

**The Relationship between Friendship Quality, Masculinity Ideology and Happiness in
Men's Friendships**

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Abstract

Friendships are voluntary, reciprocal relationships that consist of a number of provisions such as intimacy, companionship and help. These provisions or dimensions help to form, maintain and strengthen these friendships. This study has examined the claim that certain types of friendship are related to happiness, and that men's and women's friendships differ. It did so by comparing men and women in terms of the three aforementioned friendship dimensions as well as happiness. This study further investigated whether or not masculinity ideology functioned as a mediator between the dimensions of friendship and happiness.

Male ($n=140$) and female ($n=194$) students from the University of Cape Town (UCT) completed the Friendship Qualities Questionnaire, which measured their scores on companionship, intimacy, help, positive affect, negative affect, satisfaction with life, and masculinity ideology. Overall happiness scores were calculated using each participant's standardised scores on measures of positive affect, negative affect and satisfaction with life.

T-tests and Mann-Whitney U tests revealed that women scored significantly higher than men on measures of intimacy, help and companionship. Women also scored significantly higher than men on the satisfaction with life measure. Despite this, men and women were not significantly different in terms of their overall happiness scores. Path analysis revealed that masculinity ideology did not function as a mediator between friendship dimensions and happiness for men. However certain path coefficients were found to be significant. For men, the path between intimacy and masculinity ideology was significant as was the path between help and happiness. Additional analyses on women revealed that the paths between companionship and happiness as well as help and happiness were significant.

These findings suggest that masculinity ideology does affect the expression of intimacy between men in their friendships. The findings further suggest that help is one of the

most important dimensions in friendships as it is significantly related to happiness for both genders.

Key words: friendship quality, intimacy, companionship, help, masculinity ideology, happiness, friendship

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

John Donne's famous words 'no man is an island' have had more of an impact on the world than he had intended when he first wrote them. His words serve as a gentle but powerful reminder that people do not live their lives in isolation. Human beings are for the most part connected. Like many creatures, we build relationships with one another and live together in community. Throughout our development, we form personal relationships with people within our networks (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). Rapport is fostered between people in these relationships. In most cases, people feel the need to interact with one another through talk, shared activity, as well as other forms of communication. In other words, we enjoy and spend our time in the company of other people (Cann, 2004). Furthermore, there is a tendency for humans to form partnerships or dyads in both the platonic and romantic sense (Duck & Wright, 1993). This indicates that relationships are paramount to the human experience thus proving Aristotle's famous words to be true: man is by nature a social animal. A shared life with social activities is superior to a life lived alone (Froding & Peterson, 2012).

The relationships that people make differ in type and magnitude. They can be familial, platonic, romantic, and even virtual (Froding & Peterson, 2012). Familial relationships are those between relatives and are usually the first relationships formed by people. Platonic relationships occur between acquaintances, colleagues, and friends. Virtual relationships occur online and through the use of technology thus indicating that some relationships need not be confined to geographical spaces.

One of the most vital interpersonal relationships formed outside of the family unit is friendships. Friendships have been the subject of debate by philosophers, anthropologists and sociologists alike (Amichai-Hamburger, Kingsbury, & Schneider, 2012). The debates range from the importance of the relationship to the dimensions that are found within friendships.

This is evidenced by the vast amount of studies that have attempted to understand friendships in childhood, adolescence and in adulthood (see Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012; Greif, 2009; Poulin & Chan, 2010).

Friendship is a multi-faceted phenomenon that has been of interest to philosophers for some time. It became of vital importance to psychologists around the 20th century (Warris & Rafique, 2009). A reason for the interest in friendships is due to the way in which they are experienced by men and women as well as how they contribute to the psychological well-being of people.

Demir (2010) writes that friendships are important across the lifespan. Shelton, Trail and Bergsieker (2010) support this notion by arguing that people in different age groups enjoy forming close friendships with one another. Certain dimensions of friendship, such as companionship, help and intimacy are vital to the closeness of the friendship as well as the happiness of the individuals who have entered into this relationship (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012; Demir, Ozdemir, & Marum, 2011). It is clear that this relationship is essential to the human experience.

This dissertation aims to investigate three dimensions of friendship (intimacy, companionship, and help) that are vital to the formation and maintenance of friendships. The dissertation will investigate the relationship between these dimensions, happiness and masculinity ideology, a variable that may mediate the relationship between the aforementioned dimensions of friendship and happiness in men's friendships. This has been done to understand how these three dimensions are related to happiness in men's friendships, friendships that are often considered to be less intimate or less close than female friendships.

The dissertation will begin with a definition of friendships and will then discuss friendship throughout the lifespan, focussing on preadolescence, adolescence and adulthood.

Special focus will be given to emerging adulthood, a period of development that is often under-researched in friendship studies. The formation and maintenance of friendships, which includes a discussion on some of the key dimensions that contribute to both these periods within the cycle of friendships, will also be discussed.

Thereafter this chapter will discuss the three dimensions, namely intimacy, companionship and help in more detail. Intimacy will be discussed first as it is considered the most important dimension of adolescent and adult friendships. This is due to its ability to facilitate closeness in friendships. Companionship will follow this as it is considered a dimension of friendship which may serve as an alternative method of communicating closeness particularly for men in their friendships. Lastly, help will be discussed as it is similar to notions of social support, a key provision in friendships.

Subsequently the chapter will discuss masculinity ideology and its relationship to the aforementioned dimensions. The supposed barriers faced by men in their friendships with men will also be debated. Lastly, the chapter will discuss happiness and its relationship to masculinity ideology and the friendship qualities under investigation. This will be followed by a discussion of the aims and hypotheses that investigated in this study.

Defining Friendship

Despite the above comments on friendship, researchers have argued that friendship is a difficult relationship to define (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012; Rybach & McAndrew, 2006). Buhrmester (1990) suggests that friendships are a collaboration that involves self-disclosure, mutual activities and feelings of satisfaction. Hays (1988, p. 395) referred to friendships as voluntary relationships that “involved varying degrees of companionship, intimacy, mutual assistance and affection.” Amichai-Hamburger et al. (2012) maintain that friendships are dyadic in nature. They argue that friendships are characterised by a variety of

dimensions or features. Despite these explanations, “no single set of attributes seems to adequately capture the spirit of the many forms that friendship can take” (Rybak & McAndrew, 2006, p. 147). One might argue that it is the qualitative nature (i.e. the various features) of this relationship that makes a definition for friendship so elusive (Demir & Orthel, 2011). A broadly accepted definition of friendship does not exist. Despite this, the majority of researchers have come up with some suitable explanations of this phenomenon, most of which contain similar elements.

Firstly, friendships are significant, durable yet transient relationships (Sharbany, Gershoni, & Hofman, 1981). In other words, friendships are voluntary relationships that are either stable or short-lived throughout certain periods of development (Barry, Madsen, Nelson, Carroll, & Badger, 2009). This is opposed to bonds between family members which tend to be involuntary and long-standing. The transient nature of the relationship is seen in the superficial, ephemeral bonds of pre-schoolers (Armichai-Hamburger et al., 2012) while durable friendships are seen in early and late adulthood (Greif, 2009; McEwan & Guerrero, 2010).

Secondly, friendships are relationships that are essential to development (Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1996; Hays, 1985). Roy, Benenson and Lilly (2000) note that as children develop their interaction with family decreases. Placing children in schools is one of the chief reasons for this. Peers and friends become pivotal to the development of boys and girls from childhood into adulthood. With more independence, boys and girls are able to choose who they want to interact with. Berndt (2002) comments that friendships enhance the emotional and psychosocial development of adolescents regardless of the characteristics a friend possesses. This indicates that one benefits from having a friend or friends even if the friend is dissimilar to you. Friendships allow for a space wherein social skills required in

relationships can be developed (Glick & Rose, 2011). These skills affect both the platonic and romantic relationships experienced by people in their lives. Thus friendships are an important relationship for children, adolescents and even adults.

Thirdly, friendship is considered to be a dyadic, reciprocal, relationship (Bukowski et al., 1996; Sharabany et al., 1981). Buhrmester (1990) and Hays (1985) indicate that friendships are an interdependent collaboration thus indicating that it requires two people who cooperate to make the relationship work. This definition is supported by the claim that “friendship is a dyadic, co-constructed phenomenon” (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012, p.2). These three points indicate that friendships are durable, significant, mutual attachments that are both specific and affectionate (Bukowski et al., 1996).

Lastly, friendships are loaded with certain expectations and provisions (Bukowski et al., 1996; Sharabany et al., 1981). Demir, Ozen, Dogen, Bilyk, and Tyrell (2011) indicate that certain provisions are sought in this interdependent relationship. When satisfied, these provisions contribute to psychological well-being and happiness (Demir, 2010; Demir & Ozdemir, 2010). Some of these provisions include, among others, reciprocity, intimacy, trust, counsel, help, closeness, and companionship (Armichai-Hamburger et al., 2012; Hall, 2012, Newcomb & Brady, 1982; Pauriyal, Sharma, & Gulatti, 2011).

From these four points, one can argue that friendships contain cognitive, behavioural, social and emotional benefits based on the many features or dimensions of this dyadic relationship (Bell, 1981). They also contain a multitude of provisions. This list of provisions is non-exhaustive and does not sufficiently embody the spirit of the various forms that friendships take (Rybak & McAndrew, 2006). What is clear from all three points is that the relationship is reciprocal and, if certain provisions are present, beneficial to those engaged in the friendship. They are, in essence, affective bonds (Poulin & Chan, 2010).

Friendships are an important element of the human experience (Demir & Orthel, 2011). They contribute to psychological health as well as psychological development of men and women throughout the lifespan (Weiner & Hannum, 2013). For the sake of this study, friendships are reciprocal relationships where certain needs are met. More specifically, friendship will be defined as a voluntary, co-constructed, mutually beneficial phenomenon characterised by the presence of certain dimensions and provisions.

Friendship throughout the Lifespan

As previously noted, friendship is a mutual relationship which contain certain dimensions such as help, intimacy and companionship. These components, when present, positively contribute to those involved in the friendship. This relationship has been studied extensively by researchers for many years. One important aspect of friendship is its development over the different stages of development (Fox, Gibbs, & Auerbach, 1985). Friendship plays a different role in a person's life from preadolescence (when friendship is said to begin) until late adulthood. The following section of this paper will look at friendships in preadolescence, adolescence, and adulthood and will then discuss research in a period now known as 'emerging adulthood.' This section has been included as the study primarily focusses on university students who fit the description of this often understudied developmental stage as far as friendship was concerned.

Preadolescence. In the preadolescence stage of development, it is found that the focus of one's attachment relationships shifts from siblings and parents to that of peers, particularly due to the school environment (Sullivan, 1953). The relationships made in this context are thus voluntary in nature (Rancourt, Conway, Burk, & Prinstein, 2013). Studies indicate that same-sex friendships are the norm in this age thus children prefer to spend time with friends within their own gender (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Poulin & Chan, 2010;

Roy, Benenson, & Lilly, 2000). Homophily (similarity) and peer socialisation are reasons given for this phenomenon, suggesting that gender norms play a role in the formation of friendships during preadolescence (Rancourt et al., 2013). At this age, companionship is a key variable in terms of friendships whereby children enjoy spending time engaging in shared activities with their friends within their friendship groups (Rancourt et al., 2013). Poulin and Chan (2010) add that helping one another is another key factor in preadolescent friendships. This indicates that friendships during this stage are marked by shared activities and assistance.

Despite this, the bulk of preadolescent children (mostly toddlers) depend on their parents, teachers and grandparents for sources of support and attachment (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985, 1992). These friendships are relatively unstable given the fact that autonomy during this stage of development is limited (i.e. parents play a direct role in ensuring the stability of the friendships). As children grow, their reliance on familial sources of companionship lessens and their friendship networks thus increase (Poulin & Chan, 2010).

Gender differences are also apparent in same-sex preadolescent friendships. A study conducted by Foot, Chapman, and Smith (1977) indicates that girls' friendships are intensive whilst boys' friendships are extensive. In other words, girls prefer one close friend whilst boys prefer to interact in groups of friends. Similarly, Wright (1982) posited that girls prefer face-to-face friendships whereas boys prefer side-by-side friendships. Face-to-face friendships are person oriented and are high in emotional support and confiding while side-by-side friendships are high in commonality (shared activities and experiences). These gender differences are pronounced when researching the reaction of friends to newcomers in their group. All in all, preadolescent friendships are characterised by intensive time spent with a

friend, engaging in shared in activities with them and helping one another where necessary (Rancourt et al., 2013).

Adolescence. In adolescence friendships change rather significantly.

Dominated by periods of intensive change and exploration, adolescence is a stage of development where the reliance on friends is heightened. This is met with a desire for more stability within the lives and friendships of adolescents (Granic & Hollerstein, 2006).

Sullivan (1953) proposed that during adolescence, children form intimate collaborative relationships with peers. This is in order to satisfy certain socio-emotional needs such as self-esteem, support and reciprocity (Rancourt et al., 2013). Given the turbulent nature of adolescence, where body changes and explorations of sexuality are prevalent, Buhrmester (1990) suggests that adolescents shift their reliance onto friends rather than parents or other sources of support. This is in attempt to establish autonomy from their caregivers (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). They thus form deeper, more mature connections with their friends (Poulin & Chan, 2010).

Berndt (2002) argues that loyalty and self-disclosure become vital during adolescence. It is clear that within this stage of development, friendships shift focus in terms of the provisions that peers expect from their friends. Using self-report data, a study conducted by Waldrip, Malcolm, and Jensen-Campbell (2008) indicated that adolescent friendships may buffer against the stressors of adolescence, and protect against adjustment issues. They found that the more supportive the friendship is, the better the individuals within the friendship are able to adjust. Poulin and Chan (2010) argue that adolescents require close, intimate friendships where they can express their concerns about the various issues that they face. Problem-solving and self-disclosure become paramount during this developmental stage. Research has shown that intimacy becomes a key variable in adolescent friendships,

especially since there is a shift from same-sex to cross-sex friendships during this time (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Fuhrman, Flannagan, & Matamoros, 2009). It is important to note that same-sex friendships still remain prevalent.

Various levels of friendship are experienced by individuals in this developmental stage (Pittman & Richmond, 2008; Sharabany, Gershoni, & Hofman, 1981). These include ego friendship networks, friendship cliques and best friendships (Poulin & Chan, 2010). Ego friendship networks refer to a group of friends a person nominates as their groups of friends. They include best friends and secondary friendships. Friendships cliques are groups of friends (3 to 9) that spend an extensive amount of time with one another. Best friendships refer to the person and his/her best friend. These friendships are the most studied in the literature (Poulin & Chan, 2010). These different levels of friendship are affected by the different dimensions (e.g. reciprocity, intimacy, support, loyalty) sought within these friendships. These dimensions affect the depth, length and maintenance of this dyadic relationship during adolescence and even into adulthood (Berndt, 2002; Konstan, 1997; West, Lewis, & Currie, 2009).

Adulthood. According to Bagwell et al. (2005), adult studies on friendships focus on specific features of friendship, namely social support, attraction, health and similarity. The authors mention that solidarity is a term adults tend to use when describing their friendship in other studies. Greif (2009, p. 619) argues that friendships in late adulthood are “maintained out of desire rather than out of obligation.” This indicates that friendships are still important to men and women in their later years. In most instances, friendship studies pertaining to adults focus on psychological well-being and adjustment. For example, Thomas (2010) examined whether or not perceived or actual support has implications for well-being, stress and depression for older adults. It was found that providing support (i.e. altruism) was

associated with greater longevity and well-being for older adults.

As it stands, the benefits of friendships among children, adolescents and older adults have been well documented in the psychological sphere (Swenson, Nordstrom, & Hiester, 2008). The majority of friendship studies focus on adults in their later years indicating a gap between the developmental stages of late adolescence and early adulthood (Bagwell et al., 2005; McEwan & Guerrero, 2010; Swenson et al., 2008). The stage that, up until recently, had not been well-documented in terms of friendships is a stage known as emerging adulthood, a crucial stage in human development. Swenson et al. (2008) once argued that “literature on the benefits or role of friends during emerging adulthood is not as extensive (p. 551).” However, there are some studies that have examined friendships during this stage of development.

Emerging adulthood. Arnett (2000) describes the stage of emerging adulthood as the stage of the ‘roleless role.’ This period begins during the late teens and goes into the twenties. It is termed the age of the ‘roleless role’ because young adults are seen to have left the dependence of adolescence but do not have the enduring role characteristics that are seen in adulthood. Emerging adulthood is “distinguished by relative independence from social roles and from normative expectations” (Arnett, 2000, p. 469). This stage of development only occurs in industrialised societies where young adults are given the opportunity to engage in drawn out independent role exploration as well as risk behaviours. Arnett (2000) attests that attaining self-sufficiency is vital to this stage of development. Young adults seek to be responsible for their own wellbeing, to be financially independent and to make decisions independent of caregivers or other sources of support. The key characteristic of this stage of development is identity exploration. The key areas of exploration are love, work and worldviews. These explorations result in both pleasurable and unpleasant consequences.

Young adults deal with these explorations while dealing with other developmental demands such as managing in romantic relationships and progressively taking on more adult roles in society (Barry, Madsen, Nelson, Carroll, & Badger, 2009). This is why Arnett (2000) argued that the late teens and early twenties are “the most *volitional* years of life” (p. 469).

What is clear is that during this developmental stage, young adults require friendships and relationships that are enduring and close so that their identity explorations can be supported if need be (Swenson et al., 2008). One of the main reasons for this is that “peers often take over as primary attachment figures and play a role in need fulfilment” (Swenson et al., 2008, p. 551). If these friendships are stable, the individuals within the friendships are able to find and be themselves in a supportive space. This is also evidenced by Erikson’s theory of social development that places the development of close relationships as a primary developmental task of individuals in their early twenties (Erikson, 1963).

All in all, deep, meaningful friendships help those in the emerging adulthood stage with the various problems that life presents especially during university years. Evidence for this has been presented by McEwan and Guerrero (2010) who argued that young adult friendships (between the ages of 18 and 25) are considered to be more intense, satisfying and time consuming than those of other developmental stages. They argue that in these friendships, interpersonal needs are fulfilled, interpersonal rewards are accessed and one’s identity is shaped. The transition to university affects these changes as one has to adjust to the autonomous lifestyle that college usually encompasses. This is a reason for taking a closer look at friendships at this stage of development. It is both psychologically interesting and significant.

Formation of Friendships

The way in which the formation of friendships is understood throughout the lifespan has changed over the years. These changes have stemmed from the fact that friendships are no longer bound by context or environment due to technological advancements, online social networking and communication. Despite this, there are two key concepts that affect the formation of friendships: homophily and propinquity.

Homophily suggests that people tend to bond with those that are similar to them (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012). Similarity is a powerful force that not only fuels the formation of friendships but the maintenance or retention of those friendships (Noel & Nyhan, 2011). Whether the similarity is in appearance, interests, classrooms, behaviours or values, it is a powerful binding agent that helps friendships form. One not only chooses friends who are similar to oneself, one also exhibits similar behaviours to his or her friend in order for the friendship to be more congruent (Noel & Nyhan, 2011).

The second concept that influences the formation of friendships is propinquity. Propinquity or 'nearness' refers to both physical proximity as well as a feeling of similarity that attracts individuals to one another (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012). Propinquity is related to proximity and it asserts that people make friends with people in the same area as them (McEwan & Guerrero, 2010). An example of this is a person who makes friends with those in his or her same team, residence, or classes. This is linked to the many understandings of friendship which suggest that the relationship is characterised by closeness, both in terms of depth and proximity.

While propinquity and homophily govern the formation of friendships, recent research suggests that online communication also affects the formation of friendships. Online social networking uses technology to help people form friendships when proximity becomes

an issue. The internet has played a vital role in this form of communication (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012; Froding & Peterson, 2012; McEwan & Guerrero, 2010). These online interactions provide a relatively safe, controllable environment for people to self-disclose and interact with one another (Shepherd & Edelman, 2005; Valkenburg & Peter, 2009). According to the rich-get-richer hypothesis of friendship formation, introverts with low self-esteem can easily make friends online thus indicating the importance of online communication on the formation of friendships (Peter, Valkenburg, & Schouten, 2005). Similarly, extroverts are able to make friends online as easily as they do offline. Online friendships have the potential to translate to partial or complete offline friendships (van Zalk, van Zalk, Kerr, & Stattin, 2013). The online world has thus changed the way in which friendships form and how friendships are understood by researchers.

