'We are the real men': Masculinity, poverty, health, and community development in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya
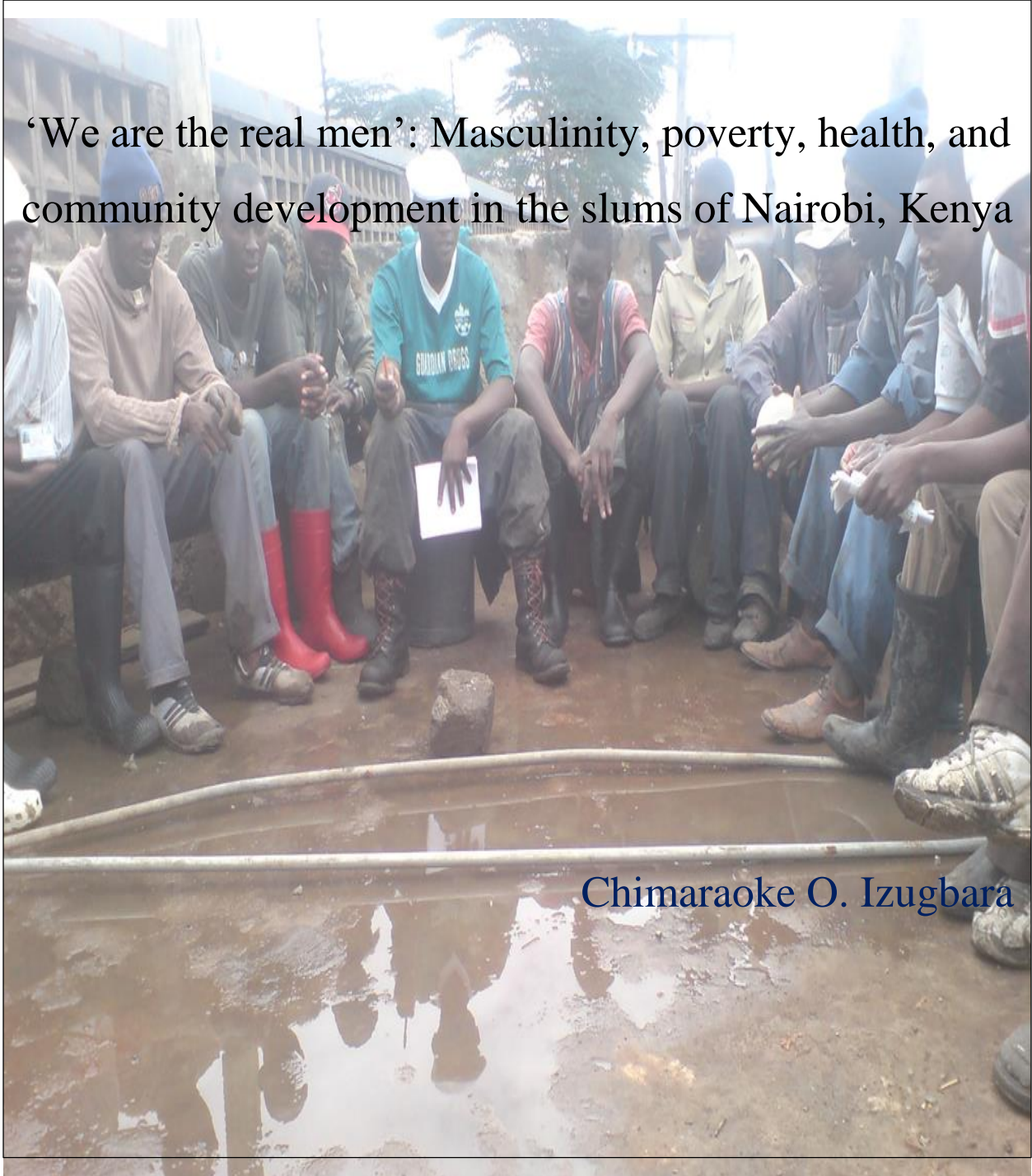
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Dedication

For

Frank & Elizabeth Izugbara (my parents) for emphasizing education and teaching me hard work, honesty, and forthrightness

and

Professor Emeritus Göran Bondjers (Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, Sweden). He knows why!

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis, comprising a five-chapter comprehensive summary (*kappa*) and four published papers, presents findings of a study that addressed Nairobi's poor men's (a) constructions and performance of masculinity (b); views of masculinity vis-à-vis their personal health and wellbeing, and (c) portrayals of the implications of masculinity for the development and progress of their community. The study was conducted in Korogocho and Viwandani slums in Nairobi, Kenya between 2009 and 2012, using qualitative research methods, including ethnography, in-depth individual interviews, and focus group discussions. The study was guided by critical masculinity theory as exemplified in the works of Connell, Messerschmitt and other social constructivists and queer theorists who view masculinity, and indeed gender, as socially-produced and fluid dynamics that derive their meanings within specific social contexts. Emerging evidence highlights breadwinnerhood as the common denominator in local discourses surrounding 'properly masculine' men in the slums of Nairobi. Narratives constituted poverty as both a challenge to masculine identity as well as a promoter of 'true' manliness, defined mainly in terms of persistent pursuit of providerhood in the face of poverty. Further, although it was largely out of their reach, poor men celebrated and clung doggedly to the ideal of provider-masculinity, pursuing it through a variety of remarkable and, sometimes, contradictory strategies. It also emerged that the while men recognized the complicated cultural origin of poor health, they stressed on gender and masculinity in particular, and everyday livelihood situations in general, as critical for their health and wellbeing. With respect to community development, men's cognizance of the structural and contextual constraints to the development of their communities intersected with both a feeling that they have helped to hamper community development and an adamant sense of their own criticality and centrality in ensuring it. Poor men also generally hinged community development and progress on traditional masculinity scripts, often negatively depicting community development activities that seek to promote gender equality. The study concludes as follows: First, work with men must build on the ways they articulate and understand the issues that they face in their everyday life. Further, interventions with poor men must pay mind to the diverse ways poverty and a sense of masculine deficit can motivate their performance of themselves as men. Lastly, the process of making men allies in the global struggle for gender equality and an inclusive social system must start with supporting them to enjoy improved livelihoods and comprehend the beliefs and social forces that motivate their everyday behaviors.

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Chapter 1: Study Background

1.0: Introduction

This study, which comprises five comprehensive summary chapters *(kappa)* and four published papers, aims to answer the following key questions: How do poor men in Nairobi City construct and perform masculinity? What does it mean to be a poor man in Nairobi where material wealth and provisioning capacity are locally-prized dimensions of masculinity but also difficult to achieve or attain? How are the implications of poverty for masculinity constituted and performed by economically-marginalized urban men? How do poor urban men in Nairobi construct masculinity in relation to their individual health and wellbeing and the progress and development of their communities? What are the social and development work implications of masculinities produced at the intersections of poverty, marginalization, and local beliefs and views of gender.

1.1: Situating my interest in gender, health, and development among poor urban Kenyan men

My interest in the above questions was initially stirred during my first visit to Kenya in 2005; on April 29th to be precise. As I settled into my room at a popular hotel in central Nairobi, a report in one of the local TV stations grabbed my attention. It was a live broadcast about Lucy Kibaki, wife of the then President of Kenya. Lucy had stormed the residence of Mahktar Diop, then outgoing World Bank Country Director to Kenya. Mahktar and Lucy were neighbors in the opulent Muthaiga area, which lies west of Nairobi. The World Bank executive was hosting a party in his house to mark the end of his term as Bank Country Director in Kenya. Several popular local artistes had been invited to the event to entertain guests, mainly top diplomats and a number of key local politicians and government officials. A visibly-furious Mrs. Kibaki barged into the party, yelling that the music was too loud, and demanding that it be switched off. Wrenching off electric cables from the microphones and amplifiers, Her Excellency engaged Diop and his guests in a shouting contest. During the screaming bout, Lucy yelled at everybody in the party: 'This is 'Muthaiga, not Korogocho!'(Njeru, 2013).

The following morning, the media were agog with news of the incident. Remarkably, the bulk of emerging reports and public opinions did not support Her Excellency's behavior. She has not shown decorum, tact and dignity and had not conducted herself reverently like a First Lady, most commentators said. Some sources described her as needing psychiatric help and as a shame to the nation (Anonymous, 2005; Oloo, 2005). A particularly curious aspect of the media and public discourse that ensued was the demand, by large sections of the Kenyan public, civil society and media, for Mrs. Kibaki to formally and publicly apologize to Kenyans, particularly residents of Korogocho (Kimani, 2006; Moschetti, Kiuna, & Oluoch, 2005).

A quick Google search of 'Korogocho' helped me put the whole fuss about Mrs. Kibaki's Korogocho remark into perspective:

> ''Korogocho…third largest slum area in Nairobi after Kibera and Mathare. Murder is rife, violent crime is all too common and the number of guns in civilian hands in the area is beyond belief. A cartel of thugs and other violent urban gangs continue to rule Korogocho with an iron fist. Their reign of terror goes virtually uncontested, as the security forces are generally loath to venture into this veritable war zone unless with massive reinforcements. The thugs are known to even waylay the church faithful and rob them of the day's offering. It is also one of the most densely populated and socially volatile slums in Kenya. The structures in Korogocho are very congested. The slum has an average of 5-6 persons per room. The estimated population of Korogocho in the '90 was 100,000 and rose to 200.000 in 1999. In December 2000, one of the ugliest incidents that ever occurred…a group of men gang raped a woman, mutilated her private parts, and gouged out her eyes. Her butchered body was found the following morning abandoned in a disused water dam near Ngunyumu village in Korogocho...[1]''

It then fully dawned on me: In Madam Kibaki's imaginary, and perhaps in that of several Kenyans, Korogocho was the antithesis of Muthaiga. For Her Excellency, it was unfortunate that Mr Diop, in his moment of merriment, had brought Korogocho-like disorder, backwardness, and lawlessness to Muthaiga! Clearly, somebody needed to remind the World Bank executive that he ought to know better: Muthaiga and Korogocho are two different worlds: Their peoples, ways of life and settings are totally different and should neither converge nor mingle (Njeru, 2010).

As fate will have it however, about a year after my first visit to Kenya, I was back in Nairobi to take up a research position at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), a leading research institute in Africa. As part of my orientation to APHRC's work and research, I was given a guided tour of its Health and Demographic Surveillance Sites (HDSS). The Health Demographic Surveillance System (HDSS) is a population registration system that monitors health and demographic dynamics in a geographically-defined population(Sankoh & Byass, 2012). It offers a platform to test and evaluate public health interventions and provides a suitable sampling frame for social science and epidemiological studies. In addition to its importance in quality research training, the greatest appeal of the HDSS, lies, perhaps, in its potential to advance timely evidence for policy and intervention design (Arthur, Bangha, & Sankoh,

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[1] See: http://oscaralochi.blogspot.co.ke/p/blog-page_5336.html

2013; Crampin et al., 2012). For over a decade now, APHRC has implemented Africa's premier urban-based DSS sites in Kenya. These sites are Korogocho (Koch) and Viwandani (Viwa) in Nairobi, Kenya.

Nothing prepared me for the intensity of poverty I saw in Koch and Viwa in 2006. Of course, I was born and grew up in Nigeria, a developing country with very disconcerting health, social and development indicators and where millions of people have poor-quality housing and livelihoods. Further, though from a middle-class south-eastern Nigerian family, I had, as a young man, spent considerable time living with friends in low-end urban settlements in Jos, Central Nigeria. Before my current job in Kenya, I had also worked with poor people in the slums of Nigeria, Ghana, and Senegal etc. Further, my first PhD (in medical anthropology) involved extensive ethnographic research among traditional birth attendants (TBAs) in poor rural and urban areas of southeastern Nigeria.

Essentially, despite my longstanding interest and previous work and research in poor urban settlements, Koch and Viwa left a lasting impact on me. I had many questions about the everyday life of Koch and Viwa men, women and children. But as I passionately consumed the massive literature on Koch and Viwa, particularly from APHRC researchers, I found that the bulk of the literature on the people of Koch and Viwa, had focused on health, schooling and demographic outcomes. Little research had addressed the question of gender relations and slum dwellers' everyday life and livelihoods and how these impact health, community development and general wellbeing. More importantly, I also found that while the bulk of research in Koch and Viwa had focused on women and girls, much less was known about the lives of men and boys who live in them.

I sought more information on the lives of Koch and Viwa dwellers, visiting the settlements regularly, asking questions about the social organization and everyday dynamics of socio-economic life in the communities. As my knowledge of Koch and Viwa deepened, the urgent need for a more critical perspective on the lives of men in these slums dawned on me. The evidence I collected from these preliminary visits indicated that poverty, violence, poor health, and feelings of masculine failure were common among men residing in slums. I found that men were not only the most common perpetrators of violence in these communities, they also suffered a great deal of it. The most common causes of death among Koch and Viwa men were not HIV, TB, cancer or malaria etc., but injuries sustained, mostly, in violent situations (Kyobutungi, Ziraba, Ezeh, & Ye, 2008; Ziraba, Kyobutungi, & Zulu, 2011). I was also struck by stories I gathered that suggested a high incidence of suicide among Koch and Viwa men. More importantly, the stories overwhelmingly linked these suicides to a failure among men to realize themselves as 'proper' or 'real' men: men killed themselves when their wives left them for other men or cheated on them; when they lost

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their jobs; were no longer able to provide for their families; or when they were publicly humiliated by women or other men etc.

As I continued to gather information on the everyday lives of Koch and Viwa people, I realized the need for a more thoroughgoing investigation of masculinity among poor Kenyan men living in slums deprived of the locally-popular artefacts of a prized manhood, such as material wealth, profitable employment, and capacity to provide (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Francis, 2006). To address these gaps in the literature, I developed a proposal to interrogate the lives of marginalized men in the slums of Nairobi. The study, which was readily funded by the Ford Foundation, East Africa Office in 2009, forms the basis of the current PhD research.

1.2: Kenya: a socio-political and economic history

The East Africa Protectorate, established in 1895, by the British Empire formally became the Kenya Colony in 1920. However, after a drawn-out liberation struggle against British settlers, Kenya gained political independence in December, 1963. The country currently has a landmass of 581,309 km km^2 and lies across the equator in east-central Africa, on the coast of the Indian Ocean. Kenya is neighbored in the north by Ethiopia, by South Sudan in the northwest, and Somalia to the east. Uganda and Tanzania border Kenya in the west and south respectively. Its south-eastern flank is the Indian Ocean coastline, a 400-kilometer distance. Kenya's population has been growing steadily. From 2.5million in 1897; 5.4 million in 1948; 8.6 million in 1962; 10.9 million in 1969; 15 million in 1979; 21.4 million in 1989; and 28.7 million in 1999, the population of Kenya is now roughly 43 million (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Health, National AIDS Control Council, Kenya Medical Research Institute, & National Council for Population and Development, 2015). The people of Kenya come from over 40 different ethnicities. The dominant ethnic groups are the Kikuyu, Luyha, Luo, Kalenjin and Kamba, who boast millions of people. But there are also the Kuria, Gabras, Basuba and Taita who number a few thousands.

The hopes and expectations engendered by independence in 1963 have yet to be translated into improved livelihoods for majority of Kenyans. Instead, the country has remained a weak coalition of ethnicities who are in unremitting and cut-throat competition and contest with each other (Berman, Cottrell, & Ghai, 2009; Wrong, 2009). Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's first indigenous President, was in power from independence till his death- on August 22, 1978- from old age. Under him, independent statehood was consolidated, enabling the growth of a local economy and foreign investments as well as the creation of a black Kenyan professional and business middle class (Ndegwa, 1998; E. A. Odhiambo, 2002, 2004). But Kenyatta's government was bereft of a clear strategy for broadening political participation and accommodating dissent and opposition. As a founding father, rather than work towards a Kenya where political space existed for

dissenting voices and where minorities enjoyed a sense of belonging and membership, Kenyatta played ethnic groups against each other, sharply dividing the citizens, promoting ethnic tension and lubricating inter-ethnic rivalries (House-Midamba, 1996; Mutua, 1994). His presidency was marred by authoritarianism, strategic favoritism, tribalism and nepotism. Kenyatta was also very high-handed, showing disregard for popular opinion in several occasions, exemplified, for instance, in his resettlement of his Kikuyu tribesmen in the country's Rift Valley province, an action, which, until today, remains a critical bane of unity in Kenya (Kanyinga, 2009; Mueller, 2008).

Kenyatta died in office in 1978 and was succeeded by Daniel Arap Moi from the Kalenjin ethnic group. Moi frantically pursued Kenyatta's policy of intolerance to opposition and dissent (Ashforth, 2009). Like his predecessor, Moi suppressed opposition leaders and expelled senior members of his party who favored multi-party politics. Members of his Kalenjin ethnic group were appointed into top government and party posts, heightening ethnic tensions and suspicions (Adar & Munyae, 2001). Under Moi, the constitution was amended to make Kenya a one-party state, increasing Moi's political and economic stranglehold on Kenya. Corruption peaked under Moi's watch as he, family members, cronies, and political associates abused power, grabbing public and private lands and properties (Adar & Munyae, 2001; Anyang'Nyong'o, 2006; Barkan, 2004; Mwangi, 2008).

