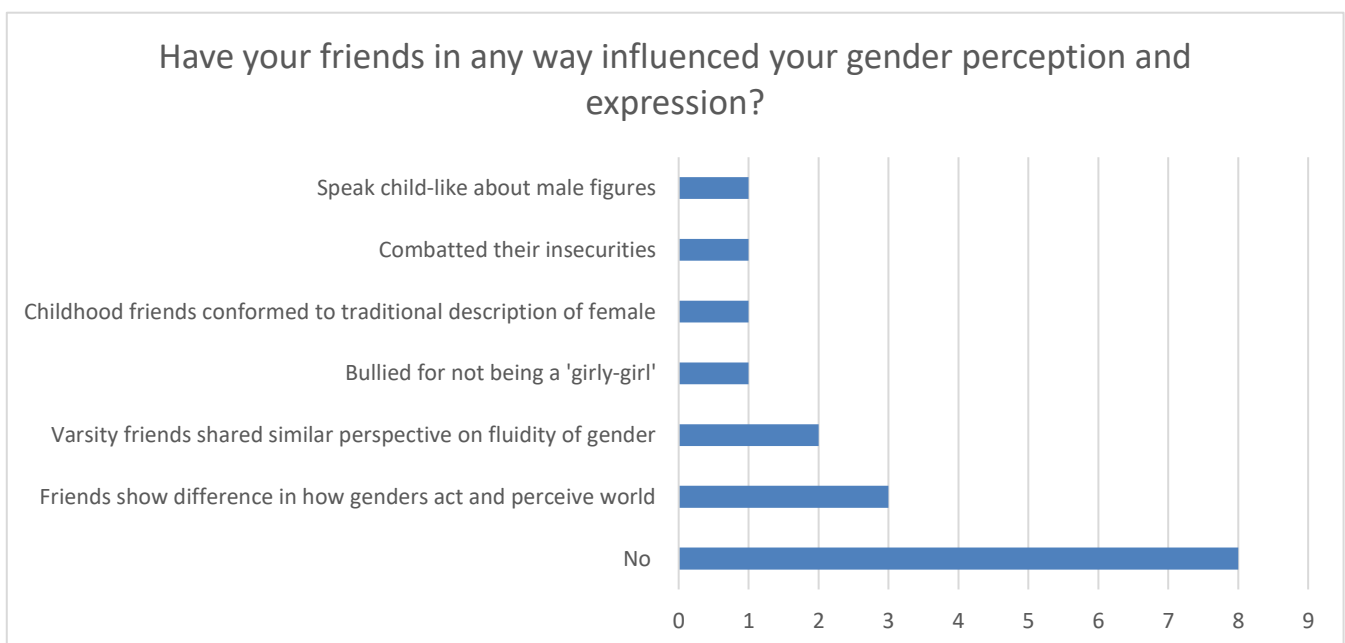


Figure 32: Friends as influence.

#### 5.1.5 RQ4: How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their education?

RO4: To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their education.

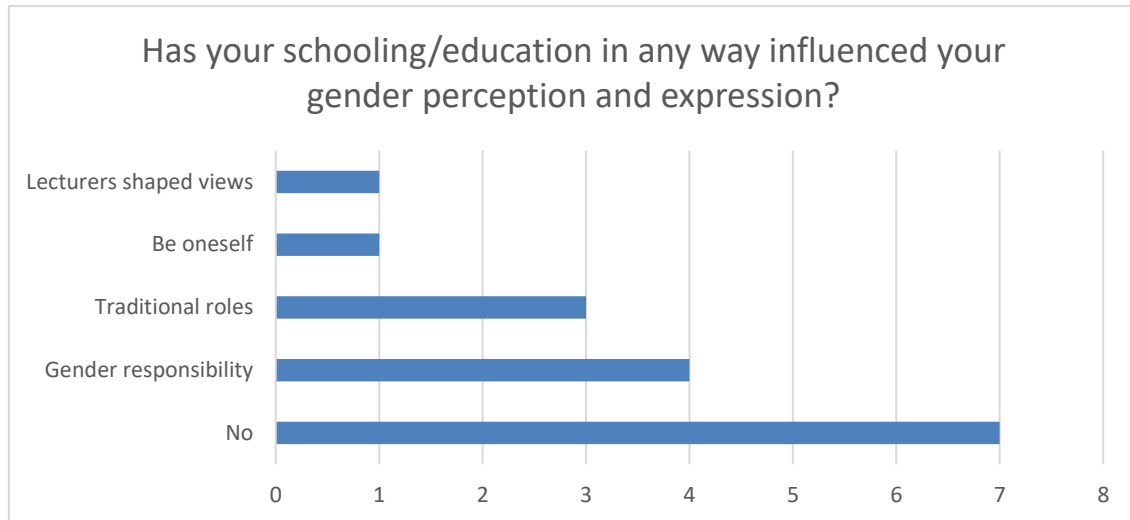


Figure 33: Schooling/educational influence on gender.

Figure 33 illustrates elements that fall under schooling or educational influences on gender perceptions. Half of the respondents recorded negative answers (50%;  $n=8$ ) to this question, but one explained how their teachers and lecturers shaped their views (6.25%;  $n=1$ ). Lecturers provide a neutral, equal lens to view how patriarchal values influence female identity and representation. Another respondent learnt to be themselves in these institutions (6.25;  $n=1$ ). Respondents were also taught gender responsibility (25%;  $n=4$ ), and traditional gender roles (18.75%;  $n=3$ ). In terms of traditional roles, responsibilities included 'genderised' work roles in the classrooms, with boys being encouraged to help with physical work such as moving tables and chairs around; girls were encouraged to tidy up classrooms. A respondent who attended a Montessori primary school was encouraged about gender, age, race, and sexual equalities. Interpreting these results has reached a conclusion that concurs with research by Foote (2000) and Aransiola (2016); namely that secondary socialisation processes such as friends and schools are just as influential when considering the acquisition of gender norms and social qualities.

### 5.1.6 RQ5: How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their community?

RO5: To determine how NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression are influenced by their community.

