

## General Introduction

**1.0. Research topic:** Transforming Masculinities into an asset for HIV prevention: A case study of how Mabutho's (The UCCSA men's organization) teachings on masculinities can mediate HIV prevention in the UCCSA-Mozambique

**Comment [SN1]:** This is ok for a working title but we will need to revise it later as it is too long

### 1.1. Description of the study

This exploratory study will explore to what extent evaluate whether and how Mabutho's teachings on manhood can help prevent mediates HIV prevention in the Mozambique Synod of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA). It will also explore possibilities for sensitising and mobilising men for behaviour change and effective response to HIV prevention in church and society.

**Comment [SN2]:** "To what extent" is a quantitative question. It means you have to answer a "measurable" question at the end. You need to present a more qualitative question.

### 1.2. Study Background

Mabutho is generally a lay male Christian organization in the Mozambique Synod of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA). Religio-cultural aspects have placed Mozambique among the countries which suffer the world's highest burden of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (see Audet et al. 2010:1). Despite the several legislative and policy changes that have been undertaken in the area of HIV prevention the outcome of such campaigns remain ineffective.

**Comment [SN3]:** What are aspects? What is meant here?

Domestic violence, sexual assault and rape continue to be alarmingly high; this suggest that the church needs to tackle the HIV epidemic from a different angle, of which targeting on masculinities for change is one.

**Comment [SN4]:** Preachy!!!

There is some evidence in current literature to suggest that organized religion (especially Christianity and Islam)<sup>1</sup>, which are the main religious institutions in the world and in Africa in particular, have been the birth place for the patriarchal ideologies, which are critical in the HIV epidemic.

As already stated, the aim of this study is to evaluate is study is designed to find out to what extent the whether and how the teachings of Mabutho (men's organization) of the UCCSA can mediate mediates HIV prevention in Mozambique. It is going to The study seeks to investigate inquire whether there is any role played by the men's organization in the

<sup>1</sup>See Manda, D. 2009. "Religion and the Responsibility of Men in Relation to HIV and Gender Based Violence: An Ethical Call". In *Journal of Constructive Theology: Gender, Religion, and Theology in Africa*, Vol. 15. 2. Pp. 23-40 and Camody, D. 1994. *Response to 101 Questions about Feminism*. Great Britain, 95.

deconstruction of hegemonic masculinities, which have been shown to be a driver of the HIV epidemic, ~~which have proven to be critical in this era of HIV epidemic~~. Since religion dominates all aspects of life, the study will further inquire what role the church can play in the transformation of the religio-cultural portrayal of masculinity in order to encourage mutuality and partnership between men and women.

**Comment [SN5]:** Put in references for this

Religious beliefs and practices can play a role in the transformation of human behaviour for the well-being of human society. ~~It is my hope that~~ Hence, it is presumed that men's organizations which are an integral part of the life of many churches, can be used as a space of influence to challenge dominant patriarchal ideologies of masculinities. Furthermore, as well as influencing men men's organisations can offer men a chance to make life-giving decisions and translate such decisions into visible actions for HIV prevention.

**Comment [SN6]:** Substantiate with references

Studies on masculinity, religion and HIV from an African perspective are still very few<sup>2</sup>, it is my hope that a study like this will greatly contribute to the scarce body of literature which address masculinities, religion and HIV in Africa and in Mozambique in particular.

**Comment [SN7]:** Cut this and move it to the literature review

### 1.3. Research Rationale

~~The passion for conducting a research on "Transforming Masculinities into an asset for HIV prevention"~~ The rationale for embarking on this research emerges from what I have personally witnessed as an ordained minister in ~~a Christian church~~ the UCCSA where I have had with much experience in working with men's organization (Mabutho) in the Mozambique Synod of the UCCSA. During my term as the Regional chairperson for Mabutho in Maputo (2006-2009), I ~~realised that the ideologies which inform this organization are those of a patriarchal religion which stress hegemonic masculinities that, as various studies have shown, have proven to be a motivating factor in fuelling the HIV epidemic~~. Witnessed the ways in which the organisation is built on traditional patriarchal ideologies. At the same time, I also recognised the Mabutho as a space where men could change harmful behaviour.

This motivated me to reflect on Mabutho and investigate whether their teachings can mediate HIV prevention and how ~~could~~ Mabutho could be transformed into an asset for HIV prevention in Mozambique.

**Comment [SN8]:** Please read up on Steve De Gruchy's concept of religious health assets. This can become a conceptual framework for your thesis.