Mwai Kibaki, an economist, defeated Moi in a keenly contested presidential election in 2002. Kibaki campaigned on a policy of economic growth, educational transformation, anti-corruption, and constitutional change (Klopp, 2012; Wrong, 2009), promising to reunify the country and address feelings of ethnic and other forms of relegation and neglect (Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006). While Kenya witnessed massive economic growth under Kibaki, ethnic politics and marginalization continued. Kibaki's Kikuyu tribesmen and allies firmly and unashamedly hijacked the state structure, deploying it inconsiderately and selfishly (Klopp, 2012; McGee, 2008; Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006; Wrong, 2009). This situation led to widespread pressure for change, which peaked during the 2007 presidential elections, when dashed hopes for change in the country's political leadership climaxed in accusations of election rigging by the incumbent Kibaki and, resulting in widespread violence.

However, through the intervention of the international community, a political resolution was reached in 2008, bringing the violent impasse to an end. The arrangement allowed effective and clear-cut power-sharing between Mwai Kibaki and his opponent, Raila Odinga, as president and prime minister respectively. Power-sharing by Kibaki and Odinga ended in 2012, when a new election, whose result was futilely contested in court by Raila Odinga, brought Uhuru Kenyatta, son of Kenya's pioneer president, into power as president of Kenya in 2013.

Returning now to the economy, Kenya has, at least, in the last one decade, enjoyed considerable economic growth. Many factors contributed to this: favorable international environment, national support to local and international investment, prolonged political stability, and sustained expansion of a local economic and a professional elite that has invested its wealth in Kenya (Oparanya, 2012). The country has also benefited from continuous efforts to diversify its economic base. From a coffee and tea-reliant economy, Kenya has grown its earnings from tourism, flower exports, and mineral resources etc. Economic growth has however not sustainably addressed social inequalities. Growth has merely benefited a small group of local businessmen from a few ethnic groups, barely trickling down to the poor. Corruption, insecurity, crime, joblessness, high cost of living, marginalization, and poor health evidenced by high incidence of communicable and non-communicable diseases, ethnic strife and crises have also continued to plague the so-called economic giant of East Africa. Currently, an estimated fifty percent of Kenyans live below the poverty line (Oparanya, 2012). I undertook the current research in the context of growing poverty and rising economic marginalization, particularly among men in Nairobi, Kenya.

Figure 1: Map of Kenya, 2012

1.3: Nairobi: The founding, growth, and slumization of a capital city

Nairobi, located at an elevation of about 1660m, is currently Kenya's political and economic capital city. The city derives its name from the Maasai phrase; *Enkare Nyorobi*: 'the place of cool waters.' Indeed, until

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the last decade of the 1800s, little was known about the area now called Nairobi. Historical accounts describe *Enkare Nyorobi* as a previously uninhabited wetland used by the pastoral Maasai for grazing their cattle. British political and economic interests are at the heart of the founding and growth of modern Nairobi (Boedecker, 1936; Obudho, 1997). Seeking to open up East Africa, facilitate commerce and the movement of goods and people, and promote effective colonial control of the region, the British began the construction of a railroad from Mombasa to Kisumu near Lake Victoria. In this process, Nairobi assumed strategic locational significance as a layover post, supply depot and administrative center of the Uganda Railway, encouraging both the growth of commerce and influx of people into the area (City-Data.com., not dated; Greenway & Monsma, 2000; Obudho, 1997). Malaria-bearing mosquitoes do not survive Nairobi's high altitude, increasing its particular appeal as a residential area for Europeans (Boedecker, 1936). Following its rising political and economic fortunes, Nairobi formally replaced Mombasa as capital of British East Africa Protectorate in 1905, and was soon declared a municipality in 1919. It would also be granted a formal city status in 1954 Nairobi (Obudho, 1997). Initially however, migration into Nairobi was rigorously restricted for Africans using a variety of strategies, including issuance of passes, entry refusals, prohibition of loitering and unlicensed businesses and settlements, taxation, and limited housing for the local people etc. (Bujra, 1975; White, 1990). For instance by 1930, Nairobi Municipality was already implementing policies that forced men moving into cities to leave their wives and children in their rural homes (Bujra, 1975; McClintock, 1991; White, 1986). In 1938, Nairobi's Municipal Officers observed that the city saved money on proper native housing because the needs of eight men may be served by the provision of two rooms for the men and one for the sex worker (Davis, 1939). This was in evident reference to Malaya prostitution, a form of sex work that emerged, *circa* 1920, in Pumwani settlement, east of Nairobi. Malaya sex workers sold erotic and other forms of domestic labor from inside their own dwellings (White, 1986, 1990). They waited in front of their rooms for their male clients to come. This form of sex work reinforced British colonialism. According to Izugbara (2012) and White (1986, 1990), Malaya sexual and other services enabled urban-based male laborers to reduce visits to rural areas to see their families, stay in the city, and come to work more regularly.

Kenya's political independence in 1963 critically altered the social organization and demographics of Nairobi. Izugbara (2012) notes that the liberalization of formal education, easing of mobility laws, and failure of the nascent local political elite to reallocate the farmlands deserted by escaping British settlers triggered an unparalleled influx of citizens into Nairobi. Contemporary trends such as the tourism boom, industrialization, rise of cash-cropping, growth in cross-border trading activities, economic crises, and, more recently, political conflicts and crises in Kenya and in neighboring countries such as Rwanda, Somali, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda have also contributed to the popularity of Nairobi as destination for many

people. Poorly-managed episodes of rural famines, crop failures, and droughts in Kenya have also increased incentives to flee to Nairobi (Izugbara, 2012). Following these trends, Nairobi has continued to expand population and potential. From a paltry 11,000 persons in 1911; 120,000 in 1948; 251,000 in 1960; and 1,800,000 in 1995; Nairobi is currently a multiethnic, multinational community of over 4,000,000 people. The population of Nairobi is also expected to hit 17 million by 2025. Nairobi hosts a range of diverse formal and informal business ranging from food processing, textiles, clothing, building materials, and communications to transportation and heavy equipment (City-Data.com., not dated; Ochieng & Ogot, 1989). Facilitated by ease of access by air, its historic museums, national archives and parks, and other key attractions, Nairobi has become a popular tourist destination in Africa.
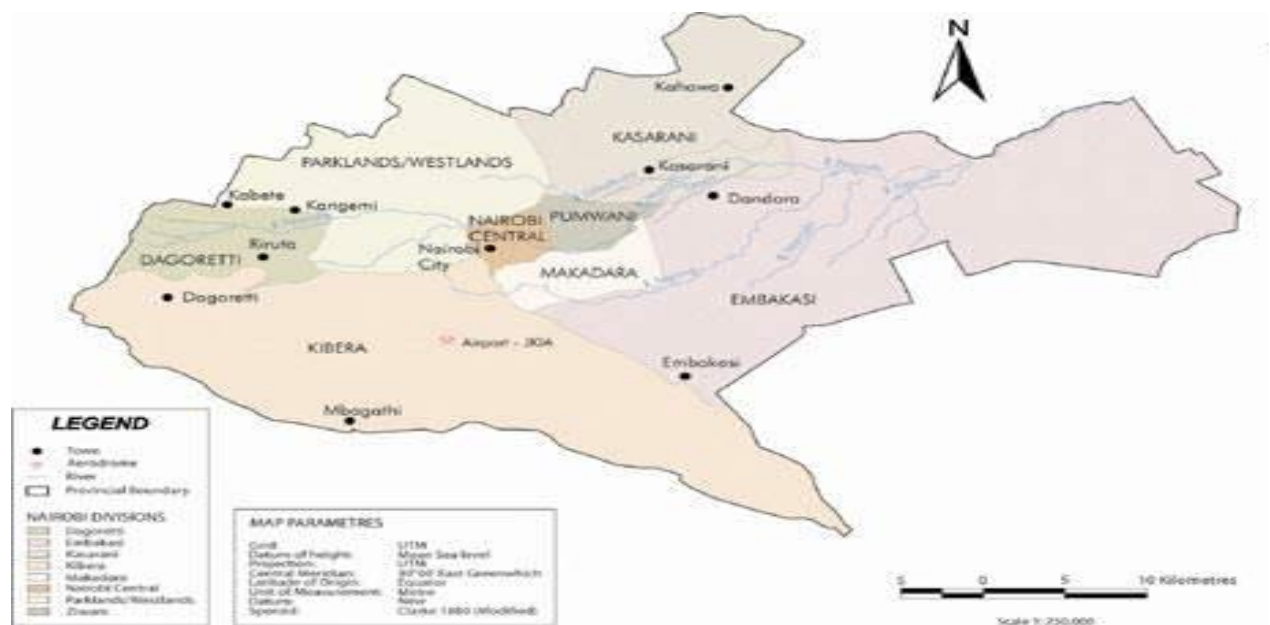
Figure 2: Map of Nairobi, 2012

Rapid and uncontrolled growth has, however, brought extensive pressure on the city's infrastructure. Longstanding inequities in Kenya have also continued to be recreated in Nairobi as poor incomes, unemployment, and poor governance have produced a city sharply divided into poor and rich neighborhoods. Today, Nairobi is an exemplar of the typical African city where rapid urbanization and population explosion, amidst poor economic fortunes and poor governance, have concentrated poverty in congested informal settlements, commonly called slums (Kimani-Murage & Ngindu, 2007; Parks, 2013). Currently, 60% of the residents of Nairobi live in slums characterized by substandard social services, lack of security, access to power, potable water, poor housing, as well as poor social and other outcomes that

aggravate national indicators and delay progress towards the Millennium Development Goals[2] (Parks, 2013). While slum dwellers constitute over half of the population of Nairobi, they only inhabit 5% of the total residential land, giving them just about 1% of the total landmass of the city (Karanja & Makau, 2006). Currently, an estimated 100 different slum and squatter settlements exist in Nairobi, fueling a new form of sightseeing in Kenya: slum tourism (Karanja & Makau, 2006; UN-HABITAT, not dated). It is in two of such slums in Nairobi that I investigated masculinity among economically-marginalized urban men.

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[2] The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were launched in 2000 to enable the world work around a common 15-year agenda to tackle poverty and misery. The MDGs developed measurable, universally-agreed goals for eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, preventing deadly but treatable disease, and expanding educational opportunities for all children, among other development imperatives (UNDP, 2014). In September 2015, the MDGs will be replaced by the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS).

Chapter 2: Study problem, objectives and background literature

2.0: Introduction

In the past three decades, a body of research, demonstrating the variability, as opposed to the fixity, of masculinity has emerged (Connell, 2005; DeKeseredy, Donnermeyer, Schwartz, Tunnell, & Hall, 2007; Levant & Richmond, 2007). This body of research shows that masculinity is a socially-produced and vibrant phenomenon that is negotiated, fashioned, developed, and performed in the context of everyday social life. My research explores the social production as well as views and practices of masculinity among men in poor urban settlements of Kenya. In this chapter, I outline my research problem and questions. I also review key literature related to major issues addressed in my study. The key goal of the review is to position my research in relation to what is currently known in the field.

2.1: Research problem

In most of Africa, rapid urban growth is occurring under exacting economic situations. As a result, majority of the residents in Africa's large cities—and a growing proportion of Africans generally —now live in congested slums and shantytowns (Kimani-Murage & Ngindu, 2007). These slums and shantytowns, characterized by punishing poverty and poor livelihood conditions (African Population and Health Research Centre, 2009; Karanja & Makau, 2006; UN-HABITAT, not dated), present particularly captivating and fertile locations for exploring gendered behaviours and their implications for health, relationships, and community development and engagement. Writing specifically about men in poor urban African contexts, Ehioma (2004) noted that 'the average man in the slums of Africa is 'economically insecure; feeding from hand to mouth…. He can hardly boast of his next meal and… his family can go for days without any food.' Generally speaking, the socio-economic context of life in African slum settings sets limits on what men and boys can both aspire to and achieve (Davis, 2006; Pryer, 2003). The high-level of poverty, unemployment, and insecurity in most African slums have resulted, among other things, in the inability of men to capably fend for and defend their families, which potentially contests their notions of themselves as well as identities as free managers of their destinies, guardians of, and breadwinners for their families and communities, development agents, community leaders, workers or even as strong, powerful, and influential (Silberschmidt, 1999, 2001, 2004a).

Recent studies in African urban communities as wide-ranging as Nairobi, Lagos, Accra, Kampala, and Johannesburg point to the urgent and overdue need for more critical perspectives on the men who live in cities (Adedimeji, Omololu, & Odutolu, 2007; African Population and Health Research Centre, 2002, 2009; Buvé, Bishikwabo-Nsarhaza, & Mutangadura, 2002; Mitullah, 2003). Men and boys in African slums are

disproportionately represented among those who suffer morbidities and mortalities arising from injuries. Many times, these injuries are sustained in violent situations involving other males (Kyobutungi et al., 2008; Ratele, 2008b; Ziraba et al., 2011). In several African countries, the prevalence of violence against women and male involvement in alcoholism, substance use, and risky sexual practices, including multiple sexual partnerships and non-use of condoms in casual sexual liaisons, is also generally higher in slums than in the general population (Buvé et al., 2002; Greif, Dodoo, & Jayaraman, 2011; Kalipeni, Craddock, Oppong, & Ghosh, 2004; Zulu, Dodoo, & Ezeh, 2003; Zulu, Dodoo, & Chika-Ezeh, 2002; Zulu, Ezeh, & Dodoo, 2000). Research shows that poor urban men are less likely to follow non-violent routes in their civic demands and engagement, interactions with socio-political institutions, and quest for social change (Jewkes, 2002; Jolly, 2010; Neocosmos, 2008). In the face of these dynamics, scholars (Jewkes, 2002; Kalipeni et al., 2004; Mitullah, 2003; Pryer, 2003; Ratele, 2008b) have suggested that urgent need exists for more critical understanding of the interaction of poor livelihoods and manliness in African cities. Several scholars (such as Izugbara and Undie (2008), Smith (2007) and Xaba (2001) have noted that for many of the pressing issues in sub-Saharan Africa, including health promotion, violence prevention, civic engagement, and community development, understanding how men construct and perform themselves in specific social environments is key, urgent and critical.

The goal of my research is to explore practices and notions of masculinity among poor men in urban Kenyan communities and to provide evidence that can support innovative programmatic work with them. I seek to understand both Nairobi's poor men's discourses and practices of masculinity and how, in defining, enacting and performing themselves as men, they invoke social expectations, personal agency, and cultural resources. Specifically, I ask: How is manliness constructed and enacted in these slum contexts where the 'conventional' artefacts of masculinity are not readily available to men? This question demands urgent answers because as Silberschmidt (2001) argues, while breadwinner masculinity is valued and prized in most of East Africa, several of the region's men are increasingly unable to achieve it. Further, Sherman (2005) notes that marginalized men's experiences with masculinity are unique, because poverty undermines the critical everyday ways they express themselves as gendered people. Masculinities have also been found to exist, intersect with, and co-produce one another in relation to class, poverty, wealth, politics, and inequality in any given context (Ratele, 1998, 2008a, 2008b).

But my aim in the current study is not to explain the totality of the lives and behaviours of men who reside in the slums of Nairobi by reference to poverty. Rather, I explore the different ways these men are fashioning and working out masculine identities and selves and relating with mythic figurations of masculinity which, due largely to poverty, appear symbolically elusive to them; how they are negotiating

and addressing the challenges, perceived and real, of poverty to their sense of manliness; and the implications of the unreachability of locally-valued and prized versions of manliness for poor men's behaviours, roles and relationships as well as engagement with their communities (Jolly, 2010; Silberschmidt, 2004b).

2.2: Study Objectives

My principal aim in this research is to generate rich scientific knowledge on the social construction of masculinity in poor urban Kenyan settlements, the implications of economic stress and poor livelihoods for masculine practices and identities as well as the impact of poor male slum residents' practices of manliness on their relationships, health, and community development and engagement. I intend to produce knowledge that can be leveraged to deliver innovative strategies for social and development work with men in the slums of Kenya. Findings are also expected to set the tone for future research on masculinity practices of marginalized men in other settings in Africa. In more specific terms, my research seeks to:

a. Investigate the implications of poor socio-economic and livelihood conditions for poor male slum residents' practices of masculinity and masculine identity work (See papers 1& 4)

b. Explore constructions and practices of masculinity among marginalized men in Nairobi's slum communities (See papers 1 & 4)

c. Interrogate notions and practices of manliness in relation to health, relationships and community development and engagement (See papers 2 & 3)

d. Provide basis for thinking critically, theoretically, and creatively about forms of programmatic action and work with poor urban men in Nairobi (See papers 1, 2, 3, & 4).

2.3: Literature review

In the literature currently, gaps exist in scholarly knowledge on marginalized urban men in Africa in relation to masculinity. We also know little about how poor urban men in Africa negotiate the challenges (perceived and real) of poverty to their social sense of manhood; poor urban African men's relationships and engagements with their communities; as well as poor urban men's own understandings and constructions of the implications of their manliness practices for their health. While I seek to contribute to knowledge in these areas, some relevant and related literature already exists, as I show below.

In the section that follows, I review the existing research on some of the key issues that my study addresses. These include the social construction of masculinity, the notion of hegemonic masculinity, and the relationship between masculinity and poverty, community development and health. The goal of the review is to highlight

existing debates in the literature as well as the gaps which my study seeks to fill. In this dissertation, I use the phrase 'social construction of masculinity[3]' to refer to the diverse ways that masculinity as an aspect of gender is fashioned or configured by social, economic, linguistic, religious, cultural, media, artistic and other institutional discourses, dynamics and or processes (Beall, 1993; DeCecco & Elia, 1993).

2.4: Essentialist and socialization perspectives on the origin of masculinity

The current academic literature on masculinity continues to draw from social constructionist perspectives of gender (Beall, 1993; Lock & Strong, 2010; Steinfeldt et al., 2011). The view of gender, and indeed masculinity, as a socially-constructed phenomenon emerged in response to the limitations of essentialism or biological determinism and the socialization or sex role perspectives of masculinity, in particular, and gender, in general (Beall, 1993; DeLamater & Hyde, 1998; Fenstermaker & West, 2013; Tiefer, 1995).While constructionism is, itself, accused of treating phenomena as both real and unreal at the same time (Boghossian, 2006; Burningham & Cooper, 1999; Houston, 2001), it is a superior viewpoint to essentialism and socialization/sex role perspectives which pay little mind to the complexities, contestations, continuities, and discontinuities that characterize masculinity; the active role of humans in the formation of identities; and the dynamism that typify manhood subjectivities in history, organizations, and contexts (Alsop, Fitzsimons, & Lennon, 2002; Diamond & Butterworth, 2008; Fenstermaker & West, 2013; Hearn, 1994; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009; Marecek, Crawford, & Popp, 2004).

In the essentialist literature, men and women are depicted as inherently different (Crompton & Lyonette, 2005b). The view holds innately distinctive make-ups and inner compositions responsible for differences in the behaviors men and women. The root of behavioral differences in men and women, according to essentialism, lies in key biological differences in brain structures between them (Fuss, 1989; Witt, 2011) as well as anatomy, physiology, hormones, adrenalines, and chromosomes (Crompton & Lyonette, 2005a; DeCecco & Elia, 1993; Messerschmidt, 2004). For instance, boys may be propelled into raging aggressiveness and competitiveness by hormones. Wilderness camps, boys' single sex classes and use of male role models are some of the common interventions that derive from essentialist notions of boys' behavior (Kempf-Leonard & Sample, 2000; Weaver-Hightower, 2010). Research drawing on biological determinism suffers serious flaws; it cannot account for varying notions and practices of masculinity among men, cultures and societies. It lacks good explanation for changes in masculine and gendered behavior overtime (Miller & Costello, 2001). Further, its policy and programmatic work implications are unclear and often unsuccessful (Udry, 2000).

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[3] The terms 'masculinity', 'manhood', and 'manliness' are used synonymously in this dissertation.

A second perspective of masculinity is the socialization or sex role perspective. While recognizing the social roots of masculinity, research adopting this view depicts masculinity as the outcome of a passive process of socialization. Societies prescribe particular behaviors and values for men and women, relying on key social institutions, particularly the family, religious systems, schools etc. to ensure that members acquire the requisite knowledge, beliefs, morals and habits, From the sex role perspective, masculinity is thus merely the product of how society simply socializes its men and boys (Connell, 1987; Gustafsod, 1998). The image of humankind that emerges from the socialization thesis is that of passive and submissive individuals who simply carry on with received skills and acquired behaviors and attitudes(Gustafsod, 1998; Hicks, 2008). Humans are not viewed as active makers, creators, re-makers and re-creators of their behaviors and identities (Pinker, 2003). Critics of socialization and role theory argue that it reinforces biological determinism; men are essentially different from women and are socialized differently (Awe Forum, not dated; Beall, 1993; Connell, 1987);uses sex differences as the basic explanatory factor in behavior, and cannot explain dynamism in social meanings and performances of gender and masculinity (Andersen & Hysock, 1999); conflates gender with sex differences; cannot account for different masculinities, and fixates at gender dualism (Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985; Connell, Hearn, & Kimmel, 2005; Valdes, 1996). More importantly, socialization theory neglects the agentive nature of humans (Hicks, 2008). Of course, while socialization is important in behavior and value formation, individuals are also active producers of their social world and environment. They are not just passive consumers and bearers of cultures and training. They configure and re-configure themselves based on a range of intersecting factors including class, race, mass media, peer pressure, culture, skills, education, networks, knowledge, ability, religion, age, body shape and sexual preferences and orientations (Connell, 1987, 2005, 2011; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; McNay, 2000; Risman, 2004).

2.5. Social constructionism

The thesis that masculinity and masculine identity are not fixed properties is the core of the social constructionist perspective of masculinity. The origins of social constructionism are in the philosophical, sociological and anthropological writings of scholars such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Paul Ricoeur, Jurgen Habermas, Giambattista Vico, George Herbert Mead, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Harold Garfinkel, Erving Goffman etc. (Burr, 2003; Elder-Vass, 2012; Gergen, 1985; Lock & Strong, 2010). Social constructionism affirms masculinity as a dynamic, ongoing, changing and changeable, rather than static or fixed phenomenon (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 2005; Hearn, 1996; T. Reeser, 2010). Connell (2011) argued that masculinity only has meaning within a specified culture. It is often constituted through ideology, control, performance, language and related aspects. In effect, masculinity is a malleable quality that is constructed and reconstructed daily in relationships with other people. The individual and collective practice of gender relations occurs within the context of social structures. Masculinity is thus neither determined wholly by social structures, historical

practices, and cultural scripts, nor by predetermined genetic and psychological makeup. Masculinity as a personal practice is a product of societal institutions (such as the state, the workplace/labor market, the family) and history; it is created and expressed through personal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural practices (Connell 2005). In his assessment of the politics of change in contemporary masculinity, Connell contends that labor market and the state play a major part in framing the development of 'protest' masculinity, a version of hegemonic masculinity, sustained as a collective practice in social spaces such as bike clubs. But vivid rejections of masculinity, as well as a low-keyed 'complicit' masculinity, materialize from the same social environment by special class/gender praxes. Diverse masculine identities and varieties exist and are produced with people's active participation (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 2011; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Mullins, 2006). Different contexts produce unique types of masculinities, and while there may be a dominant masculine subjectivity in a given context, other forms of masculinity will coexist, conflict and cooperate with the dominant version. This suggests that masculinity does not just stand in dualistic opposition to femininity (Connell, 2005), but is itself a variable characterized by complexities, complications and contradictions both in terms of how different masculine identities relate to themselves and other forms of identity forms, including feminine identities and forms of being (Connell, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Moynihan, 1998). Masculinity is also not a form of behavior imposed on men by society at large. Men, and indeed others, take active part in the formation, sustenance, creation, and destruction of forms and identities of manliness in society(Connell, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

It is against the above context that Allard, Cooper, Hildebrand, & Wealands (1995: 24) assert that we "are not passively shaped by the larger societal forces such as schools or the media, but are active in selecting, adapting and rejecting the dimensions we choose to incorporate, or not, into our version of gender." Essentially, masculinity can be viewed as a process that is endlessly under production—practice, processing, and transformation. Connell writes that masculinity is social, only coming 'into existence as people act" (1998:154) and only meaningful within a specific culture (see also Connell, 2011; Messerschmidt, 2004). It is not an unchanging value or attribute, but a malleable trait that is constructed and reconstructed through ideology, control, performance, language and related aspects and in relationships with other people (Alsop et al., 2002; Connell, 1987, 2005, 2011; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; T. W. Reeser, 2011). Masculinity is thus neither shaped wholly by social structures, historical practices, and cultural scripts, nor by predetermined genetic and psychological makeup. It is a product of societal institutions, history as well as personal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural practices (Connell, 2005). More recent research continues to position masculinities within localized social and political realms highlighting the multiplicity in masculinity in social class settings and contexts, ethnic communities, and regions (Cornwall, Edström, & Greig, 2011; Hearn, Pringle, Pease, & Ruspini, 2011; Sluggett, 2011). Men are constantly inventing and reinventing themselves as well as being

invented and reinvented by the contexts in which they live. The process by which masculinities are produced and reproduced is multifaceted and so are the implications of masculinities for men's health, relationships and community. Connell (2005) notes that central to the making of the masculine gender is an active process of negotiating with social situations and constructing ways of existing in them. Men do or perform masculinity, and they invoke social expectations, personal agency, and cultural and other resources to do so(Hearn, 2004).

2.5.1: Examples of scholarly research on the social construction of masculinity

Reeser (2010) has described some key ways in which masculinity is socially constructed or produced; namely as a form of ideology and part of language, discourse and everyday practice. As a form of ideology, masculinity is produced through a series of beliefs that groups buy into and that influences how they go about or live their lives. He argues that different social groups, contexts, and institution have a self-interest in masculinity and the way men express themselves. These institutions and groups motivate men into behaving along particular ideals and standards. The state often needs soldiers to protect it and so promotes a military version of masculinity. Businesses need capitalistic masculinity to make money, and so construct versions of ideal manliness. Certain sports require particular behaviors from men and ultimately weave those values into a normative ideal for men. In the section that follows, I highlight some key examples of research on the social construction of masculinity.

Scholarly analyses of the ideological production of masculinities are legion (Kuefler, 2001; M. Ghaill, 1994; Walker, 1994). For instance, Woodward (2000) draws on United States army recruitment literature, military publicity materials, popular accounts of soldiering, and army videos to show how the United States government constructs military masculinities in terms of the warrior-hero. This view of masculinity is important for the military institution which requires sacrifice, fearlessness, toughness etc., to achieve its goals. Early on therefore, soldiers are taught and immersed in the values of neo-stoic "cult of manliness', conformity, alertness, the importance of achieving approval and privilege through success in competition and the dangers of weakness or effeminacy. They learn that "service" and "sacrifice" to the state is a 'responsibility and a chance to make history in the noblest theater for heroic action, to harden their bodies and discipline their minds to realize their own destiny as men while serving the state' (Dean, 1998). Further, Dean writes that the military in many societies seeks to create and reproduce a community of Spartan warrior-heroes who believe that 'individual and collective redemption from effeminate temptations' is accomplished through ideals of manly civic virtue, service, and aggression toward enemies, warfare and even martyrdom. Soldiers thus ultimately embrace the ideology that service is an occasion to exhibit their hardiness and bravery, patriotism and statesmanship. Through this process, men with a sense of heroism and even willingness to die in defense of country are produced.

Masculinity as ideology is also easily evident in the arena of organized sports (Kidd, 2013; Majors, 2001; Messner, 1995; Messner & Sabo, 1994). Sportsmen, for instance, learn through ideological tutoring that muscularity and aggressive competition are key ingredients for triumph and victory (Luciano, 2007; Messner, 1995). Chapman's (2004) study of Tokyo karate dōjōs (training halls), showed that the ideology of masculine hegemony and superiority is propagated through stress on the 'naturalness' of male physical supremacy as well as physiological contrast of male and female sporting competencies. As male-dominated sporting environments, karate dōjōs, provide, among other things, a space where the power of masculinity and of vigilant, well-framed, disciplined, mentally-alert, and brutal men are produced, embodied and consumed. Steinfeldt, Foltz et al.(2011) show how college football coaches use the sport as a veritable learning space for players to, among other things, acquire norms that define 'real' manliness in terms of being accountable and in control and showing team-manship. In his analysis, Soulliere's (2006) uncovered how messages communicated by the World Wrestling Entertainment, (WWE) about manhood support forms of masculinity that emphasize hostility and violence, emotional restraint, and success and achievement.

Language is key to the development, maintenance, negotiation and circulation of different masculine identities (Herdt, 1994). Currently, there is growing consensus that language lies at the heart of understanding men and masculinity, with writers such as (Johnson & Meinhof, 1997), maintaining that masculinity (and gender more generally) is something fashioned in and through language and discourse. Language remains the repository of assumptions about gender and thus key to understanding its contextual interface and intersections with race, class, dis/ability, sexuality and other forms of identities (Edley 2001). The propagation of masculinity through language forms, including imageries, adverts, TV, billboards, films myths, stories, discourse and practices is an established research theme in gender studies (Johnson & Meinhof, 1997; Kiesling, 1996, 2001a, 2001b, 2005, 2007; Seidler, 2004; Thorne, Kramarae, & Henley, 1983). Ideas of masculinity are often expressed and articulated through spoken and unspoken language. Kiesling (2001a, 2001b, 2005, 2007) argues that particular linguistic devices are often used to display different masculinities. Masculinity is therefore the product of a range of ways of speaking that denote a social hierarchy. Speakers select from this repertoire depending on the speech activity and their interlocutors. He holds that masculine identity is a performance that is contextually meaningful in immediate speech events and invokes cultural knowledge of gender and social structures. The above view resonates with Benor's (2004) research that showed that among Orthodox Jewish communities, boys and men frame their masculinity partly through linguistic enactments of their religious learnedness and knowledge. Males deploy the language difference to convey the persona of the *talmid chacham*, the wise and learned man of Jewish law. Bucholtz's (1999) study in California also shows that conversational strategies are key to young people's portrayal of black masculinity, in contrast to white masculinity, as physically powerful and dominant. Through

language, young white boys enable racial hierarchy that supports white cultural appropriation of African-American culture of manliness.

Research on the discursive construction of masculinity through the mass media is also legion and revealing (Consalvo, 2003; Craig, 1992; Hanke, 1998; MacKinnon, 2003). For instance, in his interesting analysis of print and television representations of baseball pitcher, Nolan Ryan, Trujillo (1991) reveals how he was depicted as embodying an ideal for men: the quintessential male athletic, symbol of the capitalist worker, family patriarch, white rural cowboy, and phallic figure. Similarly, Gough's (2006) interrogation of the construction of men's health in a special feature of a United Kingdom national newspaper (The Observer, November 27, 2005) shows how it intensely appealed to essentialist notions of masculinity, unquestioned differences between men and women, and constructions of men as in need of dedicated female help. Jansen and Sabo's (1994) analysis of the media coverage of the Persian Gulf War shows that sports/war metaphors that reinforced the multiple systems of domination, rationalized the war, and strengthened the ideological hegemony of white Western male elites were commonly used. The metaphors particularly marshaled patriarchal values that construct, mediate and maintain hegemonic forms of masculinity. Examining three volumes of a Norwegian forestry magazine, Brandth and Haugen (2000) showed that masculinity was constructed at two of the main sites of forestry, namely sites of practical forestry work and organizational management, which match the `tough' and the `powerful' positions of masculinity in the business. The study tracked changes in notions of ideal logger-masculinity from the old, tough logger to the energetic, young man with efficient and powerful machinery and modern tools.

Religious discourses also construct masculinity. In her study of Pakistani young men, Hopkins (2006) argued that religious discourses support the emergence of patriarchal and aggressive masculinities among young Muslim. In the same vein, Agorde (2007) observed the rise of a new masculine public culture in Ghana due largely to the proliferation of Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity that emphasizes masculinity constituted in terms of solid commitment to church activities, prayer, and family. These often translate into expectations that 'real' men should be economically- sufficient and stable, family-oriented, and spiritually-mature to guide and teach their family. In Boretz's (2013) research in China and Taiwan, the dramatic images in Chinese religion were shown to derive from and iconify masculine qualities of violence, aggression, and physical prowess: the implicit core of Chinese patriliny and patriarchy. Through the direct bodily practice of martial arts movement as well as coaching, Chinese and Taiwanese martial arts practitioners identify and represent themselves as men of prowess, a quality which they vehemently deny men at the lower limits of the society.

Other studies have called attention to the interesting and complicated processes of change that men and masculinities undergo as a result of social situations and contexts. In doing masculinity, men therefore invoke different resources (Slugget, 2011). The process by which masculinities are produced and reproduced is

multifaceted and so are the implications of masculinities for health, men's relationships and forms of civic engagement. Connell (2005) notes that central to the making of the masculine gender is an active process of negotiations with social situations and constructing ways of living in them. Messerschmidt (1997) maintains that men construct their behavior with the influence of significant others in their lives; gendered responses are thus the reactions of men and women to their unique social situations and contexts. Masculine identity is therefore not the product, simply, of passive socialization; it involves vigorous engagement with social reality and situations.

Class and economic conditions are among the critical key social realities and dynamics that impact masculinities. My research focuses primarily on poor men in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya. Poor people form an economic category or class (McLellan, 1988). As one of a number of social hierarchies in social science analysis, class is key to understanding social expectations related to manliness. The notion of working-class masculinity, for instance, frames certain men in relation to the experience of manual labor (Warin, Solomon, Lewis, & Langford, 1999). But the relationship between class and masculinity is certainly very complex and widespread (Connell, 2005).

This complexity has led to the realization that it is not just objective poverty and marginalization that affect and challenge men, but also prevailing social notions, constructions and perceptions of poverty and power. Poverty and power are relative and contextually produced. For instance, Yapa (1996) argues that deprivation is socially-constructed through the devaluing of existing resources and the manufacture of new wants. Poverty does not just reside exclusively in the external world independent of discourses that define it; the origins of scarcity and want are social and humans make sense of and embody poverty in different ways. Hunger and malnutrition are immediately material, yet they exist in a discursive materialist formation where ideas, matter, discourse, and power are intertwined and inform behavior. Knowledge or perception that one is poor can trigger the performance of oneself in particular ways.

Feelings of poverty and powerlessness among men are therefore as important in their effects on men's behaviour as objective poverty measured in terms of poor incomes, unemployment, and inability to sufficiently provide (Silberschmidt, 2001, 2005). Gould (1974) notes that even for men who are employed and earn good incomes, the presence of other people who earn higher than them can be threatening and marginalizing. The feeling of insecurity and marginality in men is also often exacerbated if the person earning the higher income is a woman (Sherman, 2005). Equally complex is the relationship between real and imagined poverty and marginality and masculinity among men. Silberschmidt (2001) thus suggests that both measurable poverty and feelings of poverty can inspire complex masculine reactions in men, highlighting how constructions of poverty rather than actual poverty are central in the lives of men. In the view of Morgan (2005),downwardly mobile individuals or

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poor men whose failure in economic class terms is constructed or viewed as indications of a feebleness of character, which might also be gendered (lack of ambition, poor incomes, unemployment, involvement in work that is not viewed as masculine, alcoholism, etc.). The self-protective and nervous masculinity of the new entrants into middle class occupations, localities, or lifestyles may also contrast with the seemingly stable masculinities of men from middle class families, and who through school and university, have entered middle class occupations and a lifestyle characterized by appropriate marriage (Morgan, 2005).

Sherman's (2005) research in Golden Valley, California provides a good example of how economic processes and changes and class dynamics shape masculine ideals and practices. With massive industrial downsizing in the Golden Valley, employment opportunities for men dried up, leaving several of them jobless and unable to earn incomes and provide effectively for their families. The loss or feeling of loss of their breadwinning role and capacity- the major variable around which they had constituted their masculinity- seriously undermined their abilities to sustain functioning relationships. Economically-disempowered Golden Valley men who continued to rigidly seek traditional breadwinner/homemaker gender roles suffered serious tensions in their homes and families. However, the situation or feeling of marginalization also refocused several of the poor men's into more attainable masculine goals such as active parenting and domestic work. Such men experienced less strife and more satisfaction.

Reeser (2010) aptly drives home the unfixed nature of masculinity by noting that there is no single model of response that everyman 'turns to in order to define their masculinity or imitate it when they want to act masculine.' To put it in Bourdieu's (1977) words, men are also simultaneously agents and subjects. They are acted upon by the context of their lives and also act upon the very structures and systems within which they exist. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have thus noted that masculinities are largely configurations of practices that are only accomplished in social action and that differ markedly across social settings and class.

2.5.2: Social constructionist research on masculinity in Kenya

In Kenya currently, research on the social construction of masculinity exists in the form of analysis of media and literary representations of manliness as well as social science and historical investigations of 'tribal' masculinities and the impact of social change on masculinities and norms of genders. Media and literary research on masculinity in Kenya has relied on popular music, books, films, TV shows and dramas in Kenya to clarify constructions of manhood in the country. For instance, focusing on a body of literary texts produced in Nairobi between 1960 and 1990 called the Spear Books, Granqvist (2006) argued that new masculinities have emerged at the crossroads of local (African) impressions of the status of the man, the legacy of colonialism, and the impacts of modernity and globalization. He noted that post-colonial masculinities in Kenya-and which these

artistic productions so powerfully attest to- reflect politics of gender and the emasculating influence, violence, and punishing uncertainties of the African postcolonial city which turns men into "boys-who-never-grow-up." He concludes that there is an order which venerates violent masculinity in the modern Kenyan city, and that this order is produced by the country's violent colonial past as a segregated city and its postcolonial and international claims for recognition.

Peck's (2013) analysis of the Kenyan TV show, *XYZ*, reveals that masculinity is a central theme in the popular discourses that circulate in Kenya. Peck maintains that postcolonial discourses of political power have coalesced around the figure of the *mzee*, or male elder. Efforts to challenge male leaders using the XYZ show are effected through socially-othered selves like rap artists and feminized males that ultimately reinforce elder masculinity as a normative attribute of political leadership. The show's puppets who are cast as wife, homosexuals and hip hop artists point to wider anxieties about a social order hinged on heterosexual patriarchal normativity. The show's interest in disempowered men, liberated and disrespectful urban women, and loss of traditional values and norms borrow heavily from male-privileging norms that maintain hierarchal power and support a notion of proper social order framed in masculinist terms.

Tom Odhiambo's (2007, 2011) analysis of fictionalized postcolonial masculinities in Kenya shows that independence unleashed freedoms and liberties that had been inconceivable to a majority of native Africans during the colonial era. These freedoms radically altered relationships, especially between men and women. Kenyan men's rapid ascendancy to political positions and power in the aftermath of colonialism rapidly masculinized the public and domestic space. Odhiambo maintained that men's role in the independence struggles in Kenya led to their perception as conquerors of the colonial establishment; a mentality which they promptly transferred into the social fabric of independent Kenya by projecting their sexuality and virility in dominating their womenfolk. Urban working men's hedonistic pursuits, primarily sex, Odhiambo submitted, are performances of their new-found freedom and power in the postcolonial period.

Ethnic masculinities and changing male identities also form key issues of research in Kenya. The extant literature shows that while circumcision, marriage, maintenance of independent residence, ownership of one's own herd of cattle, and successfully rustling cattle etc. were the key terms around which masculinity was constructed in many indigenous cultures in Kenya, these are rapidly changing in the face of globalization, transformation, urbanization, and other processes. In Kenyatta's, *Facing Mount Kenya, (2011),* the social production of manliness in traditional Kikuyu culture is addressed. Kenyatta shows that the transition from boyhood to manhood was marked through ritual circumcision that sought to toughen boys into daredevil warriors. Among the Luo, the third largest ethnic group in Kenya, Blommaert,(2010) show that building a *simba* (hut) signified manhood. Adult Luo males who have not built a *simba* are not respected. In the past, the Luo portrayed

circumcision as a form of defilement of manliness. In reality, when members of other ethnic groups in Kenya want to demean Luo men, they forcefully circumcised them (Ahlberg & Njoroge, 2013). However, in the context of HIV and public health campaigns that celebrate circumcision as key to HIV prevention, several Luo men willingly undergo circumcision and circumcised Luo men have gradually emerged as ideal men, who sometimes show themselves off as embodying modern and healthier Luo masculinity (Wawire, 2010). In Mojola's (2014) research on intimate relationships between widowed Luo women and poor young men that emerged in the wake of economic crisis and a devastating HIV epidemic, she shows how the co-optation of widow inheritance practices due to the presence of an overwhelming number of widows in a context of economic crisis and rising poverty has made widows providers, and poor Luo young men, kept men. These young Luo men, rather than being feminized by being kept or provided for, use other ways to construct their masculinity and perform themselves in manners congruent with Luo cultural ideals.

Hodgson's (1999) analysis of changing masculinities among the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania showed that the pursuit of pastoralism and cultural authenticity was, until recently considered ideal for Maasai men. From an early age, boys are taught to take risks and endure physical hardship, hunger, circumcision and derision as they are toughened into 'real' men. For instance, newly circumcised young boys were responsible for protecting settlements and livestock from attackers and wild animals. They stole livestock from neighboring ethnic groups, which swelled their pride and prestige. Maasai men who did not live up to the norm of pastoral masculinity were traditionally called *ormeek.* Such men attended school, were Christians, or lived in the cities. Essentially, *ormeek* was a ridiculed and derided masculine identity in the traditional Maasai worldview. However, given changing political and economic situations of the Maasai, *ormeek* men have become far better positioned and situated to adapt, survive, and prosper than their uneducated counterparts. In this context, *ormeek* masculinity has supplanted pastoral masculinity as the most valued version of masculinity among Masaai.

 The reconstruction of indigenous Kenyan masculinities in the face of economic change is also the theme of Meiu's (2009) study of Samburu men. With the growth of the Kenyan tourism industry in the 1980s, numerous young Samburu men migrated seasonally to coastal tourist resorts seeking to gain materially from and participate in the socio-economy of tourism. Many of these men developed sexual relationships with white female, and sometimes, male tourists, rapidly accumulating wealth, and forming a new social group within their home communities. Meiu shows how these men, referred to as "Mombasa morans", embodied newer versions of masculinities fashioned in the nexus of local warrior masculinity, desire, tourism, the appeal of exoticism, and globalization. In his study of agricultural labor migration in Western Kenya during British colonial rule, Ocobock (2013) showed that decisions to leave home for work and wages, overtime, were conflated with maturity and masculinity. Ocobock's analysis revealed the different competing and complementary roles played by different nodes of authority of fathers, employers, colonial officials, and young men to produce new identities

of manhood. Early on, the British endeavored to lure young men into the labor market. District officials and chiefs manipulated initiation practices to ritually redefine age at which boys became men so that they might leave home to labor or work. Ultimately, labor migration and wage-earning became integral to their age-defined masculinity and as a platform for earning one's manhood (Ocobock, 2010, 2013).

In the current research, I broaden understanding of men in Kenya by specifically focusing on poor men in the slums of Nairobi. My aim is to understand masculinity as a socially-constructed dynamic in the slums of Nairobi. Previous research in Kenya has ignored the processes whereby local and national contexts of poverty and men's everyday socio-economic life, in combination with wider globalized processes, influence notions, idiosyncrasies, understandings, and practices of manliness as well as men's gendered views of themselves and perceptions of their place and role in social and community development etc. My research will, among other things, address this gap.

2.6: Hegemonic and compensatory masculinity

Another issue in the literature that resonates with my research relates to Mullins' (2006) view of the major developments in masculinity research during the period, namely (1), the realization that multiple forms of masculinities are possible and often co-exist in a given society, and (2), the emergence of the theory of hegemonic masculinity which posits a socially constructed set of behavioral expectations that exerts its pressure on all men in a society and is constructed relative to different socially-disvalued masculinities as well as women. Mullins' (2006) view is that the core of hegemonic masculinity is the continual legitimation of gender definitions requiring the subordination of women to men and the subordination of non-hegemonic masculinities to the dominant form. Overall, the concept of hegemonic masculinity is nearly three decades old. Connel and Messerchidmt traced the concept to studies on social inequality in Australian high schools by (Kessler et al. 1982) and on the formation of masculinities and men's experiences of bodies and role in Australian labor politics (by Connell 1982, 1983). The concept traditionally derives from the Gramscian notion of "hegemony" in reference to the mobilization and demobilization of whole classes. It was Connell who first used it to describe the culturally normative ideal of male behavior. Underlying hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical construct is the assumption that societies strongly encourage their men to express a particular kind of masculinity (Connell, 2005). This version of masculinity is not necessarily the most prevalent form of male expression and may not be normally distributed in the population. But it is the most socially-endorsed or valued. Hegemonic masculinity versions are often normative and dynamic, legitimated through discourse, ideology and practices (Carrigan, et al. 1985; Cheng 2008; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Lusher and Robins 2009; Mullins 2006; Reeser 2010). Scholars (such as Connell, 2000, 2005; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Kimmel, 2000; Connell, Hearn, and

Kimmel, 2005) have thus noted that because it is the hegemonic version of masculinity that society strongly endorses for its men to embody, men face an unrelenting pressure to continually display a masculine persona.

However, as Kimmel and Connell (2000) note, masculinity is an illusion, a fraud at continuous risk of being uncovered and exposed. The reigning characterization of masculinity, in any society, they argue, is thus often an effort to avert emasculation. Masculinity is not embedded in the body or personality traits of individuals. Hegemonic masculinity is merely a pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity). It is not the only version of masculinity in a society. Rather, it co-exists with, and is distinguishable from other masculinities, especially those that are socially perceived and defined as subordinated. It is not always violent, but could be supported by direct and indirect force. Hegemonic masculinities are produced in specific circumstances, undergo change, are in contest with other masculinities and can be displaced by new forms of masculinities (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). The concept of hegemonic masculinity has exerted considerable influence on thinking about men, gender, and social hierarchy. It has been used to explore several social phenomena, including crime (Goodey, 1997); street life (Collison, 1996) ; drinking behavior (Campbell, 2000); the public lives of media and cultural other icons (Whannel, 2001); classroom practices (McGuffey & Rich, 1999); teacher strategies and teacher identities (Brown, 1999); sports (Light & Kirk, 2000); men's health practices (Emslie, Ridge, Ziebland, & Hunt, 2006); aggression (Holland, Men, & Women, 2004); nationalism (Bracewell, 2000); popular anxieties about men and boys (Buchbinder, 1998); patriarchy (Douglas, 2002); and models of gender (Kronsell, 2005).

One major critique against the notion of hegemonic masculinity is that it presents a narrow view of the lives of men (Hearn, 2004), and fails to clarify masculinities as identity projects and the relationship between hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities (Wetherell and Edley (1999). My research builds particularly on the last critique. It hinges on Demetriou's (2001) notion of dialectical pragmatism which captures the dynamic interaction of masculinities with each as well as the agency of subordinated and marginalized groups—often conditioned by their specific locations and situations. I will analyze marginalized men's responses to lack of access to the artifacts of hegemonic masculinity. I am, among other things, interested in the relationship between non-hegemonic masculinities and hegemonic ones in local contexts, particularly the routes that men follow to attain valued versions of hegemonic masculinity.

The notion of compensatory masculinity is also relevant to my work. The notion is a corollary of the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Willer (2005) describes masculine compensation as the tendency among men whose masculinity is at risk of being doubted or questioned to behave in particularly masculine ways in an attempt to reconfirm their masculine standing to themselves and others. He linked the idea to Freud's notion of reaction formation, noting that it offers a particularly useful tool for explaining men's response to threats to their

masculinity. Willer explains masculine overcompensation as an exceptional type of reaction formation with the implication of femininity or unsatisfactory masculinity being the disagreeable trait that produces men's overcompensating behavior. For Willer, men who suspect themselves to have inadequate masculinity will compensate by enacting extreme masculine behaviors and attitudes designed to create the impression that they are 'properly' masculine. Essentially, it is failure or sense of failure to achieve the ideals of particular hegemonic versions of masculinity that pushes men into compensatory actions (D. D. Gilmore & Uhl, 1987; Willer, 2005).

In the bulk of the existing literature, compensatory masculinity is depicted as a mere psychological reaction that is accessible to, performable by, and permissible as an answer for all masculinity-challenged men. Analyses of several western and non-western cultures have linked the hyper-masculine and aggressive defense of honor among men to generalized inner anxiety among men about their masculine role (D. D. Gilmore, 1990; D. D. Gilmore & Uhl, 1987; M. M. Gilmore & Gilmore, 1979). Gilmore and Uhl (1987) argued that while young men gained recognition and honor by proving themselves, often implying antagonistic and aggressive behavior, older men were expected to be honest, diplomatic and responsible. Societies thus survived by priming their males, from the start, to be ready and prepared to expend themselves in defense of the group's future. Thus, hyper-masculinity and aggressiveness contributed to society's functioning and to the psychological integration of men into their communities. Male ideology induces '… high performance in the social struggle for scarce resources, a code of conduct that advances collective interests by overcoming inner inhibitions." (116)

In his book, *Life is Hard,* Lancaster (1988) also posited compensatory masculinity as a psychological, and common response among men whose sense of manliness is threatened. Building largely on ethnographic data on men in Nicaragua, Lancaster posited that a pervasive internal desire to claim status and prestige and avoid stigmatization produces hyper-masculinity and masochism among men. Nicaraguan male children are socialized to protect their masculinity by stripping others of theirs. They grow up with the psychological burden to protect their masculinity and deny other men theirs. The same viewpoint is expressed by Zinn ((1982) who argued that Mexican men are thrust into machismo and hyper-masculinity by their psychological needs to prove their manhood and impress it upon their wives and children that they are the men of the house. Hyper-masculinity thus compensated for Mexican men's feeling of undervaluation outside of the house where they enjoy little respect from his boss co-workers and/or people in general than they would or expect. A Mexican man, Zinn wrote: "is perpetually obsessed with the need to prove his manhood, oftentimes through fighting excessive drinking and/or extramarital affairs.'(42) Proving to his family that he is still a man shields him psychologically against the mortifying experiences and humiliations he suffers in the outside world.

Masculinity researchers (including Connell, 1995; Conway-Longway, 1994; Izugbara, 2008; Kimmel, 1994; Weeks, 1985) have furnished evidence showing that men, in most world cultures, tend to believe that they have

to protect their masculinity on an everyday basis or lose it. In the view of Banditer (1995), being male has ultimately become about for many men so much of an attainment, so often a goal sufficiently beyond reach that they keep striving to create, recreate, and sustain it. Men's lives are thus lived continually believing that masculinity is fragile and requires regular and high maintenance. Izugbara et al. (2009) noted that men fear the loss of masculinity because it puts them at risk of contempt, derision, and sometimes violent abuse. Such men relinquish their right to be respected. Men thus go at length to uphold and maintain their sense of power and control. Research (by Burns, & Mahalik, 2007; Connell, 1995; 2000, 2005; Conway-Longway, 1994; Kimmel, 1996, Mullins, 2006) shows that feelings that masculinity is fragile and that the slightest slip can cause it to be lost altogether encourage men to work hard to get and retain it. As one source puts it: 'the presumed delicateness of masculinity means that men can slip at once, without warning, from the most respected person to the butt of everybody's joke. This can sometimes only take a moment's lapse in which what the man says or does is viewed as unmanly. As a result, the protection of masculine identity, even at the expense of one's welfare, would seem to many men the right thing to do' (Anonymous not dated).

Connell (2000, 2005) poignantly argued that the scripts that organize manliness in most world societies depict it as very unstable and precarious, consisting mainly in a pattern of practices rooted in the repetitive denial of femininity and homosexuality. The import of Connell's point is that men are led by these scripts to try to sustain their public perception as masculine by perpetually performing themselves in terms of lack of respect for women, placing emphasis on physical size and masculine potency, participating in public display of physical strength and violence, refusal to admit vulnerability, non-display of care and affect, and involvement in practices that emphasize heterosexual virility, conquest and competitiveness. This complexity raises the stakes for masculinity, making it of high-maintenance value and exposing it to all sorts of threats and risks. In the words of Weeks (1985), this also creates "a tenuous fortitude" for men as they are forced into a situation where they perpetually monitor themselves and are perpetually monitored. Men thus live their lives continually warding off threats to their manliness. Kimmel (1996: 101) notes that:

> As a collection of do's and don'ts, the male sex role is a recipe of despair, given
> what it takes to be a real man, if any men could live up to the image, and hence all
> men . . . feel like failures as men. What's worse, the psychological costs of trying
> to live up to the image . . . lead men into lives of . . . despair, of repressed emotion
> and deferred dreams.

Extant literature has linked a sense of threatened masculinity to bodily practices, such as muscle-building (Maas, et. al., 2003), extremely negative attitudinal and affective dispositions toward homosexuality and effeminacy in men (Willer, 2005; Glick et al., 2007), open support for violence; greater propensity for, and uninhibited interest

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in goods (such as cars) that highlight physical size, manly power, and potency; and fanatical participation in public display of physical strength (Willer, 2005). Choi (2003) shows, that in cultures, where traditional distinctions between men and women become blurred and intimidating for men, they may pursue body building to serve as the primary reminder of their masculinity. Muscularity, reportedly, differentiates men from women, revalidating men's sense of masculinity. Support for this thesis exists in studies by McCreary, Saucier and Courtenay (2005), Kimmel & Mahalik (2005), Beagan & Saunders (2005), and Sánchez, Greenberg, Ming Liu, & Vilain (2009), who show positive associations between the drive for muscularity among men and their anxieties with not having an ideal masculine body as well as their perceived need to distinguish themselves from women. Gay men's drive for very muscular bodies has also been shown to relate to pressures to appear more masculine and avoid being suspected to be gay (Beagan & Saunders, 2005).

The attitudinal and affective responses of masculinity-threatened men have also been studied. Based on an experiment with college students, Willer (2005) suggested that overcompensation among masculinity-threatened men may drive attitudes toward war and homosexuality. In the study, men whose masculinity was threatened expressed more negative attitudes toward homosexuals, including greater support for a ban on same-sex marriage, showed greater support for war and violence, expressed greater fondness for goods (such as cars) that highlight physical size and masculine power and potency, and participation in public displays of physical strength. Glick et al (2007) point to the potential of masculinity threat to selectively heighten men's negative affect toward effeminate gay men. They argued that men's desire to reject stereotypically feminine traits in themselves encouraged them to display negative affect toward effeminate gay men. Glick and colleagues found greater fear, hostility, and discomfort toward effeminate gay men in response to a masculinity threat. They concluded that homosexual men who are perceived as stereotypically effeminate are in great danger of violence in the hands of masculinity-threatened men. In an experiment by Maass et al (2003), men reacted to their perceived or stated lack of masculinity with extreme masculine behavior, including the sexual harassment of women.

However, theorizing overcompensation as the unvarying response among masculinity-threatened men frustrates more searching appreciations of masculinity practices as dynamic social projects which have cogent instrumentality for deploying agents. Some scholars have thus sought more nuanced pictures of the lives of marginalized men. Guttmann(2006) challenged characterizations of the typical response of Latino men to masculinity-threatening circumstances in terms of hyper-masculinity. Focusing on the daily lives of working class men in Colonia Santo Domingo, Mexico City as well as men's perceptions of their own gendered predicaments, Guttmann peeled through the macho stereotype and uncovered the complex and multi-dimensional character of Mexican men's social realities. Mullins' (2006) *Holding Your Square* has also presented compelling evidence that besides violent masculinities, other masculine identities exist among men

who feel starved of the popular and public paraphernalia of dominant manliness models. Situational factors condition men's responses to and engagements with their sense of manliness.

The notion of hegemonic masculinity is related to Silberschmidt's (2001) study of violent masculinities among the Kisii of Kenya. She notes that patriarchal structures and stereotyped notions of gender hide the increasing disempowerment of many men in rural and urban East Africa. Socioeconomic change left men with a patriarchal ideology bereft of its legitimizing social activities and features. Unemployment or low incomes prevented them from fulfilling their traditionally-acclaimed roles as heads of household and breadwinners. On the other hand, women's roles, contributions and responsibilities in the household increased. This affected men's social value, masculine identity and self-esteem. In this context, multi-partnered sexual relationships, physical violence, and sexually-aggressive behavior have emerged as men's strategies for reinforcing male identity and sense of masculinity. Silberschmidt's argument is reechoed in Amuyunzu-Nyamongo and Francis's (2006) study which linked poverty to loss of male ego, sense of worth, and feeling of honor among Kenyan men. In line with Osella and Osella (2000), Amuyunzu-Nyamongo and Francis contend that in Kenya, the ownership and display of wealth particularly in the form of provisioning and breadwinner define masculinity, facilitating the denigration of men considered economically-weak. An important outcome of Kenyan men's declining economic fortunes, they suggest, is their increasing sense of irrelevance and powerlessness.

2.7: Masculinity and poverty

Masculinity and poverty have been studied from a variety of perspectives. The bulk of the existing research has resided on the impacts of real or imagined poverty, powerlessness, economic strain, unemployment, and marginalization on constructions and experiences of masculinity. For instance, Sherman's (2005) research explored the impacts of economic strain and job loss on masculine identities, as well as the effects of threats to masculine identity on family stability in a rural American community. She showed that men's experiences with masculinity in times of economic and labor market strain fatally dent their abilities to sustain functioning relationships. Sherman's research restates issues earlier observed by Zinn (1982), who argued that Mexican men are thrust into machismo and hyper-masculinity by the need to prove their manhood and impress upon their wives and children that they are the men of the house. Hyper-masculinity, for Zinn, compensated for the impoverished Mexican men's feeling (real or imagined) of undervaluation outside of the house where they get both poor pay and little respect from their bosses, co-workers, and/or people in general than they expect. The Mexican man, Zinn thus wrote: "is perpetually obsessed with the need to redeem his damaged sense of manhood, oftentimes through fighting, excessive drinking and/or extramarital affairs.'(24). Proving to his family that he is still a man buffers him psychologically against a humiliating, de-masculinizing outside world.

In his study of young men in, Maputo, Mozambique, Groes-Green (2009) presents evidence that massive unemployment and poverty have led several men to resort to bodily powers and capital, understood as abilities and physique of the male body, rather than on economic powers and social status to assert their authority in relation to women. He notes that while Maputo's young men with financial powers enact masculinities based on provisioning, their poorer counterparts compensate for this inability through violent and hypersexual masculinities. Further, Jolly (2010), writing about men and poverty in post-apartheid South Africa concluded that the most violent responses to change in South Africa have come from ruthlessly marginalized and emasculated men who have forced to adopt extremist masculine behaviors to validate themselves as men. While poverty and economic marginalization frustrate poor Kenya men's capacity to meet their responsibilities as providers and securers(Silberschmidt, 2004a), it is not clear that they all negotiate their inability to attain breadwinnerhood masculinity through hyper-masculine practices.

A key aim of my research is to explore masculinities among poor urban men in the slums of Nairobi. I also seek to understand these men's perceptions about the reachability, to them, of valued and hegemonic breadwinnerhood masculinity. Essentially, my study explores configurations of manliness in a context of poverty as well as the views surrounding masculinity among poor urban men. Simply put, I ask: How do poor marginalized men in the slums of Nairobi perform themselves in a context of impoverishment and lack? Is poverty producing compensatory masculinities among marginalized urban men? And what other masculine identities exist among marginalized Nairobi men? Papers 1 & 4 address these questions.

2.8: Masculinity and health

The bulk of extant literature has focused on how masculinity impacts the health of men and others in the society. A major gap filled by my research fills relates to how men themselves frame and understand the implications of their masculinity practices, compared to others social indicators, for their health and wellbeing. Doyal (2001) argues that manliness may be both health-promoting and health-hampering. Masculinity may promote health and wellbeing through its association with higher income and employment. However, the development and maintenance of a masculine identity can also be health-damaging (Harrison, Chin, & Ficarrotto, 1992; Sabo, 1998; Sabo & Gordon, 1995). For instance, as Waldron (1995) argues that globally men are still at greater risks of dying prematurely from occupational accidents; they do some of the most dangerous jobs, including fighting in wars etc. Social expectations demanding masculinity to be performed in terms of hardiness, carefreeness, and risk-taking continue to frequently propel men into unsafe behaviors including speeding, smoking and drinking etc. Research by Mahalik, Walker, and Levi-Minzi (2007) shows that traditional masculine practices are a risk factor for harmful health behaviors among men. In their study, Australian men who espoused traditional masculinity attitudes reported more health risk behaviors and fewer health-promoting behaviors. In the US,

Courtenay (2000) shows that men suffer more severe chronic conditions, have higher death rates for all the leading causes of death in the country, and die nearly seven years younger than women. He linked the plight of US men to gendered health-related beliefs and behaviors, noting that these beliefs and behaviors, like other social practices that women and men engage in, are a means for demonstrating femininities and masculinities. Courtenay's views resonate with Moynihan's (1998) thesis that "growing up male" can blind men to their emotional potential, which frustrates the emergence of their sympathetic and empathic capacities, restrains their divulgence of debilities and weaknesses, and inhibits their uptake of health promotion messages as well as help and care when the need arises.

In their examination of the minority stress model, traditional masculine gender roles, and perceived social norms in gay men's use of health-damaging substances and drugs and risky sexual practices, Hamilton and Mahalik (2009) found that masculinity and perceptions of social norms predicted health risk behaviors. Men who expressed traditional masculine gender roles used substances more and reported higher numbers of risky sexual activities. In '*It's caveman stuff...., but that is to a certain extent how guys still operate': men's accounts of masculinity and help seeking'*, O'Brien, Hunt, and Graham (2005) showed that the reluctance to seek medical care is common among men in Scotland. The men they studied generally endorsed the 'hegemonic' view that men 'should' be hesitant to seek help. There are also a few studies on how poor health affects masculinity, particularly the implications of disability and chronic diseases on the negotiation of masculine identity (Gerschick & Miller, 1995; Lindemann & Cherney, 2008; Ostrander, 2008).

In Kenya, research on the nexus of public health and masculinity blossomed in the context of the male involvement movement and the HIV epidemic. Public health and masculinity studies in Kenya have generally linked the construction of masculinity in terms of control of women's body to men's lack of support for women's use of contraceptives and poor sexual and reproductive health communication and non-participation in women-centered reproductive health services (Luke, 2006; Onyango, Owoko, & Oguttu, 2011). For instance, some researchers have shown that men consider being seen at the obstetric/gynecological delivery and antenatal care ward as feminizing. Men are not expected to show emotions and they view escorting women or being seen in female spaces as unmanly (Onyango et al., 2011). Nzioka's (2001) study showed that despite a high knowledge of sexual risks, fear of HIV and awareness of the protective value of condoms, young men in Kenya exhibit high risk behavior. He linked this to men's need to conform to social prescriptions of male prowess, early sexual experience, and having more than one partner. Nzioka argues that young men consider getting girls pregnant and having had a treatable STD as markers of masculinity, blame girls for not protecting themselves (and girls' parents), and want to boast about their sexual conquests to their peers. Masculine values that underscore sexual prowess, early and regular sexual experience, control of women's body, violence against women, polygamy, lack of ownership rights among women, and men's refusal to use condoms in marital relationships and to actively

support family planning, multiple sexual experience, etc. among men have been associated with sexual and reproductive health problems in several other studies. Other studies have also addressed transformations in masculinity in Kenyan cultures as a result of growing public health issues such as HIV (Njue, Voeten, & Remes, 2011; Obure, Nyambedha, Oindo, & Kodero, 2009; Silberschmidt, 2004b).

As the few literature sampled above shows, masculinity and health research has mostly overlooked men's own understandings and constructions of the implications of masculinity for their health and wellbeing. My research will attempt to address this major knowledge gap. Paper 2 addresses the question of men's own understandings and constructions of the implications of masculinity for their health and wellbeing.

2.9: Masculinity and community development

Following the failure of the women in development (WID) approach to community development, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach to offer a framework for understanding power and social relations at community. The bulk of literature on masculinity and community development has focused on the extent to which norms of manliness privilege men and impact community life and wellbeing. There is now a body of research seeking more in-depth analysis of masculine attitudes, sensitivities, and behaviors as well as the dynamics of power and privileges and their implications both for efforts to address the structural basis of gender inequalities and for championing progress and change at community levels. These studies generally hold that men need to reject the privileges of normative masculinities for community development and gender equality to be realized (Connell, 2005; Cornwall, Edström, & Greig, 2011; Welsh, 2010). Valuable as the existing research is, it has ignored men's self-identities in relation to community development and wellbeing. In this dissertation, I explore, among other things, poor men's constructions of their gendered roles in community progress and development. Paper 3 addresses this question.

2.10: Theoretical Framework

My research will generally be guided by critical masculinity theory as exemplified in the works of Connell (2011), Messerschmidt (2004) and all those social constructivist and queer theory scholars who view masculinity and, indeed gender, as a socially produced and fluid dynamic which only has meaning within a specific social context. Critical masculine theory views masculinity not as a fixed attribute, but as a supple trait that is constructed and reconstructed, through ideology, control, performance, language and related aspects and in social relationships. The mind of critical masculinity studies is to understand men's positioning in a range of social and political settings by unpacking and peeling through the complexities that surround men's life in particular contexts (Hearn, 1996; Kimmel, Hearn, & Connell, 2005). Manliness is thus a product of societal

institutions, history as well as personal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural practices (Connell, 2005). While they may interact with global processes and trends, localized social and political spheres (Sluggett, 2011) have critical implications for masculinity. These domains are key to the ways men constantly invent themselves and are reinvented by the circumstances and groups that surround their lives. I posit masculinity as a socially constructed dynamic in the slums of Nairobi. I am interested in how the local and national contexts of poverty and poor male slum residents' everyday life as marginalized individuals, in combination with wider globalized processes, drive notions, idiosyncrasies, understandings, and practices of manliness as well as men's gendered views of themselves and perceptions of their health and role in social and community development etc.

Also, particularly important and useful for making sense of my research is queer theory, a critical social theory which challenges the either/or essentialist notions of gender and sexuality. Queer theory celebrates an understanding of sexuality and gender that hinges on shifting boundaries, inconsistences and cultural constructions that flow from social situations and contexts. Queer theory challenges the popular notion that there is a binary divide between homosexuality and heterosexuality, and maintains that sexual identity is not fixed. Currently, little application of queer theory exists in studies of gender in Kenya. Queer theory offers a constructionist view of gender, and challenges the perspective of gender, sex and sexuality as stable and correlated (Turner, 2000; Wilchins, 2004).Queer theory developed out of an examination of perceived limitations in the traditional politics of recognition and self-identity. In particular, queer theorists identified processes of consolidation or stabilization around some other identity labels (e.g. gay and lesbian); and construed queerness so as to resist this. A central tenet of queer theory is that identity is a constellation of multiple and unstable positions and that mismatches exist between sex, gender and desire. Masculinity and femininity are therefore not opposites but different sides of the same coin. This is because actual human behavior typically circumvents categorical definitions and the logic of gender and sexual order is so deeply embedded in an indescribably wide range of social institutions. Queer theory's main project is the exploration of the contestations that surround the categorization of gender and sexuality. This is because identities are not fixed, and cannot therefore be easily categorized and labeled. Gender identities consist of many varied components and to categorize them by one characteristic may not do them justice. Queer theory holds that there is an interval between what a subject "does" (role-taking) and what a subject "is" (the self). So despite its title, the theory's goal is to destabilize identity categories, which are designed to identify the "sexed subject" and place individuals within a single restrictive sexual orientation. Drawing on queer theory, I will unpack masculine identity among poor men in Kenya as unfixed, queered, and so deeply embedded in an indescribably wide range of social acts that frequently contest the very popular categorization of masculine gender and sexuality.

Connell's (2005) theory of hegemonic masculinity, which describes the culturally normative ideal of male behavior, is also a key theory of interest to me. As earlier shown, the key assumption underlying the notion is

that society strongly encourages men to embody this kind of masculinity, which though not necessarily the most prevalent form of male expression, is the most socially-endorsed. In contemporary Kenya, as in many other parts of the world, material wealth is increasingly central to the identity of men, and masculinity is ever more constructed and enacted in terms of breadwinnerhood. Currently and as in many other contexts globally, it is ownership and display of wealth that set the pecking order of manliness in most of urban Kenya (Silberschmidt, 2004a). Economically-incapable urban men in Kenya suffer social castigation and devaluation (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Francis, 2006; Ntarangwi, 1998). I seek to use social constructionism to explain men's negotiation of the discursive hegemony of breadwinner masculinity and influential narratives that constitute 'proper' masculinity in terms of provisioning. I explore the strategic cultural materials, resources, practices, norms and values that poor men deploy to achieve socially-relevant masculine identities. Essentially, I argue that the notions, performances and particularities of masculinity in the slums of Nairobi reflect the socio-economic marginality of the people and communities.

The masculine over-compensation thesis is also relevant to my research. As I noted earlier, masculine over-compensation is the inclination of men, who feel masculinity-threatened to perform themselves in excessively masculine ways to achieve respect and restore their sense of manliness (Willer, 2005). Protagonists of the theory hold that men who suspect their masculinity to be defective will overcompensate by enacting excessive masculine behaviors and attitudes to create the impression that they are truly masculine. In this regard, over-compensatory masculinity primarily plays a psychological function. However, as researchers (including Connell 2005) show, men express diverse masculinities when confronted with situations that threaten their sense of manhood. This suggests that the masculine overcompensation thesis offers an overly simplistic and psychologistic portrait of men: one that obscures the various agent-social positions and masculine identities that men summon, deploy, invoke and perform to confront and come to terms with their situations, emotional needs, and competing demands. Among other questions, I ask: How do masculinity-challenged men in the slums of Nairobi construct and perform masculinity? What does it mean to be a man in the slums of Nairobi where poverty appears to challenge the very notion masculinity? Do men in the slums of Nairobi assert themselves through overtly masculine actions, and to what extent do such actions, if they exist, merely satisfy marginalized men's immediate psychological needs for masculine self-reassurance?

Chapter 3: Methods and Materials

3.0: Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methods and materials which I used in my research. I will first briefly reflect on the epistemological basis of my research and evidence-gathering approach. I then discuss the information collection, analysis and presentation strategies. My reflections on the limitations and strengths of the current research and possible methodological directions for future similar studies conclude the chapter.

3.1: Epistemological reflections

Epistemology addresses the nature, meaning and scope of knowledge. The key questions of epistemology are: What is knowledge and what is knowable? What do we know? How do we know what we know? What forms can and does knowledge take? Etc. (Held & Pols, 1985; Krauss, 2005). At the heart of my research is the idea that masculinity, like other gendered practices, is socially-constructed, part of the everyday life of individuals, and produced by context. I am interested in how men themselves construct manliness and realize themselves as men in the context of the slum as well as in their everyday life. I believe that key to knowing and making sense of masculinity practices of men in the slums is profound familiarity with the context of their everyday live as well as in-depth understanding of the ways people define and live out their reality. Epistemologically speaking, the core of the knowledge I am interested in, belongs to and resides in the people living in the slums themselves and in the slum context itself. Given my focus on masculinity as an everyday aspect of the lives of societies and as deriving from the meanings individuals give to their actions as men, qualitative research methods offer me a means for accessing the kind of knowledge that I am seeking. According to de Gialdino (2009), cognitive interaction and cooperative knowledge construction are two fundamental features of qualitative research. A key assumption that guides my approach is therefore that social reality is multiple and can only be effectively reached through a critical researcher-participant dialogue. I consider interviews and observations as critical tools that allow me to reach down and understand the reality of the lives of people in the context of their everyday life. However, I am also aware that reality is not fixed and that the information I have collected may be interpreted in other ways than I have done here.

3.2: Study sites

As earlier noted, in Nairobi, rapid urbanization and population explosion, amidst declining economic fortunes and poor governance, have aggregated poverty in slums. In the papers I published as part of this dissertation, I have extensively described Korogocho (Koch) and Viwandani (Viwa), the two slums that hosted my investigation of the everyday lives of economically-marginalized men. In both study sites, APHRC operates the

Nairobi Urban Health and Demographic Surveillance System (NUDHSS). This decade-old longitudinal research platform currently covers several sections and villages in Koch and Viwa, and collects routine socio-demographic and health data on roughly 70,000 individuals in about 25,000 households (fuller descriptions of Koch and Viwa are found in the papers that form part of this dissertation).

3.3: Data collection methods

The Ethical Committee of the Kenya Medical Research Institute granted approval for my study. I obtained verbal informed consent from all interviewees for their participation in the study and for the audio recording of their responses. Primary information for this study were collected through in-depth individual interviews (which were excellent and most appropriate for my interest in asking open-ended questions that elicit deeply-grounded information from people on their personal experiences, ideas, knowledge etc. of a phenomenon (Rubin & Rubin, 2011); ethnography (which allowed me to observe people and groups firsthand, have a feel of their everyday life and develop deep and emic understanding of their practices, behaviors and actions (Bernard, 1998)); and FGDs (which helped me gain insights into group and community-level practices and dynamics(Berg & Lune, 2004)). I also used secondary information from existing literature and sources, both published and unpublished.

I used ethnographic and interview materials gathered from Koch and Viwa between 2009 and 2012 in this study. As part of my ethnographic research, I lived near both slums for over three years, spent and slept several days in them, attended many community events in the two communities, was a regular face in key social spaces including restaurants, pubs, sporting events, and bars in both settings, and volunteered in several local organizations, including gender-focused and violence prevention projects. My participation in different events and activities in the slums facilitated my access to local gossips and made me aware of day-to-day events, processes, and experiences in the slums. For over one year in each of the study sites, two research assistants also kept dairies of key and remarkable actions and practices of men in the two communities.

3.4: Focus group and individual interviews

I held focus group and individual interviews with a sample of men in Koch and Viwa villages covered by the NUDHSS platform. The men who participated in the focus group and individual interviews were recruited through a multistage sampling process. The first stage involved the identification of all households in the two settlements in which lived a man, aged 25 and above. APHRC's NUDHSS provided the sampling frame of households in Koch and Viwa. The second stage involved the random selection of 162 men (81 from each settlement) from the listing of men in the sampled households. Random selection is not usually required for qualitative interviewing and could, in fact, be counterproductive. However, I opted for it to achieve maximum

variation sampling, which ensures representation of diverse dimensions of explored phenomenon. The small size of the sample was motivated largely by my concern with analytical convenience. Fifty (25 per settlement) of these men were further randomly selected for qualitative individual interviewing (IDI), while the remaining 112 (56 per settlement) men were requested to participate in all-male focus group discussions (FGD). In each settlement, I held eight FGDs, comprising an average of seven men.

In both IDIs and FGDs, I sought respondents' understanding of the challenges of living in the communities, their ideas about how their communities can be transformed into better places to live and work, the barriers to this transformation, how 'real' men behave in the community, what qualifies men in the community as men, expectations about men in the community, and the implications of the ways the communities' men express and perform themselves as men for the transformation of their communities into better places to live and work. IDIs were held in the homes of the men. But when respondents' homes were not ideal, alternative places were used. Individual interviews lasted an average of one hour and were all audio-recorded. FGDs were also held in settings that minimized interference by non-participants. Group discussions lasted an average of one and half hours and sought to gauge and elicit community-level norms, dynamics and practices, rather than sensitive personal experiences of the issues under study. Because FGDs did not seek to elicit sensitive and personal information, they raised little confidentiality issues and participants tended to speak freely.

The Luo men who participated in the study I reported in paper 3 were also recruited through a multistage sampling process. The first stage involved the identification of all households in the two settlements in which resided a self-identified Luo man, aged 20 and above. APHRC's NUDHSS provided the sampling frame of households in Koch and Viwa. The second stage involved the random selection of 33 Luo men from the list of all men in the sampled households who self-identified as Luo and were aged 20 or more years. Seventeen of these men were approached to participate in individual interviewing while 16 of the men were requested to participate in a focus group discussion. A group discussion was held per study site and comprised eight men.

3.5: Getting it all to make sense: Data analysis

Ethnographic notes and transcribed interviews, which were later translated into English, form the study material. Two professionals helped me to translate the interviews. Initially, one translator transcribed all the taped interviews from Swahili into English. The transcripts were then carefully compared with the taped interviews by the second translator. Both of the translators agreed on the final version of the transcripts. The interview narratives were first concurrently but independently read again and again, and then coded by the author, two research assistants, and a professional qualitative data coder, relying on Creswell's (1997) version of Strauss and Corbin's (1990) grounded theory. Later, I met with the coder to appraise the coding outcomes, ensure inter-

coder concordance, and agree on a codebook that reflected the thematic categories of the responses and key issues emerging from the interviews. Using a jointly-developed codebook, transcribed interviews were then finally coded with Nvivo. I adopted a qualitative inductive approach involving thematic assessment of the narratives to understand the data. Analysis involved reading and rereading narratives and interviews to detect overriding themes in qualitative information as well as the understanding of the meanings and messages of themes through the continual investigation of narratives for categories, linkages and properties. Verbatim quotations are occasionally used to show responses on significant issues and themes (Higgins, Hirsch, & Trussell, 2008).

3.6: Positionality, gaining entry and fieldwork experience

The ideas and interpretations I have espoused in this study are not entirely value-free. They possibly might reflect my upbringing, socialization, and life experiences. I was born into a middle-class Nigerian family which may have shaped my views and understanding of life and people's behavior. I am also currently a staff of an international organization, earning a salary way above the median monthly income of many working-class Kenyans. I also already hold a PhD in anthropology and have longstanding experience in working with poor marginalized people exposed to multiple social problems as well as persons in contexts different from mine. There is no doubt that my background and these differences with the people I studied affected my interpretation of findings in fundamental ways. These dynamics also affected the ways I negotiated my entry and stay in the two communities that I worked. In some instances, the differences worked in my favor and in others, they impacted negatively on my research. For instance, I observed in the field that my nationality was a point of reference. Indeed, before long, community members started calling me *Igwe* (a honorific Nigerian-Igbo word popularized by Nollywood); Chinedu (a Nigerian resident in Kenya who had a major run with the law and was ultimately deported and his property confiscated); Kanu Nwankwo (one of Nigeria's, indeed Africa's most accomplished footballers); or any other popular Nigerian footballer, for that matter. The people of Koch and Viwa engaged me on different issues including whether people in Nigeria really get rich through magical means; why Nigerians were good in football; the difference between Nigerian and Kenyan men; whether slums also existed in Nigeria; the source of the wealth of Nigerians; whether Nigerians were all as rich or poor as Nollywood portrays them; whether Babangida (one of Nigeria's erstwhile military rulers) will one day return as Nigeria's president; how much wealth former Nigerian president, Abacha, really stole; how Aliko Dangote (Africa's richest man and Nigerian national) really became wealthy; what it is like to be under military rule; who will win the next presidential elections in Nigeria etc.?   In other instances, it was the value of my research that was debated, with people asking how my research will change things, bring development, and be used by policymakers etc. The people and communities that I studied though poor, were resilient, intelligent and quite very politically engaged. They asked my hard views on major social issues: homosexuality, sex work, gender equality, abortion, gay marriage, and ethnicity and development. I was

asked what qualified me as a man, whether gays qualify as men; whether women should really hold political positions etc. The challenges and questions which the people posed to me helped me deepen my own understanding of social reality, including how my own masculinity is also regularly constructed. I was asked to buy drinks to prove myself my masculinity, whether I had girlfriends, why I needed to be accompanied around the communities by other men if I, myself, was a 'real' man (only women presumably needed protection to get around the community), and told to prove myself as a man by fighting gang members etc.

As my research progressed, I also found that much as I tried to hide the differences between me and people in the communities I studied, they sometimes take advantage of them. For instance, I was approached several times for financial support and my explanation that my study was funded by a group did not help matters. People wanted gifts from me, asked help with educational and employment problems and sought advice on health and relationship matters   'Boss, you know you have more resources than us, please help me pay my daughter's school fees' I was once told. I was also once told: 'I know you are better than Kenyan men who will not help their own brothers, please can you help with my rent this month.' Yet another young man did approach me with another interesting request: 'Boss, please you cannot hide it that you are a *jina kubwa (big person),* please can you help me pay hospital bills for my wife.' I also found out that beyond objective definitions of poverty and material wellbeing, social notions of wealth and material comfort shaped several aspects of the relationship with the people of Koch and Viwa. The mere circumstance of living outside a slum and studying the people residing there was constructed as a sign of affluence and wellbeing. I was thus regularly treated as the 'other' who could help the poor.

Working in the slums also taught me how much of my own everyday masculine behavior could pass as performance and outright negotiation. In instances, where I was physically threatened by other men, I showed submission to them in order to survive or and finish my research. I regularly invoked the educated other persona and sometimes played the humble guy, the cash-loaded money guy, and the knowledgeable man etc. to survive, get information or access to groups and gangs. These negotiations and presentations of different selves were important to my work in the field and opened my eyes to my own masculinity as a negotiated and contextual performance that I deploy in different contexts to accomplish important life objectives. At different points in my research, I had to ask myself questions such as: What makes me a man? What kind of man am I? Who am I in reality? While, I am not sure all my answers to these questions were 'correct', the experiences sharpened my interest in men's strategies for asserting themselves as men, for proving their manliness and for negotiating and performing themselves in particular contexts.

My experience in the field also raises very important issues related to oppressive research and studying "down", i.e. people with few options to say 'no'. It is important to note that although the study was approved by the local

ethics board, many ethical issues which I did not envisage emerged during fieldwork. Looking back, while ethical review boards have become key actors in research, very many issues that emerge in the field are not often envisaged by these boards or by researchers themselves. For instance, I was forced to tip respondents who insisted on it (sometimes by buying them alcoholic drinks) before they could grant me interviews or who threatened to scuttle my research if I did not give them anything. For my research to continue, I also had to be part of '*harambees*' (ceremonies to raise money to finance education, rents, funerals and even marriages) in the communities that I studied. Sometimes, I also had to make promises to my study respondents that I knew would be difficult for me to fulfil. In many instances, when my respondents asked me personal questions, I offered tactful questions. For instance, I was never firm to anybody about what my faith is. When intensely homophobic people asked about what I thought of homosexuality, I will answer them tactfully, saying that I am a researcher and merely learning from people in the community. Depending on the ethnic affiliation of who sought my views on political issues, I also offered diplomatic responses. When respondents openly questioned me about then government of Mr. Kibaki, I was often evasive, preferring to say that I was not in good position to judge and that it was the views of Kenyans that mattered. When I was with the several Luos, Kalenjins, Kambas, and Luyhas who did not want Kibaki to continue in power, I pandered to their thoughts and views, sometimes even offering harsh critiques of Kibaki's government.

Essentially, I figured out early on that the success of my research depended on the kind of relationship I maintained with different groups of people in the communities I studied. Formal ethical processes do not often take good account of the rigorous negotiations that researchers may engage in to collect quality data. Traditionally, ethical review processes have focused on protecting the respondent from coercion, guaranteeing their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses, and ensuring that they are not unnecessarily disadvantaged by research activity. However, as I learnt from the field, poverty and marginality put respondents at far greater risk than ethical processes can protect them from. I found that if offered money and other incentives, respondents were most willing to speak to me; inform me about other people's lives; show me men who have murdered others; protect me; and even tell me of their own criminal pasts. The researcher-researched power differences are quite very obvious and pressing in research with poor people. Researchers need to be ethical and understand the field implications of their privileged position (Barron, 1999). Even though I know nobody was watching, a sense of commitment not to abuse the privilege to study others was important to me and remained key to my responses to the many ethical dilemmas I faced in the field. Researchers working with marginalized people must understand ethics beyond what Ethics Board regulations offer. Only conscientiousness on the part of researchers will ensure that they play by rules and resort to best practices when nobody is really watching. Further, very little of the ethical guidelines that I signed protected me from emotionally disturbing situations: seeing abused and malnourished children; listening to men's stories about murders and rapes; being required by

respondents to join me in drug corners or *mira* houses, etc. It is also important for researchers working with vulnerable populations and in situations of extreme poverty to consider seeking psycho-social services and support to help them come to terms with the intensely inhuman situations that they may observe in the field.

Overall, my study is interesting and fills an important knowledge gap about the everyday lives of poor urban men. I relied largely on qualitative methods and information which permit rich descriptions of the lives of people. However, the study was only conducted in two slums in Nairobi and I do not know how the issues reported here compare with trends in other parts of Kenya or and East Africa. The study is also very interpretive, building on the author's knowledge of debates in the field, disciplinary background, readings of extant literature, and takes on the interviews and observations I conducted. It is possible that other interpretations can be derived from the same materials I have presented. Finally, the study could have been strengthened with a survey that decomposes some of the findings into quantitative data and explores their distribution in the population studied. In this respect, quantitatively-minded social scientists have a task ahead of them.

Chapter Four: Masculinity in the slums of Nairobi: Further reflections

4.0: Introduction

In this chapter, I highlight further issues from by research and juxtapose my evidence against some of the key literature related to my work. The chapter is organized around additional evidence that have not been well-explored in the published papers, but which are central to my key research themes. These key themes are hegemonic and compensatory masculinity, poverty and masculinity, the relationship between masculinity and health and the men's role in community development. The goal is to further highlight both the uniqueness of my research as well as its linkage to existing knowledge and data.

4.1: Hegemonic and compensatory masculinity

As earlier noted, one of the key developments in masculinity studies in recent times is the emergence of the theory of hegemonic masculinity. Purveyors of hegemonic masculinity thesis hold that society often strongly endorses a particular version of masculinity which defines the relationships between men and women and among men. Men who possesses or are viewed as possessing the features of hegemony occupy the top echelon of manliness in society (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is thus a culturally idealized form of manhood. In many societies, hegemonic masculinity hinges on bread-winning (Sherman, 2005). However, hegemonic masculinity is also anxiety-provoking, differentiated, brutal and violent, psychologically contradictory, and thus crisis-prone. The failure to live up to the ideal or hegemonic version of manliness in each setting can unsettle men and lead them to over-compensatory practices (Willer, 2005). The material I amassed painted a very intricate picture of masculinities and the contradictions surrounding marginalized men's everyday expressions of themselves in relation to esteemed versions of manhood.

Debates surrounding the existence of hegemonic masculinity notwithstanding (Phoenix & Frosh, 2001)(Phoenix & Frosh, 2001)(Phoenix & Frosh, 2001)(Phoenix & Frosh, 2001), my fieldwork indicated that breadwinnerhood was a common denominator in the discourses surrounding 'properly masculine' men in Koch and Viwa. Although it was largely out of their reach, men in the slums I studied celebrated and clung doggedly to provider-masculinity, pursuing it in different ways. They frequently spoke about how 'real men' provided adequately for themselves, families, and wards. They often made it clear that the capacity to provide distinguished 'real' men from others. Men who are unable to provide were not expected to marry, enjoy respect, or claim to be men. As many respondents told me: 'men who are not able to provide well for their families and themselves are just like women.' Of course, in the two settlements were men who performed morally-respectable work (judging, at least, by the local moral and value systems) and toiled very hard to earn incomes and establish, support and feed

their families. But based on the materials I collected, not many men were successful in their breadwinner role. One Viwa man drove this point home: 'We try, but it does not mean we all succeed. I would say the problem is in not trying.'

The evidence I generated suggested that the belief in breadwinner manliness was incredibly strong in the slums. I therefore contend here that the men I studied in the local slums of Nairobi operated within a larger global framework of manliness. Globally, men in many societies continue to define themselves and be defined in terms of provisioning, family headship, marriage and community leadership (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Francis, 2006; Coughlin & Wade, 2012; Gavanas, 2002, 2005; Sherman, 2005; Silberschmidt, 1999).Kenyan poor men's notions of manliness are therefore not entirely unique. They reflect global trends and tendencies. Perhaps, the differences lie among other things, in the kinds of strategic cultural materials, resources, practices, norms, and values that poor men relied on to achieve locally-valued masculine identities and breadwinnerhood; why they held strongly to breadwinner masculinity in the face of its near-impossibility for them; and how they responded to or addressed feelings of masculine failure and inadequacy or and the need to assert themselves as men.

Narratives implied that 'real' men were those able to provide for their families or show capacity for provisioning. To have a family that one was not able to provide for was viewed negatively. Marriage was considered important but it was not essentially expected to precede the capacity to provide. It was often framed as an undertaking that men go into once their capacity to provide is guaranteed. Men spoke about how they delayed marriage because they do not have anything to support them to provide for their families. For instance, respondents told me that it was not advisable to formally marry, rent one's own house, father children etc. until one is able prove his capacity as a provider. As one man poignantly put it: 'I think marriage is good only when you can support your family. It is not good to marry and then begin to look everywhere about how to support your wife and family. That is the mistake some of us made and some people continue to make here in Koch. If you do that, your wife may not respect you and those more able than you, may end up enticing your wife and sleeping with her.' Another respondent told me: 'You don't see a young woman and then tell her: ''I want to marry you.'' You need to know how to take care of her when she comes and the kids begin to arrive. If you do not have something to help you take food back home every day, you are not yet a man.' I generally understood the men to mean that even without marriage, they were expected to provide for themselves and wards. Indeed, in some of the pubs I frequented, it was common to hear banters and jokes that centered on the folly of men who get married before being sure of their livelihoods.

There is a reason why the notion of breadwinner masculinity may be amplified in a slum environment. From my research, it was apparent that breadwinnerhood enabled men to assert their power over family, wives, children, and ensure one's authority and control of women's sexuality. As several men and women in the slums told me,

inability to support one's family and wives puts a man at risk of cuckoldry, disrespect, and infidelity. 'Look if you want to know why a man needs to be able to provide before we say he is a man here, it is because if you cannot provide for your family and wife, you will be disrespected and maligned. Other men who can will take your wife and children while you are still alive. You will be disgraced by both women and other men.'

Extramarital affairs and multiple sexual partnerships are common in the slums of Nairobi and have been linked to the high incidence of HIV in the communities (Luke, 2006; Zulu et al., 2002). Poverty is a leading contributor to multiple sexual partnerships in the slums of Nairobi (Zulu et al., 2003; Zulu et al., 2002). Poor women in Kenya, as in many other places, can easily be lured into transactional sex (Njue et al., 2011). In the slums where I worked, having sex with the wife or female members of a man's household is considered a major humiliation to him. During my fieldwork, I frequently heard men boast that they can humiliate other men by sleeping with their wives, sisters, and daughters. I also heard men boast openly that their wives cannot cheat on them because they provided adequately for them. The widespread belief was that men can prevent the ultimate humiliation and embarrassment by providing adequately for their wives, wards, and children. Provisioning capacity was a major resource that guaranteed men several privileges and was thus equated with protective capacity.

4.2: Breadwinnerhood strategies

Interestingly, among the men I studied, breadwinnerhood was pursued through a variety of interesting strategies, including violence and compensatory masculine acts. My materials suggested that the bulk of men's violent actions whether perpetrated individually or in gangs often aimed to generate, sustain, and or defend livelihoods. Gangs and individuals relied on violence as a means of livelihood and to eke out living, threaten business competitors, and maintain a niche of local scarce socioeconomic opportunities. In the first paper I published as part of this dissertation, I detailed the role of violence in my study communities based largely on early ethnographic materials from my work in the two communities (see paper 1). While violence among poor people is real and often taken for granted, its foregrounding in economics and livelihoods continues to be ignored in the literature. Much of what was reported about Kenyan slums when my study commenced hinged on dysfunctionality and the violent psychology of their dwellers (Ziraba et al., 2011; Zulu et al., 2002). In 2004, when Osward Banda , a Zambian diplomat was murdered and his five year old son tied to his dead father's body and left in his car in a Koch street, the media framed the incident in terms of Koch dwellers' low literacy levels, inherent criminality and lack of regard for the value of life. When the body of a young sexually assaulted and decapitated woman was found in a Koch dumpsite in 2005, media reports focused on the animalistic and inhuman tendencies of poor people. My initial experience in both slums demonstrated and confirmed the currency of violence in Koch and Viwa. Even today, slums in Kenya continue to be associated with and characterized by violence. Interpersonal violence topped the causes of death among men in 2006-2010 in both

slums (Ziraba et al., 2011). Rape, murders, robbery and muggings etc. remain commonplace in slum communities in Nairobi (Mitullah, 2003).

In all these however, very little connection has been made between violence in Koch and Viwa and the everyday livelihood realities of and structural violence against slum dwellers. In both slums, extreme masculine ruthlessness and violence bordering on overcompensation exist and reflect the disastrous upshot of the efforts of men and women in the slums to survive. For instance, there was Danger, a 36-year-old Koch resident and regular face in Zipizipi Bar, my favorite hangout. Slum folklore holds that Danger earned his name the hard way. Danger himself told me: 'I am not called Danger for nothing.' Danger is a violent man who claims to have killed people, including a policeman. He admitted having raped several women and currently leading a violent gang. Danger and I once discussed what makes him a man. For him, to be a man, one must be able to provide even in tough situations as well as demonstrate a capacity to scare other men. 'A 'real' man must be feared…if not, everybody here will mess with you and even take over your business, work, and wife. We are poor here and if you don't show what you are made of, nobody will respect you.' He added. 'You have to scare other men to be safe here. If you don't take things to a different level, people will just not recognize you that is what I have realized.' On the other hand, there was also Batho, a Viwa man who regularly boasted to me about how he is feared in the community. 'If you don't do things that make other men and even women fear you here, then they will take you for a ride and spoil things for you. They will say after all, we are all poor and therefore the same. I use force and violence to make it known that we are not the same and to protect my small business here.' Bartho also proudly told me he could get any woman in the community to sleep with him because he is feared and has resources.

Silberschmidt (1999) has noted that poverty can force men to compensate through intensive belief in, support for, and approval of gender inequality and men's domination of women. In my study, men narrated how poverty put them at risk of ridicule by women and how they had to ensure that women do not take them for granted because of their poverty. Some of the ways they could ensure that they are not disrespected particularly by women, included asserting themselves, refusing to accede to women, being violent to women, wife-beating, and threatening women. In the slums as I earlier noted, poverty is rife. Structural violence in the form of lack of amenities and opportunities characterises the lives of dwellers of Nairobi's slum. Men who do not demonstrate that their poverty is not an excuse for others, especially women, to disrespect them, risked mistreatment. Men admitted to the special vulnerability of poor men to disrespect and poor treatment. They thus encouraged men to defend their masculinity constantly. For instance, Maina, an unemployed Koch man with whom I regularly played checkers burned down her wife's *chang'aa* shop following a quarrel with her. Maina's wife (Njeri) was relatively well-to-do. She owned the hut where they lived in Koch and was already building a brick house in their rural home. Maina regularly complained that Njeri disrespected him because he was unemployed. One

day, Maina queried her for returning late from work. When Njeri responded that she worked late so she could feed him, an infuriated Maina rushed to Njeri's shop and set it on fire. I visited Maina in police custody and he showed little or no remorse for his action. He has taught Njeri a lesson, he told me; and as he put it 'to make her know that I am a man and should be respected no matter the situation.' There was also Cliff, who was a regular subject of demeaning banter among men in one of the pubs that I occasionally visited. Towards the end of my fieldwork, Cliff stabbed one of his perpetual mockers. When I tracked Cliff to his new hangout: a *khat* den in one of the most dangerous areas of Viwa, he offered a very poignant explanation for his behavior: 'They make fun of me and call me names …, so I taught them that they cannot mess like that with a man.'

4.3: Alternative masculinities

Evidence indicating violence as a common denominator in the slums of Nairobi notwithstanding, claims that poor men gravitate towards compensatory and violent masculinities (Mullins, 2006) do not hold for all the men I worked with. Essentially, both violence and non-violence were cultural materials and resources that poor men deployed in the slums. Koch and Viwa men displayed contradictory masculinities and also created alternative masculinities to survive the harsh slum context etc. They allowed violence to be perpetrated on them, used drugs, and yet others sought compensation through rampant sexual activity. Interesting, they also resorted to sex work and other actions that ordinarily would not be considered masculine (see paper 4).

Clearly, there was very little in my research to show that men like Maina, Cliff, and Danger (discussed above) really enjoyed much admiration or respect in Koch and Viwa. Danger were considered mentally-unwell by several men I knew. He and Cliff were said to have many enemies and considered at risk of early and violent death. The contradictions of urban masculinities at play in the slums I studied are highlighted by the different strategies men used to dialogue and negotiate with the ideals and notions of manliness. Forty-year old Maniki, a Koch-based casual laborer, clarified this point as we discussed the lives of Koch men:

> 'Here people will humiliate you because they know you are poor… even women will insult you. You just have calm down and take things like a man. You allow people to oppress you but you just move on. You do that because you are a man …as a man you sometimes have to play the fool, not fight. Here, you can allow people, even women, to push you around because you want to get something. Some men here fight to prove themselves, but not all of us do that. Sometimes, we even allow ourselves to be mistreated and dissed in order to get what we want. That's how to be a man here… to be smart and get what

you want. *We are the 'real' men* because we are able to live through these difficulties as honest men.

So, while violence was a central feature of the lives of men who live in the slums of Nairobi, it did not fully define them. Rather, interesting differences existed in the masculinities of Koch and Viwa men. For Maniki and men like him, it was their longsuffering commitment to 'honest' breadwinnerhood that distinguished them from other men in the slum. The same feeling of true manliness was expressed by men in the slums who resorted to seemingly unmanly acts (such as sex work, being kept by women, permitting their wives and girlfriends to do sex work, submitting to violence by other men, working for women etc.) to pursue or and attain breadwinnerhood (see paper 4). Essentially, manliness was not often defined by the route through which it was achieved but by the attainment of the ideal of breadwinnerhood. Interestingly, the men I studied viewed manliness as a fixed pattern, and did not acknowledge creating other forms masculinities. For them, men are naturally born to be breadwinners and it is failure to attain it that mattered. How it was attained did not matter much and did not mean that men were different. 'I think we are the same. If I work in the railway to feed my family and you work in the dumpsites to put food on your table, we are doing the same thing men are expected to do. The difference is in how well you are doing in what you are doing and whether you are doing anything at all.' offered one Viwa man. There is little in my study to suggest that poverty exempted men from expectations of breadwinning. Rather, it reinforced the expectations. One man puts it this way: 'Yes, we can do all these things to become a 'real' man. Poverty is not an excuse not to try. Men are born to provide. In fact, poverty makes us work harder.' Put differently, manliness was constituted in terms of capacity to find innovative ways to rise above poverty and achieve breadwinnerhood.

Resignation to poverty was constituted as the hallmark of masculine loss and unmanliness. A 'real' man just keeps trying or put himself at risk of been considered a failure. I found it very interesting that based on the general perception of what makes a man, men that I worked with defined their different livelihood strategies as manly. For example, it was manly to endure humiliation if it guaranteed one's livelihoods. When men sold sex, they framed it in terms if masculine smartness and shrewdness. In fact, doing feminized work was frequently more morally-valued that engaging in violent actions such as stealing and robbery. Masculinity thus had very far-reaching meanings for Koch and Viwa men. The centrality of normative gender ideas to men's self-identity may explain why men would do everything to protect their masculine image. Gavanas (2005) suggests that men are not always immediately aware of the constructions, contradictions, and fluidities of their own manliness and thus may not be able to change themselves. Men's framing of masculinity through traditional scripts that present it as fragile and in need of constant protection and work has the tendency to encourage their deployment of a variety of strategies to achieve, defend and sustain a masculine identity. It also encourages men to frame the bulk of their actions in masculine terms

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and to find innovative self-validating ways to engage contexts and situations that raise suspicions about their manliness or do not clearly validate their identities as powerful, hardworking, innovative, go-getting males (Douglas, 2002; Kiesling, 2001a; Sherman, 2005).

The issues raised above resonate firmly with Banditer's (1997) point that being a man implies a labor, an effort that often pushes men to do different things to meet the mark. However, as my materials show, not all the things men do to prove their social notions of manhood would qualify as masculine in the eyes of local people in the communities that I studied For them manliness is state, a product. The process of achieving it mattered less than the state. My findings thus support the claim of queer theory that identity is the product of multiple and unstable positions, and that contradictions, misalignments, and discontinuities exist among sex, gender, and desire. Masculinity and femininity may appear as distinct and opposites, but in reality, they are contested and individuals cannot be placed within single restrictive gender identities and orientations.

4.4: Masculinity and health

From my review of the literature on masculinity and the health of men, I found a gap in knowledge regarding men's view of their health in relation to manliness. This gap in knowledge needs urgent filling given extant research showing that manliness may be both health-promoting and wellbeing-hampering. Understanding men's own notions and views of the implications, for their health, of the ways they perform themselves as men is key for theorizing men's health behavior and for developing interventions to improve health and other outcomes for men. Insights on how men define health and try to achieve it as men can also be key in the design and delivery of actions targeting men.   As extant research shows, social expectations regarding masculinity do not always favor positive health outcomes among men. Men are expected to be hard, carefree, take risks and have many sexual partners. Links have been made between these expectations and behaviors that make men unhealthy such as speeding, non-use of health facilities, multiple sexual partnerships, smoking, and drinking etc. For instance, researchers (Courtenay, 2000; Emslie et al., 2006) agree that men grow up with weak capacities for emotion which restrains their willingness to divulge debilities and weaknesses, and inhibits their uptake of health promotion messages as well as help and care when the need arises.

In Kenya, research on men has also neglected their views regarding the interaction of their health with the ways they prove and perform themselves as men. I explored men's perceptions of ethnicity and masculinity in relation to health, gauged their understanding of the drivers of their health, and sought to understand the kind of connections they make between their health and manliness and livelihood contexts. The evidence

I collected indicated men's recognition of the complicated and complex social, biological, cultural, and contextual determinants of health. They recognized how their health is produced by the everyday context of their lives. They felt that their local cultures and beliefs were important to their health and they also stressed gender and everyday livelihood situations as being more critical for their health than Luo customs. Based on these, I argue that poor urban men's recognition of the structural causes of ill-health among them overlapped with lay notions derived from particular expressions of Luo culture in urban slum contexts. On one hand, respondents regarded the performance of their sense of ethnic identity as protective, and on the other, they also admitted to the health-damaging repercussions of some of the ways they enacted aspects of Luo culture.

Studies linking men's perceptions of aspect of their identity to socio-economic and other outcomes are rare. An important issue emerging from my study relates to the potential of ordinary people to recognize the complex determinants of their heath. The men understood the role of poor income and lack of quality health facilities in their poor health. Many of them could not afford the high cost of health care in Kenya, did not have health insurance, and had little access to health promoting resources. As one of the men put it; 'In the slums, we battle diseases and poverty, we don't have jobs and there are no good hospitals. Government does not care much about us here. We lack water, good schools, and proper houses. These things make you sick, and mean you don't get good care when you are sick.' In the study, men showed great appreciation of the importance of being and remaining healthy. It was generally agreed that without good health, men could not be men.

The health narratives of the men I studied were also largely gendered. Health was important for men because it was key to their manliness. Sickly men reportedly have difficulties proving themselves as men, working, earning incomes, and providing for their families. Healthy men were considered more likely to be and remain breadwinners. Health among men equals capacity to provision. The realization by men that health is the foundation of masculinity is critical. But equally critical was the notion that 'real men' do not pay attention to minor health issues. One Luo man told me, for instance, that 'real' men do not have to stop working because of a minor wound, minor headache or minor headache. According to him, only women and lazy men show fear or do not work when they suffer minor health issues. Essentially, for the men, being of sound health and not bothering about minor health issues were all signifiers of 'true manliness'.

The Luo men I studied appreciated the diversities in the ways men from other cultures sometimes perform themselves. For them however, the acknowledgment of other ways of being men did not translate into fundamental differences among men from different cultural background. Thus, while Luo men recognized

that they behaved differently from men in other cultures, they also reported that they were no different from other men in the ultimate goal of their actions. Essentially, local cultural and ethnic demands do not make them fundamentally different from men in other cultures. Luo men regularly drew this point home by pointing to Kikuyu, Luhya and Kamba men. Those men were expected to be circumcised while Luo were not. As one man told me: 'Our ethnic culture is important and may make us do certain things differently, but at the end of the day, Kikuyu and Luo men are still expected to provide for their families whether or not our cultures expect us to be circumcised.'