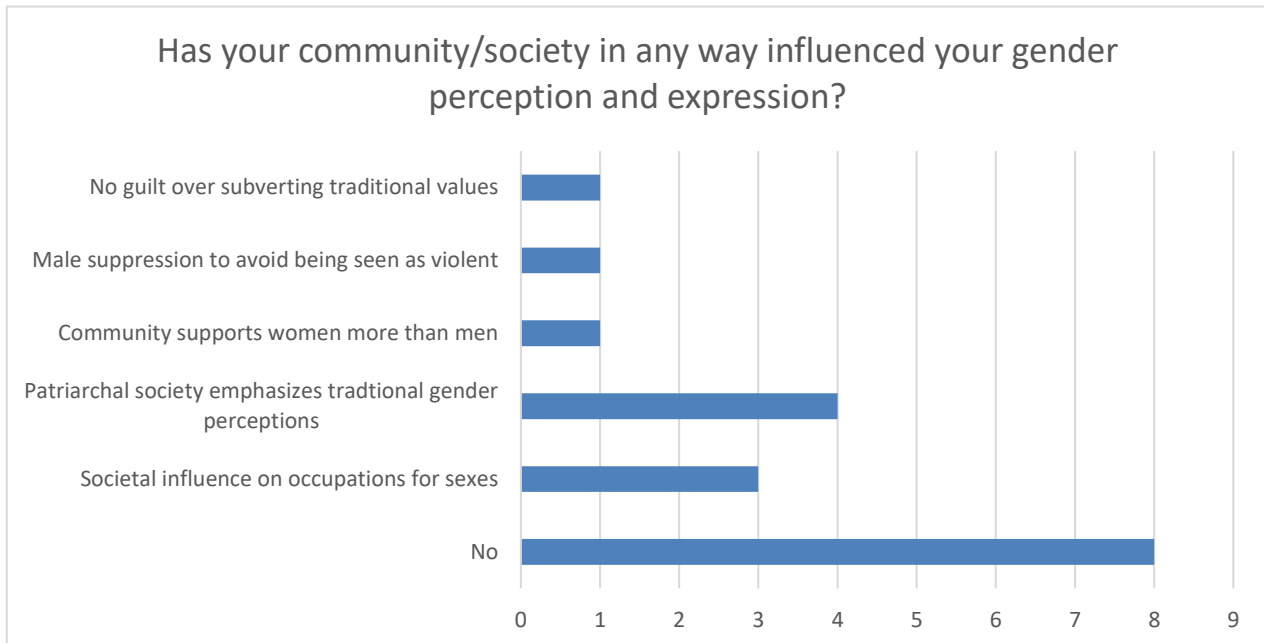


Figure 34: Community/societal influence.

For this question, the consensus was that the respondent's community did not affect their gender perceptions (44.4%;  $n=8$ ), as seen in Figure 34. Traditional gender roles were deemed influential (22.2%;  $n=4$ ); these were enforced by a patriarchal society. Such societies have shown respondents the 'prototypical woman' which the patriarchy desires: women are to "be passive, quiet and the physical embodiment of feminine beauty" (R008). Select respondents further explained information on societal influence in terms of occupations for the sexes (16.6%;  $n=3$ ). In these communities, certain jobs are for men only and others for women only. A respondent noted this, explaining that their community played a big role in the career-field the respondent chose. Boys doing physical work has already been noted in the school classrooms; this is also demonstrated in the communities and societies respondents reside in. These communities and societies portray men as the stronger ones, more capable of physically demanding jobs, the protectorates and those in charge of problem resolution. In contrast, one respondent wrote that in their society, their community tended to favour women over men, with men suppressing their frustration to avoid negative stigmas and attitudes being attached to them.

According to Carter (2014), an individual's social identity represents the group memberships and the individual's participation in them. Categories of memberships includes one's community/society. These socialisation memberships influenced their meanings and provided ideas for behaviour that they deem appropriate (Stets, 2006; Carter, 2014).

5.1.7 RQ6: How are the concepts of gender, gender perception, gender expression and gender variance defined in theory?

RO6: To determine how the concepts of gender, gender perception, gender expression and gender variance are theoretically defined.

Gender is defined as the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a particular culture associated with a person's biological sex (APA, 2012). Gender perception is the social and cultural views of males and females (IGI Global, 2020). Gender expression is an individual's presentation — including physical appearance, clothing choice and accessories — and behaviour that communicated aspects of gender or gender role. Gender expression could or could not conform to a person's gender identity (APA, 2015). Gender variance is defined as an umbrella term used to describe gender identity, expression, or behaviour that fell outside of culturally defined norms associated with a specific gender (Simons et al., 2014).

5.1.8 RQ7: Are there negative implications on NMB HEI students, resulting from factors that influence their gender perception and expression?

RO7: To determine if there are negative implications on NMB HEI students, which result from factors that influence their gender perception and expression.

Figure 35 demonstrates questions referring to bullying, teasing and harassment in respondents' schools or neighbourhoods. Respondents indicated that there was bullying or harassment in schools or the neighbourhood they grew up in (21.4%;  $n=3$ ), while partly (35.7%;  $n=5$ ) and no (42.9%;  $n=6$ ) were recorded as well. This was in relation to their gender or someone else's gender perceptions. Respondents indicated that they themselves were bullied (37.5%;  $n=6$ ) and not bullied (62.5%;  $n=10$ ) because of their gender or someone else's gender perceptions.

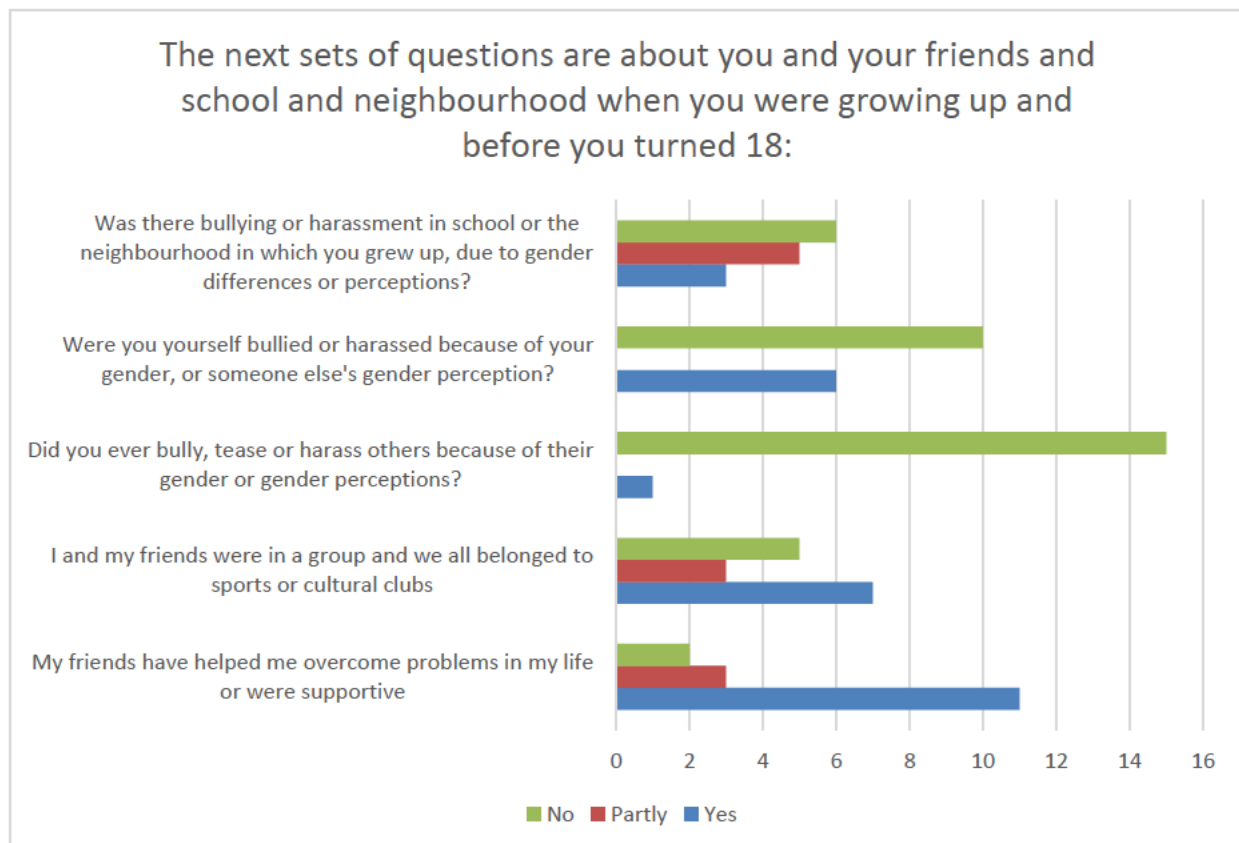


Figure 35: Negative implications.

