Using Role Play to (Re) Evaluate the Relationship between Masculinity And / Or Femininity and HIV and AIDS

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Abstract: The paper explores masculinity and / or femininity and their relationship to the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe. The paper implicates both masculinity and femininity as accomplices in spreading HIV and AIDS. The purpose of the paper is to highlight the growing concern that cultural practices contribute to the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe and beyond. The paper further argues that whereas the masculine (male or female) may impose themselves on the feminine (female or male), the latter also contributes to the prevalence of HIV and AIDS by willingly accepting the imposition as a societal 'norm' or value to use Taylor's (2003) theory of scenarios. The unquestioned acceptance of the masculine's demands becomes the norm or scenario that should be viewed as 'natural' by both the hegemonic masculine and the subaltern feminine in a relationship. To carry out the study, a case study design was adopted as the operational framework for data gathering. Data was collected from Mount Zion, Temeraire Baptist Church in Mashava, Masvingo province by engaging Practice As Research (PAR) and participant observation. The sample comprised 20 adolescents made up of 10 boys and 10 girls. The results gathered from the research confirmed that to a greater extent, societal norms and attitudes influence one's behaviour towards life in general and sex to be specific. These findings demonstrate the need for academics, government, families and other interested stakeholders to re-evaluate cultural practices and specifically, gender roles.

Keywords: Role play; Masculinity; Femininity; HIV and Aids; Sex; Gender roles; socialisation.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to explore the concepts of masculinity and femininity and their relationship to HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe. There is growing concern that cultural practices have and continue to contribute to the HIV and AIDS scourge in Zimbabwe. In view of this observation, the UNAIDS (2010) recommends that men and boys need to be engaged in innovative approaches to change harmful social and cultural practices that contribute to the spread of HIV and AIDS. Studies such as the 'Engaging Men, Changing Gender Norms' have concluded that masculinity and/ or femininity have been instrumental in spreading HIV and AIDS in African countries including Zimbabwe. The same study has concluded that when it comes to decision making in relationships, men are expected to dominate and women to be passive. Unequal parties do not negotiate when they have sex and more often than not the masculine male has the final say on the use of protection during sex. Therefore, the dominated feminine persona in the relationship may not be in a position to protect herself from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV. The double standard of condoning multiple sexual partners for men and the expectation that men should know more about sex puts them and their partners at risk as well as preventing them from seeking sexual health advice (Baylies and Janet, 2002). The UNAIDS (2010) report on Global Aids Epidemic, concluded that some traditional gender roles and attitudes are fuelling the HIV and AIDS pandemic globally. Cognisant of this argument, this paper seeks to explore society's expectations about what it means to be a 'real' man and/ or woman. It also explores how some of these gender attitudes and expectations are linked to the spread of HIV and AIDS.

2. Masculinity, Femininity and HIV and AIDS

Femininity and masculinity are theories derived from the social sciences and traditionally, these psychological theories were understood from a bipolarity view - where femininity and masculinity were regarded as mutually exclusive (Constantipole, 1973). The theories of femininity and masculinity can be understood better if we start with the basics of what sex and gender mean. According to Stoller (1974), sex is the biological connotation. Gender is "a term that has psychological or cultural rather than biological constructions. If the proper terms for sex are 'male' and

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'female', the corresponding terms for gender are 'masculine' and 'femininity; these latter may be quite independent of (biological) sex" (Stoller, ibid:9. More importantly, He further argues and rightly so, that "gender is the amount of masculinity or femininity found in a person, and, obviously, where there are mixtures of both in many humans, the normal female has a preponderance of femininity" (pp.9-10). Stoller (ibid) also suggests that Femininity or masculinity is culturally determined or learnt after birth rather than biologically determined. Thus, in a way, according to him, culture is very much implicated in what is masculine or feminine behaviour in a given society. Stoller (ibid) attempts to explain how masculinity and femininity happens in males and females by suggesting that the "sense of maleness is the awareness that lam a male… with this awareness of one's maleness comes the lam manly or masculine which emerges only after the child has learned how his parents expect him to express masculinity that is, to behave as they feel males should" (Stoller, ibid: 41). The notion of 'lam male' has a biological rather than gender implication and what this means is that masculinity or femininity is predicated on both the biological and the cultural environment. Thus, depending on one's environment females can have masculine qualities normally associated with males and vice versa. This paper does not debate the degree or amount or preponderance of 'masculinity' or 'femininity' in an individual. Instead, it argues that both qualities of masculinity or femininity are implicated in the spreading of HIV and HIV in the sense that both passivity and dominance or vice versa lead to the spreading of HIV and AIDS. The male imposes and the female readily accepts and therefore both are implicated in the prevalence of the HIV and Aids scourge.