### 1.4. Preliminary Literature Review

<sup>2</sup> See Klinken, Adriann. 2011. "Transforming Masculinities towards Gender Justice in an era of HIV and AIDS". In Haddad, Beverley (Ed.) Religion and HIV and AIDS: Charting the terrain. University of Kwazulu-Natal press, p.276

Many studies about the negative role masculinity and religion have played in fuelling the HIV epidemic have been done from the angle of social and human sciences. However, little has been said about the role religious men can play for HIV prevention. This preliminary literature review will build on written sources concerning the men's organization in the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA), as well as the role of the men's organizations in the transformation of masculinities into an asset for HIV prevention.

#### 1.4.1. Literature on men's organizations in the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa

Xavier Massingue in his 2004 unpublished paper *Matimu ya Mabutho* (= A history of Mabutho), states that Mabutho (men's organization) emerged with the aim of preaching the gospel of conversion to the unconverted and to teach Christian teachings of moral purity among the non-Christians. The main claim One of the teachings of the men's organization from the beginning has been that women are both the "bearers of life and the 'poison'" of their own wombs, for women have been responsible for preparing the home brew and tobacco for their husbands, who in turn become violent and ignorant of God's will on earthy (2004:6). This information will help me assess how that claim impacts on the current relationship between members of Mabutho and women in church and society in general.

**Comment [SN9]:** Surely this is not the main claim of a men's organisation? It may be one of the teachings.

In his 1999 article *Reflecting on the Heritage of the London Missionary Society*, Rupert Hambira states that the London Missionary Society was a male dominated organization. "The male dominated mission came from overseas to a male dominated society in Africa and did not recognise the situation as a challenge" (1999:224). This ~~has forced~~ prompted Hambira to question how ~~our~~ the spirituality in the UCCSA can be informed by the perspective of both men and women in the contemporary world (1999:225). ~~This piece of information is important in that it will help me understand how the legacy of the LMS has informed the church's theology and the man's organization in particular. Both the unpublished article by Massingue and the article by Hambira will be key sources in sketching a history of the men's organisation in the UCCSA right from its missionary roots to its current expression.~~

**Comment [SN10]:** This is a weak justification for why you are using this unpublished paper. Surely its value is in providing a history of the men's organisation?

#### 1.4.3. Literature on the role of the men's organizations on transforming masculinities into an Asset for HIV prevention

At this time, there is no current literature which particularly and specifically addresses Mabutho as such; however, there are some studies which have already been done elsewhere

about the role religious men's organizations can play in the deconstruction of traditional concepts of masculinity for societal transformation in the context of HIV and AIDS.

In his 2011 Case Study of men's organizations entitled *Saint Joachim as a model of Catholic Manhood in Times of AIDS: A case study on Masculinity in an African Christian Context* Adriann Van Klinken shows how religious ~~teachings-groupings~~ can be utilized as a strategy in the transformation of critical masculinities through correcting certain behaviour and attitude of men in the fight against [the](#) HIV epidemic (2011:1). Klinken shows how Catholic men in Zambia have deconstructed traditional conceptions of masculinity by transforming hegemonic forms of manhood associated with irresponsibility of men in marriage and sexual immorality into responsible agents that can contribute to preventing [the](#) HIV epidemic.

Beverly Haddad in her article *Choosing to Remain Silent: Links between Gender Violence, HIV/AIDS and the South African Church* (2003) argues that behaviour patterns of men in communities can be changed provided that the church is willing to do so. Haddad argues that the church can play a significant role in the transformation of critical masculinities if men could only be given space through men's organizations, where they can start exploring alternatives masculinities ~~which represent no danger in the HIV epidemic (2003:162). In the course of the HIV epidemic, the church is morally obliged to create a safe space for the transformation of masculinities, because men too are victims of patriarchy and struggle to cope with some societal expectations about them as ascribed by patriarchy.~~

Comment [SN11]: Rephrase this

Comment [SN12]: Preachy!!!

Klinken in his article *Transforming Masculinities Towards Gender Justice in an Era of HIV and AIDS: Plotting the Pathways* (2011), states that while acknowledging that most aspects on the socialisation of men are informed by religious beliefs and practices, it is also true that religion (the Christian church in particular) can offer a platform for the transformation of any dominant ideologies of masculinities considered to be critical in this era of [the](#) HIV epidemic (2011:278ff). Indeed, the men's organizations within Christian churches can be an influential space for change and transformation.

~~Demoka~~ Manda in her article *Religion and the Responsibility of men in relation to HIV and Gender-Based Violence: An Ethical call* (2009) argues that although Christianity is traditionally understood as a patriarchal religion, it can still create a space for the transformation of men into change agents in the HIV epidemic and gender based violence in Africa (2009:29). Church organizations, pulpits and sermons can be powerful weapons in the deconstruction of hegemonic masculinities in church.

Comment [SN13]: Check spelling!