A respondent indicated that they bullied, teased or harassed someone (6.25%;  $n=1$ ), while most respondents (93.75%;  $n=15$ ) indicated that they did not bully, tease or harass someone because of their gender or gender perceptions. Respondents indicated they were involved with sports or cultural groups (44.7%;  $n=7$ ); were partly involved (20%;  $n=3$ ); and were not involved (33.3%;  $n=5$ ). In response to the question if their friends were supportive and helped them overcome problems in their life, responses for yes (68.75%;  $n=11$ ), partly (18.75%;  $n=3$ ) and no (12.5%;  $n=2$ ) were recorded. Bullying was generally the result of non-subscriptive not subscribing to the traditionally patriarchal gender roles, expectations, and perceptions. These findings are in accordance with studies by Frieden and Laffin (2019) and Jiang (2019), which found that children with any gender variance of any form are more likely to suffer from school violence. Many respondents did not indicate if the harassment and bullying they faced in school had later emotional or consequential effects on their gender perceptions and expressions. One respondent, however, indicated insecurities resulting from the bullying. These insecurities disappeared with finding peers they could relate to in terms of similar understandings of gender and the fluidity of gender.

## 5.2 Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

Much of the research presented in this investigation is preliminary. Using similar populations to the one in question, there are directions in which this work could be extended. More research must be done on influential factors other than parents, media, and religion. This will develop a comprehensive list of factors determined as influential to a student's gender perceptions. Additionally, the limitations on geographical locations imposed limited the number of respondents. Expanding the location to the entire Eastern Cape will provide more responses and the investigation could be deemed generalisable. This investigation is conducted on a set age group for specific purposes. However, these purposes do not encompass all students, as many students are above the age of 25. Including older students must be considered for future research. The use of survey platforms which allows data-tracking lets the researcher determine platforms which garner more respondents. The data-collection process would then be shifted to these platforms, to increase the respondent pool and make results more generalisable.

## 5.3 Ethical Considerations

Table 7 summarises the ethical considerations pertaining to this investigation.

*Table 7: Ethical considerations.*

| <b>Consideration</b>   | <b>Explanation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Confidentiality</i> | No sign-in to Google necessary; respondents asked to provide alias. Online questionnaire chosen to protect respondent confidentiality. Google Forms was chosen as it is a well-known platform, which assists in demonstrating validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of the investigation. |
| <i>Privacy</i>         | The research process is conducted on one device owned and operated by the researcher; device is passcode protected. All documents stemming from data collection and analysis are passcode protected.                                                                                           |
| <i>Consent</i>         | Respondents provided with information sheet and compulsory consent form; respondents cannot complete questionnaire without completing it.                                                                                                                                                      |

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Withdrawal</i> | Respondents able to withdraw at any time without their data being recorded. If participation was no longer wanted, the alias served as identifier without examination of the data. |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### 5.4 Limitations

Table 8 summarises the limitations pertaining to this investigation.

*Table 8: Limitations.*

| <b><i>Limitation</i></b>       | <b><i>Explanation</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Sample size</i>             | Limited in size. Despite meeting minimum requirement, 16 responses are not enough to warrant generalisation.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Tracking</i>                | Google Forms has no tracking service to determine from which platform the questionnaire was accessed. Therefore, tracking was not monitored, and the researcher cannot state which platform was most successful in garnering responses.                                                          |
| <i>Sensitivity and privacy</i> | Topic could be too sensitive for potential respondents, discouraging them from partaking. Face-to-face interviews may have provided opportunity for respondents to disclose more information, which could have been beneficial for investigation.                                                |
| <i>Age range</i>               | Research was conducted on 18-25 year-olds, but many students are older than 25 and were thus excluded from partaking.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <i>Location</i>                | The location was set to HEIs in NMB. Data retrieved from other locations may not reflect the findings of data retrieved in this region. The validity of data sourced from other regions cannot be guaranteed if based off this investigation.                                                    |
| <i>Survey fatigue</i>          | Due to the length of the questionnaire, it is likely that some respondents suffered from survey-taking fatigue. This was evident in the research gathered, certain respondents left large portions of the last section out. Google Forms does not have the capability to monitor drop-out rates. |

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## 7 ANNEXURES

### 7.1 Annexure A: Questionnaire

# Gender Perceptions of Higher Education Institution Students in Nelson Mandela Bay Survey

Dear Nelson Mandela Bay higher education institution student,

My name is Jessica Lee-Anne Smit and I am a student at The IIE's Varsity College – Port Elizabeth. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Dr Carlien Jooste about gender perceptions of students from higher education institutions in Nelson Mandela Bay. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding, education, and awareness of factors that influence students' gender perceptions and the resulting expression of one's gender.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study because your opinion is of importance to me, and your feedback will directly impact the course of my investigation. You will help create better understanding, education, and awareness of factors that influence students' gender perceptions and the resulting gender expression.

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. Nobody else, including anybody at The IIE's Varsity College – Port Elizabeth, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognizable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like you to complete my survey on gender perceptions, which is comprised of this questionnaire. It will not take more than 15 minutes of your time. You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your gender perceptions.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate, please do not hesitate to me or my supervisor.

My contact details are as follows:

Jessica Lee-Anne Smit

Email: [REDACTED]

---

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Dr Carlien Jooste

Email: [REDACTED]

Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete the consent form below.

1. Do you give your consent for participation in the Gender Perceptions of Higher Education Institution Students in Nelson Mandela Bay Survey?

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ I agree to be interviewed for this research investigation, in the form of this online survey.
- ☐ My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- ☐ My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- ☐ I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- ☐ I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

**Gender Perceptions of Higher  
Education Institution Students Survey -  
Sociodemographic Information**

This section asks biographical information, such as age, geographical location, institution of study, and gender.

2. Please provide a name (an alias) that you are comfortable with the researcher knowing.

\* Not your real name \* It will not be used in research summaries; it will merely be used as a reference point for the analysis of your information, in order for the researcher to put a name to the information.

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3. What is your age?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19
- ☐ 20
- ☐ 21
- ☐ 22
- ☐ 23
- ☐ 24
- ☐ 25
- ☐ Prefer not to say

4. What is your ethnic background?

*Please include your race, culture and home language.*

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5. What area of Nelson Mandela Bay do you reside in? Please state the city and the suburb.

*Nelson Mandela Bay is a region of the Eastern Cape which encompasses the cities of Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Despatch, Colchester and their surrounding rural areas.*

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6. Are you a student at any of the higher education institutions in the Nelson Mandela Bay area?

An institution is described as any public or private university or college that falls within the Nelson Mandela Bay area.

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Prefer not to say

7. What year are you currently completing?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 1st  
☐ 2nd  
☐ 3rd  
☐ 4th  
☐ Honours  
☐ Masters  
☐ Other  
☐ Prefer not to say

8. What type of high school did you attend?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Public mixed-gender  
☐ Private mixed-gender  
☐ Public single-gender  
☐ Private single-gender  
☐ Home-schooled  
☐ Prefer not to say

## 9. What is your gender?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Cis-gender - a person whose gender identity and expression aligns with their biological sex
- ☐ Gender non-conforming - a person who does not fully conform to societal standards and definitions of their gender
- ☐ Genderqueer - a person whose gender identity does not align with the binary (man or woman) understanding of gender, someone who isn't fully a man or a woman
- ☐ Genderfluid - a person whose gender identity moves between different genders
- ☐ Transgender - a term describing a person whose gender identity and expression do not align with their biological sex
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe
- ☐ Prefer not to say

## 10. What is your biological sex?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say

## 11. What is your sexual orientation?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Heterosexual
- ☐ Homosexual
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Asexual
- ☐ Pansexual
- ☐ Queer
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe
- ☐ Prefer not to say

**Gender Perceptions of  
Higher Education Institution  
Students Survey - Childhood  
Experiences**

These questions are centred around your childhood and family whilst growing up. They will ask about your life, and the relationships you've had/have with family and friends

**Family Life**

12. Who took care of you when you were growing up?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Only my mother
- ☐ Only my father
- ☐ Both parents
- ☐ A parent and a step parent
- ☐ A parent and another / other relative(s)
- ☐ Sibling(s)
- ☐ 2 moms or 2 dads
- ☐ Grandmother and/or grandfather
- ☐ Aunt and/or uncle
- ☐ Another relative
- ☐ Prefer not to say

13. What members of your family did/do you live with?

Immediate family includes your parents, grandparents and siblings; any family member who you lived with, or who lives in your parents house with you. Please check all that apply to you.

