

**The role of the media in framing President Jacob Zuma's multiple or concurrent sexual relationships as cultural polygamy**

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**Abstract:**

Many questions have been asked as to why sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly South Africa, has such a high incidence of HIV/AIDS. While social and economic power imbalances between the sexes, coupled by the biological vulnerability of women, play an important role in the rapid spread of South Africa's HIV/AIDS epidemic, what truly seems to set South Africa apart from the rest of the world is the high incidence of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships.

Multiple or concurrent sexual relationships are defined as sexual partnerships that overlap in time, when one partnership starts before another terminates. These types of relationships have the potential to create complex sexual networks – commonly referred to as a “sexual superhighway” – for the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, most notably HIV/AIDS.

While the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships is to a large extent under-reported by the South African media, a great deal of media attention is given to President Jacob Zuma's practice of polygamy as a Zulu cultural tradition. The researcher proposes that Zuma's intimate partnerships stray from the well-defined parameters of cultural polygamy and that he does, in fact, have multiple or concurrent sexual relationships that fall outside the boundaries of polygamy. The researcher further proposes that the example set by the President in his personal life has an effect on the general morality of the South African people and especially on women's status in society.

**Abstrak:**

Baie vrae is al gevra oor hoekom sub-Sahara Afrika, en spesifiek Suid-Afrika, so 'n hoë voorkoms van MIV/Vigs het. 'n Sosiale en ekonomiese magswanbalans tussen mans en vroue, tesame met die verhoogde biologiese kwesbaarheid van vroue vir seksueel-oordraagbare siektes, speel 'n rol in die vinnige verspreiding van die MIV/Vigs epidemie in Suid-Afrika maar wat ons blykbaar onderskei van die res van die wêreld is die hoë voorkoms van veelvuldige of samelopende seksuele verhoudings.

Veelvuldige of samelopende seksuele verhoudings word gedefinieer as verhoudings wat oorvleuel of waar een verhouding begin voordat 'n vorige verhouding beëindig is. Hierdie tipe verhoudings het die potensiaal om komplekse seksuele netwerke te vorm – algemeen beskryf as “seksuele super-snelweë” – waarbinne seksueel-oordraagbare siektes, insluitende MIV/Vigs, vinnig kan versprei.

Terwyl veelvuldige of samelopende seksuele verhoudings min aandag geniet in die Suid-Afrikaanse media, is daar wel 'n fokus op President Jacob Zuma se uitlewing van sy Zulu-tradisie van poligamie. Die navorser stel egter voor dat Zuma se intieme verhoudings afwyk van die goedge-definieerde riglyne van kulturele poligamie en dat hy in werklikheid eerder veelvuldige of samelopende seksuele verhoudings het wat buite die reëls van poligamie val. Die navorser stel verder voor dat die voorbeeld wat die President in sy persoonlike lewe stel 'n uitwerking het op die moraliteit van Suid-Afrikaners en veral op die status van vroue in die samelewing.

**Keywords:** polygamy, concurrent sexual partnerships, multiple sexual partnerships, media framing, Zuma, HIV

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND ORGANISATIONS**

<b>ABC</b>	abstinence, be faithful, condom use
<b>AIDS</b>	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>HAART</b>	highly active antiretroviral therapy
<b>HIV</b>	human immunodeficiency virus
<b>PEPFAR</b>	(US) President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
<b>RCMA</b>	Recognition of Customary Marriages Act 1998
<b>STIs</b>	sexually transmitted infections
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>VCT</b>	voluntary HIV counselling and testing
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Study background

Of the estimated 34 million people living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2011, 23.5 million reside in sub-Saharan Africa (“Global HIV/AIDS estimates”, 2011). Many questions exist as to why Africa, and specifically sub-Saharan Africa, has such a high incidence of HIV/AIDS. Social and economic power imbalances between the sexes and the biological vulnerability of women all play an important role in the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, but what seems to set us apart from the rest of the world is the prevalent practice of concurrent sexual relationships (Cullinan, 2010:13; “Global report”, 2012:70; Magadi, 2011:522; Quinn & Overbaugh, 2005:1583).

Multiple and concurrent sexual relationships have the potential to create complex sexual networks within which the virus can spread – the so-called ‘superhighway’ for the spread of HIV – and this reason has been identified as one of the main underlying causes for the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS infections in sub-Saharan Africa (Halperin & Epstein, 2004:4; Kenyon & Badri, 2009:31; Reniers & Watkins, 2010:299). Concurrency is defined as sexual partnerships that overlap in time, when one partnership starts before another terminates (Kenyon & Badri, 2009:29).

While the practice of concurrent sexual relationships is rarely reported on by the South African media<sup>1</sup>, there has been consistent focus on President Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma’s practice of polygamy as a cultural Zulu tradition. The researcher proposes that the president’s relationships with more than one woman at the same time amounts to the practice of concurrent sexual relationships and are merely framed in the media as ‘cultural polygamy’.

The main motivation for this study is to investigate the way in which the South African media have participated in framing the president’s concurrent sexual relationships as ‘cultural polygamy’ and as a result has largely ignored educating the public about the risk involved in multiple or concurrent partnerships.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 5: Results and discussion

## 1.2 Justification of study

In 2009 and 2010, the author worked for a company that conducted wellness workplace programmes, specifically focussing on HIV/AIDS education and voluntary HIV counselling and testing (VCT). It was during this time that the author became aware of the effect that multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships were having in the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS among heterosexuals in South Africa.<sup>2</sup>

During the first four months of 2010 there were four specific events that received wide media attention and highlighted what was referred to as President Zuma's practice of 'polygamy'. In light of the author's work at the time, promoting VCT, the author felt that the media missed an opportunity to identify and address concurrent sexual partnerships when referring to the President's relationships.

The four news stories were:

- a) President Zuma's marriage to his third wife (his fifth marriage) on 4 January 2010, an event that awakened the debate on polygamy and its place in modern South African society. Zuma's polygamous lifestyle had been a topic of discussion since he came to prominence during the ANC conference in Polokwane in December 2007, but this marriage to Thobeka Madiba reignited the debate and caught the attention of the world as it happened while Zuma served his first term as president of South Africa. Numerous newspaper articles in January 2010 quoted Zuma as defending his polygamous marriages on the grounds of his Zulu culture and painted critics of the president's multiple marriages as racially and culturally biased (Gouws, 2010:12; "It's my culture", 2010:1).
- b) The second incidence in 2010 was the news on 31 January 2010 that Zuma had fathered a child (officially his 20<sup>th</sup> child) with a woman who was neither one of his three wives nor a fiancée (Govender, 2010:1-2). The birth of the baby girl was proof that Zuma practiced unprotected sex outside his circle of multiple marriages, falsifying his claims that he was

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<sup>2</sup> In the rest of the world HIV/AIDS is still largely confined to the following groups and their sexual partners: gay men, intravenous drug users and commercial sex workers (Epstein, 2009:xii).

practicing ‘cultural polygamy’: the president was clearly practicing concurrent sexual partnerships.<sup>3</sup>

- c) The third story in 2010 that received attention for its press coverage was the president’s official state visit to the United Kingdom on 4 March 2010. His most recent bride, wife number three, Thobeka Madiba, accompanied him to Britain where Zuma faced harsh criticism and negative publicity in the UK press (“A real letdown in London”, 2010:6; Scholtz, 2010(b):1).
  
- d) The fourth news story that had a direct impact on the formulation of this research was the public HIV test that Zuma took on 15 April 2010, as part of the South African government’s drive to encourage South Africans to submit to voluntary testing for HIV (“Motlanthe and Zuma will launch HIV campaign”, 2010). While first insisting that the president’s test result would remain a private matter, the presidency declared on 25 April 2010 that the president was indeed HIV negative (“Setting a better example”, 2010). Given the president’s propensity for unprotected sexual intercourse with multiple sexual partners (as proven by his multiple children from multiple women) this leads one to question what kind of example the president sets for the average South African, whereby one man can have multiple sexual partners, practice unprotected sex and yet remain HIV negative?

### **1.3 The aim of the study**

The purpose of this research is to investigate how the South African media focussed on portraying President Zuma’s relationships as a form of cultural polygamy instead of identifying it as multiple or concurrent sexual relationships. The aim is to further illustrate how this framing process has awakened a new discourse on the practice of polygamy and the effect this has had on the lives of

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<sup>3</sup> During Zuma’s rape trial in March 2006, Zuma testified that he had unprotected sex with the complainant whilst knowing that she was HIV positive (“Timeline of the Jacob Zuma rape trial”, 2006).

South African women in terms of their bargaining power to negotiating safe sex practices and their general attitude towards the dangers of contracting HIV.

#### **1.4 Overview of the methodology**

The research methodology employed in this study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques with the aim of juxtaposing the cultural practice of polygamy with the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships. The quantitative technique of textual analysis was employed in examining three South African newspapers during the period of January to May 2010: the weekly papers *Sunday Times* and *Mail & Guardian*, and the Western Cape daily, the *Cape Times*. The newspaper analysis focused on the four key events (listed above) in the summer and autumn of 2010 that illustrate how the South African media framed President Zuma's practice of concurrent sexual relationships as cultural polygamy. Furthermore, fieldwork was conducted to ascertain the effect the media's framing had on a group of women in the vicinity of the Robbie Nurock Day Hospital in Cape Town.

#### **1.5 Outline of the remainder of the thesis**

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive literature review of the issues pertinent to this research document: polygamy and multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships. Chapter 3 explains the research theory. Chapter 4 examines the research design and methodology. Chapter 5 explains and discusses the research results. Chapter 6 gives the researcher's conclusions and recommendations for further study.

## **Chapter 2 Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the researcher will review the existing literature pertaining to this study in two sections: polygamy and multiple or concurrent sexual relationships. The first section on polygamy examines its historical and cultural underpinnings, the role of polygamy in the spread of HIV and a legal overview. This section will furthermore examine the effect of the migratory labour system on the practice of polygamy and the status of women in polygamous marriages.

The second section defines and explains the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships and why this practice is identified as one of the leading causes of the high HIV prevalence rate in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in South Africa. The section will further examine the biological and social or cultural factors that make women more vulnerable to HIV infection than men. Finally, the second section will study the effect of President Zuma's choices as role model for the nation.

### **2.2 Polygamy**

#### **2.2.1 Introduction to the study of polygamy**

Polygamy is often regarded as an archaic form of marriage, especially in cases where traditional society has been in contact with an urban, industrial way of life (Møller & Welch, 1985:2). Commonly viewed by Western cultures as an instrument for the domination of women by men, polygamy is in fact a complex and ubiquitous practice with many different underlying principles (Clignet, 1970:4; Madhavan, 2002:69; Ware, 1979:194). For many African peoples, polygamy has always had a traditional social and economic basis: it promoted clan solidarity by linking up families, whilst also ensuring that all women were married off, thus maximising the fertility of the clan (Epstein, 2009:70).

The most common form of polygamy is ‘polygyny’ where one man is married to two or more wives (Møller & Welch, 1985:1). In this paper polygamy and polygyny are used synonymously.

### **2.2.2 Historical background**

Mann (1994:168) states that to understand African marriage in the present, one must study it in the past. The mission churches regarded marriage and monogamy as central to Christianity, resulting in an inevitable clash with the local polygamous culture (Mann, 1994:169), with white missionaries preaching that conversion to Christianity entailed divorcing one’s ‘extra’ wives (Diffin, 2010).

Nwoye (2007:384) states that the colonial attitude towards polygamy was firmly grounded in the theory of institutional evolutionism: the progression of Africans from the rule of custom to the rule of law, from polytheism to monotheism and from polygamy to monogamy. Despite this, Møller and Welch note that polygamy has always co-existed with monogamy (1985:3). Even though polygamy was traditionally widespread as an ideal, it was considered a ‘privilege and not the norm’ and depended on the status and wealth of the husband (Møller & Welch, 1985:14).

Ware (1979:189) found widespread acceptance of polygamy, mainly because of the distaste for the alternative, which in a cultural context is most often not faithful monogamy but legal monogamy paralleled by a series of more or less open affairs. In Ware’s study, three-quarters of all wives chose an additional wife in preference to multiple mistresses, on the grounds that men spend less money on their wives than on their mistresses and that the position of a wife is defined rather than fluid and uncontrollable. In the case of levirate (the custom where a man marries his brother’s widow), polygamy allows for the social security of widows (Møller & Welch, 1985:14).

In Zulu culture “every family member must work for the betterment of the family”, according to Zulu scholar Ndela Ntshangase, a lecturer in the school of Zulu studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Diffin, 2010). One way to improve a family’s status and income is to add extra members with additional wives. This is particularly advantageous in an agricultural society (ibid.).



During his visit to the United Kingdom in March 2010, Zuma defended his polygamous marriages as part of his culture and questioned the perceived superiority of Western culture when compared to African culture: “When the British came to our country they said everything we are doing was barbaric, was wrong, inferior in whatever way. I don’t know why they are continuing thinking that their culture is more superior than others” (Diffin, 2010).

### **2.2.3 The role of the migrant labour system**

The African population has always been extremely mobile, with pre-colonial migratory patterns driven by agricultural resources, trade and labour (Rutabanzibwa, 2008:7). The labour requirements in farming caused a demand for African workers in the Orange Free State and Transvaal. Labour legislation quickly followed this demand and by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, legislation indirectly compelled Africans to sell their services to Whites by forcing Africans not employed in White service to pay higher taxes than those working for a White employer (Breytenbach, 1972:7)<sup>4</sup>.

The most significant impact on labour practices in South Africa came with the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West in 1867 and of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1884-1886. Labour requirements of the farming industry were quickly surpassed by the overwhelming labour requirements of the mining industry (Breytenbach, 1972:7).

In post-colonial times, migration became a vehicle for economic betterment, especially in escaping poverty and resource deprivation (Breytenbach, 1972:7; Rutabanzibwa, 2008:7). Under the migrant labour system male migrant workers would go to work in urban-industrial areas, leaving their wives and families to take care of the rural home. For the migrant labourers, accommodation was provided in single-sex hostels and polygamy provided a solution to the problems of being forced to spend long periods away from the family (Hunt, 1989:356; Møller & Welch, 1985:20).

Clignet (1970:22,23) asserts that migratory work facilitated a two-pronged system of polygamy: firstly for the stable males who remain in the rural areas and secondly for the mobile members of the population who, with an increased cash income, were able to support two households

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<sup>4</sup> Act 9 of 1870 (T).

– one in the city and one in their village of origin. Hunt (1989:356) found that the migrant labourer’s “bachelor wage” actually produced little money to send back to his rural family and as a result, many rural women also started emigrating to the city.

Historically the migratory labour system contributed to epidemics of sexually transmitted diseases, most notably HIV/AIDS, by fostering long absences, increased family breakdown and increased numbers of sexual partners (Hunt, 1989:354). This is especially true in sub-Saharan Africa where the migrant system of labour contributed significantly to the spread of HIV from urban to rural areas, as well as from rural to urban areas (Hargrove, 2008:56).

#### **2.2.4 Polygamy and the spread of HIV**

The incidence of HIV/AIDS in Africa is found primarily among sexually active heterosexuals (Hunt, 1989:355)<sup>5</sup>. Epidemiological studies have shown that multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships are a primary determinant of the rapidity and extent of heterosexual HIV transmission (Reniers & Watkins, 2010:299).

Polygamy is a common and institutionalised form of concurrency, creating small pockets of concurrent partnerships in which the HI-virus is effectively ‘trapped’ until one or more of the (infected) spouses start a new relationship (Reniers & Watkins, 2010:299,305). Having said that, marriage – either monogamous or polygamous – is not a safeguard against contracting a sexually transmitted infection such as HIV because the institution of marriage in itself does not stop men (or women) from straying (Reniers & Watkins, 2010:299).

In the case of President Zuma, an illegitimate child was fathered (with Sonono Khoza) in 2009 while he was already party to two marriages and engaged to be married to his (now) third wife (“Jacob Zuma admits fathering love child”, 2010).

The greater region of sub-Saharan Africa is home to 62% of the world’s HIV cases with more than 14 000 people infected daily with HIV and 11 000 people dying daily due to HIV/AIDS-related

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<sup>5</sup> Outside of Africa HIV/AIDS is still largely confined to gay men, intravenous drug users, commercial sex workers, and their sexual partners (Epstein, 2007:xii).

illnesses (Mbirimtengerenji, 2007:605). Africans are particularly at risk of contracting HIV with the majority of HIV infections in South Africa occurring among the African population (13.6% prevalence) followed by Coloured (1.7%) and White and Indian (both 0.3%) (“South Africa HIV & AIDS statistics”, 2010). Studies on HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa have noted that pervasive, culturally entrenched gender discrimination increases the risk of HIV infection for African women (Eaton, Flisher & Aarø, 2002:162).

HIV infected females tend to be younger with the highest prevalence rate among females aged between 25 and 29 years old; among males, the peak is in the group aged 30-34 years. The provinces with the highest HIV prevalence are KwaZulu-Natal (15.8%), Mpumalanga (15.4%) and Free State (12.6%) (“South Africa HIV & AIDS statistics”, 2010).

### **2.2.5 The role of women in polygamous relationships**

The likelihood of a woman entering a polygamous marriage depends upon her age, her religion and her education, with the most important determinant being her level of education: well-educated women are the least likely to be found in polygamous marriages because they are more likely to be financially independent (Ware, 1979:186).

A woman’s role in a polygamous marriage is tied to two main issues: her productive and reproductive services. Historically a woman’s productive services were valued in economies that relied heavily on non-mechanical agriculture, while her reproductive services facilitated the birth of a larger number of children per family, during a given period of time (Møller & Welch, 1985:8).

Traditional African culture places a high premium on children and women regard having children as essential to their view of themselves as women and adults (Tabi et al., 2010:123). The cultural acceptance of a relationship between a man and a younger woman is directly linked to the importance placed on fertility and having children, as younger women are generally seen as being more fertile (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S22). Ogho (as cited in Nwoye, 2007:384) points out that polygamy is often related to the barrenness of the first wife or to the fact that she only produced female children in the marriage. In traditional African culture the notion of gender and identity is

elastic – in contrast to its rigid Western conception – making it possible for a woman who does not biologically generate a child to become a mother by ‘marrying’ another wife for the husband.

Polygamy can promote competition in child-bearing between co-wives: the greater the number of co-wives, the greater the number of children likely to be desired by each wife (Ware, 1979:192). According to Møller and Welch (1985:15) a large family is an asset where:

- wives and children are the main labour force;
- children can, in the future, provide social security in old age; and
- children represent the means of acquiring extensive political power.

The relationships between co-wives are shaped by social, cultural and personal context, with co-wives using both competitive and collaborative strategies to negotiate their relative status within the domestic group (Madhavan, 2002:69). Jealousy between co-wives is common and often rooted in their aversion to sharing resources, both sexual and material (Ware, 1979:188).

There is a tendency to describe the relationship between co-wives as competitive: women pitted against each other over the affection and time of a shared husband, often resulting in petty squabbles and jealousy (Meekers & Franklin, 1995:315). The South African media has been quick to note any hint of discord between Zuma’s wives (Mapiloko & Keepile, 2010; Roberts, 2010; “Zuma’s wives not at war – family”, 2010).

In polygamous marriages, conflict tends to arise when the husband favours the youngest wife or favours the children of one wife (Meekers & Franklin, 1995:315). The co-wives’ aversion to favouritism is rooted in the belief that a husband is likely to follow sexual favours with economic benefits (Ware, 1979:190). In order to minimise conflict between the co-wives, there needs to be strict rules of domestic arrangement, such as cooking and sleeping rotations (Madhavan, 2002:71).

Perhaps surprisingly then, the practice seems to hold several advantages for both the husband and the wives. According to Dr Valerie Møller, Professor of Quality of Life Studies at Rhodes University, polygamous men are in general happier and economically better off than men who are in

other types of relationships, while at the same time experiencing a better quality of life and greater job satisfaction (personal communication, 29 May 2010).

The advantages of a polygamous marriage for the co-wives include a sense of companionship with the other woman (or women) in the marriage and the benefits derived from the shared responsibilities of household work, food production and childrearing (Madhavan, 2002:71-79; Meekers & Franklin, 1995:315; Møller & Welch, 1985:16; Tabi, Doster & Cheney, 2010:123). Additional advantages, for the women, include sharing the burden of the husband's sexual demands (Ware, 1979:189).

In some African societies it is not uncommon for a woman to participate in the choice of her husband's next wife. In doing so, senior wives maximise their economic benefits by selecting hard-working co-wives and limit future conflict by choosing junior co-wives that they like (Meekers & Franklin, 1995:315).

Smith-Rosenberg (as cited in Madhavan, 2002:70) found that friendship among women is a crucial factor in empowering them against male dominance. Age is a central factor in the formation of friendship between co-wives (Madhavan, 2002:71). A large difference in age between the first wife and any subsequent wives usually produces a maternal relationship in which the younger woman solicits advice from the older one (Madhavan, 2002:79).

#### **2.2.6. A legal overview of the practice of polygamy**

Initially the objection to polygamy was a socio-religious one: Christianity taught that one man should marry one woman. As a result the colonial powers tried to replace the African system of morality with a Christian one and the courts followed suit (Bekker, 2001:48). Under White- Afrikaner rule post 1948, African traditional marriage was not recognised by the South African state and only church and civil weddings enjoyed full legal status ("South Africa preparing", 1997:42).

The main reason for this and a feature of customary marriage that has always distinguished it from common law marriage, is the fact that customary marriages are, or can potentially be,

polygamous (Bekker, 2001:48). Based on this distinction the courts have adamantly refused to recognise customary marriages, going as far back as Ngqobela v Sihele 10 SC 346 (1893) and consistently in later cases (Bekker, 2001:48).

The legislature defined ‘marriage’ as “the union of one man with one woman”, while a customary marriage was not called a marriage but a ‘union’ or ‘relationship’, where neither party is married (section 35 of the Black Administration Act 38 of 1927).

Opponents of polygamous marriages based much of their criticism on the inferior position polygamous marriages attributed to women (Bekker, 2001:48). However, White-dominated courts and administrators did not seem unduly concerned with the inferior position of women in customary marriages, with the now repealed section 11(3)(b) of Act 38 of 1927 confirming that women were the perpetual minors under the guardianship of their husbands (ibid.).

The courts are now prepared to accommodate polygamous marriages. In Ryland v Edros 1997 (2) SA 690 (C) Judge Farlam ruled that the Constitution had introduced such a basic change in the values of South Africa that a contract based on an unrecognised Islamic marriage could no longer be considered invalid solely for “the reason that potentially polygamous marriages are not recognised in South African law” (Bekker, 2001:48).

While customary marriages were first recognised through the Natal Code of Zulu Law (1985) and KwaZulu Natal Act (1987), customary marriages gained national recognition when the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act 1998 (RCMA) came into effect in 2000 (Tolsi & Alcock, 2010:5). The RCMA – the culmination of the post-democracy view on polygamous marriages – recognised African customary marriages as legal and explicitly permits the possibility of polygamous marriages (Mihindou, 2006:41).

The RCMA effectively extended the state’s recognition and regulation of marriage to both monogamous and polygamous customary marriages and brought South African legislation in line with the country’s constitution that recognised marriages under any tradition, system or personal or family law (De Vos, 2010; “South Africa preparing”, 1997:42).

According to Section 1 of the Act, ‘customary marriage’ is defined as “a marriage concluded in accordance with customary law”, while ‘customary law’ is defined as “the customs and usages traditionally observed among the indigenous African peoples of South Africa and which form part of the culture of those peoples” (Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 120 of 1998).

The RCMA clearly aims to limit the discriminatory effect of traditional patriarchal practices on women by declaring in Section 6 that “the wife in a customary marriage has in all respects a status equal to that of her husband”.

### **2.2.7 The current state of polygamy**

Considering South Africa’s racially divided past, polygamy continues to divide South Africans along racial lines. As far back as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Chief Tetekulu, while giving evidence before the Natal Commission of 1881-2 summed it up by saying:

Lobolo and polygamy are the two great questions which divide us from the White man (Brookes as cited in Bekker, 2001:48).

Modern African nuptiality takes place in a social context that is influenced by church authority, the state, issues of legality, and the moral culture of family relationships (Guyer, 1994:231). Madhavan (2002:82) found that polygamous marriages were in decline as a result of increasing cost of living, an increase in women’s education, urbanisation, and changes in women’s status. In fact, were it not for the artificial preservation of aspects of polygamy in the ‘formaldehyde of customary law’, it is quite possible that polygamy would have fallen away over the past 150 years (Van der Westhuizen, 2010).

Whilst traditional polygamy has declined in many African societies, the cultural heritage of polygamy continues to legitimise sex with multiple and concurrent partners; and South African men today, including President Zuma, readily partake in this practice (Leclerk-Madlala, Simbayi & Cloete, 2009:16). The practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships, combined with poor and

inconsistent male condom usage, has been identified as the key behavioural driver of HIV in modern-day Africa (Mah & Halperin as cited in Leclerk-Madlala et al, 2009:16).

In spite of changing socio-economic circumstances, the ideals of polygamy remains alive in African society, even if the marriage form is no longer practiced extensively for practical, economic or moral reasons (Møller & Welch, 1985:18). The rewards that traditionally accompanied plural marriage have become narrower and more specific, with additional wives now indicating additional financial expenditure. In a modern, urban setting where social standing is often equated to material wealth, a large family can represent a liability rather than an asset (Clignet, 1970:280, Madhavan, 2002:73). With little or no land to tend, children have little productive value unless they can be employed successfully in the labour market, while the high cost of schooling is another prohibitive consideration to rampant fertility (Clignet, 1970:280; Møller & Welch, 1985:17).

Mann (1994:167) identifies the practice of ‘outside marriage’ – whereby men marry one woman by statutory law, as well as forming extra-legal domestic and sexual unions with other women – as a modern form of polygamy that is widespread in African towns and cities. Research into the discourse on the subordination of women reveals two main themes relating to male sexuality: biologically determined ‘need’, and sexual ‘rights’ (Eaton, Flisher, & Aarø, 2002:161). For example: in discussions on monogamy, men claim that they ‘need’ variety and claim that it is in a man’s nature to want many partners (Eaton, Flisher, & Aarø, 2002:161). Likewise, men tend to reason that impulsive, unprotected sex is justified because sexual desire is a natural force that “should not be controlled” (ibid.).