The UNAIDS (2010) report states that adolescents remain the most critical group to target in reducing the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, as most infections occur during this period. This realization has partly informed our choice of the target group in this paper. At the adolescence stage, individuals start to move gradually towards a more mature sense of identity and purpose Jenkins *et al.* (2009). There is growing evidence that HIV and AIDS and violence risk for both young men and women is linked to early socialization which promotes certain gender roles as 'the' norms. Masculinity may come with the belief that multiple partners and/ or maintaining control over the behaviour of one's partner is acceptable to the society. Thus, addressing gender norms that indicate what is appropriate or expected behaviour for both the masculine and feminine are increasingly being recognized as an important strategy to prevent the spread of HIV infection Brief (2010).

According to Thirne (1993), gender role expectations are seen to influence a person's identity from birth and get ingrained in one's personality. This influences how one sees himself. Witt (1997) concurs and adds that a child's earliest exposure to gender role expectations comes from their parents. She explains that from the time their children are babies, parents treat boys and girls differently. Girls are expected to be sweet and sensitive and boys are expected to be strong and brave. This presents a difficult task to change agents but does not mean it cannot be done. Thus, the study aimed to tackle such attitudes and got participants to explore these gender role expectations in a safe space.

As children develop, gender stereotypes are reinforced first in their home contexts. These are perpetuated throughout childhood and into adolescence through a number of socializing agents such as the media, school and church Martin *et al.* (1990). Zimbabwe is traditionally a male dominated society. Men are expected to hold the power while women are expected to passively stand back. According to Taylor (2003) this acceptance by both males and females of the set-up is the 'norm' that the Zimbabwean patriarchal society considers being 'natural'. More often than not females willingly accept to be exploited by the more masculine male figure in the society. This socialization approach to gender stereotype suggests that gender can be a reliable product of social behaviour only under certain conditions. Social and gender expectations that adolescent boys be confident and knowledgeable when it comes to sex inhabit their expression of doubt and uncertainties. Consequently they often accept incorrect sexual information without question or learning about sexuality by chance (Koss, 1991).

The UNAIDS (2010) report indicates that HIV incidences have fallen by more than 25% between 2001 and 2009 in 33 countries. The report has attributed this partly to positive behavioural change. Among young people in 15 of the most severely affected countries, HIV prevalence has fallen by more than 25% as these young people have adopted safer sexual practices. Slightly more than half of all people living with HIV are women and girls and this is the gender that tends to be more feminine. Thus, their femininity clearly contributes to the higher prevalence of HIV and AIDS among this population group.

3. Conceptual Framework: The Interactive Theory

This study is premised on the interactive theory of gender socialization. In recent years, many authors in the field of gender research and specifically in the field of masculinity have ascribed to this theoretical framework, which posits that any given culture setting provides a version, or multiple versions of masculinity (Connell, 1987). These gender norms which are passed on to both young males and females by their families, peer group and social institutions among others are interpreted and internalized by individuals. These individuals re-interpret and re-construct the norms and as members of a particular group of society, also influence the broader shared norms. This theoretical framework highlights that certain models of 'maleness' or masculinity are promoted in specific cultural settings but that individual males will vary by how closely they adhere to these norms. Furthermore, this framework indicates that norms can evolve over time as individuals and groups re-construct them.

4. Methodology

This research was carried out in the form of role play workshops with randomly selected 20 adolescents, comprising 10 males and 10 females from Mount Zion, Temeraire Baptist Church, Mashava district in Masvingo

Province. The researchers chose Mashava as a research location because it is a closed small post-mining community whose prevalence of HIV and Aids is fairly high. The young people of this community are at risk as they are exposed to illegal gold panners who are constantly flashing money and cars which attract quite a number of young girls and boys. These workshops were conducted under the interactive theory model. The UNAIDS (2010) report states that adolescents remain the most critical group to target in reducing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, as most infections occur during this period. This realization has partly informed the researcher's choice of the target group in this paper.