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Father
- ☐ Mother
- ☐ Brother(s)
- ☐ Sister(s)
- ☐ Stepfather
- ☐ Stepmother
- ☐ Step-siblings
- ☐ Grandfather
- ☐ Grandmother
- ☐ Aunt
- ☐ Uncle
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

14. If you responded "Other" to the previous question, please state what family members you lived with.

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15. What is the highest level of schooling that whoever took care of you completed?

Check answers that apply to you.

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ No schooling
- ☐ Primary school (one caregiver only)
- ☐ Primary school (both caregivers)
- ☐ High school (one caregiver only)
- ☐ High school (both caregivers)
- ☐ University - undergraduate (one caregiver only)
- ☐ University - undergraduate (both caregivers)
- ☐ University - postgraduate (one caregiver only)
- ☐ University - postgraduate (both caregivers)
- ☐ Prefer not to say

#### Your Childhood Experiences

16. When you were a child or teenager, who in the home did the following:

*Check all that apply.*

|                                                   | Mother                   | Father                   | Both<br>parents          | Sibling                  | Another<br>caregiver<br>(grandparents<br>etc.) | No one                   | I did so<br>myself       |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Prepared food                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cleaned the house                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Took care of gardening or any outside maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Washed clothes                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cleaned the bathroom                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Took care of the children                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Provided an income                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Helped children with homework                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17. The next sets of questions are about you and your friends and school and neighbourhood when you were growing up and before you turned 18:

*Mark only one oval per row.*

|                                                                                                                                 | Yes                   | Partly                | No                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Was there bullying or harassment in school or the neighbourhood in which you grew up, due to gender differences or perceptions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Were you yourself bullied or harassed because of your gender, or someone else's gender perception?                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Did you ever bully, tease or harass others because of their gender or gender perceptions?                                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I and my friends were in a group and we all belonged to sports or cultural clubs                                                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| My friends have helped me overcome problems in my life or were supportive                                                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Gender Perceptions of Higher Education Institution Students Survey - Gender Roles, Attitudes, Perceptions and Stereotypes**

This section will ask you about your views regarding various issues in society. I am interested in your views regarding these statements. Please feel free any way you like – there are no right or wrong answers

## 18. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*Mark only one oval per row.*

|                                                               | Strongly<br>agree     | Agree                 | Slightly<br>agree     | Neutral               | Slightly<br>disagree  | Disagree              | Strongly<br>disagree  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Females can play rough sports like rugby                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Females can ask males out on dates                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Males can play netball                                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Males can play with dolls and toy kitchenware like females do | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Females can play with cars and action figures like males do   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Blue is a boys colour, pink is for girls                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Males are better leaders than females                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| When women work, they are taking jobs away from men           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Females are just as smart/intelligent as males                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Females should have the same freedom as males                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

|                                                                        |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Families should encourage males to attend university more than females | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Females are allowed to be the breadwinners for their families          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Raising children is the responsibility of both parents                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Females should be allowed to work in fields dominated by males         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Males should be allowed to work in fields dominated by females         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Males are strong and do all the work                                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Any feminine-acting male is gay                                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Any masculine-acting female is a lesbian                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

### Gender Roles, Attitudes, Perceptions and Stereotypes - fill in the blanks

In order to explore your own stereotypes, complete the following sentences with the first thought that comes to mind. Don't censor yourself.

19. Women tend to be better than men at

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20. Men tend to be better than women at

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21. As a man/woman, I was always taught to

Begin your sentence with "as a man, I was always taught to" or "as a woman, I was always taught to"

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Gender Perceptions of  
Higher Education  
Institution Students Survey  
- Different Influences on  
Gender Perception

This section will ask you about different gender perceptions and how these might influence you. I am interested in your views regarding these statements. Please feel free any way you like – there are no right or wrong answers

22. To what extent do you think have the following influenced your perception of gender?

*Mark only one oval per row.*

|                       | Very influential      | Moderately influential | To some extent        | To a little extent    | No extent             | I don't know          |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Parents / caregivers  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Family                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Friends               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Community / society   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Culture               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Religion              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Schooling / education | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Television            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Movies                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Music                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Books                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Toys                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Social media          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Celebrities           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**I'd like your elaboration on the following questions**

In order to explore your own views, answer the following questions with as much detail as possible. Don't censor yourself.

23. Has your family in any way influenced your gender perception and expression? If yes, please explain.

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24. Have your friends in any way influenced your gender perception and expression? If yes, please explain.

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25. Has your society/community in any way influenced your gender perception and expression? If yes, please explain.

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26. Has your culture or religion in any way influenced your gender perception and expression? If yes, please explain.

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27. Has your schooling or education in any way influenced your gender perception and expression? If yes, please explain.

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28. In what way(s) have television, movies, music, books, and toys influenced your gender perception and expression?

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29. In what way(s) have social media and celebrities influenced your gender perception and expression?

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**The final three questions focus on your interpretation of gender and sex**  
Please provide as much explanation as possible

30. Do you believe biological sex and gender should be separated, or are they the same thing? Why / why not?

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31. Do you believe your biological sex influences the expression of your gender (and vice versa)? Why/ why not?

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32. Finally, how do you see yourself?

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Gender Perceptions of Higher  
Education Institution Students  
Survey - Thank you

Thank you for your participation in the Gender  
Perceptions of Higher Education Institution Students in  
Nelson Mandela Bay Survey!

Please click "Submit" to send in your response.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

7.2 Annexure B: Ethics clearance letter

**KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**DEBBIE WINTER**  
 T: (031) 878 2000  
 F: (031) 878 2000

**WITWATERSRAND**  
 T: (011) 888 5800  
 F: (011) 888 5800

**POTCHEFSTROOM**  
 T: (018) 500 8870  
 F: (018) 500 8870

**GAUTENG**  
**LAUREN**  
 T: (011) 704 8800  
 F: (011) 704 8800

**WITWATERSRAND**  
 T: (011) 558 4800  
 F: (011) 558 4800

**POTCHEFSTROOM**  
 T: (018) 500 8800  
 F: (018) 500 8800

**WITWATERSRAND**  
**DAVE VORST**  
 T: (011) 888 5800  
 F: (011) 888 5800

**NORTH CAPE**  
**PORT ELIZABETH**  
 T: (041) 888 4800  
 F: (041) 888 4800

21 July 2020

Student name: Jessica Smit

Student number: 18049149

Campus: IIE Varsity College Port Elizabeth

Re: Approval of Honours Psychology Proposal and Ethics Clearance**HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER**

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

The campus research panel wishes you all the best with your research.