Ezra Chitando in his article *Men as Gender Activists: Opportunities and Challenges within the Religious Sector* (2010), argues that since men are victims of their own socialization it is important that the concept of manhood be transformed so that men can become agents of social transformation. For men to fight against patriarchy and strive for their own humanity they must abandon religio-cultural practices which dehumanizes them (2010:127). Chitando argues that men's organizations are at the right position to influence change among men (2010:134). Men's organizations can play a big role for the transformation of negative masculinities.

Kennedy Owino in his article *Maleness and its possible influence on abuse and domestic violence in South Africa: A critique of some Expressions of Evangelical Theology* (2010), argues that culture and religion are major forces of socialization in Africa which have reinforced notions of maleness that have been affecting the relationship between men and women in this era of [the](#) HIV epidemic (2010:146). The church as a male dominated institution can help reshape the notions of masculinities into a new reality whereby the idea of maleness does not presume superiority, but mobilizes the strength of others for building a just society.

## 1.5. ~~The~~ Research Question and Objectives

### 1.5.1. Research Question

From the above it is clear that studies have shown not only the ways in which religion has shaped negative masculinities, but also the potential of religious beliefs and practices through men's organizations to be a space for the liberation of hegemonic masculinity. **Hence the question this study wants to ask is:**

~~How can~~[Does](#) the teachings of Mabutho on masculinity mediate HIV prevention ~~and how influential can they be for the transformation of masculinity?~~

In attempting to probe the above question, I will use the following **sub-questions:**

1. What is the function of Mabutho (men's organization) in church and society?
2. [How influential](#) ~~are~~[Do](#) the Mabutho's teachings ~~on mediating~~[mediate](#) HIV prevention?
3. What is the function of Mabutho in the men's lives in church and society in the context of HIV prevention?

**Comment [SN14]:** How does one measure whether something is influential or not? I think that this may not be a measurable objective.

### 1.5.2. Hence the objectives of this study are:

- To describe the function of men's organizations such as Mabutho in the church and society.
- To ~~inquire about the influence of~~ investigate the role of Mabutho's teachings ~~on~~ in mediating HIV prevention.
- To ~~inquire about the~~ evaluate the function of Mabutho in the men's lives in church and society.

## 1.6. Research Limitations

Until currently, the Mozambique Synod of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa operates in two regions of South Mozambique. Mabutho predominates in every local church within the Synod. ~~The fact that~~ Mabutho operates in both rural and urban churches within the Synod. ~~I will, however, has forced me to~~ limit my study to four churches in an urban setting, because ~~as we know~~, the results from a rural setting may be different from those of an urban setting due to the way people are socially constructed in each setting. The churches will be selected as follows: Maputo region (Mavalane and Malhazine Congregational churches), Inhambane Region: (Balaza and Muele congregational churches). ~~It is my hope that the members of the men's organization within the four selected churches will represent the rest of the membership of Mabutho in Mozambique.~~

The fact that I have served the organization as the regional chairperson can be a disadvantage and advantage. It is a disadvantage in that some of the interviewees may not feel free to talk to me. It can be an advantage in that people will try to be as sincere as they can because they will think that I know what I am talking about.

**Comment [SN15]:** Your expression tends to be very colloquial in academic writing. You need to work on this. Try not to write so "casually"

## 1.7. Theoretical frameworks and Research Methodologies

### 1.7.1. Theoretical frameworks

Transforming masculinities into an asset for HIV prevention is both an issue of liberation and social ethics. Therefore, the theoretical frameworks which will be used for this study is ~~the~~ "Liberation Ethics", a theological framework developed by Mark Ridley-Thomas (1991) and the "woman to woman: coming together for positive change" a social framework coined by Romero et al (2006).

The concern of liberation ethics as understood by Thomas is the radical transformation of the current structures with the aim of creating a better world for all (1991:41). Liberation ethics offers a platform on which one can build character, develop a sense of responsibility for self and empower those who are denied dignity. Liberation ethics posits that for communities to engage in the process of transformation it is vital that love be taken into account, because love is the “force that governs the human interaction and inspires men and women to move beyond themselves to take risks on behalf of self or others” (1991:38). Since liberation ethics is based on human rights, it then follows that God as the author of life has endowed human beings with rights and dignity that cannot be taken away from them. Liberation ethics provides ~~us with~~ practical strategies for creating a domination-free community in places where gender inequalities are supported by cultural and religious practices (1991:30).

The theme of liberating masculinities should be taken seriously in the time of HIV epidemic, because its emphasis is on mutuality, a crucial component to love for one self and for others (see 88). Further, Chitando argues that masculinities that do not subject women and other men to violence are an asset, because ~~they~~ are rooted in respect for women and responsible use of power are a valuable resource in response to HIV (2009:89).