The three concepts discussed above explain the formation of friendships based on proximity and similarity but they do not account for why people form friendships in the first place. The social provisions theory outlined by Robert Weiss (1974) is a conceptual framework that explains this phenomenon. Weiss posited that people seek specific provisions in their relationships. These provisions are sought from different people depending on the nature of the relationship (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Weiss (1974) outlined six basic provisions sought by people: attachment (intimate disclosure), reliable alliance (a lasting bond), enhancement of worth (affirmation), social integration (companionship and shared experiences), guidance (instrumental aid and advice) and the opportunity for nurturance (caring for one another). In terms of this theoretical perspective, friendships are a social relationship that provides certain social needs depending on the developmental stage of the individual (Fehr, 2008; Sullivan, 1953). Hall (2010) elaborates on this theoretical framework by referring to needs as unwritten expectations that are crucial to the course of a friendship.

These needs and expectations drive people to seek out those who can satisfy these needs. In the beginning of one's development, relatives, particularly parents and siblings provide these provisions but as one ages, certain needs that families usually cannot provide are sought. This is compounded by the fact that one does not spend much time with family in certain environments, for example school or university (Barry et al., 2009). Friends thus provide valuable resources to one another and try to reduce any pressures that the other faces (McEwan & Guerrero, 2010). In addition, the provisions or dimensions sought by people in their friendships are also vital to the maintenance of this platonic relationship.

Maintenance of Friendships

The formation of friendships is one aspect of the friendship cycle. Maintaining friendships as the months and years pass by becomes paramount, given the relatively fragile, ephemeral nature of friendships (Amichai et al., 2012; Ledbetter, 2010). Friendship stability is particularly important to psychosocial adjustment (Poulin & Chan, 2010). Keeping friendships alive as time progresses proves to be a challenge when propinquity is compromised. This is especially so during preadolescence when children enter new schools and late adolescence when students enter the university context (Poulin & Chan, 2010). This suggests that contextual factors play a role in the stability of friendships. When a person enters the university context and other environments, maintaining a close proximity with a friend from school becomes difficult. In most cases, university students form new friendships. These friendships can vary along racial, cultural, gender and age lines (Poulin & Chan, 2010). In other words, one has the capacity to make friends with those who are dissimilar to them in terms of culture, race, gender and age. Furthermore, students' endeavours usually shift towards a romantic partner as well as to their studies (Arnett, 2000; Barry et al., 2009). Research has shown that friendships of a certain quality and quantity are

positively linked to academic and psychological adjustment during university (McEwan & Guerrero, 2010). It is argued that several provisions or dimensions contribute to the maintenance of these friendships.

The maintenance of friendships, particularly in the 21st century, is dependent upon a number of online and offline provisions. Both mediums are important to friendship maintenance despite the suggestion that offline interactions are replacing offline, face to face interactions of friends (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012). This suggestion is based on the assertion that virtual friendships are not as genuine, valuable, and enriching as offline friendships (Froding & Peterson, 2012). In contrast to this, van Zalk et al. (2013) posit that adolescents have offline-exclusive friendships, online friendships as well as conjoint (offline and offline) friendships. This suggests that different degrees of friendship occur both offline and online.

The provisions sought in the formation of friendships are similar to those that are needed to maintain the friendships. As previously mentioned, companionship is the most commonly found variable that is present in preadolescent and adolescent friendships. Although it lessens throughout adolescence it is still one of the key variables necessary for a quality friendship (Froding & Peterson, 2012). Online companionship is said to reduce loneliness and anxiety for those with low self-esteem (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012). It results in the experience of emotional support which many not easily be received offline by these individuals.

Other key provisions which contribute the maintenance and thus stability of friendships include: self-disclosure; solidarity; reciprocity; self-validation; assistance; trust, emotional security; mutuality; shared activities; exclusivity; and commonality (Bagwell et al., 2005; Buhrmester, 1990; Fuhrman, Flannagan, & Matamoros, 2009; Hall, 2012; Poulin &

Chan, 2010; Sharabany & Wiseman, 1993; Sullivan, 1953). These provisions are positive provisions and result in high quality friendships (Poulin & Chan, 2010). Whether provided offline or online, each provision contributes to the maintenance of the friendship as well as the intensification of the friendship. Intimacy is another important provision sought in adolescence and in emerging adulthood. It is widely recognised as the core feature of friendship by psychologists and philosophers and has dominated psychological discourse for some time (Armichai- Hamburger et al., 2012). Along with companionship and help (which encompasses tangible support, emotional support and guidance), intimacy helps to ensure that friendships among university students remain close and stable.

The first section of this literature review has defined friendship using a number of characteristics that have been congruent throughout many conceptions of friendships in the extant literature. Firstly, friendships are reciprocal and relatively durable relationships that take place both online and offline. Secondly, friendships are important throughout the lifespan and involve various expectations and provisions. Lastly, these expectations and provisions contribute to the formation, maintenance, strength and growth of the friendship.

Although several dimensions of friendship are vital to the maintenance of friendship throughout the lifespan, three in particular stand out. The first is intimacy which involves being vulnerable and sharing secrets with a friend. The second is companionship, the sharing of activities and experiences. The last dimension is help which involves supporting a friend through the provision of instrumental and/or emotional assistance. Each of these will be discussed subsequently. Additionally, I will discuss the importance of these dimensions in relation to masculinity ideology and happiness within same-sex friendships.

Intimacy

Despite being an important element of relationships, intimacy has often caused problems in psychology based on its definition. It is a concept that has been understood differently by various researchers. Intimacy has been described as a fuzzy, ill-defined dimension of friendship (Kaplan, 2007). This has hampered research. Additionally, the various definitions of intimacy have led to certain assumptions as to how relationships, platonic or otherwise, operate. This is especially so where same-sex and cross-sex friendships are concerned. In this section, I will discuss these definitions of intimacy and the implications they have for studies of same-sex male friendships.

Studies over time have pointed towards intimacy as being one of the fundamental features of close friendships and relationships (Garfield, 2010; Johnson et al., 2007; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958; Reisman, 1990). Researchers have found that intimacy is an expected and valued aspect of friendships, particularly in adolescence and adulthood (Fehr, 2004; Parks & Floyd, 1996). Intimacy has also been linked to pro-social behaviour, enhanced self-worth and identity formation (Bauminger, Finzi-Dottan, Chason, & Har-Even, 2008). These attributes are positive outcomes of intimate friendships and result in, and are associated with, happiness and psychological wellness (Demir, Ozen, Dogen, Bilyk, & Tyrell, 2011; Gore, Cross, & Morris, 2006). As a result, it is arguable that intimacy is viewed as the most important dimension of close friendships (Shelton, Trail, West, & Bergsieker, 2010). The way intimacy has been described is problematic. Two models of defining intimacy dominate the extant literature. These models are “intimacy as closeness” and the more dominant “intimacy as self-disclosure.” These two models will be discussed subsequently.

Intimacy as closeness. Intimacy has often been mistaken for the term closeness when described or measured by researchers. This is one of the biggest issues regarding the study of intimacy in psychology. Stafford (2005) argues that the term closeness is “poorly conceived, seldom agreed on, and variously operationalized” (p. 12). Rybak and McAndrew (2006, p.148) argue that “the hazy use of terms such as closeness and intimacy” contribute to interchangeable use of both terms. Each acts as a stand-in for the other. Wood and Inman (1993) argue that closeness is a cherished, interdependent relationship between people. Closeness has often been described as “the extent to which an individual within a relationship exhibits interdependence, liking, and mutual knowledge of the other individual” (Bowman, 2008, p. 319). In other words, closeness incorporates aspects of fondness and sharing. Both intimacy and closeness are marked by some form of sharing with intimacy being linked to emotional sharing.

Johnson, Haigh, Craig and Becker (2009) studied relational closeness in terms of long-distant and geographically close friendships. They defined closeness based on the work of Parks and Floyd (1996). In Parks and Floyd’s (1996) study, closeness was found to be a multifaceted concept which incorporated support, self-disclosure and shared interests. Closeness was also characterised by a person explicitly expressing the value of the relationship. Rybach and McAndrew (2006) commented that it was a broad term that could be applied to a variety of relationships. In contrast, intimacy was found to have a romantic or sexual dimension to some of the participants (Parks & Floyd, 1996). Other participants argued that intimate relationships were a more intense form of close relationships. Buhrmester (1990) contended that intimate friendships “involve engaging in mutual activities, self-disclosure, and reciprocal feelings of satisfaction with the relationship” (p. 1101). This is similar to the definition of closeness presented above. This definition

incorporates many different aspects of friendships which make friendships close. From the above explanations, it is quite clear that there are many issues with both terms in the literature. These issues have led to various explanations of intimacy.

Reisman's (1990) explanation of intimacy states that intimacy can be explained as feelings of fondness or closeness. The main issue with using intimacy as a replacement for closeness is that intimacy has often been defined along the lines of self-disclosure, one aspect of friendship. This has implications for the present study, because it reflects possible gender differences on how intimacy is displayed by men and women. As I hope to convey in the following paragraphs, intimacy and closeness are not as interchangeable as they have been in past research. If anything, intimacy is more similar to the term self-disclosure than it is to closeness.

Intimacy as self-disclosure. Linking self-disclosure with intimacy is not uncommon in psychological research. Bowman (2008) defined self-disclosure as “open sharing of information about the self” (p. 316). Self-disclosure is a transaction built on the foundations of reciprocity. It is the mutual sharing of personal emotions and thoughts (Bowman, 2008; Cozby, 1973; Reisman, 1990). It is considered a risk-taking exercise as one verbally exposes intimate details about oneself to another person in an open manner. An expectation of self-disclosure is that a person receives some kind of support from the person they disclose their personal thoughts and feelings to (Shelton et al., 2010). This allows for a close bond between friends. Fehr (2004) notes that self-disclosure is critical to the development of intimacy. Bauminger et al. (2008) support this notion with their studies of adolescent friendships. They hypothesised that increased self-disclosure results in increased intimacy in friendships. These findings are based on the work of Sullivan (1953) which regarded intimacy as fundamental to development. Self-disclosure has thus been used as a proxy for intimacy in many studies.

Shelton et al. (2010) found that self-disclosure is important to close friendships and indicated that self-disclosure aids the creation and maintenance of these friendships.

Self-disclosure is thus a vital component of friendships and is, perhaps regrettably, a decent stand-in term for intimacy. However, given the intimacy as closeness perspective, it is clear that intimacy can either be seen as a proxy of closeness or self-disclosure. It should not be a proxy for both as it muddies the meaning of closeness in both men's and women's friendships. Closeness cannot refer only to emotional sharing as there are other aspects of friendship (such as shared activities and support) which also contribute to friendships being close. What these two perspectives indicate is that intimacy is an important dimension in friendships and other relationships. Because of the rather strong similarity between intimacy and self-disclosure, this dissertation shall henceforth define intimacy through the lens of self-disclosure.

Defining intimacy. Similarly to self-disclosure, intimacy is a reciprocal exercise. Intimacy is described as “an interpersonal process that involves communication of personal feelings and information to another person who responds warmly and sympathetically” (Reis & Shaver, 1988, p. 375). This definition bears resemblance to that of self-disclosure. Both require a person to trust the friend that they are disclosing the information to. This trust indicates liking and fondness which results in the strengthening of that relationship (Gore, Cross, & Morris, 2006). The person receiving this knowledge reciprocates by being supportive and is thus able to share their personal lives with that initial person. Simply put, intimacy is the mutual sharing of thoughts and feelings between friends resulting in a close bond between them. Most importantly, intimacy involves personal and emotional confessions which allow for an emotional bond between friends (Chu, 2005; Gore et al., 2006). This two-way exchange is considered paramount during adolescence and young adulthood (Bauminger

et al., 2008; Johnson et al., 2007). The disclosure of this personal information is considered to indicate respect within a friendship. It also indicates a commitment to increasing the intimacy within that relationship (Gore et al., 2006).

Another aspect of intimacy is that it includes mutual demonstrable affection which is characterised by a communicated understanding of, respect for, and a desire to help, another person (Garfield, 2010; Lewis, 1978; Reisman, 1990). This definition suggests that intimacy comprises of many different behaviours, some of which are similar to the concept of closeness. However the most prominent definition in psychological research literature suggests that intimacy involves the disclosure of problems, feelings or concerns (Reisman, 1990). The level of intimacy in a relationship is important in that relationship being termed a friendship thus indicating the importance of intimacy in friendship studies (Rybak & McAndrew, 2006).

Intimacy is important for both interpersonal and intrapersonal growth due to the openness and trust it yields (Bauminger et al., 2008). If a person's friendship contains intimacy, it means that the person can go to a friend and disclose information to them in a space that is open, constructive, and accepting. This indicates that intimacy and self-disclosure are the same concept, if not strikingly similar. Bowman (2008) argues that some researchers consider intimacy to be, to some extent, "the act of self-disclosing" (p. 316). Others purport that self-disclosure leads to intimacy which results in closeness in friendships (Buhrmester, 1990). These two arguments suggest that that intimacy is not an interchangeable term for closeness. It is rather a dimension that can lead to and extend closeness in a friendship.

Because of the similarity between intimacy and self-disclosure, it is arguable that they are the same concept. Both intimacy and self-disclosure are reciprocal exercises and involve

the unveiling of sensitive information to another person. It is thus fair to say that self-disclosure is both a stand-in term for intimacy and also the *way* to be intimate. In other words if a person is intimate with another person, then that person is engaging in self-disclosure. This has over time posed many issues for research into the topic of intimacy, especially where gender differences are concerned. This has had a significant effect on how men's relational styles have been viewed by psychologists, researchers and wider society.

Gender differences in intimacy. From older studies by Jourard and Lasakow (1958) to more recent studies (Hall, 2010), it has been noted that women self-disclose more readily than men and thus their same-sex friendships are considered to be more intimate than those of men. Research using self-disclosure and closeness as proxies for intimacy found that women were more intimate than men (Dindia & Allen, 1992; Warris & Rafique, 2009). Augmenting this assumption are the studies which show that women score higher on empathy and self-disclosure in many studies (Vigil, 2007). Empirical evidence suggests that women's friendships are not only higher in intimacy but are of a higher quality when compared to the friendships of men (Demir & Orthel, 2011). In other words, by expressing more intimacy in their friendships, women's friendships are seen to be better and more valuable than men's friendships. This finding is relatively long-standing and is seen as the norm within society (Cozby, 1974; Fehr, 2004). The above paragraphs on the definitional aspects of intimacy indicate that by defining intimacy as self-disclosure or as closeness, gender differences are bound to emerge. As a consequence of looking at friendships this way, studies will undoubtedly find that women are more intimate than men. This has resulted in a male deficit model for understanding intimacy in male friendships.

Male deficit model in men's friendships. Research has yielded the idea that men's friendships are inferior since men are supposedly deficient in intimacy (Wood & Inman,

1993). This long-standing view has persisted despite what Duck and Wright (1993) have described as a “limited view of intimacy and caring” (p. 725). Furthermore, the confusion of the terms intimacy and closeness may also contribute to this deficit model of intimacy.

According to researchers, men do not reap the ‘therapeutic’ benefits of self-disclosure in their male friendships (Elkins & Peterson, 1993; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958; Warris & Rafique, 2009), and are considered stressed and at risk of psychological stressors such as depression (Norman, 2011; Spencer, 2007). These findings reinforce the idea that men are disadvantaged due to the emotional deficits in their friendships (Greif, 2006). These findings support the notion that intimacy is the most important dimension in adolescent and young adult friendships (Fehr, 2004; Poulin & Chan, 2010; Swenson et al., 2008).

Muddying this issue further are studies indicating that psychological well-being is hampered by restricted emotional self-disclosure (Greif, 2006; Spencer, 2007). Greif (2006) questions this notion by arguing that men’s friendships are different. However, most studies argue that men are hampered by gender norms regarding self-disclosure which may explain why they score lower than women on measures of intimacy. After all, studies show that women are said to have a greater ability to self-disclose (Elkins & Peterson, 1993; Hacker, 1981).

Male friendships are seen as less intimate than same-sex female friendships (Bank & Hansford, 2000; Roy, Benenson, & Lily, 2000). The persistence of this finding has led to some studies attempting to extend emotional and verbal intimacy among men (Garfield, 2010; Lewis, 1978). This is interesting as self-disclosure is in contrast to male norms of relating to one another (Migliaccio, 2009; Spencer, 2007; Wood & Inman, 1993). It is clear that feminine style of friendship that incorporates intimacy and self-disclosure is favoured in psychological research (Wood & Inman, 1993).

Alternative paths to intimacy. Researchers have also argued that there are other ways in which intimacy can be expressed and that this might be related to gender differences. Fehr's (2004) research proposed and described three main perspectives on gender differences in intimacy in same-sex friendships that exist in research. In the first perspective, both men and women agree that intimacy is viewed through the lens of self-disclosure. Despite this, men prefer to show intimacy through shared activities. This perspective, whilst acknowledging that men chose to show intimacy through other means, reinforces the male deficit model of intimacy which suggests that friendships between women are more intimate (Wood & Inman, 1993). Greif (2006) and Armengol-Carrera (2009) suggest that men are searching for emotionally strong attachments between themselves. This adds to the evidence that men desire self-disclosure, thus intimacy, in their friendships. The second perspective offers a rather attractive explanation for gender differences in intimacy for men. It states that men's and women's friendships are equally intimate and are of equal importance. This perspective indicates that men achieve intimacy (here taking the meaning of closeness) via activities rather than self-disclosure. The converse is true for women. The last perspective reasons that self-disclosure is the only way women achieve intimacy whilst men can achieve intimacy either by shared activities or self-disclosure (Fehr, 2004). In the latter perspective, male and female paths to intimacy are seen as equal.

Despite the last two perspectives proposed by Fehr (2004), the first perspective has dominated psychological literature. It has largely been based on the male deficit model of intimacy in men's friendship which suggests that men and women agree that self-disclosure is the path to intimacy in their friendships. Why do men do not follow this path? Perhaps it is the case that intimacy has been used as a stand-in for closeness. This would explain why

researchers and men feel that there are other ways to communicate closeness in friendship (Wood & Inman, 1993; Patrick & Beckenbach, 2009).

Issues with intimacy. There are numerous studies on intimacy in same-sex friendships from childhood into adulthood. An important issue affecting the current conception of intimacy in same-sex male friendships is the feminisation of intimacy. This speaks to the preconceived and definitional assumptions that influenced past studies. Wood and Inman (1993) argue the following points.

Firstly, they argue that explanations of intimacy are not gender neutral and all-encompassing. Evidence for this is seen in the findings of Bowman (2008) and Hacker (1981). Both authors indicate that self-disclosure may not always be beneficial and may make relations uncomfortable, particularly for men. This is due to the vulnerability with which self-disclosure is bound, which is contrary to traditional male gender norms (Migliaccio, 2009). Thus if intimacy is seen as a dimension of friendship which appears as or through self-disclosure, men will automatically be disadvantaged based on their gender norms.

Secondly, they argue that men's explanations of intimacy are side-lined and devalued. One study found that doing activities for a friend or even a loved one was a way for men to communicate affection, closeness and intimacy (Patrick & Beckenbach, 2009). These shared activities and experiences are similar to Fehr's (2004) work which suggested that men communicate intimacy through commonality. In other words, they share parts of their lives with one another (Kaplan, 2007). That self-disclosure and intimacy are seen as paramount to close friendships speaks to the discounting of non-feminine expressions of displaying concern, love and friendship (Duck & Wright, 1993; Migliaccio, 2009; Wood & Inman, 1993). Irrespective of this finding, self-disclosure dominates the literature on this vital friendship dimension.

Lastly, they argue that female norms of relating are legitimised and perpetuated by society, thus leading to the findings that same-sex male friendships lack intimacy. Intimacy has been prized over other dimensions of friendship by researchers due to its often-reported psychological benefits (Shelton et al., 2010). This has added to the legitimisation of female norms as self-disclosure is considered a vital component of well-being in friendships. In contrast, studies have shown that self-disclosure and emotional expressiveness are ways to express intimacy that are seen as feminine by men (Migliaccio, 2009; Spencer, 2007; White & Peretz, 2010). This presents an interesting conundrum for men. On one hand, intimacy and self-disclosure are vital components of friendship that some men seek. On the other hand, men tend to avoid self-disclosure due to an array of factors regarding gender norms. Not all male adolescent and adult friendships will have intimacy in abundance and this should not be a reason to problematize those relationships.

Perhaps a more pressing issue is the unfortunate substitution of the word intimacy with closeness. By doing so, men's friendships are seen as less close, less valuable and more problematic than women's friendship simply because some men avoid self-disclosure (Migliaccio, 2009). Simply put, avoiding self-disclosure results in avoidance of emotional expressiveness or intimacy which thus leads to the assumption that certain friendships are not close and therefore inferior. This logic is flawed since intimacy (here including the act of self-disclosure) and closeness are not interchangeable terms despite what past literature has suggested. Intimacy is one quality or dimension of friendship that helps to bring friends closer together. There are other dimensions which contribute to closeness in friendships. Furthermore, self-disclosure may not be the way to achieve close friendships for men (Fehr, 2004). One may even argue that self-disclosure is not the *preferred* way of relating in their friendships. This is a key feature that should be taken into account when understanding men's

friendships.