Dr. Carlien Jooste  
Supervisor



Sasha Boucher  
Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC)

**POTCHEFSTROOM**  
 1st Floor  
 Montecasale Park Plaza  
 1st Floor  
 Potchefstroom  
 Potchefstroom 0648  
 P.O. Box 8700  
 0648

T: (041) 888 4800  
 F: (041) 888 4800  
 E: [varsity@iiedu.ac.za](mailto:varsity@iiedu.ac.za)  
[www.varsitycollege.ac.za](http://www.varsitycollege.ac.za)



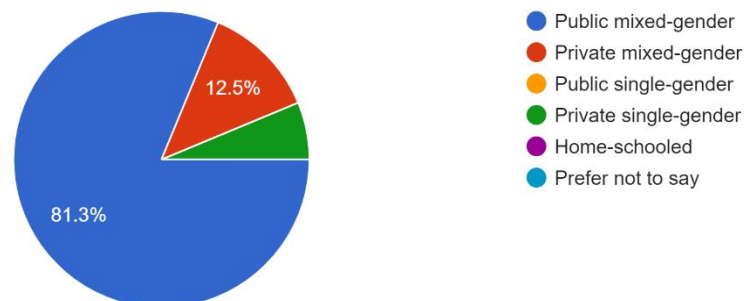
Director: Dr. Douglas (IEE), JGA Oosth (Offen-Executive), MD Afsaat (Offen-Executive), T.J. Oosth (Offen-Executive) Designing Director: T.M. Dikolen

Varsity College is an educational brand of The Independent Institute of Education (Pty) Ltd which is registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training as a private higher education institution under the Higher Education Act, 1997 (reg. no. 20077-HE07/002). Company registration number: 18897304754/07.

### 7.3 Annexure C: Type of high school attended

What type of high school did you attend?

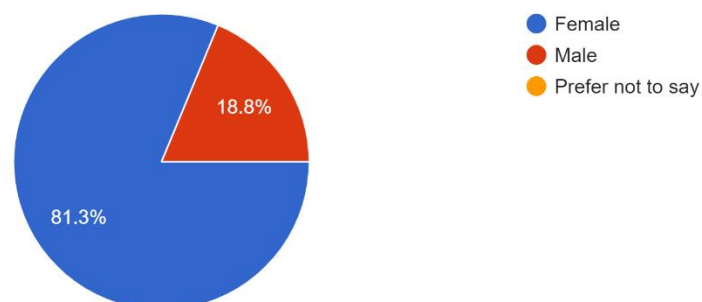
16 responses



### 7.4 Annexure D: Biological sex

What is your biological sex?

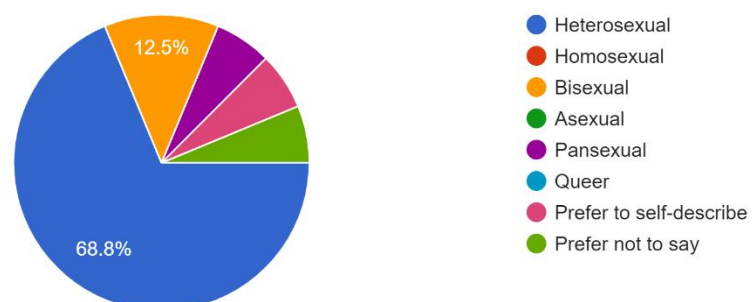
16 responses



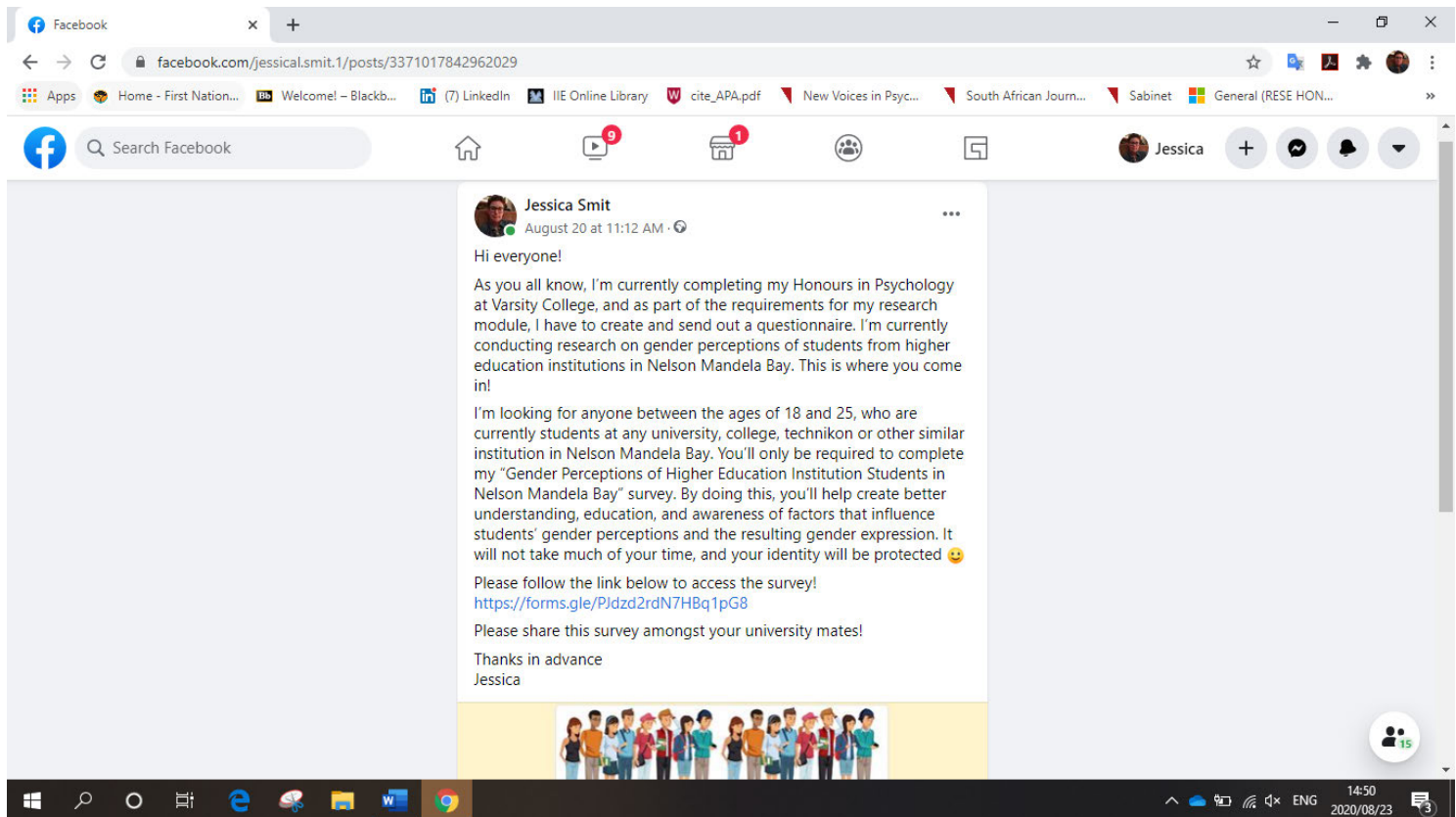
### 7.5 Annexure E: Sexual orientation

What is your sexual orientation?