5. Data Presentation: Role Plays (Workshops)

Workshop 1
Aim: Group introduction and exploring the participants' gender attitudes towards masculinity and femininity.
Duration: 1 hour
Resources: none.
Item 1: Formal introductions (5minutes). The facilitators introduced themselves to the participants. The facilitators then briefly stated their purpose and expectations.
Item 2: Breaking ice (The game takes 5 minutes).This is a game where participants are asked to move around the space and whenever the facilitator mentions a number, the participants are supposed to quickly group themselves into that number and whoever is not in the formed groups will be out of the game. This exercise involves spontaneity and breaks loose the ice. It also warms up the participants.
Item 3: Group introduction (10 minutes). In a circle, each participant mentions his/her name and states his/her expectation from the workshop to try and learn each other's names. All the participants play the name game. A participant randomly mentions a name simultaneously pointing at the bearer of the name and the action keeps on moving around the circle. This game builds concentration.
Item 4: Making of group rules (10 minutes). Seated in a circle, the participants were requested to make rules of engagement. The facilitator mimed a bowl in the middle of the circle where a drink was being made. Each participant was requested to put in an ingredient which requests what he / she expects to be observed in the group. After everyone has had a chance, then everyone drinks from the bowl as a sign of a binding contract.
Item 5: Exploring Attitudes (10 minutes). Standing in circle, every participant is requested to do an action that he or she deems to present a man. After everyone has had a go, in the same way, actions presenting a woman also follow.
Item 5b: (10 minutes). Standing in a circle, every participant is requested to say two words that describe a 'real' man and woman.
Item 6: Reflection (10 minutes). Seated in a circle, participants were asked about any insight that the session could have opened especially by the words and actions representing a male and female. The session was then closed with a reminder about the next session.

Workshop 2
Aim: Exploring societal expectations around a 'real' man and woman.
Duration 1 hour.
Resources: Flip chart papers, markers, cloth and masking tape.
Item 1: Name game (5 minutes. In a bid to warm and continue to learn each other's name, the participants play the name game.
Item 2: Mime Game (10 minutes). The facilitator uses a cloth to mime an object and hands over to the next participant who uses it as the object handed over to him/ her before she changes it into a different object and hands it to the next participant. This continues round the circle until the facilitator feels the purpose has been achieved. This is to prepare the participants for mining during the image exercise.
Item 3: Listing of attitudes (20 minutes). A volunteer from the group writes on a lip chart what the participants perceive to be the major positive societal attitude about a real African man and woman. Another volunteer writes on another paper what the participants perceive to be major negative societal attitude about a real African man and woman. The participants are then requested to divide themselves in four groups and come up with two images of what they consider to be the most positive and negative attitudes.
Item 4: Presentation and Discussion of the images (20 minutes). Each group presents the image and the other participants take a guess at what it is and also have a chance to change the image. A short discussion about the choice of these particular attitudes follows. Each group has a chance to present and discuss.
Item: 5 De-rolling (5 minutes). A count down from ten to one using arms and legs is done to close off the session.

Workshop 3
Aim: Exploring the societal expectations that men should have early sexual debut.
Duration: 1 hour.
Resources: Chairs, coin and plastic bottle.
Item 1: Warm up, Fruit salad game (5 minutes). The participants are grouped into three fruits and all take up chairs in a circle apart from one. When the participant without a seat calls out other seated participants across the circle, the participant who fails to get a seat, calls out another fruit or can call out fruit salad where everyone leaves their seats to find others. This game elicits a sense of competition.

Item 2: Competition game (Pass the squeeze 10 minutes). The participants are informed that the session is going to be a competitive one. They are then divided into two groups using a method of counting one to two where all the ones belong to the same group and so are the twos. Kneeling in two lines closely facing each other, the person at one end of the line passes a squeeze to the next when a cue is given. This squeeze is then quickly passed on from one member to another to reach the last person who grabs the bottle before the other team does so.

Item 3: Role play exercise debate (30 minutes). In the same competing teams as above, the participants are divided into "oppose" and "proposer" of a debate motion. The participants are told that they are chiefs in traditional African society set in the pre-colonial era. They are then asked to take their seats facing each other while the facilitator is the chairperson of the debate. They are then given the topic "a real man is the one who has an early sexual encounter debate". The participants are only given two minutes to digest the topic individually. Every participant is allowed to voice his / her arguments. The chairperson then opens the debate using his position to further inquire into the participants' arguments.

Item 4: Summary (5 minutes). The chairperson summaries the main points raised during the debate.

Item 5: De-rolling (3 minutes). The participants are asked to close their eyes as the facilitator takes them on a journey from pre-colonial era and from that imaginary place until they are back to where they were. They are then requested to open their eyes.

Item 6: Reflection (5 minutes). The participants are asked about any new insights that have been elicited by the session, particularly the debate.