The discourse of ‘rights’ is evident in the manner in which young men claim ‘ownership’ of their sexual partners and feel justified in forcing their girlfriends into sex. This behaviour is supported by social norms that insinuate that a man has a right to sexual intercourse within a romantic relationship and therefore has the right to use force, if necessary, to obtain it (Eaton, Flisher, & Aarø, 2002:161).



“Affluent polygamy” is in ascendance in most urban African cities whereby polygamy is not practiced as stipulated in African tradition, but rather in a subversive way by affluent middle-class men (Nwoye, 2007:384). One of the more worrisome forms of multiple partnerships is intergenerational relationships, where large age disparities exist between partners (Leclerc-Madlala, 2009:17)<sup>6</sup>. Young women in these relationships are at an increased risk as an older man is more likely to have been sexually active for many years and therefore more likely to be infected by sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (Leclerc-Madlala, 2009:17).<sup>7</sup>

Although poverty prompts many young women to engage in transactional sex, they also view relationships with older, employed men as a relatively easy way to meet their growing desire for consumer commodities (Leclerc-Madlala, 2009:17).

Anozie (as cited in Nwoye, 2007:384) observes that African traditional society did not accept the institution of polygamy merely as a means to satisfy male sexual lust as is frequently opined by those not familiar with other cultures. Viewed within the perspectives of a specific cultural setting, the practice of polygamy has a number of well-defined social functions and advantages.

### **2.2.8 Zulu culture or Zuma culture?**

The nuances of the practice of polygamy goes deeper than the general view of it as a marital custom. Nwoye (2007:383) distinguishes between two forms of polygamy: affluent polygamy and interventive polygamy. Affluent polygamy is motivated by economic ambitions and the wish for social prestige, while interventive polygamy is entered into in response to family stress, typically the inability of the first wife to produce heirs.

There is a strong relationship between Nwoye’s definition of affluent polygamy and the media’s portrayal of President Zuma’s practice of multiple or concurrent partnerships. “Sex, virility and loyalty are intimately linked to one of the most remarkable political comebacks in recent history,”

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<sup>6</sup> For more on intergenerational sex see section 2.3.5

<sup>7</sup> HIV rates are disproportionately high for South African women in the 15- to 24-year age group, approximately four times that of young men (Leclerc-Madlala et al, 2009:17).

British columnist Jonathan Clayton declared shortly after Zuma's triumphant performance at the African National Congress's 52<sup>nd</sup> national conference at Polokwane in December 2007. "They have helped Mr Zuma, a charismatic populist with impeccable liberation struggle credentials, to hone his image as an expansive African 'Big Man' politician" (Clayton, 2007).

Zuma himself draws a firm link between his practice of polygamy and his cultural Zulu heritage. During the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in January 2010 a journalist asked Zuma to respond to the many people who feel that polygamy is inherently unfair to women. Zuma replied:

As a culture, as my culture, [polygamy] does not take anything from me, from my political beliefs and everything, including the belief in the equality of women (Bearak, 2010).

Various commentators insist that the cultural tradition of polygamy should not be confused with sexual promiscuity. Anonzie (as cited in Nwoye, 2001:384) states that African traditional society does not accept the institution of polygamy merely as a means to satisfy male sexual lust and the practice exhibits a number of well-defined social functions and advantages. Burke (as cited in Nwoye, 2001:384) reinforces Anonzie's observation that the main factor behind polygamy is not sexual in nature, but rather the desire and/or need to have children. The taking of a second wife is often the simple consequence of the barrenness of the first.

In an opinion piece in *Die Burger* following the birth of President Zuma's child with Sonono Khoza, official opposition leader Helen Zille emphasised that the baby was born "between marriages" and that no culture, even polygamous cultures, justifies cheating on your wife or wives (Zille, 2010(a):15).

Commentator Leopold Scholtz wrote in a similar vein in *Die Burger* of 12 February 2010:

Zuma se voorliefde vir vroue met wie hy nie getroud is nie, beklee deesdae in die algemeen 'n prominente plek in die internasionale nuusberiggewing. Talle kommentators het gister ook weer daarop gewys dat sy veelwywery nog een ding is – 'n mens moet dalk versigtig wees om

jou eie kultuur tot absolute norm te verhef – maar seksuele losbandigheid is iets anders (Scholtz (A), 2010:16).

*English translation: Zuma's preference for having relationships with women to whom he is not married, takes a prominent place in international news coverage these days. Many commentators noted again yesterday that while multiple marriages is one thing – one always has to be careful to insist that one's own culture is superior to others – his sexual promiscuity is something completely different.*

Political analyst Rhoda Kadalie puts it even more succinctly in *Die Burger* of 16 February 2010:

Poligamie is een ding; rondslaap 'n ander (Kadalie, 2010:12).

*English translation: Polygamy is one thing; sleeping around is altogether different.*

### **2.2.9 Overview of international perspectives**

Polygamous marriages in Africa remain high, ranging from 20-50% of all marriages on the continent (Tabi, Doster & Cheney, 2010:122). An interesting development in the Nigerian history of polygamy saw a small, but influential, educated elite develop in Lagos, drawn primarily from repatriated slaves from Sierra Leone and the New World. The members of this group were Christian and highly educated, relative to the population as a whole (Mann, 1994:169). The elite men expressed two main objections to the practice of monogamy: first it deprived some women of marriage and second it created a problem of what to do with widows (Mann, 1994:173).

In Muslim and Hindu-Buddhist communities polygamy is, under certain conditions, legal. Examples include where the wife is unable to fulfil her husband sexually; if she is permanently physically or psychologically disabled; if she is terminally ill or if she is unable to bear children (Jacubowski, 2008:92). Jacubowski (2008:94) found that among Muslim women in modern-day Indonesia, women's lack of power, self-esteem, autonomy and economic dependence limits their

capacity to communicate and negotiate for safer sex. At the same time gendered social norms and attitudes encourage men to have more than one wife and/or sexual partner.

While polygamous practices in African countries are often entrenched in cultural traditions, in the United States of America polygamy is strongly tied to certain religious sects. It is argued by those who practice polygamy that anti-polygamy laws infringe religious liberty (“Back in fashion”, 2006:35). The most vocal exponent of polygamy has long been the Mormon Church where the practice has persisted, despite officially being outlawed in 1890 (Biele, 1998).

The Mormon Church has been headquartered in Salt Lake City since 1847 and the state of Utah is considered to be 70% Mormon (Kleiner, 2002:50). Despite polygamy being a crime in Utah for more than 100 years and punishable by up to five years in prison, the practice is thriving throughout the state. The number of people in polygamous families in Utah is estimated at 50 000 (“Utah: Illegal polygamy”, 2003:85). The largest of the polygamist sects is the fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) with approximately 10 000 members (“Back in fashion”, 2006:35).

In the US, the debate over polygamy centres around women’s rights and the potential for abuse in a polygamous marriage, with many viewing polygamy as an embarrassing and potentially harmful institution practiced by people on the fringe of society (Biele, 1998). A Gallup poll in May 2006 found that 90% of Americans consider polygamy to be morally wrong (Saad, 2007). Despite this, statistics show that the number of polygamists in the US is growing (Biele, 1998) .

## **2.3 Multiple or concurrent sexual relationships**

### **2.3.1. Introduction to HIV/AIDS in South Africa**

HIV/AIDS was first diagnosed in South Africa in 1982 – the same year that diagnoses were first made in parts of North America, Europe, central and eastern Africa (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:163; Gouws & Abdool Karim, 2005:54). Initially, between 1983 and 1987, HIV in South Africa

was spread mainly through men who have sex with men and HIV infection in the heterosexual population was rare (Gouws & Abdool Karim, 2005:55; Higgins, Hoffman & Dworkin, 2010:435).<sup>8</sup>

Today the picture looks completely different: HIV transmission in developing countries is largely driven by heterosexual intercourse and sub-Saharan Africa is home to 76% of all HIV-positive women (Jha, 2001:224; Magadi, 2011:523; UNAIDS, 2010:10,130). Women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, with an estimated 13 women becoming infected for every 10 men (UNAIDS, 2010:10). At present 58% of the people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women (Global report, 2012:70). This growing ‘feminisation’ of the HIV pandemic reflects women’s greater social and biological vulnerability (Chersich & Rees, 2008:S28; Magadi, 2011:522; Quinn & Overbaugh, 2005:1583).

Even though evidence suggests that overall new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa has stabilised or started to decline<sup>9</sup>, the actual number of people infected continues to grow – mainly due to increased access to anti-retroviral therapy extending the lives of those living with AIDS (“Global report”, 2012:8; Magadi, 2011:522). Social and economic power imbalances between men and women leave many women and girls with little capacity to negotiate sex, insist on condom use or otherwise take steps to protect themselves from HIV (Global report, 2012:70).

Young women aged 15-24 are especially vulnerable to the disease and are as much as eight times more likely than men to be HIV positive (Magadi, 2011:523; UNAIDS, 2010:10). This is largely because of their biological vulnerability due to the immaturity of genital tracts making them more prone to tears and abrasions during sexual intercourse (Sheth, 2009).<sup>10</sup> Transactional sex

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<sup>8</sup> Outside Africa HIV/AIDS is still largely confined to gay men, intravenous drug users, commercial sex workers, and their sexual partners (Epstein, 2009:xii).

<sup>9</sup> Worldwide the number of people newly infected in 2011 was 20% lower than in 2001. The sharpest declines occurred in the Caribbean (42%) and sub-Saharan Africa (25%) (“Global report”, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> Women who have gone through menopause are also at higher risk of HIV infection, because the lining of the uterus thins with age and the vagina becomes drier leading to tears and abrasions during sexual intercourse (Seth, 2009).

associated with gender-based violence and socio-economic disadvantage puts women of all ages at risk of HIV transmission (Magadi, 2013:1653).

In South Africa there is a striking difference in age and gender distribution of HIV infection, with high HIV prevalence fuelled by high rates of new infections in young women (Gouws & Abdool Karim, 2005:48,61). South Africa has experienced one of the fastest growing HIV epidemics in the world with an estimated 5.6 million people in South Africa living with HIV/AIDS out of a world-wide total of 22.9 million (“South Africa HIV & AIDS statistics”, 2011).

Compared to other viruses, HIV is difficult to transmit since transmission can only occur through the absorption of blood, genital fluids or milk from an infected human body (Iliffe, 2006:8). (Compare this to the influenza virus that can be transmitted aurally to anyone close enough to inhale it.) Women are exposed on both fronts: first through unprotected sex between men and women – which accounts for 80 per cent of the cases – and secondly through mother-to-child transmission during pregnancy, labour and breastfeeding<sup>11</sup> (Tigawalana, 2010). With the estimated vertical transmission rate (mother-to-child) hovering at around 30%-50% in the 1990s, those infants who did not die from HIV/AIDS in the first years of life, still faced the very real possibility of being orphaned (Mwale & Burnard as cited in Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:164).

The spread of HIV at a population level depends on the number of people infected, the number of susceptible people who are available to be infected, the rate at which these two groups make contact, the probability that the infection is transmitted and the life expectancy of infected people (Gouws & Abdool Karim, 2005:49). Initially there is an exponential increase in the number of newly infected individuals, but prevalence will taper off as the number of infected individuals increases and the susceptible pool decreases (ibid, 2005:49).

Studies in Uganda have identified two occupational groups that are largely responsible for introducing HIV/AIDS into a general population that otherwise showed little promiscuity: long-

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<sup>11</sup> About half of mother-to-child transmissions are due to breastfeeding, with the rest occurring before or at birth (Jha, 2001:224).

distance truck drivers and migrant labourers<sup>12</sup> (Iliffe, 2006:25). Countries in the southern regions of Africa became infected with HIV slightly later than those further north, but nevertheless overtook east Africa's levels of prevalence during the mid-1990s (Iliffe, 2006:33).

An early attempt to explain the speed and scale of Botswana's epidemic highlighted three contributing factors: the position of women in society (particularly their lack of power in negotiating sexual relationships), cultural attitudes to fertility and social migration patterns (Iliffe, 2006:40). During spells of labour migration, infection is typically passed from promiscuous men to their regular female partners based in rural areas (ibid, 2006:40). The South African study by Wilkinson et al. (1999:26) identified the circular migration of men between an urban workplace and a rural home as one of the main reasons for the continued high prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among rural women.

Having an STI increases the risk of HIV transmission in several ways:

- STIs cause inflammation of the mucous membrane which brings a large number of immune cells to the area to fight the infection;
- Immune cells are known to be involved in HIV transmission; and
- Some STIs also cause open lesions or sores that offer an easy way for the virus to enter the body and cause an infection (Sheth, 2009).

### **2.3.2 Concurrency: creating 'sexual superhighways'**

In the late 1980's analysts suggested that lifestyle would play a dominant role in determining the individual changes of HIV infection and that the level of the disease over time is more likely to be determined by changing lifestyles rather than by medical breakthroughs (Caldwell, Caldwell & Quiggin, 1989:186). A lifestyle choice, identified as one of the main underlying causes for the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS infections in sub-Saharan Africa, is multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships. These partnerships have the potential to create complex sexual networks within which the virus can spread – the so-called 'superhighway' for the spread of HIV (Beyrer, 2007:981; Green, Mah, Ruark &

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<sup>12</sup> For more on the link between HIV and migrant labour practices, see section 2.2.3

Hearst, 2009:63; Halperin & Epstein, 2004:4; Kenyon & Badri, 2009:31; Reniers & Watkins, 2010:299).

Concurrency represents an alternative to sequential monogamy and is defined as ‘sexual partnerships that overlap in time, when one partnership starts before another terminates’ (Morris & Kretzschmar, 1997:641; Kenyon & Badri, 2009:29). Typically, a person in a concurrent sexual relationship will have a primary relationship, as well as an additional stable secondary relationship. These extramarital partners are referred to as the ‘city wife’, the ‘second wife’, or the ‘permanent girlfriend’ (Engel, 2006:218).

In concurrent partnerships, much of the protective effect of partner sequence is lost because earlier partners remain connected to the subject and can be exposed when the subject becomes infected by a later concurrent partner (Morris & Kretzschmar, 1997:642). Even though the primary partner might have no other partner, the secondary partner might have one or more concurrent partners, and links everyone up to a larger sexual network (Shelton et al.:2005:1057). It is believed that serial monogamy and sporadic one-off sexual encounters (such as with prostitutes) might not contribute as much to new infection rates as do networks of longer-term concurrent or overlapping partnerships (Shelton, Cassell & Adetunji: 2005:1057).

A joint inquiry by the Southern African Development Community and UNAIDS (as cited in Kenyon & Badri, 2009:29) concluded that:

high levels of multiple and concurrent sexual partnerships by men and women with insufficient, correct condom use, combined with low levels of male circumcision are the key drivers of the epidemic in the Southern African region.

A comparative study of sexual behaviour has shown that African men and women are not more promiscuous than heterosexual people in other world regions: they typically do not have more sexual partners than people elsewhere and report roughly similar, if not fewer, numbers of lifetime partners (Caraël as cited in Halperin & Epstein, 2004:4; Epstein, 2009:22; Green et al, 2009:64). The difference seems to be that in Africa a high proportion of men and women often have more than one –



typically two or perhaps three – established concurrent sexual partnerships that can overlap for months or even years (Halperin & Epstein, 2004:4). This is common when the couple have had a child together and the sexual relationship continues long after they ceased to be each other's main partner (Jewkes, 2009:32). An international comparative study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) (as cited in Kenyon & Badri, 2009:29) found that concurrency rates were considerably higher in sub-Saharan Africa (18-55%) than in other Third World areas, such as South Asia (3%).

When Zuma married his third wife, Thobeka Stacie Madiba, in January 2010, he had already paid lobola for a sixth prospective wife, Gloria Bongzi Ngema ("The politics of love", 2010:8; "Presidency lays down the law", 2010:5), with whom he had a child in 2006 (Dibetle, 2010:2). Zuma also paid lobola to the family of Swazi Princess Sebentile Dlamini in 2002 (Gama, 2002; Kabizokwakhe, 2013).

Concurrency rates in southern Africa seem to be tied to a particular masculine identity that is largely determined by a man's ability to attract and maintain sexual partners (Brown, Sorrell & Raffaelli, 2005:587). Despite widely dispersed information about HIV and AIDS, the need for men to have sex with multiple partners combined with negative attitudes towards condom use and the desire to father many children continue to put men's sexual health at risk (Brown, Sorrell & Raffaelli, 2005:587).

Concurrent relationships act as an accelerant of HIV transmission due to two main factors: Firstly, concurrency has a dramatic effect on increasing the size of the 'connected component' – the number of persons who are directly or indirectly sexually connected at any point in time. Secondly, the infection-transmission-lowering effect of 'partner-sequencing' (where the HI-virus is trapped in a monogamous relationship after transmission) is lost in the concurrent relationship (Kenyon & Badri, 2009:31). The result is that concurrent or simultaneous sexual partnerships are far more dangerous than serial monogamy, because they link people up in a giant web of sexual relationships that creates ideal conditions for the rapid spread of HIV (Epstein, 2009:55; Green et al, 2009:65).

The infectiousness of HIV varies with the concentration of virus in the blood – the higher the concentration, the more likely it becomes for the virus to get into genital fluids and to be passed on during sex (Epstein, 2009:60). In the first few weeks or months after infection, a person's blood teems with the HI-virus until such time as the immune system produces antibodies and cells that attack HIV and the virus levels fall (Epstein, 2009:60; Green et al, 2009:65).

HIV transmission is more rapid with long-term concurrency because the viral load, and thus infectivity, is much higher during the initial weeks or months after infection: as soon as one person in a network of concurrent relationships contracts HIV, everyone else in the network is placed at risk (Halperin & Epstein, 2004:5; Chersich & Rees, 2008:S28; Green et al, 2009:65)<sup>13</sup>. When one considers that HIV transmissibility is enhanced 10- to 40-fold in the acute infection phase, one can see how the risk factor for everyone in a concurrent sexual network is increased as soon as one person in that network is infected (Kenyon & Badri, 2009:31).

In contrast, when an infected person in a stable monogamous relationship has a one-night stand, the casual partner has a good chance of escaping infection because HIV transmission is a 'stochastic process': it occurs as a matter of chance, like the flip of a coin, since the HIV-positive person will transmit the virus, on average, only once in a hundred or so sex acts (Epstein, 2009:57). By the time that the serial monogamist has moved on to a new partner, his/her viral load will have fallen, reducing the risk to the new partner (Epstein, 2009:61).

### **2.3.3 The Mbeki debate: the link between poverty and HIV transmission**

Former President Thabo Mbeki insisted that questions of health and disease should be understood in their social, political, economic and cultural contexts (Hoad, 2005:104). In 1999, Mbeki began to solicit the opinions of a murky, informal network of scientists and activists known as 'AIDS dissidents' who claimed that the disease is not caused by sexual behaviour and HIV, but by a vague collection of environmental and nutritional factors such as vitamin deficiencies, chemical pollution

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<sup>13</sup> In contrast to concurrent relationships, serial monogamy traps the virus within a single relationship for months or years (Halperin & Epstein, 2004:5).

and poverty (Epstein, 2009:106). Mbeki stunned scientists at the 13<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Conference in Durban in July 2000 when he singled out extreme poverty, not HIV, as the cause of AIDS (Swarns, 2000).

While the AIDS dissidents' ideas have been broadly dismissed by the scientific community, it has been suggested that socio-economic background is the most significant factor for predicting the sustained adoption of risk prevention measures in South Africa (Eaton, Flisher, & Aarø, 2002:162). Poverty has been found to drive women into vulnerable occupations and fostering disease by weakening medical systems and putting treatment beyond the reach of the poor (Iliffe, 2006:42).

Poverty is often the reason given for the commodification of sex, in which women agree to sexual relationships with men in exchange for financial support (Eaton, Flisher, & Aarø, 2002:162). Alternatively, the situation may not be an overtly monetary exchange, but rather based on the otherwise out-of-reach status, gifts, or financial assistance, only an older partner with money can offer (Eaton, Flisher, & Aarø, 2002:162). Regardless of the reason, the exchange of sex for money or gifts means that sex happens on the man's terms – and that usually means without a condom (*ibid.*).

While the traditional markers of a man's masculinity in sub-Saharan Africa remain having multiple sexual partners and fathering many children, modern markers of wealth – a car, money, education, and a job – have been added to the equation, particularly in urban areas (Brown, Sorrell & Raffaelli, 2005:594).

Surprisingly then, some research seems to point in the opposite direction: there is a stronger relation between household wealth and HIV prevalence (Shelton, Cassell & Adetunji, 2005:1057). Shelton et al. (2005:1057-1058) suggests a few reasons to explain the observed wealth-HIV relationship: Firstly, household wealth is equated to urban residency and HIV is higher in urban areas. Secondly, HIV prevalence is partly a function of survival and wealthier people with HIV probably

survive longer. Thirdly, wealth is associated with mobility, time and the additional resources that enable people, especially men, to have concurrent sexual partnerships.<sup>14</sup>

A defining factor in the wealth/HIV debate centres around residency: the urban poor in sub-Saharan Africa have significantly higher odds of HIV infection than their urban non-poor counterparts, despite poverty being associated with a significantly lower risk among rural residents (Magadi, 2013:1645). Then there is also the economics of sexual behaviour: adverse future prospects of people living in poverty are likely to increase their readiness to take risks such as transactional sex and substance abuse (Magadi, 2013:1645; Rodrigo & Rajapakse, 2009:10).

#### **2.3.4 Biological vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS**

The spread of HIV/AIDS is influenced by various factors, including demographics such as age and gender, social practices such as sexual networking and medical factors, including the provision of anti-retrovirals and the treatment of AIDS-related opportunistic infections (Gouws & Abdool Karim, 2005:50).

The impact of biological factors is universal to all women and puts them at a distinct disadvantage to men with regard to HIV infection rates (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:166; Chersich & Rees, 2008:S27; Magadi, 2011:535; Rodrigo & Rajapakse, 2010:10). There are several factors that make women biologically more vulnerable than men to sexual infection with HIV, the most important being:

- the larger genital mucosal surface that is exposed during intercourse;
- the higher viral load in semen (compared to the viral load in vaginal fluids);
- the prolonged presence of the semen in the female genital tract after acts of sex;
- the exposure to considerable amounts of seminal fluid during sex if ejaculation occurs;
- the lack of detection of sexually transmitted infections<sup>15</sup>;

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<sup>14</sup> The alternative seems to be the norm for women, who maintain multiple concurrent partners in an effort to improve their economic situation (Shelton, Cassell & Adetunji, 2005:1058).

- the presence of micro-lesions that can occur during intercourse and provide entry points for the virus (very young women are even more vulnerable in this respect because they have not reached physiological maturity);
- forced or coerced sex that increases the risk of micro-lesions;
- the practice of ‘dry sex’ in some African cultures which causes tears in the genital tract during sex;
- the overall warm and moist environment of the vagina – the perfect place for bacteria to grow (Rodrigo & Rajapakse, 2010:9; Sheth, 2009; Tigawalana, 2010; “Women and HIV/AIDS”, 2000).

Women’s vulnerability to HIV is directly linked to the vertical infection of their infants during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding, yet the importance of heterosexual intercourse and breastfeeding in HIV transmission was downplayed for years (Birdsall, Nkosi, Hajiyiannis, & Parker, 2004; Jha, 2001:224). An estimated 90% of HIV-positive children live in sub-Saharan Africa and the highest antenatal HIV prevalence (34.5%) in South Africa is found among women aged 25-29 (Birdsall et al., 2004).

About half of mother-to-child transmission is due to breastfeeding, with the rest occurring before or at birth (Jha, 2001:224). Clinical trials have shown that many mother-to-child transmission infections are preventable, either through breast milk substitutes or a short course of antiretroviral drugs such as Zidovudine or Nevirapine (ibid, 2001:224).

Key factors that determine the spread of infectious diseases, such as AIDS, include the contact rate, the infectiousness and the duration of infectiousness (Gouws & Abdool Karim, 2005:50). HIV/AIDS is unique in that its spread is further dependant on demographic factors including age and gender; social factors including sexual networking patterns and sexual practices; biological variables such as the presence of other sexually transmitted infections and male circumcision; and medical

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<sup>15</sup> Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) often remain untreated because women are either asymptomatic or the symptoms are not acted upon (Wilkinson et al, 1999:22).

factors including the provision of anti-retrovirals and the treatment of AIDS-related opportunistic infections (ibid, 2005:50).

### **2.3.5 Social and cultural vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS**

The biological vulnerability of women and girls for HIV infection is further exacerbated by the consequences of gender inequalities: low socioeconomic and political status, unequal access to education and employment and a higher prevalence of violence (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:165; Higgins et al, 2010:435; UNAIDS, 2010:130). While the impact of biological factors are universal to all women, this is not true of non-biological factors (Rodrigo & Rajapakse, 2009:10). Caldwell, Caldwell & Quiggin (1989:189) found that the African system of emotional and economic weakness within the conjugal bond is reinforced by “polygyny, the great age gap between spouses and the long post-partum period of sexual abstinence”.

Many women within a marriage or monogamous relationship are vulnerable to the unfaithfulness of their partners (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:169; Tigawalana, 2010). Urbanisation and modernisation have transformed modern sexual partnerships to include mistresses and extramarital love affairs while the African patriarchal system legitimises male dominance and female subordination while tolerating multiple sexual partnerships (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:169; Tigawalana, 2010).

Magadi (2011:533) found that the risk of HIV infection among women is higher among those who are unmarried (never married, widowed or divorced/separated) or married in polygamous unions. Although most African women in multiple or concurrent partnerships are not prostitutes, such relationships often include a quasi-transactional aspect, related to issues of gender inequality, poverty and the globalisation of consumerism (Halperin & Epstein, 2004:5). Traditional gender norms place women at increased risk as they have less freedom in choosing their partners, initiating and pacing sexual activity, and negotiating on safer sex (Rodrigo & Rajapakse, 2009:12).

Entrenched gender inequalities do not only increase the vulnerability of women to HIV infection, but are also a factor in the spread of the epidemic through economic dependency, lack of

assets, and lack of protection against abuse and exploitation (Tigawalana, 2010). Something as simple as denying women access to education and gainful employment could force many into cohabitation and temporary sexual relationships in return for financial support for items like rent and food (Tigawalana, 2010; UNAIDS, 2010:76). Existing gender differences in power relations and decision-making may lead to women experiencing violence when attempting to negotiate safer sex through condom use or being coerced into sex, increasing their risk of HIV infection (Magadi, 2011:523).

Young women's risk of HIV infection is elevated by intergeneration sex or age-disparate partnerships with men who are at least five years older (Jha, 2001:224; Tigawalana, 2010; UNAIDS, 2010:76). Relationships between young women and older male partners are common in sub-Saharan Africa and generally found to be associated with unsafe sexual behaviour, low condom use and an increased risk of HIV infection (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S18).

The 67-year-old Zuma is a prime example of an older man who has relationships with younger women (Cullinan, 2010:13):

His latest two wives, Nompumelelo Ntuli and Thobeka Madiba, are both in their 30s. [Sonono] Khoza is 39, while the woman who accused him of rape, known only as "Khwezi" was 31 at the time. Both Khoza and "Khwezi" are the daughters of Zuma's friends – so these were literally cases of "intergenerational sex".

Statistics reflect the increased risk of HIV infection among women having intergenerational sex: the South African national household survey of 2005 found a high HIV prevalence (29.5%) among young women aged 15-19 years who had a partner who was at least five years older (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S18). Several factors have been identified that put young women in age-disparate relationships at risk, one of them being low risk perception. Young women often view older men as 'safe' partners because they appear to be more stable and more responsible (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S18). Yet the exact opposite is true: older male sexual partners are more likely than younger men to be infected with HIV due to having had greater exposure to the risk of HIV infection (Magadi,

2011:536; UNAIDS, 2010:132). Age disparities and economic dependence also prevent young women from insisting on safe sex practices (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S18).

South Africa has high teenage HIV prevalence rates: 2.5% of males and 6.7% of females in 2008 (“South Africa HIV & AIDS statistics”, 2013). Adolescence is often marked by scant economic resources, high demand for material goods and high levels of peer influence and pressure (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2002:4). Older, wealthier men often step into this situation, providing young women with money, transport or other gifts as an explicit part of a sexual relationship (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2002:5). These men are colloquially referred to as ‘sugar daddies’ or the ‘three c’s boyfriends’ – cash, car and cell phone (Pisani, 2008:136) – but in many cases young girls who have financial problems exchange sex for money to buy the basics such as soap and food or to pay for their education (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:168).

These transactional sexual relationships with their accompanying expectation of material gain must not be confused with prostitution where there is an agreed fee (Jewkes, 2009:32).<sup>16</sup> Meekers and Calvès (as cited in Kaufman & Stavrou, 2002:6) found that economic hardship may increase the number of sexual partners for both boys and girls, thus also increasing their risk for contracting HIV.

Studies on age-disparate relationships suggest that even when young women are aware of the risk, the benefits they derive from the relationships often outweigh the cost of contracting HIV (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S20). These women are under no illusion of the high rates of AIDS illness and death in their communities. Studies found that this knowledge can even promote their involvement in age-disparate liaisons because they bring with them the possibility for enjoying life now while young, beautiful and alive (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008:S20).

### **2.3.6 Prevention messages and their effect on HIV transmission**

The advent of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) has made treatment more affordable and freely available in developing countries. It has also had an adverse effect in reducing

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<sup>16</sup> Many people who engage in ‘survival sex’ in southern Africa do not consider themselves sex workers (Andersson, Cockcroft & Shea, 2008:76).



AIDS mortality in the developed world, where risky behaviour has increased, likely in response to the availability of HAART and the improved prospects of life with HIV (Jha, 2001:224).

In many epidemiological studies about sexual behavioural change and HIV, sexual behaviours are separated from their cultural context and the media's prevention messages focus on conventional recommendations addressed to individuals with the naïve belief that they will lead to important behavioural changes at the population level (Craiel & Cleland, 2010:1219).

HIV prevention is a slow and laborious process at best, and much of South Africa's HIV prevention strategies are based on the difficult task of getting people to change their sexual behaviour (Cullinan, 2013:13). Behaviour change does not happen overnight, especially among older people with entrenched patterns (ibid.). While condom use has increased among young men, older people find it more difficult to adapt to less risky sexual behaviour (ibid.).

This is again illustrated by Zuma's behaviour:

In 2005, Zuma was accused of raping an HIV-positive woman. During his trial in 2006, he admitted that he had not used a condom, and was ridiculed for saying that he had protected himself by taking a shower after sex. But last year, despite marrying two more wives, Zuma also produced a baby with a woman who was not his wife, Sonono Khoza (Cullinan, 2013:13).

Critics of the South African government's ABC message (abstinence, be faithful, condom use) such as Mark Heywood, director of the AIDS Law Project in Johannesburg, and author Helen Epstein, conclude that there is no evidence that the message of abstinence has had any impact in halting the spread of HIV (Baldauf & Moore, 2008). Heywood questions the restrictions set by the (US) President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) that recipient organisations should

focus on promoting abstinence instead of condom use and should not provide assistance to sex workers (Baldauf & Moore, 2008).<sup>17</sup>

African women's vulnerability to HIV is often attributed to sexual coercion and poverty that drives them into unwanted relationships, yet a study by Lurie et al. (as cited in Epstein, 2009:94) found that 30 to 40 percent of 'discordant couples' (in which one partner is positive and the other negative) it is the woman who is positive, not the man. Despite some women becoming infected through sexual coercion, many also contract the virus in consensual premarital or extra-marital relationships (Epstein, 2009:95).

The 'innocent wives' scenario where 'innocent' wives are infected by their promiscuous husbands, is not typical in Southern Africa, where many wives are having sex with people other than their husbands and an even higher proportion are having sex before they ever have a husband (Pisani, 2008:137). In an environment where the prospects of work and marriage are slim and where they are often aware of their boyfriends' unfaithfulness, many women are themselves quick to see the benefits of securing multiple partners (Hunter, 2005:398). Having more than one partner is often referred to as 'walking on two legs' with the implication that it places the woman in a stronger position (Jewkes, 2009:33).

The risk involved in concurrency extends to men and women who are faithful to a single partner: what matters is the nature of the sexual network, not the behaviour of any particular individual (Epstein, 2009:59). Concurrent sexual relationships imply long-term relationships in which there is a degree of intimacy and trust, hence condoms are seldom used (Epstein, 2009:59). That some women will remain abstinent until marriage is of little consequence when their future husbands are either already infected or will become so during the course of the marriage, putting to pains the 'ABC mantra' – the notion that abstinence, being faithful and using condoms is enough to prevent HIV – according to epidemiologist Quarraisha Abdool Karim (Shetty, 2009:871).

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<sup>17</sup> Nearly a third of PEPFAR funding for HIV prevention goes to faith-based organisations that advocate a message of abstinence and marital fidelity (Baldauf & Moore, 2008).

In the case of migratory labour such as mine workers, the ‘low-risk’ people (the faithful wives and girlfriends who remain at the rural home) are in actual fact the ‘high-risk’ people (typically thought to be the commercial sex workers) (Epstein, 2009:92). The reason for this is that the miners prefer long-term girlfriends in the townships to using prostitutes. When they do have sex with prostitutes, they know it is risky, so they usually use condoms. With their long-term township girlfriends, who trust them in return, condoms are used less often. In this way the miners, their wives and girlfriends unwittingly become caught up in a concurrency network (Epstein, 2009:92-93).

### **2.3.7 President Zuma as role model**

Thabo Mbeki, at that time president of South Africa, opened the debate on the “sexually charged representations of African bodies as central epistemological features of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European racism” (Hoad, 2005:101). In a speech at Fort Hare University on 12 October 2001 Mbeki lambasted “people who proclaim that our continent is doomed to an inevitable mortal end because of our unconquerable devotion to the sin of lust” and alluded to the sexually charged representations of African men as “natural-born, promiscuous carriers of germs” (Forrest & Streek, 2001)

Mbeki again brought the debate to the fore in 2004 when he was involved in a public spat with journalist and anti-rape campaigner, Charlene Smith, following a newspaper article by Smith about how rape had become a way of life in South Africa. Mbeki replied to Smith’s article, via his weekly column on the African National Congress website, stating that:

[Smith] was saying our cultures, traditions and religions as Africans inherently make every African man a potential rapist... [a] view which defines the African people as barbaric savages (“Mbeki slammed in rape race row”, 2004).

Following his acquittal of rape charges in 2006, Zuma issued the following statement: “I wish to state categorically and place on record that I erred in having unprotected sex. I should have known better and I should have acted with greater caution and responsibility” (“Zuma child report”, 2010).

His fathering of a child with Sonono Khoza in 2009 subsequently caused a public furore when the story broke in February 2010.

Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille said that Zuma was “setting back the fight against HIV and AIDS” and “failing to show leadership by having unprotected sex” (Mkhwanazi, 2010):

Although some might argue Zuma’s sex life was a private affair or ‘culture’, this was not the case as he was a public figure and his conduct had profound public consequences (ibid.).

An editorial in the *Cape Times* argues in a similar vein that:

The legitimate reason for the outrage [over Zuma’s fathering of Khoza’s child] is the very obvious contradiction between Zuma’s public and his private lives... Set against the backdrop of his pronouncements in public, Zuma’s behaviour in private exposes him as a man who does not practice what he preaches (“Affairs of state”, 2010:8).

A column by Zelda Jongbloed in *Die Burger* on 15 February 2010 asserts that President Zuma’s multiple relationships confirm the West’s view of African stereotypes (Jongbloed, 2010:8) whereby having multiple women is very much a status symbol and part of the image of the successful African male (Engel, 2006:218).

Letters to the editor published in the *Cape Times* in February 2010 question Zuma’s status as role model as follows:

Shame on you, Mr President! I wonder if Jacob Zuma has given any thought to the example he is setting to our nation’s millions of young men who look to him as a role model for their own behaviour? (“Letters: A poor example”, 2010:8).

I don’t like the message you are sending out to the masses – now those who cannot afford to have more than one wife and one child will be thinking they too should have a small army of children. Sadly they are the only ones who suffer (“Letters: Wrong message”, 2010:8).

I really wonder what the staunch supporters of President Jacob Zuma are saying now after the JZ and Irvin Khoza's daughter's saga... We have lowered the standard for one to occupy the highest office in the land and these are just some of the consequences of all our omissions ("Letters: Lowered standards", 2010:8).

Columnist Rhoda Kadalie writes in *Die Burger*

Dit is te betreur dat die neiging om kultuur as verontskuldiging vir sulke verhoudings te gebruik 'n nasionale tydverdryf geword het. Wanneer die president dit as verskoning gebruik, skep hy presedente wat rampspoedige gevolge vir toekomstige generasies sal hê (Kadalie, 2010:12).

*English translation: It is sad that using culture to justify these types of relationships is becoming a national pastime. When the president uses [culture] as an excuse, it sets a president that can have disastrous consequences for future generations.*

## Chapter 3 Research theory

### 3.1 Media framing

#### 3.1.1 Introduction to media framing

Framing refers, on the one hand, to the manner in which journalists shape news content within a familiar frame of reference and on the other hand, to the audience who adopts these frames and sees the world in a similar way to the journalists (Van Gorp, 2007:61). The concept of a 'frame' suggests that a piece of information is only awarded meaning when it is placed in a context of other information (Jensen, 2002:149). Framing essentially involves selection and salience: selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communicating text (Entman, 1993:52). Entman (1993:53) further defines salience as "making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful or memorable to audiences". Similarly, Van Gorp defines 'salience' as

The process of emphasizing certain information and making it more significant so that the audience will notice it more easily (2007:67).

Framing is rooted in both psychology and sociology, but references to framing are also found in linguistics and discourse analysis and political science (Benford & Snow, 2000:611; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:11; Van Gorp, 2007:60). The psychological origins of framing can be traced back to the experimental work by Kahneman and Tversky (1973) that examined how different presentations of essentially identical decision-making scenarios influence people's evaluations of the various options presented to them and ultimately the choices they make (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:11).

The sociological foundations of framing were laid by Goffman who made the assumption that individuals struggle to understand the world fully and interpret their life experiences. In order to process new information efficiently, individuals apply interpretive schemas or 'primary frameworks' to classify information and interpret it meaningfully (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:12). Hall (as cited in Benford & Snow, 2000:613) referred to framing as "the politics of signification".

### 3.1.2 How frames work

Framing is both a macro- and a micro-level construct (Scheufele, 1999:106). As a macro-construct, framing refers to the presentation of information in a way that resonates with existing underlying schemas among their audiences (Shoemaker & Reese as cited in Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:12). As a micro-construct, framing describes how people use information and the way issues are presented to form impressions (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:12).

Price and Tewksbury (as cited in Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:15) found that framing focuses not on which topics or issues are selected for coverage by the news media, but instead on the particular ways in which those issues are presented. Framing has an applicability effect: the message suggests a connection between two concepts that the audience, after exposure to the message, accept to be connected (ibid.).

Entman (1993:52) sets out four distinct functions of framing: firstly, frames define problems (what the causal agent is doing, usually measured in terms of common cultural values); secondly, frames diagnose causes (identifying the forces creating the problem); thirdly, frames make moral judgments by evaluating causal agents and their effects; and lastly, frames suggest remedies (offering and justifying treatments for the problems and predicting their likely effects). Entman (ibid.) used the Cold War as an example to suggest that frames have at least four locations in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver and the culture.

Even if journalists are personal witnesses to the event, they still only perceive part of the reality (Van Gorp, 2007:67). This inability to perceive objective reality explains why selection and ordering by the media is inevitable (ibid.).

Entman (2007:164) defines framing as “the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation”. Framing shapes and alters audience members’ interpretations and preferences through priming: “the process of introducing or raising the salience or apparent importance of certain ideas that encourage the audience to think, feel and decide in a particular way” (Entman, 2007:164).

The purpose of frames is two-fold: by selecting and calling attention to particular aspects of the reality that is being described, frames simultaneously direct attention away from other aspects:

Most frames are defined by what they omit as well as include, and the omissions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience (Entman, 1993:54).

The frame is an invitation or stimulus to read a news story in a particular way, leading to a specific definition of an event and a moral judgment of a person to come more easily across the receiver's mind (Van Gorp, 2007:73). There is more or less consensus among media scholars that the picture of 'reality' that news claims to provide is nothing more than "a selective construct made up of fragments of factual information and observation that are bound together and given meaning by a particular frame, angle of vision or perspective" (McQuail, 2005:101). Journalists do not function in a vacuum: past, present, and future expectations lead to the construction of an own social reality (Johnson-Carte, 2005:1). To therefore assume that 'facts' can be gathered by disinterested and neutral observation is "hopelessly naive" (ibid, 2005:2).

At the same time, news is also the outcome of a process of negotiation between the reporter and the source of information – a 'dance' between reporters and their sources (Miller & Williams, 1993:126). In tackling this question, one of the 'founding fathers' of the sociology of news, Walter Lippmann, focused on the process of news gathering as the "objective clear signal which signifies an event" (McQuail, 2005:375).

Research on media effects since the early 1980s is characterised by 'social constructivism' whereby audiences rely on "a version of reality built from personal experience, interaction with peers, and interpreted selections from the mass media" (Scheufele, 1999:105). McQuail (2005:102) echoes this by identifying a few interesting postulates of social constructionism, namely that "meanings are offered by media, but can be negotiated or rejected" and the idea that the "media cannot objectively report on social reality" because all facts are interpretations.



What is news then? Of the different news mediums, the newspaper is, arguably, “the archetype, as well as the prototype, of all modern mass media” (Tunstall as cited in McQuail, 2005:375), with news being the central ingredient of the newspaper. Early news commentator Robert Park compared the essential properties of the news report with another form of knowledge or record of past events – history – and located news as somewhere in the middle of the continuum that ranges from ‘acquaintance with’ to ‘knowledge about’ an event (McQuail, 2005: 375).

News is not a reflection of a world ‘out there’, but rather the product of the “practices of those who have the power to determine the experience of others” (Molotch & Lester as cited in Miller & Williams, 1993:127). News is the one component that distinguishes a newspaper from other kinds of print media, earning it a special status or protection in society and allowing it to express opinion in the name of the public (McQuail, 2005:375).

### **3.1.3 Constructing news frames**

The concept of news framing is interchanged with widely used terms such as ‘frame of reference’, ‘context’, ‘theme’, or ‘news angle’ (McQuail, 2005:378). Outside the formal scholarly discourse the use of the words ‘frame’, ‘framing’ and ‘framework’ are common and their connotation is roughly the same (Entman, 1993:52). According to Entman, framing essentially involves ‘selection’ and ‘salience’: to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text (ibid.).

Entman (as cited in McQuail, 2005:378) summarises the main functions of frames as defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgements and suggesting remedies. This is achieved through a number of textual devices, including using certain words or phrases, making certain contextual references, choosing certain pictures or film, giving examples as typical and referring to certain sources (ibid, 2005).

Scheufele (1999:106) pinpoints two concepts of framing: media frames and individual frames. This distinction suggests that frames serve both as devices embedded in political discourse (media frames) and as internal structures of the mind (individual frames). Most frames are defined by

what they omit, as well as include and the omissions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience (Entman, 2007:54).

Scheufele (1999:115) identifies three potential sources of influence: the first source of influence is journalist-centered influences (the frames constructed by the journalist to structure and make sense of incoming information, most notably through variables such as ideology, attitudes, and professional norms), secondly news framing is influenced by factors like the type or political orientation of the medium and thirdly external sources of influence (for example authorities and interest groups).

It is almost impossible to stand completely unbiased and isolated from the items of fact. The moment a story arrives on the journalist's desk, it is already clouded in a built-in frame that suits the purposed of the source and is unlikely to be purely objective (McQuail, 2005:379).

The result is that even when following the rules for 'objective' reporting, journalists can still convey a dominant framing of the news that prevents most audience members from making a balanced assessment of a situation (Entman, 2007:56). Gamson and Modigliani (as cited in Scheufele, 1999:106) conceptually defined a media frame as "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events". The frame suggests the essence of the issue by turning meaningless and non-recognisable happenings into a discernible event. In contrast, individual frames are defined as "mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information" (Entman, as cited in Scheufele, 1999).

Fishman (as cited in Scheufele, 1999:117) suggests that similar to 'regular' audiences, journalists are also susceptible to frames set by news media. Fishman labelled this phenomenon a 'news wave' – where the framing of a story by a small number of local media is subsequently picked up by other journalists and news media.

In summarising the roles of the different frames, Friedland and Zhong (as cited in Scheufele, 1999:106) states that frames serve as “the bridge between larger social and cultural realms and everyday understanding of social interaction”.

Leading research suggests that on most matters of social or political interest, people are not generally well-informed and aware, and that framing therefore heavily influences their responses to communications (Entman, 1993:56). The frame manifests itself in media content through different framing devices, including word choice, metaphors, exemplars, descriptions, arguments and visual images (Van Gorp, 2007:64).

In a content analysis of media framing studies, Matthes (2009:355) found that, although visuals are not the main signifiers of frames, they are still treated as complementary elements and used for frame interpretation. Matthes (2009:350) distinguishes at least three roles for visual effects: firstly, text is coded and visuals are ignored, secondly, visuals are directly coded as a part of a frame, and thirdly, visual elements are not a main part of the frame, but are discussed when interpreting the frame. An example would be the front-page article of the *Cape Times* on 5 January 2010 (of Zuma’s wedding to Thobeka Madiba) that carried three photographs of the couple, at the wedding, in traditional Zulu dress (Maphumulo, 2010:1).

#### **3.1.4 Reporting a different view**

Identical frames may appear across different media, mainly because many media rely on the same information sources or serve as information sources for each other (Van Gorp, 2007:68). This enhances the persuasive power of the frames “because the media appear to address the audience with a single voice” (ibid.).

Croteau and Hoynes (as cited in Pelsler, 2002:11) recognise that “ideas and attitudes that are routinely included in media become part of the legitimate public debate about issues, [while] ideas that are excluded from the popular media ... have little legitimacy”. They simply fall outside the range of ‘acceptable ideas’. In terms of framing news: “the ideological influence of media can be seen in the absences and exclusions just as much as in the content of the messages” (ibid, 2002:11).

In their book on the media's response to the United States' invasion of Iraq by the administration of George W. Bush, Bennett et al. (2007:x) speak on how "balancing the spin of prominent officials with reasonable challenges can hold government up to the bright light of public accountability". One of the lone dissident voices on Zuma's version of 'Zulu culture' during his rape trial was an article in the *Mail & Guardian*<sup>18</sup> that quoted an unnamed prominent Zulu cultural activist who noted "what Jacob Zuma and the complainant did is not Zulu culture. Zulu culture tells us to respect each other and I don't think JZ showed any respect to the complainant nor to himself. At this point Zulu culture failed, but Zuma culture conquered" (Moya, 2006).

Pelser probits "the formation of a frame is determined as much by what the frame includes as by that which it excludes" (2002:26). Whilst not going as far as to question if Zuma is indeed practicing polygamy (as opposed to simply indulging in multiple or concurrent sexual relationships), the *Mail & Guardian's* blogging website (*Thought Leader*) does offer an alternative view. One blog on the *Thought Leader* website draws a direct link between the macho imagery of music videos screened on MTV and VH1 where "every fifth video shows a male rapper with golden rings, chains and teeth, accompanied by a decorative herd of females in various stages of undress" and "the 'indigenous' version [of] Jacob Zuma and his group of spouses" (Van der Westhuizen, 2010).

The combination of the president's "collection of women as a sign of masculine potency" and "South Africans' obsessive following of its 'leaders', means that Zuma's contribution to his ideologically motley coalition of forces is ethnic and patriarchal chauvinism" (ibid, 2010).

Dominant news perspectives (or 'news frames') can produce various results, among them arousing public attention by labelling events in ways that evoke moral disapproval, establishing empathy with people who have been harmed or victimised and attributing responsibility for events to particular people or policies that can be held accountable (Bennett, 2007:89).

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<sup>18</sup> Buiten (2013:61) notes in an article published in *Ecquid Novi: African journalism studies* that the *Mail & Guardian* provides an exception to the general focus on gender within newsroom relationships (as opposed to gender representations in the media) with journalists from the *Mail & Guardian* "showing a consciousness of the ways in which their understandings of gender shaped gendered news texts".

Dr Desiree Lewis, associate professor in the department of women's and gender studies at the University of the Western Cape, states that Zuma has used the "tradition card" opportunistically, especially in the run-up to the African National Congress's elective conference in Mangaung where Zuma canvassed for a second term as President of the ANC (Parker, 2012):

Generally, Zuma's leadership style has always revolved around spectacle, demonstrating both to his enemies and supporters that he embodies some kind of ethnic authenticity.

Lewis concludes that rather than pointing to a growing conservatism in the country, polygamy "[shows] a deeply embedded conservatism over gender issues in sections of society that still relied on traditional gender roles and had feudal-like notions of authority, obedience and loyalty" (ibid, 2012).

### **3.2 Introduction to research design and methodology**

The research conducted in this study is two-fold:

- it examines the framing of news articles of Zuma's multiple or concurrent relationships as examples of cultural polygamy
- it examines women's understanding of and attitudes towards Zuma's relationships.

At the start of any research problem, the researcher must ascertain two major aspects of the research design: precisely what is it that you want to find out, and what is the best way to do that (Babbie, 1992:89). Methodology represents the principal ways in which the researcher acts on her environment, that is, her methods for conducting research (Lemon, 1995:30). The research methodology employed in this study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques with the aim of juxtaposing the cultural practice of polygamy with the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships.

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount (Lemon, 1995:32). The quantitative technique of content analysis was employed to examine three South African newspapers during the period of January to May 2010: the weekly papers *Sunday Times* and *Mail & Guardian*, and an English daily published in the Western Cape, *Cape Times*. The newspaper analysis

focused on four key events in the summer and autumn of 2010 to find out if the South African media framed President Zuma's practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships as cultural polygamy.

Compared to quantitative research, which involves 'some sort of counting', qualitative research methods are better able to penetrate the deeper layers of a message (Wigston (1997:152). Qualitative research attempts to examine a phenomena in a holistic manner and can therefore be described as both analytic and interpretative (Lemon, 1995:33). In this study, the qualitative research takes the form of interviews with a number of women to ascertain their understanding of polygamy and the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships.

### **3.3 Theoretical framework: feminist media theory**

#### **3.3.1 Introduction to feminist media theory**

The media's role in framing President Zuma's multiple or concurrent sexual relationships as cultural polygamy will be measured against the theoretical framework of feminist media theory. Buiten (2013:56) states that:

South Africa's news media represent a powerful site through which social and cultural meanings around gender are articulated and contested (Buiten, 2013:56):

The ability of mass media to reach, inform, educate and motivate whole populations, makes it essential to developmental issues and one of the most powerful change agents in modern society (Okello-Orlale, 2006:50,51). The question of gender touches almost every aspect of the media-culture relationship (McQuail, 2005:121).

Over the last twenty years, the founding principles of contemporary western feminism has changed dramatically (Barrett & Philips as cited in Van Zoonen, 1994:3). Where feminists used to be united in their quest for the cause of women's oppression (generally assumed to be capitalism, patriarchy or sexist society), fragmentation makes it impossible to now think of 'feminist theory' as a consistent and homogeneous field (Van Zoonen, 1994:3). McQuail (2005:121) also notes that the reach of feminist media research today is much broader than the original limited agenda of under-

representation of women in the media and the stereotyping and sex-role socialisation of media content.

It is of course important to note that not all women support the calls for equality between men and women (in the same way that not all men are gender insensitive (Motsei as cited in Sesanti, 2009:210). Much of what has been written about women's rights in Africa has been written against the theoretical framework of womanism: "a feminist theory that emphasises a cognisance of colour and culture in the struggle for women's rights" (Sesanti, 2009:210).

When dealing with issues like culture, Sesanti (2009:212) points out that one must take cognisance of the fact that culture is constantly evolving and changing. Hamelink (as cited in Steeves, 1993:33) points out that cultures have influenced each other throughout history and that it is constantly evolving, in part, in response to the need to adapt to its unique environment. Yet, despite acknowledging that cultures are neither fixed nor stagnant entities, African culture in general 'remains African' (Makgoba, Shope & Mazwai as cited in Sesanti, 2009:212) with "one African Cultural System manifested in diversities" (Asante as cited in Sesanti, 2009:212).

Modern cultural feminist media studies goes far deeper than the original limited agenda of matters such as the under-representation of women in the media and the stereotyping and sex-role socialisation of media content (McQuail, 2005:121). Studying the role of the media in constructing a public identity of the women's movement, Van Zoonen (as cited in Creedon, 1993:6) concluded that coverage of the movement were based on three storylines:

- women's 'emancipation' is legitimate, 'feminism' is deviant;
- women's movement activists are quite different from and not representative of 'ordinary women'; and
- the movement is directed against men.

A characteristic of feminist research is its emphasis on action with the goal of changing the unequal status of women in culture (Creedon, 1993:8). Kanyoro (as cited in Okello-Orlale, 2006:48) cautions that: "unless information is used for constructive social change, it becomes an ivory tower of information and the documentation only as good as the paper it is written on".

Today the two common concepts that distinguish feminism from other perspectives in the social sciences and the humanities are ‘gender’ and ‘power’ (Van Zoonen, 1994:3-4). While the media tends to distort gender by assuming: “a stable and easily identifiable distinction between women and men”, Van Zoonen (1994:40, 41) proposes a new ‘cultural studies’ paradigm of: “overlapping and sometimes contradictory cultural descriptions and prescriptions referring to sexual difference”.

### **3.3.2 Application of feminist media theory to the research problem**

Okello-Orlale (2006:49) notes that traditionally, the mass media has “either sidelined women’s issues or stereotyped them through content and images”. In a South African context, gender, together with race and class, has been identified as a key social legacy facing the country (Buiten, 2013:55). Democratic South Africa has some of the most progressive gender legislation in the world (Buiten, 2013:55), yet the African patriarchal system legitimises male dominance and female subordination while tolerating multiple sexual partnerships (Ackermann & De Klerk, 2002:169; Tigawalana, 2010)<sup>19</sup>.

When asked to define the terms ‘gender’ and ‘gender transformation’, “most journalists and editors responded first in terms of women’s measurable representation and advancement in the workplace” (Buiten, 2013:61). The ideal is not to merge all women under an unrealistic canopy of sisterhood, but to recognise the impact of African diversity on the various forms of feminism (Kolawole, 2002:97). African women have a history of collective struggles that is the opposite of the popular feminist assumptions that “African women have suffered and still suffer in silence under the burden of oppression” (Kolawole, 2002:97). Daymond (as cited in Kolawole, 2002:96) argues that in a multi-cultural setting, women need to shift “from the simplistic (and ultimately exclusionary) assumption of sisterhood”.

Buiten (2013:56) concludes that although significant advances in gender equality have been made with regards to policy and legal measures, important lags persist in respect of broader social and

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<sup>19</sup> See section 2.3.5 (Social and cultural vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS).



cultural transformation. Dervin (as cited in Van Zoonen, 1994:128) claims that the political value of feminist research lies in its desire to: “give women a voice in a world that defines them as voiceless”. This necessitates a double consciousness on the part of the researcher: first in relation to her privileged role as researcher, and secondly, towards the research subject: “women who often do not have much to gain from being the subject of research and who are positioned as merely delivering information and experiences for the professional benefit of others” (Van Zoonen, 1994:129).

## **Chapter 4: Research design**

### **4.1 Quantitative research: newspaper analysis**

#### **4.1.1 Introduction to quantitative research**

Media content analysis has held a special interest to scholars since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when sociologist Max Weber identified media content as a means to monitor the ‘cultural temperature’ of society (Macnamara, 2005:69). The primary concern of quantitative research is to demonstrate a cause-effect relationship (Gunter, 2002:211), while stressing objectivity and searching to eliminate the human element (Neuman, 2003:141). In this study, the researcher aims to determine the effect, if any, that the media’s potential framing of President Zuma’s sexual conduct has had on South African women.

The process of framing a news story implies the bracketing of certain items of information to differentiate them from potentially endless masses of information (Jensen, 2002:149). Framing essentially influences how audiences think about issues (Jensen, 2002:150).

Wigston (1997:152) identifies three defining components of content analysis: a content analysis must be systematic, objective, and quantitative. ‘Systematic’ implies a set procedure of analysing the content; ‘objective’ means that the study can be duplicated by someone else with the same results; and ‘quantitative’ means that the analysis should give precise results, either numerical values or frequencies (Wigston, 1997:152).

#### **4.1.2 The newspapers selected**

The quantitative technique of textual analysis was employed in examining three South African newspapers during the period of January to May 2010: the weekly papers *Sunday Times* and *Mail & Guardian*, and the English daily, the *Cape Times*, published in the Western Cape. During this period in 2010, the three newspapers showed the following statistics (“The Press in South Africa”, 2010):

*Sunday Times:*

- South Africa's biggest Sunday newspaper,
- Established in 1906 and distributed all over South Africa and in neighbouring Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland,
- Owned by Avusa<sup>20</sup>,
- Language: English,
- Circulation: 462 370<sup>21</sup>,
- Readers: 3 800 000<sup>22</sup>.

*Mail & Guardian:*

- Formerly the *Weekly Mail*, the *Mail & Guardian* was established in 1985 in partnership with the *Guardian* of London,
- Owned by Mail & Guardian Media,
- Language: English,
- Circulation: 50 230,
- Readers: 428 000.

*Cape Times:*

- A daily published since 1876, the *Cape Times* is aimed at the middle classes of Cape Town and has mainly a white and coloured readership,
- Owned by Independent Newspaper Group,
- Language: English,

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<sup>20</sup> During the period researched in this thesis (January to May 2010) the *Sunday Times* was owned by Avusa – it is now owned by Time Media Group

<sup>21</sup> 'Circulation' refers to the number of copies sold. Data for the cited article was sourced from the Audit Bureau of Circulations South Africa (ABC) for October to December 2010.

<sup>22</sup> 'Readers' refers to the number of people who read the newspaper. Data for the cited article was sourced from the South African Advertising Research Foundation's All Media Products Survey (Amps) Average Issue Readership of Newspapers and Magazines for the period January to December 2010.

- Circulation: 423 710,
- Readers: 268 000.

The newspaper analysis focused on four key events during the period of January to April 2010. The four events are:

1. President Zuma's marriage to Thobeka Stacie Madiba on 4 January 2010. Madiba, who already has two children with Zuma, is his third wife ("Jacob Zuma weds third wife", 2010).
2. President Zuma's fathering of his 20th child with a woman who is neither one of his three wives nor a fiancée ("Jacob Zuma admits fathering 20th child", 2010). The mother of the child, born on 8 October 2009, is Sonono Khoza, the daughter of Irvin Khoza. Irvin Khoza is Zuma's long-time friend and chairperson of South Africa's 2010 World Cup Local Organising Committee (Govender, 2010:1).
3. President Zuma's official state visit to the United Kingdom on 4 March 2010. Zuma was accompanied by his third wife Thobeka Madiba ("Jacob Zuma arrives in Britain", 2010).
4. President Zuma declaring his negative HIV status on 25 April 2010 ("Setting a better example", 2010). Zuma publicly took an HIV test on 15 April 2010 as part of a government drive to encourage South Africans to voluntarily test for HIV and learn their HIV status ("Motlanthe and Zuma", 2010).

#### **4.1.3 Content analysis**

Content analysis is the process of making: "an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text" (McKee, 2008:1). As a research technique, content analysis is based on measuring the amount of something in a representative sample of mass media (Berger, 1991:25).

Once a body of content has been selected, the researcher must determine how much of that content to analyse (Gunter, 2002:221). The first step in the textual analysis of this research document was to scan the three newspapers for news items relating to the four events (stipulated in 3.3.2) during

the period of January to May 2010. News items were divided into five sections: article in the newspaper, editorial, opinion piece, cartoon and letter to the editor.

In order to answer the research question, the researcher scrutinised the news items selected using the ‘crude but useful technique’ (“Method in text-analysis”, 2007) of identifying high-frequency words used as alternatives in framing the news items selected. The words highlighted were: ‘culture’ or ‘cultural’, ‘Zulu’, ‘tribal’, ‘tradition’ and ‘polygamy’ or ‘concurrent’ and ‘multiple’ (when referring to sexual partners). The results of the quantitative analysis is presented as

Addendum A: *Sunday Times*

Addendum B: *Cape Times*

Addendum C: *Mail & Guardian*

#### **4.1.4 Limitations to quantitative content analysis**

Probably the greatest advantage of content analysis is that few resources are needed in terms of time and money (Babbie, 1992:328). Despite this, there are several factors to consider that might limit the scope of the study. Quantitative content analysis often makes few inferences about the potential significance of their findings and what they may reveal about the production process or the impact on the audience (Gunter, 2002:222). Content analysis is limited because the researcher is: “prevented from reading between the lines of media output and is expected not to ‘dig’ below the manifest level of analysis or to descend to the level of latent meanings and associate conclusions” (Van Zoonen, 1994:69).

With content analysis there is often a problem with sampling: how representative is the material studied (in this case the newspapers), relative to all the material that could be studied (Berger, 1991:29)? For this reason, the quantitative research in this study has been combined with qualitative research in the form of interviews that cast a broader light on the audience’s perception of President Zuma’s sexual practices.

The limitations of the quantitative analysis necessitated a qualitative discussion of the results, as will be discussed in Chapter 5: results and discussion.

## **4.2 Qualitative research: Interviews**

### **4.2.1 Introduction to qualitative research**

Qualitative research is concerned with ‘authenticity’: giving a fair, honest and balanced account from the viewpoint of someone who lives it each day (Neuman, 2003:185). Given the personal nature of the research question, it was imperative that this study include a qualitative component.

One of the problems a researcher faces when conducting survey research is finding the ‘right’ people to interview (Berger, 1991:38). This concerns two factors: first the researcher must consider the social and economic characteristics of the respondents (age, sex, race) and secondly, the researcher must ask questions that will provide useful information on the subject being researched (Berger, 1991:38).

### **4.2.2 Selecting the sample**

‘Sampling’ refers to the procedures that the researcher follows when selecting individual units of analysis from a larger population (Du Plooy, 1997:49). In communication research the term ‘population’ refers to the entire group that the researcher wants to investigate and the first step in selecting a sample will be to define the nature of the population (Du Plooy, 1997:49). The aim of the qualitative component in this study is to establish what women understand ‘polygamy’ and ‘multiple or concurrent sexual relationships’ to mean and to ascertain how women feel about President Zuma’s practice thereof.

Given that the population – women – is too large to measure, a subset of the greater population must be defined. In order to narrow the population down, a sampling frame is constructed by listing the elements from which the probability sample is selected (Babbie, 1992:208). The women interviewed were primarily selected on the basis of race and age: only Black African women were

interviewed because President Zuma links his practice of polygamy to his African, specifically Zulu, culture; and due to the personal nature of the questions, only adult women (over 18 years old) were interviewed.

Once the above sampling frame was established, every fifth woman who adhered to the criteria was approached. One of the main characteristics of non-probability samples is that the sample does not represent the population because each unit in the population does not have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Du Plooy, 1997:61). As a result the researcher cannot generalise the findings of the research<sup>23</sup>.

#### 4.2.3 Planning the questionnaire

When planning a questionnaire it is important that all the questions be unambiguous and perfectly clear to everyone (Berger, 1992:42). Important aspects to consider include:

- a) *The order of the questions* – do you start off with an interesting question, or do you first ask about the person’s social demographics?
- b) *The logic of the question order* – how the questions follow on from each other,
- c) *The utility of the questions* – you only have a limited number of questions that you can ask, so you must ask questions that will give you the information you need,
- d) *How many questions to ask* – each question must be limited to one topic,
- e) *The respondent’s ability to answer* – will the respondent have the knowledge to answer your questions?
- f) *The content of the questions* – are any of the questions biased?
- g) *The language used* – are the questions worded clearly?
- h) *The form of the questions* – are you asking open questions that require lengthy answers, or are they closed questions that will be answered with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’?
- i) *The purpose of the questions* – what exactly is it that you want to find out?

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<sup>23</sup> Also see recommendations for further study in Chapter 5.

- j) *The clarity of the questions* – do the questions require a single answer although they ask several questions? (Berger, 1991:42-43).

A typical questionnaire will often include as many statements as questions (Babbie, 1992:147). This is often the case where a particular attitude or perspective can be summarised in a brief statement with which the respondent can either agree or disagree (ibid.).

It was decided to have a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions in the questionnaire. In the case of closed-ended questions, the respondent is asked to select an answer from the options provided by the researcher, while in open-ended questions the respondent is asked to provide her own answer or explanation to the question (Babbie, 1992:147).

#### **4.2.4 Data collection**

Interviews took place on Tuesday 8 October 2013 in the vicinity of the Robbie Nurock Day Hospital in central Cape Town.

The researcher explained the purpose of the research to each interviewee, as well as the confidentiality of her participation. Participants were asked to sign a form stating that the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the research were properly explained to them before the interview commenced.

After the interview, participants were given an incentive of R50 in appreciation of their time.

#### **4.2.5 Interviewing**

Bower (as cited in Jensen 2002b:240) gives a common sense justification for the appeal of interviewing:

The best way to find out what the people think about something is to ask them.

Interviewing is one of the most widely used methods of data collection (Jensen, 2002b:240). There are a number of advantages in having a questionnaire administered by an interviewer, as



opposed to asking respondents to read questionnaires and enter their own answers (Babbie, 1992:269).

The advantages include:

- a higher response and completion rate than for example mail surveys;
- the presence of an interviewer generally decreases the number of ‘don’t knows’ and ‘no answers’;
- interviewers can explain confusing questionnaire items to the participants; and
- the interviewer can observe as well as ask questions (Babbie, 1992:269).

In-depth interviewing has a close affinity to conversation and is therefore well suited to tap into people’s perspective on the media (Jensen, 2002b:240). Once in the field, the researcher will try to establish rapport with respondents and to be accepted as non-judgmental and non-threatening (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998:82).

Interviews were conducted with 11 women in the vicinity of the Robbie Nurock Day Hospital in Buitenkant Street, central Cape Town, to ascertain their understanding of polygamy and multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships. A total of 11 women were interviewed for this study, each adhering to the following demographics: adult (over the age of 18) and South African.

#### **4.2.6 Ethical issues to consider**

Any ethical decisions will involve one’s personal sense of what is right (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998:36). Participation in any type of social research inevitably disrupts the subject’s regular activities and takes a portion of their time (Babbie, 1992:464; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998:40). On top of that, social research often requires that people reveal personal information about themselves to a complete stranger (Babbie, 1992:464).

An ethical clearance letter was obtained from the Department of Journalism at the University of Stellenbosch prior to the interviews being conducted. This was done in order to adhere to the university’s fundamental principles of research ethics and scientific integrity to which all research conducted at the University of Stellenbosch must adhere (“Framework policy”, 2009).

Ethical issues are seldom open and shut in social research, but it is important to be sensitive to that part of the research (Babbie, 1992:269). The main ethical issues that the researcher had to consider during the interview process were the issue of voluntary participation, the principle of no harm to the participants and the issue of anonymity and confidentiality.

#### **4.2.6.1 Voluntary participation**

A major tenet of research ethics is that participation must be voluntary: no one should be forced to participate in a study (Babbie, 1992:465). Closely related to voluntary participation is the requirement of informed consent whereby research participants must be fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research, and give their consent to participate (“Ethics in research”, 2006).

After introducing herself to each potential participant, the researcher explained the research topic and asked the participant to sign a form stating that she was fully informed of the nature of the research and the confidentiality of her participation.

#### **4.2.6.2 No harm to participants**

Not injuring your participants is one of the principles of conducting ethical research (Babbie, 1992:465). Revealing deviant behaviour or attitudes is likely to make participants feel uncomfortable and the affect can linger long after the research has been completed (Babbie, 1992:466). Asking people about their sexual behaviour is one clear example where media research can cause participants psychological distress (Priest, 1996:43). One way to minimise this harm is to follow especially stringent procedures to ensure confidentiality of the research data (Priest, 1996:43).

The nature of the questions asked in the researcher’s interviews falls within the ambit of Priest’s example of causing potential psychological distress (Priest, 1996:43). Great care was taken to explain to each participant the confidentiality of her participation. The researcher also paid careful attention to her own demeanour so as not to come across as judgmental or condescending to the participant’s lifestyle choices.

#### **4.2.6.3 Anonymity and confidentiality**

The terms ‘anonymity’ and ‘confidentiality’ are often confused with each other (Babbie, 1992:467). A respondent is considered ‘anonymous’ when the researcher cannot identify a given response with a given respondent. In an interview survey, like the one conducted during this research project, the respondent can never be considered anonymous, since the researcher collects the information from an identifiable respondent (Babbie, 1992:467).

In this research process, the respondents’ identity is ‘confidential’: the researcher is able to identify a given person’s responses but promises not to do so publicly (Babbie, 1992:467). No participant’s name was taken during the interview process and the participants were referred to as ‘Interviewee 1’, ‘Interviewee 2’ etc. Participants all signed a consent form stating that the research proposal and the confidentiality clause were adequately explained to them. Participants were asked to use only a signature and not to write out their names.

#### **4.2.7 Limitations to qualitative research**

One of the arguments that quantitative researchers often use is that qualitative research is too subjective because the results are expressed in language rather than in numbers (Priest, 1996:4,6). Disadvantages of face-to-face interviews may include higher expenses, problems in reaching certain locations and interviewer bias (Gunter, (2002:216). There is always the possibility that people may not give honest answers, if, for example, they fear that their answers will either make them look bad or lead to the surveyor to form a negative opinion about them (Berger, 1991:41).

Another factor that may affect the study’s validity and accuracy is when the interviewee does not understand a question, even when they think that they do (Berger, 1991:42). The researcher’s structuring of responses in closed-ended questions may also overlook some important responses (Babbie, 1992:148).

## **Chapter 5 Results and discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter analyses the results of both the initial quantitative study of newspaper articles and the qualitative method of interviews with women in the vicinity of the Robbie Nurock Day Hospital in central Cape Town.

Each of the three newspapers (*Sunday Times*, *Cape Times* and *Mail & Guardian*) published during the period of January to May 2010 was scrutinised for articles, editorials, opinion pieces, cartoons and letters to the editor in reference to each of the four events laid out in Chapter 4: Research design.

Each of these news items were then further studied for the occurrence of specific words ('culture', 'cultural', 'tradition', 'Zulu', 'tribal', 'polygamy', 'concurrent' and 'multiple') that bear testament to the media's framing, or not, with regards to President Zuma's multiple or concurrent sexual relationships. The results of the quantitative study is included in Addendum A, B and C. What follows is a detailed discussion of the articles published during the time period January to May 2010.

### **5.2 Newspaper study**

#### **5.2.1 Findings – *Sunday Times***

##### **5.2.1.1 Event 1: Marriage to Thobeka Stacie Madiba, 4 January 2010**

A front page article about President Zuma's then upcoming wedding to Thobeka Stacie Madiba was published in the *Sunday Times* of 3 January 2010 (Molele, 2010(a):1). The article emphasised the cultural aspects of the ceremony, referring to the: "Zulu ceremony known as an *udwendwe*" and the payment of "*lobolo*". A brief history is also given of president Zuma's previous marriages:

The 68-year-old president, probably the country's most prominent polygamist, has been married at least four times and is father to more than a dozen children.

The article makes a cultural reference to President Zuma's relationship with his other fiancée, Gloria Bongzi Ngema, by referring to the Zulu custom of "*umbondo*":

Zuma's new fiancée, Gloria Bongzi Ngema from Durban, brought *umbondo* to the Zuma family last Monday. This means that Zuma has paid *lobolo* to Ngema as the *umbondo* ceremony is always performed after *lobolo* has been paid.

A page 3 article on 10 January 2010 about President Zuma's fiancée Ngema, gives insight into the president's extended family dynamics (Mthethwa, 2010:3):

Zuma, 68, who early this week married KaMadiba at a colourful traditional wedding, paid *lobolo* for Ngema first before asking for KaMadiba's hand in marriage... But it is not known when the couple [Zuma and Ngema] will tie the knot. [Zuma and Ngema] have a four-year-old son, Sinqumo.

While journalists often use words such as 'umbondo', 'udwendwe' and 'lobolo' when referring to specific African traditions, an article by Fred Khumalo in the *Sunday Times* of 10 January 2010 criticises the media's lack of understanding of Zulu culture (Khumalo, 2010:4). Khumalo points out the media's misinterpretation of President Zuma's supposed 'fall' during a traditional Zulu dance at his wedding to Ngema and bemoans his colleagues' lack of understanding of cultural matters:

She [*iafrica.com* journalist Narissa Subramoney], like some of my colleagues, had taken the 'fall' at face value. In Zulu we call it '*ukusina uze uqethuke*'.

The misinterpretation by many in the media of President Zuma's 'fall' during his wedding dance is, according to Khumalo, testament of the conflating of African cultural practices and 'backwardness':

If you want to debate polygamy with Zuma, by all means confront the man and debate the issue. Separate the polygamy debate from what you call a 'backward' style of dancing or dressing up.

The practice of polygamy is examined in some detail in an article on 17 January 2010 that explores both the origins of polygamy and its modern variants (Molele (b), 2010:1-2):

To its ardent supporters, polygamy forms part of a new cultural wave among black South Africans who want to reclaim their heritage and the traditional values eroded by apartheid and racial domination.

According to Molele, polygamy has become a fashion statement that few men can afford:

Observers quip that this development is the new Mercedes-Benz: another symbol of ostentatious indulgence and power.

Molele quotes Nomboniso Gasa, a political and gender analyst, as saying:

Polygamy is an unpleasant spin-off of patriarchy... The fact of the matter is, most South African men cannot afford it.

The reader may well ask the question: why would women want to enter into a polygamous relationship? An article by Hlophe and Ngcaweni on 24 January 2010 offers seven reasons why women: “in an age of heightened feminism, the social and economic empowerment of women, growing individualism and rampant capital accumulation”, may choose to enter polygamous unions (Hlophe & Ngcaweni, 2010:5):

- i. the search for companionship in whatever form it presents itself;
- ii. societal pressure to enter into a marriage as opposed to being single;
- iii. unconditional love that fosters acceptance of a possibly undesirable living arrangement;
- iv. buying into the notion that it is in men’s nature to have multiple relationships;
- v. believing that monogamy is an unnatural social construct;
- vi. appreciating the communal values symbolised by polygamous families; and lastly,
- vii. polygamy could be viewed as a good form of social relations.

### 5.2.1.2 Event 2: Fathering of a child with Sonono Khoza, story broke 31 January 2010

The *Sunday Times* broke the story of President Zuma fathering a child with Sonono Khoza, daughter of his long-time friend and soccer administrator, Irvin Khoza, on 31 January 2010 (Govender, 2010:1-2). There are two distinct sub-texts to the story: first, the colourful Zuma family dynamics:

Baby Thandekile Matina Zuma, now nearly four months old, has been registered in her father's name and brings to 20 the number of children known to have been fathered by him – along with the 19 Zuma is officially said to have had, with his ex-wife, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, his late wife, Kate Zuma, and his current wives and girlfriends.

And secondly, the emphasis on culture and cultural practices in reporting on the birth of the baby:

...a delegation from KwaZulu-Natal, acting on Zuma's behalf, visited the Khoza family in December last year to discuss the Zulu customary damages, *inhlawulo*, that are due when a child is born out of wedlock.

The following week, the *Sunday Times*' lead article was Zuma's apology to South Africans for his fathering of a child outside wedlock (Malefane, 2010:1-2). The article reports on Zuma's references to culture and custom:

Defending himself earlier this week, Zuma said he had 'done the necessary cultural imperatives in a situation of this nature: for example, the formal acknowledgement of paternity and responsibility, including the payment of *inhlawulo* to the family. The matter is now between the two of us and, culturally, between the Zuma and Khoza families'.

Exactly what the tradition that President Zuma professes to uphold is, is questioned by Adam Habib in his opinion piece on 14 February 2010 where he proclaims that: "tradition, it seems is only mentioned when it suits the President's pleasures" (Habib, 2010:9).

Pregs Govender's article on 31 January 2010 makes it clear that the baby with Sonono Khoza is the result of President Zuma having "unprotected sex with a woman who is not his wife" and draws a parallel to a speech Zuma made in May 2006, following his acquittal on a charge of rape:

I wish to state categorically and place on record that I erred in having unprotected sex. I should have known better and I should have acted with greater caution and responsibility (Govender, 2010:1-2).

The *Sunday Times* published three short articles emphasising the disparity between the government's HIV-prevention message and President Zuma's personal conduct in the newspaper of 7 February 2010. The first article asks whether the president understands the government's ABC (abstain, be faithful, and condomise) mantra:

Clearly – as shown by the 20 children he has fathered over the past 33 years with 10 different women who do not include his senior spouse – he does not Abstain, intend to Be faithful or Condomise. Perhaps he thinks the acronym means Absolute Bareback Carnality ("Hogarth: not everything is as simple as ABC", 2010:8).

The second short article on 7 February 2010 is in the form of a quiz, asking the reader to identify the origin of the statement (by Professor Edward Rhymes):

Who said: "We are portrayed as... rampant sexual beasts, unable to control our urges, unable to keep our legs crossed, unable to keep it in our pants?" ("Hogarth: what a thing to say!", 2010:8).

The third article crowned President Zuma as the weekly 'Mampara of the week' for:

urging the nation to take personal responsibility in preventing HIV and AIDS and not exposing ourselves to unnecessary risks and, when eventually caught out, claiming that he had followed all the necessary cultural imperatives by acknowledging paternity and paying a fine to his pregnant girlfriend's family ("Mampara of the week", 2010:8).



Following the annual World Economic Forum, held in Davos, Switzerland, 27-31 January 2010, the *Sunday Times* portrayed President Zuma as a world leader who is not taken seriously on the world stage:

... while other heads of state and government were being asked on World Economic Forum panels about global economic growth, climate change and banking regulation, all anyone wanted to know from our President was how he coped with so much marriage and whether he loved all his wives equally (“Hogarth: the world and his wives”, 2010:6).

This sentiment is echoed in an editorial on 7 February 2010:

It is difficult to imagine how the people can now be confident that the President will handle sensitive matters of state properly when he cannot handle his personal affairs with honour and dignity... In addition to undermining the integrity of the ruling party, Zuma’s shenanigans also erode the dignity and gravitas of the President’s office. Most crucially, it does untold damage to this country’s image and its international stature (“Show respect to your people”, 2010:8).

A letter to the editor on 14 February 2010, following president Zuma’s apology for his relationship with Khoza, points out that Zuma’s concurrent sexual relationships (outside of his plural marriages) puts his wives at risk:

Is [Zuma] apologising for his failure to recognise the deadly risk to which he exposes his many wives? (“Letters: Apology has hollow ring”, 2010:5)

One of the debates ignited by President Zuma’s practice of polygamy is how his fellow South Africans view this African custom. President Mbeki alluded to the stereotyping of African sexuality during his presidency<sup>24</sup>, but the issue came to the fore again in February 2010.

In his column on 14 February, Mondli Makhanya, wrote that President Zuma:

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<sup>24</sup> See section 2.2.8: Zulu culture or Zuma culture?

makes the script so easy for those who view Africa as that dark place where strange things happen. Those Westerners who nurse a zoological fascination with Africa find in [Zuma] the perfect justification for their stereotyping of the continent: to them he is a raw, dancing, singing Zulu with many wives and children. The genuine item. (Makhanya (A), 2010:8)

Makhanya concludes that:

[Zuma] is, in fact, African culture's worst enemy.

An opinion piece also from 14 February 2012, makes a clear distinction between public acceptance of President Zuma's practice of polygamy and his extramarital relationships:

I recognise that polygamy is allowed by our constitution and that Jacob Zuma has been transparent about his commitment to polygamy even when he canvassed for the presidency. His practice thereof can therefore not be held against him. However, his relationship with Sonono Khoza and the fathering of a child with her is a different matter (Habib, 2010:9).

### **5.2.1.3 Event 3: Official state visit to the United Kingdom, 4 March 2010**

President Zuma's lifestyle choices were heavily criticised during his official state visit to the United Kingdom in March 2010. Even an article in the *Sunday Times* that focused on the trade and business delegation that accompanied the President, included references to his multiple wives and children:

Forget all the tawdry headlines about President Jacob Zuma's wives and children – this state visit, for the 200-strong high-powered trade and business delegation and their UK counterparts, was all about, well, business (“We are all just eager to get on now”, 2010:11).

It is fair to say that the predominant focus during the official state visit was on the President's personal life. The President had a particularly hard time at the pens of the British tabloid press as explained by Alec Russell, world news editor of the *Financial Times*, in an article in the *Sunday Times* of 7 March 2010:

In their typically irreverent and sensationalist way, several of the tabloids had opened their coverage of the visit with a full-on assault on Zuma's polygamous ways... It was a classic British tabloid assault (Russell, 2010:11).

An editorial of the same date criticises the 'appalling' treatment of President Zuma at the hands of the British media, but concludes that the president: "brought this upon himself by refusing to moderate his behaviour in deference to the office he now holds" ("A real letdown in London", 2010:6). The editorial concludes:

Looking back on this event, it will be impossible for Britons or South Africans to recall anything rousing or memorable – just a tacky spat about polygamy.

#### **5.2.1.4 Event 4: President Zuma publicly declares HIV status, 25 April 2010**

Only one *Sunday Times* article dealt exclusively with President Zuma's public announcement of his HIV status: an opinion piece by Mondli Makhanya in the newspaper of 2 May 2010. While Makhanya's opinion piece welcomes the: "progressive and constructive approach of the Jacob Zuma administration over the past 12 months" with regards to policy changes to the government's handling of HIV/AIDS:

the only major blot in the communications has been the disjuncture between Zuma's public pronouncements and his nocturnal adventures (Makhanya, 2010B:8).

Makhanya writes that by publicly declaring his HIV-negative status, the president only: "entrenched the stigma of being HIV-positive". According to Makhanya:

one cannot but conclude that by declaring his status on Sunday, Zuma was making a playground taunt of 'nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh' to all those who thought his post-midnight activities would have got him infected. It was not a useful exercise at all. In fact, it was a self-serving gesture aimed at clearing his name.

### 5.2.1.5 Conclusion

The *Sunday Times* placed great emphasis in portraying President Zuma's personal life in terms of culture and tradition. In total, the words 'culture' (or 'cultural'), 'tradition', 'Zulu' and 'tribal' were mentioned 107 times during the period of January to May 2010 in articles relating to the four events under discussion. 'Polygamy' appeared a total of 67 times.

In contrast the words 'concurrent' and 'multiple' appeared a total of nine times for the entire period when referring to sexual partners. (See section 4.2.1.7 for a total breakdown.) Articles overtly critical of the President were, to a large extent, limited to the opinions of political opponents of Zuma. An example is a strongly worded criticism of Zuma's lifestyle choices by the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) spokesperson Floyd Shivambu, as reported in the *Sunday Times* of 16 May 2010. Shivambu is quoted as saying:

multiple sexual partners cannot be fashionable in an era where many people are dying of AIDS (Wa Afrika & Malefane, 2010:1).

In the same article President Zuma's erstwhile supporter, ANCYL President Julius Malema, is quoted as follows:

It can never be permanently correct that men are at liberty to have as many sexual partners (as they want)... Multi-sexual relationships will be discouraged, not only among the youth, but among all South Africans, because the scourge of HIV and AIDS has impacted all of us, irrespective of gender, culture and age.

## 5.2.2 Findings – *Cape Times*

### 5.2.2.1 Event 1: Marriage to Thobeka Stacie Madiba, 4 January 2010

A front-page article on the day of President Zuma's 'traditional wedding to his fifth wife' lists Zuma's other wives (Sizakele Khumalo and Nompumelelo MaNtuli Zuma), his previous wives

(Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and Kate Mantsho Zuma), his 18 children and his engagement to Gloria Bongzi Ngema (“Media barred from Zuma’s nuptials”, 2010:1).

The newspaper’s editorial of the same day emphasised that while the focus for the day is on Thobeka Stacie Madiba, President Zuma “has already paid lobola for a sixth prospective wife, Bongzi Ngema” (“The politics of love”, 2010:8). The editorial notes that Zuma has spoken out publicly in defence of the: “traditional Zulu practice [of polygamy] as a right that should be respected”.

The following day’s (5 January 2010) main front-page article focused on the traditional aspects of Zuma’s wedding to Madiba, with the word ‘traditional’ mentioned in the sub-title (“President formalises marriage in traditional ceremony”) and carried three photographs of the couple in traditional Zulu dress (Maphumulo, 2010:1). The article quotes two guests at the wedding who comment favourably on the ceremony: the first guest, Siphso Msomi, is quoted as saying:

We love [Zuma] because he is one of us and does not look down upon us. Zuma can marry as many women as he wants. It is our culture.

The second guest quoted in the article, Prudence Khumalo, is also supportive of the ‘tradition of polygamy’, saying:

In the West [polygamy] is frowned upon. Here we celebrate it. It is our culture and we stand by it.

In contrast to these positive sentiments, a letter to the editor published in the newspaper of 5 January 2010 that deals with Zuma’s wedding to Madiba, points out that: “our constitution does not provide equal opportunity for men and women when it comes to multiple marriages” because only men are allowed to have multiple marriages (“Letters: Knot for everyone”, 2010:8).

The legality of multiple marriages is the subject of an opinion piece on 13 January 2010 where John Scott writes:

Sorry to have to tell the President this, but the Department of Home Affairs lists among those who may not marry ‘persons already married’. Fortunately, [for President Zuma] multiple wives are apparently permissible if you marry them under customary law (Scott, 2010:8).

An article on 7 January 2010 covers the ‘unprecedented move’ by the Presidency “to clarify the status and the number of President Jacob Zuma’s wives” (“Presidency lays down the law”, 2010:5):

For the record, President Zuma has three wives: Ms Sizakele Khumalo (MaKhumalo), Ms Nompumelelo Ntuli (MsNtuli) and Ms Tobeka Madiba (KaMadiba). He also has a fiancée, Ms Bongzi Mgema.

President Zuma directly linked his practice of polygamy to his Zulu culture at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2010 and dismissed criticism at the time that the practice was: “symbolically a great step backward” or inherently unfair to women, saying:

[Polygamy] is my culture. It does not take anything from me, from my political beliefs and everything, including the belief on the equality of women (“It’s my culture”, 2010:1).

#### **5.2.2.2 Event 2: Fathering of child with Sonono Khoza, story broke 31 January 2010**

On Monday 1 February 2010, the day after the *Sunday Times* broke the story about President Zuma’s child with Sonono Khoza, the *Cape Times* published an article quoting Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille as saying that Zuma’s sexual conduct: “is setting back the fight against HIV and AIDS” (Mkhwanazi, 2010:5).

The article twice refers to having ‘multiple partners’ as being a risk to contracting HIV/AIDS: first in a direct quote from Zille referring to the government’s OneLove campaign as: “promoting safe-sex, the use of condoms and attitudes that diminish the chance of having unprotected sex with multiple partners”. The second reference juxtaposes the message of the Government’s HIV/AIDS campaign to Zuma’s personal conduct:

[Zille] said [the OneLove campaign] was in contrast to what Zuma was practising in having multiple partners.

A front-page article on 2 February 2010 notes that Khoza's baby was born three months before Zuma's marriage to Thobeka Stacie Madiba in January 2010 (Davis & Du Plessis, 2010:1). Elaborating on the previous day's quotes from Zille, the article states that ANC spokesperson, Jackson Mthembu, refused to comment on whether Zuma's conduct countermanded government campaigns urging people to be faithful to one partner and use condoms during intercourse. It also concedes that:

[Mthembu] did not elaborate on whether polygamy in Zulu culture allowed for having children with women outside of marriage.

In a similar vein, political commentator Professor Adam Habib is quoted in the same article as saying: "there was a distinction between practising polygamy and having multiple sexual partners". This sentiment was echoed by political party Cope's president, Mosiuoa Lekota, who stated that:

African custom as a smokescreen [is] no longer acceptable. Polygamy is not promiscuity and [Zuma's] behaviour is not justifiable under any circumstances.

An opinion piece by Melanie Judge, also on 2 February 2010, criticises 'male-controlled HIV strategies', specifically male condom use and male circumcision (Judge, 2010:9):

The extent to which male sexuality decides and acts is central to both these prevention approaches. It is men who use condoms and women who negotiate their use.

Judge claims that there is often a misplaced emphasis on fidelity, explaining that:

we know that 'faithful' women are at risk as a result of the sexual behaviour of their partners... Take the married woman who is faithful to a husband and who knows he has multiple partners but cannot negotiate condom use due to economic dependency and fear of violence in the relationship.

An editorial on 3 February 2010 claims that the only legitimate reason for the public outcry regarding the birth of Khoza's child is: "the very obvious contradiction between Zuma's public and his private lives" ("Affairs of state", 2010:8):

This, after all, is the man who told us on World AIDS Day, just one month ago, not to be irresponsible in our sexual practices, to practise safer sex and to use condoms, 'consistently and correctly during every sexual encounter'.

The editorial concludes that: "set against the backdrop of his pronouncements in public, Zuma's behaviour in private exposes him as a man who does not practise what he preaches".

The same sentiment is echoed in two letters to the editor in the same edition of the newspaper. The first letter asks: "if Jacob Zuma has given any thought to the example he is setting to our nation's millions of young men who look to him as a role model for their own behaviour", before concluding that:

If President Zuma is leading by example then we are all in trouble ("Letters: A poor example", 2010:8).

The second letter is written as an open letter to Zuma and states:

I don't like the message you are sending out to the masses – now those who cannot afford to have more than one wife and one child will be thinking they too should have a small army of children ("Letters: Wrong message", 2010:8).

President Zuma's response to the criticism lodged against his child with Khoza came in an article on 4 February 2010 where he refuted suggestions that his actions had undermined the Government's HIV/AIDS programmes and insisted that he had taken 'personal responsibility' for his actions by doing "the necessary cultural imperatives in a situation of this nature". This includes "formal acknowledgement of paternity and responsibility, including the payment of *inhlawulo* to the family" (Mbanjwa, 2010:1). Zuma concludes his explanation by stating:



The matter is now between the two of us, and culturally, between the Zuma and Khoza families.

The cultural traditions that Zuma allude to holds little sway with a letter writer in the following day's edition of the newspaper on 5 February 2010:

The Zulu kingdom should be ashamed at how you have paraded its culture of polygamy... You believe nothing will happen to you, while you hide behind 'tradition'... You promote and justify adultery ("Letters: Beacon of disaster", 2010:8).

A letter to the editor published on 8 February 2010 concludes that:

There is no culture in the world that justifies a man who sleeps with his friend's daughter. In our culture, a friend's daughter is considered one's own. If the youth follow Zuma's example, they will grow up with no morals ("Letters: Bad example", 2010:8).

An opinion piece by Simphiwe Sesanti on 5 February 2010 states that Zuma: "as someone who projects himself to the world as a custodian of African culture", should know that "his tendency of impregnating women and then marrying them later does not exonerate him from the act of violating the very culture he claims to cherish" (Sesanti, 2010:9).

An article in the 11 February 2010 edition of the *Cape Times* speaks directly to the dangers of multiple and concurrent partners, identified as one of the primary reasons for the high HIV/AIDS incidence in southern Africa<sup>25</sup>:

Southern Africans tend to have more than one partner over a longer period of time, creating a vast, interlocking 'sexual network'. People in longer relationships are less likely to use condoms, thus enabling HIV to travel easily through their sexual network (Cullinan, 2010:13).

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<sup>25</sup> For a literature review of multiple or concurrent partnerships, see section 2.3

The author of this article goes on to explain that polygamy does not pose a danger when it operates as “a closed set of exclusive relationships, but the danger occurs when all partners are not faithful to one another”. The author then makes a direct link to the practice of concurrency and President Zuma’s multiple relationships:

Our president is a clear example of a man involved in ‘multiple and concurrent partnerships’. He has three wives, one fiancée (Gloria Ngema), half a fiancée (Princess Sebentile of Swaziland) and last week told us he was also ‘in a relationship’ with Khoza, the mother of his four-month-old baby.

Another behavioural danger identified in the literature as a contributing factor to the high HIV prevalence of women is ‘intergenerational sex’<sup>26</sup> – and again the author makes a direct link to this practice and President Zuma’s sexual conduct:

Zuma is a prime example of an older man preferring younger women. His latest two wives, Nompumelelo Ntuli and Thobeka Madiba, are both in their 30’s. Khoza is 39, while the woman who accused him of rape, known only as ‘Khwezi’ was 31 at the time. Both Khoza and ‘Khwezi’ are the daughters of Zuma’s friends – so these were literally cases of ‘intergenerational sex’.

An interesting alternative theory to the known risks of multiple or concurrent partnerships and intergenerational sex is offered in an article on 18 February 2010 (“Safe sex call rings hollow if you have nothing to lose”), namely that of cultural risk taking:

If there is one characteristic separating the hyper endemic countries of southern Africa from the rest of the world, it is that more people here are willing to take the risk (Harrison, 2010:11).

When making choices that involve risk, we weigh up the risky alternatives and decide if the risk is worth taking (Harrison, 2010:11). Harrison identifies Zuma as a typical risk taker:

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<sup>26</sup> For more on ‘intergenerational sex’, see section 2.3.5

At least in terms of sexual behaviour, the President's predisposition seems to be that of a risk-taker.

### 5.2.2.3 Event 3: Official state visit to the United Kingdom, 4 March 2010

The *Cape Times*' lead story on 3 March 2010 focused on the trading of insults between President Zuma and the British media around their criticism of his polygamous practices (Monare (a), 2010:1). The article quoted Zuma at length, defending his culture:

When the British came to our country they said everything we are doing was barbaric, was wrong, inferior in whatever way... I don't know why they are continuing thinking that their culture is more superior than others.

The accompanying front page article ("UK press have field day", 2010:1) gives a summary of the British press's coverage of Zuma's state visit, including the following extract from an article in the *Independent* newspaper:

JZ, as the populist 67-year-old leader likes to be known, is in dire need of some positive PR after a disastrous month in which he was castigated for promiscuity.

The article notes that: "the most vitriolic of all the [British] articles" appeared in the *Daily Mail* and described Zuma as: "a sex-obsessed bigot with four wives and 35 children"<sup>27</sup>.

The editorial on 3 March 2010 laid some of the blame for the negative British news coverage during the state visit at the feet of the President and criticises Zuma's handling thereof stating that: "it was to be expected that the British press – or some section of it – would find President Jacob Zuma's wives and his extra-marital affairs more interesting than his politics" ("Press gang", 2010:8). The editorial continues by noting that:

Whatever Zuma thinks of Britain, its colonial past and British 'culture' today... the first day of a state visit to London was not the best occasion on which to express these opinions.

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<sup>27</sup> The *Cape Times* quoted from this *Daily Mail* article again: first in a front page article on 4 March 2010 (Monare (B), 2010:1), and in an opinion piece on 5 March 2010 (Weaver, 2010:9).

In its front page article the following day (4 March 2010), the *Cape Times* noted that: “the festive mood in Britain was offset by some rancour in South Africa about Zuma’s treatment at the hands of the British press” (Monare (B), 2010:1). In the article, the ANC Youth League, at the time firmly in Zuma’s camp, decried the British media who “seem to have developed a habit of rubbishing our President and constantly portraying him as barbaric and of inferior belonging (sic)”.

The article also quotes Democratic Alliance MP, Kenneth Mubu, denouncing Zuma for allowing himself to be “dragged down to the level of the tabloid”, instead of rising above the “predictable criticism”:

By accusing the British people of believing that Africans are ‘barbaric and inferior’, he has insulted his hosts, and no doubt undermined the entire purpose of the state visit.

The *Cape Times* published two letters to the editor on 4 March 2010 that refer to President Zuma’s state visit, both of them critical of Zuma. The first letter deals almost exclusively with ‘the cultural practice of polygamy’ and states:

Our president, a self-professed polygamist, has largely assisted the African community to see no value in the cultural practice of polygamy. His ‘weakness for women’ has in a way made the cultural practice a sham. This is a revelation that at our core we are simply human beings with unbridled passions, hiding behind our revered ways of life. We use our manhood to demarcate and entrench practices that serve our urges (“Letters: Just because it’s tradition”, 2010:10).

The second letter focuses on President Zuma’s response to the British media’s criticism, accusing the President of displaying the same negative stereotyping:

In speaking about the attitude of British colonialists 400 years ago, he does nothing but perpetuate a cultural stereotype himself, namely that British people think themselves superior to others (“Letters: Trading stereotypes”, 2010:10).

#### **5.2.2.4 Event 4: President Zuma publicly declares his HIV status, 25 April 2010**

The *Cape Times* published an article on 9 April 2010 about President Zuma's public HIV test the previous day, mentioning that the test came: "months after revelations that he fathered a child out of wedlock" ("President has HIV test", 2010:5). The article reveals that Zuma took the HIV test in order: "to encourage as many South Africans as possible to do the same". The article quotes Zuma as saying that: "the results of his test would not be made public", insisting that the result of an HIV test is "confidential and private".

A front page article on 26 April 2010 however, does the opposite, stating that the President is HIV negative and quoting Zuma as saying:

I have decided to share my results with all South Africans... to promote openness ("President goes public", 2010:1).

The fourth paragraph of the article mentions that: "[Zuma's] three previous tests were also HIV negative", while the fifth paragraph notes that:

Zuma is a polygamist father of 20 who came under the spotlight after he admitted in court in 2006 to having had unprotected sex with an HIV-positive woman.

An editorial on 28 April 2010, notes President Zuma's: "distinct break from the denialism that blighted President Thabo Mbeki's years in office" and that, by taking the test "Zuma has set a good example, and one that South Africans will hopefully follow" ("Test of character", 2010:8). The editorial then goes on to criticise the President's disclosing of his test results, noting that: "the President may have inadvertently encouraged just the sort of behaviour which the campaign seeks to prevent".

The reason offered in the editorial for this criticism is that: "we all know [Zuma] has neither abstained, been faithful to his partners, nor used condoms". The editorial further questions Zuma's position as role model to South Africans:

For many South Africans – perhaps especially young males – Zuma is a role model whose actions are closely followed. As a result, there will be many who learn the wrong lesson from the President’s test result: they will think that they, too, can indulge in risky behaviour without contracting the virus.

#### **5.2.2.5 Conclusion**

A breakdown of the number of instances the words ‘culture’ (or ‘cultural’), ‘tradition’, ‘Zulu’ and ‘tribal’ appear in articles relating to the four events during the period of January to May 2010, totalled 120. During the same period, the word ‘polygamy’ appeared a total of 39 times in the articles studied.

The words ‘concurrent’ and ‘multiple’ (when referring to sexual partners) appeared a total of 14 times in the articles studied during this period.

One particular article by Health-e News Service managing editor Kerry Cullinan, published in the *Cape Times* of 11 February 2010, summarised the dangers posed by multiple or concurrent partnerships and intergenerational sex – both identified as key markers in the high HIV prevalence of young women in sub-Saharan Africa (Cullinan, 2010:13). While Cullinan directly links president Zuma’s behaviour to multiple or concurrent partnerships as well as intergenerational sex, she also notes that:

Zuma’s aversion to using condoms during his extramarital relationships, despite having numerous children born out of wedlock, is a good example of just how difficult it is for older people to adapt to less risky sexual behaviour (Cullinan, 2010:13).

In two of the articles that feature the words ‘multiple’ or ‘concurrent’, their use is attributed to comments made by DA leader Helen Zille (Mkhwanazi, 2010:5; Zille (b), 2010:11).

### **5.2.3 Findings – *Mail & Guardian***

#### **5.2.3.1 Event 1: Marriage to Thobeka Stacie Madiba, 4 January 2010**

A letter to the editor published in the 8-14 January 2010 edition of the *Mail & Guardian*, questions the suitability of President Zuma as role model to the South African youth:

Zuma is sending the wrong message to the youth in the era of HIV/AIDS. He should be aware that he is a role model and that his behaviour can be emulated (“Letters: Zuma’s wife habit”, 2010:30)

An opinion piece in the *Mail & Guardian* of the same date is not so much critical of Zuma’s practice of polygamy as it is critical of the number of children the President’s various relationships have produced:

If one counts the children he’s had with his known wives, some others – about four – fall between the cracks and are unaccounted for (Kroes, 2010:33).

#### **5.2.3.2 Event 2: Fathering of child with Sonono Khoza, story broke 31 January 2010**

The *Mail & Guardian* reported on a tipping point in public opinion of President Zuma’s practice of polygamy: the fathering of a child with a woman who is neither a wife nor a fiancée:

Twenty kids, five wives and a whole lot of polygamous loving going on (wife or not). He very obviously has multiple wives, but he also has multiple partners – the latest baby’s mother was not married to him (yet) (Thorpe, 2010:27).

This prompted the newspaper to ask:

Has President Zuma finally overstepped the morality mark? The public fury that greeted the news that Zuma has fathered another child out of wedlock indicates that the tide of what once seemed unstoppable support for the President may have reached its limit (Dibetle, 2010:2).

The article makes the point that criticism of the President's child with Sonono Khoza was widespread throughout the many different South African communities:

At downtown taxi ranks, on crowded Soweto street corners and behind the lush garden walls of Diepkloof Extension, guns came out blazing against the President (Dibetle, 2010:2).

It goes on to quote a: "middle-aged woman on the back seat of a rickety Rosebank minibus taxi", questioning Zuma's insistence that his multiple relationships have their origin in 'culture':

Zuma's behaviour has nothing to do with culture. He is corrupting both young men and women of this country. The message he is passing to young people is that it is good to have children outside wedlock and that is against our culture to use a condom... sies! (Dibetle, 2010:2).

The editorial of the week of 5-11 February 2010, also alludes to the public's change of heart:

By fathering yet another child out of wedlock, with a mistress, the man who styles himself the great unifier managed to unite us against him. The outpouring of anger was spontaneous and it was aptly summed up by the *Sowetan* in a front-page editorial that declared: "Shame of the nation" ("It is just too much", 2010:22).

An opinion piece by Charlotte Bauer, in the same edition of the *Mail & Guardian*, mentions the: "unacceptable crossing of the line... especially for those who have defended the institution of polygamy" and explains that:

[the move from polygamy to adultery] came as an absolute shock to others who viewed it as a transgression of the values and the legitimacy of such customary unions (Bauer, 2010(b):26).

The columnist claims that carving a respectable space for polygamy in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century democracy always: "depended on Zuma sticking to the rules of a game". Bauer concludes that by overstepping the cultural boundaries of polygamy: "nobody has mocked the institution of polygamy as Zuma has mocked it".



An article in the 12-18 February 2010 edition of the *Mail & Guardian* gave a summary of newspaper opinion pieces from the rest of Africa under the title, “Zuma’s African PR problem”. One of the columnists quoted is Prince Prah from the Ghanaian news website, *Ghana Web*, who wrote in his piece entitled “South Africa’s Sex-President”:

It is sad that at the World Economic Conference... the [most] exciting contribution from South Africa had nothing to do with economy and development but President Zuma’s statements about his polygamy, his promiscuity and Zulu culture (Pampalone, 2010:4).

Prah concludes that: “polygamy may be accepted among his Zulu stock, but his fathering of a love child raises grave moral questions”.

A letter to the editor from an ‘ANC Youth League member’ tries to find some justification for concurrent sexual relationships:

People move from one relationship to another. That transition does not always involve a neat break-up, followed by an idle period, then entry into another relationship (“Letters: Let he who is without sin”, 2010:22).

President Zuma’s insistence that he took ‘responsible action’ by paying the Khoza family *inhlawulo*, was criticised in a letter to the editor in the *Mail & Guardian* of 12-18 February 2010:

How can paying *inhlawulo* for impregnating your friend’s daughter, when you have three wives and a fiancée, be taking responsible action? It seems to me you have no respect for your wives to have publicly embarrassed them so. The same goes for their families. (“Letters: Our Glorious Breeder”, 2010(a):24).

Another letter in the same edition takes the opposite view, calling criticism of President Zuma’s child with Sonono Khoza “hypocrisy” and “nothing but scoring political points” (“Letters: Our Glorious Breeder”, 2010(b):24). The letter writer points out that the ‘Sonono Khoza affair’ is simply part of Zuma’s courtship ritual:

For any partners there is a process of courtship and JZ has demonstrated in almost all his relationships or marriages that they have had kids before they were married. He has subsequently taken responsibility and married the spouses. The Sonono Khoza affair is no different. Because JZ respects cultural rights and the sanctity of marriage, he will take Sonono Khoza down the aisle (“Letters: Our Glorious Breeder”, 2010(b):24).

A comment piece in the same edition also refers to President Zuma’s ‘modus operandi’:

The facts that attest to this are before us when you look at his modus operandi. He impregnated his latter two wives and his fiancée out of wedlock. It is only after this that he begins the process of marriage and commitment (Bikitsha, 2010:28).

The columnist also adds that “in the midst of all that, he had sex with Khwezi (the woman who accused Zuma of rape in 2006) and now Sonono”.

### **5.2.3.3 Event 3: Official state visit to the United Kingdom, 4 March 2010**

Unlike the other newspapers examined during the research (*Sunday Times* and *Cape Times*), the weekly *Mail & Guardian* focused mainly on the business aspects of the state visit and makes only passing reference to the furore that erupted in the British press around the President’s personal life.

Articles in the 5-11 March 2010 edition, that covered the state visit, focused on Zimbabwe sanctions and a World Bank loan for Eskom (Rossouw, 2010:9), Prince Philip’s pendant for faux pas (“Bigot known as Prince”, 2010:25) and royal scandals (Bauer, 2010(b):28).

A comment piece in the newspaper of 12-18 March 2010 examines “the status of South African women in 2010” and finds that “South African women, especially African women, find themselves in a toxic space” (Morudu, 2010:30). The article criticises the ANC’s response to “the recent sex scandal involving the President” (i.e. the Sonono Khoza story):

Spokesperson Jackson Mthembu declared that Zuma was a self-proclaimed polygamist and that his sexual relations – including, apparently, with daughters of his friends – should be

understood as part of his Zulu culture. Students of Zulu tradition were at least honest enough to see this for what it was: Zuma culture (Morudu, 2010:30).

A personal account of polygamy (from a Nigerian perspective) was published in the 1-8 April 2010 edition. It described the author's grandmother's experience of a polygamous marriage (she was the first wife) and concludes that "husband-sharing is ugly and, one way or another, someone's dreams are crushed when a new wife joins a household" (Shoneyin, 2010:15).

#### **5.2.3.4 Event 4: President Zuma publicly declares HIV status, 25 April 2010**

The paper edition of the *Mail & Guardian* did not publish any articles relating to the President's public admission that he was HIV negative. The only reference to this event was in the form of two letters to the editor published in the 30 April – 6 May 2010 edition of the newspaper. The first letter to the editor was written by South African satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys, who asks what message Zuma's negative HIV status sends to the youth:

After his recent sexual history, President Jacob Zuma is being universally congratulated for making his HIV-negative status public. What message does this convey to the youth? That a shower after unprotected sex works? That multiple sexual relationships outside marriage(s) are okay? ("In brief: Pieter-Dirk", 2010:33)

The second letter is also critical of Zuma declaring his HIV-negative status, based on Zuma's lifestyle choices: "the fact that you marry every January, or that you apologise now and then because you fumble... You had a child with Irvin Khoza's daughter, meaning you didn't use a condom ("In brief: Toni Molefe", 2010:33). The letter writer concludes by asking: "Mr President, are you for real?"

Three articles about the President's statements regarding his HIV status were published in the newspaper's online edition. The first article ("Zuma reveals his HIV status" – Timse, 2010) gives an overview of the President's statement and background information on his previous tests and his family network. The second article ("Zuma AIDS-test disclosure 'buries denialism'", 2010) contains

commentary on the President's announcement, and the third article is in the form of a blog entry on the *Mail & Guardian's Thought Leader* website ("Would he have disclosed his status if it were positive?" – Sheik, 2010).

While admitting that "disclosure [of one's HIV test results] is an individual decision", the President decided to announce his negative HIV status on 25 April 2010 (Timse, 2010). The article clearly juxtaposes the President's known sexual conduct with his multiple negative HIV test results. The fourth paragraph for example states that Zuma "told a court in 2006 when charged with raping a HIV-positive woman that he had showered rather than worn a condom to ward off the risk of HIV". In direct contrast to what is known to be risk-taking behaviour, the following paragraph quotes the president as saying:

My April results, like the three previous ones, registered a negative outcome for the HI-virus.

According to the article, Zuma's speech "not only broke a taboo by referring publicly to his own HIV status, but cemented his break with Mbeki's policies". The article further admits that, while Zuma's personal life has come in for criticism "his AIDS policies have been largely welcomed across South Africa".

The second article published in the online edition of the *Mail & Guardian* ("Zuma AIDS-test disclosure 'buries denialism'", 2010) expands on the President's announcement by including comments from the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa). Numsa spokesperson Castro Ngobese said that:

Numsa applauds President Jacob Zuma for disclosing his HIV status after taking a public test.

The Numsa spokesperson further stated that Zuma has now buried "the denialism, aloofness, poetic and bookish approach to the HIV/AIDS pandemic associated with the presidency of Thabo Mbeki".

The third online article was published on the *Mail & Guardian's* blogging website, *Thought Leader*, on 28 April 2010 and asks the question if President Zuma would have declared his HIV test

results if it turned out to be positive (Sheik, 2010). The author concludes that the president's negative test result could possibly have a more negative impact than a positive result:

In effect, a negative result is saying to South Africans: look at me, I can have unsafe sex, skip all the letters of the alphabet in prevention, take a shower and still be HIV-negative.

### **5.2.3.5 Conclusion**

The words 'culture' (or 'cultural'), 'tradition', 'Zulu' and 'tribal' appear a total of 42 times in the articles examined. The word 'polygamy' was used a total of 38 times. The words 'concurrent' and 'multiple' (when referring to sexual partners) appeared eight times in the articles studied during the period of January to May 2010.

A comment piece in the newspaper of 12-18 March 2010 examines "the status of South African women in 2010" and finds that "South African women, especially African women, find themselves in a toxic space" (Morudu, 2010:30). The article criticises the ANC's response to "the recent sex scandal involving the President" (i.e. the Sonono Khoza story):

Spokesperson Jackson Mthembu declared that Zuma was a self-proclaimed polygamist and that his sexual relations – including, apparently, with daughters of his friends – should be understood as part of his Zulu culture. Students of Zulu tradition were at least honest enough to see this for what it was: Zuma culture' (Morudu, 2010:30).

## **5.3 Discussion of interview findings**

### **5.3.1 Introduction**

This section presents the results and conclusions from the interviews conducted during the qualitative research process. The purpose of the interviews was to ascertain women's understanding of the concepts of 'polygamy' and 'multiple or concurrent sexual relationships' in relation to the practices of President Zuma and to get an understanding of the prevalence of multiple or concurrent relationships in Cape Town.

### **5.3.2 Profile of the sample**

A random selection of women were interviewed in the vicinity of the Robbie Nurock Day Hospital in central Cape Town. President Zuma links his practice of polygamy to his African culture, therefore the participants were primarily selected based on race (i.e. Black African).

The researcher first obtained the participants' basic demographic details before conducting more in-depth interviews on a one-on-one basis.

### **5.3.3 Limitations**

The interviews only captured the understandings and responses of a randomly selected group of women. There is no doubt that other understandings and opinions warrant further study<sup>28</sup>.

### **5.3.4 Results of the questionnaire**

The demographic details of each participant were first recorded, followed by a more in-depth interview with each woman.

*Table 1* provides a summary of the interviewees' demographic details.

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<sup>28</sup> See Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations for further study

Participant	Nationality	Age	Home language	Partner's home language	Place of residence
Interviewee 1	South African	40	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 2	South African	48	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 3	South African	50	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 4	South African	40	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 5	South African	26	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 6	South African	27	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 7	South African	33	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 8	South African	22	Afrikaans	Afrikaans	Peri-urban
Interviewee 9	South African	33	Xhosa	Xhosa	Peri-urban
Interviewee 10	South African	32	Xhosa	None	Rural
Interviewee 11	South African	20	Afrikaans	None	Urban

*Table 1: Demographic details of participants.*

### **Results of question 1: What do you understand 'polygamy' to mean?**

Six of the women interviewed said that they do not know what 'polygamy' means. One interviewee said that she was 'not sure'. The remaining four women gave the following definitions:

*Interviewee 1: Polygamy is when you have as many wives as you want: 4, 5, or more. It's about our culture, coming from our ancestors.*

*Interviewee 2: It's like an abuse for the women.*

*Interviewee 4: It's men who have more than one woman.*

*Interviewee 9: More than one wife.*

**Results of question 2: What do you understand ‘multiple or concurrent sexual relationships to mean’?**

Six interviewees did not know what ‘multiple or concurrent sexual relationships’ means. The other five women gave the following explanations:

*Interviewee 1: It is when you have many partners. You must only have one partner. People have diseases and it is not safe to have many partners.*

*Interviewee 4: It is a different sexual arrangement.*

*Interviewee 5: It is like have a relationship with two people.*

*Interviewee 9: Multiple means to have more than one relationship or sexual encounter.*

*Interviewee 11: Where you have a lot of partners at the same time. It is a very unstable practice.*

**Results of question 3: Do you approve or disapprove of men who are married to more than one wife at the same time?**

None of the women interviewed approved of men who are married to more than one wife. The following comments were added by Interviewee 6, 8 and 10.

*Interviewee 6: It is not right.*

*Interviewee 8: If you can afford both [wives] and put food on the table, otherwise it is not okay.*

*Interviewee 10: It is not okay.*

**Results of question 4: Do you approve or disapprove of men who have more than one sexual partner at the same time (NOT married at all)?**



Only one woman interviewed approved of men having multiple partners. The rest of the women disapproved, some adding

*Interviewee 3: I don't approve. There are a lot of diseases.*

*Interviewee 8: I disapprove. It is not right to sleep with more than one person.*

**Results of question 5: Are you in a polygamous marriage? i.e. does your husband have more than one wife?**

None of the women interviewed were in a polygamous marriage.

**Results of question 6: Are you aware if your partner has a girlfriend or other wives?**

Two of the women interviewed are not in a relationship, while two others indicated that her partner was in a relationship with another woman.

Seven of the women said that their partner was not seeing anyone else.

**Results of question 7: Do you feel that you are able to ask your partner to use a condom?**

All the women interviewed indicated that they were comfortable asking their partner to use a condom during sexual intercourse. (Two of the women interviewed are not currently in a relationship.)

**Results of question 8: Are you currently in a sexual relationship with someone other than your husband or main partner?**

None of the women interviewed were currently in multiple or concurrent relationships. (Two of the women interviewed are not currently in a relationship.)

**Results of question 9: Have you in the past had more than one sexual partner at the same time?**

Eight of the women said that they have never been in a multiple or concurrent sexual relationship.

*Interviewee 3 added: No, if I finish a relationship, I never go back again.*

Three women admitted to having had multiple or concurrent sexual relationships in the past.

**Results of question 10: If yes, did you have unprotected sex (sex without a condom) at the time?**

Three women admitted to having had multiple or concurrent sexual relationships in the past. Two of them said that they had unprotected sex while in a multiple or concurrent sexual relationship in the past.

*Interviewee 4: Yes, sometimes, but not after I found out about HIV.*

*Interviewee 9: No, condom all the time.*

**Results of question 11: Do you think it is common in your community for men to have more than one sexual partner at the same time?**

Four women said that it was common in her community for men to have more than one sexual partner at the same time.

*Interviewee 11: It is very common. It is common everywhere, not just where I live.*

The rest of the women (seven) answered negatively.

*Interviewee 3: In my culture, no. The Xhosas is not like the Zulus, not anymore.*

**Results of question 12: Do you think it is common in your community for women to have more than one sexual partner at the same time?**

Five women indicated that it is common for women to have multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships.

*Interviewee 1: Yes, these days.*

*Interviewee 11: Not a lot of women.*

**Results of question 13: Do you think HIV is a problem in your community? Please explain.**

One interviewee replied that she does not know if it is a problem because she does not know anyone in her community who has HIV.

The rest (ten of the eleven respondents) confirmed that HIV is a problem in their communities.

*Interviewee 1: Not just in our community, but in our country and in the world.*

*Interviewee 3: Yes, HIV is a problem. The young children don't protect themselves. HIV is something terrible, but young people don't accept it.*

*Interviewee 4: [HIV] is a big problem. Many people die of AIDS.*

*Interviewee 5: Yes, because people don't want to protect themselves. They get drunk and sell themselves for money.*

*Interviewee 6: Yes, if you don't use condoms, you will get HIV.*

*Interviewee 7: Yes, many people have HIV but they don't want to accept their positive status and go to the hospital. If people hear that you have HIV, they don't treat you well.*

*Interviewee 8: Yes, if you sleep with one person and then another, the virus will spread.*

*Interviewee 9: Yes, a huge one. Even though people are aware of HIV and the consequences of [having] more than one partner. More people are not necessarily dying, but more people have HIV and know it.*

*Interviewee 10: Yes, I think many people have HIV.*

#### **Results of question 14: Do you know your HIV status?**

Only one woman interviewed did not know her status.

#### **Results of question 15: Do you think men look up to President Zuma because he has more than one wife?**

Five women answered in the affirmative. One interviewee said that she did not know if men looked up to Zuma because he has more than one wife.

*Interviewee 1: Yes, it is Zuma's culture to have many wives.*

*Interviewee 2: Yes. They think [Zuma] uses them, not love them. As a president it does not look good to have many wives, especially for teenagers.*

*Interviewee 3: Yes, but most of them [who look up to Zuma] are Zulus. It is in their culture.*

*Interviewee 9: Yes, because they see him as a leader.*

*Interviewee 10: Yes, because now all the men want to have more than one wife. 'Our president has five wives, why can't I?' they ask.*

Five women said that they do not think that men look up to Zuma because he has multiple wives.

**Results of question 16: Do you think that President Zuma is a good role model for young men and women?**

Only two women felt that Zuma is a good role model.

*Interviewee 8: Yes, he is our president and people look up to him.*

The other nine women interviewed did not think that Zuma is a good role model.

*Interviewee 2: No, not at all.*

*Interviewee 3: No, he is a bad example. [Zuma's] an old man. It is not a good idea for him to have a lot of young wives. The women go to [Zuma] for money.*

*Interviewee 4: No, according to the things that he did. Other people can't [have many wives], people can't support them. But he can do that because he is the President.*

*Interviewee 5: No, he doesn't set a good example.*

*Interviewee 7: No. For example, since Zuma is president there is nothing good. Nkandla... Did you hear the news about the corruption in government? It's not good.*

*Interviewee 9: No, I don't think he is leading by setting a good example. With the rate of HIV, he should be the one to show people to have one partner. The naive comments about the shower just makes it worse. I don't think he values women. He just uses his power to get women. He's using our money too, because we must finance all these households.*

*Interviewee 10: No, sometimes he does something wrong and young people think that it is the right thing to do.*

*Interviewee 11: No, he is the president and he must set an example. How are you going to feed all your children if you have so many? He's making men think it's okay to go around making women pregnant and not support them.*

### **5.3.5 Discussion of the questionnaire findings**

The majority of women interviewed had no clear understanding of the meaning of 'polygamy' and 'multiple or concurrent sexual relationships'. None of the women approved of men who have more than one wife, despite making a connection between President Zuma's multiple wives and his 'culture'.

Their disapproval of having more than one wife (or girlfriend) seems to centre around the man's ability to provide financially for his multiple partners and offspring. The women also make a strong distinction between President Zuma's ability to afford many wives and the ordinary man on the street.

The issue of financial support also featured in how the women viewed Zuma as an example for young people. Only one woman saw Zuma as a role model for young people, the rest thought that he fell short of being a role model because of his polygamous lifestyle, government corruption, the money spent on Zuma's Nkandla homestead and the country's high HIV infection rate.

## **Chapter 6 Conclusion and recommendations for further study**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to investigate how the South African media focussed on portraying President Zuma's relationships as a form of cultural polygamy instead of identifying it as multiple or concurrent sexual relationships. The aim was to further illustrate how this framing process has awakened a new discourse on the practice of polygamy and the effect this has had on the lives of South African women in terms of their bargaining power to negotiating safe sex practices and their general attitude towards the dangers of contracting HIV.

The research conducted was three-fold: firstly, the researcher conducted a literary review of the three main themes of the research question (i.e. the practice of polygamy, the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships, and the issue of media framing); secondly, the researcher did a detailed analysis of articles published in three major newspapers during the period of January to May 2010 that pertained to four news events during that period; and thirdly, the researcher conducted interviews with a randomly selected group of women to ascertain their understanding of some of the main themes of the study.

Most media frames are defined by what they omit, as well as include and the omissions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience (Entman, 2007:54). During Zuma's rape trial, the mainstream media continuously missed the chance of portraying Zuma's sexual exploits as anything other than the frames already assigned to it, namely 'culture' or more specifically, 'Zulu culture'.

By casting President Zuma's sexual relationships as cultural polygamy in media reports, an alternative understanding – that of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships – is stifled. Much of the media's framing of Zuma's sexual exploits can be explained by media practitioners' general ignorance of African culture. During Zuma's rape trial in the autumn of 2006, he took full advantage of the fact that those who presided over the trial were ignorant of African culture, even going as far as

stating that: “I accept that learned counsel might not know Zulu customs and traditions” (Sesanti, 2008:372).

It was with this knowledge of the general ignorance of African culture that Zuma, in explaining why he had condomless sex, could boldly state that “in Zulu culture, you don’t just leave a woman in that situation, because if you do then she will even have you arrested and say that you are a rapist” (*The Herald* as cited in Sesanti, 2008:372).

The newspaper articles that were studied illustrated the framing of President Jacob Zuma’s multiple relationships as ‘cultural polygamy’ through the predominant use of the words ‘culture’, ‘tradition’ and ‘polygamy’. There was minimal use of the words ‘multiple’ and ‘concurrent’ (when referring to sexual partnerships) in the newspaper reports studied, with many of the references to ‘multiple’ and ‘concurrent’ attributed to opinion pieces or quotes by Zuma’s political foes, most notably Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille.

The exchanges between the researcher and the women interviewed revealed two principle issues: a general lack of understanding of the key concepts of ‘polygamy’ and ‘multiple or concurrent sexual partnerships’, and the connection that the women made between Zuma’s personal life (multiple wives and girlfriends) and the practice of his ‘culture’.

Something the researcher found interesting was that even when the women interviewed inadvertently cloaked Zuma’s relationship dynamics as the practice of (Zulu) culture, there was still widespread condemnation of men who have multiple wives (and girlfriends). Many of the women interviewed pointed to the affordability of having multiple partners and children, while noting that the mere fact that Zuma can afford it does not mean that he is setting a good example to the youth of South Africa.

The literature review showed a strong causal relationship between the dramatic spread of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa and the practice of multiple or concurrent sexual relationships. Multiple partnerships coupled with women’s societal and biological vulnerability means that especially young women are at risk of HIV infection.



The literature review further showed that polygamy, as an institutionalised form of concurrency, has the potential to trap the HI-virus within the partnership until such time as one or more of the (infected) spouses start a new relationship. Having said that, marriage (either monogamous or polygamous) is not a safeguard against contracting a sexually transmitted infection as the marriage in itself does not stop any of the partners from straying. The criticisms logged against Zuma in the wake of the Sonono Khoza story reflects exactly this: people are tolerant of Zuma's private life until such time that he himself crosses the boundaries set up by the cultural institution that he professes to honour – when Zuma starts practicing “Zuma culture” instead of “Zulu culture”.

## **6.2 Recommendations for further study**

An extensive survey of all major Black African cultures (Pedi, Tsonga, Tswana, Ndebele, Swati, Sotho, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu) should yield a more comprehensive understanding of the practice of polygamy among South Africans.

Based on Fred Khumalo's criticism about journalists' understanding of cultural matters (Khumalo, 2010:4), it would also be interesting to conduct a comprehensive analysis of journalists' knowledge and understanding of African practices.

The connection between multiple or concurrent sexual relationships and the high prevalence rate of HIV infection among young women in South Africa justifies further research and possibly an extensive communication campaign aimed at addressing, among other things, the dangers of intergenerational sex.

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## **Statutes**

Black Administration Act 38 of 1927

Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, Act 120 of 1998

## ADDENDUM A

### Results of study of the *Sunday Times*: period January – May 2010

#### *Sunday Times*: January 2010

Article in newspaper	Editorials	Opinion piece	Cartoon	Letter to the editor
3 Jan 2010, p.1 Zuma takes the fifth		3 Jan 2010, p.19 Leave the birds alone, sir – you're getting married		
10 Jan 2010, p.3 Real makoti is publicity shy		10 Jan 2010, p.7 The Mrs-education of President Love Pants		
10 Jan 2010, p.4 One man's 'fall' is another's civilisation				
17 Jan 2010, p.1-2 Is this culture, or bling-bling?				
24 Jan 2010, p.5 The joys of polygamy for middle-class women				
31 Jan 2010, p.1-2 Zuma fathers baby with Irvin Khoza's daughter				
31 Jan 2010, p.6 Hogarth: The world and his wives				

**Sunday Times: February 2010**

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
7 Feb 2010, p.1-2 Zuma: I'm sorry for the pain I've caused you	7 Feb 2010, p.8 Show respect to your people, Mr President	7 Feb 2010, p.9 Prolific art inspired by our Nkandla bungler	14 Feb 2010, p.8 Luke, I could be your father! ... And yours... And yours... And yours... And yours...	14 Feb 2010, p.5 Apology has hollow ring (three letters): Tebza-Ngwana, by e-mail; Sello Molekwa, Tshwane; and Wesley Samson Abboy, Durban
7 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Not everything is as simple as ABC		14 Feb 2010, p.8 Zuma must reinvent himself – for his sake and the country's		14 Feb 2010, p.5 How come he is still in office?
7 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: What a thing to say!		14 Feb 2010, p.9 Once upon a Valentine's Day at Nkandla...		21 Feb 2010, p.5 We want a president we can respect
7 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Mampara of the week: Jacob Zuma		14 Feb 2010, p.9 How far can Zuma push the sex scandal boundary?		21 Feb 2010, p.5 Love Pants has lost the plot
14 Feb 2010, p.1 Love Pants is off Cupid today		28 Feb 2010, p.11 When 'traditional values' are a stick to beat women		21 Feb 2010, p.5 One joke we can't afford
14 Feb 2010, p.3 Iron Duke's family 'suspicious of all'		28 Feb 2010, p.11 The emperor's old clothes are a bit too revealing		
14 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Unintentional humour				
14 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Cure for insomnia				
14 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Take a child to work				
14 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Overcrowded SA				
14 Feb 2010, p.8 Hogarth: Tax relief for all				

Article in newspaper	Editorials	Opinion piece	Cartoon	Letter to the editor
21 Feb 2010, p.1 'It is time to talk about our moral code'				
28 Feb 2010, p.2 Zuma to be grilled over wife's life of luxury				
28 Feb 2010, p.10 Hogarth: Lock up your wives, daughters, girlfriends...				

**Sunday Times: March 2010**

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
7 Mar 2010, p.1-2 Zuma loses grip on power	7 Mar 2010, p.6 A real letdown in London		7 Mar 2010, p.6 News item: President Zuma awarded the Order of the Bath	
7 Mar 2010, p.11 'We are all just eager to get on now'			21 Mar 2010, p.10 The Rainbow Nation?... I wish I knew!...	
7 Mar 2010, p.11 Trial by media a taste of cup to come				
7 Mar 2010, p.6 Hogarth: Leader meets unemployed dog-loving mother of four				
7 Mar 2010, p.6 Hogarth: A pair of scrubbers				
7 Mar 2010, p.6 Hogarth: Don't scare the horses				
21 Mar 2010, p.10 Hogarth: Singing a praise				
21 Mar 2010, p.10 Hogarth: Nkandla numbers				
21 Mar 2010, p.10 Hogarth: Money for mamas				

***Sunday Times: April 2010***

None

***Sunday Times: May 2010***

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
2 May 2010, p.9 So many questions: Jimmy Manyi	2 May 2010, p.8 Be grateful, Jimmy	2 May 2010, p.8 Zuma revels in being negative – and HIV keeps its stigma		23 May 2010, p.5 When golden boy turns on The Man
9 May 2010, p.3 It's time for Zuma to be his own man		16 May 2010, p.4 Cultural debate – but not a whitewash – is to be welcomed		
16 May 2010, p.1 Malema's followers turn on Zuma				



**Incidence of specific words in relation to the four events during the period January – May 2010: *Sunday Times***

Newspaper and month	Incidence of words 'culture', 'cultural', 'tradition', 'Zulu', 'tribal'	Incidence of word 'polygamy'	Incidence of word 'concurrent' or 'multiple'
<i>Sunday Times</i> – Jan 2010	Article: 24 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 9 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 33	Article: 52 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 53	Article: 6 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 6
<i>Sunday Times</i> – Feb 2010	Article: 5 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 36 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 41	Article: 1 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 10 Cartoon: Letter to the editor: TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 11	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 2 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 2
<i>Sunday Times</i> – Mar 2010	Article: 5 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 5	Article: 2 Editorial: 1 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 3	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0
<i>Sunday Times</i> – Apr 2010  NO ARTICLES	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0
<i>Sunday Times</i> – May 2010	Article: 17 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 11 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 28	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 1 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 1

**ADDENDUM B: Results of study of the *Cape Times*: period January – May 2010**

***Cape Times*: January 2010**

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
4 Jan 2010, p.1 Media barred from Zuma's nuptials with wife No 5	4 January 2010, p.8 The politics of love	8 Jan 2010, p.8 Our President Zuma just brings together the old and the new		5 Jan 2010, p.8 Knot for everyone
5 Jan 2010, p.1 Zuma's dance of love		13 Jan 2010, p.8 The main thing is your wives should know about one another		
5 Jan 2010, p.5 Political cleric slams tradition of polygamy				
7 Jan 2010, p.5 Presidency lays down the law on Zuma's wives				
29 Jan 2010, p.1 It's my culture, Zuma says of his three wives				

**Cape Times: February 2010**

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
1 Feb 2010, p.5 Zuma's sexual conduct is as damaging as Mbeki's Aids denialism was, says Zille	3 Feb 2010, p.8 Affairs of state	2 Feb 2010, p.9 HIV/AIDS prevention strategies are sexist and disempower women	3 Feb 2010, p.8 Father of the nation	3 Feb 2010, p.8 A poor example
2 Feb 2010, p.1 Row over Zuma's love child	9 Feb 2010, p.8 Sorry saga	3 Feb 2010, p.8 Like JFK, our Jacob can't get enough of you know what	9 Feb 2010, p.8 Another baby child?	3 Feb 2010, p.8 Wrong message
3 Feb 2010, p.5 Zuma should apologise to SA public for fathering love child - Zille		5 Feb 2010, p.9 Zuma violates the traditions he claims to love	11 Feb 2010, p.12 There isn't a sister to be had in the town	4 Feb 2010, p.8 Love or lust?
4 Feb 2010, p.1 Zuma defends love child			18 Feb 2010, p.10 Storks: If he carries on like this we'll have to unionise	4 Feb 2010, p.8 Lowered standards
5 Feb 2010, p.4 Promiscuity, unprotected sex and offence against sanctity of life, says Makgoba		18 Feb 2010, p.11 Zuma and Max: two very different cases that must be treated differently		5 Feb 2010, p.8 Beacon of disaster
5 Feb 2010, p.4 Question about state benefits for Zuma's love child is 'taking it too far'				5 Feb 2010, p.8 An embarrassment
11 Feb 2010, p.1 More Zuma children revealed				5 Feb 2010, p.8 Respect all cultures
11 Feb 2010, p.6 Zuma's 'fun' is nobody's business, says Sasco				8 Feb 2010, p.8 Bad example
11 Feb 2010, p.13 Efforts to prevent HIV are not a simple case of ABC				9 Feb 2010, p.8 Going backwards
18 Feb 2010, p.11 Safe sex call rings hollow if you have nothing to lose				9 Feb 2010, p.8 Offensive charm
				9 Feb 2010, p.8 Lost authority

***Cape Times: March 2010***

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
3 Mar 2010, p.1 British think we're barbaric, says Zuma	3 Mar 2010, p.8 Press gang	3 Mar 2010, p.8 Things the Queen and Zuma probably won't say to each other	11 Mar 2010, p.10 The daddy of them all	4 Mar 2010, p.10 Just because it's tradition doesn't mean we can't question it
3 Mar 2010, p.1 UK press have field day with Zuma state visit		5 Mar 2010, p.9 The only positive side to tabloid rant about Zuma is the negative reaction		4 Mar 2010, p.10 Trading stereotypes
4 Mar 2010, p.1 Royal welcome for Zuma				5 Mar 2010, p.8 Pomp or ceremony?
				5 Mar 2010, p.8 You give good headline

***Cape Times: April 2010***

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
9 Apr 2010, p.5 Zuma's rating plummets from 58% to 43% in three months	28 Apr 2010, p.8 Test of character			
9 Apr 2010, p.5 President has HIV test to encourage others to do so, too				
26 Apr 2010, p.1 President goes public with his HIV status				

***Cape Times: May 2010***

none

**Incidence of specific words in relation to the four events during the period January – May 2010: *Cape Times***

<b>Newspaper and month</b>	<b>Incidence of words ‘culture’, ‘cultural’, ‘tradition’, ‘Zulu’, ‘tribal’</b>	<b>Incidence of word ‘polygamy’</b>	<b>Incidence of word ‘concurrent’ or ‘multiple’</b>
<i>Cape Times</i> – Jan 2010	Article: 31 Editorial: 2 Opinion piece: 2 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 35	Article: 6 Editorial: 1 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 4 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 11	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 2 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 2
<i>Cape Times</i> – Feb 2010	Article: 9 Editorial: 1 Opinion piece: 31 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 16 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 57	Article: 4 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 3 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 5 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 12	Article: 10 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 1 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 12
<i>Cape Times</i> – Mar 2010	Article: 5 Editorial: 2 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 20 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 28	Article: 5 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 3 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 8 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 16	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0
<i>Cape Times</i> – Apr 2010	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0
<i>Cape Times</i> – May 2010	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0

**ADDENDUM C: Results of study of the *Mail & Guardian*: period January – May 2010**

***Mail & Guardian* – January 2010**

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
8-14 Jan 2010, p.4 Zuma-style		8-14 Jan 2010, p.33 A snip for Papa Polygamy?		8-14 Jan 2010, p.30 Zuma's wife habit: 3 letters (Babusisiwe Vilakazi, Empangeni; Molly Chetty, Chatsworth; Norman Clemo)
8-14 Jan 2010, p.5 Home economics				
8-14 Jan 2010, p.5 Polygamy 101				
8-14 Jan 2010, p.35 Thought leader: Zuma's polygamy is fine by me				

**Mail & Guardian – February 2010**

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
5-11 Feb 2010, p.2 Anger mounts against JZ	5-11 Feb 2010, p.22 It is just too much, Mr President	5-11 Feb 2010, p.26 Public tide turns against JZ	5-11 Feb 2010, p.23 Baby shower	5-11 Feb 2010, p.22 Let he who is without sin...: 2 letters (Themba Phakathi, ANC Youth League member, eThekweni Region; and Dr JV Larsen, Howick)
5-11 Feb 2010, p.27 Thought leader: Zuma is part of the problem		12-18 Feb 2010, p.28 What part of no does Zuma not get?	12-18 Feb 2010, p.25 Your book is called WHAT?!...	12-18 Feb 2010, p.24 Our Glorious Breeder: 6 letters (Chris Khoza, Bushbuckridge; Carlos Liltved; Patrick Rampai, Klerksdorp; Michel Maikoro, Pretoria; Israel Ben Nkosi, Cape Town; and Miles Seward, Cape Town)
12-18 Feb 2010, p.3 Zip up, ANC tells JZ				
12-18 Feb 2010, p.4 Zuma's African PR problem				
12-18 Feb 2010, p.29 Thought leader: Polygamy ... a colonial perk				
26 Feb – 4 Mar 2010, p.7 Zuma visit to reassure investors				

***Mail & Guardian – March 2010***

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
5-11 Mar 2010, p.8 Right royal protocols for Zuma's palace stay		5-11 Mar 2010, p.28 Royals shock Zuma	12-18 Mar 2010, p.29 President Zuma Simpson	
5-11 Mar 2010, p.9 Coming home bearing gifts		12-18 Mar 2010, p.30 Women are in a toxic space		
5-11 Mar 2010, p.25 Hayibo.com: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Going out with a bang</li> <li>• Bigot known as Prince</li> </ul>				
19-25 Mar 2010, p.2 Keeping it in the family				

***Mail & Guardian – April 2010***

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
		1-8 Apr 2010, p.15 Polygamy? No thanks		

***Mail & Guardian – May 2010***

<b>Article in newspaper</b>	<b>Editorials</b>	<b>Opinion piece</b>	<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
				30 April – 6 May 2010, p.33 In brief: Pieter-Dirk Uys 30 April – 6 May 2010, p.33 In brief: Toni Molefe



**Incidence of specific words in relation to the four events during the period January – May 2010: *Mail & Guardian***

<b>Newspaper and month</b>	<b>Incidence of words ‘culture’, ‘cultural’, ‘tradition’, ‘Zulu’, ‘tribal’</b>	<b>Incidence of word ‘polygamy’</b>	<b>Incidence of word ‘concurrent’ or ‘multiple’</b>
<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i> – Jan 2010	Article: 8 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 3 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 7 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 18	Article: 7 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 12 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 20	Article: 1 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 1 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 3
<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i> – Feb 2010	Article: 12 Editorial: 3 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 10 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 25	Article: 5 Editorial: 1 Opinion piece: 8 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 5 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 19	Article: 3 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 1 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 4
<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i> – Mar 2010	Article: 7 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 7	Article: 1 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 2	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0
<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i> – Apr 2010	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 1 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 1	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 2 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 2	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0
<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i> – May 2010	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 0 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 0	Article: 0 Editorial: 0 Opinion piece: 0 Cartoon: 0 Letter to the editor: 1 TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTANCES: 1

**ADDENDUM D:**

**Questionnaire**

**Introduce myself and explain purpose of research:**

My name is Nicola and I am a student at Stellenbosch University. I am currently doing research on the role of the media in portraying President Jacob Zuma’s sexual relationships with his multiple wives and partners as cultural polygamy.

I would like to ask you a few questions in order to find out how you feel about polygamy and multiple sexual relationships. I would also like to get an understanding on how sexual partnerships work in your community.

These questions (and your answers) are confidential: I will not ask or write down your name – you will only be known as ‘Interviewee 1’ etc. If you understand what I have explained to you, I will ask you to sign this questionnaire at the top.

**CONTACT SHEET**

Interviewee number:

**DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS**

Age:

Nationality:

What is your home language?

Afrikaans	Pedi	Tsonga	English
Tswana	Ndebele	Swati	Sotho
Venda	Xhosa	Zulu	Other

What is your partner’s home language?

Afrikaans	Pedi	Tsonga	English
Tswana	Ndebele	Swati	Sotho
Venda	Xhosa	Zulu	Other

Place of residence:

Urban	Peri-urban	Rural
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**QUESTIONS:**

1. What do you understand 'polygamy' to mean?
2. What do you understand 'concurrent sexual relationships' to mean?
3. Do you approve or disapprove of men who are formally married to more than one wife at the same time?
4. Do you approve or disapprove of men who have more than one sexual partner at the same time (NOT married to all)?
5. Are you in a polygamous marriage? I.e. does your husband have more than one wife?
6. Are you aware if your partner has a girlfriend or other wives?
7. Do you feel able to ask your partner to use a condom?
8. Are you currently having a sexual relationship with someone other than your husband or main partner?
9. Have you in the past had more than one sexual partner at the same time?
10. If yes, have you ever had unprotected sex (sex without a condom) while you had more than one sexual partner at the same time?
11. Do you think it is common in your community for men to have more than one sexual partner at the same time?
12. Do you think it is common in your community for women to have more than one sexual partner at the same time?
13. Do you think HIV is a problem in your community? Please explain why you say this.
14. Do you know your HIV status?
15. Do you think men look up to President Zuma because he has more than one wife?

16. Do you think that President Zuma is a good role model for young men and women with regards to HIV prevention?

Once the respondent has answered all the questions, she will be given R50 in appreciation for her time.

## Addendum E: Examples of newspaper reports

*Sunday Times*, 14 February 2010, p.5

Letters: Apology has hollow ring

# Apology has hollow ring

ZUMA must be respectful to the nation and say in detail what he is apologising for, "Zuma: I'm sorry for the pain I've caused you" (February 7).

Is he apologising for:

- Being imbecilic, along with his party, for thinking that by simply acknowledging paternity, the matter should rest?
- His failure to recognise the deadly risk to which he exposes his many wives?
- The abject volte-face, marry-go-round, lies and stitch-ups about being married or not to Sonono?
- Undermining the Aids campaign?
- Being a bad example of

● HOW come only famous married men's morals are questioned when they cheat, but never those of the women they cheat with? Should morals and values only be shown by men? — Sello Molekwa, Tshwane

anything associated with the regeneration of basic values?

- Being a not-good-enough president and out of his depth?
- Distracting the nation from core issues of services, jobs and the World Cup?

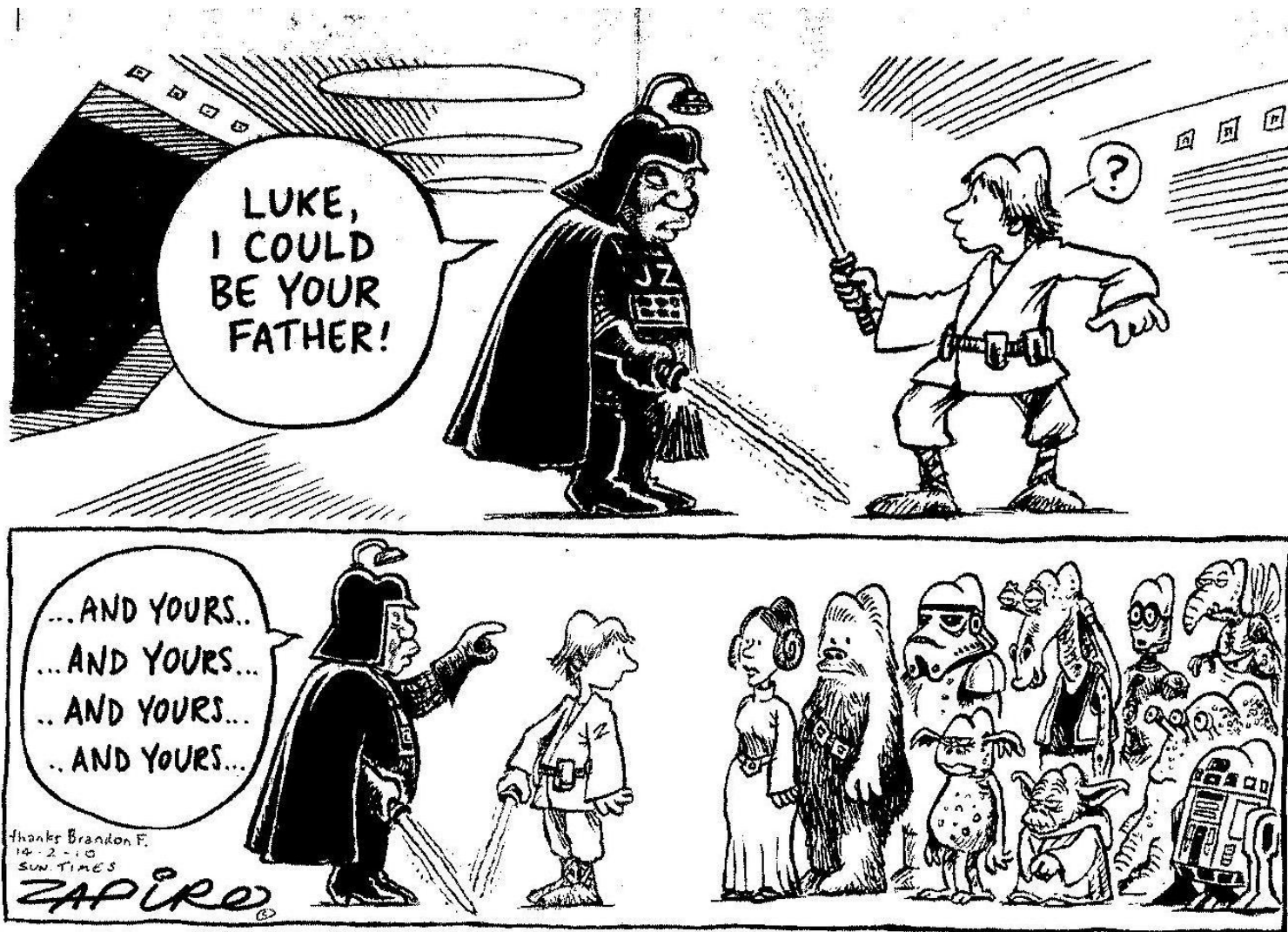
He can't apologise for everything because it is clear that he and his advisers don't get it.

None of them understands the gravity of this saga, and the nation is told it has no right to question Zuma according to African custom, as defined by Malema and company.

It is an apology to shut me and you up. Sorry, but I don't buy it. — Tebza-Ngwana, by e-mail

● PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma is following in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela, but where Mandela was figuratively a "father to the nation", Zuma is literally so. — Wesley Samson-Abhoy, Durban

Zapiro: Luke's father



*Sunday Times*, 7 March 2010, p.6

**Editorial: A real letdown in London**

## A real letdown in London

BRITAIN handed President Jacob Zuma a golden opportunity to impress on all our behalf by inviting him, on the eve of the World Cup, to be one of only two state guests that the queen of our Commonwealth will receive into her home this year.

In the idiom of the moment, he dropped the ball again.

The treatment of our president by some British media was appalling. From merely churlish through asinine to blatantly racist, their comments served more as an indictment of the state of Britain's media than of our democracy. But that is the price of free speech — and of freedom itself.

For President Zuma to respond as he did on his first day there was conduct unbecoming of a head of state — and particularly unworthy of a leader carrying the hopes and reputation of a young nation on his shoulders. He stooped to the level of Britain's boorish media bloggers, insulting his hosts in an unseemly fit of pique that set the agenda for the coverage of his entire visit.

Zuma needs to admit that he brought this upon himself by refusing to moderate his behaviour in deference to the office he now holds. To go on, in London, about the need to debate morality suggests we here at home need that guidance. We don't. We know what is right and what is wrong. If Zuma is unsure, he should consult a mentor and not make his problems our problems — especially not on an international stage.

If his staff did not see the attacks coming and develop sophisticated strategies to head them off then they don't deserve their salaries. The British organisers would have had the visit mapped to the second, as we witnessed when Queen Elizabeth was here in 1999, with every comment scripted. The South Africans should have done no less.

And knowing how easily they could be pulled off the track as a result of Zuma's reputation, they should have been prepared to set the agenda with riveting speeches crafted by experts, instead of the mundane essayists he has used so far.

There was an opportunity to make South Africa's mark. Ours is the most promising country on the continent, the World Cup looms, the recession is over. The mythology of our miracle transition, the rainbow metaphor, and romantic memories freshly revived by a Hollywood film of our icon, Nelson Mandela, leave Britons disposed to hear and believe good things about us.

But instead of arriving with a strong and memorable message, our leader arrived empty-handed. So poor was the research by his team that he even presented the queen with the same gift of an African-idiom chess set that Mandela took on his visit.

Looking back on this event, it will be impossible for Britons or South Africans to recall anything rousing or memorable — just a tacky spat about polygamy.

Please, Mr President, pick up your game.

Trial by media a taste of cup to come

# Trial by media a taste of cup to come

**ALEC RUSSELL**

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma was, it is fair to say, not his usual ebullient self in the Dorchester Hotel on Tuesday afternoon. Then again, he had just fallen victim to a particularly ruthless British tabloid media ambush.

Hours after his arrival in London the president was giving a briefing to launch his state visit. It was an excellent opportunity to win over some of the more influential people in the British media. Yet initially, at least, he appeared subdued and even distracted.

He cleared his throat repeatedly. When asked the predictable questions about Zimbabwe and the nationalisation of the mines he was hesitant, if not unclear.

It was only when the Financial Times's veteran former Africa editor, Michael Holman, said with a mischievous gleam in his eye that he had to broach a sensitive subject, paused for

dramatic effect and proceeded to ask about the parlous state of Bafana Bafana that the president relaxed. "You will be surprised," Zuma said with a chuckle, insisting there was yet a chance the World Cup would stay in Africa.

If that was the moment the president regained his composure, the same could not be said for some of his advisers. They were still reeling from the savaging their president had received in that morning's press.

In their typically irreverent and sensationalist way, several of the tabloids had opened their coverage of the visit with a full-on assault on Zuma's polygamous ways. Some even suggested that he should not have been invited given the past scandals — the corruption trial and the rape trial — and compared his visit to deeply controversial past state visits by leaders such as Robert Mugabe and even the late tyrant of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu.



TELL US: Did the British media treat Zuma fairly? Write to [tellus@sundaytimes.co.za](mailto:tellus@sundaytimes.co.za)

It was a classic British tabloid assault. British politicians are grimly accustomed to the routine: the accusatory and often unsubstantiated headline, the trenchant prose. The relevant editors may have thought the coverage a bit of good fun at Zuma's expense, a chance to make a few jokes about polygamy.

But it unleashed a tidal wave of racist bile on the blogosphere, with the websites of right-wing newspapers awash with the comments of people starry-eyed for the days of apartheid.

Quite why the entourage were startled I am not sure. Anyone with the slightest experience of the carnivorous ways of the tabloids would have known that

last month's revelation by the (South African) Sunday Times of the president's love child made inevitable a splurge of "nudge nudge, wink wink" headlines.

The best tactic would have been to brush the controversy aside and say nothing.

Once Zuma suggested that parts of Britain still had a colonial mind-set, the story was doomed to endure.

It would certainly be wrong to suggest that the tabloids' assault reflected a uniform British view.

But equally, the tabloid lambasting was a reminder that Zuma has a long road to travel if he wants to shed his reputation for scandal. It was also a reminder to South Africa ahead of the World Cup: it is not just the fans that are coming. It is also the tabloids. Beware.

*Russell is world news editor of the Financial Times and author of After Mandela: The battle for the soul of South Africa*



Zuma revels in being negative – and HIV keeps its stigma

# \*Zuma revels in being negative — and HIV keeps its stigma

IT was almost eight years ago to the day this week that journalists piled into a room in Pretoria to hear what, at the time, was a most dramatic announcement by the government.

That day, April 17 2002, the government of President Thabo Mbeki announced that it was jettisoning its Aids denialism and adopting a caring attitude in its approach to the disease.

In a statement which was supposed to alter the divisive discourse on the epidemic, the cabinet said: "Because of the scale of the disease, because it affects every aspect of our society, and because of the need for awareness, care and support, defeating it depends on a partnership of all sectors of society with government to implement a comprehensive campaign."

The statement continued: "As government focuses its efforts and resources ever more intensively on the public policy challenges of HIV/Aids, it will draw whatever it can from science to use in this fight. As in all areas of science, research and debate will continue, but government is not a protagonist in those debates."

Elsewhere in the world this would not have been huge development. But we, in South Africa, had been through an unseemly debate on Aids, and therefore welcomed the respite from the destructive episode.

The move was celebrated as a major breakthrough. Perhaps prematurely, because the late Manto Tshabalala-Msimang went on to negate everything that April 17 was meant to be about. But we've all been instructed not to speak ill of the dead, so this lowly newspaperman will refrain from



## One hopes that Zuma's stunt is not replicated by other political leaders who are wont to mimic their rulers

recounting how that health minister, with the connivance of the president, systematically undermined the cabinet decision.

So it was, with relief and excitement, that the nation observed the progressive and constructive approach of the Jacob Zuma administration over the past 12 months. There has been resolve and there has been action.

And, very importantly, the right messages have been issued.

The only major blot in the communications has been the disjuncture between Zuma's public pronouncements and his nocturnal adventures. But even then, most South

Africans were prepared to accept him as a freak of nature and listen to the right sounds coming out of the government.

You can almost sense the positive feelings in the air, with South Africans willing to join in the fight against Aids. We are now where we should have been in the wake of that announcement on April 17 2002.

Until last weekend, that is. One's spine went cold on Sunday, when the president announced that he did not have HIV.

Not because it was unexpected. But rather because of the cheer that went up as soon as he uttered these words: "After careful consideration, I have decided to share my test results with South Africans. The purpose is to promote openness and to eradicate the silence and stigma that accompanies this epidemic."

"My April results, like the three previous ones, registered a negative outcome for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus."

"I want to emphasise that, by disclosing my HIV-negative status, I am not putting pressure on any South African to do the same."

The politicians on the podium clapped. The officials running the show cheered. The masses in the audience ululated.

Elsewhere in the complex, other people were queuing to take HIV tests. If the statistics ran true, roughly 10% of those who were tested would be positive. So my heart sank on behalf of all of them.

What did the cheers mean for them? Were they the undesirables, the stigmatised? Were they no longer with

the "in-crowd" that deserved cheers and ululations?

It would have been fabulous for us all to have celebrated the day, which was billed as the launch of the government's "New and Upscaled HIV and Aids Treatment And Prevention Plan".

After all, it was a huge step on the way to fulfilling the undertakings of April 17.

It was a far cry from the denialism that cost us so much time, money and — tragically — so many hundreds of thousands of lives.

But it was definitely the wrong thing to do. In celebrating his negative result the way he did, Zuma was entrenching the stigma.

As other commentators have pointed out, the power and the value of declaring one's status lies in declaring oneself to be HIV-positive.

A positive status means a stigmatised station in life.

So one cannot but conclude that by declaring his status on Sunday, Zuma was making a playground taunt of "nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh nyeh" to all those who thought his post-midnight activities would have got him infected. It was a not a useful exercise at all.

In fact, it was a self-serving gesture aimed at clearing his name.

One hopes that Zuma's stunt is not replicated by other political leaders who, as we know, are wont to mimic their rulers. Nor by societal leaders who may now feel that declaring one's negative status is the thing to do.

The next cheer that must go up is for the president showing those who are living with the disease that they, too, are normal.

Zuma's dance of love

PRESIDENT FORMALISES MARRIAGE IN TRADITIONAL CEREMONY

Cape Times 5 January 2010 p. 1 (cont. to p. 5)

# Zuma's dance of love

SOLLY MAPHUMULO and REUTERS

NKANDLA: President Jacob Zuma formalised his marriage to his third wife during a traditional ceremony in his home town of Nkandla yesterday.

The ceremony at Zuma's Nkandla homestead in rural KwaZulu-Natal was witnessed by his first wife, Sizakele Khumalo, Chief Mandla Mandela and the premier of the province, Zweli Mkhize, among other dignitaries.

Some 2 000 guests thronged the homestead to watch the ceremony in which 67-year-old Zuma and Tobeka Madiba, 38, took part.

The couple are already married under South African law and have three children. Madiba attended Zuma's inauguration ceremony in May. He paid a dowry to her family in 2007.

For Tobeka Madiba-Zuma, it was the moment she had been waiting for - a single question by a traditional marriage officer about her love for Zuma.

Over the past few days, like many a bride-to-be, she had rehearsed the process - Question: *Imthetho uyabuza ukuthi uyamthanda Na* (The law is asking do you love him?) Response: Raise a knife in the air (a sign of love), which would lead to her groom breaking out in dance with his shield raised high.

But yesterday, Madiba-Zuma seemed unsure of the process.

Perhaps it was just nerves.  
To Page 5



**I DO AGAIN:** President Jacob Zuma tied the knot for the fifth time yesterday, marrying Tobeka Madiba, seen here doing a traditional dance to mark their marriage. Also at the ceremony were several politicians and the grandson of Nelson Mandela, Chief Mandla Mandela.

Pictures: BONGWE MCHUNU

*Cape Times*, 8 February 2010, p.8

Letters: Bad example

## Bad example

JUST a week ago, President Jacob Zuma argued that his polygamous behaviour was part of his Zulu "culture" and that the international community should respect that.

But there is no culture in the world that justifies a man who sleeps with his friend's daughter. In our culture, a friend's daughter is considered one's own.