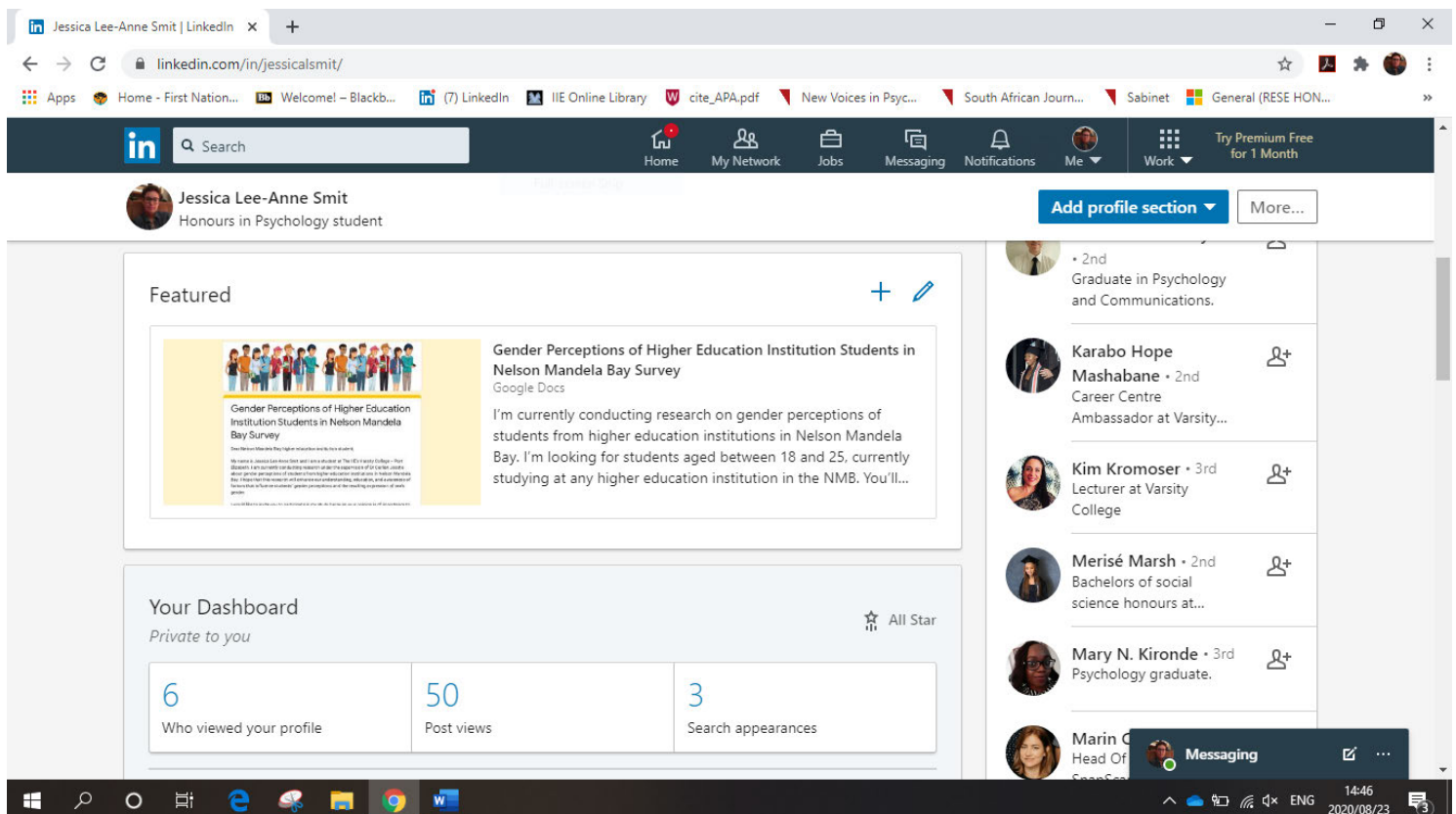
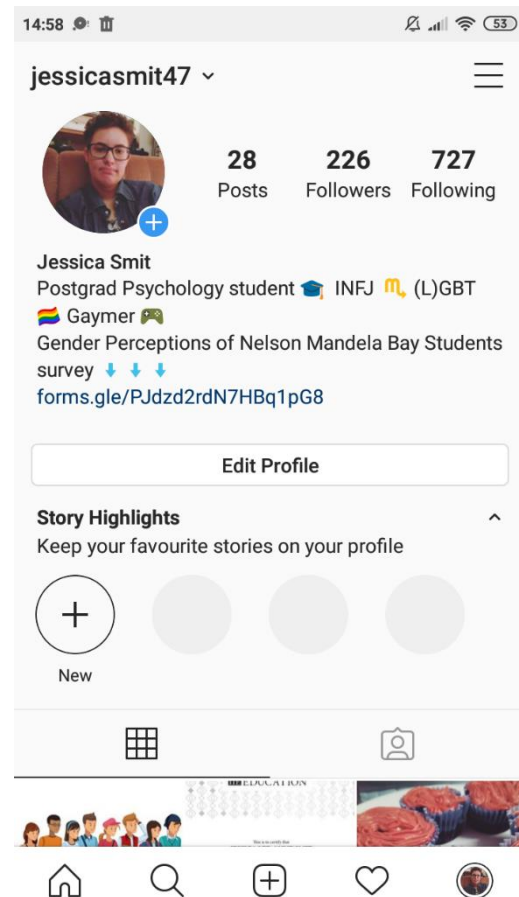
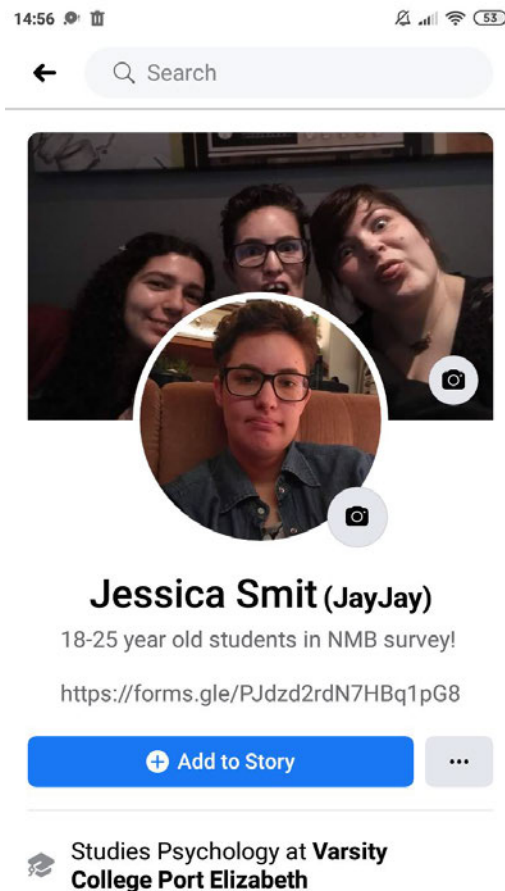
16 responses