Workshop 4

Aim: Exploring the societal expectation that it is only 'natural' for men to have more than one sexual partners.
Duration: 1 hour.
Resources: None

Item 1: creativity and Spontaneity game (10 minutes). Participants are asked to move around the space to get their blood running and warm up. In a circle, the facilitator begins a story with just a sentence and the next person is supposed to take it on and add a sentence that makes logical sense and develops the story. This process goes on around the circle. This is to elicit a sense of creativity and spontaneity.

Item 2: I agree or disagree game (15 minutes). Statements are read to the participants and they need to decide whether they agree, don't agree or don't know. For instance, if they agree, they should raise both hands. For a statement they disagree with, they should not raise any hand at all. For statements where they don't know, they should turn around and face away from the circle. For every statement read, the participant will ask at least 1 or 2 people from any of the 3 categories why they chose that particular answer. Short and fast answers are expected.
Questions

1. Men should be tough and strong and never admit that they may be mistaken?
2. A man should always know what to do and should never show his weakness?
3. Men have stronger sex drive than women?
4. A man needs to have sex with more than one woman?
5. Men are unfaithful because it is difficult for them to control their desire?
6. Women should be passive and let men take all decisions in a relationship?
7. Women should not complain about their men's unfaithfulness?

Item 3: Role playing (20 minutes). The participants are divided into two groups to come up with role plays. The first group is to come up with a role play exploring why the participants think men are expected to have multiple sexual partners. The second group is expected to come up with a role play exploring any dangers, if any, associated with the expectation that men should have multiple sexual partners.

Item 4: Discussion (10 minutes). The participants are required to point out issues that may have come up in the role plays that they don't necessarily agree to and why. Participants are also encouraged to raise issues that they believe are crucial but didn't come up in the role plays.

Item 5: Wrap up (5 minutes). The facilitator reiterates the important issues raised by the participants that correlate with the research that has been done. If the facilitator feels some important issues have not been raised, he could point to them in the wrap up.

Workshop 5

Aim: Exploring the sexual network and their relation to HIV and AIDS.
Duration 1 hour.
Resources: Colored threads (blue, red, and white), blind folds, markets, pens, paper, a collection of objects and a box.

Item 1: Skills Development game (Objects game 10 minutes). Prior to playing, the facilitator places the group of objects on a table and covers it with a cloth so that no one can see it ahead of time. The leader explains that the participants have one minute to look at the objects as they can remember. The participants are not allowed to touch any of the objects and they cannot talk aloud during the minute of looking. The leader has the participants stand around the table and pulls the cover off, saying "Go". After timing a minute, the leader covers the table and asks the participants to write down as many objects as they can remember. The leader gives the participants two minutes to do this and at the end, the leader lists all of the objects on the table.

Item 2: Concentration game (Find the animal game 10 minutes). The participants are invited into a circle. The facilitator hands out blind-folds and tells participants to blind one another. The facilitator moves around the group, giving each person the name of an animal. The challenge will be to find out all other animals of one's own kind. No one can talk only animal's sounds can be made.

Item 3: Sexual network Exercise (30 minutes). The main aim of this exercise is to help participants understand the concept of sexual networks and how concurrent sexual relationships increase the spreading of HIV.

➢ Bring out the two containers marked X and Y.
➢ Give the 10 female participants 3 pieces of paper each from the container marked X and tells them to write their names once on each of them. After writing their names on them, they should fold them in half and put them back in the container marked X.
➢ Bring out the container marked Y with 10 papers: 6 have the word PLAYER written on them, 1 has the word PLAYER USING CONDOM EVERY TIME written on it, 1 has written on ABSTINENCE and 2 with the words FAITHFUL ONE WOMAN and ONE MAN written on them.
➢ Ask the 10 males to pick one paper each from the container marked Y.
➢ Tell the 6 boys with the papers marked player to select three papers from X that holds the names of girls.
➢ Ask the boy who has selected the card with player using condoms every time to select three papers from container X
➢ Ask 2 boys who have selected faithful one woman and man to select one name card each from that container X
➢ Ask a girl to come up, give the boy one end of the white string and the other need to the boy. This link presents the first sexual network.
➢ Repeat the same steps for the second boy.
➢ Ask the boy with the player using condom every time to come up and read aloud the name of the three women he has chosen.
➢ Give him three blue threads representing condoms used for every sexual encounter. Ask the each of the three girls to hold onto one of the other sides of each thread.
➢ One at a time, ask the boy with the player cards to read out the names of the girls they selected. Ask them to come forward and give them red threads representing unprotected and unfaithful sexual relationships. Ask the three girls to hold onto the other end of the thread.
➢ At some point, a girl's names will undoubted be read out more than twice. She will keep changing position holding onto the threads and others as they are mentioned.
➢ Tell the participants that boy 10 is a very sexually active guy. Tell him to pick 2 more girls from container X for a total of 5. Give him 5 red threads and connect him to the network.
➢ At this point, the construction of sexual network is complete. Ask the participants to now use this graphic representation and apply it to real life and how the sexual choice we make determines who they are connected to in the network.
➢ Ask them to describe all the people they are connected to and how they are connected.
➢ Ask any interesting connection in the network.
➢ Make sure everyone understands the sexual network, the meaning of the coloured threads, and how the participants are inter-connected before moving onto the next question.
➢ Next, ask them to point who in the network is the most and least at risk of contracting HIV and STDs in the network.
➢ Select one person in the network and ask the participants "what if this person was HIV positive? Does this put you at risk?" Change the HIV positive person a couple of times to see how plucking him or her in a different part of the network will affect the HIV status of the rest of the members?
➢ At a certain point you will begin to sense that you and the audiences have gained all the information from observing this network. Ask the participants if they have last questions, observations or comments about this network.