In one study, Reisman (1990) administered a Conversation Topics Questionnaire to men and women in a university in Hungary and found that gender played a role in conversation topics. He further found that men do express and discuss their concerns from time to time, which is in contrast to the finding that they are not intimate. Whilst this indicates that self-disclosure is present in male friendships, it also suggests that it is not as important as it is in female friendships. This stresses the importance of acknowledging men's relational styles instead of undervaluing them.

Beyond intimacy. It is argued in this dissertation that closeness in male friendship cannot be understood solely through the dimension of self-disclosure. Studies have shown that men communicate closeness through shared activities, shared experiences or instrumental support (Fehr, 2004; Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010; Patrick & Beckenbach, 2009). Care-taking, loyalty and action-based empathy are undervalued qualities men are said to possess in their relationships (Demir & Orthel, 2011; Hammer & Good, 2010). Additionally, other friendship qualities are also valued by men in their friendships. Help (through instrumental and emotional support) is another quality of friendship in adolescence and adulthood (Zimmerman, 2004). Research conducted in the tradition of "intimacy as self-disclosure" as well as "intimacy as closeness" paradigms may overlook these findings. It is clear that men have other ways of being close in their same-sex friendships.

Duck and Wright (1993) aptly argue that "explicit displays of affection and personal disclosure have been over-inclusively (mis)interpreted as closeness rather than as one way of expressing it" (p. 725). This is the crucial to the study of men's friendships. It suggests that men's ways of communicating closeness or care should not be discouraged, diminished or pathologised by those working within a feminine paradigm of thinking about intimacy

(Migliaccio, 2009; Wood & Inman, 1993). It is thus unfortunate that these misinterpretations have led to models and operational definitions of intimacy that are one-dimensional. This in turn has resulted in certain findings where gender differences are concerned.

It is important to note that while intimacy remains a pivotal dimension of relationships, there are other dimensions that are involved in creating and maintaining close friendships. Companionship is an example of these dimensions and plays an important role in the friendships of men.

Companionship

Cann (2004) argues that people spend their lives in the company of others. They provide people with positive and negative experiences and influence who they become in the future. Through common activities and spending time with different people, one is able to discern those who will make life easier to live (Cann, 2004; Sharabany & Wiseman, 1993). Men seem to favour commonality and instrumentality in their interactions (Migliaccio, 2009). These interactions result in what Swain (1989) aptly termed as ‘closeness in the doing.’ In other words, men communicate closeness through shared activities as well as shared experiences (Bank & Hansford, 2000; Bowman, 2008; Chu, 2005; Hall, 2010; Migliaccio, 2009; Wright, 1982). These experiences usually include the achievement of a mutual goal (for example, winning a tournament). These activities and experiences are a critical component in the dimension of friendship known as companionship.

Defining companionship. If one measures the joy and excitement that a person experiences when engaging in activities with a friend, one gets to the heart of the concept of companionship (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999). Fehr (2004) proposed that men communicate closeness through shared activities which included things such as drinking, sports, and

backpacking. These activities fit the concept of companionship rather than intimacy, especially since intimacy is usually framed through the lenses of self-disclosure.

Companionship thus involves the time spent together with a friend engaging in pleasurable shared activities as well as shared experiences. It involves a sense of similarity between individuals as well as mutual sharing which are both vital for interpersonal relationships (Hall, 2010). This is similar to homophily. If one enjoys a certain sport or activity, it is likely that one will befriend someone with similar interests.

Sharbany, Gershoni and Hofman (1981) believed that in terms of close friendships, the perceived meaningfulness of a relationship leads to a person preferring the company of certain individuals. This is vital to companionship as friends often do things together because they enjoy each other's company. The time spent with that friend is significant thus indicating the importance of companionship in friendships.

Sullivan (1953) suggests that there is a social need for companionship as it provides certain social provisions in certain stages of development, further indicating the importance of companionship in friendships. Like intimacy, companionship is both a need and a provision within relationships. The behavioural systems theory explains the importance of this dimension in human relationships.

Behavioural systems and companionship. Furman and Buhrmester (2009) argue that behavioural systems are goal-corrected in that they help to sustain a secure relationship between an individual and his or her environment. The system involves an evaluation process so as to see whether or not the goals of the system are being met for the individual within the system. The affiliative system is the system that best exemplifies the importance of companionship in friendships. It is based on what is seen as a biological need to relate with others. By relating with different people, people provide themselves with protection and

potential food sharing opportunities. This leads to companionship as well as cooperation and social play. This allows for a relationship to be co-constructed based on the collaborative element involved in both social play and companionship. This usually occurs in same-sex dyads which may indicate the importance of companionship in friendships (Furman & Buhrmester, 2009). Companionship is a dimension of friendship that is sought by both men and women in their friendships. It is also one of the first features that manifests in friendships in a person's early years.

Companionship in human development. In line with Sullivan's (1953) social needs and provisions theory, psychological studies have shown that companionship is a vital component of personal relationships, especially at a young age. For example, Buhrmester and Furman (1987) argued that boys and girls engage in enjoyable activities with friends or siblings. Their study found that in boys' friendships, time spent together was more important than intimacy in their early friendships. Furthermore, young boys and girls prefer same-sex friends as companions. The majority of studies report that companionship becomes less important as children reach adolescence. This is where intimacy comes to the fore (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987). However, studies have shown that companionship is still a vital component of friendships after adolescence.

Fuhrman, Flannagan and Matamoros (2009) studied university students in the United States and asked them to rate important behavioural expectations among friends, romantic partners and colleagues. They found three sets of behaviours were common among these close relationship partners. One of them was social companionship. For the participants to see companionship as vital to their friendships at this stage of development indicates its importance to both men and women. Within this dimension of friendship, time spent together differentiates close friends from non-friends (Hall, 2010). Furthermore, similarity is prized as

people tend to conform to similar same-sex characteristics in order to be included within the in-group. These characteristics are expected by one's peers. Hall (2010, 2012) suggests that men and women agree that spending time with friends for the sake of company was important to the friendship. This is often the case with boys and men who have extensive group friendships and engage in group activities such as watching sport or playing games (Foot, Chapman, & Smith, 1977). Whilst intimacy is an important dimension of friendships, companionship still stands as one of the dimensions that men and women value, but especially so for men.

Companionship in men's friendships. Kaplan (2005) argues that men seek companionship rather than self-disclosure in their friendships. He interviewed 30 men for his study and found that closeness was not communicated through self-disclosure but through the use of nicknames, cursing, dirty talk, humour and play. Communicating closeness could even involve a homosocial embrace between two close friends. Kaplan further noted that if intimacy is involved in men's friendships, it is usually reduced by ambiguous joking so as to reduce the anxieties of intimacy in men's friendships. His findings indicate that the interactions between men are not characterised by self-disclosure as they are in women's friendships. In his later work, Kaplan (2007) further states that men's friendships support the notion of 'doing' things together, once again indicating companionship and shared activities.

Kaplan (2007) argued that men communicate closeness through covert, non-verbal cues such as sharing accomplishments as well as in the doing of favours for one another. This however does not mean that men's friendships are less close than those of women (Caldwell & Peplau, 2004). Rather, it suggests that in addition to self-disclosure, men display closeness differently. This also suggests that researchers may need to build on the strengths and existing patterns of closeness that men possess instead of solely focusing on the deficit model

that involves remedying men's ways of relating (Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010). This is especially so where studies that have focussed on expanding intimacy in male friendships are concerned (see Garfield, 2010; Lewis, 1978).

Other researchers have found that through shared experiences and time spent together, a sense of rapport is established between men. This rapport unifies men thus cementing the closeness of their friendships as men have common missions, visions, purposes (Swain, 1989). Therefore, non-verbal appreciation through companionship should not be seen as impersonal and safe as research has done in the past (Williams, 1985; Wood & Inman, 1993). Furthermore, these findings suggest that alternative views on closeness and intimacy should be considered and valued as some men may find companionship to be an important quality of their close male friendships (Chu, 2005; Konstan, 1997; Migliaccio, 2009; Wood & Inman, 1993; Wright, 1982).

Interestingly, Demir, Ozdemir and Weitekamp (2007) argue that companionship is a key indicator of close friendship of men and women particularly in American settings. Their study found that companionship was not only important for close friendships but that it was a significant predictor of happiness. This indicates that shared activities play an important role in the subjective well-being of a person. Companionship and intimacy are thus two variables which are important to male and female friendships but another dimension plays a role in their same-sex friendships. This dimension is help and it will be discussed in the subsequent section of this paper.

Help

Help is another dimension which plays a seminal role in the growth and maintenance of close relationships. It is considered a key dimension in communicating closeness in all

relationships and speaks to the adage “a friend in need is a friend indeed.” This dimension of is also known as support or assistance and manifests in different ways depending on the closeness of the friendship and the need of the friend. I will define this dimension and I shall discuss how the dimension manifests in male friendships.

Defining help. Help is defined as the provision of “guidance, assistance, information, advice, and other forms of tangible aid necessary to meet needs or goals” (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999, p. 2). Assistance and support both indicate the willingness to engage in some form of interactions that will help a friend when they are in need. These interactions may be of an instrumental, social or emotional nature (Furman & Buhrmester, 2009; Fuhrman, Flannagan, & Matamoros, 2009; Sharbany & Wiseman, 1993). In other words, friends may provide emotional support (empathy, caring, listening), instrumental support (guidance, tangible aid) or any other forms of support to one another in times of need. Help is thus the instrumental and/or emotional resources used to assist a friend (Rose & Asher, 2004). These resources are given by a friend and can also be expected in friendships (Hall, 2012).

Support plays an important role in the management of stress and adjustment among students of various ages. This is especially so in friendships as friends are more likely to be supportive than non-friends (Rose & Asher, 2004). Chow and Buhrmester (2011) argue that the effects of stressful events tend to affect interpersonal relationships, especially in close college friendships where students are largely interdependent. They further suggest that in these times, close friends are “the most common partners young adults turn to when distressed and that receiving social support from friends has important implications for individual wellbeing” (p. 685). It is thus a vital component of close friendships.

Support and symmetrical reciprocity. Symmetrical reciprocity is a dimension of friendship expectations that includes “the most important features of friendship: loyalty,

mutual regard or authenticity, trustworthiness, and support” (Hall, 2010, p. 725). Support is one of these reciprocal features. Each of these features is ideal in the production of closeness in friendships and they help to distinguish between acquaintances and close friends (Fehr, 2004). Symmetrical reciprocity is valued by both sexes and the behaviours that form part of this friendship expectation are found in same-sex and cross-sex friendships. This suggests that support is an essential and satisfactory condition for close friendships (Cann, 2004; Hall, 2010). Buhrmester’s (1990) work suggests that not having intimate friendships can be stressful and alienating for adolescents as they do not have access to the various kinds of support these close bonds bring. These various types of support manifest differently in men and women’s friendships.

Emotional support. As with companionship and intimacy, there are some gender differences in the communication of support and types of support preferred by men and women in their same-sex friendships. Most research on support in friendship favours emotional support for it is vital to the production of intimacy as well as intimate friendships (Fehr, 2004; Fuhrman, Flannagan & Matamoros, 2009; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). Emotional support includes love, trust, empathy and caring (Langford, Bowsher, Malony, & Lillis, 1997). Rose et al. (2012) argue that when one feels overwhelmed by his or her emotional burdens, they seek help through speaking about a problem. This emotional catharsis is made possible through self-disclosure. This form of support allows for emotional expressiveness and can protect against loneliness which may help to reduce stress (Bagwell et al., 2005).

Emotional support may also be seen as affective assistance and is considered to be “the most important category through which the perception of support is conveyed to others” (Langford et al., 1997, p. 96). This is perhaps due to the fact that it indicates liking of and

affection towards a person. Given the affective, expressive nature of emotional support, it comes as no surprise that women seem to display and prefer emotional support as it is linked to the expression of intimacy. This may suggest that women's friendships are expressive in nature when compared to men's friendships. Studies have found that men also display support but through other means. In most cases, men use instrumental support.

Instrumental support. Instrumental support is defined as “the provision of tangible goods and services, or tangible aid” (Langford et al., 1997, p. 96). It is considered to be concrete assistance and involves doing deeds for other people when needed. Instrumental support is often overlooked in favour of emotional support in the same way as companionship is overlooked in favour of intimacy. This presents a problem where men's friendships are concerned. Instrumental support is similar to the covert style of closeness described by Kaplan (2007) which involves engagement through favours. Men find that instrumental reciprocity is more important in their same-sex friendships when compared to women (Roy, Benenson, & Lily, 2000). This view is bolstered by the early work of Duck and Wright (1993) who suggest that instrumental friendship types were important for men. Although their research found that men and women are both instrumental and expressive in terms of their friendship styles, recent research points to men preferring instrumental help in their friendships where support is concerned (Patrick & Beckenback, 2009). What this indicates is that instrumental help is a vital aspect of friendships and relationships in general but that men prefer it to other forms of support. It is a social need as well as a social provision and helps to strengthen the friendships of men and women.

Men's friendships and instrumental support. The overarching finding in past literature is that men prefer friendships that are functional and instrumental (Migliaccio, 2009; Wright, 1982). Assisting a friend through instrumental actions also plays an important

role in communicating closeness in friendships. This practical assistance or instrumental support takes place in the form of tangible goods and favours (Kaplan, 2007). This is in line with Wood and Inman's (1993) arguments that practical help is an expression of care and closeness in men. Furthermore, practical help works on the assumption that care is provided when there is a need for it.

Another key aspect was that of advice which incorporates both instrumental and emotional support in male friendships. Advice underpins quite a few of the participants' conceptions of male friendship in some studies. It shows that closeness and care manifest in different ways in male friendships (Bowman, 2008; Fehr, 2004). Advice seems to come from a place whereby men reveal their problems to one another in order for solutions to be provided. This is verbal support which indicates the fact that help arises from both verbal and non-verbal behaviours (Fehr, 2004; Camarena et al., 1990).

While women's friendships are emotionally reciprocal (Duck & Wright, 1993), men's friendships are reciprocal in terms of resources. They are reciprocal in terms of assistance and meeting certain concrete needs. Sharbany, Gershoni, and Hofman (1981) conducted a study with girls and boys in terms of the changes in intimacy within their same-sex and cross-sex friendships between preadolescence and adolescence. Sharbany et al. (1981, p. 806) identified a "pattern of lower intimate friendship among boys than among girls" in the results of their study but pointed out boys' friendships consisted of meeting concrete needs through mutual, instrumental support. Patrick & Breckenback's (2009) study is a clear indication of this. They interviewed older men and found that men showed care by doing things for one another and expecting the same to be done in return. They also did things for their spouses. This was indicative of the closeness and care in their eyes, thus reinforcing the importance of instrumental help in the way men display care.

In summary, male friendships follow the well-known proverb “actions speak louder than words.” Despite this, the deficit model of male friendships still persists. One of the reasons for this is an aspect of men’s experiences that many believe to threaten the quality of those friendships. Others believe that the male deficit model exists because this aspect of male friendships affects how men communicate closeness and intimacy in their platonic and romantic relationships. An aspect that might have a bearing on these differences is the set of ideas held by men about what it is to be masculine. This was included as a variable to investigate further in the present study.

Masculinity and Masculinity Ideology

As mentioned earlier in this review, studies that have focussed on gender differences in same-sex friendships usually find that women are more intimate, close, expressive and even more satisfied in their friendships when compared to men. This finding is similar across studies looking at men and women’s same-sex and cross-sex friendships. Although no-one has examined this particular aspect to explain the gender differences in friendship, intimacy, companionship and help, masculinity ideology was considered as a feasible variable to consider in this regard. I hypothesised that adhering to a dominant masculinity ideology influences men’s friendships thus making them different to women’s friendships. The researcher further hypothesises that this adherence is the reason why a deficit model of men’s friendships still exists in the literature. The following section will briefly discuss gender norm conformity in both men and women. Subsequently, this section shall define masculinity and masculinity ideology based on extant literature. It will then discuss two perspectives of masculinity and friendships. The first deals with the barriers men face in their friendships. The second discusses the positive aspects of masculinity. Lastly, this section will discuss the

relationship between masculinity ideology and intimacy as this dimension of friendship is the most affected by the adherence to masculine norms.

Gender norm conformity in men and women. The motivation to act in accordance with gender norms suggests that there are differential behaviours for men and women. These behaviours, which are largely based on sex roles, have been socially constructed (Good & Sanchez, 2010). These authors argue that men and women 'do gender' for three reasons: because they enjoy it; they feel pressure to do so and they fear sanction for any gender-violating behaviours (Good & Sanchez, 2010). They argue that there are positive and negative consequences for conforming and not conforming to these behaviours. Men are expected to be individual focused, assertive and dominant, while women are expected to be warm, caring and sensitive. By choosing which norms to adhere to, men and women experience more psychological benefits.

Studies on masculinity rarely take women into account despite the assertion that men and women can enact masculinity (Parent & Smiler, 2013). This has implications on how masculinity has been studied over the years. Many researchers have studied this construct using only male samples. Scales have been developed to ascertain men's experiences and opinions regarding masculinity (Levant, 2011). This includes their endorsement of certain male role norms. However, women can also endorse certain norms as indicated by some studies (see Parent & Smiler, 2013). More specifically tests using the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory-46 (CMNI-46; Parent & Moradi, 2009) indicated that certain masculine norms (such as winning, self-reliance, and heterosexual self-presentation) were present for both men and women. The difference between the genders lies in the level of endorsement of these norms (Parent & Smiler, 2013).

Studies that have looked at masculinity and women mostly focus on women and the

ideal gender-related attributes they would like in their male partners (Backus & Mahalik, 2011). These studies have found that a feminist identity may contribute to women's relationships with men. Backus and Mahalik (2011) found that women who endorsed a feminist identity would most likely choose male romantic partners that did not conform to masculine norms such as competitiveness and violence.

Other studies have examined whether or not women are more or less traditional in their view of the male role when compared to men. Levant, Majors and Kelly (1998) found that women were less traditional than men in their endorsement of masculinity ideology. This indicates that men and women can be studied in relation to masculinity. Further evidence of this is found by Parent and Smiler (2013) who used the CMNI-46 (Parent & Moradi, 2009) to investigate the extent to which men and women enact certain aspects of masculinity. They found that masculinity functions similarly for men and women. In other words, women's definitions of masculinity are similar to that of men.

These studies indicate that women can and should be studied in terms of their beliefs about masculinity. They also show that women do endorse certain masculine norms albeit to a lesser extent than men.

Defining masculinity and masculinity ideology. In early psychological literature, masculinity was thought to be a biologically based personality trait that was unique to each individual and based on the dichotomisation of sex vs. gender (Mankowski & Maton, 2010). Due to this dichotomisation, social science researchers initially understood masculinity as a social role. This meant that researchers initially saw masculinity as a generic and static construct. However, researchers have found that masculinity is not a fixed trait embedded within the body (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This is due to the ever-changing nature of masculinities throughout time. This flexibility speaks to the notion that masculinity is not a

universal expression of maleness that is adopted and endorsed by men worldwide. This has ultimately led to the understanding of masculinity as a social construction.

Masculinity is now regarded as an amalgamation of dynamic male practices, relations, social roles, personality traits and experiences that are steeped in psychological realities and power differentials (Crook, 2009; Levant, 2011; Mankowski & Maton, 2010; Norman, 2011; Ratele, 2008). These practices are context dependent and manifest as a result of social learning thus indicating their fluidity (Addis, Manfield, & Syzdek, 2010). With these practices come cultural and social expectations. Men are expected to adhere to the norms as they exist within a certain construct. By this logic, Ratele (2008, p.520) argues that “men are not by nature men.” Instead, they are imbued with ideas about male practices. Masculinity ideology thus refers to the extent to which men adhere to masculine norms, many of which require men to inhibit and overstate certain behaviours. More specifically, masculinity ideology refers to the “endorsement and internalisation of cultural belief systems about masculinity and the male gender, rooted in the structural relationship between the two sexes” (Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1994, p. 88). Migliaccio (2009) argues that *doing friendship* for men is in essence *doing gender*. In other words, the way in which men relate as friends is predicated upon certain norms regarding men’s performances of masculinity. This has implications on how men interact with other men in their friendships.

Barriers to male friendships. If boys and girls, and men and women, differ in terms of intimacy and closeness in their friendships, then a question is raised: Why should this be? One possible answer to be explored in the present study is masculinity; the idea that boys and men are less intimate in their friendships as well as their romantic relationship because of their adherence to certain masculine norms. Chu (2005) suggested that these masculine norms serve as barriers to intimacy and thus closeness in male friendships. If one accepts the male

deficit model of intimacy, one could argue that men's friendships seem to face certain obstacles that women's friendships do not. This is the case as far as self-disclosure and intimacy are concerned. Certain conventions of masculinity inhibit the expression of friendship qualities such as intimacy and self-disclosure (Spencer, 2007). These conventions of masculinity prize certain qualities over others for men which has implications for their interactions with others. If one is to look at male friendships through the lens of the male deficit model, certain masculine norms would result in men inhibiting self-disclosure thus limiting the opportunity for them to have close friendships. One of these norms is emotional restraint. Through social learning, men have learned not to express their concerns and feelings as this may lead them to be seen as weak or feminine in the eyes of others within society. Emotional restraint relates to the aversion to vulnerability, a masculine norm where men mute their feelings of vulnerability as they fear being seen as weak and/or feminine (Bank & Hansford, 2000; Patrick & Breckenbach, 2009).

Traditional male role norms, such as anti-femininity, homophobia, toughness, competition and aggression have also been seen to impede men from being close in their friendships (Bank & Hansford, 2000; Levant, 2011; Pleck, Sonenstein & Ku, 1993; White & Peretz, 2010). If men adhere to these norms, it is possible that their levels of intimacy will lessen. Vigil's (2007) study investigated how willing men and women were to engage in mutually beneficial relationships. He found that women score higher on empathy and personal disclosure with close confidants than men. He argued that men are affected by dominance hierarchies and competition which affect interpersonal maintenance behaviours. This indicates that men who adhere to masculine norms of competition and dominance are more likely to score lower on intimacy measures than those who do not.

Anti-femininity and homophobia indicate that hegemonic masculinity is the dominant

expressions of maleness (Ratele, 2008). In essence, men conform to strict heterosexual gender role norms regarding their performances of masculinity (Levant, 2011). Chu's (2005) study of boys and their male friendships found that norms of masculine behaviour are often reinforced by peers suggesting that men cannot readily remove themselves from the masculine context. His study, which used interviews and observational data, found that boys are attuned to the cultural norms that inhibit them and in some cases have to prove that they subscribe to those masculine norms (Chu, 2005; Levant, 2011). According to the male deficit model, these masculine norms affect friendships because they affect men's ability to trust one another as well as their desire for the protective close friendships that past literature has deemed beneficial to a person's wellbeing (Chu, 2005).

Deviating from the aforementioned male norms has severe consequences for men in their social contexts (Levant, 2011). Armengol-Carrera (2009) and Greif (2006) suggest that men are victims of a patriarchal system of masculinity which may inhibit their expression of emotion. They further suggest that men are searching for a greater connection to one another which, as previously mentioned, reinforces the notion that men's ways of relating are inherently pathological. The adherence to masculinity ideology is said to be at the root of this problem. However, other researchers in men's studies have found that masculinity is not always a detrimental aspect of the male experience.

Positive aspects of masculinity. Another perspective of masculinity exists within the literature on masculinity and men. It does not endorse the deficit model of intimacy and friendship proposed by the majority of researchers. The positive psychological approach emphasises the strengths of men and their ways of caring (Kiselica & Englar- Carlson, 2010). These ways of displaying care include action empathy, protection and provision. Action empathy involves acting based on what a person sees in terms of their loved ones. Men thus

act in relation to the plight faced by the person they care about. Provision is similar to help as men provide instrumental aid or support to their friends or loved ones. In terms of protection, men act as guardians of the home by providing a sense of security for those he provides for. This is a far cry from the remedial approach in psychological literature.

Hammer and Good (2010) write that sacrifice, withstanding hardship to protect others, loyalty and courage are other positive aspects of masculinity that are overlooked in society. These aspects of masculinity have the potential to buffer against stress and depression. Unfortunately, this perspective of masculinity remains undervalued given the strong emphasis on the pitfalls of masculinity as seen in the bulk of psychological literature. The bulk of masculinity studies are conducted in settings where a Westernised hegemonic masculinity ideology prevails (Ratele, 2008). It does not help that the majority of scales created to measure dimensions of masculinity focus on the dimensions that may be detrimental to men's friendships as well as their wellbeing. In essence, masculinity ideology comprises of traits that are positive and negative depending on the lenses that researchers use to look at these norms.

Masculinity and intimacy. Adhering to masculine norms affects the way in which men communicate closeness in their male friendships. Intimacy is the dimension that is most affected by the adherence to masculine norms (Bem, 1974; Pleck, Sonenstein, & Ku, 1993). The negative relationship between both variables is well noted in the literature on masculinity and intimacy. The abovementioned authors argue that intimacy is in contrast to men's gender role norms which lead to them not displaying intimacy in their various relationships. Men are unlikely to display intimacy through self-disclosure due to the gender norm of being stoic (Migliaccio, 2009). Adhering to these stereotypical norms is said to be costly to the men as they do not allow them to be 'sufficiently' intimate in their friendships (Fischer & Narus,

1981). In one study, Crook, Thomas and Cobia (2009) note that men restrict displays of affection between one another based on their adherence to male role norms. Men are socialised to control their emotions which has helped to paint the male-deficit model of intimacy that persists today. Men are expected to live by the practices that govern them yet simultaneously display intimacy through feminine behaviours such as emotional disclosure. The struggle between these conflicting gender norms is said to hamper the friendships of men in adolescence and adulthood (Greif, 2006; Mankowski & Maton, 2010). According to research, this struggle has unfortunate implications on the psychological, physical and emotional well-being of men (Gore, Cross & Morris, 2006; Greif, 2006).

Given that men's friendships are seen to be less intimate than women's friendships, it stands to reason that men's subjective experiences of well-being could be attributed to the lack of intimacy exacerbated by conformity to masculine norms (Greif, 2006). In essence, masculine norms have the potential to affect intimacy in men's friendships which may negatively affect men's subjective well-being. This will be discussed in more depth in the next section on happiness.

Happiness

Intimacy, companionship and help form part of a kaleidoscope of friendship dimensions that help to create and maintain close friendships in childhood, adolescence and in adulthood. There is ample evidence that the nature of our adult relationships have a significant effect on our psychological well-being (Khaleque, 2004). These qualities are provisions within these platonic relationships and are linked to the concept of psychological well-being (Demir & Ozdemir, 2010), a fundamental component of a person's adjustment within the world. For the purposes of this study, psychological well-being will also be

referred to as happiness. Happiness in friendships depends on a number of provisions and is potentially hindered by certain factors. The researcher argues that masculinity ideology is one of the factors that may potentially affect happiness. The following section shall define the concept of happiness based on two approaches and will then look at how happiness is related to friendship. It will then examine the relationship between happiness and masculinity ideology.

Psychological well-being: Two perspectives. Determining and understanding well-being has been of great importance for researchers within psychology. Understanding this phenomenon was initially difficult for researchers. However Hofer, Busch and Kiessling (2008) argue that two lines of understanding psychological well-being exist in the literature. Both approaches suggest that psychological well-being involves environmental/personal mastery as well as positive relations with others (Hofer, Busch, & Kiessling, 2008). These approaches are known as the eudaimonic approach and the hedonic approach. Both will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

The eudaimonic approach. For the most part, the eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being attests that there are several basic universal needs that human beings need to fulfil in order to attain personal fulfilment (Hofer et al., 2008). The fulfilment of these needs is reflected by a person's positive functioning within society and thus their psychological well-being. Within this approach it is understood that some desires may not promote well-being (e.g. wealth and status). Based on the theories discussed within their paper, Hofer et al. (2008) propose that authenticity, autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, positive relations, competence, relatedness, environmental mastery and a purpose in life are some of the key needs that, when satisfied, foster well-being. These highly valued needs are not universal pre-requisites but represent a broad spectrum of needs that may bring

about psychological well-being in others. Whilst the theoretical strength of this approach sets it apart in terms of understanding psychological well-being, it is the hedonic approach that is of most interest to this study as it deals directly with the concept of *subjective* well-being.

The hedonic approach. Well-being is defined as being purely subjective in the hedonic approach. In other words, it is the subjective evaluations of a person's life that denote subjective well-being or happiness (Hofer, Busch, & Kiessling, 2008). This is a personal approach to well-being that stems from a person's appraisal of their lives "in global terms or concerning specific life domains (Hofer et al., 2008, p. 504). These evaluations are cognitive and emotional in nature. The affective aspect of subjective well-being depends on the ratio of positive emotions to negative emotions. The cognitive aspect relates to life satisfaction. This aspect deals with how content a person is with their life in relation to the standards that they have set for themselves in terms of their own life achievements (Hofer et al., 2008).

Interestingly, the hedonic and eudaimonic approaches are positively correlated and contain a relational aspect to them. Positive relations in the eudaimonic approach mirror the need for affiliation and intimacy found in the hedonic approach, thus indicating that people have a desire for warm interactions (Demir & Orthel, 2011; Hofer et al., 2008). Despite this, the hedonic approach still remains the most valuable approach to the current study. It is directly related to the construct of happiness that has been chosen for investigation in the present study. It is believed that the evaluations of one's life are related to the dimensions one experiences in his or her friendships.

Happiness and friendship. Demir, Ozen, Dogen, Bilyk and Tyrell (2011) note that having a friend and friendship quality in general are associated with happiness. Furthermore, their study indicates that the support received by a friend is associated with happiness. This

stems from the finding that friendships provide certain provisions to people who have entered into those relationships (Hall, 2010; Sullivan, 1953). This class of interpersonal relationships is qualitative in nature and is an important source of happiness according to Demir, Ozdemir, and Weitekamp (2007). Certain qualities of friendship, including intimacy, companionship and help have been related to happiness. This has been found in studies that examined close friendships as well as general friendships. These variables are similar to those presented in the following study and represent important friendship dimensions that have an effect on happiness. The established link between friendship qualities and happiness indicates that the cognitive and affective evaluations of one's life are affected by the perceived levels of intimacy, companionship, and help provided by friends (Demir & Ozdemir, 2010; Demir et al., 2011). I believe that adhering to certain masculine norms may impede the relationship between friendship and happiness.

Froding and Peterson (2012) provide further evidence to support the link between friendship and happiness. Their work is based on Aristotle's understanding of friendship, character and virtue as seen in Aristotle's seminal work, *Nicomachean Ethics*. The Aristotelian theory of friendship asserts that friendships are important to human happiness. In these friendships, self-knowledge is gained, growth occurs and a person has the potential to become more virtuous. Most importantly, the theory implores that you need friends and people to be close to you. This theory further asserts that a shared life with social activities is superior to a life lived alone (Froding & Peterson, 2012).

Spending time together with a friend is considered the most important aspect of Aristotelian friendships. This brings to mind the dimension of companionship in friendships. It is interesting that Aristotle found this dimension to be of utmost importance to friendships in Grecian times whereas intimacy has taken the fore today.

Three types of friendships were outlined in terms of Aristotelian friendships: friendships based on mutual adoration (virtues, inner qualities); friendships based on mutual pleasure; and friendships based on mutual advantage (Froding & Peterson, 2012). In most cases, the latter two occurred due to the first kind of friendship. In essence, a friend becomes an extension of one's self. The most genuine friendships involve reciprocation, intimacy, help, companionship, mutual adoration and they lead to self-knowledge and happiness.

Happiness and masculinity ideology. Intimacy is often considered as one of the most important relationship qualities within close friendships (Demir, 2010). It is also considered to be a significant predictor of psychological well-being and adjustment as I have argued early in this chapter. However, many studies found that companionship is a better predictor of happiness in the close friendships of men and women (Demir, Ozdemir, & Weitkamp, 2007). Despite these findings, gender differences are commonplace in the study of happiness.

As with studies on intimacy, men generally score relatively lower than women on psychological well-being and happiness measures. King and Terrance (2008) investigated men and women in their study investigating the friendship qualities of college students. Their findings indicate that women described their best friendships as more permanent, rewarding and emotionally satisfying than their male counterparts. King and Terrance also report that there is an association between reduced closeness in male friendships and decreased psychological well-being. This in turn results in an increased susceptibility to psychological problems such as depression, stress, substance abuse and other forms of psychopathology (Khaleque, 2004).

According to research, men also have a poorer attainment of quality of life than women in terms of safety, education, and health (Mankowski & Maton, 2010). This indicates

that the psychological well-being of men is quite different to that of women.

Demir and Orthel (2011) investigated friendship qualities, real-ideal discrepancies and happiness in their study of college students. They hypothesised that if one's relationship qualities increased, it would lead to a low real-ideal discrepancy which would increase psychological well-being. The authors found that friendship quality scores (based on the McGill Friendship Questionnaire – Friendship Functions) for men were lower than those of women. This may have implications on how men view their friendships as well as whether or not they experience subjective well-being based on their friendship qualities. A number of authors have attempted to explain why it is that men are viewed as less happy in their friendships and in their lives. Men are expected to live by the practices that govern them yet simultaneously display intimacy through feminine behaviours such as emotional disclosure. The struggle between these conflicting gender norms hampers the friendships of men in adolescence and adulthood (Grief, 2006; Mankowski & Maton, 2010). This struggle is said to have unfortunate implications on the psychological, physical and emotional well-being of men (Gore, Cross & Morris, 2006; Greif, 2006).

Given that men's friendships are seen to be less intimate than women's friendships, it stands to reason that men's subjective experiences of well-being could be attributed to the lack of intimacy exacerbated by conformity to masculine norms (Greif, 2006). In essence, masculine norms have the potential to affect the expression of certain friendship dimensions in men's friendships which may negatively affect men's subjective experiences of happiness. This line of thinking derives from the deficit model of male friendships. If one is to look at men's friendship through another lens, one might find that dimensions such as companionship and help are positively related to happiness for men. This suggests that the pathways to happiness for men are different to the pathways for women. It remains to be seen

how masculinity ideology relates to these other friendship dimensions as well as to happiness. An examination of these variables may be able to tell us whether or not masculinity ideology hinders one's subjective well-being by being a barrier against intimacy, companionship and help in men's same-sex friendships.

Conclusion

Men and women differ in many ways. In terms of their same-sex friendships, certain dimensions of friendship manifest more readily than others. This is often the case for intimacy, companionship, and help, three dimensions that are vital to the creation, maintenance and growth of friendships. In most instances, men score lower than women on measures on these dimensions. Companionship is one dimension where men are most likely to fair better than women. One line of thinking suggests that when men adhere to and endorse certain masculine norms, their scores on these variables will be lower. The increased belief in a certain masculinity ideology thus negatively affects the happiness of men in their same-sex male friendships. Hence masculinity is seen as a barrier or mediator between friendship quality and happiness.

As far as the dimensions of friendship are concerned, intimacy is most often considered a feminine quality. Companionship is considered to be more prevalent in men's friendships. Help is present by both genders with each possessing the capability to provide assistance to their friends where necessary. Many studies have examined these variables in terms of gender differences. To the best of my knowledge, these variables (namely, companionship, intimacy, help, masculinity ideology, and happiness) have not been investigated simultaneously in this particular manner. Given that the bulk of friendship studies have been conducted within the European and American nexus of psychology, it

would be interesting to conduct a study assessing the gender differences in terms of certain friendship qualities in Southern Africa.

Additionally, conducting research on masculinity in relation to subjective well-being has not been conducted in South Africa (Ratele, 2008). To the best of my knowledge, a study with these specific variables has not been conducted in a South African university setting. This study therefore has a rather ambitious overall aim: to investigate, in a local context, how these five variables might be inter-related in men's and women's friendships. It could be that such a study also throws light on the male deficit model of friendships, and may provide an alternative way to understand same-sex male friendship.

Aims and Hypotheses

The first aim of the study was to examine the differences between men and women in their same-sex friendships. With this in mind, the researcher developed these hypotheses based on the literature presented above:

1. Men and women will differ on their intimacy scores
2. Men and women will differ on their companionship scores
3. Men and women will differ on their help scores
4. Overall, men and women would not differ significantly on their happiness scores.

The second and perhaps more important aim of the research was to investigate the interrelationships between friendship qualities, subjective well-being, and masculinity

ideology. By doing so, the researcher aimed to show that the endorsement of and adherence to masculine norms plays a role in influencing how friendship qualities are displayed in men's friendships as well as how they affect the subjective well-being of men. Figure 1 indicates the aforementioned relationship between the friendship qualities, happiness and masculinity ideology. Based on the literature as well as the diagram presented in Figure 1 below, the following hypotheses were investigated.

1. Intimacy, companionship and help will be correlated with happiness.
2. Intimacy will be correlated with masculinity ideology
3. Companionship and help will be correlated with masculinity ideology.
4. Masculinity ideology will be correlated with happiness.
5. The effects of intimacy, companionship and help on happiness will be mediated by the variable, masculinity ideology.

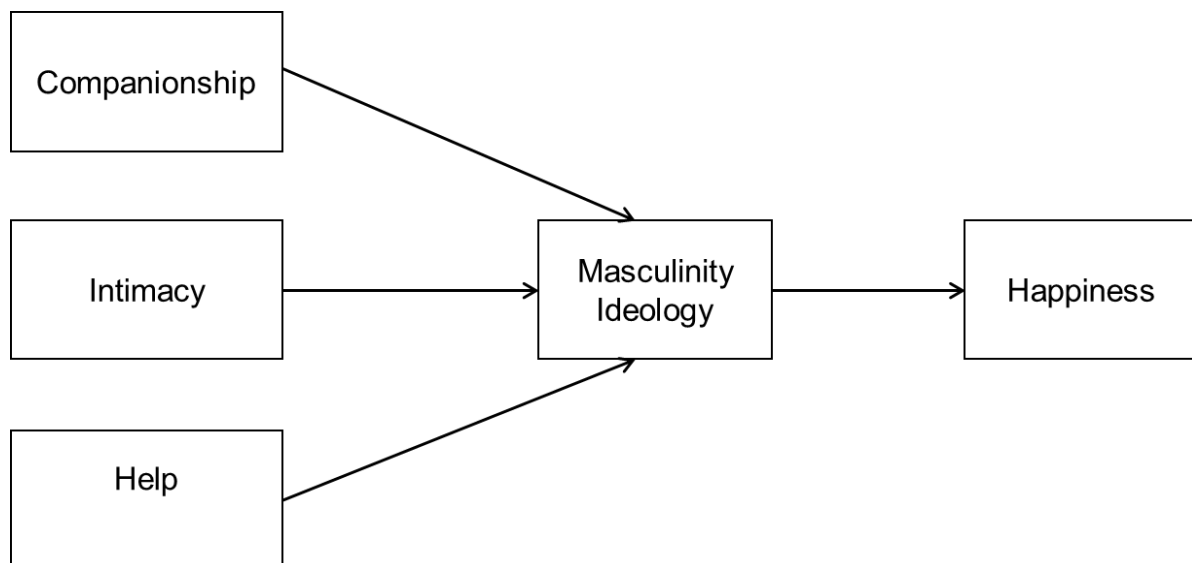


Figure 1. Predicted pathway to happiness.

CHAPTER 2: Method

Design

This study focuses on five variables and their (inter-)relationships; intimacy, companionship, help, masculinity ideology, and happiness. Young people between the ages of 17 and 30 were surveyed by means of a questionnaire that contained measures of these variables. This questionnaire was called the Friendship Qualities Questionnaire and was distributed to the participants in an online format.

Participants

Initially, undergraduate students at the University of Cape Town were invited to participate in the study. University students best represent the emerging adulthood contingent that had not been studied in relation to their friendship qualities and subjective well-being (Amichai- Hamburger et al., 2012). At first, the invitation was sent out only to undergraduate students in the Department of Psychology. The students received a course credit for their participation. After this first round of recruitment, it became clear that women outnumbered men in terms of respondents from the psychology department. Thus a second round of recruitment was conducted which specifically sought male students from other faculties in the university. As a result, more men were recruited. The above-mentioned method of selecting participants is a combination of two non-probability sampling methods, snowball sampling and convenience sampling (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2009).

Overall, 402 individuals responded to the questionnaire. The data from a number of participants were excluded from the study due to the fact that some respondents ($n = 5$) were over the age of thirty. Others did not complete all the items on all of the questionnaires and some participants responded many times to the questionnaire. One participant clicked 'no' on the consent form and thus their responses were not used. These respondents ($n = 63$) were all

removed from the analysis. All in all, 334 (140 male, 194 female) participants were used for the final analysis of the study.

Race was not a focal point of analysis for the study but this information was captured in any event, and is given here. Forty-seven percent (159) of the participants were White while 26% (88) identified themselves as Black/African. Eighteen percent (60) of the participants were Coloured and 5% (16) of the participants were Indian. Two percent (6) of the participants were Asian and the remaining 2% (5) of participants identified themselves under the category 'Other.' The way in which the ages of the participants were collected (using age ranges) made it impossible to determine the mean age of the participants, however, the majority of participants ($n = 327$) were between the ages of 17-25.

Measures

Intimacy, companionship, help, masculinity ideology and happiness have been measured by different scales/measures over time. For example, the Dimensions of Friendship Scale (Chadna & Chadna, 1986) and the Friendship Intensity Measurement Scale (Arunkumar & Dharmangadan, 2001) assess the different dimensions within friendships and the different strength levels of friendships. The Intimacy Scale (Shulman et al., 1997) was used by Bauminger et al. (2008) to assess intimacy in adolescent friendships. Masculinity ideology has been investigated in several ways including the Male Role Norms Inventory-Revised (Levant, Rankin, Williams, Hassan, & Smalley, 2010) as well as the Male Role Norms Scale (Thompson & Pleck, 1986). The former investigates an internalisation of masculine norms whilst the latter assess men on 3 dimensions of masculinity; anti-femininity, status and toughness. Each of these scales boasts a high internal consistency and would have been relevant to the present study but for the fact that they were developed in countries

dominated by Western notions of masculinity. The scales chosen for this study were those that best measured the variables under investigation. They were also well-known, reliable scales in terms of measuring friendship qualities/dimensions and happiness. Furthermore, the scale measuring masculinity ideology was devised for a South African context, making it particularly useful for this study.

With this in mind, the study utilised four scales/questionnaires to measure the variables specified in the literature review. The scales were combined to create a Friendship Qualities Questionnaire that was placed online for respondents to answer. Given that the researcher sought a large sample, an online survey was the best option as participants could respond both in their own time and in large numbers. The variables as well as the scales that were used to measure them will be discussed in more detail below.

Friendship Quality. The McGill Friendship Questionnaire – Friends’ Functions (MFQ-FF) designed by Mendelson and Aboud (1999) was used to measure the friendship qualities of companionship, intimacy and help. The scale is one of two designed by the aforementioned authors to measure friendship quality in late adolescence and early adulthood which made it suitable for the age group recruited in the current study. The scale assesses the degree to which a friend fulfils six specific friendship functions. The six functions are: stimulating companionship, help, intimacy, reliable alliance, self-validation, and emotional security. The MFQ-FF is based on whether or not a respondent believes that their friend fulfils the aforementioned friendship functions. It consists of 30 items (5 per subscale) thus 15 questions were used to examine the three subscales outlined in the previous chapter. Each question was rated on a 9-point Likert scale. Following Mendelson and Aboud, five of the nine points were labelled (0 = never, 2 = rarely, 4 = once in a while, 6 = fairly often, and 8 = always). Researchers have reported alpha values ranging from .88 to .96 for the subscales

(Demir & Ozdemir, 2010; Demir & Orthel, 2011). Each subscale of the MFQ-FF used in the present study will be discussed briefly below. See Appendix A for the MFQ-FF subscales.

Companionship. The stimulating companionship subscale consisted of five items (an example being “X is fun to do things with”) which measured the joy and excitement that a person experiences when engaging in activities with a friend. This was important as mere time spent with a friend is believed to be meaningless unless this time spent with a friend yielded positive outcomes (Demir, 2010; Froding & Peterson, 2012). An average companionship score was computed for each of the participants. Cronbach’s alpha for this subscale was .88, indicating a good internal consistency, considering that Mendelson and Aboud (1999) reported an alpha of .84 for the subscale.

Intimacy. Similar to the companionship variable, a subscale from the MFQ-FF was used to measure the variable of intimacy in this study. The intimacy subscale consisted of five items which measure the degree to which a person feels that their friend is sensitive to their needs. In essence, it measured whether or not a person could openly disclose personal feelings or thoughts to their friends (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999). The five items including the following item “X is easy to talk to about private things” were also rated on a 9-point scale as described above. Average intimacy scores were computed for all the participants. The intimacy subscale had a high internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$), comparable to that of Mendelson and Aboud ($\alpha = .90$).

Help. The help subscale of the MQF-FF (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999) was used to measure this variable. This subscale measures the provision of “guidance, assistance, information, advice, and other forms of tangible aid necessary to meet needs or goals” (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999, p. 2). It taps into the instrumental facet of support as indicated by items such as “X helps me when I need it” and “X lends me things that I need.” Once

again, five items were used to measure this aspect of friendship quality and the scores attained by the participants were averaged to create one mean help scores. The internal consistency for the subscale was good ($\alpha = .83$). Most would argue that an alpha of .80 and above indicates good internal consistency (Field, 2009).

Masculinity Ideology. Scales such as the Male Role Norms Scale (Thomson & Pleck, 1986) and the Revised Male Role Norms Inventory – Revised (Levant et al., 2010) were developed to measure some of the many dimensions within masculinity. The Male Role Norms Scale consists of 26 items that measure the masculinity dimensions of anti-femininity, toughness and status. The Male Role Norms Inventory - Revised measures the endorsement of traditional masculine ideology using 53 items which measures 7 dimensions of masculinity, some of which have been discussed above. The Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (Mahalik et al., 2003) investigates the personal conformity or nonconformity to dominant masculine norms. The bulk of the abovementioned masculinity studies were conducted in settings where a westernised hegemonic masculinity prevails (Ratele, 2008).

Luyt (2005) constructed the Male Attitude Norms Inventory –II (MANI-II) to investigate masculine ideology specifically in the South African context. His scale focussed on gender ideology where gender norms are multidimensional and socially constructed. Because of this, the scale was used for this study. The MANI-II (Luyt, 2005) is a 40-item scale that measures a South African masculinity ideology in South Africa. In other words, it measures the extent to which South African men endorse certain beliefs and ideas pertaining to socially constructed gender norms. The items (which include statements such as “men should be calm in difficult situations” and “men are prepared to take risks”) were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly

agree). Only 29 of the 40 items were used in this study as these items measured an overall masculinity ideology as well as three sub-factors, namely toughness, control, and sexuality.

- Toughness measured emotional containment. Nine questions measured this sub-factor with an acceptable alpha of .79.
- Control referred to the nucleus of a man's sense of control. Twelve items measured control with an acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .83$) for this study.
- The remaining eight questions measured sexuality, the dominant masculine expression of heterosexuality as seen in masculinity literature. The alpha of this subscale was .69.

The scores for the items within each subscale were summed to create composite subscale scores. These scores were summed to create a final masculinity ideology score for the male participants (range = 29 to 145). Overall, the 29 items used from the MANI-II reported a good internal consistency ($\alpha = .87$) for the study. The scale can be seen in Appendix B.

Happiness. The assessment of happiness involved the use of the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) to gauge both the cognitive and affective aspects of subjective well-being. The SWLS (see Appendix C) measured the global cognitive evaluations of a person's satisfaction with their own lives. The test consisted of 5 items and participants were asked to agree with the five statements provided (e.g. "I am satisfied with my life"). Their agreement was rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). A composite satisfaction with life score was obtained by summing each participant's scores on the 5 items (range = 5 to 35). The reliability of the scale has been high in studies that have used the scale with Demir et al. (2011) reporting an alpha of .89. The study obtained an alpha of .87 indicating a good

internal consistency. The scale has been used by others (see Hammer & Good, 2010) to measure psychological adjustment and is often used concurrently with the PANAS to measure subjective well-being (Demir, 2010).

The PANAS (see Appendix D) was used to measure positive and negative affect over a certain period of time. It consisted of ten mood states for positive affect (e.g. “interested”) and ten mood states for negative affect (e.g. “irritable”) respectively. Respondents were asked to rate their mood on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely). The participants were asked to rate their mood in broad terms. In other words, they were asked how they generally felt in terms of the mood states. Composite scores for the positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA) were computed using the summed score of each participant’s responses to the PA and NA questions (range = 10 to 50 respectively). Demir et al. (2011) reported satisfactory reliabilities for the scales ($\alpha = .86$ for PA; $\alpha = .85$ for NA). Similarly, this study reported satisfactory alphas for the PANAS with the alpha being .84 and .86 for positive and negative affect respectively. Demir and Orthel (2011) note that the scale is a well-known commonly used scale to measure happiness thus making it consistent with the aims of this study. It would have been possible to use either the SWLS scores or the PA scores as adequate measures for happiness but the researcher chose to follow the literature regarding the use of these measures. In most cases, the scores on these measures are combined with the NA scores. As per the literature (see Demir, 2010, Demir et al., 2011, Kasser & Sheldon, 2002), an overall happiness score was computed. This was done by summing the standardised scores (z-scores) for Positive Affect and Satisfaction with Life, and subtracting this score from the standardised score of Negative Affect.

Procedure

The study was given ethical clearance by an Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities in 2012. Data collection took place over a three month period between August and October 2012. The questionnaire was placed onto an online survey tool (SurveyMonkey). Ten students were requested to complete the questionnaire as a pilot test. This was done for two reasons: to see how the participants' responses would be collated for analysis; and to find out more about how the administration of the test could be improved. Their results were not used for the main study. Small adjustments were made to the delivery of the questionnaire as a result of this pre-testing.

In the initial run of data collection, an advertisement (see Appendix E) of the online questionnaire was posted onto the university's learning platform, Vula. The university used this site for a multitude of purposes, one of which included research initiatives. On this site, students were notified of the basic intention of the study as well as their incentive for participating in the study (a course credit). The questionnaire was presented at the bottom of the advertisement in the form a URL link. It came with an informed consent form which gave information to participants regarding the anonymity and confidentiality of their scores and personal data (see Appendix F). At the end of this, the participants were asked to sign the consent form by ticking yes or no before answering the questionnaire. The first question of the questionnaire required participants to fill out relevant demographic data (age, sex, ethnicity, etc.) before launching into the various scales identified in the measures section above.

Each questionnaire consisted of standardised instructions which can be seen on the questionnaires in the appendices. Both men and women were asked to answer the entire questionnaire. Given that students began to write exams in October, the researcher then

closed the study by 18 October and as stipulated on the consent form, awarded each participant with their course credit. Following data collection, data was transferred to Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Programme for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for coding and data analysis. After data analysis, students who participated in the study were provided with a debriefing (see Appendix G) describing the purpose of the study. This also included a general breakdown of the results of the study.

Ethical considerations

Students were told about the study on Vula using a short advertisement which described the study. This advertisement contained a link to the study. An informed consent form was attached to the front page of each online questionnaire assuring students of the confidentiality of the study as well as their anonymity (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2009). Onus was on the researcher to ensure that the participants were aware of all their rights within the study. Furthermore the consent form outlined that the use of the student numbers by the students was purely for SRPP and debriefing purposes and that access to their responses would be restricted.

By providing students with SRPP points for their participation, the students benefitted from study by means of an incentive. Given the nature of the study as well as the fact that the questionnaire will be answered online, there was no threat or harm on any of the participants (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2009). Feedback based on the study was provided to the students on Vula. This was of additional benefit to the participants as it debriefed them and informed them of the results of the study. This document can be seen in Appendix G.

Data Analysis

The data analysis methods used in this study served to investigate the hypothesis presented in Chapter 1.

Group Comparison Tests. To test aim 1 (i.e. testing the gender differences on each variable), t-tests and Mann-Whitney U tests were run to examine the differences between men and women on the various friendship qualities and measures of happiness. Both methods are considered to be robust in terms of identifying differences between groups (Field, 2009). T-tests were used for the normally distributed data whilst Mann-Whitney U tests were used for data that was not normally distributed (Field, 2009; Tredoux & Durrheim, 2002).

Path Analysis. Aim 2 investigated the relationship between the friendship qualities (intimacy, help, and companionship), masculinity ideology, and happiness. This mediation relationship could have been investigated using either ANOVA, multiple regression, or structural equation modelling (Field, 2009; Lleras, 2005).

Initially it was thought that multiple regression, particularly a hierarchical regression would be the best analytical technique for mapping the mediation relationship between the variables. However, structural equation modelling is considered the stronger option when testing mediation relationships (Petersen, Louw, & Dumont, 2009). Path analysis was thus chosen for the analysis. Path analysis was developed by Wright in the 1920s and examines the direct and indirect relationships between variables (Lleras, 2005). These relationships are indicated in a path model which is linked to the hypothesis (or hypotheses) postulated by the researcher. Path analysis thus uses correlational data to understand the causal processes which underlie particular assumptions. It is both a type of structural equation modelling and an extension of multiple regression which looks at main effects, indirect effects, as well as instances of mediation (Field, 2009; Lleras, 2005). Path analysis was used to test different models of the pathways to happiness postulated by the researcher. These paths will be discussed in more detail in the results section.

CHAPTER 3: Results

Statistical analyses were conducted to test two aims explored in this study. The present chapter contains the results of these analyses and starts with a description of the data cleaning process undertaken by the researcher. This included the identification and removal of unusable data from the study.

These first set of analyses pertained to the first aim of the study: examining the gender differences between men and women of intimacy, companionship and help; as well as their experiences of positive affect, negative affect, satisfaction with life, and happiness. The scores on positive affect, negative affect and satisfaction with life were used to compute an overall happiness score for the participants. Group comparisons tests were chosen to investigate these gender differences.

The second part of the study pertained to the second aim of the study. This was to investigate how masculinity ideology plays a role in influencing how friendship dimensions are displayed in men's friendships as well as how they affect the subjective well-being of men. This was done by examining the relationship between friendship qualities (dimensions), subjective well-being and masculinity ideology. Path analysis was chosen to investigate this aim. Hypotheses for both aims were presented in Chapter 1.

Although this study was interested in male friendships, and the path analyses therefore were aimed at men in particular, the fact that data was available on women as well made it possible to explore these relationships for women too. The questions within the masculinity ideology measure, the MANI-II, were such that women could answer them in terms of their own beliefs about men and masculinity. Because of this, path analysis was run on the data from the women in this study to see whether or not there would be a different path between friendship qualities and happiness when taking into account masculinity ideology.

Data Coding and Cleaning

Following data collection (which was described in the previous chapter), the researcher set about coding the data on MICROSOFT EXCEL 2010. It was important that unusable questionnaires and responses were removed from the study prior to analysis as they could not be used for analysis.

First and foremost, blank questionnaires were removed from the analysis. This included responses that had demographic data filled but no attempt to answer the various questionnaires as well as completely blank questionnaires whereby participants consented to take part in the study but did not complete or start the study. These participants were likely to be students who consented to the study in order to gain their course credit.

Secondly, partially completed questionnaires were removed from the analysis. In this case, participants did not respond to questions related to certain variables. It was likely that participants chose to drop out of the study after filling in what they felt was enough information to secure them a course credit.

Lastly participants who completed the study several times were also removed from the study. These participants filled in the questionnaire several times and often did not complete the questionnaire each time. Again, it was hypothesised that these participants aimed to receive the course credit and perhaps did not feel the need to complete the questionnaire. All in all, 68 participants (including those who were above 30 years old) were removed from the analysis. Given the high response rate to the study as indicated by the large number of initial participants (402), it was felt that removing these participants would not significantly hamper the power of the study (Field, 2009), and would not bias the results in a predictable way.

Group Comparison Tests

Group comparison tests were conducted in order to investigate whether or not there were significant differences between men and women in terms of their scores on these variables: intimacy, companionship, help, and happiness. These comparisons focus on the first aim of the study. Additionally, gender differences on scores for positive affect, negative affect and satisfaction with life were examined. T-tests and Mann-Whitney U tests were used for the analysis.

Intimacy. Statistical analyses indicate that the data on men and women in terms of intimacy was negatively skewed with the bulk of the responses being relatively high. This can be seen in Figure 2. For this reason, Mann-Whitney U tests were run on the data. The Mann-Whitney U test is a non-parametric test that does not compare the means of two groups as the t-test does (Field, 2009). Instead, this test examines the mean ranks of data from two independent groups (Field, 2009). The results of the Mann-Whitney U test were significant and in the expected direction. The female group (average rank = 185.06) reported having more intimacy in their friendships than the group of men (average rank = 143.17), $U = 10173.5$, $z = -3.93$, $p < .01$.

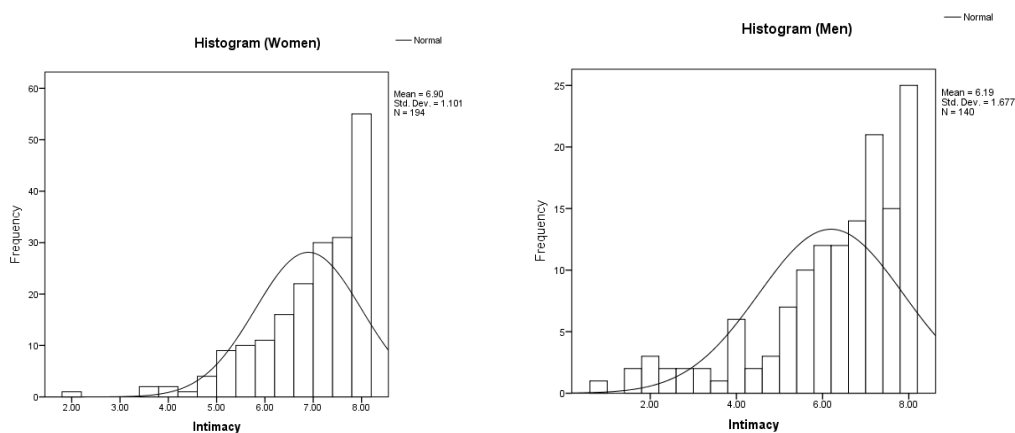


Figure 2. Histograms representing the intimacy scores of men and women

Companionship. As Figure 3 indicates, the companionship data too was negatively skewed for both groups. Mann-Whitney tests of significance indicated that women (mean rank = 183.27) scored significantly higher than men (mean rank = 145.64) on the measure of companionship, $U = 10520$, $z = -3.53$, $p < .01$.

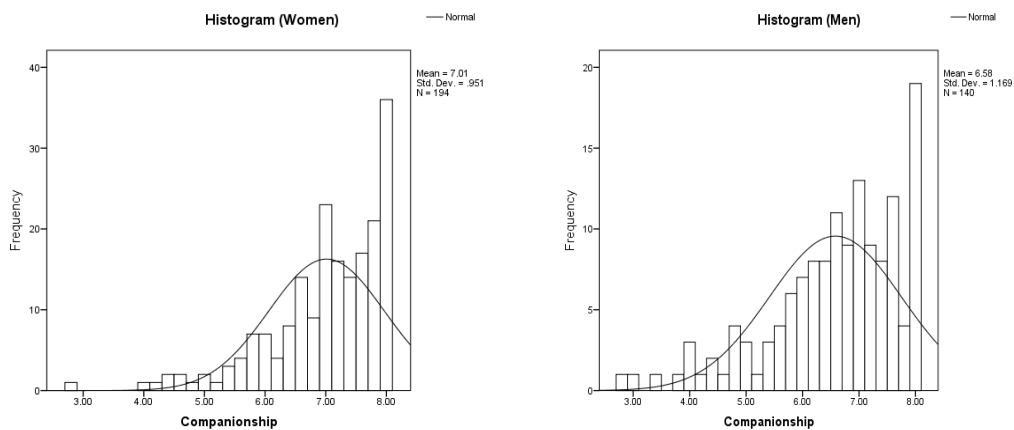


Figure 3. Histograms representing the companionship scores for men and women

Help. The data for help variable was negatively skewed in both the male and female groups as seen in Figure 4. A Mann-Whitney U test was thus carried out to identify which gender scored significantly higher on the help measure. The results were significant and women (average rank = 180.27) scored significantly higher than men (average rank = 149.81), $U = 11103$, $z = -2.85$, $p = .004$. Therefore, women experience more help than men in their same-sex friendships.

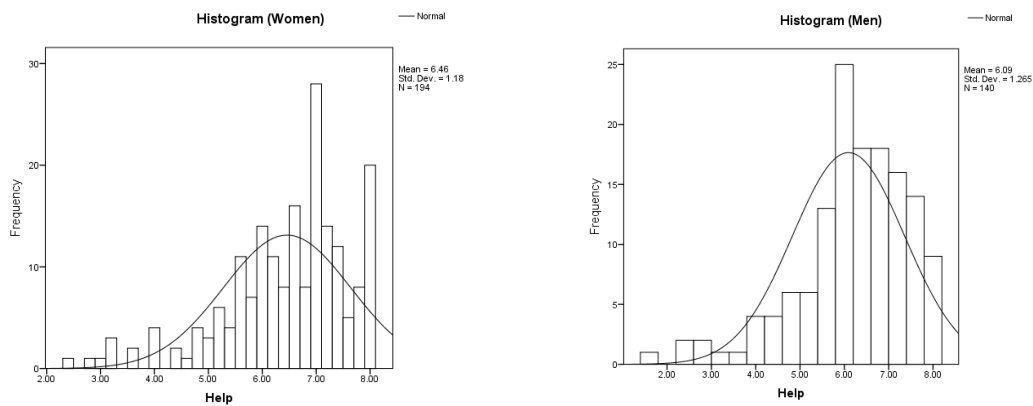


Figure 4. Histograms representing the help scores of men and women

Positive affect. As seen in Figure 5, the positive affect data was normally distributed for both men and women. Thus a t-test was conducted to see which group scored higher on the measure of positive affect. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was upheld as Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not significant, $F(332) = .009, p = .93$. A two-tailed t-test indicated that there was no significant difference between men ($M = 6.09, SD = 1.27$) and women ($M = 6.46, SD = 1.18$) in terms of their experiences of positive affect, $t(332) = .38, p = .7$.

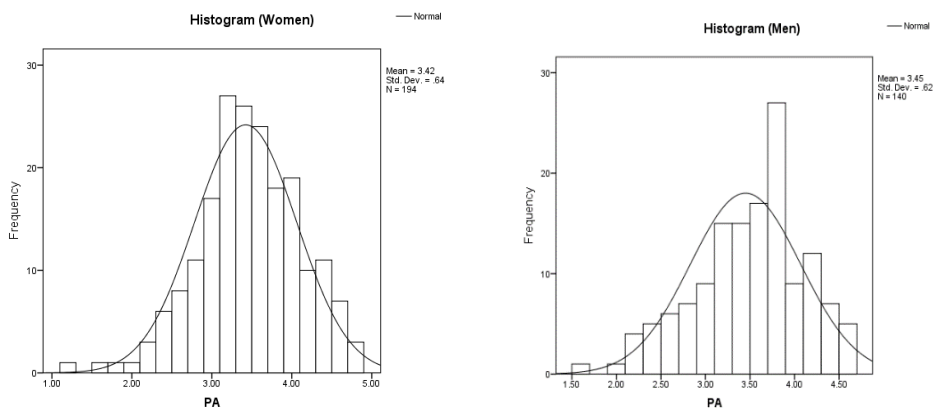


Figure 5. Histograms representing the positive affect (PA) scores for men and women.

Negative affect. The data for negative affect was positively skewed for both groups as indicated in Figure 6. Thus Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted on the data. There were no significant differences between men (average rank = 166.44) and women (average rank = 168.26) in terms of negative affect, $U = 13432$, $z = -.170$, $p = .865$. Thus men and women did not differ in terms of their subjective experiences of negative affect.

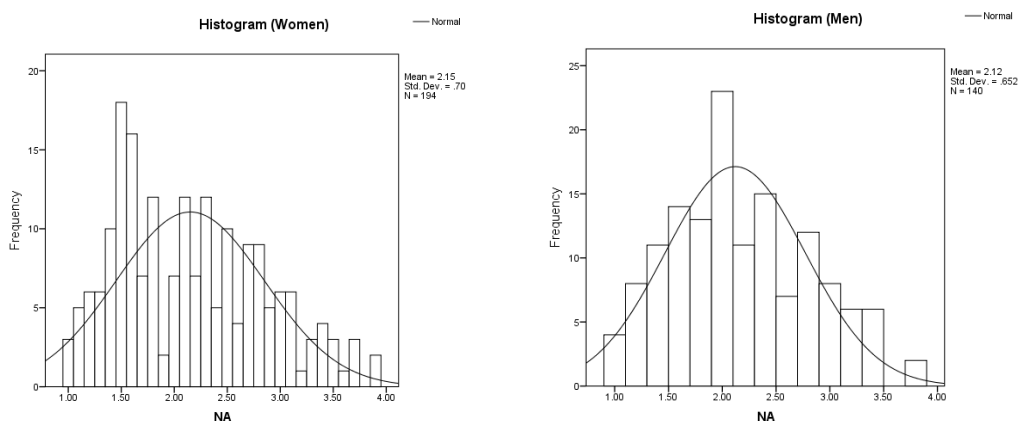


Figure 6. Histograms representing the negative affect (NA) scores of men and women.

Satisfaction with life. The data for men and women in terms of their satisfaction with life scores was normally distributed. This data is presented in Figure 7. An independent samples t-test was conducted to identify whether or not men and women were more satisfied with their lives. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not significant thus the assumption of normality was upheld, $F(332) = 1.275, p = .260$. A two-tailed t-test indicated that women ($M = 23.94, SD = 6.44$) experienced significantly more satisfaction with life than men ($M = 21.9, SD = 7.06$), $t(332) = -2.748, p = .006$.

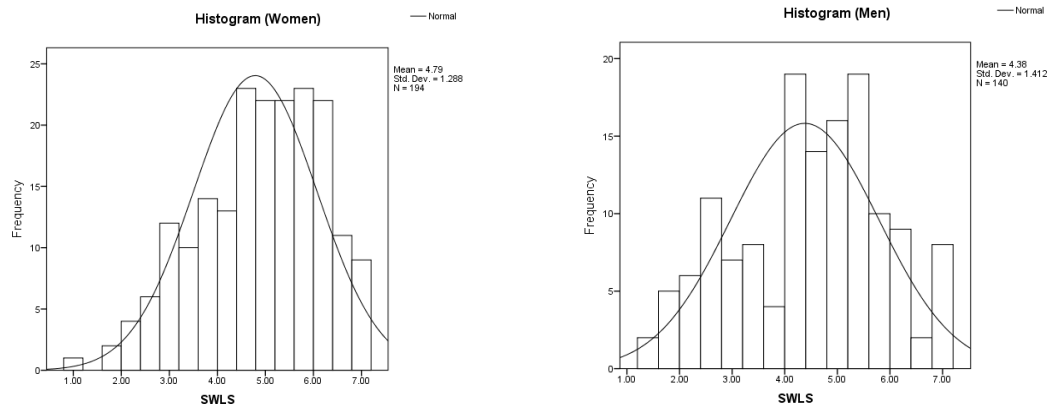


Figure 7. Histograms representing the satisfaction with life scores (SWLS) for men and women

Happiness. Overall happiness was computed by adding the standardised scores of positive affect and satisfaction with life scores and subtracting the standardised score on negative affect from this score as explained in Chapter 2. The scores for both men and women were normally distributed (see Figure 8) therefore an independent samples t-test was conducted. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not significant, thus indicating homogeneity of variance, $F(334) = .03, p = .86$. A two-tailed t-test indicated that there was

no significant difference in the means of the men's group ($M = -.23$, $SD = 2.11$) and the women's group ($M = .16$, $SD = 2.23$), $t(332) = 1.6$, $p = .11$.

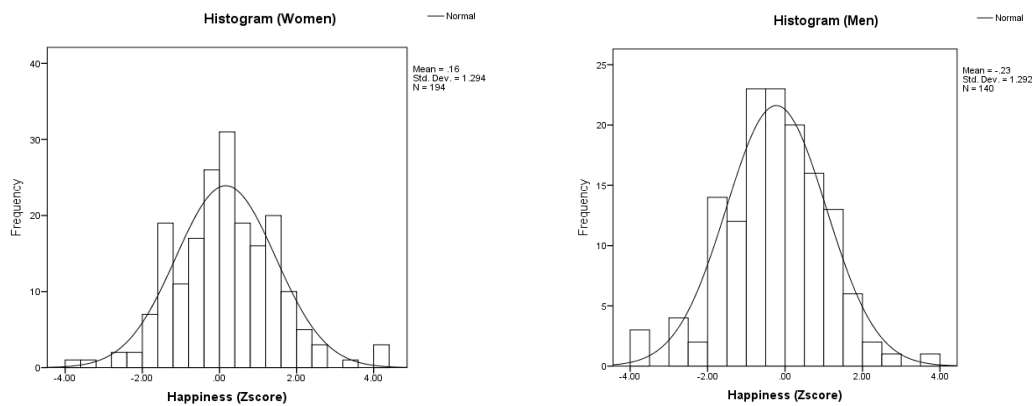


Figure 8. Histograms presenting the happiness scores (standardised) for men and women

Path Analysis

Pearson product-moment correlations. Pearson product-moment correlations were conducted as the first step in terms of the path analysis. It was important to determine which variables were correlated. This was done to indicate whether or not path models could be a good fit to the data. The following correlations were computed for the men in the study. As Table 1 indicates, some correlations were significant and in the direction proposed in the hypotheses.

Table 1.

Intercorrelations of independent, mediator and dependent variables (men)

| Variable | Masculinity Ideology | Companionship | Intimacy | Help | Happiness |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| Masculinity Ideology | – | | | | |
| Companionship | -.120 | – | | | |
| Intimacy | -.181* | .633** | – | | |
| Help | -.102 | .642** | .624** | – | |
| Happiness | .001 | .252** | .184* | .311** | – |

*. $p < 0.05$ level (2-tailed); ** $p < .001$ level (2-tailed)

The correlations between happiness and the friendship qualities were significant albeit low. Happiness was positively correlated with intimacy ($r = .184, p = .029$), companionship ($r = .252, p = .003$) and help ($r = .311, p < .001$). The correlations between the friendship qualities themselves were positive and significant.

The correlation between masculinity ideology and happiness was not significant, $r = .001, p = .987$. Nevertheless the path between the two variables was included for the model given the hypotheses presented previously. Furthermore masculinity ideology was not correlated significantly correlated with help ($r = -.102, p = .230$) and companionship ($r = -.120, p = .157$). Intimacy was the only friendship quality that was significantly related to masculinity ideology despite the weak correlation, $r = -.181, p = .033$. This finding would have significant implications on the results of the path analysis.

As stated above, although this part of the study was about male friendships, sufficient data on women were available as well. This provided an opportunity to extend the analysis to

women. This analysis was done separately from the men's analysis to investigate whether or not the models proposed for male friendships would work for female participants. This was done as items on the MANI-II were feasible enough to warrant an investigation on women's conceptions of masculinity ideology (e.g. women could answer question like "It is admirable for a man to take the lead when something needs to be done", see Appendix D). In other words, the questions on the scale could be answered by women to gauge their opinions on how men should be within society. The use of masculinity measures on women has been reported by recent research (see Parent & Smiler, 2013). However given that this is not the ideal use of the MANI-II, one expects the findings of the women in this study to differ from the men.

As Table 2 indicates, the correlations between the various friendship qualities are positive and significant as they were for men. Furthermore, the friendship qualities were positively correlated with the measure of happiness with companionship being the most related to happiness for the female participants, $r = .299$, $p < .01$. Surprisingly, intimacy had the lowest correlation with happiness – although significant still. None of the variables were significantly correlated with masculinity ideology. This finding is not surprising as it is based on women's scores on the masculinity ideology measure.

Table 2.

Intercorrelations of independent, mediator and dependent variables (women)

| | Help | Intimacy | Companionship | Masculinity Ideology | Happiness |
|----------------------|--------|----------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Help | – | | | | |
| Intimacy | .599** | – | | | |
| Companionship | .558** | .606** | – | | |
| Masculinity Ideology | .088 | .079 | .059 | – | |
| Happiness | .274** | .198** | .299** | .058 | – |

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

The model comparisons were done separately for both men and women will be discussed below.

Path analysis for men. The overall aim of the path analysis was to test whether or not masculinity ideology functioned as a mediator between the friendship qualities and happiness. This was the theoretical model formulated in this study, based on what is known from the literature. For masculinity ideology to be a mediator variable, three conditions had to be met (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Firstly, the variations in the friendship qualities (intimacy, companionship, and help) had to result in a significant variation in masculinity ideology. Secondly, variations in masculinity ideology had to result in significant variations in happiness. Lastly, the path between the friendship qualities and happiness is not significant when the mediator variable is controlled for. This path has to be zero in order to show that masculinity ideology is the dominant mediator. Hence three models were tested. Model 1 (see Figure 9) was designed to test the direct effects of the independent variables (companionship, help, intimacy, and masculinity ideology) on happiness, as well as the direct effects of the

independent variables on happiness via the mediator variable (masculinity ideology). Model 2 (see Figure 10) was designed to test only the direct effects of the independent variables, including masculinity ideology, on happiness.

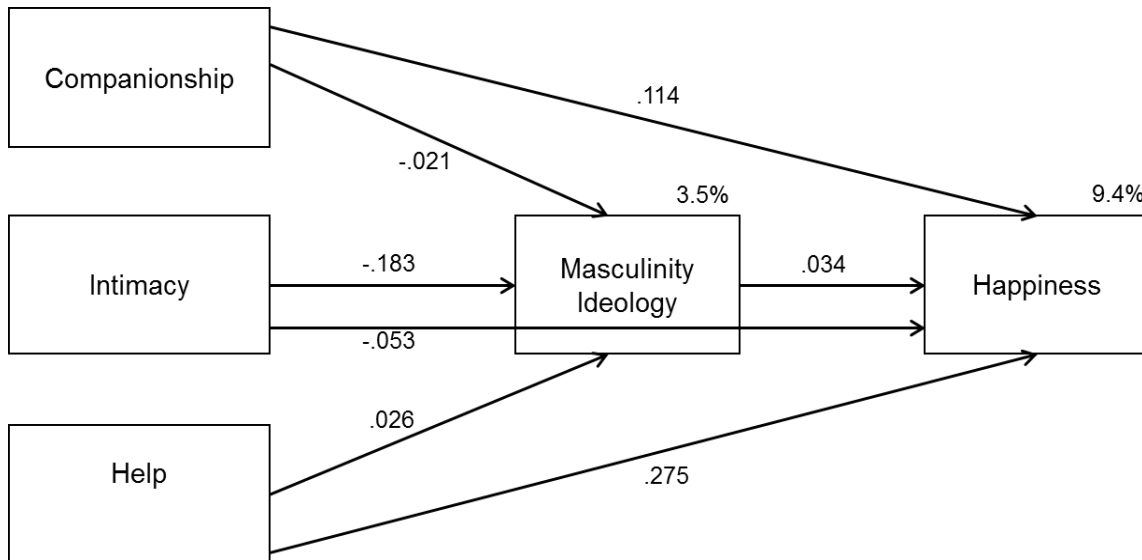


Figure 9. Model 1 with the independent variables, masculinity ideology as a mediator, and happiness as a dependent variable for the male sample.

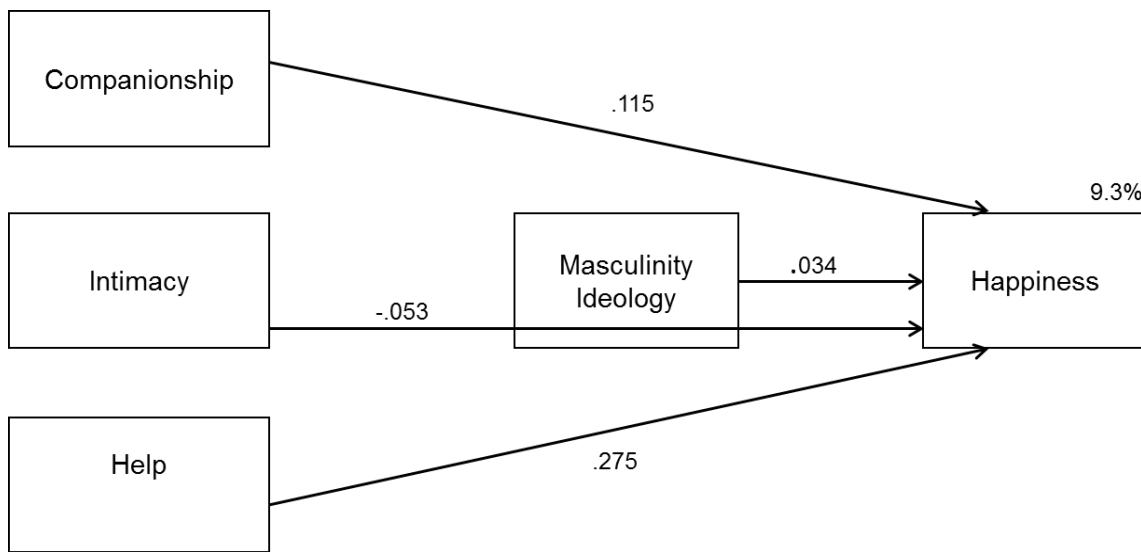


Figure 10. Model 2 which only includes the direct paths of all the variables and happiness for the male sample

Lastly, Model 3 (see Figure 11) was designed to test the effects of the independent variables on happiness via the masculinity ideology, the mediator variable. This figure is identical to the proposed pathway to happiness as seen in Figure 1 in Chapter 1.

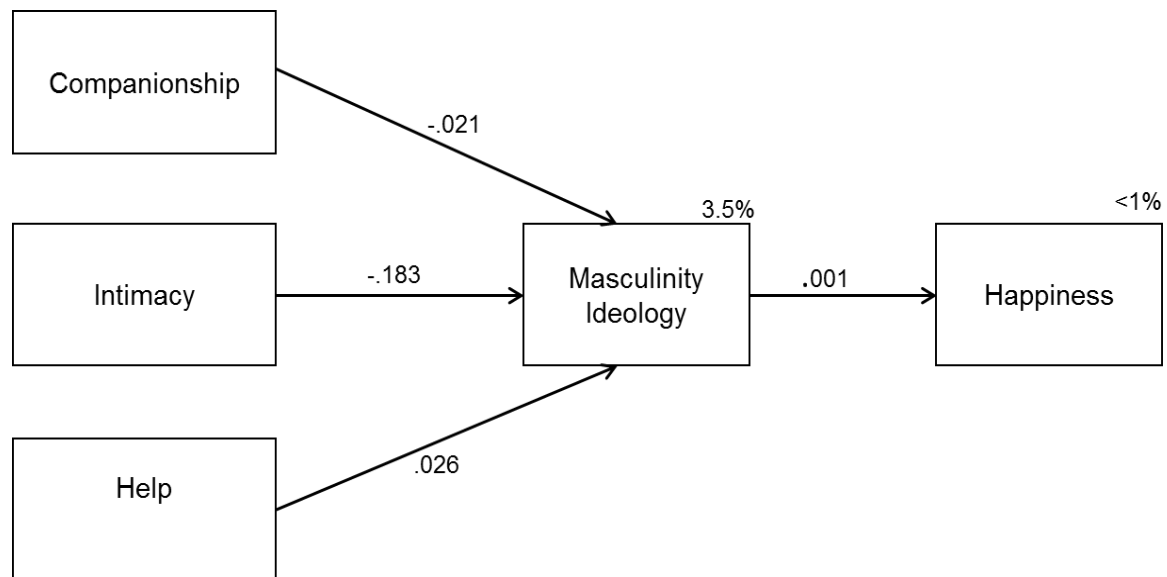


Figure 11. Model 3 which only includes masculinity as a mediator between the independent variables and happiness for the male sample.

The nested model approach allows researchers to establish whether or not a parsimonious (nested) model is significantly different from the base model (Bollen, 1989; Loehlin, 1992). Thus the base model is compared to the nested models in order to ascertain which model is a better fit for the data. In this case, the base model is Model 1 with Model 2 and Model 3 being the nested models. This approach was used to determine whether or not the model testing masculinity ideology as a mediator variable (Model 3) had the best fit to the data. This was done to investigate whether or not masculinity ideology was a mediator variable (AMOS FAQ #6, Nested Model Comparisons, 2004). It also allows the researcher to

compare the path coefficients and variances of all the models involved in the nested models comparisons.

In terms of model comparisons, an assessment of fit indices indicated that Model 1 (ie. the model testing the direct and indirect paths) was not a good fit to the data, $\chi^2 (3) = 165.09$, $p = .000$, $NFI = .108$, $CFI = .074$, $RMSEA = .623$. The same was found for Models 2 and 3. Thus none of the proposed models managed to significantly fit the data. In terms of the variance explained by each model, Model 1 explained 9.4% of the variance in happiness whilst Model 2 explained 9.3% of the variance in happiness. Model 3, which examined the mediating path, explained the least variance of the models (< 1%).

The nested model comparisons revealed that when comparing the base model (Model 1) with nested model 1 (Model 3), nested model 1 was significant, $\chi^2 (9) = 15.279$, $p = .002$. This indicates that the nested model worsens the overall fit and that the original model should be accepted. When the base model was compared to nested model 2 (Model 2 which measured the direct effects of all the independent variables as well as masculinity ideology on happiness), model 2 was not significant, $\chi^2 (3) = 4.663$, $p = .198$. In this case, the base model would have been rejected in favour of the Model 2.

The standardised path coefficients for Models 1, 2 and 3 are presented in Table 3. These coefficients pertain to the men in the study. Given that the models were not a good fit to the data, only the direct effects were reported. The results indicate a significant positive path between help and happiness as well as the significant negative path between intimacy and masculinity. These results match the hypotheses presented earlier on in the chapter. The significant and non-significant paths (those that deviated from the norms in the literature) from Model 1 will be discussed as this model, albeit a bad fit to the data, explained the most variance in terms of masculinity ideology and happiness.

Table 3.

Variance and path coefficients for Models 1, 2 and 3 (men)

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| | Direct and mediated paths | | Direct paths | | Mediated paths | |
| | Masculinity | Happiness | Masculinity | Happiness | Masculinity | Happiness |
| | Ideology | | Ideology | | Ideology | |
| Variance | 3.5% | 9.4% | – | 9.3% | 3.5% | <1% |
| Masculinity | – | .034 | – | .034 | – | .001 |
| Ideology | | | | | | |
| Companionship | -.021 | .114 | – | .115 | -.021 | – |
| Intimacy | -.183* | -.053 | – | -.053 | -.183* | – |
| Help | .026 | .275*** | – | .275*** | .026 | – |

Note: This table represents the standardised path coefficients for men * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

The path coefficient between intimacy and happiness was not significant ($\beta = -.053$; $p = .520$). The path coefficient between help ($\beta = .275$; $p < .001$) and happiness was positive and significant. This indicates that those who believed that their friends aided them whenever necessary perceived themselves to be happy. Help was the only friendship quality that was significantly related to happiness. One of the friendship qualities, intimacy, was a significant predictor of masculinity ideology. The negative significant path coefficient of intimacy ($\beta = -.183$; $p < .05$) on masculinity ideology indicates that men who had high levels of intimacy

usually did not adhere to most/certain masculine norms. However, the path coefficient between masculinity ideology and happiness was not significant ($\beta = .34$; $p = .681$). This indicates that while intimacy plays a role in predicting adherence to masculine norms, adherence to masculine norms do not have any significant effect on happiness.

Path analysis for women. The discussion now turns to the analysis of the data provided by the women in the sample on the same variables. It must be said again that this is not the main aim of the present study, but that it is done simply to see whether the results would duplicate the men's findings. The model comparisons for the women's path analysis were similar to that of the men. Models 1, 2 and 3 were not significant. None of the models were a good fit to the data.

Model 1 explained 8.7% of the variance in happiness as well as 0.6% of the masculinity ideology scores. Model 2 also explained 8.7% of the variance in happiness. Model 2 only explained 0.3% of the variance in happiness scores. These scores further indicate that the models were not good fits to the data. Most importantly, the models show that the mediation path (Model 2) is the weakest predictor of happiness. This model only explained 0.3% of the happiness scores for women.

The nested model comparisons compared the base model (Model 1) to the respective nested models (Models 2 and 3). In AMOS, the nested model comparisons assume that the base model is correct even if this is not the case. With this in mind, the base model was compared to model 3. It was found that model 3 was significant, $\chi^2(3) = 21.49$, $p < .001$. This indicates that the nested model would worsen the overall fit to the data thus the base model should be retained. When compared to the base model, model 2 was found to be not significant, $\chi^2(3) = 1.698$, $p = .637$. This model which measured the direct effects of masculinity ideology, intimacy, companionship and help on happiness was accepted in favour

of the base model. A similar pattern was found for the nested model comparisons conducted on the men in the study.

Table 4 shows the standardised path coefficients for Models 1, 2 and 3 for the path analysis conducted using the women's results on the various measures. The results indicate that there is a positive relationship between help on happiness as well as a significant path between companionship and happiness for the female sample. The relevant findings from Model 1 will be discussed.

Table 4.

Variance and path coefficients for Models 1, 2 and 3 (women)

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| | Direct and mediated paths | | Direct paths | | Mediated paths | |
| | Masculinity | Happiness | Masculinity | Happiness | Masculinity | Happiness |
| | Ideology | | Ideology | | Ideology | |
| Variance | 0.6% | 8.7% | – | 8.7% | 0.6% | 0.3% |
| Masculinity | – | .033 | – | .034 | – | .057 |
| Ideology | | | | | | |
| Companionship | -.002 | .232** | – | .232** | -.002 | – |
| Intimacy | .042 | -.046 | – | -.046 | .042 | – |
| Help | .064 | .173* | – | .173* | .064 | – |

Note: This table represents the standardised path coefficients for women *p < .05; **p < .001

The path coefficients between the friendship qualities and masculinity ideology were not significant. This was to be expected as these findings stem from women who are not the ideal target of the MANI-II, the scale used to measure masculinity ideology in men.

Similarly, the path between masculinity ideology and happiness was not significant ($\beta = .033, p = .632$). One could argue that this means that believing that men should adhere to masculinity ideology does not play a role in the subjective well-being of women. As with the men's path analysis, the path coefficient between intimacy and happiness was not significant ($\beta = -.046, p = .507$).

In terms of the significant findings, the path coefficient between help and happiness was positive ($\beta = .033, p = .012$). In essence, the more one perceives their friend to be helpful, the more one is likely to be happy. This path was also significant for the men's path analysis which indicates the importance of help in the friendships of both genders. The stronger path coefficient was found between happiness and companionship ($\beta = .232, p < .001$). This path coefficient was surprisingly not significant for the men in the study. This finding suggests that the more women spend time with their female friends and engage in activities with them, the happier they are. This indicates that the paths to happiness for men and for women may differ in some aspects but are similar in others.

Summary

This chapter has presented the results for the two research questions posed in this study. The first question was investigated by the group comparisons tests. These tests aimed to test the differences between men and women on the various dimensions of friendship and measures of happiness. The group comparisons tests - which utilised Mann Whitney U tests and t-tests - found that men and women scored differently on measures of intimacy,

companionship, help and satisfaction with life. In all cases, women scored significantly higher than men on the measures. However, men and women did not differ in terms of their overall happiness scores.

The second research question focussed on men's friendships and the interrelationships between intimacy, companionship, help, masculinity ideology and happiness. Path analyses indicated that none of the models were a good fit to the data, although certain paths were found to be significant such as the path between intimacy and masculinity ideology for men. As expected, there was a negative association between intimacy and masculinity ideology for men in this study. There was a positive relationship between companionship and happiness for women. This finding was unexpected. Furthermore, help was the only dimension of friendship that was significantly related to happiness for both genders. The pathway between intimacy and happiness was not significant for both genders. The implications of these findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: Discussion and Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to develop and test a model predicting happiness in men's friendships, a model that would bring together some of the disparate strands of research on this topic. Based on the extant literature, it was assumed that the effects of certain friendship dimensions or qualities, namely companionship, intimacy, and self-disclosure on happiness would be mediated by one's agreement with certain norms regarding masculinity (i.e. masculinity ideology). This hypothesis has not been tested in the past.

As a foreword to this analysis, the study initially examined the gender differences between men and women in terms of intimacy, companionship and help as well as their expressions of positive affect, negative affect, satisfaction with life, and happiness. As mentioned in Chapter 3, positive affect, negative affect, and satisfaction with life were used to compute an overall happiness score for the participants. Group comparisons tests were chosen to investigate these gender differences. Two of the four hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1 regarding gender differences were supported: there was a significant difference between men's and women's intimacy scores; and there was no difference between men and women in terms of their happiness. The overall findings suggest that intimacy, companionship, and help manifest in women's friendships more readily than in men's friendships.

Following these tests, path analysis was used to investigate whether or not masculinity ideology functioned as a mediator between friendship qualities and happiness for men. None of the models were a good fit to the data, however certain pathways within the models were found to be significant. As per the hypotheses, intimacy was negatively associated with masculinity ideology, and help was positively associated with happiness.

Additional analyses on the women's sample regarding the path models indicated that both help and companionship were significantly associated with happiness.

The abovementioned findings will be discussed in more detail below.

Group Comparison Tests: Gender Differences

Differences in intimacy. Women were found to score higher than men on the measure of intimacy. These gender differences were not surprising considering the importance of self-disclosure within intimacy, and the literature on intimacy and gender differences. It has long been argued that women are more intimate than men in their same-sex and cross-sex friendships (Cozby, 1974; Hall, 2010; Vigil, 2007). Further evidence is provided by Mendelson and Aboud (1999) who found that men scored lower than women on each subscale of the MFQ-FF questionnaire. Fehr's (2004) work is perhaps most useful here in terms of understanding this result. She suggested that women communicate closeness in their friendships through self-disclosure, and that this is the pathway to intimacy in these relationships for them. Men, on the other hand prefer shared activities as a way of communicating closeness in their friendships, and thus it comes as no surprise they score lower on measures of this dimension of friendship.

One could speculate that the notion that men are stoic when it comes to their emotions may have inhibited men from admitting to being vulnerable to their male friends. A study conducted on boys and girls by Rose et al. (2012) indicated that independence is valued by boys thus they were less likely to disclose their problems to their friends than women. A reason given for this was that boys do not see the utility of disclosing their problems as much as women do. Simply put, intimacy through self-disclosure is not as useful to them in their friendship.

Men prefer not to communicate closeness this way as evidenced by Migliaccio's

(2009) and Patrick and Beckenbach's (2009) studies. Both studies indicate that companionship is a far more beneficial way for men to be in their friendships. In other words, men close male friendships are characterised by shared activities and experiences rather than the intimacy and self-disclosure.

Differences in companionship. It was thought that men might score higher than women on the dimension of companionship based on the argument that men's friendships are instrumental and side-by-side rather than expressive and face-to-face (Fehr, 2004; Duck & Wright, 1993). Despite this, women scored significantly higher than men on the companionship measure in the present study. Nevertheless, the literature allows for such a result, and there are findings from other studies that also showed women to be higher in companionship ratings (Elkins & Peterson, 1993; Jourard & Lasakow, 1958; Warris & Rafique, 2009).

Since the data for each friendship dimension was not normally distributed, mean rank scores for men and women were computed using Mann-Whitney U tests. The present study found that, in terms of the mean rank scores, the companionship mean ranks for men were higher than those of their mean rank scores for intimacy. This may suggest that companionship is regarded more favourably than intimacy for men (Kaplan, 2007; Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010; Migliaccio, 2009). Women's mean rank scores on companionship were lower than their mean rank scores for intimacy for this study. Thus, although in the present study women scored higher on companionship than men, intimacy is still ranked higher than companionship. The opposite is true for men in the present study. The literature on men in terms of both companionship and intimacy is thus consistent; men prefer companionship to intimacy.

It is not clear what to make of the particular finding (that women score higher than

men) in the present study. It is clear that part of the explanation lies in the definition of the variable, and how it is operationalized. It might just be that the stimulating companionship variable in the McGill Friendship Questionnaire- Friendship Functions focuses more on the enjoyment one derives from being with the friend, rather than the shared activities themselves (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999). Because of this, the measure may leave out an important aspect of companionship; that men communicate closeness with male friends through shared activities such as reaching a goal together, teamwork, and other recreational activities (Kaplan, 2005; Kaplan, 2007; Migliaccio, 2009). This may have implications on how companionship is understood by researchers, and may deserve closer conceptual work in future studies.

Differences in help. As with the mean ranks of companionship and intimacy, there was a significant difference between men and women on the help measure. The Mann Whitney-U tests indicated that women scored significantly higher than men in terms of help. The same was seen in the mean rank scores of the other variables. This finding is consistent with the MFQ-FF gender differences found by Mendelson and Aboud (1999). They found that women scored higher than men on all the friendship qualities measured by the MQF-FF.

An important finding is that help had the highest mean rank of all the friendship qualities for men, even though women's mean rank scores were higher. This is consistent with the finding that men's friendships are functional and instrumental. In other words, they consist of instrumental support and shared activities (Roy, Benenson, & Lily, 2000; Zimmerman, 2004). What this suggests is that men prefer to communicate closeness in their friendships through instrumental help or assistance rather than through intimacy (Bank & Hansford, 2000; Migliaccio, 2009; Patrick & Beckenbach, 2009; Wright, 1982).

The converse was true for women. Women scored higher on intimacy and

companionship than on the measure of help. This suggests that women value intimacy and companionship more than help in this particular study. Despite this, they still scored higher on the measure of help than men. What makes this finding more puzzling is that the measure of help is meant to measure the instrumental aspects of support (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999).

Whether instrumental or emotional, support requires a person to tell a significant other that they are facing particular challenges. This involves certain levels of disclosure which may be the reason why women scored significantly higher on this measure. Rose and Asher (2004) found that girls endorsed prosocial strategies such as interpersonal engagement and disclosure more than boys as far as help was concerned. Advice-seeking and speaking about the problem involves self-disclosure and vulnerability which may account for the high help scores in women. If one tells a friend about their problems, one is more likely to receive assistance. Perhaps this is the reason why women scored higher even on the measure of instrumental help (Rose & Asher, 2004).

In terms of men, Rose et al. (2012) argue that men prefer to deal with their problems independently as per gender norms. In other words, men tend to deal with issues on their own. This supports findings by Greif (2006) which suggest that men are socialised not to seek help when it is need. Furthermore, men seem to seek and advice and instrumental support through what Kaplan (2007) described as action empathy. In other words, you assist a friend when you can see that they are in need of assistance. It is thus unlikely for men to verbally disclose their need for help. This suggests that help manifests differently in both genders.

Differences in positive and negative affect. The differences between men and women on positive affect as well as negative affect were not significant. Generally, women are considered to report significantly higher levels of positive affect than men (Demir, Ozdemir, & Weitkamp, 2007; King & Terrace, 2008). The implication of this finding in the

present study is that men and women are quite similar when it comes to the affective aspects of subjective well-being. This is in contrast with the male deficit model of friendships that exists in the literature (Demir & Orthel, 2011; Wood & Inman, 1993). The male deficit model argues that men are taught to control their emotions and display toughness (Armengol-Carrera, 2009; Greif, 2006; Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010), and that they would then score lower on subjective well-being. If men and women are not significantly different on measures of positive and negative affect, one might argue that men are not as emotionally stoic as the literature suggests. This calls into question the deficit model on male friendships.

The PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) measured positive and negative affect in this study. It gauged how men and women felt *generally* in terms of the emotions or feelings provided. This indicates that men and women in this study were similar in terms of their overall feelings. This could have affected the overall happiness score computed for the happiness variable in the present study.

Differences in satisfaction with life. The significant difference between men and women on the measure of overall satisfaction with life was not in line with the hypotheses. It was found that women experienced more satisfaction with life than men based on the scores obtained on the SWLS. Since satisfaction with life is considered as a decent measure of the cognitive aspect of subjective well-being, one can assume that these findings support the longstanding notion that women are generally happier than men (Demir & Orthel, 2011). More specifically, the findings indicate that women *perceive* their lives to be more satisfying than the lives of men. This finding seems to support the deficit model of male friendships.

Greif (2006) mentions men's quality of life can be improved through establishing stronger connections with other men. This could lead to closer friendships, increased well-being and longevity (Greif, 2009; Thomas, 2010). If men are less satisfied than women in

their lives and in their friendships, then one has no choice but to accept that the deficit model is a valid albeit limited way of understanding men's friendships. Interestingly, the differences between men and women on satisfaction with life were not found in the measure of overall happiness.

Differences in happiness. There were no significant differences between men and women in terms of happiness, as measured by an aggregate standardised score computed using scores on the PANAS and the SWLS. This suggests that while men and women differ on many of the friendship qualities as presented above, they are quite similar on most measures of happiness (Demir, Ozdemir, & Weitkamp, 2007). It has been argued that certain friendship dimensions predict happiness. These include support, companionship, and intimacy.

Ozen, Sumer, and Demir (2010) argue that in terms of friendship quality, best friendships and close friendships contribute the most to well-being. If men and women are similar in terms of their well-being, this suggests that both their same-sex friendships contribute to their happiness despite their differences in terms of companionship, intimacy and help. What is interesting is that, while women scored higher than men on all these dimensions, they were not different than men in terms of their well-being. If anything, these findings suggest that men's friendships should not be pathologised as they too contribute to their happiness. This calls into question the longstanding deficit model of male friendships as seen in the literature. Research should perhaps focus on understanding these differences rather than problematizing them. Perhaps then, we will be able to understand why men and women score differently on various dimensions of friendship especially when this seems to have little or no bearing on their feelings of happiness.

Overall, the findings of the group comparisons tests suggest that women score higher

than men on all friendship qualities. This is perhaps due to the face to face, emotionally-driven nature of women's friendships which focus on self-disclosure, emotional support, vulnerability and help in the form of advice (Elkins & Peterson, 1993; Demir & Orthel, 2011; Hacker 1981). Conversely, men choose side by side friendships which favour instrumental support, problem-solving and shared activities (Fehr, 2004; Migliaccio, 2009; Wood & Inman, 1993). Intimacy is not absent in these friendships. It is rather a lesser friendship quality when compared to help and companionship. It is a useful dimension of friendship for men, as Fehr (2004) has argued, but it is not paramount in their friendships. This does not necessarily mean that their friendships are less close than women's friendships. Rather, these findings are merely an indicator of difference. This is especially so as no significant difference was found between men and women in terms of their overall happiness.

What is clear is that both men's and women's friendships result in positive relations with others thus making both men and women happy in their respective ways (Hofer, Busch, & Kiesseling, 2008). As long as companionship, intimacy and help are present in the friendship, it is likely to be a satisfying friendship which will contribute to one's happiness.

Path analysis

Although the first part of this work examined gender differences on a number of important dimensions related to friendship, men were the primary focus of the present study. As a result, the main aim of this study was to develop and test a model that predicted that men's subjective well-being will depend on how they regarded their friendships (in terms of intimacy, companionship, and help), as mediated by where they stand on masculinity ideology.

This model tested two main assumptions. Firstly, the model assumed that certain

friendship dimensions (i.e., companionship, intimacy, and help) had an effect on happiness. Secondly, the model assumed that these friendship qualities interacted with a mediator variable, namely masculinity ideology, to affect happiness. Thus the expectation was that the effects of intimacy, companionship, and help on happiness will be mediated by the variable, masculinity ideology.

Overall, the hypothesis that men's happiness would depend on certain dimension of friendships as mediated by their adherence to a masculine ideology was not supported as none of the models were a good fit to the data. Admittedly, this was an ambitious idea to explore in the research on friendships as these variables had not been studied in this way before. I concede that it was quite unlikely that a suitable model would be found for the data given the variables involved in the study. Despite this, the current research found significant paths between certain variables within the model. Some paths were consistent with the extant literature, while others suggest that certain dimensions of friendship may not be as paramount to friendships as previously suggested by researchers.

The intercorrelations between companionship, intimacy, and help were significant. These correlations were expected as these variables are considered to be vital to friendships as they enhance friendship quality (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999). Furthermore, these qualities in particular are three of the most important when understanding the effect of positive friendship qualities on the formation and maintenance of both same-sex and cross-sex friendships (Bagwell et al., 2005; Fuhrman, Flannagan, & Matamoros, 2009; Sullivan, 1953). This is further evidenced by the fact that these correlations were also seen for the women in the study when the paths between these variables were tested for them as well. This suggests that companionship, intimacy, and help are vital to friendship irrespective of gender and are dimensions that should be considered when investigating the quality of friendship.

Intimacy, companionship and help were also significantly positively correlated with happiness, further indicating their importance as contributing factors to happiness within same-sex friendships (Demir, 2010; Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1996; Ozen et al., 2011). This positive relationship further shows that positive friendship dimensions are related to happiness. Interestingly, the correlations between intimacy and happiness were low for both men and women in the study. These findings could indicate that this variable may not be as vital to happiness as previously argued in the literature. This is supported by the work of Demir and Weitkamp (2007) who argued that companionship and support were key predictors of happiness in friendship. This bolsters the argument that companionship is “one of the most basic dimensions of friendship,” (Demir & Weitkamp, 2007, p. 201). It also suggests that it is more important to adult friendships than previously argued by researchers.

Given the literature on masculinity ideology and intimacy, it was not surprising that intimacy was negatively correlated with masculinity ideology for men. This finding was significant and supports the longstanding notion that there is an inverse correlation between conformity to masculine norms and the expression of intimacy in male friendships (Gore, Cross, & Morris, 2006; Greif, 2006; Migliaccio, 2009). Migliaccio (2009) for example, found that masculine expectations result in a decrease in expressiveness (intimacy/self-disclosure) and an increase in instrumentality (shared activities). This indicates that masculinity is an integral part of men’s friendships. The path between masculinity ideology and intimacy was also significant and negative, a further illustration of the inverse relationship between these two variables that has been noted in the literature. Most would argue that men are deficient in terms of intimacy but I would argue that it is not a deficiency. Rather, this is the reality of most male friendships.

The major conclusion one can draw from this is that one cannot divorce ideas of

maleness from same-sex male friendships (Migliaccio, 2009). Men relate to one another in their own way that is different to the way that women relate to one another. There are similarities and differences between their friendships. Perhaps researchers should look to valuing these friendships as they stand in the same way that they value female friendships as being intimate and full of self-disclosure. It is clear that each kind of friendship contributes to the happiness of men and women.

The path between companionship and happiness was significant for women in the study but not for men. The importance of companionship in friendships has already been acknowledged (see Cann, 2004; Roy, Benenson, & Lilly, 2000) but is often underplayed in women as research argues that they tend to prefer intimate, talk-centred friendships (Duck & Wright, 1993). The finding in the present study suggests that women do enjoy spending time engaging in stimulating activities with their friends. It must be acknowledged that in this study, men acted contrary to what one would expect from the literature on male friendship and companionship. It is not immediately clear from the results why this was the case however some explanations were indicated in the section on gender differences in companionship.

Thoits (2011) suggests another way out of this puzzle; that stimulating companionship and self-disclosure might be confounded for women. When a person shares in social activities with a friend, one will experience positive affect. This can lead to physical and psychological well-being and buffers against loneliness. One might argue that women engage in self-disclosure (and thus intimacy) while engaged in shared activities with their female friends.

The fact that this path was not significant for men in the study is equally interesting given the literature which argues that men's friendship involve shared activities and mutuality. Following the same reasoning as indicated above, it may be that in men's

friendships, men would rather engage in the activities with their friend than to disclose how much these shared activities bring them joy. Questions such as “X is fun to do things with” on the MQF-FF require one to disclose the joy and affection that one has towards a friend. One might argue that men would rather *have* a good time rather than *discuss/disclose* how fun it is to have a good time with their male friends. Five questions were used to gauge this dimension of friendship (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999, see Appendix A). Perhaps other measures could have better understood how companionship works in men; in particular, removing the possible confound between self-disclosure and companionship. These measures would have to remove the affective component in this dimension. If the companionship measure had focussed on the frequency with which a friend engages in certain activities, perhaps the findings would have been different. This could be a better way of gauging the shared aspect of companionship.

An interesting finding in this study was that the path between intimacy and happiness was not significant for both men and women. This was unexpected, considering the literature that has suggested that self-disclosure (and thus intimacy) is vital to close, meaningful friendships and psychological adjustment (Bowman, 2008; Cozby, 1973; Johnson et al., 2007; Reisman, 1990). Perhaps intimacy may not be an important dimension of men’s friendships as far as subjective well-being is concerned.

A study by Landoll, Schwartz-Mette, Rose, and Prinstein (2011) may be able to account for this anomaly. Landoll et al. posit that self-disclosure may have important implications for adjustment as discussing one’s problems to a friend results in a catharsis. This catharsis potentially leads to certain emotional benefits including stress relief and positive feelings. Their study examined adolescent friends and their same-sex friend. The authors observed these friendship dyads as they discussed a number of issues related to

depression. They found that discussing problems with a friend was significantly cathartic for boys after a sixth month period but not for the girls in their study. Two reasons were given for this. The first reason given by the authors was that the boys used self-disclosure as a means to engage in problem-solving and other behaviours which combatted the effects of depression. Secondly, the researchers argued that the catharsis manifested only if the men valued self-disclosure in their friendships. This further indicates that intimacy is only important for men *if* they value it (Fehr, 2004; Rose & Asher, 2004).

In contrast, women in their study engaged in self-disclosure that may have been excessive in nature which potentially cancelled out the protective benefits of self-disclosure. This explained the null effect it had on depression over the sixth month period. They argue that women may have conversations which are negatively focussed, speculative and repetitive in nature. This results in co-rumination which may predict depressive symptoms over time. Furthermore, they argue that women take personal responsibility for their problems and internalise them. This indicates that, while intimacy has potential benefits, it can also be a risky exercise. Constantly seeking reassurance and ruminating about one's problems is a trait commonly found in women's friendships (Landoll et al., 2011). This indicates that intimacy, through self-disclosure and vulnerability, may in fact be detrimental to happiness in certain circumstances. This may explain the findings as seen in the present study.

Help was found to be a significant predictor of happiness for both men's and women's friendships. This is not surprising as social support has long been seen as a buffer against stress. It is also a dimension which results in increased happiness (Mitchell, Lebow, Uribe, Grathouse, & Shoger, 2011). It was a stronger predictor for happiness in the men's sample. This was expected, given that it is the one variable that is often studied in relation to men, masculinity and friendship. In terms of men, providing friends with support or assistance is

seen as a key indicator of care and closeness (Migliaccio, 2009; Patrick & Beckenbach, 2009; Wood & Inman, 1993;). This brings us back to the well-known adage, 'a friend in need is a friend indeed.' It also indicates the instrumental nature of men's friendships and it further suggests that these friendships should be examined under different lenses than those which invalidate male ways of relating.

This is not to say however that women's friendships aren't supportive. Perhaps these findings indicate that the kind of support and assistance men and women provide for their friends differs. Women are more likely to provide emotional support while men provide instrumental support (Langford, Bowsher, Malony, & Lillis, 1997). This, along with shared activities and self-disclosure helps to make both men's and women's friendships closer. As previously stated, help incorporates the concept of support, a significant psychological contribution to friendships (Weiner & Hannum, 2013). Support is an important dimension as some friendships are not face to face. Weiner and Hannum (2013) researched the manifestation of social support in long distance and geographically close friendships. Their study found that emotional, instrumental, and perceived support were key factors in reducing the impact of stress in both long distance and geographically close friendships. The internet and other technological advancements have played a role in maintaining these friendships (Amichai-Hamburger et al., 2012; Froding & Peterson, 2012; McEwan & Guerrero, 2010). What this implies is that support plays an instrumental role in the maintenance of friendships regardless of distance and type. It can be experienced both offline and online and is a significant buffer against stress and depression when necessary (Mitchell et al., 2011). It is related to many positive outcomes including happiness. Demir, Ozdemir & Marum (2011) argue that supportiveness is a key behaviour in friendship maintenance, thus further indicating the importance of this dimension of friendships.

Perhaps the most important finding of this particular study was the negative path between intimacy and masculinity ideology found for the group of men in the study. This significant path bolsters the argument that a higher adherence to, or agreement with, masculine norms results in a lower levels of intimacy for men in their friendships. It also suggests that it is not simply men, but men with a certain ideology toward masculinity who respond to intimacy in this way. This finding is often overlooked and underplayed, and is truly interesting. It is a contribution to our understanding of intimacy and men. The finding illustrates the need to examine other ways that men communicate closeness within their friendship. It is clear that intimacy might have been seen as feminine by some men hence their scores on the variable. This is in line with quantitative and qualitative research on men, masculinity and intimacy with regards to certain dimensions in same-sex friendships (Hacker, 1981; Migliaccio, 2009; Wood & Inman, 1993). Does this path make men's friendships less close or pathological? Based on some of the findings of this study, the answer is no. The fact that men and women are similar on their happiness scores is an indication of this. Additionally, help was found to be positively linked to happiness for both men and women. These two findings suggest that help is the key dimension in men's friendships and those men are still happy, regardless of their adherence to masculine norms.

Studies conducted by Rose et al. (2012) and Landoll et al. (2011) found that men disclose only when necessary – when they want to solve the problems that they face. In other words, men only self-disclose if they see it as being a vital utility in their friendships. Intimacy is thus not necessarily a prerequisite for their close friendships. It is a useful dimension that some men value over others. This depends on whether or not they adhere to masculine norms of relating. It is clear that men's ways of relating to one another are different to women. Neither one should be prized over the other as this negates the subtle

differences between both genders.

The significant paths for men and women merit further study, particularly in university contexts in South Africa. This study was ambitious in its aim but was able to find some interesting results regarding men's and women's friendships.

Limitations and Recommendations

The study was not without its limitations. Race was from the start not considered as a variable of interest. Although an obvious limitation to the generalizability of the study, this is not considered a threat to the validity of the findings. It is certainly an area for fruitful further study. The way in which the demographic information was collected made it impossible to determine any race or age effects, particularly when comparing the older participants to the younger ones. Furthermore, the study focussed on a particular developmental group and thus age effects were not computed for the participants. Future studies may want to investigate specific other age groups to see if there are differences across the lifespan.

Care and attention to the conceptualisation of the variables, which are often closely intertwined, and the measurement of these variables could improve the value of future studies in this field. As it stands, intimacy is often seen as synonymous with self-disclosure and closeness in the literature. It is also seen as a variable that is involved in romantic and sexual relationships. Researchers may want to investigate its effects on happiness by defining this variable in a way that suggests that it is only related to platonic relationships. Help, while predominantly seen as instrumental support in this study, requires one to disclose his/her problems to a friend. This disclosure is a feature of emotional support. It is thus important that these variables be stringently defined in future studies.

Further studies may want to use one scale/measure for happiness as a whole instead of

creating a standardised happiness score based on the cognitive (SWLS) and affective (PANAS) aspects of subjective well-being. This practice is common in happiness research (see Demir, 2011) but it might be more prudent to use an existing scale given the nature of this study. This is especially so given that scales exist which measure subjective happiness, a global assessment of happiness (Demir, Ozdemir, & Marum, 2011).

Conclusion

Friendships are without doubt important relationships in our lives. They have been studied thoroughly over time and are said to provide a person with several benefits. These benefits are advantageous as they relate to adjustment, well-being, quality of life, and closeness for a person within a friendship. These provisions manifest as certain dimensions and differentiate close friends and best friends from acquaintances and others. Three of these dimensions include companionship, intimacy and help. Each of these dimensions are said to contribute to the happiness of an individual.

Male friendships, which have been studied for many years, have been of particular interest to researchers based on the deficits that are said to exist in these friendships. Studies of these friendships are often maligned by certain gender expectations based on masculinity ideology. Men are said to be less intimate or close as they do not engage in self-disclosure. Other studies suggest that the study of male friendships is dominated by feminine norms regarding friendship. These discrepancies lead to this study investigating male friendships by comparing them to women's friendships on the three aforementioned dimensions.

Certain findings were consistent with the literature. Men scored significantly lower than women on measures of intimacy as well as on measures of help. They also scored lower than women on a measure of satisfaction with life. Surprisingly, men also scored lower on

companionship, a variable that is said to be prominent in male friendships. Reasons for this may be investigated in future studies. Interestingly, there was no difference between men and women in terms of happiness. This may be an anomaly in this study or it may suggest that men and women are similarly happy in their friendships despite the differences between them on these friendship dimensions.

The study had an ambitious aim of trying to model the variables of happiness, masculinity ideology, companionship, intimacy and help to determine if there were any inter-relationships between the variables. This was to determine whether or not masculinity ideology mediated the relationship between the dimensions of friendship and happiness. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study was the first of its kind to examine the interplay between these variables. None of the models tested were significant as a whole, however certain pathways between the variables were found to be significant. In terms of men, the inverse relationship between intimacy and masculinity ideology still stands. The more men identify with longstanding conceptions of masculinity, the less they will convey intimacy to their male friends. Similarly high levels of intimacy suggest that men choose not to identify with certain conceptions of masculinity. This supports the idea that men's friendships are in fact, performances of masculinity which suggests that researchers should look beyond the deficit model when examining male friendships. Perhaps it might be time to acknowledge that applying female norms to male friendships is not the best way to understand how men interact with one another.

For women, the path between companionship and happiness was significant. This path was not significant for men which begs the question: what is it about companionship that is so important to happiness? Is it perhaps that they enjoy spending time together or is that they enjoy engaging in self-disclosure whilst they are together? It might be that self-

disclosure and companionship are confounded concepts. This would suggest that certain dimensions of friendship, while different, are entangled. Examining these claims was beyond the scope of the present study thus further research should be done to address this rather unexpected finding.

Two critical findings were found in the study regarding both genders. Firstly, intimacy was not significantly related to happiness for both men and women. This is interesting considering the therapeutic, cathartic benefits that intimacy supposedly possesses. Perhaps self-disclosure and thus intimacy are not as important to happiness as previously argued in the literature.

Secondly, the path between help and happiness was significant for both men and women for the present study. In other words, help is the dimension of friendship that has the potential to develop and sustain both men's and women's same-sex friendships. This contributes to their subjective well-being. Whether the support received from a friend is emotional or instrumental, it contributes to a person's well-being. Thus, while an overall model could not be computed for men and women on the variables, there are some links between certain variables that warrant further investigation.

An important afterthought that may explain these findings is the measure of happiness. Happiness is a difficult construct to measure and the way in which it was measured, which used standardized scores of different scales, could have affected the models that were investigated. It could be that this method of computing happiness does not accurately measure what happiness is. Perhaps it would be prudent to measure either the cognitive or affective aspects of well-being rather than combining them as demonstrated in the present study. Researchers in this often understudied area of male friendships may want to look deeper into the concept of happiness and how manifests in men.

Overall, this study has found a way to investigate the relationship between various dimensions of friendships, masculinity ideology and happiness in a way that has not been attempted before in the literature. Although ambitious in its aims, this exploratory study has found findings that both support the extant literature and suggest that male friendships need to be studied in a holistic manner that incorporates, supports and respects men's gender norms as well as their ways of relating to one another. Only then, can researchers truly understand the way in which certain dimensions contribute to closeness between friends as well as to the happiness of men.

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Appendix A

McGill Friendship Questionnaire–Friendship Functions

The items on this form concern the kind of friend your friend is to you. Imagine that the blank space in each item contains your friend's name. With him or her in mind, decide how often the item applies. On the scale directly to the right of each item **circle the number** that indicates how often your friend is or does what the item says. There are no right or wrong answers because adult friendships are very different from one another. Just describe your friend as he or she really is to you.

Please ensure that you have imagined a best/close friend from your gender.

| Never | | Rarely | | Once in a While | | Fairly Often | | Always |
|-------|---|--------|---|-----------------|---|--------------|---|--------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |

1. ___ is someone I can tell private things to. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

2. ___ has good ideas about entertaining things to do. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

3. ___ makes me laugh. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

4. ___ knows when I'm upset. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

5. ___ is someone I can tell secrets to. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6. ___ is exciting to talk to. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

7. ___ knows when something bothers me. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

8. ___ is exciting to be with. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9. ___ is fun to sit and talk with. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

10. ___ is easy to talk to about private things. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

11. ___ is

12. ___ is

13. ___ is

14. ___ is

15. ___ is

Appendix B

The Male Attitude Norms Inventory- II

Please select the response that most describes your response to the questions that follow

For example:

Men should eat vegetables every day.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

No Opinion

Agree

Strongly Agree

1. If a man hurts himself, he should try not to let others see he is in pain.
2. Men who cry in public are weak.
3. Men should share their worries with other people.*
4. To be a man, you need to be tough.
5. A man should make all the final decisions in the family.
6. Men should be able to sleep close together in the same bed.*
7. Men should have a job that earns them respect.
8. A successful man should be able to live a comfortable life.
9. A man deserves the respect of his family.
10. Men have a sex drive that needs to be satisfied.
11. Men should feel embarrassed if they are unable to get an erection during sex.
12. Men who teach children or cook in restaurants should be proud of what they do.*
13. If a man is frightened, he should try and not let others see it.
14. It is wrong for a man to be seen in a gay bar.

15. Men should be prepared to physically fight their way out of a bad situation.
16. It is admirable for a man to take the lead when something needs to be done.
17. A heterosexual man should not feel embarrassed that he has gay friends.*
18. Gay men should be beaten up.
19. A man's decision should not be questioned.
20. Men should be determined to do well.
21. It is important for a man to be successful in his job.
22. Gay men are not suited to many jobs.
23. Men should remain focused in difficult situations.
24. Men should have the respect and admiration of everyone who knows them.
25. Men should be able to kiss each other without feeling ashamed.*
26. Men are prepared to take risks.
27. A father should be embarrassed if he finds out that his son is gay.
28. Men should be calm in difficult situations.
29. Men should think logically about problems.

*Reverse-scored items.

Appendix C

The Satisfaction with Life Scale

Instructions:

Below are five statements with which you may agree. Using the 1 – 7 Scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line following that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

The 7-point scale is:

1=Strongly Disagree, 2= disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4= neutral (neither agree or disagree), 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal | _____ |
| 2. The conditions of my life are excellent | _____ |
| 3. I am satisfied with my life | _____ |
| 4. So far, I have acquired* the most important things I want in life | _____ |
| 5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing | _____ |

* replaces the word 'gotten' from the original scale

Appendix D

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you **GENERALLY** feel this way, that is, how you feel on the average. Use the following scale to record your answers.

| very slightly or not at all | a little | moderately | quite a bit | extremely |
|-----------------------------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

__interested

___irritable

__distressed

___alert

__excited

___ashamed

__upset

___inspired

__strong

___nervous

__guilty

___determined

__scared

___attentive

__hostile

___jittery

__enthusiastic

___active

__proud

___afraid

Appendix E

Advertisement sent out to students regarding the Friendship Qualities Questionnaire

Subject: Earn 1 SRPP Point!! - ONLINE Friendship Qualities Study

Saved By: Loyiso Maqubela

Modified Date: 13-Aug-2012 11:30

Hi everyone,

I am looking for participants to take part in my Masters Research study.

It is an **online questionnaire** study looking at different **friendship qualities** among University students. It should not take you more than 30 minutes.

Follow this link if you would like to

participate: http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22FV9NFCVUY_

You will be awarded **1 SRPP point** once you have participated in the study.

It's that simple ;-)

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me on loyiso.maqubela@uct.ac.za

Appendix F

Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research project about friendship qualities and happiness.

The questionnaire should not take more than 30 minutes to complete.

Please read through your rights as a research participant

I understand that:

- My participation is voluntary and I may withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the study at any time
- My withdrawal/ refusal to participate will not result in any penalty
- I will not be paid money for participating the study
- SRPP points shall only be awarded should I choose to participate in the friendship quality study
- any information I disclose in this questionnaire will be kept confidential
- there are no expected costs to me participating in this study
- my student number (signature) will only be used to allocate SRPP points

Please sign the consent form below

Appendix G

Debriefing: Friendship Qualities Questionnaire study

The study that you took part in aimed to understand the differences between men and women on a number of friendship dimensions that have been postulated to lead to happiness in same-sex platonic friendships.

Hays (1988) describes friendships as “voluntary interdependence between two persons over time, that is intended to facilitate socio-emotional goals of the participants, and may involve varying types and degrees of companionship, intimacy, affection and mutual assistance” (p. 395). This definition of friendships suggests that it is a bond between two people where certain socio-emotional needs are met. These needs are met through the provision of friendship dimensions/features such as companionship, intimacy and mutual assistance (or help). These dimensions, when provided, contribute to a person’s happiness as they fulfil certain needs.

Unlike familial bonds, friendships are voluntary which makes them all the more special. You choose who your friends are. You choose them because they are similar to you or because you have shared certain experiences with them. This bond is thus essential to one’s lived experience and contributes to your happiness. People enjoy spending time with their friends and engage in certain activities with them. These include watching sports games, chatting about life and in some cases seeking advice when faced with certain problems. In emerging adulthood, a critical and volatile period between adolescence and adulthood, a friend can help support you as you begin to explore different aspects of yourself. This is a period of development where input from your friends becomes pivotal.

Studies on friendships over the years have yielded the finding that men’s friendships are less intimate and thus less close than women’s friendships (Migliaccio, 2009). Because of

this, men's friendships are usually seen as inferior to women's friendships. The male deficit model of friendships argues that men are at risk because they have less intimacy in their friendships. A reason for this is that men adhere to norms regarding masculinity. These norms require men to be emotionally passive, independent and practically invulnerable. By adhering to these norms, men are more likely to experience less happiness than women, according to this male deficit model. However, some argue that men are just different to women in their friendships and that intimacy is not an important feature of their friendships. Companionship and help (assistance) were argued to be dimensions of friendships that men favoured. These dimensions were said to contribute to happiness (Demir, Ozdemir, & Weitkamp, 2007).

This study, which focused on men and women in emerging adulthood, hoped to investigate whether or not men's friendships were as deficient as the male deficit model suggests.

Based on the literature on this topic, I proposed several hypotheses. The most important of these hypotheses stated that:

1. Men and women would differ on measures of companionship, intimacy and help.
These three friendship dimensions are vital to the maintenance and growth of friendships
2. Men and women were not different on measures of happiness
3. Masculinity ideology acts as a mediator between the friendships qualities (companionship, intimacy and help) and happiness.

As a participant in this study, you completed a questionnaire that measured the following constructs

1. The level of intimacy your friend provided to you
2. The level of companionship you experienced with a friend

3. The level of help you received from a friend
4. Your agreement on certain masculine norms regarding men in South Africa
5. Your overall happiness

The results of this study indicated that men and women are indeed different on measures of companionship, intimacy and help. In all cases, women experienced more companionship, more intimacy and more help than men. This seemed to indicate that a male deficit model existed for men. Interestingly, there were no differences between men and women in terms of their happiness. This indicated that even with these gender differences on these dimensions of friendship, men and women were equally happy.

Masculinity ideology was not found to be a mediator between the three friendship dimensions and happiness but there were certain pathways that were significant. Firstly, intimacy had a negative relationship with masculinity ideology. In other words, the more you adhere to masculine norms as a man, the more likely you are to not experience intimacy in your friendships. This suggests that masculinity ideology only impedes intimacy for men who are high in masculinity ideology and not all men.

Secondly, help was the only dimension of friendship that was found to be significantly linked to happiness in this study. This finding was found for men. This suggests that the provision of assistance, whether instrumental or emotional, contributes to the well-being of a person's friends.

Additional analyses were run on women regarding masculinity ideology. Companionship and help were found to be linked to happiness for the women in this study. This puzzling finding suggests that companionship is more important in female friendships than previously hypothesised.

These findings suggest that same-sex friendships are more complex than the literature

suggests. The findings further suggest that for women, happiness is linked to two friendship dimensions rather than one. All in all, men and women's friendships are different in some respects, however, these differences do not necessarily mean that women are happier than men. Both friendships are vital to their well-being despite the differences in how certain dimensions appear in their friendships. It is also clear that help is the friendship dimension that both genders seem to value as it is related to happiness. This supports the famous adage that 'a friend in need is a friend indeed.'

Thank you all for your input. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me.

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Yours sincerely,

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