~~Thomas’ explanation of liberation ethics connects well with my understanding that in order for us to move into the formation of a new community based on mutual respect the church should strive for the liberation of men from life-denying masculinities, which hinder HIV prevention in our communities as well as fighting for the radical transformation of the current structures put on place by patriarchal religion.~~

Comment [SN16]: Preachy

The “woman to woman: coming together for positive change” framework postulates that for women to increase knowledge about HIV transmission and prevention they need to come together so they can learn from one another how to identify and undermine social and cultural barriers faced by women in HIV prevention as well as to develop strategies for change in response to such barriers (2006:393). By adapting this framework in the context of masculinity I am deliberately admitting that men and the men’s organization can learn from this and come together, empower and transform each other for the deconstruction of hegemonic masculinity into an asset for HIV prevention. Because, just as Chitando asserts “not all women are powerless and not all men are powerful” (2010:133), a man to man: coming together for positive change approach would enable those men who have negative

attitudes of masculinity to learn from those who have positive models of masculinity within the organization.

Through the men's organization, it is indeed possible to construct a men's theology (teachings) that empowers both men and women who are victims of religious and cultural practices which drifts them into the HIV epidemic in church and society.

**Comment [SN17]:** Both these "frameworks" are more "activist" frameworks – that is they will help you with looking at the ways in which the Mabutho are operating on these frameworks or not. However, there seems to be very little "theory" in this framework. I strongly suggest that you use Steve de Gruchy's "religious health assets" as a framework with which to understand the phenomenon of the men's organisations as mediate HIV prevention.

## 1.7.2. Research Methodologies and Data Analysis

### Research Methodologies

This is an empirical study; therefore primary research will be undertaken. Furthermore, in order to inquire whether the teachings of Mabutho can mediate HIV prevention in the Synod of Mozambique it is going to analyse a wide range of recent material (2000 onwards) in print (books, reports, thesis and papers) which have been written about men's organizations elsewhere and in the UCCSA in particular. Interviews will be conducted in four selected churches of Maputo (2) and Inhambane (2) regions. The study will use convenience sampling for face to face interviews. This method is based on the inclusion of people who are accessible.

**Comment [SN18]:** Salvador, I have readthrough this section and it is very weak. You will need to do much more work here. You need to read up on research methodologies. You need to find a good book on research methods and see what methods suits your research question best. Also, I don't think interviews alone nor the questions that you have are sufficient to answer your research question. You must remember that the aim of the empirical work is to answer your research question. The fact that the men already meet in groups should provide an ideal opportunity for example for focus groups. Please read up more on research methodology and then re-write this section.

**Comment [SN19]:** Reference?

**Comment [SN20]:** What about observation as a means of data collection.

In gathering information Portuguese (Mozambique's official language) and Chitswa (one of the most common local languages within the church) will be used as medium of communication during the time the research will be undertaken. For interviews the following questions will be asked:

- a) How long have you been in the organization?
- b) How have some of the teachings impacted in your life with regard to HIV prevention?
- c) What do you learn about manhood and how can you use what you learn for HIV prevention?
- d) In your opinion how can Mabutho be used as a space for the liberation of men from religio-cultural aspects which are harmful to both men and women in the HIV era?

**Comment [SN21]:** These are weak questions and they will need to be put into an interview schedule if you want to show how they are helpful in answering your research questions.

### Data Analysis

It has been indicated above that information will be collected through interviews in two churches of urban Maputo and urban Inhambane. The data collected from the interviews will be typed and coded using **discourse analysis**. The interviews will be coded according to the name of the congregation and the marital status of the participants. The information collected in Portuguese and Chitswa will be translated into English.

**Comment [SN22]:** What is this? You have to be more intentional about describing exactly what you will do and how you will do it in this section.

### **1.8. Structure of the Study**

This study will be composed of five chapters, and each chapter will be organized as follows:

Introduction: the introduction will introduce the study and it will cover the following: Study Background, Research Question and Objectives, Research Limitations, Theoretical framework and research methodologies.

Chapter one is going to describe the importance of Mabutho in church and society. It will cover the following: A brief history of the emergence of Mabutho in the UCCSA, the emergence of Mabutho in the Mozambique Synod of the UCCSA, and the importance of Mabutho in the Mozambique Synod of the UCCSA.

Chapter two is going to inquire about the influence of Mabutho's teachings on mediating HIV prevention. It will give an overview of the participants, data collection strategies and analysis.

Chapter three will inquire and assess the function of Mabutho in the men's lives with regard to HIV prevention, as well as assessing whether Mabutho can offer a platform for the construction of positive masculinities in the era of HIV epidemic.

Chapter four will summarise the findings of the study, recommend and suggest further areas of research.

### **1.9. Bibliography:**

Audet et al. 2010. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*. Viewed: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2011, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>

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