Item 4: Written Reflection (5 minutes). At the end of the session, hand a pen and a paper to each participant and ask them to write down what this session has opened their eyes to and anything else that could have caught their eyes.

Workshop 6
Aim: Re-evaluating gender attitudes.
Duration: 1 hour.
Resources: Flip charts papers, markers, pens and note books.
Item 1: Ice breaker solemn and silent (10 minutes). The facilitator explains that this exercise will take self-control. Members pair back to back. On the count of three, everyone must face their partners. They look each other in the eye and try to remain solemn and serious. No speaking. The first to smile or laugh must sit down. All remain standing then take a new partner and the activity continues until only one person has not smiled or laughed. (Second round of playing can involve teams competing to outlast each other). If you get a pair at the end who are both keeping a straight face, the rest of the group can act as hecklers to disrupt them.
Item 2: Improvisation game (10 minute). One participant sits on a bench. The setting is a park and the person on the bench has no character until the second participant enters. The second participant has decided who she is, and who the person sitting on the park bench is. For example, the person entering could decide, "the person on the bench is a

famous author and l am a great fan of their work". In this situation, the actor would recognize the person on the bench, react to seeing their favorite author in person, ask for an autograph and tell the author about which books she likes best. The actor on the bench meanwhile has to adapt to the situation, developing their character bit by bit. The imprecision ends when one actor exists, hopefully after everyone figures out whom they are. This game is to elicit creativity and play.

Item 3: role playing (30 minutes). The facilitator asks the participants to decide which two of all the explored gender attitudes towards masculinity and femininity are most likely to put people at risk of HIV. One volunteer writes on the chart all the attitudes as they are recalled by the group. They then choose the two. The participants are then divided into groups. One group is to come up with a role play exploiting how the identified two attitudes are normally formed and passed on in society. The other group is to explore how the identified attitudes can be realistically re-evaluated or changed. The two groups then get into their groups to prepare.

Item 4: group discussion (10 minutes). After the two groups have presented, there is discussion about the presentation. Do they find the suggested courses of action realistic? What does it take for such actions to be carried out? Who in society could be of much help in this?

Item 5: Closure of workshop (5 minutes). At this point, the facilitators extend their gratitude to the participants for their effort and commitment. The facilitator asks if there is anything anyone would like to share with the whole group otherwise notebooks are handed to participants to write their parting words, whether the workshop met their expectations and anything they would like to communicate to the facilitators.

6. Findings

The participants presented and described the pictures as interpreted in societies of 'real' male as powerful, strong (read capable of being physically violent), hardworking and a go-getter. For the 'real' female, she was described as being well- mannered (read submissive), beautiful and a 'good' listener. The majority of them had their own parents as role models. It was evident that parental characteristics influence gender typing in terms of the role models that are available for the child to imitate. Parental power has a great impact on sex typing in boys, According to societal expectations women should be respectful, humble, and submissive to men. These norms are reinforced by mothers, aunts, churches and elders of the communities. As the sessions progressed, young girls opened up about their own understanding of a man in today's society which is marred with socio-economic, cultural and political crisis. Their characteristics included rich, wealthy, a man with a car/s, a married man (responsible man/mature) and for the young man, a 'real' woman is beautiful, free spirited, respectful, one who can cook well. For the young man having multiple sexual partners and abusing drugs define a man. Thus, gender interpretations in society differ with time and factors that surround them.