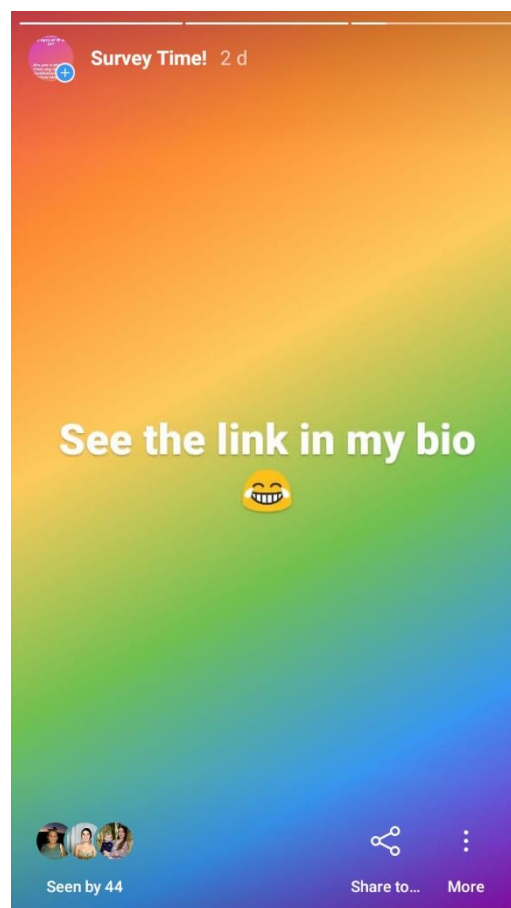
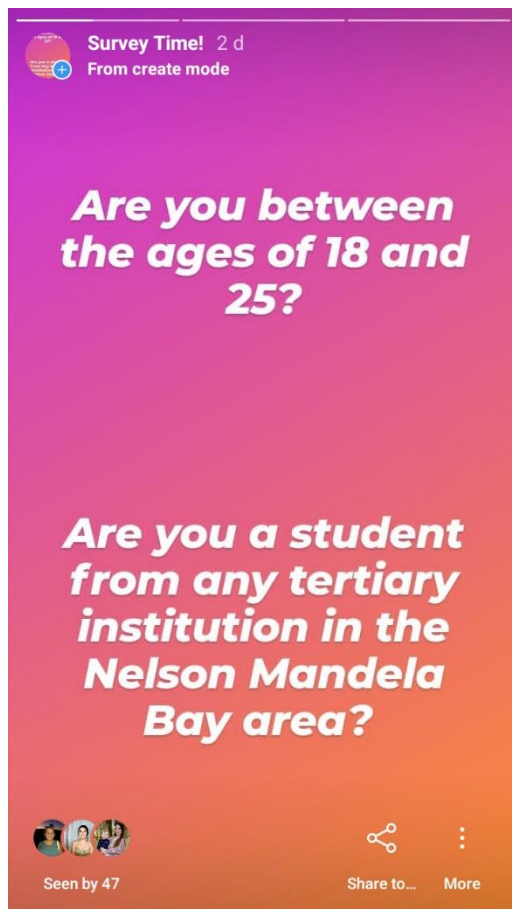


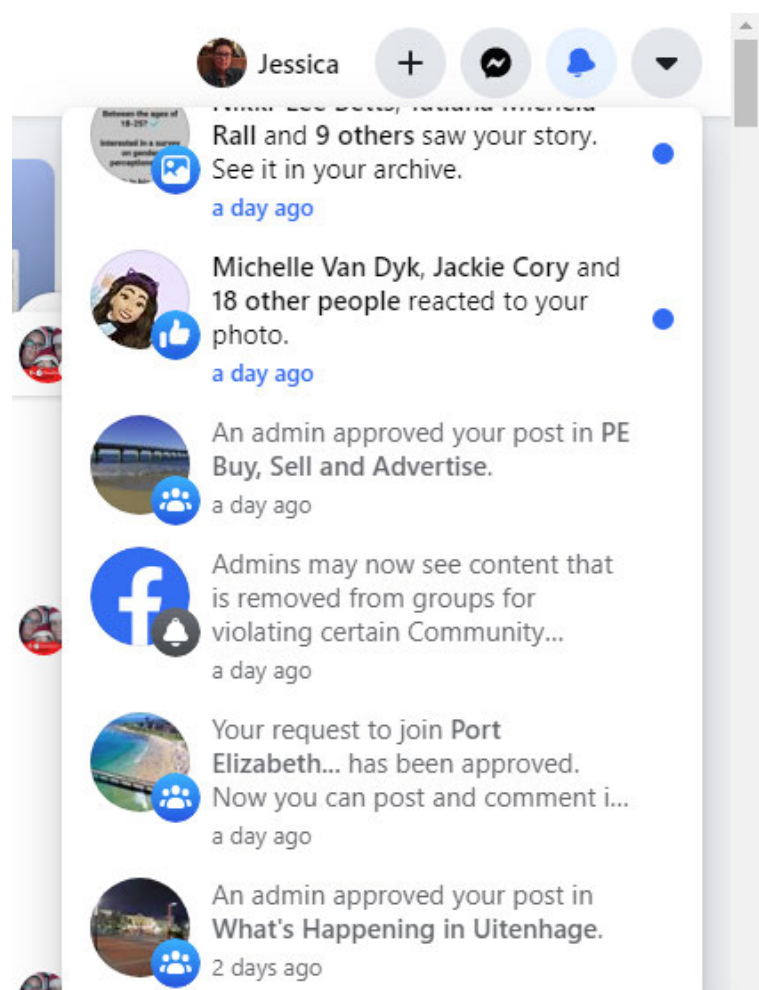
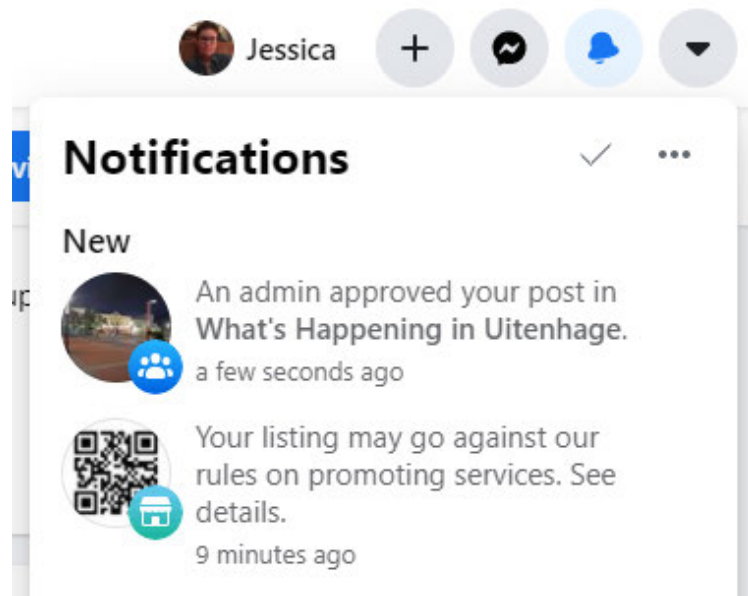
## 7.6 Annexure F: Posts to social media platforms



## 7.7 Annexure G: Researcher biography links and featured posts



7.8 Annexure H: Status updates

7.9 Annexure I: Approvals & non-approvals

7.10 Annexure J: Facebook group posts

The screenshot shows a Facebook interface. At the top is the navigation bar with the Facebook logo, a search bar, and icons for home, notifications (9), marketplace, groups, and a page. Below this is the header for the 'Port Elizabeth Community' group, featuring a profile picture, the group name, and an '+ Invite' button. A tab bar below the header offers 'Room', 'Photo/Video', and 'Tag People' options. The main content area displays a post from Jessica Smit, who shared a link. The post text reads: 'Hi everyone! I'm currently completing my Honours in Psychology at Varsity College, and as part of the requirements for my research module, I have to create and send out a questionnaire. I'm currently conducting research on gender perceptions of students from higher education institutions in Nelson Mandela Bay. This is where you come in! I'm looking for anyone between the ages of 18 and 25, who are currently students at any university, college, technikon or other similar institu... See More'. Below the text is a graphic with an illustration of a diverse group of students and the title 'Gender Perceptions of Higher Education Institution Students in Nelson Mandela'. To the right of the post, a sidebar provides group details: 'The Port Elizabeth community page formed to serve the people who live in the community! ... See More', group settings ('Private', 'Visible'), location ('Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape'), and type ('General Group'). A 'Rooms' section shows a room named 'Hie' with a 'Join to restart' button and a '+ See All' link at the bottom.