Judging from the materials I collected, the cultural diversities in urban life did not translate immediately into improved understanding of differences in masculinities. Rather, urban existence was particularly key in getting men to think of breadwinning masculinity as a universal value for men. Essentially, poverty in the urban context appears to have led to the reassertion of local gender values in ways that made breadwinner notions of masculinity more central in the worldviews of men. The poverty of the men also tended to made them to reassert old values in the absence of the means to achieve new values and forms of manliness. As one man put it: 'Among the Kamba, women do not feed men. So it is in Luo land. This is one thing you realize in the city… that men are the same everywhere, despite their different ethnic cultures.' Essentially, men displayed a tendency to understand masculinity as a local, national and transnational trait. They understood the local issues, including poverty, local expectations and cultures that impacted on masculinity. But they also made linkages between global and regional issues such as HIV, media, urbanization, and migration and men's health and wellbeing. Change and continuity in masculine values are important and understanding how old masculine values are reinvented in new contexts remains an important area of research and theory

4.5: Masculinity and community development

As earlier noted, following the failure of the women in development (WID) framework to community organization and development, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach has emerged to offer a framework for understanding power and social relations at community. But writings on masculinity and development have focused on the extent to which norms of manliness privilege men and impact community life and wellbeing. However, there is a growing body of research that seeks more in-depth analysis of masculine attitudes, sensitivities, and behaviors as well as the dynamics of power and privileges and their implications both for efforts to address the structural basis of gender inequalities and for championing progress and change at community levels. These studies generally hold that men need to jettison the privileges of normative masculinities for community development to be realized (Connell, 2005; Cornwall, Edström, & Greig, 2011; Welsh, 2010). The narratives I collected suggest that community development is

valued by men. They see community-level positive change that brings them benefits and makes their lives easier and more productive as critical. However, from the narratives of responding men, community development can only be useful to men if it reconfirms and reasserts their place, centrality, and authority in society. In my study, men wanted progressive, healthy, peaceful and productive communities. From their perspective, community progress was tied closely to the prosperity and power of men. Community development activities that reduce men's influence, power and authority were not viewed favourably or positively. To men, the goal of community progress is not gender equality or more incomes for women. Several of the men I interviewed argued that gender equality was not only impossible, but unnatural. Reportedly, men and women were not created to be equal in the society. Community development initiatives that aim to make men and women equal in society were viewed as dangerous and unlikely to deliver their expected impact. Among the men, development was equated with increased opportunities for men to provide. Essentially, the goal of community development from the perspectives of the men I studied, is not to challenge men's power but to reaffirm it and help men and women meet their traditional roles in society. Communities, women, and children would be better off if men had better jobs, prospects, and opportunities in life. Better paying jobs would enable men cater better for their households and support their children's education, health, and wellbeing. Peace and development in the community would offer men more security and opportunities as they go about their daily activities of breadwinning, enabling them to provide well for their families.

Interestingly, with specific reference to community development, men asserted their role in terms of protecting and securing the community, feeding their families, and preventing vice in their neighbourhoods. Men considered themselves responsible if they supported their households and kept their wives in control; if they resisted other men who expressed alternative views or sexualities; and if they matched violence with violence. One of my guides told me: 'Given that we are poor, developing this community means that men have to be up and doing. They have to act responsibly, being by the side of their family, providing for and guiding their wives and children. They have to live by examples and teach their children what is right. In addition, they have to fight off bad men to keep the community and people safe'. Men who don´t take this responsibility serious are not 'real' men. Men said that they fail to take responsibility or to support their community by not working hard and providing well, not speaking out against homosexuality, and not fighting back against violence. Taken together, community development for men involved a reassertion of traditional masculine values. It was also apparent from the narratives of the men that only men can be leaders in the task of community development, a role that was perceived as impossible for a woman. Essentially, men's understanding of their place in community development and progress was dominated by patriarchal notions of gender and power.

When asked about the role of women in community development, the men I studied insisted that women had the role of managing the home front, cooking, and nurturing children. It is also part of women's role in the household to teach children to be well-behaved, moral, and respectful while the men were at work. Men did not ascribe to women the role of leaders of change, defenders of community, or breadwinners. They also did not anticipate any direct out-of-the-household role for women in community development. In many instances, men told me clearly that women who work outside the house, challenge men's headship of the household, control their men and seek equality with men can slow down community development. It was also believed that women also frustrate community development by resorting to immoral practices, such as sex work; seeking equality with men, and trying to take over men's responsibilities in the family and community. Men noted that it was part of their responsibility to ensure that women do not overstep their boundaries. Men's viewpoint can be understood against the backdrop of the thesis of researchers (Gavanas, 2002, 2005; Mullins, 2006; Silberschmidt, 1999) who argue that poverty creates a sense of gender insecurity among men that raises need for them to perform themselves in different ways, including forcefully and violently asserting themselves in community affairs, women's lives, and family contexts.

Poor men in the slums of Koch and Viwa were aware that government and politics have key roles in community development. Interestingly too, they recognized the structural and contextual basis of the development of their communities. They recognized structural violence against them by government as poor people and how that frustrates the progress of their community. 'No matter how we try in this community things may not go well without the support of government.' Men expected government to pay attention to infrastructure, job creation, and security. Without good structures to guarantee those, development will be difficult. They blamed the poverty of their communities for the lack of responsibility shown by the government towards them. The political consciousness and awareness of the poor presents a resource for community development and transformation and local action (Cornwall et al., 2011; Hearn et al., 2011; Welsh, 2010).

Chapter Five: Summary, conclusions, and abstracts

5.0: Summary and conclusions

As I was completing my fieldwork in 2012, Sammy, a 46-year-old man who regularly quizzed me about Nigeria, asked me if I now knew what it means and takes to be a man in the slum, I was puzzled. First, I explained to him that my study did not show that men in Koch and Viwa were any different from men in any part of the world, in the sense that all men respond to their social environment and the different types of men, we see, meet and relate with are merely products of their environments. 'So are you saying that if you put me in Lagos, I will be like men in Lagos?' 'Pretty much.' I answered, 'And if the men in Lagos were born and bred in a Nairobi slum and exposed to the same issues and struggles and they, too, would possibly be and act like the men in the slum.' I also elaborated that my study also pinpointed the specific ways men in the slums of Nairobi respond to the particularities of their social milieu and define themselves in relation to community progress, health and as men. However in discussing with him, I also learnt how much my research ideas have progressed during the period I was in the field.

My research is among the first to explore practices of masculinity among poor urban men in Kenya. At a time when the artefacts of locally-prized masculinity (breadwinnerhood) in Kenya are increasingly difficult to achieve and attain, I sought to understand the ways men living in Kenyan slums perform themselves as men. My focus is important against that background of claims in the literature that poor marginalized men tend to gravitate towards compensatory and violent masculinities to deal with their sense of masculine insufficiency. As I showed earlier in my literature review, this claim has been made about men in many parts of the world including South Africa, Mexico, the US (Willer, 2005; Glick et al., 2007; Choi, 2003; McCreary, Saucier and Courtenay 2005, Kimmel & Mahalik 2005, Beagan & Saunders 2005, and Sánchez, Greenberg, Ming Liu, & Vilain 2009). But my findings show that there is very little evidence that compensatory masculinity is a route that all men follow to deal with a sense of masculine insufficiency. In my study, while compensatory masculine practices were evident in the violent and extreme acts of the men I studied, I also found that several men dealt with a sense of masculine insufficiency by redefining the meaning of being a man and even taking on nontraditional roles. This important finding resonates with research on men in several parts of the world (DeKeseredy et al., 2007; Sherman, 2005; Zinn, 1982). In Sherman's research with jobless American men for instance, she found that while experiences with masculinity in times of economic and labor market stress prompt men to resort to violence and exaggerated masculine practices, it is not all men who do so. Sherman showed that in several instances, many men unable to realize traditional versions of masculinity redefine themselves, sometimes assuming feminized

roles in the household. My research adds a very novel issue to the above phenomenon, which is that poverty did not exempt the poor men I studied from expectations of diligence in provisioning and breadwinning. Rather, it was constituted as both a challenge to masculine identity and a promoter of true manliness, defined mainly in terms of persistent pursuit of providerhood in the face of poverty. This confirms that the expectations of men as successful providers and as economically-stable can motivate them into a unremitting quest for power, wealth and influence (King & Mason, 2001).

Literature shows that masculinity is performed or enacted differently across contexts and societies (Connell, 2005; Gutmann, 2006). In my research, I show evidence that different discourses of masculinity as well as contending communities of men operate in the slums of Nairobi. My materials however pointed to the hegemony of breadwinner masculinity in the slums of Nairobi. There is always a dominant masculine form in every social context (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Groes-Green, 2009; Hearn, 2004). Interestingly, as in many parts of the globe, breadwinnerhood is the hegemonic version of masculinity in slums of Nairobi and it is tenaciously pursued even in the face of its unfeasibility. Being a breadwinner which then qualifies one to be the head of the household and hence to be able to make a claim in masculinity is sought by any means necessary by poor men in the slums of Nairobi. Being at the bottom of the economic ladder does not preclude men in slums from adhering to the same masculinity ideology as men in other economic classes in Kenya. Men in the slums of Nairobi are thus clearly operating within the framework of larger patriarchal definition of a 'man'. In a recent US study, (Coughlin & Wade, 2012), it was shown that while men have become much less restricted in the ways they express their manhood, the expectations that they will be providers for their households have not changed. Contemporary American men still feel that if they are going to get married and have children, they should be able to provide for their wives and children. Poor men in the slums of Nairobi are active participants in the global patriarchal discourse that frames manhood in terms of breadwinnerhood and providerhood.

Remarkably, I also found that men in the slums of Nairobi pursued breadwinnerhood in a variety of ways: by socially-sanctioned means as well as strategies that, in their contexts, were considered absolutely 'un-masculine'. Further, as my study showed, these strategies allowed poor men in Nairobi's slum some flexibility in the way they pursued breadwinnerhood. Consequently, such 'unmasculine' practices as selling sex to fellow men, pimping one's wife, and accepting to be openly violated by other men assume new meanings as men seek to assert themselves as men. According to Korobov (2005), ironies and contradictions characterize masculinity across cultural contexts. It is these ironies that make hegemonic masculinity tactically possible for men in different societies. In the US, Payne (2011) showed that men responded to blocked opportunities through ingenious practices that allowed them to still establish themselves as men in their society.

From my research, the strong forces against changes in masculinity become apparent. Men enjoy several social and economic privileges by asserting themselves in particular masculine forms (Connell, 2011). They change when the change will accomplish them certain objectives and gains (Payne, 2011). But they also see traditional masculinity as universal and natural. Men's inability to see how dynamic their practices of masculinity are frustrates work aiming to change them. This is because the conceptualization of a particular practice in terms of nature makes it harder to engage lay people with messages of change (Witt, 2011). Men in the local slums of Kenya operate within a larger global patriarchal framework of masculinity that focuses on the capacity to provide (Agorde, 2007; Campbell, 2000; Gavanas, 2005; Sherman, 2005; Silberschmidt, 2001). Kenyan poor men's notions of manliness are therefore not unique. Further, understanding the plethora of ways men perform themselves gives an important place to queer theory in men's studies. When poor men told me: "we are the real men…" they were indeed charting a new norm of masculinity, though they did not openly admit or acknowledge it More critical appreciation of the different ways men deploy themselves in pursuit of valued gender norms is key.

Another noteworthy issue emerging from this study relates to the importance of lay perceptions of ethnicity in relation to health and of masculinity in relation to community development among the men I studied. As I noted earlier, research on the interaction of ethnicity and health and on masculinity and community development and masculinity has ignored the direct voices of people from communities investigated. The men I studied knew the implications of masculinity for their health and communities. Importantly, they underscored the role of men in the failure of their community to develop and emphasized their own criticality and centrality in the progress of their community. Within this context, prejudiced social conceptions and prejudices such as homophobia become important expressions of masculinity among men seeking to show that they need to assert themselves in more masculine ways to play their roles as community leaders and protectors. Masculinity-threatened men's tendency to simultaneously claim they have failed in their responsibilities and are a problem and to reinforce the patriarchal ideal of self-sufficient, individualistic men by insisting they are the ones to solve the problem is well-documented (Gavanas, 2005; Messner & Sabo, 1994; van Leeuwe, 1997).

Overall, I have raised important questions for both social research and work with men. I conclude as follows: First, work with men must seek to comprehend and build on the ways they articulate and understand the issues that they face in their everyday life. Further, interventions with poor men must pay mind to the diverse ways poverty and a sense of masculine deficit can motivate their performance of themselves as men. While national poverty alleviation measures are very urgent, men also need help to engage with and peel through their own behaviors and actions, to recognize the dynamics that undergird their conducts and free themselves from the tensions and pressures that condemn them to lives of

desperation, violence, anxieties and risk-taking. The process of making men allies in the global struggle for gender equality and an inclusive social system must start with supporting them to enjoy improved livelihoods and comprehend the beliefs and social forces that motivate their everyday behavior. Against this backdrop generally emerges the urgent need for a clearly defined and workable national framework and agenda in Kenya for improving the livelihoods of its poorest and most needy citizens and for the public education of men and women on issues of gender and equality and to guide work and interventions to foster gender equitable social institutions.

5.1: Abstracts of published papers included in the dissertation

Paper 1: Poverty, Masculine Violence, and the Transformation of Men: Ethnographic Notes from Kenyan Slums (Published 2011: In *Men and masculinities around the world: Transforming men's practices*, edited by Keith Pringle, Elisabetta Ruspini, Jeff Hearn and Bob Pease, 236–246. New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

The intersections of violence and masculinity have been studied in a variety of social contexts (Bourgois 1996; Messerschmidt 2004; Mullins 2006). Missing in these studies, however, are grounded accounts of how a hazardous sense of threatened masculinity and notions of masculine dignity constructed around interpersonal violence become part of the everyday thinking of some men. Put differently, how does the belief that self-esteem, material worth, and possibilities for life improvement can only be realized through violence and ruthlessness become a key element of poor men's social and cultural outlook? Drawing on my fieldwork in the slums of Kenya, I link masculine violence to the dynamic association, which men make, between their private and shared marginalization and livelihood misfortunes and the everyday cruelty of others as well as the invasive belief that one has to both vigorously resist violence and deploy it in order to be safe. This disastrous sense of an inherently vicious world interacts dynamically with the lived reality of a constant state of emergency that interminably banishes men from dynamic access to public goods, to the realm of socioeconomic marginality, insecurity, and participation in drugs and other illicit economies that endorse aggression and brutality. Efforts to transform men need to take account of their livelihood contexts.

Paper 2: Men, masculinity, and community development in Kenyan slums (Published 2014: In *Community Development* 45 (1):32-44)

There is limited research on masculinity in relation to community development. Using ethnographic and interview data from two slums in Kenya and building on one of the more well-known definitions of community development, we explore men's narratives of themselves in relation to community development. We highlight how men's cognizance of the structural and contextual constraints to the

development of their communities intersected with both a feeling that they have helped to hamper community development and an adamant sense of their own criticality and centrality in ensuring it. While repudiating the idea that they have to change in order for their community to progress, men also generally hinged community development on their tenacious pursuit of traditional masculinity scripts. The rejection of mainstream masculinity norms as the basis for community progress will not resonate consistently among men. Social and community development work with men that fails to acknowledge them as gendered people may not succeed.

Paper 3: Ethnicity, livelihoods, masculinity, and health among Luo men in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya (Published 2013: In *Ethnicity & Health*. 18 (5):483-498)

Abstract: Previous research suggests that ethnic self-identity has little consequence for objective health outcomes compared to the structural dimensions of ethnicity. Using qualitative data, we investigated perceptions of ethnicity in relation to health among Luo men in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya. While recognizing the complicated cultural origin of poor health, responding Luo men stressed on gender and masculinity in particular and everyday livelihood situations as being more critical for their health than Luo customs. Recognition of the structural causes of ill-health among the men overlapped with lay notions derived from particular expressions of Luo culture in urban slum contexts. To some extent, respondents regarded the performance of their sense of ethnic identity as protective, though they also admitted to the health-damaging repercussions of some of the ways they enacted aspects of Luo culture. Ethnic beliefs that link particular enactments of local customs with health outcomes may motivate the performance of cultural identity in ways that can produce critical health outcomes.

Paper 4: Life is not designed to be easy for men': Masculinity and poverty among urban marginalized Kenyan men (Published in 2015: *Gender Issues* 32 (2) DOI 10.1007/s12147-015-9135-4)

Current analyses of poverty and economic marginality in relation to masculinity continue to ignore the direct perspectives of men whose lives form the crux of such investigations. I draw on interview and ethnographic data from two slums in Nairobi, Kenya's capital city to address poor men's constructions and performance of manliness in relation to poverty. Men acknowledged economic adversity as both a major constraint to their masculinity and a significant dynamic in their own evolution and development into 'proper' men. In striving for locally-valued masculine identities, particularly breadwinnerhood, Nairobi's poor men advanced new values, narratives and strategies that both projected them as socially-respectable

men and reconstituted their normatively 'un-masculine' actions as macho. Ironies suffuse masculinity in the slums of Nairobi, and are, in large part, driven by the critical and complex social dynamics and popular beliefs, which poor men navigate while seeking to make valued masculinity both notionally and practically accessible for themselves.

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