A society is a group of people who live together governed by a set of norms, values, ideas and beliefs. In a particular society, males and females are expected to behave and conduct selves in a certain manner that is deemed ideal. Anyone who diverts from the ideal is considered a deviant. The mashava community is a hub of different cultural groups who include the Shona, Chewa, Nyanja, Ndebele and Tonga among others. These groups are governed by different beliefs, norms and values. However, from the findings, the majority of them tend to agree on what is expected of a 'real' man and woman in terms of the way they should conduct themselves. Parents, pastors and community elders expect boys and girls to abstain from sexual activities until they are married. However, the young boys and girls are exposed to new emerging cultures that are influenced by the global thinking. Thus, individual community expectations are clashing with global expectations. The participants emphasized the pressure they succumb to for them to engage in early sexual practices due to technology and media exposure. One of the participants mentioned that his role model is Justin Bieber, a Canadian born singer he adores so much. He argued that Bieber started engaging in sexual activity at a young age and so he too sees nothing wrong with that. He mentioned further mentioned that this was "cool" and an acceptable norm among the boys of his age.

To one of the girls, "Men are the ones who ask you out, who buy you phones, clothes and food and it is my duty to repay them with sex, the way they like it," says one of the participants. To use Taylor (2003) theory of scenario, what this girl says has become the 'norm' and 'natural' thing to do. It has become the scenario, the norm even if this is a result of years of socialization of both the boys and girls. They have become victims of the very society that should teach them values and ideas to protect themselves from danger. In the case of the Mashava community, girls are exposed to "Makorokoza" or the illegal gold panners who hold power over them as they use money to lure young girls into engaging in unsafe and unprotected sex. In Zimbabwe, societal norms are guided by patriarchy. Patriarchy, like most forms of oppression, has a way of trying to convince us that, in the words of the Collective (2011) "things are the way they are because they have to be, that they have always been that way, that there are no alternatives and that they will never change. " In this case, the man has money and power over women. Within this structure, men and women both have their own specific roles (the male leads and the female supports and complements). The power imbalance between male and female also translates into economic dependency for women. The female may be forced to exchange sexual favours for money or gifts in order to meet her basic needs, support her families, pay for school or even enhance her social power thus exposing her to high risk of HIV and AIDS.

The majority of "Makorokoza" or illegal gold panners have families. However, due to the excitement of fast cash and a bid to prove their masculinity they end up engaging in extra marital affairs with different girls from the Mashava community thereby creating sexual networks. These networks expose the girls and men to high risk of contracting HIV and AIDS. Sexual networks are groups of persons who are connected to one another sexually.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Gender attitudes are influenced by both biological and environmental factors Stoller (1974). Culture is one of the most important environmental factors that shape one's personality. Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Social norms about female sexuality make it very difficult for women and girls around the world to protect themselves from HIV infection. Women and girls are often encouraged to remain uninformed about sexual matters and/or remain sexually passive. From the workshops carried out, passivity or meekness ranked highly in the ideal or 'real' female. The expectations for sexual passivity in women, along with the priority given to male sexual pleasure also makes it difficult for women to be an equal partner in deciding the terms of sexual activity, including negotiating safer sex practices. Social norms about masculinity often assume that men are knowledgeable and experienced when it comes to sexual issues. This can have the negative effect of preventing men from seeking sexual health information or admitting their lack of knowledge about HIV risk reduction. Masculinity norms can also pressure men to have multiple sexual partners, which contradicts HIV/AIDS prevention messages about fidelity, delaying onset of sexual activity in young people, or reducing the number of sexual partners. However, from the workshop sessions, young people acknowledged that despite hinders from cultural norms they were getting enough information on HIV and AIDS on the internet via their cellphones. Technology is now their best teacher as almost every teen possesses a smart phone.

The challenge for gender activists is to engage with gender roles, without losing the analysis of power and gender identity. Gender roles and norms are familiar and much easier to discuss in groups than reflection on gender binaries, values and power. There are a range of tools that institutions and societies can draw on in enabling change. These range from Freire (1970) pedagogical theories that argue that change can come about through dialogue, reflexivity and consciousness-raising to contributions from discursive psychology such as achieving change through 'restoring agency' through critical observation, reflection and exposure to counter-normative discourses (Edley, 1997). These can become tools for transformative processes that academics, governments, NGOs and others agencies can adopt.

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