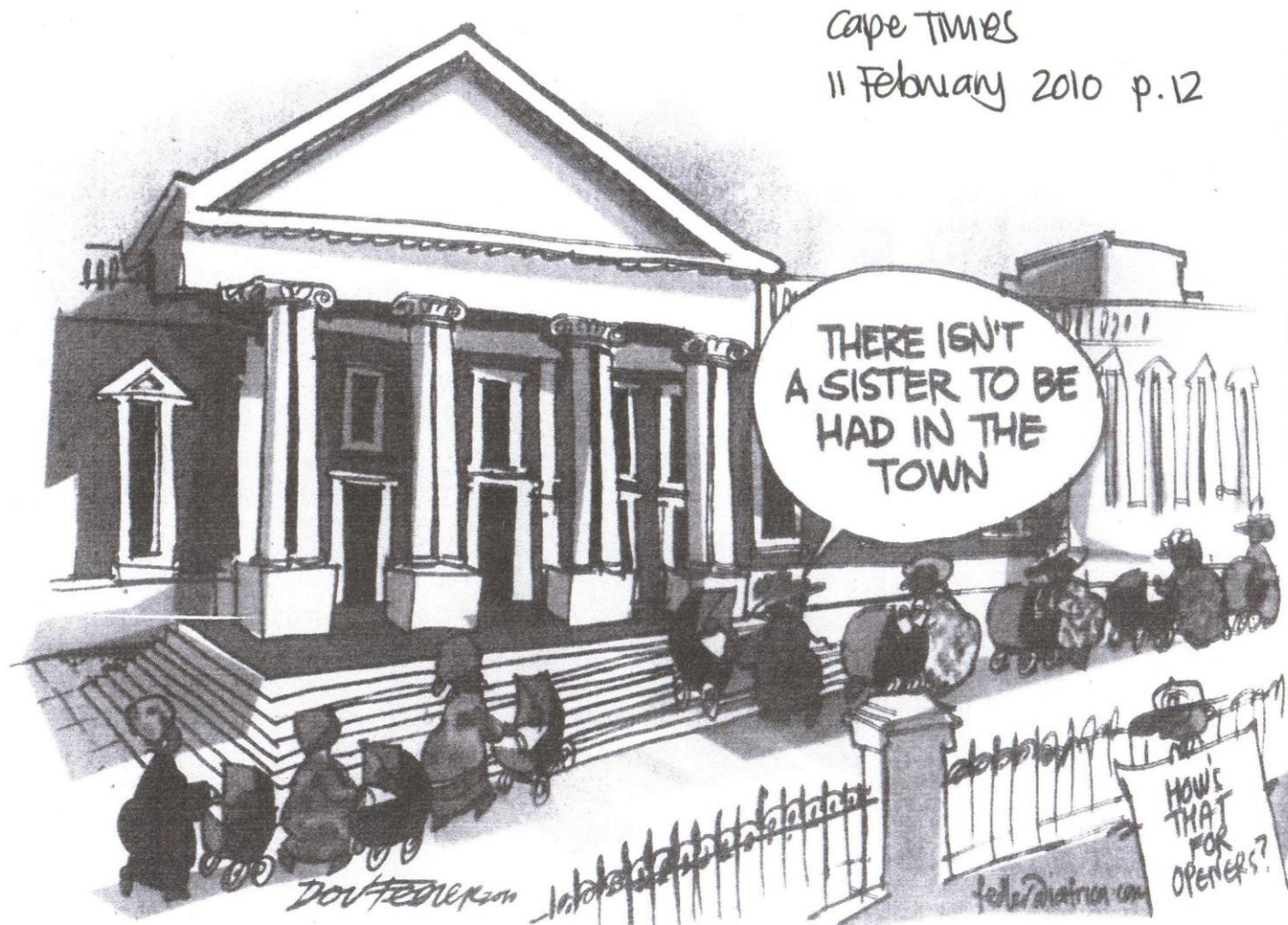
If the youth follow Zuma's example, they will grow up with no morals.

With all due respect, I suggest that Zuma steps down before causing any more harm to the country he fought for, the country he vowed to die for.

**BAZUKISE MARASHA**  
**PLUMSTEAD**

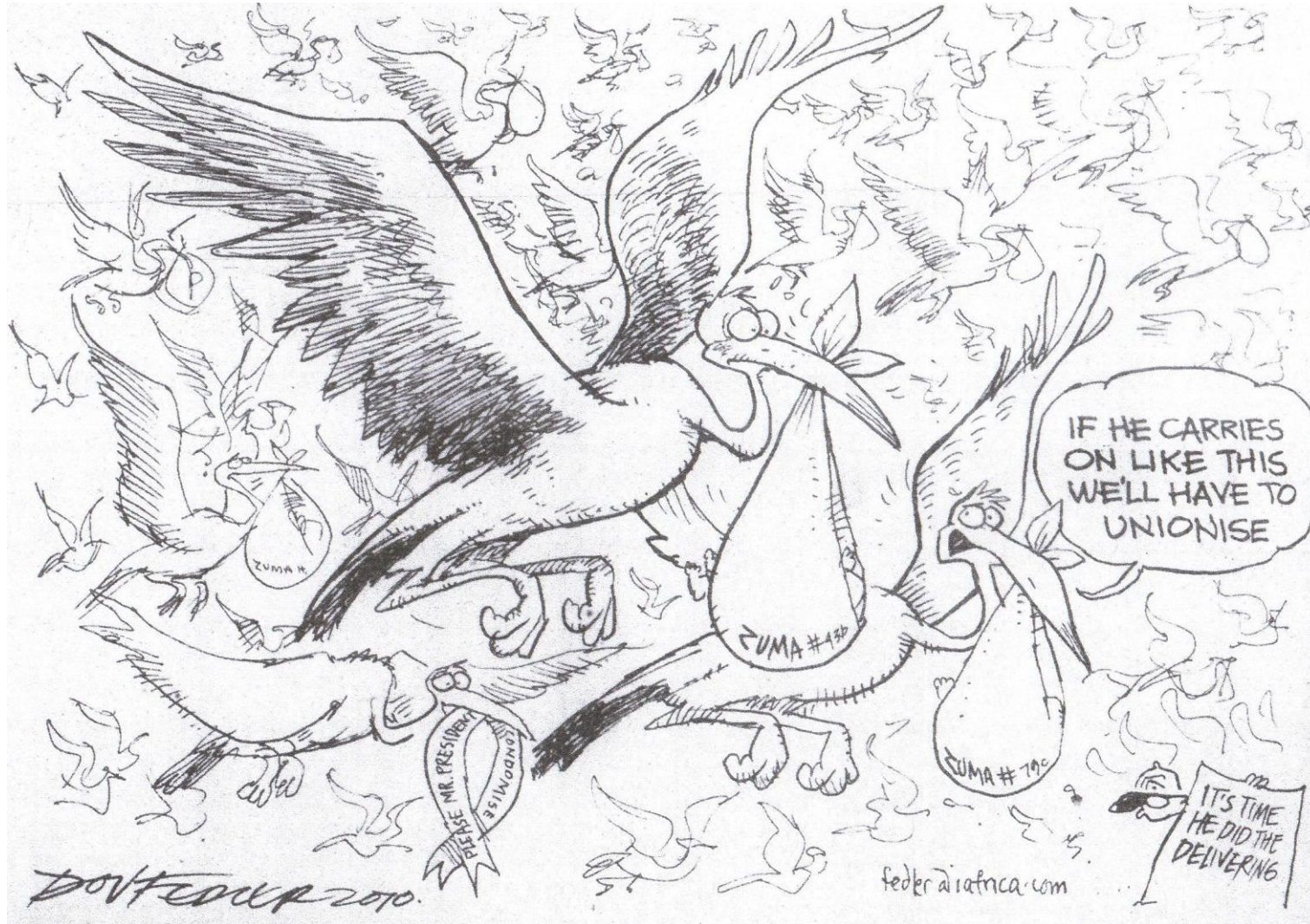
Cape Times, 11 February 2010, p.12

Cartoon: There isn't a sister to be had in the town



Cape Times, 18 February 2010, p.10

Cartoon: Storks unionising



Cape Times, 3 March 2010, p.8

Editorial: Press gang



Things the Queen and Zuma probably won't say to each other

MOWBRAY metering and retail wheeling CAPE TOWN their homes for many years, and a FISH HOEK

Cape Times 3 March 2010 p.8

# Things the Queen and Zuma probably won't say to each other

THIS is the conversation that President Jacob Zuma and Queen Elizabeth probably won't have around the banqueting table at Buckingham Palace tonight:

JZ: It's a great pleasure to be here this evening, your majesty.

QE: So nice to have you, Mr President. Please call me ma'am.

JZ: And you can call me Jake, er, ma'am. What's ma'am stand for, ma'am, if I may ask?

QE: Oh, madam, I suppose.

JZ: That takes me back to my young days, when we had to call all white madams madam. That's all finished now in South Africa.

QE: I'm so glad. It's just a formality here in court. Have you been to court before, President... er, Jake?

JZ: Yes, but as you know, I was acquitted of all charges.

QE: Of course. I meant the court of St James. Cultural differences cause so much misunderstanding, though I've always been interested in diversity within the Commonwealth.

We have fox-hunting and grouse-shooting, and you have cattle-slaughtering to celebrate important events. Both pretty bloody, really except that there's more point to yours.

No one eats the fox except the dogs.

JZ: We slaughtered quite a few cattle at my wedding feasts.

QE: That's another difference. You have polygamy and here even having a second spouse is a criminal offence. My own forebears made up for it with a succession of mistresses, except for Henry VIII who had six wives though not all at the same time. He bumped each one off before he took on another.

JZ: That's what my critics don't understand. Polygamy means no one has to get divorced, let alone get bumped off, before a person can remarry.

QE: Mind you, my crowd had a lot of mistresses, too. Charles II is supposed to have had a record number, but my great-grandfather Edward VII didn't do too badly either.

JZ: In my country some people make such a fuss even if you only have one or two.

QE: It was so nice meeting your first wife, Thobeka. I'm sorry you didn't bring any of the others. I'm sure we could have found more space for them round the table.

JZ: Well, Nompumelelo's got a bit of a problem at the moment. They want to kick her out of her eight-bedroomed Durban house in spite of my good friend Erwin Ullbricht being more than willing to go on paying the rent.

QE: I hate these accommodation problems. I have always found the palace cold and draughty. But they insist on Philip and I staying here. It's the British puritanical streak. Discomfort is supposed to promote good morals.

JZ: That reminds me, ma'am. You may not know that I am leading a national campaign of moral regeneration in South Africa. We believe it's the only way to stop corruption, immorality and same-sex marriages.


QE: That's wonderful news, Jake. If there is any support I can give you as supreme governor of the Church of England - except for same-sex marriages of course - please let me know.

JZ: Thank you, ma'am. I myself speak as an ordained honorary minister of the Full Gospel Community Church in Ntuzuma, which is part of the Independent Charismatic group.

QE: I'm afraid I'm not really a happy clapper, Jake. But we may have more in common than I thought.

John Scott

P. S.



JOHN SCOTT

Just because it's tradition doesn't mean we can't question it

## Just because it's tradition doesn't mean we can't question it

THE call made in 3rd Degree on eTV for the cultural practice of polygamy to be done away with because it discriminates against and degrades women is sure to stoke another round of heated debate on the relevance of culture in our modern state.

Polygamy like racial exploitation, has its eloquent proponents. Listening to one of them, I was left with the sense that those who inherit cultural practices are shallow at articulating the fundamentals of those cultural practices.

They rather request "the other" to respect the culture or tell "the other" how, not being "us", they cannot understand its complexities. African cultures must not be presented as something mystical or complex, merely to discourage any critical evaluation of them. The call to drop polygamy is not misplaced, but it also gives those who practise it an opportunity for honest introspection regarding its origin, and whether the original conditions in which it arose still pertain.

It is not an all-out war against the culture, but a sensible and obvious observation, to suggest that the cultural practice of polygamy "is inherently unfair to women" because it continues to place men in a superior position.

Such an assertion does not require a majority nod from women to be valid. And nothing precludes us from saying, "we need to be critical of elements of our culture".

Jean Jacques Rousseau, writing on a subject proposed to him in 1754 by the Academy of Dijon - What Is The Origin of Inequality Among Men, And Is It Authorised by Natural Law? - was quite candid about the challenge of pinning this subject down. He said: "It is by no means a light undertaking to distinguish properly between what is original and what is artificial in the actual nature of man, or to form a true idea of a state which no longer exists, perhaps never did exist, and probably never will exist."

In as much as our constitution - in the Bill of Rights and Traditional Law -

recognises tradition that does not make any cultural practice or tradition any sounder or fair.

I wouldn't say I am an African traditionalist; however, I am always aware that my upbringing was surrounded and influenced by cultural practices, traditions and customs.

There were many families straddling Christianity and customary practices. As a young boy, I could not tell what was "original" and what was "artificial".

As an adult grappling with a host of things and their meaning, I would still take umbrage whenever I perceive an attack on anything culturally dear to me.

This knee jerk response whenever our culture seems to be under attack is, understandably, taken as an attack on the entire existence of a people - who derive their meaning and ways from it.

To suggest in a moment, set against the aeons of an existence of a people, that we do away with the cultural practice of polygamy is seen as desecration.

As Africans, we are caught between being affirmed in the history that says Egyptian civilisation was developed by kinky-haired people and cherishing our static culture.

Most African states, including South Africa, have modern governance, and are signatories to all kinds of conventions and declarations that promote equitable systems for men and women in all spheres of our society.

One thing one can say is that there are many customs and traditions in all spheres of our society where the reverence in such acts or practices is gone.

Our president, a self-proclaimed polygamist, has largely assisted the African community to see no value in the cultural practice of polygamy.

His "weakness for women" has in a way made the cultural practice a sham.

This is a revelation that at our core we are simply human beings with unbridled passions, hiding behind our revered ways of life. We use our

manhood to demarcate and entrench practices that serve our urges, just like whiteness during colonialism and apartheid - did to black people.

As Rousseau put it: "It requires more philosophy than can be imagined to enable anyone to determine what precautions he ought to take, in order to make solid observations on this subject."

If the call to do away with polygamy is not embraced by those we see as being degraded by it, then we might as well wait for them, until they feel the pain of oppression, to speak.

Women's movements are of course better placed to advance objections on those elements of our culture which are discordant with the principles and rights that proclaim that women are equal to men; in the same way as women are clamouring, as Shireen Hassim puts it, "for increased access to areas of decision-making as well as structural transformation".

LUMKILE MUKWA  
GUGULETHU



President has HIV test to encourage others to do so, too

# President has HIV test to encourage others to do so, too

## POLITICAL BUREAU

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma, living up to his World Aids Day promise, had an HIV test yesterday, months after revelations that he had fathered a child out of wedlock.

Zuma said the results of his test would not be made public, insisting that such results are "confidential and private".

"People do not have to take a public test or release their results if they do not want to do so," he said. "Everybody's pri-

vacy and dignity must be respected by health professionals and the public in general.

"We must also respect the HIV status of all South Africans, whether positive or negative, and support each other to deal with this epidemic," Zuma said.

He added that if test results came back positive, "HIV is not a crime and is no longer a death sentence".

In a statement released yesterday, the Presidency said the government's HIV testing cam-

paign - which was to start on Thursday - would be postponed as Zuma would be visiting the United States and Brazil.

Zuma said he had taken the test "to encourage as many South Africans as possible to do the same, as part of the build-up to the public launch".

"We made a call in December to mobilise all South Africans to get tested for HIV. We reiterate that every South African should know his or her HIV status," the Presidency said.

Zuma reiterated the message he delivered last year on World Aids Day that HIV tests were a private matter.

He also noted that yesterday's test was not the first he had taken, urging the public to do the same.

Zuma urged South Africans to fight against the stigma associated with HIV/Aids.

Zuma took his first HIV test four years ago, after admitting during his rape trial that he had slept with an HIV-positive woman without a condom.

3/7

*Cape Times*, 26 April 2010, p.1

President goes public with his HIV status

# President goes public with his HIV status

ACCORDING to his fourth test taken on April 8, President Jacob Zuma is HIV negative.

The president decided to reveal his results at the launch of the HIV/Aids counselling and testing campaign in the Natalspruit Hospital, east of Johannesburg, yesterday.

**"I have decided to share my results with all South Africans ... to promote openness."**

He told hundreds of people, who braved the icy weather to attend the launch, that his three previous tests were also HIV negative.

Zuma is a polygamist father of 20 who came under the spotlight after he admitted in court in 2006 to having had unprotected sex with an HIV-positive woman.

On Sunday, Zuma said the provision for condoms had risen from 450 million in 2009 to 1.5 billion this year.

The campaign, being piloted in all nine provinces, is aimed at educating and mobilising people to acknowledge their HIV status, and receive anti-retroviral treatment.

Zuma said: "We have to work harder ... to make all South Africans understand that people living with HIV/Aids haven't committed a crime. We have to expand the knowledge and understanding of the epidemic to protect affected individuals and families. The stigma arises from fear, and fear from ignorance. Let us fight ignorance". — Sapa

Mail & Guardian, 8-14 January 2010, p.4

Zuma-style

## Zuma's wedding belles

Now that President Jacob Zuma has tied the customary knot for the third time, can anyone practice polygamy? How will new wife Tobeka Madiba's life be different from the others?

# Zuma-style

## Buy yourself something nice, sweetie

Mandy Rossouw

This week's nuptials of President Jacob Zuma may have been a cultural formality, but for the new Mrs Tobeka Madiba Zuma, officially being part of the presidential family will usher in a whole new way of life.

KaMadiba, as she is now called, will have a secretary and administrative support for her volunteer work in health matters, as arranged by the spousal support unit in the presidency.

In this perk she joins Zuma's other wives, Sizakele Khumalo and Nompumelelo Ntuli.

Last year the presidency advertised several positions for beefing up the spousal office as part of the overhaul of the presidency's administrative structure.

The presidency refused to divulge the overall budget for this unit or how it may have grown with the number of Zuma's wives. But a vacancy advertisement posted by the presidency in 2009 shows that personal assistants for each wife were

sought, offering a salary of R145 920 a year. The ad stated the assistant would "prepare, present and manage information for the spouse". The successful candidate would be expected to provide basic research and events management support where required.

For KaMadiba and hers there will also be no more doctors' bills, lift clubs or expensive air tickets. Their travel, medical aid and security will be taken care of by the presidency, but Zuma will have to foot the bill for all other expenses, such as school fees.

School-going children get free rides and six domestic flights a year. The whole family will go on to Zuma's medical aid and security guards will be dispatched when needed.

Built into Zuma's salary is an annual allowance of R225 400, with which he is expected to run a private home, and R563 000, with which he can buy a private vehicle. This would be for the use of his family because, for security reasons, the president always travels in government vehicles.

The wives receive no separate allowance and are ordinarily not gainfully employed.

The three wives will undertake community work — MaKhumalo runs a vegetable garden in Nkandla and maNtuli works with orphans. The spousal office is meant to provide administrative support to the spouses of the president and the deputy president.

It formerly also provided support for businessman Bulelani Ngcuka, husband of former deputy president Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Thabo Mbeki's wife, Zanele, used the office to create opportunities for women's groups to visit seats of government and historic institutions. Mlambo-Ngcuka's husband championed a human rights programme in addition to getting sponsorship for the refurbishment of the Victoria Hospital.

In a statement released this week following questions by the *Mail & Guardian* the presidency said the number of spouses the president takes on official trips is up to him — he can take one or all of them if he chooses.

Mail & Guardian, 8-14 January 2010, p.30

Letters: Zuma's wife habit

# Zuma's wife habit

**J**acob Zuma's wedding to Thobeka Mabhija coincides with his R65-million splurge on his Inkandla homestead. Many warned that he would lead a life similar to that of the Congo's Mobutu Sese Seko, who lived on taxpayers' money.

To maintain such a huge family Zuma needs far above his current income. Are those on pilgrimage to Inkandla paying his lobola?

Last year the media reported that Mpumalanga's David Mabuza donated R400 000 to Zuma's traditional wedding to MaNtuli — and Mabuza was appointed premier. Two members of the Jacob Zuma Trust Committee, Don Mkhwanazi and Sandile Zungu, are now strategically deployed in the Black Economic Advisory Council.

Zuma's polygamous lifestyle is different to the monogamy of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki. No past ANC presidents were polygamists.

Before Polokwane, Zuma was ordained a pastor amid objections from religious communities. Does Pastor Vusi Dube of Ethekewini Community Church, the mastermind of Zuma's ordination, support polygamy?

Two mayors in KwaZulu-Natal's Ntshongwe district have taken second wives to emulate Pastor Zuma. With such harsh economic realities and the spread of HIV/Aids, is such a practice viable? Is polygamy not inviting corruption where wives of our leaders must create front companies to maintain their families from state coffers?

How does polygamous culture retard the struggle for an equitable, non-sexist society? Will our Women's League take a principled stand against patriarchy and monarchism if its president is a polygamist? Why do our movement and leaders regard polygamy as the thing to do and polygamists as celebrities and people of style?

Should we Africans accept that because Zuma is a Zulu he can take as many wives as he likes, irrespective of financial and HIV/Aids implications and the struggle that we must wage against gender oppression and exploitation?

Are South Africans and we in the ANC creating a second Zulu monarch dependent on state funds and public donations? — *Babusiswe Vilakazi, Empangeni*



**Best of both worlds: Jacob Zuma and his new wife in animal skins and sneakers on their wedding day.** Photo: Reuters/Siphwe Sibeko

**A**gain, Zuma's private issues are dividing the nation and the ANC. Traditionalists and the illiterate rural masses will view his polygamy as evidence of his manhood, while the urban masses, professionals, Christians and modernists will scorn his multiple relationships.

The ANC is a modern political party that advocates 50-50 gender parity in deployment. Women are an important sector who should speak out against polygamy, but because of patronage they dare not criticise *ubaba*, as Zuma is known by ANC women.

Zuma's views at his rape trial exposed him as a true traditionalist. Today he is more conservative than Mangosuthu Buthelezi or King Goodwill Zwelithini.

Harry Gwala used to say: "Zuma perceives himself as a representative of Zulu culture in the ANC." He sees himself as more Zulu than John Dube, Josiah Gumede, Albert Luthuli, Gwala, Moses Mabhida, Johnny Makhathini, Curnick Ndlovu and Archie Gumede — all of these were monogamists.

Zuma will soon be getting married again, this time to Bongi Ngema. What implications does this have for the taxpayer and the role of feminists in challenging the oppression and exploitation of women in society?

One eagerly awaits the reactions of Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Gertrude Shope, Angie Motshekga, Frene Ginwala, Mavivi Mnyakanyaka-Manzini, Pregs Govender and Bertha Gxowa as Zuma rolls back the achievements of the ANC Women's League and women in general.

Zuma has disappointed the ANC and women and is sending the wrong message to the youth in the era of HIV/Aids. He should be aware that he is a role model and that his behaviour can be emulated.

Polygamy is one of many behaviours that transmits Aids. The rape case and his 18 children have also exposed him as someone who does not use condoms.

Is this the leader that we need in shaping the sexual behaviour of our youth? — *Molly Chetty, Chatsworth*

**W**hat are the Mail & Guardian editor's views on the serial polygamy of South African President Jacob Zuma? Is this traditional culture "sustainable" in overpopulated South Africa?

The president is a role model for the country's youth in much the same way as President "Yes we can" inspires the youth of the world.

Please shed your PC scruples and tell your readers what you really think. — *Norman Clemons*

Mail & Guardian, 12-18 February 2010, p.24

Letters: Our glorious breeder

# Our Glorious Breeder

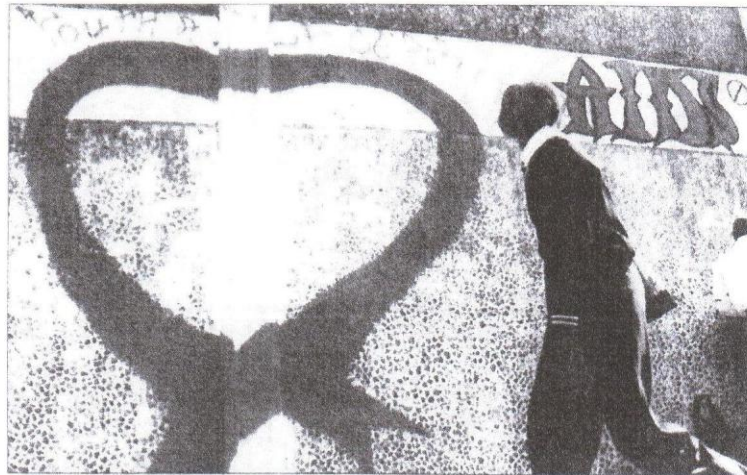
**D**ear President Zuma, I would like to congratulate you on your good governance and charm. From my angle you have done very well in these two departments. I am afraid the same cannot be said of your moral judgment.

You are an utter disgrace and an embarrassment among all African democracies. I cannot believe that you, the president of South Africa, the father of the nation, are again dragging us through this stinking mud, as you did in 2006. On World Aids Day you said, "we must all take personal responsibility for our actions", and you claim that in the Sonono Khoza case you have done so. But how could you, the first citizen of this country, behave like a wild, good-for-nothing herdbooy? How can you be paying *inhlawulo* for impregnating your friend's daughter, when you have three wives and a fiancée, be taking responsible action?

It seems to me you have no respect for your wives to have publicly embarrassed them so. The same goes for their families. Even your closest buddies in the ANC and the alliance were shocked by what you did.

Mr President, please resign. You have lost a lot of kilograms in the political arena and you are now a has-been heavyweight, a mosquito-weight. The ground you are walking on is too thin even for your mosquito-weight. If I could I would emigrate for the duration of your term of office.  
— *Chris Khoza, Bushbuckridge*

I am appalled not only by the Zuma buffoonery but by the nature of the comment on his untidy lifestyle. So what if King Solomon had 700 wives? If people such as Thema



**Is Jacob Zuma fishing for HIV? He certainly doesn't seem to be protecting himself or his wives against it**

Phakathi (Letters, February 5) want to quote biblical nonsense, why not go straight to Leviticus 25:44 and suggest a couple of Zimbabwean slaves be purchased to help with the nappy-changing? Or how about a quick visit to Exodus 21:7 to help motivate for the sale of some of the excess Zuma offspring into slavery?  
— *Carlos Liltved*

**S**outh Africans' hypocrisy is nauseating. The furore around JZ is nothing but scoring political points. For any partners there is a process of courtship and JZ has demonstrated in almost all his relationships or marriages that they have had kids before they were married. He has subsequently taken responsibility and married the spouses. The Sonono Khoza affair is no different.

Because JZ respects (cultural) rights and the sanctity of marriage, he will take Sonono Khoza down the aisle. Why are we interfering in two

consenting adults' affairs? — *Patrick Rampai, Klerksdorp*

**W**e must admit Zuma's attitude is only half the problem (if it is one at all). The real issue is morals in society. As long as status and material gain reign supreme, powerful men will have their way.  
— *Michel Maikoro, Pretoria*

**I**would like President Zuma not to furnish politically correct apologies but to respond with realities. We don't endorse comen! — *Israel Ben Nkosi, Cape Town*

**W**hat has happened to the alliance of conservative churches with a direct line to the president? Rhema and the rest were so vocal about "moral" issues such as gay marriage and abortion. But when it comes to polygamy, promiscuity and adultery in high places, all we get is a deafening silence. — *Miles Seward, Cape Town*

Mail & Guardian, 12-18 March 2010, p.29

Zapiro: President Zuma Simpson