Port Elizabeth Community

+ Invite

Room Photo/Video Tag People

Jessica Smit shared a link. 1m · 🌐

Hi everyone!

I'm currently completing my Honours in Psychology at Varsity College, and as part of the requirements for my research module, I have to create and send out a questionnaire. I'm currently conducting research on gender perceptions of students from higher education institutions in Nelson Mandela Bay. This is where you come in!

I'm looking for anyone between the ages of 18 and 25, who are currently students at any university, college, technikon or other similar institu... See More

Gender Perceptions of Higher Education Institution Students in Nelson Mandela

The Port Elizabeth community page formed to serve the people who live in the community! ... See More

🔒 Private  
Only members can see who's in the group and what they post.

👁 Visible  
Anyone can find this group.

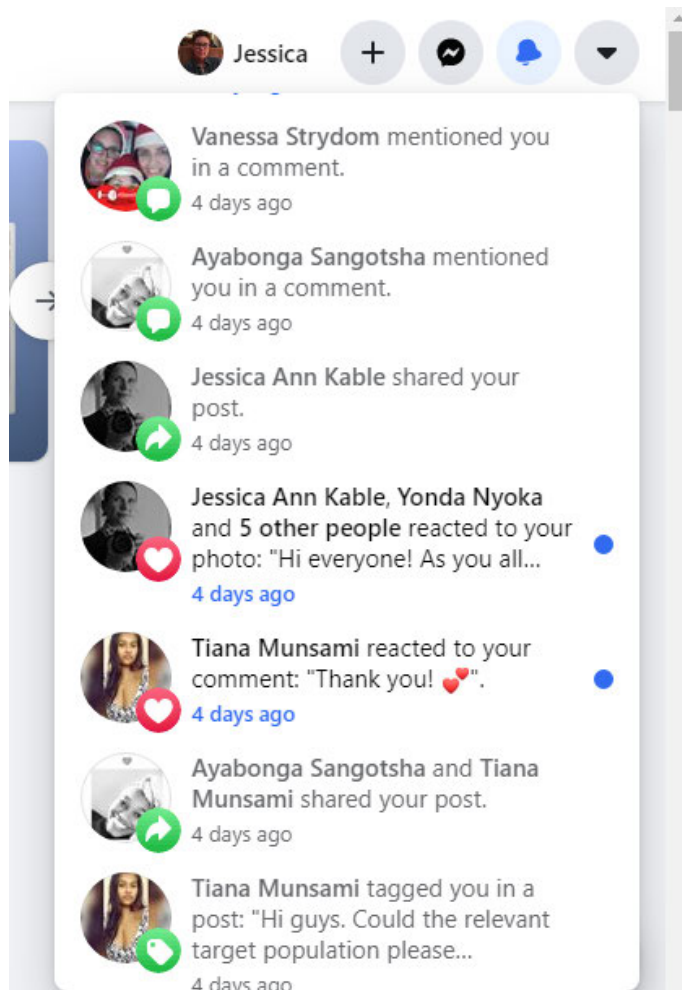
📍 Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape

👤 General Group

Rooms

Hie  
Join to restart

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7.11 Annexure K: Shared posts

## 7.12 Annexure L: Concept document table

| Annexure L: Concept Document                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                      |                                          |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: An investigation into gender expression in higher education institution students in Nelson Mandela Bay                                           |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                      |                                          |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Research Purpose / Objective                                                                                                                            | Primary Research Question                                                                                                                                 | Research Rationale                                                                                                   | Seminal Authors / Sources                | Literature Review - Conceptual Framework                                                                       | Paradigm                                                                                                                                                                           | Approach                                                                                                                                                                                 | Data Collection Method(s)                                                                                          | Ethics                                                                                                              | Key Findings                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Recommendations                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| To examine factors that influence gender perceptions and expressions of students from higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB). | What factors influence NMB HEI students' gender perceptions?                                                                                              | Discrimination because of one's gender identity. Discrimination is found in different communities and families.      | American Psychological Association       | Theme 1: History and perception of gender.                                                                     | Paradigm Interpretivism                                                                                                                                                            | Mixed-methods                                                                                                                                                                            | In-depth mixed-methods online questionnaire                                                                        | GF: valid, reliable and trustworthy. Information sheet and consent form provided.                                   | Several factors influencing gender perceptions were found. Most prominent were parents, television and movies. Other factors include friends, religion and education. The findings corroborated with Carter's GSIT theory. | More research needed on factors other than primary socialisation.                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         | Secondary Questions                                                                                                                                       | Behaviours reflective of the family or community are emulated. Gender roles are taught to children from a young age. | Aransiola, J.O.                          | Theme 2: Gender roles and perceptions on childhood.                                                            | Epistemology is to identify what factors influence a student's perception and expression of gender; and how this influences students' perceptions of gender and gender expression. | Population Parameters: Students at HEIs in NMB who are between the ages of 18 and 25.                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                    | Aliases were provided. Data stored, interpreted on one device. Respondents able to withdraw without being recorded. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Geographical area limited number of respondents; expanding area to Eastern Cape may yield more, and varied, responses. |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         | How do gender perceptions influence the expression of NMB HEI students' gender?                                                                           | Gender roles are taught to children from a young age.                                                                | Good, J.J. & Sanchez, D.T.               | Theme 3: Transgender, gender variance and societal impressions thereof.                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        | Research was conducted on a set age-group for specific purposes; however, this does not cover all students, as many are older. These students must be considered for future research. |
|                                                                                                                                                         | How are NMB HEI students' gender perception and expression influenced by their family, friends, education, community, culture, religion and social media? |                                                                                                                      |                                          |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| There is concern that NMB HEI students are deeply affected by several factors that influence their gender perception and gender expression.             | Are there negative implications on NMB HEI students, resulting from factors that influence their gender perception and gender expression?                 | Key Concepts                                                                                                         | Key Theories                             | Ontology is the reality that students' perceptions and expression of gender are influenced by multiple forces. | Sampling                                                                                                                                                                           | Data Analysis Methods                                                                                                                                                                    | Limitations                                                                                                        | Key Contribution                                                                                                    | That there is enhancement of peoples' understanding, education and awareness of factors that could influence a student's gender perception and the resulting expression of their gender.                                   | Survey platforms that track respondents will determine which distribution method is best; will gain more respondents.  |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Gender                                                                                                               | Gender Socialization and Identity Theory |                                                                                                                | Only 16 participants                                                                                                                                                               | That there is enhancement of peoples' understanding, education and awareness of factors that could influence a student's gender perception and the resulting expression of their gender. |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Gender perception                                                                                                    |                                          |                                                                                                                | No face-to-face interviews                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Gender variance                                                                                                      |                                          |                                                                                                                | Analysis & interpretation of data is limited to students aged 18-25.                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Gender expression                                                                                                    |                                          |                                                                                                                | Sampling methods: Convenience Snowball Purposive Quota                                                                                                                             | Data Analysis Method(s): Quantitative: Measurement scales and descriptive statistics Qualitative: qualitative content analysis.                                                          | Analysis & interpretation of data limited to locations of participants – HEIs in NMB, instead of the Eastern Cape. |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Gender spectrum                                                                                                      |                                          |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Higher education institution students                                                                                |                                          |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           | Nelson Mandela Bay                                                                                                   |                                          |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    | Size: 16 participants                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |