A Phenomenological Exploration of Intermarriages Between Men of European/U.S./Australian Heritage and Batswana Women of African Heritage

Nomagugu Sethlhare-Oagile

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF INTERMARRIAGES BETWEEN MEN OF EUROPEAN/U.S./AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE AND BATSWANA WOMEN OF AFRICAN HERITAGE

BY

NOMAGUGU SETHLHARE-OAGILE

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Seton Hall University
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DEDICATION

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

From observation, it seems that intermarriages are becoming more common in most societies, Botswana included. One sees interracial couples at the mall, in the church, everywhere. What is so interesting about intermarriages is that, once one crosses the color line, that is, marries someone outside of one's race, people start questioning why. In Botswana, it seems that it is tolerated for a Motswana woman to marry other nationals as long as they are Black, but, once she crosses the color line, and marries a white man, her motives are questioned by the general society. These women experience disapproval from family, friends, and the community. Their children are called derogatory names such as “Lekutwane,” “Makutwane,” or “Lekgoa,” which mean “coloreds,” “mixed,” or “white.”

Despite what people think or say, it is apparent to the native observer that in Botswana more and more women are choosing to marry outside their race.

In Botswana, statistics on interracial marriages are not kept, so one cannot state the percentages of their increase. On observation, the pattern of intermarriage is divided along gender lines; women marry partners of a different race more frequently than men. No research has been done to find out why there are a growing number of these unions in Botswana. It appears the reason for increased interracial marriages may be a shift in general attitudes. It seems that times are changing and people are becoming more relaxed in their attitudes towards intermarriages. The belief that it should not be done and that
Interracial marriage is awful may be changing, or may no longer represent the dominant feeling.

For this study I wanted to learn more about the history of interracial marriages in the U.S., since more studies have been done there than elsewhere, and to also determine how much of it applies to Botswana. I also sought to discover whether there may be hidden prejudices in families, friends, and the community with regard to interracial marriages. In Botswana specifically, to explore marital issues such as shared identity, how the couple handles marital conflicts, and how the couple cultivates their marriage. Communication is core to every marriage; I wanted to also explore how the couples dealt with it and find out beliefs and values the couple bring to the relationship. It was also important to explore the couple’s coping strategies (i.e., how they cope with others’ insensitivity or rude reactions). I also sought to explore gender differentials (i.e., who intermarries frequently, men versus women, and the change in society attitudes towards these unions that is, acceptance and rejection, therapeutic issues, and availability of support systems).

Marriage as a Concept in Botswana

According to Pitsjo and Carmichael (2003), officially a couple is legally married in Botswana once they have celebrated either customary marriage or civil marriage. Marriage by civil rites is governed by Roman Dutch Law and is a distinct event. The most important requirements for customary marriage have been identified as “pallo, a marriage agreement entered into by the parents of the groom and bride incorporating the gifts by the groom to the bride; and bogadi, the payment of bride-wealth, bride-price, or lobola” (p. 1). The authors further stated that social acceptance is crucial for a union to be called a marriage in Botswana. “Marriage becomes socially recognized when the pallo ceremony has occurred.
Pitlo is integral to all customary marriages, and civil rite marriage that does not also
include *pito* is not socially recognized” (p. 2). Roberts (1972, p. 70) described pitlo as
follows:

On the day fixed for the marriage, a group of the man’s married relations go to the
kgotla [ward] of the woman’s descent group during the morning and publicly ask
for the woman’s hand in marriage [this is known as pitlo]. This request is formally
accepted. In the afternoon the request is repeated by a group of the man’s married
female relations who visit their counterparts at the woman’s homestead. Again the
request is formally accepted.

Pitso and Carmichael (2003) emphasized that *pito* is the rite that couples have to
undergo in order for their marriages to be regarded as lawful and as carrying the rights,
duties, and privileges accorded married people in Batswana society. In Botswana
traditionally, as the authors added, “parents or senior relatives arranged marriages. Mutual
attraction between young people was little considered and there was little scope for young
sexually mature people to associate. Much effort was made to keep boys and girls apart
especially at puberty” (p. 2). Nowadays, this is not possible. There is a decline of
‘traditional controls exercised by elders. Both boys and girls go to same schools, are
educated the same way, and women go to colleges more than before. Because of the
flexibility in family ties and gender roles people are allowed to choose their own mates.

A brief synopsis of the concept of marriage in Botswana, might seem
overwhelming for a person who comes from a totally different culture and who has no
knowledge of the rituals of *pito* and *bagadi* where she or he comes from. This added to
my curiosity of finding out what this experience was like for any man of a different
background marrying into Tswana culture.

Concept of Race and Ethnicity in Botswana

My observation is that, in Botswana, race is defined based on socially recognized physical characteristics (e.g., skin color, hair texture, facial features). Ethnicity, on the other hand, is defined in terms of a group considered to be similar because they share common cultural elements (e.g., national origin, language, religion, food). People who speak the Tswana language are considered to represent the ethnic majority. There are other ethnic groups who are regarded as minorities because of language, such as Kalanga, Tswapong, Birwa, and Yeyi. Calling Tswana the “super tribe” (Werhner, 2002) alienates other minority groups. People who come from outside of Botswana may find themselves the objects of direct verbal abuse – “Go back where you come from” – or indirect disparagement known as *batswa kwa* "those from far away" or aliens.

Racism is subtle, a topic not openly discussed; yet, Batswana are quick to point out that someone is different from them on the bases of his/her physical characteristics and even challenge the benefits or privileges awarded to that individual. One of the Tswana Members of Parliament (MP) at the beginning of President Masire’s first decade (1982-92) pronounced nepotism and ethnic favoritism to be the reasons why Kalanga (one minority group) held so many jobs. The MP proposed, “That this Honorable House deplores discrimination practices in Botswana based on race, tribe or political affiliation and urges Government to take measures to discourage these practices” (Werhner, 2002, p. 737).

If Botswana politicians can hold such discussions in parliament on issues around race and tribalism, then it says a lot about Batswana’s denial about the moral meanings,
intentions, and usage of concepts such as race, majority, and minority groups. It will be
difficult to address these issues adequately if people have hidden agendas. Concepts such
as race must be discussed openly in order to be appreciated and acknowledged. For
example, a product of an interracial marriage is a biracial child. The parents should be
comfortable about their different races in order for their child to fully appreciate that he/she
is mixed. For this reason the topic of race must not be avoided. There is an implication of
usage of majority versus minorities with the population I will be studying. This makes my
study relevant, so that society is educated on discrimination and its impact on the attitudes
of society.

Problem Statement

A review of the literature reveals that in the U.S. racial identity is often at the heart
of discussion about interracial relationships. In the U.S., as well as in Botswana, women
who marry men from another race have been accused of destroying the traditions of their
native countries and labeled traitors for dating White men. One hears in Botswana, as well
as in the U.S., accusations such as “You’ve sold our country to these white men.” The
assumption is that the women lack self-esteem and have little pride in their own ethnic
group, its members, and themselves (Gaines, Rios, Granrose, Bledsoe, Farris, Young, &
Garcia, 1999).

While many people maintain that love is the primary reason for selecting a partner,
for women who date or marry outside their race, their experiences are different from what
happens in same-race relationships. Both parties experience pressure from the community
and the larger society, and, in order to function, the couple may isolate themselves and
resort to hiding their identities (St. Jean, 1998). St. Jean further posited that a couple appeared to be involved in two separate, conflicting lives:

one public, the other private. The split is then reflected in a dubious, two-sided identity, one identity reserved for the public world – based on their physical appearance or pigmentation. In contrast, the other identity – their intermarriage, an essential part of their private world - is seldom revealed to the outsider for fear of consequences. (p. 406)

It is unfortunate that these relationships are often not considered genuine by family and the community. Love is seen as a passing phase, a sign of confusion or a form of rebellion. The anger and isolation permeating today’s society scares these couples, despite their abilities to live harmoniously together (Hamm, 1994). Hence, society believes strongly that there is typically an ulterior motive, especially for white men. For example, these men are seen to be taking advantage of the women and marrying for personal gain.

According to the Gale Group (2001) with regard to African-Americans, “love is blind; love has no boundaries and no hang ups. Love is from God. If God sees no color, why should we? Dating can be a challenge for anyone” (p. 1). However, it becomes even more challenging when people date outside their races. When Blacks who choose to date outside of their race were asked about their challenges some said, “It’s not planned. It wasn’t designed. It just happens” (p. 1). Some women were overheard as saying, “You don’t know when you are going to be placed in a situation in which you find somebody that’s suitable for you, and if he or she happens to be out of your race, then so be it” (p. 3). These responses affirm what others have experienced them say regarding these relationships. In Botswana, too, there is a saying _peko e ja se rati_ meaning “I’ve has no
boundaries." This is often said to communicate that most people meet and fall in love, and that they do not go out consciously looking to date someone of a different background. It is, therefore, ironic to even question why people date across the color line.

Despite the negative reactions of others, from observation, it seems interracial marriages have increased dramatically. Because interracial marriages are perceived as unusual, they are easily noticed. As Hani (1994) observed in relation to Black-White relationships in the U.S., if two whites or two blacks walk down the street, no one would raise an eyebrow, but, if it is an interracial couple, people would look. These relationships are a reality, and it seems like interracial marriages may become common in the next centuries in Botswana, and other countries as well. I contacted the statistician in the Ministry of Home Affairs in Botswana and found out that statistics on interracial/interethnic marriages in Botswana are not kept. Marriages are documented as marriages, not as who is married to whom and from where. My observation, therefore, cannot be supported statistically. What I am seeing as an increase may not be correct, but I still thought I should pursue the subject because it forced me to think about some of the literature I had already read and also to learn more about how interracial marriages are perceived in a society that does not explicitly talk about race.

Norman (1999) stated that, in the U.S. for many years the Black man and White woman couple was more prevalent and that today many social observers say the pairing of Black men and White women is just as common. In Botswana, more Black women marry White men. What is a fact is that "interracial couples are more noticeable and prominent than ever" (p. 1). This was said by a Midwestern-author who had observed changes in social trends in the U.S. for some forty years.
Operational Definitions

Some of the definitions offered below are Setswana words, a language spoken in Botswana. And because numerous Botswana concepts will be used, their definitions are provided to help readers understand what they mean in the context of this study.

2. Batswana – Two or more citizens of Botswana.
3. Motswana – An individual or citizen of Botswana.
5. Batswà-kwa: “Those from far away” or aliens (Werbner, 2002).
6. Intermarriage – “A marriage in which the parties’ racial, ethnic, nationality, or religious backgrounds differ” (Ho, 1990, p. v).
7. Interethnic marriage – “A marriage in which each of the parties to the marriage was reared in a cultural and national environment which differs from that of the other” (Gordon, 1964, p. 1).
8. Interracial marriage – “A marriage in which the parties to the marriage belongs to different races. Their skin colors are different and will, of course, always remain different” (Gordon, 1964, p. 2).
9. Biracial child – A child whose biological parents are of dissimilar racial groups.
10. Makutiwane – A derogatory term to describe biracial children or persons, similar to “Oreo,” “Zebra,” “Chocolate,” “Colored” in the U.S.
11. Lekutwane – A derogatory term to describe one biracial child.
12. Lekgoa – A White person.
13. Family - "A basic unit of society, characterized as one whose members are economically and emotionally dependent on one another and are responsible for each other's development, stability, and protection. Serves as the basic unit of socialization to teach cultural values and adaptation to society" (Saeber, L'Abate, Weeks, & Buchanan, 1993, p. 142).

14. Extended Family - A group of individuals consisting of the nuclear family (husband, wife, and children) as well as individuals related by ties of consanguinity. Extension of ties exists among parents and their children, grandchildren, and between siblings (Sauber et al., 1993, p. 138).

15. Culture - A system of knowledge that is used by human beings to interpret and generate behavior (Spence, 1966, p. 28). Culture in the context of this study and, as defined by Bokin and Boklen (1992), will embrace what people do, what people know, and statements that people make and use to describe what it is that they know that enables them to behave appropriately given the dictates in their community.

16. Pelo e ja serati - This expression means love has no boundaries and that no-one has a right to determine whom one should date or marry.

17. Patlo - "A marriage agreement entered into by the parents of the groom and bride" (Pitso & Carmichael, 2003, p.1).


Research Questions

The research questions will cover the following areas:
1. How do the couples define intermarriage?

2. What are the attitudes of family, friends, and society about these unions?

3. What sort of support have these couples received from family, friends, and society?

4. How do these couples reconcile their background differences to successfully maintain their relationships? What issues did they face at different stages of their relationship?

5. What are the implications for therapy for these couples?

6. What does society need to know about these unions?

According to Mours (1994), the goal of qualitative research is not to produce generalizations, but rather in-depth understanding and knowledge of particular phenomena. This study will be about understanding these couples and their experiences, giving them perspective on their experiences, challenging families and society to reevaluate themselves, giving the society a mirror to look at themselves, and providing some wisdom about these unions to those who hope to be helpful (counselors, therapists, teachers, and clergy).

Significance of the Study

Ho (1990) used the term “intermarriage” to refer to a marriage in which the parties’ racial, ethnic, nationality or religious backgrounds differ. In the U.S. studies on intermarriages focused on four important reasons for examining them (Crester & Leom, 1982; Ho, 1990; Leslie, 1982). First, these marriages represent the greatest cultural, political, social, religious, and language differences, which make marital harmony difficult. Second, interracial couples are most vulnerable to alienation from both racial groups for their union and may thus be forced into couple isolation. Further, their children often,
experience great difficulty in establishing clear identities and may be subjected to
discrimination from both families in addition to discrimination from mainstream social
groups (Shackford, 1984).

The third reason for the focus on interracial marriage was that a vast majority of
interracial marriages involved a white person and a person of color who usually was a
member of an ethnic minority (e.g., Black, Hispanic, American Asian, or American Indian)
and experienced discrimination. This is true for the U.S. In Botswana, it is most often the
woman who is the majority member, and the man who is in the minority in terms of
numbers in the population. One might, however, assume that white male privilege and
colonization give him superior status and may render him dominant to the woman.
Botswana women have also been accused of marrying *batswa-kwa*, that is, nationals other
than Botswana, such as Indians, Nigerians, Ghanaians, and Zimbabweans. Intermarriage is
usually tolerated with other ethnic groups, but the marriage is often challenged when it is
between a White man and a Black Motswana woman.

Fourth, there was evidence that ethnic minority groups had been underutilizing
mental health and counseling services; thus, it was felt that a need for increased services
had to be established. In the U.S., the recent U.S. Surgeon General (U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services, 2001) report shows clear patterns of different levels of mental
health services available according to culture, race, and ethnicity. For a long time most
mental-health professionals were Euro-American, and minorities felt intimidated and did
not feel listened to or understood by someone outside their cultures. In Botswana, mental
health and counseling services are relatively new. The majority of the people with mental
health issues or even marriage issues would rather go to an elder within the extended
family or to a pastor of their church for assistance rather than to a counselor. Batswana for
a while maintained that family secrets needed to be kept within the family rather than be
told to a stranger.

As a researcher, I believe the fate of interracial marriages is predetermined by
social change. I believe that the survival rates of these marriages are high. From
observation, divorce rates are less than what is expected of "normal" marriages. I do not
have statistics to confirm this because marriages in Botswana are not recorded according to
ethnicity. People do not think in terms of "Black" and "White;" instead they think in terms
of "husband," "wife," and "marriage." If one asks a married woman to whom she is
married and he happens to be a white male, the answer would be that she is married to a
Dutch, American, or English man, and not to a white male. She will not readily group
Caucasian males into a single group designated as "white." There are very few
psychologists in Botswana. The mental health professions are only emerging. Little is
known about interracial marriages, even though they are increasing. Times have changed,
and, therefore, it would not be proper to utilize biased theories from the pejorative tradition
in the U.S. that tend to stigmatize and pathologize intermarriage and ineffective
approaches when treating these families. I would like to embark on this study for the
following reasons:

First, from observation I have seen many interracial couples in malls and public
places. This triggered the interest in pursuing the study. I wanted to find out if, indeed, they
are many and also to learn about general characteristics, relationship processes such as
courting and dating, and the degree and source of social support these couples receive.

Second, cultural influences are impacted by what is happening around them. How
might Batswana, as a society, appreciate these unions and convince other societies that it is normal to marry outside one's race. Charity begins at home. I therefore would like to educate and empower Batswana to understand that the success or failure of any relationship or marriage does not depend on one's skin color.

Third, in regard to the husbands, there is a saying in Botswana that "a way to a man's heart is through his stomach." As a researcher, I am still curious to find out what keeps these European-American-Australian men in Botswana. They marry these women and live there. Is it because the women cook well for them? The other fascinating aspect is that women have complained that there were fewer Black men than women; the ratio is estimated to be 1:2:3 that is, one man to two or even three women. Why men are few, one can never explain this dynamic. I also wanted to find out if this was another reason for women to cross the color line when marrying.

Fourth, in the U.S., for example, these unions are still not fully accepted according to the literature (Gorn, 1964; Hanson, 1994). My embarking on such a study in Botswana is mounting proof that these unions are everywhere. In keeping up with the times intellectually and also using Botswana as a model, I am acknowledging that such unions exist in Africa, as well.

Fifth, I believe it is important to describe the psychological issues which marginalized groups contend with and to state my respect for the successful survival of interracial marriages. It is also important to note the coping capacities they develop in the service of survival; to explore how interracial relationships reflect changing norms of family and of gender roles, and to explore how transformation of these relationships is perceived in families, as families are a primary source of socialization. For example, once
one is socialized in the African way that emphasizes the extended family, and then dates or marries someone who does not believe in discussing everything with his/her parents, there may be a conflict regarding the extent to which the extended family should be involved in couples decisions, thus challenging norms of the family.

Sixth, since intermarriages seem to be an option nowadays, as a student in the psychology/marriage and family therapy program, I hope to broaden my perspective on diverse families; to learn to appreciate, understand, and be of service to these families; to be an active advocate for client families across individual, family, and larger social systems; and to become attuned to how these individuals and families cope with the reactions and prohibitions society has against them as they challenge tradition.

Seventh, since no such study has been conducted in Botswana, the researcher hopes to challenge policy makers on issues around resources available for this population, especially for biracial children. As Root (2001) wrote, frank examinations of challenges that racial intermarriage entails offer insights to the public into the transformative power of love on the individuals and point to the revolutionary potential this transformation holds for re-envisioning the pursuit of a more equitable society.

Lastly, the researcher, by conducting this study would like to add to the scant literature on interracial marriages. Studies about interracial couple's experiences are still non-existent in Botswana. There is also a gender gap. Marriages between Black Botswana women and White men are far more frequent than between Black Botswana men and White women, which is an interesting observation to consider. The researcher also hopes to use this study as a baseline for future studies.
CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

The growing number of interracial marriages seems to have caused concern in many countries. The question about the motivation for people to enter into interracial marriages remains unanswered in the eyes of those who are against or doubtful about such unions. Interracial marriages are often pathologized within societies (Gaines et al., 1999). When one partner is White and the other Black, society may assume the worst about the motives and psychological well-being of individuals who date or marry across racial lines. One often hears derogatory statements such as, “She’s just rebellious or he is full of hate” or “She has lost her identity” (Gaines et al., 1999, p. 462). In Botswana, there is a stereotype of the “sugar-daddy” and a “bar girl” (Mgadla, 2003). Earlier, most Baswana girls were accused of entering into relationships with older White men for money. Today, even the most educated and prominent women marry White men, and some of these men are not old.

Most families support the ideology of love so long as their children uphold cultural conventions in their choices of partners. “Marry within your own race. Marry someone of the opposite sex” (Root, 2001, p. 1). Until recently in the U.S., beloved sons and daughters who defied these rules were rejected and disowned. Homes that were previously full of love were invaded with fear when the son or daughter married outside of the racial group, thus raising the specter of racism. Interracial couples were met with
threats of physical harm, intimidation, and name-calling. According to Root, interracial marriages have helped change long-term assumptions and social conventions. Many families now stand strong as their children make a commitment to transform their lives across color lines in marriage. Interracial dating and interracial marriages are today perceived as natural consequences of increased social interaction between members of races. Familiarity leads people to challenge and eventually to break down stereotypes. Root notes that love does not always stay within color lines, even when society is determined to enforce racial apartheid.

Historical Background

Mixed relationships are not new in most parts of the world, Botswana included. In Botswana, historians such as Mgadla (2003) noted that between 1900 and 1950 there were no interracial marriages, but interracial relationships. Mgadla, who was a history lecturer at the University of Botswana, stated that from 1911 to the 1930s misgenation and consubination were negatively perceived, at least in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (Botswana). This was influenced by race relations in South Africa. The attitudes towards these relationships were to a large extent those prevailing in the Cape, now South Africa. Mgadla further stated that "such escapades were viewed with a certain degree of amusement and, that, the general attitudes towards race relations had to do with conquest and colonization" (p. 4). Biracial children who were born out of these unions were referred to as half-case. The first president of Botswana was married to a White woman; further, there are biracial children in most towns and villages in the country thus confirming that interracial relationships or marriages were in existence for a long time.
Fang, Sidanius, and Pratto (1998) reported that in the United States, for example, there was evidence of intermixing between races way before Blacks came to America as slaves. The hostile history of Black-White intermixing stemmed primarily from White plantation owners who forced themselves onto Black women without the benefit of marriage, romance, or any status that might be associated with an affair. In the United States, interracial marriages have grown at 500% since 1970. Intermarriages tended to be acceptable and had certainly become an established fact of life. They were increasingly accepted with each succeeding generation, within ethnic and racial minority communities, though it was not always welcome (Root, 2001). Likewise, in Botswana and South Africa in the 1900s, the traders were seen to be taking advantage of women in inferior positions, that is, local women. The shortage of European women in the colonies and abuse of power by the colonizers contributed directly or indirectly to concubinage and miscegenation which are viewed negatively by Batswana and South Africans. White men were seen to be taking advantage of people considered lower in status compared to their own race (Mgadla, 2003).

With regard to the U.S., because there was intermixing between Blacks and Whites before Blacks came to the continent as slaves, the practice became widespread. According to Austin (1987), in 1792 the legislature passed a law forbidding interracial marriage. Interracial couples were also punished if they married out of the state to circumvent the law. The law encouraged extramarital miscegenation; interracial couples were penalized for legitimizing their relationship. One interracial couple, the Loving, is an example of one of the cases that challenged the antimiscegenation statutes. They were both residents of Virginia and were married in the District of Columbia pursuant to its laws. They later
returned to Virginia and were sentenced to jail in Virginia state court for violating Virginia’s ban on interracial marriages (Loving ET UX. v. Virginia, 1967). Interracial marriages were forbidden by law in the United States, not only during slavery, but in modern times as well (Billingsley, 1968). Billingsley further stated,

Not until 1967 were the last legal supports for bans were struck down by the U.S. Supreme court. Even now, however, despite the lack of legal support for such bans on interracial marriage, the customs and norms of the white majority in the country, and to some extent the black minority, make interracial marriage a rare and deviant sort of behavior. (p. 65)

In Southern Africa, the Union of South Africa, which dominated territories of Southern Africa, proclaimed a law in 1927 which forbade sexual relations between Europeans and non-Europeans. The law was called the “Immorality Act” and was designed “to preserve the moral fabric and purity” of South Africa (Mgadla, 2003, p. 16). In Bechuanaland Protectorate (Botswana) this law was never adopted for reasons that there were few individuals in interracial relationships/marriages then and that those women who were involved in those relationships and had children with these men were fully supported by the men financially, physically, and emotionally. Racial intermarriage was bound to continue, as a result.

Gordon (1964), in Intermarriage: Interfaith, interracial, and interethnic, noted that in December of 1959 the Arizona Supreme Court held its statute on interracial marriage to be unconstitutional and void. He also observed that, despite these legal and social controls and even though these unions were discouraged, interracial relationships continued to grow in the U.S. What later began happening was that in thirty states definitions of who
should not be married to who became evident. Concerns were raised about a White person marrying someone from a minority group, and laws were put in place to prevent such unions in states such as Georgia, Louisiana, and Virginia. Despite such laws, however, racial intermixing continued to take place. Those people who desired legal unions went to other states where there were no laws prohibiting their intermarriage. Gordon’s book is dated; however, it does not seem that attitudes have improved much since the 1960s.

In Botswana, as alluded to above, interracial relations date back to the 1960s even though they were not fully accepted. Marriages date back to 1948 when Sir Seretse Khama married Ruth Williams. Parsons (2002) in a conference in Cape Town presented a famous story concerning Sir Seretse Khama that combined intrigue at the highest level of government in Europe and Africa with a great tale of true love:

1948-56: Seretse Khama, an African prince studying in postwar depressed London, faked in love with a bright young woman Ruth Williams. They marry, but their black-white union alienates Seretse’s uncle Tshekedi back home and outrages white racialists in Southern Africa. At a dramatic mass meeting Seretse wins unexpected support from his people, and excites a frenzy of international press interest. South Africa and Rhodesia demand that the British act against Seretse and Ruth. After much wrangling and even outright lies, Labor and Conservative governments strip Seretse of his kingship and exile the couple to Britain, for life. (Their love, grown strong under affliction, is put to test by exile.) The rising tide of British and African public opinion eventually pushes the British government to allow the triumphant return home of Seretse, followed by Ruth with their four children. (p. 2)
Even in Britain there were some disputed issues around this marriage. Gordon Walker (Commonwealth secretary serving 1950-1951) was criticized at the time, apparently giving in to South African pressure in opposing chieftainship of Sir Seretse Khama in Bechuanaland (later Botswana) because of Khama’s marriage to a white woman (lady ex-Gi-Gso). Observers in Southern Africa said the marriage between the two in 1948 was one that roused the foundations of the apartheid system of legalized racial discrimination in South Africa. It also made the African people of the Bamangwato tribe in Bechuanaland Protectorate examine their own prejudice against white people, the very prejudice the whole of Africa was fighting (Mofhuting, 2002).

According to Parsons, Henderson, and Tlou (1995), disapproval of his marriage to a White woman was not from Batswana people as a whole, but from the leaders, royal uncles and South African and Rhodesian Whites who were then practicing apartheid. Seretse’s wife was dubbed an “adventuress” who would tire of her experiment in good time leading to divorce and the restitution of normality.

Upon return from Britain, Seretse Khama launched the Bechuanaland Democratic Party; served (1956-66) as prime minister; and, when Bechuanaland became independent as Botswana, he assumed presidency. He served four terms and died in office in 1980. He was knighted in 1966, named Sir Seretse Khama, and his wife became Lady Ruth Khama.

In the U.S., historically, a general pattern had prevailed with all immigrant groups. The first generation had a very low rate of intermarriage. The second-generation immigrants were a bridge between the U.S. and native cultures. They were affected by certain cultural values that set them apart from their mainstream peers. Their children, however, the third generation, fluent in English and the U.S. society, shared much in
common with their peers of the same socioeconomic standing.

In Botswana we do not discuss first-generation, second-generation, and third-generation immigrants. The colonial mentality of white supremacy opposed interracial dating. What perpetuated these unions, according to Mgodla (2003), was that traders, who settled in Southern Africa, because, again, there was a shortage of European women, took advantage of the local women who, of course, were Black women. This contributed indirectly or directly to concubinage and miscegenation. Volunteers (Peace Corps) who started coming to Botswana in the 1960s were not wealthy, but were university graduates who felt obliged to learn the culture and the language. They too, mingled with the local people and later on had relationships with local women and then married them.

The emergence of private schools in the 1960s, where English was the medium of instruction, may have partly contributed to interracial relationships. Batswana girls shared much in common with their peers internationally, had similar socioeconomic standing, became fluent in English, were immersed in the English culture, and later preferred to follow the English culture.

A brief glance into Botswana reveals that the national culture of Botswana is largely based on Setswana (Tswana Language) culture. Parsons (1999), in narrating the history of Botswana, reported that the national culture represented the growth of a distinct Botswana nationality defined within state borders, and embraced elements of postcolonial English culture. Tswana national culture could be traced back to the incorporation of diverse people under a string of Tswana states, beginning in the later eighteenth century and reaching maturity by the time of British colonization at the end of the nineteenth century. Everyone within the colonial boundaries of Botswana came to be regarded as a
Motswana, regardless of ethnic origin. Hence many outsiders assumed that Botswana was a monocultural entity with only one tribe. It was not until the end of colonialism that the old Tswana states were incorporated into a unitary state under a powerful central government between 1964 and 1969. If one were to observe what is going on in Botswana today, the dominant national culture reflects a dual heritage and intermingling of the Tswana and English cultural domains, and produced interracial as well as inter-ethnic marriages.

Caste, as Ross (2001) concurred, traditionally connoted an absolute taboo and the forbidden; the boundary was non-negotiable, and there were no exceptions. The concept of class, on the other hand, involved a social and economic hierarchy. It was not a closed system in the way caste was as mobility could occur in both directions.

For some time Batswana thought they had caste when it came to interracial relationships. Women were threatened with losing their privileges, and their children were not considered Batswana citizens, even though born in Botswana. They too were denied all privileges and would not be awarded Botswana passports until the citizenship law was challenged by one Motswana woman married to a U.S. citizen. In 1991, Unity Dow challenged the high court of Botswana, questioning the validity of the citizenship act.

According to section 21 of the Constitution of Botswana:

A person born in Botswana shall be a citizen of Botswana by birth or descent if, at the time of his birth: (a) his/her father was a citizen of Botswana; (b) in case of a person born out of wedlock, his mother was a citizen of Botswana; or (c) a person born outside Botswana shall be a citizen of Botswana by descent if, at the time of his birth, his father or mother was a citizen of Botswana. (Botswana Law Reports, p. 236)
Whereas every person in Botswana is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, the right, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, color, creed or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others. (Botswana Law Reports, p. 237)

Unity Dow, prior to her marriage to a citizen of the United States in 1984, gave birth to a child in 1979, in Botswana, and during their marriage to two more children in Botswana. In terms of the Act, the child born before the marriage was a Botswana citizen, and the two born in the marriage were not and, were, therefore, aliens in the land of their birth. Already there were three issues here: the children who had limited rights and legal protections, discriminatory treatment to an alien man (her husband), and Ms. Dow who felt discriminated against on the basis of her sex. It took almost eight years to come up with the amended citizenship act in 1998 which reads: “Every person who was a citizen of Botswana at the commencement of the 1998 Act shall remain a citizen with all rights and privileges” (Citizenship Act, 1998, p. 49).

What was ironic with this act was that in Botswana, much as it always was a patriarchal society, children belonged to their mothers in a case of divorce. The woman always got custody; this was a given. But the reverse was true with biracial children. They belonged with their White fathers. The extended family would take a hands-off approach, with no support for their children and grandchildren. Their mothers lost parental privileges, which seemed like punishment to these women for “marrying out.”

The history of interracial marriages told only part of the story. “Interracial couples and their children have generated a large body of academic theory” (Foeman & Nance, 1999, p. 542). If one believed everything one read about interracial couples and families,
then one would probably believe that

interracial couples were doomed from the start. Their respective families have
disowned them; they do not have moments of peace from prying and staring eyes in
the public; society treats them like lepers; they are viewed as dysfunctional, and
society believes that each partner hated one’s own race. It is thought that the only
reason they are together is because nobody wants them, that they are social outcasts
and rejects, and their children are confused. (Cohen, 1994, p. 1)

The motivations of persons to engage in interracial marriages will be further discussed in
the latter part of this section.

Legislation reflecting negative societal perceptions about Black-White marriages
and their biracial children has a long history in the United States. Laws against interracial
marriages (anti-miscegenation laws) were enacted in 1792. The U.S. Supreme Court case
(Loving vs. Virginia) ended prohibitions against racial intermarriages in 1967. Despite
these laws by the U.S. Supreme Court, there still exists in the U.S. conflicting norms
regarding the rights of an individual to select his/her own marriage partner, irrespective of
race, interracial marriages increased regardless.

George (1994) pointed out that the Bible was silent on whether interracial
relationships were acceptable or not; however, it was not silent concerning the equality of
all human beings. The author said, “Truly, the Bible taught that all human beings were in
the same position before God” (p. 2). Christians were therefore, free to choose to marry,
despite societal objections to such unions. Although many members of society attached
motives to interracial marriages, such as rebellion and non-conformity, by which some
people were seen as enjoying going against the tide (the tide refers to marriage within their
race), and the wish to be liberal, he stated it was time society started viewing such unions differently and accepted them because they were a reality.

As in most countries, social classes in Botswana are fluid, without definite boundaries (Parsons, 1999). Families and individuals are also stretched between traditional and modern models. There has been the growth of a new middle class and a new working class, largely resident in modern towns, which are bilingual in Setswana and English, and express a clear national identity over tribal identity. White settlements in Botswana consisting of Afrikaners and fewer English settled in farms along the borders of South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana in the colonial period. Since then a larger expatriate population from Europe, the U.S., South Asia, and elsewhere in Africa has been drawn to the main cities to service Botswana's remarkable postcolonial development.

Root (2001) presented the terms "endogamy" and "exogamy" that had been used in the literature on interracial marriages to distinguish socially accepted from socially unacceptable marriages. She proposed that socially acceptable or endogamous marriages conformed to social convention and took place within the in-group (also called homogenous marriages). Exogamous marriages, on the other hand, were marriages with someone from an out-group, as defined on the basis of race, gender, religion, nationality, class, or some combination of these.

Root (2001) further stated that intermarriage on the basis of class was sometimes classified as "hypergamy" or "hypogamy" (p. 34). Hypergamy refers to marrying into the higher class, "marrying up." Hypogamy denotes marrying someone of a lower class, or "marrying down" or marrying "beneath oneself." Class, in this scheme, was not determined only by wealth; it was also influenced by race, color, school attended, physical
attractiveness, and other factors. In Botswana, the point of view of most Batswana is that a Motswana woman marries a White man to become hypergamous, and it is hypogamous for a White man to marry a Black woman.

A white man who had moved up the economic scale and married a minority woman lower in socioeconomic status than himself is said to have married lower, and this is expected. Women are expected to marry up. A Black man in the same economic scale and married to a White woman, who is economically below him, is said to have married higher because the White woman would be perceived as culturally and socially superior to this Black man. His status is measured against that of this White woman. Some people would even suggest that he would not be where he was if it were not for the White woman.

In conclusion, even the definition of family today has changed in many societies, especially in the U.S. In the past decade there has been a significant shift in the nature and composition of families. In the 1950s and 1960s, a family consisted typically of heterosexual parents in a long-term marriage raising their own biological children. Since then, divorce, remarriage, and intermarriages have become more prevalent, along with openly gay and lesbian relationships, with commingling of races and women’s changing roles. The idea of a single, normative type of family, even if it ever did exist, no longer applies (Okun, 1996).

Reasons for the Increase of Interracial Marriages

According to Hamm (1994), interracial relationships continue to spark controversy as societies reshape their values. Some motives are cited in the literature. Brower (1994) posited that people who enter into these relationships have been accused of getting into
such marriages for the wrong reasons, for example, some are fulfilling a sexual fantasy, some rebelling against parents and society, and raising or uplifting their social and economic status, some are getting back at a former lover, or escaping abuse especially where one was mistreated by someone of the same race. Brower further stated that, non-conformity could play a role in interracial relationships; some people enjoy going against the tide.

The wish to appear liberal was also cited as a reason. A situation in which one stands for change in the perception of what is good for humankind may predispose some people to gravitate towards interracial relationships. Brower (1994) also stated that it was not uncommon that people chose partners with whom they can re-create unfinished business from their childhoods. People who continually hook up with abusive partners are prime examples of this.

One potential factor in intermarriage is education, which has emerged as an important determinant of who marries whom (Harris & Ono, 2001). Higher education and flexibility in gender roles seemed to be associated with more open attitudes towards interracial dating and marriages. This could also be true for Botswana because some Batswana women married to White men are, indeed, educated. Maybe these educated women missed out and could not find educated Batswana men to marry. Some jobs provide a setting in an integrated environment where people are able to discover shared interests during casual conversations. This situation can directly or indirectly influence intermarriages.

As outlined by Kouri and Laswell (1992), interracial marriages were more frequent when community structures sanctioned such unions. For example, lack of kinship controls
in urban environments made personal characteristics more likely to be valued than
categorical traits such as race, ethnic background, religion, or social class. Likewise, the
authors explained that interracial couples married for the same reasons that racially
homogenous couples did. They meet, they discover similar interests, they fall in love, and
they decide to marry. Over the past decades the disintegration of neighborhoods, schools,
and the workplace facilitated growth and opportunities for those from different races to
come to know each other. Another explanation, from the structural point of view, was that
as interracial marriages increased in number, societies became desensitized to what
previously may have been socially unacceptable to most populations.

Chulow (1993) stated that economic development resulted in relationships of
dependence and interdependence between nations. Traveling between countries had never
been easier and quicker than it is today. When people travel, they meet others from
different backgrounds whom they may live with or marry. The fascination with foreignness,
the security and comfort offered by a prosperous stranger or the practical benefits of
marrying into another country might be sufficient to create intermarriages. And in so far as
boundaries of nationality, ethnicity and religion would become permeable in response to
the moving tide of human kind, these marriages would confidently be expected to increase.
This is the situation in Botswana right now. Migration, especially of foreigners coming into
Botswana, has led to these unions.

According to Mok (1999), there were some good reasons for entering into such
relationships, such as being genuinely in love; genuinely interested in learning about
different cultures and customs; and perceiving, believing, and feeling that the stereotypes
of certain racial and ethnic groups could be pleasing and arousing; also feeling and
believing that the color of someone's skin was irrelevant. Actually, many interracial marriages were more stable than many same-race relationships. Mok further cautioned that "the subject of interracial relationships could function as a lens through which to observe inter-group relations, social distance, and racial group cohesion" (p. 1).

In summary, there is a belief that interracial marriages can be regarded very differently than interracial dating with differing demands on extended families. Interracial relationships, like homosexual relationships, have brought about legal consequences and the invocation of religion as a higher moral authority. Both were often dismissed as merely sexual, as a way to undermine their legitimacy and potential for success and happiness. Some couples had to keep their relationship secret in order to maintain family ties.

Okun (1996) proposed that our notions of the family be re-assessed and broadened. By the end of the twentieth century it had become obvious that what made a family work was not biological, legal, or cultural dominance, but rather commitment, caring, and a capacity to value others' needs and welfare as much as one's own. As we learned more about cases of sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect, of alcoholism and other substance abuse, of exploitation and other horrors, the question that follows is why these problems existed in so-called "normal" family structures, if these structures were the only or right ways for families to be?

Members of the society in general are challenged to revisit their presumptions and the assumptions of normalcy and pathology and to appreciate more fully the effects of dominant socio-cultural constructs on people's lives. According to Okun (1996), just as a child who is not a "good fit" (p. 7) in his or her family may become the identified patient, scapegoat, or lightening rod for family distress, the family that is not a "good fit" in the
larger socio-cultural context may serve the same function as the focus of the frustrations of the community.

A tolerant environment would be helpful not only for the formation of these relationships but also for day-to-day survival. It is established fact that there are mixed reactions, both positive and negative, towards interracial couples from their communities. Most researchers have found that a majority of couples reported stares and negative comments such as, "I wonder what their children will look like?" "She lacks self-respect;" "Look at her, she's even changed the way she walks or talks;" and slurs in public places. Both parties experienced pressure from the larger society, and, in order to function, they isolated themselves and even resorted to hiding their true lifestyles and parts of their identities.

There are numerous myths that surround interracial marriages and will be discussed.

1. Interracial marriages include the idea that Black women married White men for status because they (i.e., Black women) are generally thought to be inferior intellectually. Authors, including Jensen (1981), and Herrenstein and Murry (1994), continue to contend that Blacks are genetically inferior to Whites. "In the face of unequivocal evidence that Blacks are not inferior physically to Whites, as once generally posited, some now contend that Blacks are actually physically superior to Whites whereas intellectually inferior" (Foeman & Nance, 1999, p. 547).

2. That the Bible condemned interracial relationships, and that pastors who married these people did it on humanitarian grounds; such marriage would not happen, given a choice. According to Williams (1993), it has long been argued by White Americans that an interracial marriage is a sin before God, and is forbidden by God, especially, between
Black and White Americans. Williams argued that “if interracial marriage is a sin before God, and He forbids it and will punish those who engage in it, then the Bible [God’s word] is a lie” (p. 1). He charged that “What God seems to dislike and will punish are those who are openly and violently opposed to interracial marriages” (Williams, 1993, p. 1).

3. Another theory surrounding Black-White unions is that Blacks marry Whites for status. “A white woman, in particular, is sad to exchange the status of her for the higher socioeconomic standing of a Black man” (Foeman & Nance, 1999, p. 543). Kalmijn (1993), who promotes the hypergamy position, based his discussion almost totally on Black male-White female intermarriage, generally disregarding Black female-White male marriages. He argued that, whereas research suggests that Black women tend to marry down in both same race and interracial relationships, it is less likely so in interracial relationships.

Special Challenges

Cultural Codes

As Crohn (1995) explained, culture shapes every aspect of how we view the world and what we consider “normal” and “abnormal.” It molds our attitudes toward time, family, sex, and monogamy. Cultural rules govern how we expect anger and affection to be expressed, the ways that children are to be disciplined and rewarded, how we greet strangers and friends. Crohn warned that partners of mixed matches raised in different countries could have very different cultural definitions of “normal.” He forewarned that, even when both partners in a mixed match were born in the same country, spoke the same language, and were from the same class background, they at times found themselves
tripping over cultural differences in the meaning of words, behavior, and values. He said, unfortunately, cultural rules that people brought to their relationships were usually invisible until they had been violated (i.e., the couple may not have been aware of breaking cultural rules until they "crossed the line"). He, therefore, suggested that one of the most important tasks for partners in mixed matches was to learn to understand and to deal with differences in the cultural codes they brought to their relationships.

**Family Life Cycles**

Marriage relationships between a husband and wife are profoundly influenced by many forces acting upon them, both as individuals and as a couple. A married couple may experience eight stages of development: (a) early marriage, (b) parenthood and early childhood, (c) parenting children of middle childhood, (d) parenting of adolescents, (e) the launching of adult children, (f) middle age, (g) pre-retirement, and (h) retirement and old age (Ho, 1990).

Racial and ethnic issues continue to interact with the family life cycle at every stage of intermarriage (Ho, 1990). When this occurred, the stresses inherent in all stages are compounded. Every individual goes through life-cycles change. Cultural identity provides the individual with the rituals, symbols, and familiar meanings that cushioned those changes. Life-cycle changes may trigger racial or ethnic identity conflicts since they bring families close to their roots. For example, parenting a biracial adolescent may not be as easy as parenting an adolescent from same race marriage. Parents of a biracial son/daughter have to accept their differing backgrounds, communicate their differences, and teach their son/daughter to embrace the fact that he/she is mixed. These are challenges
that are real and need to be acknowledged in order for parenting to be less complicated. Friedman (1980) observed that how the rituals were handled or celebrated determined how well the couple or the family adjusts to the change. The challenges stated above that result from racial, ethnic, and cultural differences are said to be prominent with intermarried couples.

**Identity Issues**

Identity is both personal and social. Most of the literature reviewed stems from the U.S. By looking at identity issues based on U.S. society, I want to explore what is relevant for Botswana. According to Crohn (1995), whether admitted or not, most of us have carried a mixed bag of contradictory feelings about our racial, cultural, or religious identities. In a rapidly changing, culturally diverse society, it is hard for anyone to maintain a clear and consistent sense of group identity. Most people find themselves with inner confusion about where they fit culturally. People need to feel connected to a group. The group defines who may be an enemy and provides a system of social support. Group norms help sort out priorities in a complex world.

Rosenblatt, Karis, and Powell (1995) posited that identity is a matter of self-concept, that is, what one thinks of oneself. A person’s major commitments, including choice of partner, were affected by the person’s self-concept. How others react to one also stemmed from self-concept and has a major influence on it. For some people, being in an interracial partnership is not necessarily consistent with one’s self-concept as a member of one’s own racial group or with their need to be loyal to people who oppose such partnerships. Moreover, the reactions of others may threaten a person’s self-concept. For
example, other people’s reactions may suggest that one has made a bad choice, has been
disloyal to one’s people, is a rule violator, or does not belong in a group that one counts as
important to personal identity.

Crohn (1995) suggested that couples in mixed matches, in order to sustain their
marriages, should resolve their own personal cultural confusions as individuals and as a
couple. They should acknowledge and come to terms with the painful parts of their cultural
identities. They should be aware of how they, themselves, may have internalized some of
society’s negative judgments about them as an interracial couple. They should reclaim and
affirm the positive, nourishing parts of their identities. He said that, by sorting out complex
feelings about themselves, they would be better able to compromise with their partners and
to find creative ways to synthesize their individual pasts.

Social Identity

According to Katz, Joiner, and Kwon (2002), “Social identity is that part of an
individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social
group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that group
membership” (p.1). The authors further posited that self-views and self-esteem are phrases
used to refer to personal identity, or one’s view of oneself as an individual person whereas,
collective identities refer to people’s evaluations of and identification with the various
social groups to which they belong. They stated that, at any given time, people hold various
collective identities on the basis of demographic factors and personal social networks. For
example, “most people identify themselves as members of a certain nationality, race,
gender, religion, social class, marital status, sexual orientation, and occupation” (Katz,
The distinction between interpersonal and inter-group processes is a prevalent one in social psychology (Dovidio, Gaertner, Niemann, & Snider, 2001). According to self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), when personal identity is salient, an individual’s needs, standards, beliefs, and motives primarily determine behavior. In contrast, when people’s social identity is activated, people come to perceive themselves more as interchangeable exemplars of a social category than as unique personalities defined by their individual differences from others (p. 50).

Social Context of an Interracial Marriage

According to Crohn (1995), no matter how much two people share, they exist in a social world. He cited the example of Romeo and Juliet; their love was doomed not by their personalities, but by their families’ hatred of one another. Many challenges the couple faced were shaped by the stage on which they acted out the drama of their love. Crohn posited that societal attitudes about a particular kind of racial, cultural, or religious internarrriage would have a major impact on how well the relationship was accepted by family, friends, and strangers. And, because the social context is continually evolving, being attuned to its changes would help one understand and deal with the reactions of others.

Because of racism, prejudice, ignorance, or the desire to protect religious or cultural continuity, partners in mixed matches may find themselves confronted with intense negative reactions to their relationship. He posited that this stress was another
reason that mixed couples needed to learn to be especially skillful in handling difficulties within their relationships and in dealing with their differences.

Motivational Factors Affecting the Rate of Intermarriages

The motivations for people to intermarry are often questioned. According to Gordon (1964) there were many factors affecting the rate of intermarriages, such as cultural, environmental, physical, and psychosocial factors. The family determines the values that its individual members will represent throughout their lives. Religious, social, and cultural values prevail within a given family, and influences within and outside the family serve as the principal means of socialization. Like Okun (1996), Gordon (1964) posited that the nature of the family itself has evolved, that today's family is more open. Before, young people married persons whose familial, ethnic, social, or traditional backgrounds were similar to their own; nowadays, marriage take place with less reference to such considerations. The admonitions of parents, family, and the church are no longer accepted without debate.

According to Norment (1999), the specific reasons behind the escalating trend of mating across color and racial lines vary from individual to individual. Some Black women say that they are attracted to their White spouses because they found it difficult to meet Black men on their social and income levels. Others say their mates treat them well and share common interests. Some people seem to simply prefer to date people of another race.

Love at first sight is rarely accepted readily with intermarriages. The idea of romantic love, which has nothing to do with the reasonableness of that love, is still challenged. The literature and the media of our day have romanticized marriage. Gordon
(1964) stated that nowadays there is more emphasis on physical attractiveness and emotional longing rather than family background, educational standards, and social class. He posited that gender roles have changed and that women now work and are bound to meet people of different races and ethnicities in the workplace. The increased mobility of people has resulted in frequent social contacts, which led to a subsequent increase in marriages between persons who would otherwise not have met. The belief in the equality of all humans is assumed to mean that there are no significant differences between people of varying backgrounds, that whatever differences may be are without importance. The increasing heterogeneity of people within nations affects people's attitudes on many levels, including intermarriages.

Ho (1990) highlighted sociological motives for intermarriage, including changes in availability, financial security, social status, parental teaching, childhood rebellion, and stereotyped impressions. Psychological factors that motivate couples to intermarry may include the need to be different, an act of aggression, sadomasochistic needs, the Oedipus complex, and superiority and inferiority complexes. However, in reality, he posited that couples entering intermarriage were motivated by a variety of reasons, not one single motive that fit into the sociological and psychological categories presented.

Additionally, members of different cultures and ethnic groups interpreted motives differently. In Botswana for example, much as there are some people who still question people's motives for marrying someone of a different race, the saying, *pelo e ja serati*, "love has no boundaries," still prevails. Those who marry interracially do not feel obligated to explain their reasons for entering into such unions. For purposes of argument, I will highlight a few factors, which I expect to validate after my study.
Motivational factors according to Crohn (1995) included:

*A struggle with identity:* According to Crohn, when a strong preference for partners from outside of one's group is combined with the intense dislike of the opposite sex, members of one's own cultural or racial group, marriage out may be a manifestation of what is called *ambivalent identification.* Ambivalent identifiers accept their own cultural belief but uniformly reject members of the opposite sex or their own cultural group. When asked "why don't you go out with people of your own group?" they would answer:

"I have no problem being a Black man, but Black women, I just can't put up with them" or "I get along fine with Black men, but, when it comes down to dating, they are just too pushy and controlling." (p. 50)

*Separation from family:* Some people choose a partner from another race or religion unacceptable to their parents to use their relationship as a way to distance themselves, emotionally or literally, from complicated and painful family situations.

*Balancing individual and communal styles:* One of the most commonly cited reasons for attraction across religious, ethnic, or racial lines is the fascination between people from individualistic and collective cultures. Individualistic cultures stress autonomy, self-realization, personal initiative, and decision-making. Collective cultures, on the other hand, stress loyalty to the group and place a high value on the inter-connectedness of family, community and society. Men from Western cultures (i.e., Europe, and the U.S.) felt attracted to the seeming warmth and caring of their partner's more interdependent personal and family styles. Conversely, women from Africa, for example, one might assume, were drawn to the sense of autonomy and freedom that Western culture embodied.
How Interracial Marriages Are Perceived

Family Perspectives

According to Ho (1990), parents and relatives form a vital part of an individual’s heritage. They form the individual’s roots and significantly influence his/her future, including happiness in a marital relationship. A positive relationship with parents and relatives (extended family) provides an individual with a basic sense of belonging and security that form a satisfying and lasting marriage. An individual’s relationship with his or her extended family might change after marriage, especially in intermarriage. Factors that affect this change include the couple’s motives for marrying, the family’s injunctions or approval, or the new couple’s distancing themselves from both extended families or from one or the other family by religious conversions or through adopting the other’s culture.

Choosing a partner from a different racial or ethnic group allows a person to bring new possibilities into the family or to avoid interacting with the family by using a spouse as an excuse (Crohn, 1995). The extended family may stereotype the new spouse negatively. This is often a self-protective maneuver to reassure them when they are feeling that their son or daughter is rejecting them and their values by marrying out. At times parents’ or relatives’ negative reactions about intermarriages are derived from fear about being abandoned (Ho, 1990).

Families of both sides still heavily influence the choice of mate. The extended family ties exert a strong influence, and elders of ethnic groups encourage their young people to marry within their own groups (Hippler, 1974). It may be difficult for courtship to even begin if the families disapprove (Ho, 1990).

According to Crohn (1995), every family has its own unique set of priorities and
values, but it is often difficult to discern exactly what they are, even for the members of the family. Crohn further stated that, if offspring carefully thought about his/her family’s reactions to people they had cared about, it would become clearer whether it was race, religion, class, or education that was most important to them. The author continued by stating that some families’ objections to intermarriage are genuinely religious. Genuinely religious families and clergy are often more willing to accept intermarriage of people from different races or cultures as long as they share the same religion.

According to Funderburg (1994), in choosing a spouse, few people escape their family’s hopes of them. Often, in the area of love and marriage, typical parental aspirations are for good providers, loving, steady mates who will help build a strong new link in the family chain. In many families parents simply assume that their children’s spouses will share the family’s religion, ethnicity, and race, which nowadays is not predictable.

Crohn (1995) highlighted the fact that sometimes family objections are primarily an expression of genuine concern. At times, it could be a young girl getting married for the first time to a divorcee who is much older. The age of the fiancé and the issue around divorce coupled with difference in race, nationality, and religion could cause concern for her parents and extended family.

Mc Nelly (1973) maintained that family, friends, and members of the community may have an influence on interracial couples, responding in a contradictory manner, such as providing support or opposition to the pair. Past research has revealed that there were mixed reactions, both positive and negative, toward interracial couples from their communities and that interracially married individuals at times experienced racial discrimination in secondary group settings such as churches or workplace.
According to Black (1973), with increasing economic and consequently social equality between the races, there is a likelihood that interracial marriages will increase. In his account of intimate, revealing contacts with biracial couples, Black discussed, among other topics, the parents' attitudes towards interracial marriages, a discussion he thought would be of particular value to those contemplating such unions. Black looked at the expectations for biracial unions against the background of the realities of everyday living. He was interested in answers to the following questions: What are the needs that two people seek to satisfy in their choice of each other as marital partners? How can the intangibles of "falling in love" be structured in a conceptual framework that the psychologist can use to draw meaningful conclusions? And what are the special elements that enter the picture when the marriage partners are of different races?

Societal Perspectives

Clulow (1993) reported that marriage is both a social institution and a personal relationship with public and private aspects. The visibility of these aspects is different at different stages of a relationship and according to the culture in which couples live out their lives together. Zebroski (1999) asserted that those in interracial marriages keenly perceive the attitudes of the community around them; these perceptions tell something about the social support that these unions receive. In addition to family and friends, members of the community may have an influence on interracial couples, providing support or opposition through their reactions to the pair. Although it may seem that interracial couples are independent, they are still members of their communities, and there are everyday necessities of living that require some degree of interdependence with other members of
Society, especially when children are involved.

Society in general has a history of frowning on Black-White marriages, and, despite integration elsewhere, many people in White as well as Black communities do not approve of integration in the bedroom (Norment, 1999). In many cases, couples who fall in love and marry outside their cultural group are disowned by their families, shunned by friends, and insulted by strangers.

There are gender variables associated with interracial marriages. From what I have observed in Botswana, more Black women marry White men. This arrangement does not seem to bother women in same-race relationships; on the contrary, it is the men whom I observe as feeling betrayed. I have heard a man ask questions such as “What is wrong with us for you to marry a White man?” In the U.S. the dynamics seem different. Many Black women, for example, feel betrayed by the brother who marries a White woman. “Black women are annoyed, to say the least, by Black men who say they favor White women because Black women are “not so feminine,” “too strong,” “too demanding,” or “sexually uptight” (Norment 1999, p. 3). The article by the Gable Group (2001) quoted a Black man as saying he dated White women because “they made it easy” and “they set the standards of beauty.” Such talk would obviously hurt Black women and make them doubt themselves.

On the opposite side of the coin, many people assume that White men are with Black women because of their sexual prowess or that the man thinks he owns her. They assume that a White woman is with a Black man because of his sexual prowess, or that he is attracted to her because she represents the “forbidden fruit” (Norment, 1999, p. 3).
Religious Perspectives

Friedman (1987) warned that religious differences could be detrimental to successful marriages. He posited that it was very rare for couples of different races or ethnicities to share the same religious background. He argued that sometimes intermarried couples, in order to make their marriage work, reject their religions. Sometimes this is too big a price for the individual or couple to pay. Without faith some individuals felt weakened in their internal strength, spirit, and the commitment that is essential to becoming happy or to achieving a successful intermarriage. This is, therefore, what their families feared for them and could create a conflict when a family member tries to reason with the individual on the issue.

Class Distinction

Social class refers to "differences in wealth, income, occupation, status, community power and family background" (Duberman, 1975, p. 34). This definition was said to be inadequate for full appreciation of ethnic differences as they related to intermarriages. A partner in intermarriage may act in accordance with his perceived class interest in some situations and in accordance with his cultural preference or minority identity in others (Ho, 1990).

According to Gordon (1964) and Root (2001), a man who has moved up the economic scale is generally looked up to as a likely partner in marriage for women whose cultural and social heritage may be far superior to his own. Such a man may, on the other hand, marry a woman socially and intellectually inferior to him because of her physical attractiveness and his emotional response. Such factors make for an increase in marriages
between persons of different classes, educational backgrounds, and different religious faith.

Theory/Models

Ecological Systems Model

Urie Bronfenbrenner, a developmental psychologist, proposed what he called an "ecological systems model" of psychological development, which is an evolving process of interaction between the human organism and the environment (Cooper, 1998). This model, as Ho (1990) proposed, was developed in 1977 and utilized four factors affecting human development and interaction: the individual, the family, the culture, and the environment.

Although couple and interpersonal relationships are of primary concern to marital therapy, problem-solving and enhancement of the marital relationship could not occur without clear analysis of the four ecological factors.

At the individual level, Ho (1990) contended that the focus was on the bio-psychological endowment each person possesses, including personality strengths, level of psychological development, cognition, perception, problem-solving skills, emotional temperament, habit formation, and communication and language skills. The family level is focused on family style, culture, family organization, and sex-role structure, division of labor, affective style, tradition, rituals, life-cycle expectations, and adjustment and management of internal and external stress. The nature of the spousal relationship and the depth of connectedness to children and extended family are areas of concern as well as the enhancement of couple relationships.
At the culture level, Ho (1990) posited that the focus should be on understanding the value systems, belief systems, and the social norms. At the environmental level, focus should be on the economic and social structure of the society, which oppresses individuals in minority groups. Negative societal stereotypes, discrimination, and non-acceptance of the intermarried are other important factors that could affect an intermarried couple relationship. An ecological perspective allows a marital therapist to focus on adaptive (and maladaptive) transactions between the couple and between the couple and the environment. Perceptions of and support from family, friends, and society will be discussed in more depth so as to highlight the significance of this model.

The ecosystemic theoretical framework highlights the importance of recognizing the socio-cultural context in which relationships and presenting problems are situated (Auerswald, 1985; Keeney, 1983). According to Killian (2001a), individuals, couples, and families are embedded within larger social structures, and these contexts influence their values, beliefs, and daily practices. Killian (2001b) further stated that differences between persons may both originate and manifest themselves at a variety of systemic levels and that it is important that the interaction of these different levels be considered and understood.

Model of Interracial Relationship Development

From my pilot study and listening to conversations of interracial couples, it is apparent that these couples do not see themselves or consider themselves to be intermarried. They do not see themselves as "you are Black and I am White." Until problems and conflicts around issues such as rituals or customs arise, or when they move to another country where race is an issue, they do not necessarily highlight their differences. It is,
therefore, important to address the major milestones of the couples' current relationship experiences and how they negotiate their differences to establish couple identity. How they resolve conflicts, the importance of shared events, honoring particular rituals and customs of the past, and creating new ones in their new families are important issues to address. Success in these processes is no doubt dependent on compromises and appreciation of the fact that they will not always agree on everything. Foreman and Nance (1999) suggested the following stages of development for racially intermarried couples.

Stage 1: Racial Awareness. Foreman and Nance (1999) defined the racial awareness of an interracial couple as an interpersonal and cultural experience. They claimed that, as any two individuals became acquainted, they had to become familiar with similarities and differences between them and to develop a shared belief that a relationship was possible. When the couples are of different races, these differences are immediately obvious. The couple must, therefore, develop an awareness of at least four perspectives: (a) one's own, (b) one's partner's, (c) that of one's collective racial group, and (d) that of one's partner's racial group. Even if the couple decided not to discuss or even acknowledge one or more of these perspectives, they might influence early decisions that the couple make. The authors also described the pressures that the couple feels regarding framing their relationship in terms of traditional social roles and attitudes.

Foreman and Nance (1999) suggested that interracial couples work their way through the awareness stage by engaging in communication behaviors related to their mutual attraction and sensitivity. The authors said that the discovery of the others' racial place may occur or may be revealed in discussions as the couple talk directly about race or
revealed indirectly as the couple addressed daily life.

The authors thought that both partners explain their thinking and perspectives to a sometimes unfamiliar, but intimate, other. Both must develop sensitivity to a sometimes-uncomfortable, alternative perspective. Both must learn new sets of public responses that they are likely to receive when they are together. They said the development of racial sensitivity is an important phase because it fosters the development of racial consciousness that previously would have been unattainable to either partner in a single race relationship. The authors emphasized the fact that each interracial couple resolves issues of racial awareness in their own home and manner. They said success at this initial stage builds a base of trust and openness to dialogue for the interracial couple.

**Stage 2: Coping with Social Definitions and Race.** Foeman and Nance (1999) stated that, at the end of the awareness stage, interracial couples recognize their attraction for each other and their increased sensitivities to the function of race in their lives. The authors counseled that it was at this time that they must decide how to integrate the new information into their long-term relationship. One interesting fact to also note was that many couples are actually forced into the coping phase by an unaccepting society. Therefore, the couple needs to develop proactive and reactive strategies. The couple has to learn to insulate themselves, when possible, from people and situations that are potentially harmful; to select public places that are more diverse and welcoming; to learn to respond to questions about their group loyalty in a defusing or curtailing manner, to learn to avoid hot issues or language in public settings; and to begin to establish a culture common to themselves. Additionally, they should stand ready to protect themselves as a couple.
Stage 3: Identity Emergence. At this stage the authors highlighted that redefinition occurred as the interracial couple and individual take control over images of themselves. At this stage couples began to develop behaviors that are self-sustaining. Instead of looking at their differences as obstacles to be overcome, interracial couples view the unique racial configurations of their families as positive sources of strength.

Stage 4: Maintenance. To conclude the stages, Foreman and Nance (1999) pointed out that, as the couple emerges with effective strategies and perspectives, they feel energized to share their views. The authors warned that, although each couple would begin with their own awareness, individuals within couples may be at different beginning points. Another couple may have entered a relationship with the posture that race was not an issue and later be forced to address racial awareness. The authors stressed that, if and when couples began to rear interracial children, they may need to recycle through these stages in light of their children’s experiences, as well as their own.

Conclusion

From the review of literature on studies done in the U.S., it was apparent that interracial/interethnic marriages were increasing, although the exact numbers are not known. In the U.S., it was also apparent that a vast majority of these marriages involved a White person and a person of color who usually was a minority (Black, American Indian, Hispanic, or Asian). Because of the involvement of a minority person, these couples were often marginalized and discriminated against. It was also incredible to note that little research had been devoted to the reality of interracial/interethnic marriages. One wonders
why extensive research was not done in this area. Was it due to denial that intermarriages were there and would continue to grow? One goal of this study is to contribute to the scant literature.

The historical perspective, which mainly focused in the U.S., elucidated past views of intermarriages, what these marriages were about, and how these marriages affected both the persons who intermarried and their children. The term intermarriage was used and generally applied to those persons whose religious, racial, or ethnic background was different from each other, either prior to or after their marriage. Interfaith according to Gordon (1964) referred to a marriage in which the couple were born or reared in families, each of which had identified with a different religion. Interethnic marriage was defined as one in which each of the parties to the marriage was reared in a cultural or national environment, which differed from that of the other. Interracial marriages referred to those marriages in which the parties to the marriage belonged to different races; their skin colors were different and would, of course, always remain different.

On a more positive note, McIelly (1973) acknowledged that intermarriages like any other marriage, is a continuous process in which two people meet and learn to live together; that they learn to adapt to each other in order to work toward common goals and achievements. This study follows in this more explanatory vein.

What was ironic and rather insightful from the literature review was that attitudes of young people in the U.S., particularly those who were college and university students, have markedly changed with respect to intermarriages. These changes, from the way Gordon (1964) perceived them, did not necessarily mean that young people would certainly intermarry. He posited that there was a vast difference between a person's attitude
and his/her ulterior motive. These young people may be influenced by many factors that presently fail to impress them, for example, one's response to his/her parents, or to the priest, and minister, in the moment of the decision, on in relation to one's knowledge of his/her own cultural tradition, on the other.

The reality is that most nations need to acknowledge and to accept these unions, especially the U.S. society, where increases in all forms of intermarriages -- interfaith, interracial, and interethnic -- are expected. This increase may be because of (a) the increasing number of young people attending colleges, (b) the elimination of religious differences and distinctions in schools and society, (c) the official change in statuses of colored nations and their recognition by the United Nations, and (d) the greater number of people traveling throughout the world and a general decrease in parental authority and the weakening of family ties.

What I found rather disturbing with regard to intermarriages in the U.S. was that it is now accepted and perceived as almost normal for a White person to marry a Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian, but, once a White person marries a Black person, there definitely was perceived to be an issue, which persists into the present.

The literature conveyed a lot about how U.S. society (e.g., family, neighbors, churches, schools and communities) in the past has perceived interracial couples and their biracial children. Also addressed were laws against interracial marriages (anti-miscegenation laws). As time progressed these laws, which prohibited White people from marrying outside their race changed. However, according to most researchers a large portion of the U.S. society were still intolerant of interracial marriages.

Members of the society in general were challenged to revisit their presumptions
and assumptions of normalcy and pathology and to appreciate fully the effects of dominant socio-cultural constructs regarding intermarriage on people’s lives. As Okun (1996) stated “just as a child who is not a ‘good fit’ in his or her family may become the identified patient, scapegoat, or lightening rod for family distress. The family that is not a ‘good fit’ in a larger socio-cultural context may serve the same function as the focus of the frustrations of the community” (p. 270).
CHAPTER III

Methodology

Van Manen (1990) described phenomenology as one of the many types of qualitative research used to examine the lived experiences of humans; it elucidates possible descriptions and interprets these meanings to a certain degree of depth and richness. Phenomenology is aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of meanings of our everyday experiences. Phenomenological researchers hope to gain understanding of the essential "truths" (i.e., essences) of lived experiences. For example, phenomenological research would include exploring the lived experiences of couples in interracial relationships. Phenomenologists ask, "What is this or that kind of experience like?" (p. 9).

Phenomenology has been described as a philosophy and/or a methodological science for examining human nature. Researchers in the phenomenological mode attempt to understand the meanings of events and interactions for ordinary people in particular situations. It, therefore, embodies the interpretative understanding of human interaction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Phenomenologists do not assume they know what perceptions mean to people they are studying (Douglas, 1976). Phenomenological inquiry begins with silence. This silence is an attempt to grasp what it is one is studying (Penañas, 1973). What phenomenologists emphasize, then, are the subjective aspects of people's behaviors. They attempt to gain entry into the conceptual worlds of their subjects (Geertz, 1979).

Phenomenologists, according to Byrne (2001), believe that knowledge and
understanding are embodied in our everyday worlds. Phenomenologists believe that truth and understanding of life can emerge from people’s life experiences. Husserl, a German philosopher as well as a mathematician, proposed that essences serve as the ultimate structure of consciousness. He contended that bracketing (i.e., setting aside preconceived notions) enables one to reflectively describe the phenomenon under study. Mathematics influenced Husserl’s thinking; thus, he sought a logical method to gain understanding of the experiences of human consciousness (Byrne, 2001).

I wanted to understand the dynamics of interracial marriages. Husserl’s approach would imply that I should bracket my biases and assumptions regarding these couple’s experiences so as to maintain perspective and to focus on the research questions. According to Husserl, bracketing would enable me to identify the challenges these couples face. Bracketing connotes that people can separate personal knowledge from their observations about what they understand regarding their life experiences.

The implications of phenomenology are drawn, therefore, in order to know how people experience a given phenomenon (i.e., intermarriage). The researcher must learn from them what they experience and how they interpret the world. It methodologically assumes that the only way for one to really know another person’s experience is to experience it. In my study, I focused on what the couples experienced and how they interpreted their worlds. I used interviews to get this information, without actually experiencing the phenomenon myself. I attempted to attain descriptions of what these couples experienced and how it was they experienced what they experienced. All this was accomplished by listening to their stories and through observation, noting changes in mood, bodily expressions, and voice intonation that might influence their responses. Because
marriage, family, and close relationships are so integral a part of everyday lives, phenomenologists believe they should be studied as phenomena in the everyday contexts of a neighborhood, a home, and in the course of normal activities, for example, at mealtime, and during rituals and celebrations.

Phenomenological Research in Social Context

According to Schutz (1962a), social research differs from research in physical sciences by virtue of the fact that in the social sciences one is dealing with research participants who are themselves interpreting the social world that scientists also wish to interpret. People are engaged in an ongoing process of making sense of the world in interaction with their fellows, and scientists are seeking to make sense of their sense making. In Schutz's words,

the ordinary person, acting in the world, is in a biographically determined situation, doing what he or she does according to the system of relevancies that enables them to select from the environment and from interactions with others, those elements that make sense for the purpose at hand. (p. 4).

Schutz further stated that "the social scientist, on the other hand, is operating on the basis of a scientifically determined set of relevancies, choosing those aspects of the situation that are appropriate for the objectives of the research" (p. 4).

Schutz (1962b) argued that the social scientist focuses on aspects of behavior that are taken-for-granted by the ordinary person, topics that are of cognitive interest only to the social scientist. As a researcher, I am quite aware, whether marriage is intragroup or intergroup, that it is an institution which should be taken seriously. I am also aware that
there are a lot of rituals that support any marriage and that there is an assumption that when groups intermarry some stability is lost, such as ethnic identity for each spouse, or that their cultures may or may not be diluted in the process. I chose to study this phenomenon in order to find out what is lost and what survives due to the intermarriage.

Schutz (1964b) suggested that the sources of socially-acquired knowledge can be seen as four ideal types: (1) the eyewitness, that is someone who reports something that he or she observed; (2) the insider, that is someone who, because of his/her relationship to a group, is able to report the event or opinions of others; (3) the analyst, someone who has collected information and organized that information in conformity with the system; and (4) the commentator, someone who has collected information the same way as the analyst and presented that information in such a way that it can convey a clear precise knowledge of the underlying deviating system.

Ullven (1996) posited that experiences are always contextual, immediately connected to an interpretation of the world around us. Alfred Schutz (1982) used terms like "frame of reference" to refer to this contextuality (p. 48). He suggested that contextuality means not only being in the world, but also refers to a person's intentional acting in the world. He stated that the term "context" refers to a social meaning structure, the semantic relationship between an individual, and his/her being in the world. As a therapist in training and according to Kung (2000), I have to pay attention to individuals or problems in context; interactions between individuals, subsystems, or whole systems; circular versus linear processes; and patterns that connect over time. Such emphasis on the contextual and interactional aspects of relationships in the systemic approach can be advantageous in my work with intermarried couples. As Schutz stated, "our experiencing is almost ever
[always] coupled with reflection about experience” (Schutz, 1982, p. 32). In my research I attempted to discover the prevailing struggles that intermarried couples contend with and to understand how they navigate their marriages in a society that may have negative perceptions about them.

Research Design

This was a descriptive study in a search to describe the dynamics of intermarriage relationships. To accomplish this I listened to the couple’s narratives as they discussed the strengths they had and challenges they faced. Because I was focusing on the couple’s inner experiences, the phenomenological research inquiry was used. I come from Botswana and have the cultural knowledge the women had. I was well acquainted with the geographic areas where the study was conducted. Again, regarding marriage expectations in Botswana, it is clear, in black and white, as to what is socially accepted and recognized (refer to marriage as a concept, p. 3). Because of this understanding I audio-taped the interviews and transcribed them myself with no difficulty translating to English some of the Setswana phrases the women, more especially, used.

I used an interview instrument with focused questions around the topic to provide a more useful and manageable data set. The questions explored couples’ experiences and probed into their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and worries. Their narratives provided helpful perspectives related to their experiences and rich detail about their feelings and thoughts. The instrument was developed and pilot tested with one couple (October 24, 2003).
Pilot Testing

A pilot test was carried out to help evaluate the adequacy of the questions, their sensitivity, and to determine how potential participants might respond to the questions prior to carrying out the main study. Since I was at the time in the U.S., pilot testing was done with a couple from the United States, a Motswana woman married to a U.S. citizen. The couple met and married in Botswana, had their children in Botswana, and lived there for a number of years before moving to the U.S. five years prior.

Pilot testing was done to determine the feasibility of the major study, to identify problems in the research design, to refine the data collection and analysis plan, and to give the researcher some experience with her participants, the methodology, and the instrument. It was also done to establish the amount of time it might take for interviewing each participant. Based on the pilot study, the actual study seemed feasible.

The pilot study gave me some experience with the population I would be studying. I interviewed both the woman and her husband in May 2003. According to the couple, the questions were not intimidating. The couple gave interesting feedback. They both said they were interested in knowing how couples who have always lived in Botswana would answer questions on the theme-focused genogram that touch on race. When the pilot study was modified, the question on race was deleted so that it would not influence the participants to focus on their racial differences. With the pilot couple as well as the actual participants, there was some recognition of difference in these interracial marriages. As a researcher I entered the couple's world to see how they experienced this difference. What was evident and interesting was that they themselves did not see themselves as different. The pilot study woman, and four women in the actual study, discussed race in relation to their
children. She and the four women in the actual study did mention that their children are neitheracknowledged as Black or White and are called mixed in a derogatory manner and were concerned about that. The interview with the pilot study couple took three hours.

In constructing the genogram and ecomap, the woman had more to say than her husband regarding extended family networks. They live in the U.S., but her ties with her extended family are more extensive than her husband's, whose family is in the U.S. I also removed one question in constructing the genogram, one that explored societal attitudes towards their children upon realizing that attitudes towards biracial children and experiences of biracial children could make a second study. The couple, given a chance, would have said more in this area. Upon hearing the topic the woman said, "I hate the labels used to identify our children" She was referring to the ones used in Botswana, "le kutwane," "lekgoa" and said, "I wonder what labels my children have in this country?" The couple, on the whole, seemed comfortable with one another and with being interviewed.

Recruitment of Participants

In order to have greater access to participants, a non-randomized snowballing sampling method as recommended by Inman, Ladany, Constantine, and Morano (2000) was used. Given the intensive and time-consuming nature of conducting the study, the literature indicated that a sample of eight to ten participants was feasible. A small sample was recommended so as to gain an in-depth understanding of each case and to treat each participant as important and unique to the study (Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997). The study was carried out in Botswana, where intermarriages are highly noticeable.
Since highly motivated participants were desired, in recruiting these couples, I first contacted one woman who I knew was in an interracial marriage. This woman was my key informant, whom I thought was well connected and could point me to other couples who had the valuable information I needed. It is the norm in my country to talk to the women first if one needs to gain access to any horse. This is why I had to identify a woman as an informant I explained to her what my study was all about and emailed a solicitation letter to her. She too spoke to the women, as I expected her to, given our socialization.

When she emailed me back, she had included a list of women, not their husbands, who were in interracial marriages and their contact numbers and email addresses.

Because I was in graduate school in the U.S. and my project was going to be conducted in Botswana, as well as the time constraints involved that meant traveling back and forth between the U.S. and Botswana, as soon as I received the information, one month before I left for Botswana, I called the women and emailed the solicitation letters to them. As soon as I arrived, I contacted the women again, this time by telephone. By that time most of them had already discussed my study with their husbands. Not all the women that I contacted were able to participate. This was because they themselves were traveling as a family or their husbands were away. Those who could not participate recommended others whom I started contacting as soon as I arrived in Botswana.

The solicitation letter conveyed the purpose of the study, clarified that participation was voluntary, and that participants had the right to refuse to take part in the study or to withdraw from participation at any point without penalty. It also indicated that the interviews would be conducted with husband and wife together regarding their views of their marriage. It included a statement about approximately how long the interview would
last and informed participants that the interviews would be audio-taped. An informed consent form to fully inform them of the nature of the research and the demands the study could make on them was given to each participant, read and signed on the day of first contact. Because I was meeting with the women first, I would leave a copy of the consent form for the husband. The women called me as soon as they discussed the study with their husbands and set appointments for the interviews.

Participants

Participants in this study were comprised of nine intermarried couples between the ages of 38 to 65 years for the women, average age being 47, and 39 to 59 for men, average age being forty-nine. With regards to educational level, one out of nine women never went to college nor finished high school. She quit school at form 2 (9th grade). Four of the women interviewed held a diploma (associate degree), one in nursing (she later pursued journalism), one in business management, and two in education. One has a master’s degree in physiotherapy while three of the women have their masters’ degrees in psychology, law, and chemistry. Among the husbands, one out of nine men has a diploma in business management, five hold bachelor’s degrees in journalism, engineering, business, and education. Two have masters degrees in chemistry and education while one has a Ph.D. in history.

All the women in the study except one are either self-employed or working in private companies, organizations, or schools. These women have always worked. Mphs (couple 3) is unemployed. She reported working as a typist before she got married and that she quit when she started having children. Of the nine husbands, two work part-time as
consultants. One works for the government and the rest and the other six are self-employed (i.e., they run their own businesses).

With regard to religion, every couple interviewed reported being born and raised in a particular church, such as Roman Catholic (n = 3), Lutheran (n = 2), Anglican (n = 3), Dutch Reformed (n = 1), Jewish (n = 1), and St. Apostolic Church (n = 1). Five couples reported not practicing and never going to church. Some have converted to other churches, such as Catholic, Anglican, and Church of the Latter Day Saints. Some participants described themselves as raised Christian but not affiliated with any church. In two couples interviewed, the women were affiliated and actively going to church, and their husbands were not, except when the church service involved the children, such as for confirmation and baptism. In two of the couples interviewed, the husbands were born and raised in a different church than their wives, but then decided to switch to their wives’ churches and were actively participating in church activities.

All couples met in Botswana except for one who met and married in the U.S. Couples had been married from four and five years to 35 years. The two couples who are married four and five years dated for a long time and cohabitated for 12 to 14 years before they finally decided to marry. All the women are Batswana, born and raised in Botswana, except for one, a Motswana born in Zimbabwe. The men/husbands’ ethnicities were as follows: English (n = 3), Dutch (n = 2), Australian (n = 1), Danish (n = 1), U.S. (n = 1) and German/SA (n = 1). The women personally/socially identified themselves as Batswana first, then for some by tribe second (e.g., Mongwato, Moletš), some by race (i.e., as a Black woman, one with her parents, and one described herself as multifaceted). Out of nine husbands, two (2) identified themselves by their ethnicities (Dutchman, Englishman), and
the rest as Botswana, one by birth order. The number of years all these men have been in
Botswana ranged from 20 to 35 years (See Table 2, Appendix E).

The motivation for the men to migrate to Botswana ranged from boredom in their
own countries and wanting out; visiting a relative in Botswana and then deciding to live in
Botswana, to not wanting to be drafted to the army. Some came in initially as Peace Corps
Volunteers. For one, his company sent him to Botswana on a contract to work for a
number of years and he never went back; one moved to Botswana with his parents at an
early age; one met his wife abroad and moved back to Botswana with her (See Table 1,
Appendix D).

A description of each couple is found in Chapter IV, the case study section (See
genograms in Appendix F.) Pseudonyms have been used, Setswana names for the women
and English names for the husbands, for easy discussion and to preserve the couples' anonymity.

Procedure

I interviewed the couple together. The instrument I developed contained a written
demographic questionnaire to help define the social location of each person in terms of age,
education, religion, years married, personal/social identity, where and how long each lived
in countries other than Botswana, and, for the husbands, what motivated them to go to
Botswana. The questionnaire also included open-ended questions regarding how the
couple met and the reactions of members of families of origin, friends, and colleagues, as
well as societal reactions to their marriages. Data were collected in the following sequence:
I first constructed a theme-focused genogram, then an eco-map, and finally asked the
interview questions. The genogram and eco-map guided the direction, which the
semi-structured in-depth interviews took. The aim of the questions in the interview
questionnaire had to be in line with what the couple brought up, such as different
backgrounds with regard to culture, religion, or race. They chose to discuss the interracial
aspect of their marriage and that is how we proceeded.

Hill and colleagues (1997) emphasized open-ended questions throughout the
interview to give participants the freedom to answer in an unstructured fashion. They
stressed that the researcher should probe into answers to make sure that she has complete
information about the topic; also she should encourage participants to describe their
experiences in some detail.

Each interview was two-and-a-half to four hours in length. We took breaks for
coffee, to fetch something from the kitchen, to use a bathroom, or to answer a doorbell. The
couple's comfort was a priority. I am not fluent enough in Setswana, so all the interviews
were conducted in English. Some responses were mixed with a bit of Setswana that did not
require major translation. The interviews were audio-taped with the permission of the
participants. All except one couple agreed to be audio-taped. Regardless of what the
researcher said to make them comfortable the husband said he did not want to be on tape
and did not give reasons. The researcher had to listen and write every response, which took
longer compared to other interviews. Follow-up for clarification was by telephone. All
interviews were conducted in the couple's homes.
Data Collection

I obtained appropriate recording equipment from the University of Botswana (UB) to record the interviews and checked in advance of each visit to ensure the equipment was working properly. I also obtained informed consent for recording. Recording started after the introductory phase and after names had been said, to avoid including them on the tape. I used active listening to show that I was physically and emotionally present and to convey the spirit of support and so they knew they were being heard. Presumably this provided the best opportunity for encouraging participants to fully engage with the process, thus garnering the fullest possible input of data.

The participants decided on where and what time the interviews should be held. The interviews took place at the couple's homes after 7 p.m. during the week, or at 9 a.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m., and 7 p.m. on weekends. Participants were obtained from the capital city, Gaborone (n = 3), and villages [i.e., Tlokweng (n = 1), Mopane (n = 1), Modipane (n = 1), and suburbs, Phakalane (n = 2) and Mmokoldi (n = 1)]. Other than minimal interruptions, such as a knock on the door, when the researcher would stop the tape and proceed immediately afterwards, the interviews were relatively uninterrupted.

Observer Comments/Journal Entry

I used a note pad and kept constant check on discrepancies between non-verbal and spoken words. As I was interviewing, I recorded thoughts and feelings and all important insights that came to me during data collection, before I forgot them. When words, events or circumstances recurred, I noted this in the observer's comments. If I thought something was obscure, I also noted this, for example, the husband in couple two who refused to be
audio-taped. When I noticed that certain participants had elements in common, I pointed that out in the observer comments. I jotted down ideas and circled key words and phrases that participants used. I underlined what appeared to be particularly important. This information was noted as the researcher’s (my) impressions of the interviewees and of their comments. Below is a journal entry that I wrote on my experience with Jerry (couple 2).

Jerry refused to be audio-taped. As soon as I took out the tape from the back pack and asked about the socket to plug it in he said, “I do not want to be on tape. I read the letters you gave us but do not want to be on tape.” I tried to explain that it was easier and saved time and, of course, also explained safety and storage issues. He said “No!” How I felt: (a) Apprehension about the outcome of the interview; (b) This became a challenge regarding re-organizing myself; to be prepared to listen, concentrate and write very fast; (c) My mind was racing, with questions emerging regarding why he refused. I asked myself was my taping appropriate in the first place? Did he feel intimidated by the big audio-tape I got from the University of Botswana (UB)? What if subsequent interviews were the same way? What if I lose data trying to write fast? (d) I also wondered if they read my change of demeanor; feeling anxious. I did tense up a bit; (e) Finally, I said, “Okay, if you guys are ready, let’s start.” I had to respect and accept Jerry’s opinion; and (f) Observing Jerry, he was comfortable, in control, and respectful to me as well. Both him and his wife gave their best in the interviews.
Transcription

It took four months to transcribe the tapes prior to starting the analysis. To add trustworthiness to the data, copies of transcribed tapes were sent to the participants. Later, the identified themes were sent to participants. Within this procedure I was asking my participants to read through the material and state whether their responses conveyed their realities and reflected what they intended to say. They were being asked to read the transcriptions carefully to see if they had any additions, corrections, or clarifications. Participants read and made corrections and additions accordingly. Confidentiality was maintained at all times. Themes, words, and phrases of descriptions of their experiences were noted.

Narratives

Direct quotes from the couples about how they described their relationships and how friends, family and the public perceived them were used in the results section of this research study. This was done to further enhance the credibility of the findings and conclusions.

Theme-Focused Genogram

Genograms are graphic tools, rather than family trees, on which intergenerational family relationships are portrayed (McGoldrick & Geason, 1985). They represent the names, birth order, sex, and relationships of members of a family. They are used to detect recurrent patterns and themes in the family history and to help the members understand their problems. In the study all names were changed to protect the privacy of participants.
and their families.

I constructed a three-generational theme-focused genogram (Personal communication by Olga Silverstein per Robert Massey, 2004). I developed a few questions as a guide to initiate the discussion with the couple (See Appendix F). The couples' responses guided me as to how the interview questions should flow. I was able to gain information about members in the nuclear family, how they connected to the extended family, patterns of intermarriages within the family, how the family works, and a general understanding of the family as the primary influence on the couple's lives. The genogram acted as a framework for my study, and its use prompted insights. See Appendix J for a sample of participants and researcher's genograms.

Eco-Maps

According to Mattani (1993), eco-maps give an ecological or eco-systemic perspective in which clients' transactions within the environmental systems are taken into account in assessment and intervention. Eco-maps are particularly useful for capturing important information to systemic formulations, including boundary issues and the direction, rate, and mutuality of resource exchanges, while increasing the client's level of involvement in assessment and intervention planning. While my participants were not clients in therapy with me, and I made no interventions, I constructed eco-maps to find out how the couples perceived themselves in terms of the social groups to which they belong. Eco-maps helped portray relationships of the couples with extended families, formal systems such as work places, schools, friendship networks, churches, and communities in general. I then described my findings from the eco-maps. The couples understood and
experienced the interconnections that the eco-maps described.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of data, prevailing themes were identified through coding and categorizing of the essential meanings of each couple’s experiences. The analyses were done individually (i.e., husband’s and wife’s separately).

Preparing Data for Analysis

Open-ended questions in interviews usually lead to large amounts of data that had to be put into some sensible format. After the tapes were transcribed, data about similar topics were clustered by means of what is known as coding (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). In preparing data for analysis, I examined the phenomena within individual cases. I then looked across cases to determine any similarities, took all core ideas for each domain, copied these onto a new sheet of paper, and then examined them, put them into groups, and generated categories.

Interpreting Data

In interpreting data, I followed the steps below. The steps below are a combination of phenomenological analysis (Moustkas, 1994) and modified analytical induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). In analytic induction, data are examined in turn as they are collected, and the themes are continually modified to fit each new participant.
Horizonalization. Creswell (1998) suggested that, in order to have a full
description of participants’ phenomena, the researcher should engage in what is known as
horizonalization, whereby the researcher finds statements in the interviews about how
they experience the topics. Creswell further stated that, once that phase is completed, one
seeds to then develop a list of non-repetitive, non-overlapping statements, group them
together, and then write descriptions of the (textures) experiences about what happened,
including verbatim examples. Moustakas (1994) emphasized that every statement has
equal value in importance.

Initial Coding. I created a spreadsheet with the research questions in one column
and the couple’s responses in another. In my spreadsheet I also documented yes or no
responses, okay, hostile, own, mutual, etc. Not all themes were captured through this,
especially those that required more than a yes or no response so, with those I elaborated
separately about them. The categories that I created from one participant, I then compared
with participants transcripts. Similar categories across transcripts were noted as well as
variations of the same category.

As I continued to read the daunting data, I referred to the research questions to find
out if the questions had been answered. With the help of Microsoft Excel, I looked at each
transcript in depth for each participant, husband and wife, separately. Horizontally, I had
cases (husband, wife), and longitudinaIy the cells I had all the topics/categories. At first.
I looked at the thematic-genogram responses, eco-maps, and then the structured-interview
questions, reading through to find out if each question was answered appropriately.

I searched for regularities and patterns, as well as the topics the data covered, and
then wrote in my notebook in my own words phrases that represented the topics and patterns that emerged. This was a way of understanding how the participants experienced what they experienced. The categories that I created from one participant, I then compared with other participants' transcripts. Similar categories across transcripts were noted as well as variations of the same category. I came up with 22 coding categories (See Appendix H).

**Coding/Thematic Portrayal.** The initial codes were applied to the data and during this process refined to develop eight themes: (a) building the marital foundation, (b) gender roles, (c) couple and family values, (d) negotiating the cultural differences, (e) interactions outside the couple, (f) couple's perception of their marriage, (g) utilization of mental-health services, and (h) eco-map findings. These themes I then used to discuss the results of my study. Below is an explanation of how each theme was derived.

1. **Building the Marital Foundation.** In this section is information about what led the couples to marry outside their backgrounds. It covered where and how they met, the attraction, dating patterns, courtship and decision to marry, traditional marriage rituals they followed, and decision of where to live in Botswana.

2. **Gender Roles.** Here I was looking at what roles each partner assumed in the home and whether gender roles were defined or assumed. Two areas covered were household and parenting.

3. **Couple/Family Values.** Here I was looking at what the couple emphasized as important to them. This section also described how the couple navigated their differences as well as celebrated their marriage and engaged in family life. A few concepts that emerged as important, such as loyalty, humanity, respect for elders, the extended
family relationships, were further explained.

4. **Negotiating Cultural Differences**: When two people from different countries, different ethnicities, come together, they have vast amounts of differences from one another. First, there are established differences because of the different ways they were brought up. Second, how each partner views the marital institution is determined by the expectations each partner brings to the marriage. Couples shared with me what it was like to be married and coming from different cultures and how they dealt with problems that arose. Differences that were highlighted as problematic were language as a barrier, food, discipline, values, color and race, and religion.

5. **Interactions outside the Couple**: This theme arose as participants described how their families, friends, colleagues, and communities responded to their unions. I wanted to find out if couples perceived families, friends, and the community as accepting or judgmental of their marriages.

6. **Couple’s Perception of their Marriage**: Couples described what being in an interracial marriage meant for them and how they see themselves as a couple.

7. **Utilization of Mental Health Services**: Couples briefly discussed their reasons for not utilizing these services.

8. **Eco-maps**: Here I looked at eco-map findings across the entire sample.

**Honesty and Trust**

The researcher’s relationships with the participants were of a professional nature and were clearly defined. The couples knew I was a student and doing the project strictly for my studies. As the primary researcher, I had to ask myself the following questions. Do
we trust each other? Am I telling the truth? I did not pressure, persuade, or coerce my participants into providing information. I was comfortable that my questions were not embarrassing, because I had pilot tested them and received positive feedback. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), research instruments such as interview questions may have lingering effects on participants (e.g., intense conversational interviews may lead to new levels of self-awareness, possible changes in life style, and shifting priorities of living). If done badly, they may lead to feelings of anger, disgust, defeat, and intolerance. I am happy to say that none of my participants expressed the stated feelings; there were no lingering effects. Throughout the interviews, participants were comfortable with the researcher.

Sensitivity

Patton (1987) stated that it is the interviewer’s responsibility to be sensitive to how the interviewee may be affected by different questions and various question formats. Sometimes it is not possible to review all possible variations on how to ask questions. By doing a pilot study and from my interviewees’ comments, I was able to observe and establish that my questions were sensitive enough to use on the actual study. The questions worked for the first couple, and it did not mean they would for other couples. People respond to situations differently; I had to keep this in mind all the time. With the first interview, I was a bit nervous because it had been months after the pilot study. I was more worried about the length of the interview. The couple whom I interviewed was not in a hurry and would be offering tea during their interview. Because they were relaxed, I relaxed too, and, after the interview was completed, I felt at ease with subsequent interviews.
Credibility

According to Byrne (2001), in quantitative research the concepts of reliability and validity are used to judge and evaluate statistical findings. In qualitative research, however, credibility is the preferred term. Patton (1999), on the other hand, warned that qualitative research is an interpretive process; therefore, it is important for a researcher’s perspective to be articulated. Because the researcher is the instrument in qualitative inquiry, a qualitative report must include information about the researcher. What experience, training, and perspective does the researcher bring to the field? What personal connections does the researcher have to the people, program, or topic studied? Who funded the study and under what arrangements with the researcher? How did or will the researcher gain access to the study site? What prior knowledge did the researcher bring to the research topic and study site? Since I already had a few e-mails from some potential participants, following the approval of my proposal by the university’s Institutional Review Board, I started a dialogue with them. The dialogue started in June 2004, and continued until May 2005, when I was sending transcripts back and forth to my participants. I made myself known to the participants by answering all the questions proposed by Patton. The informed consent and introducing myself during data collection addressed these questions. (See Appendix C for informed consent and Appendix K for the researcher’s autobiography).

In conclusion, Patten (2000) stated that unstructured interviews tend to yield information to describe the extent to which traits are present. Unless I referred to the interviews and observer comments, I would fail to describe the results of my study in enough detail so that readers could picture the meanings attached to constructs identified. I, therefore, quoted participants and described specific interactions, so that I did not lose
focus on what my study was intended to explore.

Debriefing

There was no deception in my study. Debriefing started with the pilot study. My pilot participants were valuable to my research. Both husband and wife seemed to understand what my study was about and they understood the research questions and what their contributions were to the whole process. There was dialogue between my pilot-study participants as well as participants in the actual study and myself before I traveled to meet with them.

Throughout my study I was observant, especially of the men in the study, to determine if they felt violated. Discussing a marriage could be unsettling for some people, especially when the husband is involved in a conversation between women. I discuss my marriage with my women friends, and it is okay. I have never discussed marital issues with men. This is why I thought they might feel violated. I had to be alert for those participants who might need help in overcoming unanticipated harm to them. After the interviews I went back to viewing the reasons for my study and the procedures used and offered to share with my participants the results when they become available. I reassured my participants that the data would remain confidential. I allowed my participants any questions they had about any aspect of the study.
CHAPTER IV
Results

The study was conducted in the months of July and August of 2004. The participants decided on where and what time the interviews should be held. All the interviews took place at the couple’s homes after 7 p.m., during the week, or at 9 a.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m., and 6 p.m. on weekends. Participants were obtained from the capital city Gaborone (n = 3) villages such as Tlokweng (n = 1), Mmopane (n = 1), Modipane (n = 1), and suburbs of Gaborone, Phakalane (n = 2), and Mmokoldi (n = 1). Other than minimal interruptions, such as coffee breaks or a knock on the door, where the researcher would stop the tape and proceed immediately after, the interviews were uninterrupted. (See Table 2, Appendix E for demographic data regarding each participant).

Case Study B1: Mark and Sega

Demographic Data

Mark is 59-years-old and Sega 65. The couple has been married for 34 years. The couple met at the job; they are both journalists. The attraction was mutual interests. When they met, Sega was living in South Africa (S.A.). The couple lived between S.A. and Botswana and described this period as the roughest period of their relationship, as they had to sneak in and out of Botswana and S.A. Mark is Jewish. He was born in England and
migrated to Botswana 35 years ago. Sega was born in Tlokweng, Botswana. She was born into a Lutheran family and is not a practicing Lutheran. She lived in South Africa for 21 years, where she did most of her schooling from elementary through college. She also lived in England for three and a half years and in Zambia for six months. The couple cohabited for awhile, then married in Swaziland with no family involvement. The couple has three children: Leseol, 39, Thuso, 29, and Khumo, 27-years-old. Leseol, the oldest son who is divorced, was married to an English white woman. Thuso is married to a Zambian. Previously Mark dated across different religious backgrounds and Sega across different ethnicities. A history of interracial marriages was evident within their own nuclear family.

Researcher’s Experience

I interviewed Mark and Sega on July 15, 2004, at 7 p.m. They were the first couple I met and interviewed. I had not identified them as part of my participants initially. When I arrived in Botswana and realized that some of the women whom I contacted while in the U.S. were traveling and the husbands of some of the women were away, I had to solicit other participants. Someone, a friend to the couple, told me about them. I called Sega. She agreed to meet and invited me to her house. We met, discussed my study over tea, and she then suggested I leave the solicitation letter for her husband. Two days later she called and set up an appointment for the interview.

Because this was the first couple for the actual study, I was a bit anxious about how it would go. The interview took place at their house and they were enthusiastic. The sequence of the interview involved first the genogram, theme-focused questions, the ecomap, and lastly the interview questionnaire. Compared to the other couples I had
identified as potential participants, Mark and Sega were an older couple, he 59 and she is a 65-year-old woman. I collected the demographic data and, when they mentioned that they married in the 1960s and were living between South Africa and Botswana I became excited about what I was about to hear. Since South Africa was implementing apartheid, I was eager to listen to their story of how they met and how they successfully navigated their marriage. We settled down and went right into the interview, which went smoothly. What the couple emphasized as important were their being parents to their own children and to other children from the extended family that they helped raise. They also saw their jobs as important, as well as family values.

Eco-Mop Findings

Mark and Sega have strong and close relationships with their children and the work they do. They are both journalists, work together, and enjoy that very much because it brings them closer as a couple. They have weak relationships with the extended family, especially on Mark’s side of the family. When asked how he felt about being away from home, Mark responded by saying: I had no family ties at all, so being away from home never created problems.

Mark’s family remained estranged for a while after his marriage to Sega, but later his relationship with his mother and sister improved. His mother used to visit. Regarding relationships with friends and colleagues, there are boundary issues. They reported having a few friends that they call once in a while. Sega had this to say: “Small network of friends. We keep to ourselves most of the time. The extended family has been supportive and those are the people we rely on.”
Regarding church and religion, Mark and Sega described themselves as spiritual. They do not go to church, do not believe in organized religion, and do not participate in church activities. The potential conflict could be that Mark is Jewish and Sega Lutheran. They are not part of any support groups, nor do they utilize mental-health services. When asked about why they do not utilize mental-health services, they said they never saw a need. Since they live in a village, they reported being welcoming to outsiders who visit. Sega more especially sees women coming in to consult with her on topics ranging from parenting to politics.

Case Study B2: Jerry and Mantho

Demographic Data

Jerry and Mantho were both 46 years old. The couple had been married 21 years. Jerry came to Botswana 21 years ago to visit a relative who was teaching in the same school where Mantho was also a teacher. Jerry was born and raised in Australia and Mantho was born in Mmopane, Botswana. The couple met by chance. Jerry came to Botswana to visit his brother, who was a teacher in Moeding College and lived with his Australian wife. Mantho was also a teacher in the same college. There was a school trip that included students and teachers. Jerry's brother and Mantho were some of the teachers who were accompanying students on this organized trip. Because Jerry was in Botswana then, his brother invited him to join them. It was in the back of the truck where Jerry and Mantho started talking and realized that they shared similar likes. After the trip Mantho took over from Jerry's brother and showed Jerry around the sites in Moeding.

The attraction was mutual and they started dating. Jerry went back to Australia, but
then came back that same year, and they got married. Jerry never went back to Australia except when the couple went to visit. Both of them are Christian, but not practicing. Jerry is an engineer and Mantho a teacher at a private elementary-middle school. The couple has two children, a boy, Batho 17, and a girl, Botho 14 years-old. Mantho is the oldest of the three siblings and Jerry the youngest of four children. Dating each other outside their backgrounds was the first time for both of them. Mantho has an aunt and female cousin who are married interracially, the cousin to a U.S. citizen and the aunt to an Indian.

Researcher's Experience

Jerry and Mantho live in Mopane, a village outside the main city of Gaborone. I interviewed the couple in their home on July 24, 2004, at 9 a.m. They were the second couple to be interviewed. I had contacted Mantho while in the U.S. When I arrived in Botswana, I called her and she suggested I meet her in the private school where she works as a teacher. I met her there and discussed my study. She took the solicitation letter for her husband and later called and set up an appointment. Because I had already tested the waters, to follow the structure of interviewing with this couple was not difficult at all. The only challenging part was that Jerry refused to be audio-taped. Therefore, the interview took longer; about four hours because I had to write everything. We took breaks for coffee and for them to attend to their customers. They run a business which is named by Jerry. After the genogram and economic were complete, I went ahead and asked them in a humorous manner where and how they met. The story, which I already shared above in the demographic section, was interesting, and we were all laughing.

Listening to Mantho and Jerry, I heard that what they brought up as important to
them were their children, being a family, village life and being accepted by the villagers, celebrating both cultures appropriately, and family values.

Eco-Map Findings

According to Jerry and Mantho, their children are their mirror. Jerry stated that their children have better insights about them. They describe their nuclear family unit as tight and close. In relation to the extended family and community, the relationships are weak. This was how Mantho responded:

We belong to the family. Outside our business, I have few work relationships.

We have few friends and do not have fixed times to see people. We do not belong to any group like church or organization, even though we are more into people.

I’m also a teacher, so I do participate in school activities. So does Jerry with our children’s school.

Jerry added:

Village life is a big factor in determining our lives. We have limited relationships with outsiders, but do participate in village activities such as attending weddings, and funerals. Our daughter, for example, participates in a lot of village activities such as choirs. She plays diketo [games] with friends in the village and basketball with her friends at school.

Jerry and Mantho are not part of any support groups. On the inquiry about utilizing mental-health professionals, this was how the couple responded:

Jerry: My brother is a psychologist. We never dealt with him in that role.

Mantho: I deal with mental-health issues at school. I do a lot of referrals of
children to counselors. I also attended a few courses on counseling.

Regarding their affiliation with churches, Jerry and Mautho are both Christian, they came from Christian beginnings, they believe in God without participating in organized religion.

Case Study B3: James and Mpho

**Demographic Data**

James is 55 and Mpho 52 years old. The couple has been married 28 years. James has lived in Botswana for 30 years. His moving to Botswana from Denmark was a substitute for the army. He did not want to join the army and opted for the Peace Corps, that sent him to Botswana as an engineer, initially, for two years. The contract was further extended to three years, but then later he quit being a Peace Corps volunteer and started his own construction business. Mpho is a homemaker and James the breadwinner. James is self-employed. The couple met by chance at a party and it was love at first sight. James was born Lutheran and is not practicing. Mpho grew up in the St Paul Apostolic church and, since 1991, changed to the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints. Since their marriage the couple has lived in Botswana. They only visit Denmark. Their two older children, Cindy and Pat, currently live in Denmark.

With regards to dating, James never dated anyone outside his background. He had only casual flings. Mpho dated only Batswana Black men before. After she had a child with one Moswana man who got her pregnant and later abandoned her, she dated a white man. She later met and married her husband. The couple has four children of their own and one adopted grandchild. They are all girls, Beth, 27, Ally, 23, Jane, 21, Lilly, 14 and the
adopted grand-child Tuti, who is also 14 years old. Mpho’s paternal aunt was married to a white man; his ethnicity is unknown. There are no intermarriages on James’s side of the family.

Researcher’s Experience

I interviewed James and Mpho in their house on a Sunday on July 24, 2004 at 3 p.m. I identified this couple when I arrived in Botswana. A friend of mine who knew the couple suggested I call them. I met first with the wife, who was ready to talk before the actual interview was scheduled to happen. As soon as I told her what my study was all about she said, “I can start telling you about my experiences right now.” I had to prevent her from saying much and asked her to reserve the details for later. Of course, both she and her husband were interested in knowing why I decided to study them. Because I was clear about my position of being a student, they both said, “We will do it” and kept the informed consents and set a day and time for the interview. When I arrived on Sunday, they had already signed the informed consents and we started right away. The interview went very well, with the wife being more verbal than her husband.

Mpho and James emphasized the following in their story: the love for their children, their different roles, accepting and adapting to the other’s culture and that people (the community) should look at them as a functional married couple and not forget about the color difference. Mpho also emphasized the importance of church for her and her children and was resentful of the fact that her husband was not a member of her church. James also felt that for his family to be accepted by his brother’s family could have been a good experience to prevent the stressful relationship he now had with his brother.
Eco-map Findings

As a family unit Mpho and James are close and have a strong healthy relationship with their five children. They both alternate to participate in their children’s school activities, such as attending parent-teachers meetings and sports. With the extended families on both sides the relationships are weak. They maintain clear boundaries, e.g., Mpho’s biological family is in Botswana, but even so they communicate, but do not visit each other often. On Jerry’s side of the family, one of his brothers and his family never accepted his wife and children, thus making the relationship stressful and estranged.

Regarding their relationship with outsiders, Jerry has a few friends he associates with, some that he shares with his wife. Mpho, on the other hand, socializes in church and with a group of women who meet once in a while to help each other, such as preparing for children’s birthdays, and who sometimes sit, talk and share ideas.

There seems to be a potential conflict with regards to the couple’s relationship with the church. Religion does play a role in the lives of all family members except Jerry. Mpho and the girls are members of The Church of the Latter Day Saints. This is what Mpho said pertaining to that topic.

With me I am Christian, the same as my children because Jerry allowed that they can join as members. They were all baptized in church and participate wherever it’s necessary. So I’m sort of trying to balance it, as a Christian, and, because my husband is not a member, as a Christian and being a wife at home. I’m concerned about what I’m supposed to be, a wife who does not go to church because he needs me at home when I’m supposed to be in church or a Christian. It’s sort of half-half. Mpho and Jerry do not utilize mental-health services. They said they never saw a
need for those facilities.

Case Study B4: Alfred and Neo

Demographic Data

Alfred is 47 and Neo 43 years old. They have been married 13 years. They met and became friends initially and later started dating. Alfred was born and raised as a Catholic in Holland, and Neo was born in Molepolole and raised Anglican. Alfred has since joined his wife’s church. He came to Botswana 21 years ago as a Dutch Volunteer.

His type of education, which is environmental science, motivated him to work abroad. He once lived in India for a year. He currently works part-time as a consultant. Neo, who has lived in South Africa, England, India, and Holland, is a lawyer by profession. She is currently in a high-profile position in one of the non-governmental organizations in Botswana and works full-time. Both of them dated outside their backgrounds before. They have three children. Letika, a boy who is nine, and two girls, Dudu, seven and Sere, four-years-old. Neo is the youngest of three siblings. Her siblings married interracially as well. Alfred is an only child and there is no history of intermarriages in his family.

Researcher’s Experience

Alfred and Neo live in Gaborone. Neo identifies herself as a Motswana and Alfred as a Dutchman. I knew Neo from the church we both go to, Anglican, but had never met her husband. I had not identified Neo and her husband as potential participants initially.

Somehow, when I was in Gaborone, I thought of her, but, because of the nature of her job
that takes her all over Botswana and abroad, I did not even think she would be available at
the time of my study. I called her. She was there and she agreed to meet with me in her
office. We met on a Thursday, July 22, 2004. I discussed the nature of my study, and she
got very interested and said she would discuss it with her husband. She was due to travel
that Friday for a week and took the solicitation letter to read it. When she came back a week
later, she called me and set an appointment for the interview and also checked whether if
needed more participants.

The interview was conducted in their home on August 1, 2004, at 3 p.m. In a
humorous way she said, “My brother, too, is in an interracial marriage. I could talk him
into participating. My sister, unfortunately, is divorced.” Of course her brother did not
meet my criteria, so it did not happen. What was ironic, though, was that, when I went to
interview them, her brother was there; he had been visiting. He challenged me as to why I
chose to interview Batswana women only, and suggested that next time I should not
discriminate but include men as well. He left, and we settled in for the interview. Both Neo
and Alfred were eager participants, and they had a lot to say. Neo kept telling me, “We
both talk too much, bear with us.”

I had fun interviewing this couple. What came up as important to them was
spending time together as a couple, family time, family values, religion, maintaining their
privacy, and being respected and treated as human beings.

Eco-Map Findings

Neo and Alfred have strong and close relationships with their children and the
extended family. Relationships with friends are limited. Neo belongs to several social
groups such as the church. Through her work she engages with other Non-governmental organizations (NGO’s). Alfred, on the other hand, also socializes with environmentalist sectors and other consultants, on a limited level, though. Both look at the receptions circuit as a way of meeting and networking with people. Both participate in school activities for their children, meeting with other parents, sports groups, and the gym. This was how Neo and Alfred described their relationship with outsiders.

Alfred: You don’t really have much choice than to say that the kids need time, hence we are quite strict when it comes to our private time. And during weekends we often find ourselves, the whole of Sunday for instance, we go to church and that is our only interaction with other people. After church. Once we leave church, it’s us. Sunday we often define as...

Neo: Family day.

Alfred: Family day. So the kids would say, “Can’t come and so come play with me?” Sunday is family day, and ok, there are exceptions to the rule but generally we try to spend it as family. That is when we’re all here. She travels. I used to travel quite a lot. So you know, you need to define your space. Fairly private, I’d say then.

Religion plays a major role in the couple’s lives. Alfred was raised Catholic but converted to Neo’s church, which is Anglican. They try to go to church every Sunday as a family. Neo had this to say:

For me religion provides me with a basic value system which, fortunately for me, is translatable in my work environment. And then, in terms of family, one also tries to share those kinds of values with the children. To talk about issues of fairness, respect, and of the importance of honesty.
Neo and Alfred do not utilize mental-health services. They did acknowledge the importance of mental-health services and below is how they responded:

Alfred: It's not an area that is very popular in Botswana, in the sense that there are not so many counselors. There are many health workers here; it's probably a deficiency. Counseling has really only started because of HIV/AIDS.

Neo: We have had discussions of where do we send people to counseling?

My work entails counseling, even though I'm not a trained counselor. When I was in college in S.A., I was a member of a rape-crisis group, and we ran through basic counseling courses and provided a bit of counseling for survivors of violence. For me, it's failing back to that.

Alfred: If there is any profession that I see where the need will grow exponentially over the years is probably in the mental-health field.

Case Study B5: Tom and Lebo

*Demographic Data*

Tom and Lebo are both 46 years old. Lebo was born in Mafakela and Tom in England. The couple has been married 16 years. They met socially, and it was by chance that they ended up together. Both of them were already dating interracially within the same circle of friends, ended the other relationships, dated, and got married in London. Both of them are Christian and not practicing. Lebo is a businesswoman and Tom a businessman, self-employed, who came to Botswana to work as a financial consultant and on a contract with his London office. He has lived in Botswana for 22 years. He also lived in Bermuda for six months in 1985. Lebo lived in West Africa, Gabon, and Togo between 1982 and
1985 and in Cape Town for two years. The couple has two girls of their own, Cindy 15 and Trish, 12 years old. Lebo has a 30 year old daughter she had before she met her husband and a grandchild 10- months-old. A history of intermarriages (inter-racial and inter-ethnic) is observed in both partners' families, not in the immediate but their extended families. The couple only visits the Netherlands. They have never lived there and have no plans to move back there.

Researcher's Experience

I contacted Lebo by email before I left for Botswana to do my research. I called her upon arrival, and she invited me to her new office that she had recently opened in another hotel. I knew her as an acquaintance from her other office, and, when she directed me to her new office, that broke the ice. because, upon arrival, I was impressed by the décor and connected her on that. She felt proud and took me on a grand tour, showed me around, and we later settled into her office and discussed my purpose for being there. She had already told her husband about the fact that I was coming to do research and asking for their participation. She, therefore, took the solicitation letter for her husband and later called me for the interview. August 8, 2004 at 11 a.m was set for the interview. As soon as I arrived at their home in Mmokolodi, one of the suburbs in Gaborone, and after introductions, Lebo's husband said, "I hear you are a student in the U.S. and would like to know about our marriage. We have nothing to hide and will tell you about our experiences." Right there I relaxed, and we went right into the interview.

What seemed important and was emphasized by the couple were maintaining their businesses, making money and a better life for the family, family values, and the
cornerstones of marriage which they said they applied to any marriage, i.e., honesty, respect, and openness.

Eco-Marriage Findings

As a couple, Tom and Lebo have strong relations with their children and have different interactions with the broader or extended family. For example, they do attend wedding celebrations in the village for close relatives and funerals, and once in a while they visit Lebo’s mother in the village or invite her over to visit them. But with the extended family in the UK interactions are limited due to distance. This was what Tom said to expand on where they see themselves as a couple in the context of the extended family:

The primary thing for both of us is to earn money through our businesses, so that we can live the lifestyle we want and that we want for our children, and thereafter, it’s family time then friends.

Tom and Lebo interact with friends and colleagues on a limited level and this was how Tom responded when I probed on that topic:

I think you know, we end to keep to ourselves quiet a lot. We spend a lot of time together, um. So we don’t overly socialize. But that doesn’t mean we don’t like other people. That’s the way our relationship in our family has evolved. But when the time comes, we’re very sociable.

Tom and Lebo have not utilized mental-health services. They never saw a need to interact with them. Religion does not play a major part in the lives of this couple and their children. This was how Lebo expanded on the topic:

Going to church, religion plays a major role in our extended family. My
mother and sister go to church all the time, you know. But we don’t. They’ll pray for us.

Case Study B6: William and Botlhle

Demographic Data

William is a naturalized Motswana, born in England and migrated to Botswana with his parents when he was 8 years old, i.e., 30 years ago. William is 38 years old and Botlhle a 39-years-old woman. The couple went to the same high school, knew each other, but was not close. They have been married ten years and both are self-employed. The couple has two sons, ten and seven years old. They both dated outside their backgrounds before they met and married. Both lived outside Botswana before. William, after coming to Botswana, never went back to England except for visiting. Botlhle lived in the U.S. for five years with her family and in England for seven years as a student. With regards to religion, William is open to any religion, and Botlhle is Catholic, but not practicing. They were actually married in the Catholic Church. There is a pattern of intermarriages in both families.

Researcher’s Experience

Botlhle is actually the woman who helped solicit participants for my study. I knew her from a long time ago. She studied organizational psychology for her Masters degree, and we had talked before about what I was studying. She runs her own clothing business and her husband runs a car parts business. I knew her husband from buying things from his store. When I told Botlhle about my study she said, “Oh, I know a lot of women who are
married interracially. I will talk to them and send you their emails,” and she did. Three of the other participants I studied were obtained through her effort. The others she had suggested were either away at the time of my study or their husbands were away. Because Botlle helped out, both she and her husband were eager and enthusiastic, and the interview was relatively smooth. I conducted the interview in their home on August 8, 2004, at 6 p.m.

Botlle and William emphasized the following: their businesses, their toys, being open to outsiders, family values, fidelity, and their different roles at home. Botlle did stress that she teaches her sons life skills, so that they do not expect women to take care of them and do not to think that there are defined female-male roles. The couple also stressed the importance of teaching their children what it meant to be of mixed racial/cultural background.

Eco-Map Findings

Within their own family unit, Botlle and William have built a strong and close bond with their children. Outside the home they have limited relationships with friends and colleagues. They do associate with the school and are active parents on behalf of their sons. Botlle is also active in the gym as a aerobic instructor sometimes and in the fashion industry. They do have maintain healthy relationships with the extended family by visiting and spending time with them. Once in a while they do utilize mental-health services, not for the family per se, but for their employees. They see the need and the advantages to those facilities. For example, William shared the following:

We are fairly welcome to outsiders. Sometimes we let people from rural areas who work for us to stay over when they’re in town and even friends of
friends. So I think we are fairly open. We as a family haven’t actually used services
of a counselor or psychologist. When there was a robbery in one of our
businesses, the whole company had counseling.

Noma: Did they think it was useful?

William: Yeah. Because they were distressed. For ourselves, when we have a
problem, we try and talk about it, or maybe have some close friends talk to,
or bounce ideas off….to try and resolve the conflict.

There was a conflict recognized between the couple regarding their affiliation with
church and their ideas about religion. These were their responses on the topic:

Bothe: We’re not affiliated as a family to any specific religion, but with the boys
we’d pray with them at night. When they were born, they were baptized at a chapel
at Camphill. It was like baptizing them at home. I’m Catholic, because in Botswana
you follow your mother’s line. We chose not to enforce that. I think religion teaches
you morals, and it’s an area we are trying to add on to our lives.

William: But I think the boys are getting the moral lessons without going to church.

Bothe: Probably we will wait until they are old enough to decide for themselves
what they want to do.

Case Study B7: Ben and Tshidi.

Demographic Data

Ben and Tshidi are both 45 years old. They met in college in the U.S., dated and
married there, then moved to Botswana. Ben is from the U.S. and has a Ph.D. in History,
and Tshidi is a physiotherapist with her own private practice. The couple has been married
20 years. They have two children, Koketse, a girl 13 years old and Simba, a boy 9 years old. They are expecting their third child. With regards to religion, Ben described himself as Unitarian, but has since joined his wife’s church. They are now both Anglican and practicing. Both have dated outside their backgrounds, not interracial but outside their faith and ethnic groups. What motivated Ben to move to Botswana was his marriage to his wife.

Researcher’s Experience

Tshidi had been approached previously by some media people who wanted to write an article about interracial marriages in Botswana, and she said she refused because she didn’t know how legitimate that was. I had not identified her earlier. Someone told me about the couple when I arrived in Botswana. I called Tshidi, and she invited me to her private practice so we could talk. When I told her that this was a research project for my dissertation and she saw the stamps, signatures, and that the solicitation letter and informed consent were on letter-head, she immediately said, “This makes sense. You are a student. I don’t see a problem with your study, we will participate.” Like the others, she took the solicitation letter to her husband and later called and scheduled the interview which took place on August 14, 2004, at 9 a.m. in their home in Phakalane, one of the suburbs in Gaborone. The interview took 3 hours. Tshidi was more verbal than her husband. They both found the questions interesting and were enthusiastic.

What was important with the couple, as they told their stories, were: their children, their jobs, and the extended family. Tshidi stressed how important it was for her to be accepted by Ben’s family before they got married and kept checking with Ben whether that was going to happen. Tshidi more especially gives out her time to different social groups.
and enjoys it. She also spoke of the church as important to her. They both briefly discussed the importance of going through the traditional marriage rituals which, unfortunately, they did not do, because they married abroad.

**Eco-Map Findings**

In the nuclear family Ben and Tshidi have a strong bond and are very close. Tshidi also described the extended family in Botswana as just as close and caring. They can reach out to them at any time about any need, such as baby sitting for no charge. The extended family in the U.S. do keep in touch by writing to them and sending them gifts. Outside the home and the extended family, Tshidi belongs to various social clubs, such as the ladies club associated with the Rotary, a church organization, women’s shelters, and charity-oriented organizations. She is also affiliated with some government professional associations, such as the Botswana Physiotherapy Association. Ben, on the other hand, is more into the Rotary club, museums, and the press council and media organizations. Both Tshidi and Ben are involved with the schools for their children and participate in their activities, such as sports and fundraising activities. They maintain limited relationships with colleagues and friends.

When I probed on whether they utilize mental-health professionals, the initial response from Tshidi was, “not really.” According to Ben, five years ago, when Tshidi had a miscarriage and suffered depression, she went to therapy for a couple of sessions. Tshidi stated that she believes in the church, and this was what she said.

Religion plays a very big role in my life. I’m really surviving on religion at the moment. I go to church every Sunday; I don’t miss a service at all. Church
somehow provides me with a sense of relief, its like a stress reliever. I just love Christian life.

Case Study B8: Chris and Banyana

**Demographic Data**

Chris is a 50-year-old man, who was born in Holland and first came to Botswana in 1981 to 1994. He went to Zambia in 1994 and was back again in Botswana in 1999. Banyana is 38 years old, and born in Moshupa. The couple has been married five years, but dated and cohabited for 12 years. Chris was raised in the Dutch Reformed church and has since joined his wife’s church, which is Roman Catholic and in which they were married. Both husband and wife are chemistry majors and both hold a masters degree. Other than Botswana and Holland, Chris also lived in Zambia for four years. Banyana lived in Holland for two years as a graduate student in soil chemistry. Chris reported that what motivated him to come to Botswana was that his university in Holland was executing development projects in the field of science in Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland. He was sent to Botswana as a student assistant for the pre-entry science course and never went back. He actually taught his wife, who is a science major.

Both, Banyana and Chris dated outside their backgrounds before. They have two children, Kagiso, a boy, four years old, and Bobo, a girl five months old. And both reported a pattern of intermarriages in their families.

**Researcher’s Experience**

I knew Chris and Banyana and had not thought of them as potential participants
until I bumped into them at a Cricket club where I was meeting a friend. They knew I was in school. When they saw me, they stopped and we started chatting about topics in general. I told them why I was in Gaberone that time, and they exclaimed, "so you did not think we will give you interesting feedback, because, had we not met you, we would not have known you were here on research about our marriage." They went on to ask, "Do you have enough participants?" I told them that, if they were willing, I could add them on the list, and they both laughed and said, "Why not?" They gave me their contact numbers. I called them, and we set a time for me to meet with them. We met, initially, to discuss the study officially and later set an appointment for interviews, which went smoothly. I interviewed them in their home on August 14, 2004, at 2 pm.

In the interview they emphasized their relationship as a couple as important, their children, the extended family, how language could be a serious barrier with people of different cultures, and treating each person as a person, meaning regardless of what color that person is.

**Eco-Map Findings**

Banyana and Chris have a strong and close relationship with their children, one a baby. Both participate in their son’s school activities. When I met them, before the study, they were coming from a school-fundraising activity. Banyana is the oldest in her family and maintaining a healthy, and close relationship with her mother, whom she calls her friend, and with her four siblings. Both of them have close friends they share. Banyana reported having a wide circle of friends, mostly in church. This is how she described their relationship:
Most of my friends are from church, and we actually have a small group, sort of a society. We call it a friendship society, where we meet once a month and even have financial contributions to help each other in times of need.

Chris, on describing his friendship network had this to say:

"Uhm, I guess my closest friends are the ones from the Squash section. I played Squash and have friends from a long time ago whom we used to meet after a game for a drink."

Chris further added, I guess in addition we both have a few friends in Holland and France. I still maintain contact with a few of my old secondary school. I see them each time I'm in the Netherlands.

Chris and Banyana were married in Banyana’s church. Roman Catholic. Chris has since joined his wife’s church. On the issue of whether they utilize mental-health professionals, they responded by saying there never saw a need. Below is an excerpt from the interview:

Banyana: I’ve never been to see a mental-health professional [laughs]… I never thought I needed one. What for? For the children or ourselves? For whom?

Case Study B9: Paul and Matlho

Demographic Data

Paul is a 52-year-old German/South African man and Matlho is a 42-year-old Motswana woman, born in Mochudi, Botswana. The couple has been married four years, dated and cohabited for 14 years. They have a son Kitso, who is four years old. Paul was married twice before to Botswana women and has two sons with one of his ex-wives. Paul
has a bachelors in English and political science and Matlhoo an associate degree/diploma in management. Paul is self-employed, doing mostly construction work, and Matlhoo is employed by a private agency. Matlhoo was raised Catholic and is practicing. Paul is not affiliated with any religion. Matlhoo has never lived outside Botswana but travels extensively all over Africa and abroad. Paul lived in South Africa, Australia and the U.K. before and has lived in Botswana for 31 years. Paul reported that he first came to Botswana to visit his sister, who was married to a Catholic priest. He said he fell in love with Botswana because, having lived in S.A., there was no hint of violence in Botswana. It was liberating, and he decided to stay.

Researcher's Experience

This is one other couple that was identified by Bothoe, who then sent me Matlhoo's email before I went to Botswana. I started the dialogue with Matlhoo as soon as I got her email. Matlhoo then gave me her telephone number, so I could contact her, and I did call her when I arrived in Gaborone. We met in her office in the city. She took the solicitation letter for her husband and later called. We scheduled an appointment for the interview. Paul and Matlhoo were the last couple to be interviewed.

I interviewed the couple at their home in Modipane, a village outside Gaborone, on the evening of August 15, 2004, at 6 p.m. On arrival at their house and after formal introductions, Paul said, “I read the solicitation letter, but would like to hear more from you about why you decided to study us.” I went on to explain my reason for choosing to do such a project. That actually broke the ice, because he and his wife thought it was an interesting topic. They were comfortable, relaxed, open, and shared their experiences with me with no
inhibitions. This is the couple that came up with the concept of Zebras, referring to themselves and other interracial couples who are their friends. I asked them what Zebras meant and how they came up with such a term. Paul responded by saying, "It's there in the literature—she's Black and I'm White—colors of the Zebra." That I found interesting. I did not think much about the term. I thought, if they are comfortable with the term and themselves, who am I, to think differently? So we went on with the interview. After the interview they asked me how many more interviews I was left with. I said they were last and they said, "Let's celebrate then. "Have dinner with us." That was awesome.

What seemed significant for Paul and Matlotho were their being a couple; spending quality time together; their son; the Zebra; and teaching society about racism, apartheid, and discrimination in relation to mixed marriages and biracial children.

_Eco-Map Findings_

Paul and Matlotho described their nuclear family as strong, solid, open, secure, unique, and very close. They are caring parents to their only son. Matlotho maintains a healthy relationship with her biological family. On the contrary, Paul described his family as rigid. He had this to say:

My people ba sekgowa (are English) in their lifestyle. We go visit them in the UK, for example. Lunch is at 1 p.m. At ten past one it's a problem for them. We can't fit in with that stuff. We are extremely flexible in our lifestyle.

Matlotho maintains limited relationships with friends and colleagues. According to Paul most of the socialization he does is through the zebras. He further stated that "most of my socialization is deliberate, not sort of circumstantial. It's with one or two good friends."
As far as the role of the church is in their lives, they differed in their perspectives. This is how they responded to this topic:

Paul: Matlho has been involved in joining churches for a short period of time. Matlho: Yah, part of my spirituality really wants to be in touch with my inner self. I have registered my son for afternoon religious education. I feel strongly that I should be on top of that situation. I have a lot of information on all kinds of churches. You know, people go to people who go to church for advice.

Paul: I think that some grounding of some sort is important. The only religious practice I would personally undertake at gunpoint is...say Buddhist. Unfortunately I have not seen it in Botswana.

On the question of whether they utilize any support groups and mental-health services, both said "No!" to support groups. They have utilized mental-health services; it was brief but they did. At first it was with the nephew they adopted who had adjustment issues and the second time was when Matlho had a stillborn child, three years ago. But then the reason she said she went was that she could not find an aunt in the extended family in whom she could confide. This was what Matlho stated, in her own words:

My mother does not have sisters; she’s the only child. Usually your aunt is the one who does the traditional counseling. I couldn’t find anyone to talk to. So I talked to my gynecologist who referred me to a therapist. I saw the person about three weeks it did not feel right. I had not done it before. At least it was a woman.
Discussing Results: Themes

Eight themes emerged from the data collection: (a) building the marital foundation, (b) gender roles, (c) couple and family values, (d) negotiating the cultural differences, (e) interactions outside the couple, (f) couple’s perception of their marriage, (g) utilization of mental-health services, and (h) eco-map findings. In discussing each theme excerpts from the interviews in the participants’ own words will be used. For confidentiality pseudo-names were used. All women in the study were assigned Setswana names and the men English names.

Building the Marital Foundation

In order to understand how the couples navigated their relationships, this theme was discussed under seven sub-themes: meeting; motivation; attraction; dating patterns; courtship, and decision to marry; marriage rituals; and decisions regarding where to live.

Meeting. Although the couples stories were different, I perceived some similarities. The way the couples met and dated varied. Two couples met at the job. Four couples used the word chance to describe how they met. This could have been through socializing, i.e., at parties, drinking sessions at bars, though invitations to dinner or to drinks by friends who knew both parties. Two couples were colleagues first, would hang out together sometimes, and then dated. Five couples were acquaintances before becoming friends and then dated. Two couples met initially at school, which was not significant at first, and then bumped into each other in social gatherings. None of the couples were matched or introduced to their spouses as blind dates. Neo explained how they met:
I had been invited to lunch by somebody we knew in common, so I'd never known anything about him. There were a group of consultants working on a job, and they'd reached their halfway mark and he was part of the consulting team. So the consultants decided to go and celebrate by going to have lunch together at the Holiday Inn. I was then a student in Cape Town, and I was home on holiday… Then later Alfred and I started going out for coffee to meet and chat. And the attraction developed. For both of us, that is how we met really.

And the following is Mantho explaining how they met:

My husband came to visit his brother in 1991. I was working/teaching with his brother in Moeding. We took a trip to Kasane with students, colleagues, and his brother. I was sitting at the back of the truck with Jerry and discovered a lot of things common between us, and the attraction developed. This is how I initially met him in the back of the truck.

Bethe reported coming out of an emotionally draining relationship and meeting her husband. This was what she shared:

I had just been through a turbulent relationship, so I was very much on my own, and I kept going out by myself, and I met him.

Motivation. All nine couples entered the relationship fully aware that their motivation to marry outside their backgrounds would be questioned, that family and society predicted their marriages would fail, and that they were rebelling. Below are excerpts from interviews to validate these stereotypes.

Mpho discussed how her sister and mother predicted her marriage was going to fail,
and this was what she indicated:

The White man will dump (leave) you and no other man would want to be associated with you....

When I asked how she responded to what her mother and sister suggested, Mpho said:

I told you already that this guy made me pregnant and left me. I did not care what my mother and sister said. You know they were using my aunt who was married to a white man who divorced her and left her. I did not want a Metswana man, so I left them alone and did what I want.

One of the husbands discussed what was perceived as rebelliousness on his part in dating black uneducated women:

William: Okay, on my side when I had this girlfriend, a village girl who didn’t have the same level of education or what would you say? Class, of upbringing. My mom is very much into class of people. She did not like it. They sent me away to make me forget her. When they met Botho, they liked her immediately. My mom. Dad has always been laid back.

Tabiti alluded to the fact that her colleagues did not like Ben at first and made such comments as:

_O rwestlele izana o batla eneng mo lekgwengo le tla go tlogela. Go diregile en?_ (You are educated enough, what do you want from a white man? He will leave you. Why really? What happened?)

I asked Tabiti how she reacted to the comment, and she stated that she responded by saying:

He is educated, too, and comes from a family that is educated. I love him; that’s all.
Attraction. For all of the couples, the attraction was mutual. Seven out of nine women married for attraction. For one woman, it was attraction and loss of trust in Batswana black men, and for one other woman it was because she had just come out of an emotionally draining relationship. For the seven women where attraction was solely the motivation, they reported that they never sat down to think about whom to date. It just happened. To illustrate attraction, the following excerpts emerged from the interviews.

For Mpho, first it was her father, who was absent from the home, then she had become pregnant, and the man responsible left her. She said she had lost trust in Black Batswana men anyway, and her husband came at the right time. This was what she shared:

I could see that there was no happiness at home. My mother was not happy. We were not happy because my father was not there. He didn’t care. Not because he didn’t have anything, but because he didn’t care about us or… I don’t know what was wrong. You know when somebody starts drinking and take everything, sell and drink and finish. So you start thinking. If this is how Black people are, I will not be married to one. So I told myself I’m not going to be married to a Black.

I’ll find somebody, Kuli (Indian) or whatever, and go away...

It could have been some guy from another country, not necessarily him—-a White man.

Regarding attraction, Tshidi said:

I was introduced to him. We later started talking and going out more and more. We then got closer and closer.

In explaining their attraction Lebo and Tom stated:

Tom: Ok, the first time I met Lebo was in 1982 at the casino, and what attracted
me to her then were those sparkling eyes, as far as I know, and the smile. So I went to play on her table, and we talked a little bit. But later I came across her socially and found that she was going out with somebody else and sort of forgot any, for a while anyway, and forgot any sort of romantic pursuit. But then I was going with a girl. She was going out with a guy and she was very good friends with this girl so we, for what 3 years, we knew each other very well. We spent a lot of time socially, but not together as a couple. And both of our relationships eventually finished, and it just, for both of us, it was natural that we get together, and so we did.

Nonza: Wow! What about your story Lebo?

Lebo: I don't know what attracted me to him. Basically because he was a nice guy. He was just a nice guy, tall, and handsome [laughs]. One thing that really attracted me to Tom was because every time I saw Tom he was very, very good with children. It didn't matter whose kid it was. Tom really liked children. Then I thought, "Oh, this is a good guy to be with." And he's already said the other things on how we ended up together.

Overall, the attraction was based on kindness, physical looks, hormones and chemistry. The men reported similarly about physical traits such as sparkling eyes, hormones, chemistry, eye contact, and love at first sight.

*Dating Patterns.* One out of the nine couples never before dated outside their backgrounds. Ben never dated outside his background. Mark dated across religions, and the rest of the men dated interracially before. For the women, two i.e., Sega and Tshidi, dating interracially was a new experience for them. They dated across nationalities and
faith before. Regarding dating, Sega and Mark responded:

Sega: I did date outside my background. I lived in South Africa, and our neighbors were Xhosa, Zulu and others, so I did date other nationals.

Mark: Across different religious backgrounds, yes, I did.

The rest of the women did date outside their backgrounds, i.e., across interfaith, interethnic and interracial lines. Mpho and James’s responses to dating were:

Mpho: To tell you the truth, before I met James, I had a boyfriend, and he was a White man.

Noma: Oh, ok.

Mpho: Yeah, that’s it. I told myself, enough is enough. A Motswana man left me when I was pregnant. No more with Batswana.

James: I didn’t have any real dating experience outside my background before. I had some casual flings, if you’ll call it that. But otherwise nothing significant.

Regarding dating pattern, William and Botlhoe shared:

William: Well, I lived here most of my life... with my dating background, and I was involved in the music industry. There were always plenty of women all over the place. So I’ve had some White girlfriends, one Indian, and plenty of Batswana girlfriends.

Botlhoe: I mean I’ve always... I’ve been out with White guys, and Black guys also.

Courtship and Decision to Marry: Discussion about getting married was between the couples themselves. Because there are some traditional rituals that people go through
before the marriage in Botswana, all the women, except for two, introduced their spouses to their parents, and eventually got their family members involved. Four couples cohabited prior to marrying. One couple reported hostility and lack of acceptance of interracial marriages in the 1960s. For one couple, the reason was because they were both students at the time. Two other couples cohabited, one for twelve years, and the other fourteen years, for the reason that they just felt comfortable living together as boy/girlfriend for some time.

Three out of nine couples married outside Botswana. For one couple (Mark and Sega) it was due to the pressures they had in Botswana with the society which made them marry outside Botswana. They had cohabited for a while and the decision to marry was their own. They did not consult anybody. Below is what Sega shared:

Courtship was difficult. I was in Johannesburg, South Africa, and he was in Botswana. He could not visit me in Orlando, [a township in Johannesburg] nor could we go to the restaurant together these days. We could not be in the same office together. What he used to do, he would drive to Joburg (Johannesburg), pick me up, and bring me to Botswana, because the attitudes were different here. Last in 1968 I got a permit to work here (Botswana) we then cohabited, worked together but still kept it under wraps...

Mark added an experience about crossing Botswana/S.A. borders.

Crossing borders was interesting because we walked into Botswana separately as if we were not together. I will show my passport and Sega will show hers. We will walk to the car separately and drive off. We were always careful, especially in the South African border that none of the officials see us. It was difficult.

The mechanism to get married in Botswana was a problem. We had to go to
Swaziland to get married.

I wondered why they chose to get married in Swaziland of all place, so I probed further by asking, Why Swaziland?

Mark: People in Botswana were not accepting, so Botswana was out. With family, on my side, my mother and sister were estranged. She did not have problems involving her family, but we decided to do it on our own. Neither of us believed in discussing our decisions, which is why we decided to marry in Swaziland—outside—a neutral place for us we thought.

Banyana and Chris, on elaborating how they decided to marry, stated that:

Banyana: Yeah, first I will talk about the attraction. It could have been someone else, but I felt attracted to him and nobody else at the time. So that’s how it happened. And as to how I decided that I was going to marry him, in fact this man never asked me to marry him; we just knew that we were meant to be.

Chris: Yeah, that typified the relationship, in the sense that it was never a matter of if you’re going to get married, only a matter of when.

Banyana: We just got right together. We felt we were meant to be together, you know.

*Traditional Marriage rituals. Because there are some traditional rituals of *patilo* (a marriage arrangement entered by the parents of the groom and bride) and *hogadi* (the payment of the bride price, dowry) that people go through before the marriage in Botswana, all the women, except two, did introduce their spouses to their parents before they decided*
to marry, and as a result got their family members involved.

Four men went through the process of *patlo* and *bogadi*. One of the women, Mpho, is from Serowe, a village in Botswana that does not engage in *bogadi*, so her husband did not pay the dowry. According to the four men who went through the process, it was easy. This was how they responded to how they felt going through the traditional rituals of marriage. William related that because he had witnessed the process before, he was expecting it. Again because he grew up in the village, he saw the process being done by other families. Below is an excerpt from William and Bothe:

William: My two brothers married Batswana and went through the process. So for me, being brought up in a rural village, I was taught Setswana at a very young age. Foreigners, I could never really relate to foreigners because they wouldn’t know half of my existence, which was Setswana...Yeah, I think we (my family) resigned to the rituals. Bothe’s family is ...

Bothe: My father.

William: Yeah they’re very...cultural, and things have to be correct, and done the right way, so very early on we realized, no let’s not worry, whatever they want done will be done. They said we’ve got to organize some uncles, so we organized uncles, and whatever they wanted we did.

Bothe: I mean with me, I know that my dad is very traditional, and luckily I think William was very open to the whole process, but one thing I said to my uncles was look, please don’t try and make them wait at 6 o’clock in the morning *ko gating* (at the gate) and all that kind of stuff. Luckily, also my parents, mom and dad are quite, you know, they’ve been exposed themselves, so they weren’t trying to be
difficult, but they thought it was important that the process went through. I think the fact that we went through the whole *pule* business meant that William was accepted so openly in the family.

Another (Chris) said it was easy because he was known by the family already. It was not even rigorous. He just used his Batswana friends to represent his family, and it was accepted. This was what Chris shared:

Chris: Two of my friends, and the father of a friend of mine, who was my official uncle, he was the one who went to talk to Banyana’s uncle, etc. . . . but then again it was not difficult. . . . We had to go through the formalities. I think of course, I had known Banyana’s family for years. I’m not a family stranger. . . . The uncle comes in and says this stranger wants to marry your daughter. . . . They knew me already.

One couple went to England and married there. Tom and Lebo, after notifying Lebo’s mother, left for England and got married. Lebo’s mother told her uncles, and, after the marriage, Lebo’s uncles demanded that her husband pay some *tobola* (bride price), and he did. He did not go through the process of marriage negotiations because they were married already. This was what the couple shared on the issue:

Lebo: Yeah, he paid something but, then, we still go home now, and they (extended family) still say to us, “Look, when are you going to have a wedding here?”

Nona: Why another wedding?

Lebo: Sixteen years later, you know? They do not see us as married.

Tom: I have suggested a celebration for the sake of the family. Anyway, we talk about this every couple of years. And I say, “Let’s do it,” and Lebo says, no! wife
laughs]

One (Paul) recounted that he used the Zebras (a couple of interracial couples in Botswana who socialize together) to represent his family. Because he was married before, and in Botswana, he expected it. This was what the couple shared:

Paul: Because I was married before in Botswana I expected it. But because I don't have any relatives within reach, so relatives here... my mother is in London and my entire father's side of the family. My uncles were from friends and associates, the Zebras...

Mathe: All the zebras do that. If one couple is getting married, we all take... take part and assist them.

However, two couples did not participate in the traditional marriage rituals at all; these are the same couples who also married outside Botswana. Three couples married in the wife's church, and their husbands have since converted. Three couples married in civil courts.

Decision about Where to Live. The decision about where to live came naturally for all the couples. The men were already established in Botswana, and their wives had good jobs. None chose to move out of Botswana for that reason. Regarding the neighborhoods they occupy in Botswana, they all said they never explored to find out where other mixed families lived there. It was more an issue of the affordability of a neighborhood which led to how they chose which one to live in, eventually. Even those who referred to themselves as zebras are scattered all over; they do not live in the same neighborhood. Because the men moved away from their countries and settled in Botswana, I also asked them what it
was like:

Jerry: Moving to the village was the best thing for us in keeping things on track.

We created our own family, our own identity and goals within the context of a village....

To be living away from home, I do not miss Australia. I miss the beach.

Mantho on the issue on how they decided to settle in the village stated:

My father was worried about me moving to Australia with my husband. I'm the oldest in my family. My husband and I spoke about that. And because we thought of starting a business that required land, we could only get a piece of land in the village. So we decided to settle in the village, which is how we started our nursery.

Tom and Lebo, in illustrating how they ended up in Mmokolodi stated:

Tom: Lebo, how did we decide on Mmokolodi? I think we just loved the area because it’s out of town...

Lebo: We rented a few places in Gaborone and at some point we decided to build our own house. As Tom has said, we drove around neighborhoods and decided to build in Mmokolodi and live here because it is out of town. It’s quiet.

Tom: Now about being away from home. There’s the good and the bad. The pubs here are lousy. [laughs] I think it’s taken me a long time to get used to not being in England with the social scene. It’s very different the way people go out and enjoy themselves, the way people mix and even the shops and the offices, the surroundings are different, interaction with people is different. And I sometimes miss that. Even now, like we’ve just been to England, and I thought, “you know, I could still go back and live in England quite happily.” Um, but then now I’ve been
here for twenty-odd years, you know. This is where my house is, my family, my
business, everything. So, I’m running off the point here, aren’t I?

Paul and Matlho discussed another dynamic i.e., that one is expected to leave
Botswana and move away, and this was what they shared on how they decided to settle
where they live:

Matlho: And also, you know, in our culture, when you get married, people
expect you to move away to your husband’s country or village. We
are staying here. For some reason, people are saying why? You know.
I continuously have to explain to people that there’s no need for me to
move. I have a right to be in Botswana. I’m with my husband here.

We’ve here. He’s a Motswana man.

Paul: Anyway there’s nowhere for me to move.

Matlho: But still people have that expectation that, you know, you should be
staying somewhere else, and not here. I think we need to move that
paradigm. And even this myth that we are selling our country... to whom?

Because kana (you know) our husbands are here, it’s not like,
you know, they move us Botswana out, no!

Matlho, on how they decided to settle in Modipane stated:

I already owned this piece of land. I had not built a house except that hut. When I
met Paul and we decided to get married, I told him about my piece of land, and later,
after saving money for building materials, we built here. He designed the plan, did
the building himself with the help of labourers in the village. It was expensive to live
in Gaborone.
Gender Roles

Gender roles were divided into two topics, household and parenting. First I will discuss roles as they pertain to the household.

Household. All except three couples stated that they do not follow traditional gender roles but complement each other. For those couples whose roles were not defined, this is what they reported.

Jerry runs the family business and Mantho works full-time as a teacher in an elementary private school. Outside school responsibilities, Mantho helps out in the business. No discussion was held as to who does what tasks. Mantho, for example, does not sit back on weekends and let her husband run the nursery alone. She helps him out. This was what the couple discussed regarding gender roles:

Jerry: We complement each other. No one is limited to a certain role, for example, cooking. I do not cook all the time because I work at home. We both cook....and with the nursery.... Mantho helps me out with that too.

Just because she is a teacher and works full-time does not mean that, when someone comes in to buy plants, she would not help. She helps.

Mantho: I make sure the shopping is done, and my husband fixes the car because that I cannot do that.

Alfred and Neo, on gender roles, stated that it is assumed that there are clearly defined male-female roles. They never discussed how these roles should be practiced in their unit; their professional roles sort of defined the roles for them:

Neo: I'll just tell you a little story. A few weeks ago we were sitting in here, and
I offered Alfred some coffee after dinner, and our son looked up and said, "That's strange, I thought husbands were supposed to offer their wives coffee." So I'd say we have very fluid gender roles; we always have. To the extent where my son is a bit confused about it. It all depends on who is in the mood for cooking, and disciplining is done by both of us. We may feel more strongly about a particular issue, but there are no fixed gender roles. I suppose, if you think about it in terms of the traditional notion of head of house, because I think you should have a coordinated position in the house where you share responsibility. But, if you were to take the traditional notion, one could say we take turns, being head of the household, it depends on the issues, etc. Even with the children there's no standard thing of well mommy does the cooking or daddy does this. And if there are certain areas in which we are more skilled, one is more skilled than the other and that just happens to be, it's not because women cannot do certain things.

Alfred: I guess we're fairly non-traditional. I would do a fair bit of the cooking and the shopping and...

Neo: I'm currently the main breadwinner, in a sense, because he's currently on sabbatical, so everything is upside down in terms of the norm, so-called normal sense. And our three-year-old, I forgot to tell you...

Alfred: And I'll go and spend her money, which is a nice feeling.

Neo: Yeah [laughs]. His mother is a bit confused about that. But a few days ago I was looking at a magazine and there's a picture of a very, very large man and my three-year-old said, "Why is he so fat?" And I said, "I don't know; maybe it's just the way his body is, or maybe he eats a lot." She says, "I think he's going to have a
baby." So also that explains how gender roles have changed.

Banyana and Chris reported being raised in a certain way, but being flexible in their unit as to who does what and when. Because Chris was raised such that husbands should work full-time and be the providers, his mother, who believed in traditional, well-defined male-female roles, could not understand what was going on in his household. This was what they shared:

Chris: Well... My own siblings, my two brothers and my sister, I don't think they're any particular expectation that I do certain things, that I should have a certain role and Banyana should have another role... In this sense, they are quite enlightened. They themselves adhere to certain enlightened perceptions about gender roles. They, for example, think it's very exceptional that I decided to start working part-time, so I could be home taking care of the children. My mother found it a bit strange because she grew up in the days when the husband was the head of the household, and the wife bought the food and took care of the children.

Noms: So you were brought up in a certain way, but you practice something different in your own unit...?

Chris: Yes. Both my parents were very traditional. The husband was the husband, with his own clearly defined roles, and the wife was the wife.

Banyana: For me, when I grew up with my brothers and sisters, especially my brothers, because they're the ones who came after me, we shared duties like cooking, cleaning the house, doing washing, so in that way there was no discrimination in terms of gender. I think also in my own household here there's no... There are no certain duties that you're exempt from...
...maybe except waking up in the middle of the night, if Kagiso is complaining, but most of the time... He's the one who moves the washing machine, the laundry, things like that. I kind of want to say that there's certain duties... The hard things he'll do...

Chris: And the soft things, like making curtains, Banyana will do.

Banyana: I'll do that. [laughs]. I know that there are certain things that he hates. It's not because he can't do it. He simply hates it, the same way that I hate doing the dishes, but I do it anyway. But if I can avoid it, I'll let him do it...

It's stuff like that, but otherwise, in general I think we do whatever we can. There are no things that are supposed to be for him and for me.

As far as Paul and Matho are concerned, they do discuss who does what more than the other. Their roles are according to preference. Below was what they shared regarding gender roles:

Paul: For us it's according to our own abilities. We have a... split of the... if you take all the tasks... gender-mutual, of running a family. We have split these rightly between ourselves according to preference. So I probably do more cooking than Matho. She does a lot more cleaning than I do. I'm very lazy at cleaning 'cause I'm quite good at cooking.

Matho: We both shop.

Paul: The things that we are better at, we do. But no, we don't have... Well, there's sort of a gender role in parenting, but with the small child he has preferences, like "no, mother has to do this... Father has to do this."

But, you know, I think that's natural, from his perspective.
Three couples mentioned following traditional gender roles. Below is how two couples articulated their roles.

Outside their jobs, Lebo and Tom had this to say regarding this theme. Their roles were clear in that they discussed who does what:

Tom: I would say that, in very general terms, Lebo tends to take responsibility for the home, where I would take responsibility for the house, if you see what I mean. The building and the garden is Lebo’s. The maintenance and construction is mine. I think we share the role in terms of interior décor and everything. We share that. We do that together. And as far as the running of the house is concerned, Lebo tends to take responsibility for that. She pays for the food, all our consumables. She pays the maid and the gardener, and I pay for everything else, basically. That’s the way we split financially. And I suppose that financial split reflects the way we... our roles in the running of the house.

Lebo: When it comes to cooking, we share. Whoever wants to cook that day goes for it. If I don’t feel like cooking, I don’t cook [laughs]

Tom: We share.

Lebo: When we grew up I used to cook a lot at home, and I used to do a lot of other things, you know. But I left home when I was 18 and I’ve been on my own since then, you know. I left home when I was 18, and got married when I was 35. So between 18 and 35 years! I lived on my own, and, you know, when Tom met me, I thought, “There’s no way I’m going to be told what to do here” yeah, because I was used to being alone. And it’s been like that since then.

William and Botla also made it explicit as to what their roles are in the home.
They did not seem to have problems about the way their roles are delineated, because they openly discussed them. William had this to say regarding their roles:

William: Both she is more involved in the kitchen and the food side of things, and I'm more involved in the house and maintenance and the yard, so there is definitely that distinction. Both she is more involved in the kid's clothing, so there are definitely mother roles that she takes on, and I keep order.

**Parenting.** All couples described themselves as good parents. They share parenting, and all seemed to have a commitment to their children. Two couples discussed how they try to carry on the legacy of teaching their children about how to handle the issue of gender roles appropriately. They reported that they do this so that the assumption about gender roles do not affect them when they grow up, where they will be having certain expectations. Below are excerpts from the interviews. Both, on her own decided she needed to equip her boys with life skills and had this to share:

I think the thing is, we've got three boys in the house, two boys and a man, and me. So with the kids, you know, they bake, they....It's not really, "Oh no, that's for girls." Yet, and I think I want to try and make sure, like we had a talk the other day that as they get older, things like washing dishes, they'll have to wash dishes.

Botswana's a bit of a problem because you always have help in the house, but, as they grow older I don't want them as boys to feel, you know, that's a girl's job, so she must do it. I don't want that, for them to become those kind of men. So pretty soon they're going to get to the age when they're going to have to do the traditional female chores, because there's no females here to do them: the cooking, cleaning,
you know, that kind of thing.

Mantha had this to say about their children

Even our children alternate cleaning. There is no male or female job. My parents worked in South Africa, and they did the same thing, too. Dad used to take care of the children. My mother was never a housewife; she managed a shop. The discussion about who does what is mainly with the children. We sort of assign them chores, so that they don’t fight about who was supposed to do what and did not do it.

Couple and Family Values

All couples reported doing a lot of activities as a family, making compromises, respecting each other’s beliefs and opinions, including their children in family activities. They also emphasized raising their children to respect and feel comfortable with their parents traditions, and being involved with the extended family, for example, attending funerals, weddings in the village, and celebrating holidays together. As a couple, they reported having a strong sense of commitment to themselves as spouses and to their marriage. They also reported tolerance of each other, love, loyalty and respect as a way of celebrating their marriages. The couples also reported that coming from different backgrounds was a plus, in that they celebrate both cultures. Family values also came up strong in this area. Their children and they as couples supporting each other were important dimensions in this area. Even with family values, these varied with couples. For example, three couples discussed religion as part of their family values, whereas others did not see it that way.
All nine couples defined their families as nuclear and close. One of the couples even stated that their own children were even afraid to go to boarding school because they relate more to the family than to outsiders. Four couples maintained strong attachments to an extended family, and five have limited attachments with their extended families. The family values articulated by every couple include sub-themes: humanity, loyalty, respect for others, honesty with each other and integrity, having a shared sense of value, hard work, consistency, non-violence, communal cooperation, and religion, which will be discussed later on. I will elaborate on the first three sub-themes.

**Humanity.** Sega and Mark had to parent their own children and eight more children from the extended family as a way of showing their kindness and compassion to Sega's nieces and nephews who had lost their mothers through death. Below are excerpts from the interviews:

Mark: We have strong family values. We believe in humanity. We took care of eleven children, three our own and eight from the extended family. We emphasize respect for others, loyalty, honesty, integrity, and hard work. We relate with family members no matter what issues be it business, money, or family needs.

Sega: There is so much empathy from all of us.

**Loyalty.** This was emphasized by four couples to mean faithfulness, fidelity and being able to depend on one another. Below is an excerpt from Mantho, to illustrate the importance of loyalty in the family.

We have strong family values that include individual fidelity, honesty with each
other, and consistency. We encourage our children to be individuals, but to also realize that they have to contribute to the family. They don’t just get from parents; they earn their tokens by behaving respectfully. We also emphasize communal cooperation, loyalty to the family.

*Respect for Others.* In Botswana it is the norm to greet everyone; it’s a sign of respect. If one finds people holding a conversation, before one joins in one has to say *Dumelang* (greetings). One is expected to know his/her neighbors, and, when one comes across a neighbor outside, one greets. Respect is emphasized more with elders. It is expected that, when an elder walks into the house, one greets elders and, with children, to actually kneel and greet as a sign of respect. William had this to say:

William: Ya! I grew up in the village, taught Setswana ways of behaving, to respect elders, we teach our sons to do the same thing…

William further said: For the family we stress honesty, respect, and nonviolence. We always tell our kids not to fight with anybody.

*Extended Family Relationships.* All the men in the study did not say much about their relationships with the extended family, except that they keep in touch. Five women mentioned strong relationships with their families of origin. One (Mambo) was close to her parents, who both died in the same year. She maintains limited relations with her sister. Below are excerpts from the interviews about extended family dynamics.

Banyana described her relationships with her family as follows:

I see my mother as a mother and also as a friend. I see my brothers. I have two
brothers, and I think for my siblings it's difficult to describe how we relate.

Chris: But you are close. You and your siblings often come together to talk.

Banyara: Yeah, we are very close. We are really friends. They are my pals. We can talk about anything.

Neo and Alfred shared:

Alfred: Again, within the family context, I think, if you were to ask aunts and uncles and maybe even cousins, they would also consider us to be very private, in the sense that we keep the sort of distance we keep out of public life, more or less also applies to immediate family. Neo's brother and sister will just pop in but I would say, other than that, we socialize with them, but it's more at functions. We don't talk...

Neo: Like cousins, sort of extended family...

The family knows that if they need us, we are there. I mean like rushing off to do various things, but it's the reality of our lives, where one just has to fight for space, and say, "Look, I've got my priorities."

Tshidi had this to say to expand on the extended family:

When it comes to the extended family, um, we are also very close because they are very caring people. If anyone of us is not well, they will just come. Not too long ago, I wasn't well. The next day they were all here. I wondered who called them...

And then the extended family in America, they do keep in touch with us, and we write them. They send us gift and things. It's just that I'm the one who doesn't write them. They write a lot. I'm just lazy to write or even send an e-mail.
Negotiating the Cultural Differences

The areas covered by couples which led to capturing the negotiating the cultural differences theme included discussing differences in language, values, discipline, food, skin color or race, and religion. Much as they came from different backgrounds, the couples did not perceive cultural differences as a major component or difficulty in the ways they perceived their marriages, the struggles and challenges they have experienced, and how they have successfully maintained healthy relationships and marriages. The only difference between them as a couple not in the intermarriage was how they deal with or handle those conflicts or struggles. To them those differences are part of the marriage package. The couples felt their marriages were no different from same-race marriages. They reported that the challenges they felt were the same as in any marriage. They emphasized the importance of learning about each other’s cultures.

Neither spouse changed or gave up his/her culture. Instead they worked on bridging the gap, and devised means of consolidating each other’s cultures in their own nuclear units, e.g., they have retained their languages and learned the language of each spouse. They all learned basic communication in the language of the other. Below are the varied excerpts from the interviews.

Mpho discussed food as a difference between her and her husband that, in the 28 years they have been married, there are Setswana foods that her husband could never eat. The same is true of her. This was what Mpho said:

I mean I used to tell James that, you know eating salmon is like eating raw fish. He used to tell me that it’s pickled, I’d ask him how they pickled it. And he would say, “You just take it and put it in sour juice like vinegar, and eat it raw.” Or sometimes
it’s smoked, and I’ll tell him that, even smoked, it’s raw. Meanwhile I forget that there is biltong that we dry here, and we eat it, because I’m used to biltong. But it’s the same as eating raw beef. It’s only dry. James doesn’t like stampa (corn and beans cooked together), he never eats stampa, so I can’t force him.

Noma: We all have certain things that we do not like.

Mpho: Vaa.

Jerry and Mantho, in discussing their differences in cultures, emphasized values and keeping both cultures alive. This was what they said:

Mantho: Botswana side, we follow our culture. We follow traditions of Botswana. We emphasize that our children speak Setswana. They actually started learning Setswana first. Even botsetsi (washing the baby) we follow my culture. Botho, our daughter, was introduced to English when she was three-years-old.

Jerry: We have divided the cultures appropriately. For example, my wife will say to the children upon losing a tooth, “Throw it on the roof,” and I would bring the Australian thing of a tooth fairy.

To further elaborate, Jerry said:

Our families are not different. The ground rules, values, family culture is the same. Methods used are probably different. Same function, different details.

Over time we realized it. We, therefore, do not think our marriage is any different.

Botswana and Chris discussed language as a difference, and this was what they shared:

Chris: I would like to mention one difficulty. Not so much the fact that I’m
white, Banyana's black, not the fact that our cultural background is
different, but, I would say, I would point to the language...

Banyana: Sometimes, although, when hubby's mother talks, I understand what
she's saying, but, if I talk back, I think my Dutch has been better than
it is now, often I can't express myself in sufficient Dutch for her to
understand what I'm saying, so she tells me a lot of things, and
sometimes she wants my opinion, but I cannot give it readily... Sometimes there
are topics where she wants to talk to me woman to woman, but sometimes I have
to call hubby to explain what his mother wants.

Noma: I can imagine... woman-to-woman talk.

Banyana: woman-to-woman talk, that's true, that's one difficult area....

Yeah, language barrier.

Lebo and Tom discussed discipline of the children as different, which sometimes
causes conflict in their marriage. This is what they said:

Lebo: Yeah, because I find that sometimes, I mean it's nice to be married to
Tom and all that, but I find that raising kids is different from the way I raised mine.
Like, you'll find that Tom is very patient with the kids. If a kid does something
that's wrong, Tom will sit down and talk with the kid and I'm not like that. The way
I was brought up. I should listen to what my parents say, and do exactly what my
parents are telling me. We have problems in this area.

Tom: I think it's like any other in terms of you have issues, you have problems,
you have good times, and you have bad times. But perhaps some of the issues are
slightly different because we all have a different perspective on those issues, like
with the children. Sometimes I might feel Lebo is being a little bit hard on the kids, but I wouldn’t say so in front of the children. “Don’t say that to the children.” I’d go and talk to the kids and say, “Look, this is how it is, and mother has said that, so that’s how it is,” and then we’ll talk later about it.

Bothie discussed cultural differences using color/race as a reference point:

I know what I want to say. I don’t think a marriage is about the color you are. It is about how you relate to each other as two people. You’re either in a happy marriage or an unhappy marriage. And I don’t think that for us the issue of marriage is not about the color of our skins. If there is a problem, it’s not because William is White and I’m Black. It’s because, you know, he’s fed up that I’ve left my whatever around, and I’m like you know, I’m happy with whatever, or I’m fed up that he’s left his whatever around. It’s not because he’s White and I’m Black. That’s not the issue. It’s just simple relationship issues that happen whether you’re Black and Black or Indian and Indian or White and White or whatever. So, yeah, we have our issues, but it’s not an issue of color; it’s an issue of a relationship, finding your compromise. For example, William rides a motorbike. He likes to go out into the bush because of his rural background, I guess, for a week, and for a week I won’t know whether he’s alive or dead, and, in the beginning, I was resisting this, saying no, you can’t go, and stuff like that. But then I got to the point, ah! If that’s what he wants to do, let him do it, and I like to do other things, and he might have been resisting it in the beginning but it’s a case of, that’s what she wants to do, let her do it, and it changed everything in our relationship, and it’s not a color thing. It’s a relationship where we find what do I want, what do you want, so I don’t think the
issues have been because of color at all.

In any relationship they are differences. Differences are reasons we communicate in the first place. As alluded to earlier, these couples mentioned having direct and open communication. They spoke about sitting down and discussing issues and listening to one another. From the excerpts above, finding compromises is another way of dealing with their differences. Respecting the other, and not being confrontational, especially in front of the children, when an issue has to be discussed, and appreciating that there are good and bad aspects in a relationship were other ways of handling their differences.

Religion. All couples had some religious beginnings (see appendix E, table 1, demographic section for church affiliations). These couples believe in organized religion and do attend church regularly as a family. One of the women (Mpho) is a member of the Church of the Latter Day Saints with her children, and her husband is not a member. Three couples attend church regularly, the husbands having converted to their wife’s church. The other couples talk about being raised Christian, Catholic, Jewish, or Lutheran, but do not attend church. Below are excerpts of the varied responses on this topic.

Mark was born and raised Jewish, and Sega was raised to follow the Lutheran teachings of religion. Both do not attend their churches. When asked why they quit, Sega responded by saying:

We believe in Spirituality. Organized religion does not play a role in our lives

Alfred was raised Catholic, but converted to Neo’s church, which is Anglican. They try to go to church every Sunday as a family. Neo had this to say:

For me religion provides me with a basic value system which, fortunately for me, is transferable in my work environment. And then in terms of family, one
also tries to share those kinds of values with the children. To talk about issues of fairness, respect, and of the importance of honesty.

When I probed on how the couple chose Neo’s church to follow over Alfred’s, this was how Alfred responded:

Yeah, it’s more or less the same for me as well. I think, on a personal level, and why I don’t go to the Roman Catholic Church here, I’d rather go to the Anglican Church is because the Anglicans are much more liberal. They emphasize that, it’s more personal, it’s your own conscience that ultimately needs to guide you. You are pushed into a certain direction. And that’s also the other thing that we try and teach the kids. It’s not dogmatic. It’s not don’t do this and don’t do that, and without giving any explanations, and one wants to instill this sense of responsibility.

There was a conflict recognized between Bothle and William regarding their affiliation to church and ideas about religion. These were their responses on the topic:

Bothle: We’re not affiliated as a family to any specific religion, but with the boys we’d pray with them at night. When they were born, they were baptized at a chapel at Campbell. It was like baptizing them at home. I’m Catholic because, in Botswana you follow your mother’s line. We chose not to enforce that. I think religion teaches you morals, and it’s an area we are trying to add on to our lives.

William: But I think the boys are getting the moral lessons without going to church.

As far as religion is concerned, it seems like both William and Bothle follow the teachings of the Bible, and engage in religious practices, e.g., they pray. However, they try to remain neutral as far as the children’s involvement with the church in concerned. Their
children were not baptized in their mother's church, and Bothe indicated below that:

Probably we will wait until the boys are old enough to decide for themselves what they want to do.

As far as the role of the church in their lives, Pauh and Mattho differed in their perspectives (See discussion under eco-map findings for the couple).

*Interactions With Other Systems*

This theme came about when the couples discussed family, friends, colleagues, and community reactions to their marriages.

*Family Reactions.* Five out of nine couples reported being accepted by their families. Four women met a lot of indifference from their families, who had many questions about whether the marriage would work out. The families said things like, "What if their White husbands dump (leave) them? What was going to happen to them? What if their White husbands took them to their homelands?" Below are excerpts from interviews on how three couples had problems with their families accepting them as couples:

**Sega:** My mother was okay with it. My older brother had a problem with it, but later was okay, like everybody else.

**Mark:** Because we did not involve family in our decisions, my mother found out indirectly. She found a letter and was more upset that I did not tell her, but was okay later and visited us in Botswana on a number of occasions.

**Sega:** His sister was a bit jiffy, but...

**Mark:** The good thing is we were never close, so it did not matter how she felt.
When I asked the couple how they dealt with the family. Sega responded by saying:

As Mark pointed out, it didn’t really matter to us. Telling them was a formality (not that we needed their approval). Besides, we were married already.

James and Mpho stated the following:

Mpho: Yeah! The problem I was having was only at home. My sister was even the one influencing my mother to really refuse, saying, “No, it’s not right for her to get married to a White man. What if this thing doesn’t work well?” Things like that.

Noma: What things won’t work?

Mpho: My marrying James.

James: Maybe I should have said it earlier, but the reaction of my family at home for instance, my mother accepted us, well Mpho, reasonably well. And so did my brothers and my sister. But my brother, who’s still alive, his wife and his children seemed to have a problem. I don’t know what it is. Even to accept our children as their cousins was something they were never quite comfortable with. Beth, Ally and Jane have all been to school in Denmark in the same place my brother’s eldest daughter lived in. They never invited them around. And that is something that hurt me a bit.

When I asked Mpho and James about how they handled their family members, they responded by saying:

Mpho: I think I told you that I did not care. I said I’m going to stay with my husband, and it will work. And it worked; we have four girls and Tuli, my grand-daughter.

James: We do not talk with my brother. Even when we visit Denmark, we never...
call him and his family. I spoke to my children, and they understand. Luckily they are independent.

Lebo and Tom shared the following:

Tom: My parents didn’t approve so, not for any racial reasons, it was more the fact that we’d just met. They’d also met Lebo previously and hadn’t, didn’t approve. I can’t remember what it was, but…

Lebo: [interjects] They didn’t approve because we were, you were my friend’s boyfriend who they knew

Noma: Oh, ok.

Tom: Yeah. And they’d known my former girlfriend. That’s right.

Lebo: And they knew my ex-boyfriend as well because, they’ve been here and we’d been together, oh you know, all of us.

Noma: Oh! They had been to Gaborone?

Tom & Lebo: Yeah.

Tom: So they didn’t come to the wedding, but my sister and brother and their spouses attended, and some old good friends attended.

Lebo and Tom, in dealing with Tom’s parents who were rejecting, shared:

Lebo: I left it to Tom to handle his parents. His mother changed, and I treat her like my mother-in-law. When she is here, we do things together as women.

Tom: My parents are both in their 70’s, and it was difficult for a while. We did not visit them for some time, and my mother got worried. When we had Cindy I told them, and they wanted to see their grandchild, and I asked “What about Lebo?” They invited us all, and things changed. We did not talk about it.
Friends, Colleagues, Reactions. Below are excerpts that focused on how friends and colleagues to the couples responded to their unions.

Regarding friends and colleagues four couples had no problems. One couple which keeps a small network of friends (Mark and Sega), reported that they did not care how their friends felt, and four couples had negative experiences. Below are excerpts to validate the negative experiences they were exposed to.

Mantso had this to say:

In Moeding (a college in Otse, a village in Botswana) at first they did not like it. My colleagues were negative. My friends had no problem at all. In Mmopane, my village, it was okay because we went through every ritual. People saw Jerry as a person and not a white man. The rubbish we also got was from the missionaries in Moeding – they hated our relationship. What was interesting was that the teachers, my colleagues, the most educated, were the most negative. The industrial staff (janitors, cooks, for example) because they worked with Jerry, they were the most supportive.

I probed on her responses to hostile colleagues and she said:

To be honest with you. I was more concerned about Jerry because he was a foreigner. I did not care about what my colleagues thought. I developed a don't-care attitude.

Lebo and Jerry again had problems with friends. This is what they shared.

Lebo: When we first went out together, nobody wanted to speak to us. All the friends except Kate and Harry, and the Alexander family. People just ran away from us altogether. That's probably why we're so close now because we stayed for
something like a year with people being bitter, and you get people coming and saying horrible things to you, you know, like, how could you do that? How could you marry your best friend’s boyfriend? And they just looked at it from that point of view, and they didn’t know the circumstances.

Noma: It must have been tough.

Lebo: People were very hostile towards us, so we just kept to ourselves.

Lebo: Jerry and Mantho were also nice; we spent a lot of time around them. There were those few people who were very nice and who are still our very good friends, but most people just shunned us.

Tom: But it wasn’t because of our interracial marriage. It was because of the other social circumstances.

On how they handled their friends Lebo said:

We stayed away from them. My ex and Tom later made up, started talking again. You know they were friends before we met, so it was difficult not to talk. Then we were back again around the same friends. And I asked the women what was going on? And we laugh.

Tshidi had this to say:

Tshidi: I’ll talk about that from two angles, one from the American perspective and from the Botswana perspective. Um, from the American perspective, really, I would talk about reactions prior to marriage. I think that, when we first dated, some of the Batswana didn’t like it. Some of the Batswana, particularly the Batswana young men... the ladies I met didn’t care. Maybe they did. The Batswana young men who were there, they didn’t seem to like it. They wondered why this girl is
going out with some... some American. They didn't put too much pressure, but
there was a little bit of a slight resentment. Later, Batswana liked him and became
friends with him. They started calling him mogwe (son-in-law). That's when he
knew he was welcomed within that community. And, when we came home, people
were just accepting... starting from my father.

Tshipi in response to the inquiry about Batswana men who were with her abroad
at the time he met Ben, said:

One Motswana was brave enough to ask me why I date Ben. I said it's none of
your business. Who are you to ask me this? And I went on with my business. I
was the only Motswana girl in the University we were in. So these Batswana guys
felt like they were my brothers. I had to draw the line.

Matlo changed the following:

Matlo: Um, I've got fewer friends now because some of them made these
assumptions that I was going to be this thing, and they didn't want to
associate with that, yah, but we still see each other. And it's just waving hands to
each other. They just assumed that now that I'm married to him, it means I'm
going to change somehow.

Noma: Change how?

Matlo: Yah... the way I talk. I'm not going to change my accent. That's for
sure, forget about it. I won't do that. And then, for some reason they expect you to
be different. To be (makes squeaky voice) no! Walk differently, do things
differently. Hello! I mean we are having a conversation with my colleagues. I mean
academically intellectual people. They expect you to know more because you are with a White man. Have more... *tshwanese go kgaba* (dress up better than other women), you know, and for some reason people look at you as a role model of this thing which I don’t know how to describe it. But there’s that thing about you being a role model. It’s quite overwhelming for me.

Paul: Yah, and I have had no rejection from anyone i.e., my friends, and even from business associates.

In response to her friends and colleagues negativity, Matlho shared how she handled them:

With friends I stayed away from them. Colleagues I work with them, so I just listen and laugh. What can I do? Now it’s better, because I never changed, they admire me. They even say things like *Paul ke Motswana toda ke mmala fela* (Paul is Motswana; the only difference is his skin color.

Community Reactions: Regarding community, every couple did get ostracized. Out of every couple who experienced negativity from the community, only three experienced what they experienced in Boiswana, outside Botswana as well. One couple (Jerry and Mantho) reported hostility in Boiswana and not anywhere else. All other eight couples also reported being stereotyped in neighboring countries and, more especially, in South Africa. One couple were made to feel uncomfortable about their being a couple by South African tourists in Boiswana and not in S.A. They found this incredible and difficult to understand. Seven women reported that they were called derogatory names, i.e., *Ne* (which means *Negro*), labeled “traitors” by “selling Botswana to White men,” and called “prostitutes.”
This has since improved. All of then reported hostility. For example, that a walk in the streets could mean enduring overt displays of disapproval revealed in hateful stares and glances, negative talk or stern whispers. What was also interesting was that it seemed like society was against the women marrying White men, but not the other way around. Everywhere they go, the negative comments were channeled to the women not to their husbands. What was most positive about all this negativity was that they all thrived both personally and professionally. They coped by ignoring what people said about them, laughing, not paying attention to any signs of disapproval, and remembering that negotiating differences was an ongoing process that took a lot of work. Patience and compromise were some of the coping strategies they used. They said the results were worth the effort. Below are excerpts from the interviews on the experiences that the couples reported.

Mark and Sega articulated the following:

Mark: The community was extremely hostile at first. For example, the police in Gaborone one time tried to arrest Sega because she was wearing short pants. It was more about me than what she was wearing…

In Swaziland one hotel could not give us a room after our marriage. The scariest part was when we were in South Africa. We were harassed at the border. In one restaurant they refused to serve us…

At one time we were ignored by Afrikaners because we had a Botswana car registration. Between 1968 and 69, we had become prohibited immigrants and were like that till 1984 after my wife became a government official. That was when this was uplifted, because she had to travel all over.
Mpho shared her experience, which happened in her husband's country, not Botswana.

But the first time when I went to Denmark, far back, I was in a town where there are really Whites, only White people. You know like in rural areas here, mostly you can count the White people there. It is the same as like where he comes from. You can count 1, 2, 3 Blacks. Maybe you can finish the whole month without even meeting one. The old ladies were even taking off their glasses, to make sure, they are really seeing a Ne, you know Black people are called Negro, you know, Ne.

Some other kids were even running to call their parents, "Mommy, mommy, see Ne," you know, pointing to me because they never see a Black person. They only see them on the TV. I told James, and he was surprised.

Mazho in discussing her experiences stated:

In Australia, I did not see anybody looking at me. Negativity was more in Botswana than in Australia. And it was mostly men who called me "prostitute," "sell-out." I believe it was all jealousy. They were nasty to a point where they said, "Makgowa a nkga" (white people smell). How could they?

Surprisingly, a generation of men before us and even today marry out, i.e., Basotho (women from Lesotho), Majohane (South Africans), Maswati (women from Swaziland).

Alfred and Neo shared their experiences:

Alfred: But I think I must say that the issue we discussed before relating to tolerance... I found Botswana society in general very accepting of mixed marriages, compared, for instance, to Zimbabwe, South Africa.

and I think a lot of credit goes to the first president in establishing that.
I think there's almost something like, well, as if Batswana collectively said well, if our chief can do it, and our first President, surely it should be okay, and we should not have any major hang-ups about it.

Neo: The staring is the worst, though.

Alfred: Very uncomfortable. I mean you have to be fairly strong in how you respond to it.

Neo: You remember a few years ago when we went to, no what is it called?

Hyde Park Corner. It's a shopping center in South Africa. Looking for shoes for the children, we couldn't find a size anywhere. So we kind of were walking in the mall, and then Lefika said... this was two years ago, so, he was about eight or seven. He said "mom, why is everyone staring at you?" Because people were staring at me. Somewhat, Alfred, he was fine... and the kids were, but I was the one funny looking. So I said to him, "Well, because of apartheid," and so I spoke to them about apartheid and explained what used to happen etcetera ... etcetera, and they think it's a completely crazy story.

Tom and Lebo in articulating their experiences stated:

Tom: South Africa used to be a problem. Everywhere you go people stare. Now, at least in Joburg (Johannesburg), there's no reaction. People just look at you as just a normal couple. And it actually seems to be completely acceptable there, certainly in the areas where we go. I think perhaps Port Elizabeth is a bit different.

Lebo: Yeah, but the other thing is also that we really, I don't know about Tom, but I've really gone past that now because I've told myself that I have a right to be...
Noma: Happy.

Lebo: To be happy, and I have the right to be. And I mean, if I’m in the middle of Joburg and someone looks at me because I’m married to a white person, that’s their problem, you know. I’ve got every right to be there just as they have the right to be there.

Banyana and Chris shared their experiences in different places:

Banyana: The only place where I remember getting negative comments from the locals when we were seen together as a couple was actually in Zimbabwe. A long time ago, late 80s maybe, people made negative comments. You know, when somebody’s talking about you even when they don’t act like they were speaking about it, you can see somebody’s facial expression when somebody’s saying something negative. But otherwise, I don’t see that. I’ve never, certainly not in Botswana, got any negative feelings or comments from people from the public except for one time in the mall and this bo-Bashi (street boys). I think one wanted Chris to give him some change, and said to the others, “Ah! When they are with our sisters, forget it.” [laughs].

Chris: And when we went to the Maltese? I don’t know if you’ve been to the Maltese (a small group of islands near Sri Lanka)? You could only go there on organized tours, so I think it was through a travel agent here, booked with a group from South Africa, and there weren’t…okay, there was one black couple, and then it was us as a mixed couple. All the other South African couples were all pure whites, and then I could see . . .

Noma: What?
Chris: Yeah, it was never really spoken out, but you could see a certain reaction, certain behaviors, and uncomfortable states.

Noma: Really.

Banyana: And once more, now that you mention it, in Kasane (game reserve in Botswana) we were camping next to a white South African couple that wouldn’t even talk to Chris because Chris was staying in a tent with his black wife. What was interesting was that they had seen and talked to him before. Later, when they saw me, they started avoiding him.

Generally there were a lot of similarities among the couples. This study was done in 2004, and the couples reported feeling more comfortable about their relationships at present than they were before. Previously they had literally laughed and ignored what people thought of them. According to Matlho, currently it is apparent that they are admired more than admonished.

Couple’s Perception of Their Marriage

All couples characterized their marriages as functional. One couple used the word normal to describe their marriage. And to expand on that, they said there are no racial connotations. Two couples spoke of treating a person as a person, that the color of one’s skin and what ethnicity the other is from should not be issues of consideration. All couples volunteered that the cultural or racial backgrounds of their partners had no relevance to them. All saw themselves as like any other couple in dealing with the ordinary challenges and opportunities of a couple relationship, struggling with the everyday issues of making a living. They all stressed that they were in their relationships because of love,
companionship, compatibility, and other positive aspects of a relationship that anyone might want, not because the relationship was interracial.

This was how Paul and Matho expressed themselves:

Matho: For me, I will just say what I always say to people. I tell people that if they could give us an opportunity just to talk about our experiences then they could learn from people. Out there, even with some of my closest friends, there are a lot of assumptions about mixed marriages and about personalities, and there's this thing about white people which people have created in their minds. That as soon as you get married to a White person, your image changes. You are now a black person with a white skin...in a coconut...um. I would definitely, if I get a chance, I would talk about, you know, because of my job also, I would talk about issues... apartheid issues, you know, racism, you know, issues of racism and ethnicity in relation to mixed marriages only. I think those issues I could raise and also the fact that our children are called something else. They are not called Botswana... or whatever. They are called nukutswana, kgowasotho (a derogatory way of saying mixed) you know? It can be very hostile. You know I always say when people pass and say hey, bona lekgowanyana. No not lekgowa... lekgowanyana meaning it's a white person, but not a proper or true white person. So, I would definitely talk about those issues. In particular with children, because they become the center of attraction wherever they are. Even when they are trying to play with their cousins, they will be treated differently.

Paul: I think racism is bad. I find it disgusting from all sides, but I have much
more tolerance for *motho wa ke masimo* (rural/country person) who reacts racially to my presence or our marriage or whatever than to an educated person. Because I think it's a natural "ah" (makes surprised sound) from a rural...stand point.

Bothe had this to say:

I think for me, you know, there are...the majority of interracial relationships Black women with a White guy, and I know that there's, there is this perception "Oh! You don't like us Black guys anymore," there's that, or "ohh! you are so lucky." For me I keep telling people, you know what, a man is a man whether he's Black, White, Indian, Colored or whatever. You've got to stop looking at the color thing you know. Now just my thing is to tell people a person is a person. If they want to see in terms of relationships, you know, you often hear people say, "Hey, Batswana are so unfaithful," and I say to them, "Have you been to England." "The difference is that it's so big that you don't hear about it, but it's happening, so you can't label Batswana man like that." It is happening, I mean the community here it's so small, and we're hearing all kinds of things, so it comes back to what (husband) says, a relationship is; follow your values. If your values are faith, commitment, hard work, then follow them. As soon as you stop following those, whatever, whether it's mixed or same, it's irrelevant to the whole thing.

Two weeks before I met with Tom and Lebo they had been to Russia to attend a family wedding. Tom shared that it was in this wedding where cultural differences surfaced that they thought of their own marriage and how they handled the differences. Tom had this to say to illustrate this theme:

I think it goes back to those values we talked about earlier which add to the
cornerstones. Well, I believe they should be the cornerstones of any marriage—honesty and openness and trust and respect. I think those are true, and for me a marriage between any two people can work if you have those. I don’t believe that culture should be an overriding factor in any marriage but it’s interesting… Last week with this wedding with my nephew, we saw how differences in culture can have a major detrimental effect. We had never thought about it before, but we both immediately saw that the problem was culture and not bad people and good people, just different perspectives on things, and I’ve just written a long letter to my nephew trying to explain that and trying to tell him that he should manage those cultural differences, so that his parents and her parents can actually communicate and get on, because at the moment there’s not a nice atmosphere between the two families.

To validate this theme, Jerry and Mantho had this to say:

Jerry: This is just normal (no racial connotation), the marriage is working. People should see us as us.

Mantho: When my uncles come to my house, they say “We want to talk to Rgabe Batho” (Bafo’s father). They do not see him as a White man. The same way they address other married men in the village is the way they address my husband.

Regarding this theme, this is what Chris and Banyana said:

Banyana: You see, because . . . we don’t see our marriage any different from any other marriage, I don’t think there is need to teach anything. A marriage is a marriage; it depends on two people.
Chris: Take the person as the person, for the time being forget that he is Dutch or Botswana or Zimbabwe. Think of the person as a person.

From the narratives it was apparent that the couples varied in their thinking about whether, for them to be understood and appreciated, society has to be educated somehow. Two women stated that, given a chance, they would like to teach the public something about their marriages. One woman (Banyana) said a marriage is a marriage and asked why should teach about their kind of marriage. The couples in dealing with the negativity embrace themselves first, as a couple, and by being faithful, trusting and maintaining clear and open communication. They also focused on the need to be respected by others and to be treated as human beings, and for their marriages to be perceived as functional. Their insistence that every marriage is valid and important repeatedly came from the interviews.

Utilization of Mental Health Services

None of the couples utilize mental health services. This was no surprise to the researcher, because in Botswana people still believe in using the extended family for traditional counseling. Professional counseling and therapy are relatively new in Botswana. (See eco-map findings on discussion on mental-health services in the case-study section, pp. 73-96).

Eco-Map Findings for Entire Sample

Within the are of case study findings I discussed social groups, how the public defined the couple, and the couples' relationships with outsiders. All couples reported that their relationships with outsiders depended on how others treated
them. If the notion of *botho* (humaneness and respect) was emphasized, that conveyed some sense of acknowledgment of them by others. If they felt the respect, the relationship was good, but if they sensed distance on the part of others, they, too, would be distant. To the question about how the public defined them, most responded by saying they did not know, and some said they thought people defined them according to their work, by their husband's last name, such as Mena (Mrs.) so and so, regardless of whether they changed their last names or not. Some said, by their parents; *kwana winga Re Molefe* (daughter of Re Molefe) or their oldest child, i.e., *mgwe le fika* (Leča's mum). Some said it is how one sees oneself that people will see one. If one is sociable, people will define one as such.

With regards to social groups, women seemed more involved in social groups than men. It was difficult for men to identify one social group. Other social groups that women identified with include church organizations, friends, fitness centers, fashion industry, Inner Will (rotary club for women), media organizations, professional organizations, and charity organizations. Because all the couples interviewed have children, they saw school activities as social arenas for groups, especially if they participate. However, Mark and Sega have adult children, so school activities were not part of their social groups.

I also utilized the eco-maps to find out how the couples related to larger systems. What was evident with the eco-maps was that the relationships between the couples and the extended families varied from strong to weak. Three couples had tenuous relationships with family members before; however, their relationships have improved. One of the women mentioned stressful relationships with some of her colleagues and friends who
think that, since she was married to a white man, she was different from them, and that expected a lot from her. For three couples, especially the women, connections to the church and recreational facilities, such as a gym, were strong.

Connections to the schools were strong for every couple, except for couple one, whose children are grown. There were strong connections to health-care facilities such as hospitals, but no connections with mental-health professionals. This was not surprising, because it is the norm in Botswana. People generally do not perceive therapy or counseling as important. While my participants, do perceive therapy and counseling as important, they have not seen the need to utilize the services. Two couples did seek counseling for others, not themselves. Most still resort to the extended family as a resource to discuss and get advice about their problems as Matlho (couple 9) responded on discussing the eco-map. For all of them, their work created strong connections at the community level.

Summary

This study was based on interviews with nine couples. The study was conducted in Gaborone, Botswana, and some of its suburbs and in neighboring villages between July 7 and August 28, 2004. The structure of the interviews was always essentially the same. I asked the couples to tell me about their experiences in their marriages. With the help of the genogram, ecomap, and interview questionnaire, the couples came up with the following themes: (a) building the marital foundation, (b) gender roles, (c) couple and family values, (e) negotiating the cultural differences, (f) interactions outside the couple, (g) couple's perception of their marriage, (h) utilization of mental-health services, and (i) eco-map findings.
Interviews typically lasted between two and a half to four hours. To find these couples I had a key informant, one woman I knew, who is in an inter racial marriage. She is the one who helped in identifying potential participants, and those recruited through her also suggested others. Every discussion regarding their becoming participants was through the women, as explained in the section on recruiting of participants (p. 27).

In my study I did not aim to produce results that are representative of all intermarried couples, given the limitations of my own affiliation with the couples. At the heart of this project was an exploration of how the couples themselves experienced their marriages and how they thought society perceived them. Along those lines it is essential to point out that my use of the term intermarriage referred to a marriage in which the parties’ racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds differ (Ho, 1990, p. v). I used inter racial marriage to refer to a marriage in which two parties belong to different races (Gordon, 1964, p. 2).

One couple (Paul and Mathe) used the term Zebras. With this term, they referred to a specific group of interracial couples in Botswana. These couples actually chose to call themselves Zebras. For the couple that used this term repeatedly, it seemed as if they knew that if I, the researcher, used it in public, they were ready to defend their position.

Listening to these couples respond to my questions and talk at such length about their marriages, I came to understand that every marriage has its own struggles and challenges, regardless of the backgrounds of the two people involved. I also learned that it depends on the couple engaged in the marital institution to make the marriage work. It was remarkable to confirm that, indeed, the public, society, had negative reactions to intermarriages, and, at the same time, the same society could change what they perceive as negative to positive. Marriage as an institution is a challenge. As Fundenburg (1994) stated,
“to transcend, i.e., rise above these intermarriages requires that we recognize the cultural and individual strengths, values, and experiences.” Yunderburg further elaborated, “The path of intermarriage is a difficult one; it demands the courage to speak unpopular truths and wrestle with unpopular feelings. But if we are willing to walk through the fire to get home, then we will all get home” (p. 578).

As a closing remark, some of the couples interviewed said that they had intended to have an interracial relationship. All of them said they ended up together because they “clicked.” They were drawn to each other and got along well. They found a lot in common with each other and connected as people.
CHAPTER V
Discussion

As a married Motswana woman and from my own observations, it was evident to me that intermarriages were becoming more common in Botswana. What was surprising to me, and still is, is that the pattern of these marriages is divided along gender lines. Women marry partners of a different race more frequently than men. This is actually what triggered my curiosity and interest, as to why this was happening. One other situation that I had observed was that it seemed as if it was tolerated for a Motswana to marry other nationals as long as they are Black, but, once they marry a White man, their motives are questioned by the general society. Mantho (couple 2) shared the following, to confirm the stereotype:

Surprisingly a generation of men before us and even today marry out.

Basotho (Sotho's), Majorela (SouthAfrican's), Maswati (Swazi's) and no-one is saying anything.

As stated in Chapter I, statistics on intermarriages in Botswana are not kept; marriages are recorded as marriages and are not categorized. To, therefore, find numbers that would corroborate my observation was not possible. Also, interesting to note was that there were quite a number of intermarriages available for observation and research because accessibility to these couples was not difficult.

What is also insightful to highlight is that, we begin early in life to form attitudes about people. Growing up in Gaborone one of the major cities in Botswana, and listening
to what people thought of interracial marriages, I internalized the stereotypes that society held about why Batswana women married White men. I had my assumptions way before I embarked on this study which I believed were reasons why Batswana women marry White men. These included: (a) that women who enter into these relationships are prostitutes who get married to White men for status and economic reasons; (b) that, there is less assimilation, especially by men, to their wife's culture; (c) that there is little balance of traditions and rituals of the husband/wife in an interracial marriage; and (d) that, White men are usually faithful and maintain a monogamous relationship. Until we understand the deeper nature of interracial marriages our attitudes about them will never change. We will always look for negativity and carry on the stereotypes. Because, my assumptions were proven wrong in my study, I also challenge society to revisit their prejudices and stereotypes. To talk to interracial couples, listen to what their experiences are, and through the dialogues society will begin to understand that interracial marriages like any other marriages can work, and are functional.

In my study, I was not looking at race, per se, but was also looking at cultural differences, such as religion, language barriers, family values and gender roles. Actually, I was more interested in learning how these marriages were perceived by the society, the couples' motivations to marry, and how they dealt with the struggles and challenges in which they found themselves.

Some feedback that I got from the data collection was consistent with the U.S. literature review. For example, Batswana women, like African-American women, did report that they were labeled traitors for dating white men; that they were prostitutes who needed White men to succeed, and that they thought White men would give them a better
life than Batswana men. Some of the women interviewed reported hating the fact that they were measured against their husbands; that, if it was not for their White husbands, they would not have achieved what they achieved. Some discussed the general insensitivity of people when addressing them, especially on issues pertaining to their children. Regardless of negative perceptions by the society, the couples expressed solid identities about themselves as couples and were happy about that.

The instruments I used for data collection varied in their usefulness. The genogram was an excellent measure. Because my study also intended to measure the trends of intermarriages in these couples’ families, I was able to trace the patterns in both wives’ and their husbands’ families. The eco-map was useful because it represents community support, but to do it graphically was neither important nor necessary because, in describing themselves and how society defined them, they gave me the information I needed. Having a structured interview questionnaire was also helpful in providing organization and in keeping my questions focused. Because the couples chose to discuss the interracial piece of their relationship, a lot of important details were covered.

Some couples did ask why I did not include the children in the questionnaire. They all felt it could have given me more information in understanding their unions. Because there was room for them to ask me questions, they were interested in my role as a family therapist in dealing with them as couples and asked for my input on that. My response to their question was that family therapists regularly see families and couples of mixed cultural backgrounds, which are often different from their own. Given the situation in Botswana where there are people of varying backgrounds, I will work with diverse populations. In order to appreciate their problems, understand them fully as families,
communicate respectfully and meaningfully with them, and be helpful in what I do as a therapist, I need to possess the knowledge of culturally diverse families like them.

The awareness of societal reactions seemed to give the couples more confidence in themselves. They were aware that people were watching and judging them. Although what these couples had to say about the bases for their entry into the interracial relationship may form part of what influenced them, their comments were varied. Some talked of mixed-relationship family precedents; most of them talked about the special chemistry between them and some great similarities in backgrounds. Some of the couples did go through some difficulties at first, in being open about and navigating the relationship. But it was notable how positive they were as they discussed their marriages.

As far as support groups are concerned, all couples have achieved levels of support that they felt good about; it could be from the extended family, church, charity organizations, friends, school, recreation, and from other interracial couples. Of course, the couples also talked about sorting out a few issues when their relationships first started. For example, they had to identify with friends, relatives, colleagues who were accepting and supportive and to distance themselves from the hostile ones.

Researcher Experience and Observations

Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1996) stated, "Qualitative inquiry is always value bound — it can never be considered value free — and that inquirers must be explicit about the roles that values play in any given study (p. 471)." I had my own biases and assumptions, which I had to set aside prior to data collection (see Appendix C). This is known as bracketing. Bracketing, as Husserl, a German philosopher, puts it, connotes that
people can separate their personal knowledge from their observations and life experiences (Byrne, 2001). I also designed my own three-generational genogram so as to help illustrate my openness to my participants’ experiences (see Appendix J).

Data collection was the most difficult stage of this research, for me, given the time constraints that I had, the need to fly to Botswana, and the short time I had available to conduct interviews. The positive aspect was that, because I had already made some telephone and email contacts with some potential participants, I felt like there was room for cooperation. The scary thought, though, was that I was communicating mainly with the women and did not know if their husbands would be willing to participate and also wondered what was going to happen with my study if they refused to participate. Fortunately, that went well. All the women assured me that if husbands were going to participate their husbands would, and that is exactly how it happened.

I also do know that, had I approached the men, the experience would have been different. In my soliciting for participants in Botswana, one of the women (Tshidi, couple 7) recommended a couple in an interracial relationship who happened to be friends with them. She was positive that they would participate, claiming that the wife is very open and was doing research herself and, therefore, would understand. I called to speak to the wife. She was not home at the time. Her husband answered the phone. He asked me if I was a friend I said no! and went on to tell him about the purpose of my calling. He did not give me a chance. Right there he said, “I do not think we would like to discuss our marriage.” He asked for my number and promised to discuss the issue with his wife and call me, but never did.

To talk about such a difficult, intimate, sensitive and complicated topic had its
blame moments. I say this, because, first of all, not everyone is eager to discuss his/her marriage and how to balance differing values about parenting, careers, money, gender roles and housework. Interracial marriages involve people of different backgrounds. It becomes an intimate, emotional subject. I felt like I was telling them that they were different and that they should acknowledge it. There were hurt feelings discussed, especially the kinds of responses these couples reported getting from family, friends, strangers and the communities in and out of Botswana. Lebo (couple 6) discussed the insensitivity of people calling her daughter an albino and telling her point blank that she earned her businesses because of her white husband. I was overwhelmed by hearing the same struggles and difficulties repeated over and over. Second, what complicated this topic was the fact that I was not familiar with the cultural backgrounds and lifestyles of the male participants, and therefore, did not know whether my study would proceed well, given the fact that I solicited their cooperation to participate through their wives. I wondered how they felt about that arrangement. If I ever do a follow up study I will have to inquire about how they felt.

To overcome the bleakness, I listened and looked at each case differently without attempting to generalize to all of them as having a particular problem. I was also observant of their bodily expressions, changes in mood, and voice tones that might influence their responses. What encouraged me were the recurring examples of these couples taking on the challenges of cultural diversity with determination and humor. One woman joked around and said bo re bitsa basadi ba malgoa ba ba lathegetsweng ke bo eng jwa bone, re reetsa fela re bo re ishega. They (society) call us white women with no identity, we simply listen, laugh and ignore.
Every couple interviewed was very enthusiastic about my idea of doing this study and felt like they had to tell their story. They answered every question asked as best as they could. I did not feel at all like it was "pulling teeth" to get them to speak about their experiences. That I found interesting, because the study was really about personal experiences. All except one couple, were open to audio-taping the interviews. They found the study very interesting and are eager to read about it after completion. None of the participants had ever participated in a study of this nature before. What was also insightful was that, despite the topic and discussion of the genogram, all chose to discuss the intercultural aspect of their relationship. They found the question interesting, especially the question of whether they saw their marriage as similar to or different from other marriages. They had varied responses, but all except one perceived it as the same as other marriages, citing personal and family values as central to any relationship. The one who said their marriage was not the same with others, his argument was that it is superior to other marriages. This was what was said by Paul (couple #9):

No, the only way I think I'd say our marriage is different, I think it's superior. I'm not saying to all our friends. Some do have marriages that are admirable, but then others of our friends, their marriages are not. Yet, they are always together. In that respect, I feel our relationship is completely superior.... since we've met we've been two of us yah. We spend a lot of time apart because of work, and so on, and it does not affect us, I mean, that's.... I have a feeling that our marriage is superior.... Whether, that's different from people from similar backgrounds or not, I don't think it's relevant to backgrounds. Being faithful and respecting the other, ya.
The couples saw themselves as two independent adults who considered themselves as free to deal with the choices they made. About cultural differences, they stated that they never saw themselves as different, until I asked the question.

When asked about gender roles, almost all of them did look back to the way they were raised, individually, and how that had an impact on how roles were defined in their own nuclear families. They saw their roles as complimentary. Almost all of them seemed more concerned about their children than about themselves as a couple. They were surprised and asked why I did not have questions about the children. One other observation that was interesting was the notion of zebras, meaning mixed couples. This term, surprisingly, is not used to refer to all interracial couples in Botswana; a group of mixed couples who socialize together call themselves that. As far as whom they relate to socially, most of them said they do not relate to mixed couples because they are mixed, but to other people as well. Actually some of the couples, four of the men more especially, were friends even before they got married.

What was also interesting, but not surprising, was the fact that none of the couples utilized support groups, and only two couples once utilized mental health professionals. Their responses were that they knew therapy/counseling is sometimes necessary, but they have not seen a need to use those services. Compared to other Batswana they have the same attitude. Therapy is relatively new to a lot of people. Most Batswana are only beginning to understand its usefulness, which will require a lot of psycho-education and coaching.

When asked if they had anything to add, a few responded by saying race should not be an issue. People should not focus on color. They eagerly talked about topics like how
society has reacted to them and two couples suggested the following: "Take a person as a person, culture should not be an overriding factor to any marriage." They brought in what they saw as the cornerstones of a relationship, that without them any marriage would fail. These included good communication, honesty, trust, and respect.

Literature Review and How It Correlates to Findings

In Chapter II, I reviewed 82 journal articles and chapters. From the interviews I will use a few quotations to illustrate and validate my findings in relation to the assertions made in the literature review.

In the U.S., as well as in Botswana, women who marry men from another race have been accused of destroying the traditions of their native countries and labeled traitors for dating white men. One hears in Botswana, as well as the U.S., accusations such as, "You've sold our country to these white men." The assumption is that the women lack self-esteem and have little pride in their own ethnic group, its members, and themselves (Gaines, Rice, Gramrose, Blezore, Farris, Young & Garcia, 1999). Below is one excerpt from the interview to back this up.

Matlhoo: But, I mean, still... in Botswana people do that to me, but it's not such an aggressive look. Yes baby, you remember we went to that place where we were with bo Ton and others and one guy said, "Look at these girls, they've sold themselves to these white men." You remember that?

According to Mok (1999), there were solid reasons for entering into such relationships, such as being genuinely in love, genuinely interested in learning about
different cultures and customs, and perceiving, believing, and feeling that the stereotypes
of certain racial and ethnic groups could be pleasing and arousing, also feeling and
believing that the color of someone's skin is irrelevant. To reinforce this statement one of
the women, to the question of attraction, responded, by saying:

Banyana: Yeah, it could have been someone else, but I felt attracted to him and
nobody else at the time. So that's how it happened. And as to how I decided that
I was going to marry him, in fact this man never asked me to marry him. We just
knew that we were meant to be.

As Crohn (1995) explained, culture shapes every aspect of how we view the world
and what we consider "normal" and "abnormal." It molds our attitudes toward time, family,
sex, and monogamy. Cultural rules govern how we expect anger and affection to be
expressed, the ways that children are to be disciplined and rewarded, how we greet
strangers and friends. Crohn warned that partners of mixed matches raised in different
countries could have very different cultural definitions of "normal" (p.135). He, therefore,
suggested that one of the most important tasks for partners in mixed matches was to learn
to understand and to deal with differences in the cultural codes they brought to their
relationships. One of the questions I explored was how couples negotiated their different
cultural backgrounds. Below is an excerpt from one interview:

James: Yeah, we had to learn to accept each other and also adapt to each other
because we were both different. I had my way of living, and she had her way of
living. But we had to learn how to live together.

Mpho: Yeah, it happens. I myself, when I started like that, I really make sure that
at least I learn something, and I think James was surprised. I learned all the time by
watching his mother when she was cooking. She was a very good cook, and she used to cook a lot, like the pork things, and you know. But making gravy... I had to learn to make gravy that I was so good that James was shocked. I didn’t know how to make gravy, just gravy. His mother taught me how to make gravy.

Nona: And you were willing to learn.

Mpho: Yeah, I was willing to learn, and I learned to make gravy from his mother. But otherwise I used to know that, if I make this food like this, that’s the way I used to make it. I didn’t know that you could fry the meat, and from there you make gravy to eat with.

Rosenblatt, Karis, and Powell (1995) posited that identity is a matter of self-concept, that is, what one thinks of oneself. A person’s major commitment, including choice of partner, was affected by the person’s self-concept. How others react to one also stemmed from self-concept and had a major influence on it. For some people, being in an interracial partnership was not necessarily consistent with one’s self-concept as a member of one’s own racial group or with the need to be loyal to people who oppose such partnerships. Moreover, the reactions of others may threaten a person’s self-concept. For example, other people’s reactions may suggest that one has made a bad choice, has been disloyal to one’s people, is a rule violator, or does not belong in a group that one counts as important to personal identity.

Mpho: I mean for me....My experience is that people have a lot of expectations that, umm, you should have money. That white skin is money. That is number one. You should be able to speak through your nose, and I am definitely not going to be speaking through my nose....That I’ve made clear.
McNelly (1973) maintained that family and friends and members of the community may have an influence on interracial couples, responding in a contradictory manner, such as providing support or opposition to the pair. In response to the question regarding how did family, friends, colleagues and the community respond to your marriages?, below is an excerpt from the interviews to support McNelly:

Mpho: The first time, I think my mother was afraid. It's not because she wasn't accepting James. The only thing she was scared of was that James would divorce me. I think her fears were that, me being a foreigner, I could just leave any day and say, "No, I'm not interested," and then go back home.

Mpho: My mother thought that maybe James, maybe he won't divorce me, but he'll just dump (abandon) me with the kids and just disappear. As we know our parents, thinking about Denmark, they think it's far where you can't reach anybody, or there's no way to find where he is. It's something that my mother didn't want to even think about.

Apart from the above narratives and quotations from the literature review and interviews, generally, the literature was consistent with the data. From attraction to motivation, to navigating the marriage itself, questions that probed into all those areas validated what the literature proposed. The couples were aware of the fact that their motives are questioned, that their marriages are under scrutiny. It is how they themselves perceive themselves that is different. Couples who are engaged in intermarriages are always challenged and have to prove that these marriages do work just like any other marriage.
Data Saturation

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), saturation means that no additional data are being found whereby the researcher can develop further properties of a category. It is the key to knowing when one has collected enough data. One starts hearing the same information repeated by additional participants when saturation occurs. Through analyzing massive amounts of data, after finishing interviewing the ninth couple, I concluded that no new information would be obtained by interviewing further couples. I began hearing, "We are no different from other marriages," "We fell in love," "The attraction was mutual," "It just happened," over and over, and no new information was coming up. I felt I had reached saturation with the themes generated. The essence of what was implied was that these couples did not consciously wake up and decide they wanted to cross the color line and marry an outsider. It just happened. What I did learn which I found insightful, was that intermarriages will continue to grow. These couples have set a standard for families and communities. It is all about their love for each other, not that they are in these relationships to change anyone's world view about interracial marriages.

Closing Comments

Because a study of this nature has never been conducted in Botswana, I used the literature review from studies done in the U.S. to determine how the issues in the U.S. might apply to Botswana. I also wanted to discover whether there may be hidden prejudices in families, friends, and the community with regards to interracial marriages in Botswana. Specifically, in Botswana, I wanted to explore marital issues such as shared identities, how the couples handled marital conflicts, how the couples cultivated their
marriages, and their coping strategies. One aspect that stood out, which is different from what I gathered in the literature review on U.S. marriages, was that marriage as a concept in Botswana and in the Western and U.S. cultures varies. This was described in Chapter one, in the introduction.

The concept of race is viewed differently in Botswana. I am a Motswana myself. In my country, by birth, by nationalization or by citizenship, we are all Botswana regardless of the colors of our skins. This was proven by how the husbands of these women defined themselves and were defined by others. This was insightful. With regards to perceptions, of course, these varied, but most couples reported negativity outside of Botswana. Four couples did experience some hostility in Botswana; nothing they could not handle or deal with. And to deal with that was to ignore it and to move on with their lives.

My explanation for all this is that these women are in the majority in Botswana. They have never felt inferior to their husbands, regardless of what literature suggests they might or should feel. Hnmm (1994), for example, stated that black women marry white men to raise or uplift their economic status. I do not dispute the fact that this may be the case with some women. All the women in my study, except for one, were professional in their own rights before they met their husbands. But, even the one who is a housewife did not feel inferior to her husband. She saw her role as significant to the welfare of the family. The fact that none of these women ever left Botswana to settle in their husband’s countries empowered them, even though they themselves did not see it that way. They perceived their living in Botswana as a decision between themselves and their spouses. Gender roles have shifted; this was also apparent. It was empowering to me as well to listen to men acknowledge that their wives were more educated than they, were making more money
than they. Two men (Chris and Alfred) worked part-time and help with the children while their wives were in full-time jobs.

Limitations

The limitations of this study included the following:

1. The study reflected the experiences and perceptions of the couples in the study. It was a small sample. Therefore, I cannot say with certainty that the findings can be generalized to all interracial couples who may represent black and white intermarriages within present-day Botswana.

2. I interviewed couples. I believe interviewing the spouses alone may have generated additional information that perhaps was not shared because the spouses were together.

3. All the women in the study were Botswana. The study was done in Botswana. This may be a factor affecting these findings. It is possible that, if this study were done in a country where neither spouse was born nor currently lives, experiences reported might have been different.

4. As the instrument of research, I constantly thought about how I would actually carry out my study. I had to secure the full approval and cooperation of my participants, but this I did through the women, because it was easy to identify with them. My challenge was identifying with the men, who are from a totally different culture than mine. I wondered what they thought of me as the researcher and my study. It is possible that, if I had solicited their participation through them, their attitudes towards the study as a whole would have been different.

5. A study of this nature was never conducted in Botswana. And, since the issue of
inter racial marriages is intimate and sensitive, I had to constantly reassure clients that their participation was voluntary and that their decision whether to participate or to withdraw from the study would not affect my relationship with them. I honored everything that was stated in the informed consent. Their names were changed to keep their identities confidential. I had to also reassure them that the tapes and transcripts will be stored in a safe cabinet and that there will be no disclosure of privileged information. This was a constant challenge to me, especially on the results section, in which I had to describe an individual in reference to what she he said about the type of profession he/she held, for example, I had to disguise their positions or jobs even though I kept their jobs parallel to what is within government and non-governmental positions in Batswana. I felt as if I were losing important and relevant information in the process, even though aware of confidentiality and anonymity issues.

6. My other biggest challenge was that the literature review was based on studies conducted in the U.S. Data from the interviews did not support what the literature proposed, e.g. that love with interracial couples is a passing phase, a sign of confusion and rebellion. This is still a difficult population to make generalized statements about, given the different histories and cultural contexts in the different countries. I also mentioned above that Batswana women in my study did not feel inferior to their husbands. This would not be comparable to African-American women married inter racially in the U.S. who had a painful history of slavery and racism.
Clinical Implications

Results of this study have implications for assessment and treatment of intermarried couples and their families.

Utilizing Genograms in Therapy

In order to understand couples in therapy a genogram becomes a relevant and an important assessment tool for clinicians. A three-generational genogram will give one information about members of the nuclear family, their relationship to the extended family, family history, and patterns of intermarriage within the family. Genograms are helpful to have a visual picture of the family and to know what generation is being addressed in therapy. Out of nine couples interviewed, Neo (couple 2) has two older siblings, a brother and a sister who married interracially. Surely for someone like her, marrying outside one's background was not a new dynamic in her family, and her husband being accepted by her family was less problematic compared to Mihno (couple two) whose experience was different because she was the oldest and the first to get married.

The questions a therapist would ask a person like Neo, if meeting her for the first time would be “Are there any marriages in your families in which two people from different backgrounds got married?” “How did they handle it?” “What were their resources?” A genogram will be helpful in even pointing out inconsistencies about what the client is telling you and what happens in his/her family, e.g., a client may say there are no intermarriages in one’s family, meaning there are no interracial marriages. Within the extended family, there may be those family members who married across religions or people of different nationalities. In constructing the genogram and learning these patterns
will be helpful in also understanding couples and the marriage patterns within their extended families.

**Eco-Maps**

Genograms portray family histories over time, and an eco-map provides a valuable supplement by depicting a family's current relationships to the larger systems. We think of families in terms of the communities in which they live. All families are dependent for their survival on the systems beyond themselves. They need support from schools, mental-health services, and legal systems, such as the courts, police, and all other societal institutions. Since we are looking at relational dynamics, the therapist with the larger systems in mind should assess for strong/powerful relations, weak/tenuous relationships, and conflicted relationships. Mattani (1993) suggested that in completing eco-maps with the couple, the couple and the therapist should fill out the map together, as this may foster certain therapeutic aims, such as a sense of togetherness, mutual accomplishments, extended family dynamics and tolerance for others. Because it is a visual representation, couples will see themselves in the center, and the larger system outside. And the lines that are thick, dashed and jagged will be obvious for them to help visualize their relationships with outsiders.

From the eco-maps one can also observe the flow of energy or resources. For that reason, it is important that clinicians identify what resources are available to intermarried couples. If those services are not available, it is important to also explore the reasons why and to advocate for such services for their clients. Interracial couples, for example, may discuss spirituality as fostering a sense of meaning in their lives; just knowing they have a
relationship with God may be good enough for them. They may have weak connections or
conflictual relationships with church leaders and not go to church. I had such cases in my
study. A clinician must focus on the relational strengths which are central to the client’s
spiritual life. The eco-map will also help the therapist understand the client’s life
experiences. Use of the eco-map as an assessment tool becomes relevant and useful to
clinicians for the reasons stated above.

Marital Issues

Not every intermarried couple will succeed in negotiating the differences in their
marriage regarding discipline issues, religious differences, dealing with traditional
marriage rituals, handling the stereotypes they get from the public, and other differences.
All couples interviewed reported communicating with each other in a respectful manner,
listening and sharing ideas, expressing feelings, and supporting each other as a way of
handling their struggles in the marriage and helping them cope and survive. If not handled
well, these issues, e.g., being ostracized by society, may result in the couple isolating
themselves. Clinicians, therefore, need to attend to issues of uniqueness, isolation,
belonging and acceptance, self esteem, personal and racial identity, in addition to all the
universal developmental issues that all families contend with in society (Okun, 1996).

What was unique about these couples was the love of their children, parenting
issues, practicing clear and open communication, respecting each other, and having solid
family values. The hardest issue for them was for society to see them for who they uniquely
are, and not for what their marriages are assumed to be about. Therapists in dealing with
these couples, should therefore be patient, understanding, empathetic, and respectful. In
communicating with them, the therapist should ask questions, e.g., “Please tell me about the languages you speak at home.” or “Please tell me about your beliefs and practices in relation to special events, such as celebrating the birth of your child.” This is a way of understanding them more. They should also allow a two-way communication where they ask couples “Do you have any questions for me?” This is an indication that you as a therapist, are transparent and would also like to share aspects of yourself with them that will improve the relationship.

When working with couples who are in the process of preparing for marriage, a therapist could ask questions to help the couple plan for the future. Some of these questions might be, “How will you decide where to live?” “What do you expect in terms of community and family reaction?” “How do you think you will handle it if the reaction is negative?” “What resources do you have available to you?”

Training

Counselors, family therapists, and those working in the personal social services would benefit from training which develops a clearer understanding of the interplay of social and psychological factors affecting the well-being of these intermarriages and the children who result from them (Chulow, 1993). The couples interviewed, especially those with young children, were concerned about their children’s welfare. Below is an example of what emerged in the data collection. The researcher at the end of the interview had asked for questions or comments and Bothie (couple 6) responded by saying.

I want to add something about our children. They’re not considered white. They’re not considered black. They’re considered the coloreds, in a demeaning way. I think
that the thing is to let our kids know that they are interrace; they are both. We have a challenge because in Botswana you follow your father's tribe, isn't it? So our kids should be William's, but that, too, is challenged sometimes. So I think with those sorts of things the children will face greater challenges from friends in school than us as a couple. That's my own view. But I think it's up to us to just guide them to be strong individuals, regardless of their color, to say, 'I have a black mother and a white father, and so I'm mixed.' You know, you take it or leave it.

Therapist Self-Reflection

Family therapists need to also examine their own beliefs, attitudes, biases and assumptions regarding interracial couples, which may impede a therapeutic outcome. I for one, had my own biases that I bracketed. For starters, all couples negotiate differences when marrying, regardless in same-race marriages or intermarriages. My assumptions or biases were that in interracial marriages negotiating the differences would be much more complex because it would not only involve the different backgrounds with regards to religion or aspects of cultural differences of upbringing or of gender roles, for example. Intermarriages also involved cultural differences in terms of language, food, religion, raising biracial children. Numerous of the biases I bracketed proved unrelated to couples experiences themselves, for example, I thought interracial couples take a non-religious approach to life because they are usually shunned by church leaders and community. Four couples I interviewed were church goers. Those who chose not to attend church did not because for fear of being shunned but personal reasons.

With the increase of intermarriages, more mental-health counselors will be called
on to provide services to these couples and their families on dealing with their struggles and challenges. Therapists who continue to work through their biases in dealing with intermarriages will be able to create a safe environment where clients will not feel judged and will feel free to share their experiences and to express themselves adequately on issues around differences and negotiating their differences.

Social Implications

According to Spalding (2005), marriage is the formal recognition of its relationship by society and its laws. While individual marriages are recognized by government, the institution of marriage pre-exists and is antecedent to the institution of government. Spalding further stated that, because of shared obligations and generational relationships that accrue with marriage, the institution brings significant stability, continuity and meaning to human relationships and plays an important role in transferring basic cultural knowledge to future generations. The couples did share that their marriages were working, that they do have disagreements in their relationships like in any marriage, and that it is not because of their differing backgrounds, but also due to basic relationship issues. With this said, it is therefore important to educate the extended families, the public, therapists, policymakers, and political leaders about intermarriage. It is apparent that people marry outside their backgrounds, a dynamic that society may have problems with. It is important for families and societies to be educated to be more tolerant and accepting of intermarriages.

More and more interracial marriages are occurring in Botswana. This may be a reflection of a more open and thoughtful society. It did come up in the interviews that Botswana were more tolerant of these unions than other African states. Cohen (1996)
stated, that men, not just Black men, traditionally marry women who are not in the same socio-economic class and status as themselves because they (men) are taught to be the breadwinner. Women on the other hand, because of their socialization, try to enhance their status through the vehicle of marriage, which makes them more selective. I often hear single women in Botswana say, *re tla nyalwa ke bo mang banna ba tlhela* (who will marry us, the ratio between men and women is imbalanced; there are more women than men) this, then, reduces the available pool of Batswana Black men.

None of the women I interviewed mentioned that they married their husbands because they lacked eligible Batswana men. I think this is another reality that Batswana need to also accept, because, later the dry pool will become one of the reasons for marrying people outside their backgrounds. Again I emphasize educating the extended families, and the public on this issue.

Education is core to the principles of the Botswana government. Like other countries, Botswana is undergoing social change, which contributes to social and health problems. As one of those Batswana students who is currently being trained to become a psychologist/marriage and family therapist embarking on a study of this nature equipped me with skills for readiness to deal with diverse families with diverse problems. More training of marriage and family therapists is needed, so that they serve as a resource to these diverse couples.

In interracial relationships, and in Botswana it seems, women suffer most. They are the one’s labeled “traitors,” and “prostitutes.” In my study, it was the women who complained about being stereotyped. It was the women who raised concerns about their children. It is therefore, fitting, that a gender perspective be incorporated in program
planning and policy making. Listening to these women tell their stories, including them in planning, decision making, and validating the reality of their lives is important. In all aspects of their lives, women's needs and priorities must be met with sensitivity, whether in the realm of human rights or in activities of daily living. I, therefore, advocate for women's empowerment. They need to know that their experiences and values are respected.

Theoretical Implications and Future Research

Traditional family-therapy theories are based on the research of conventional families. Okun (1996) stated that in treating intermarried couples, it is important to learn how each individual defined his/her racial and cultural identity and to help couples locate support groups because working with this group would present some unique challenges to clinicians. The fact that intermarried couples face stresses and rejection, e.g., negative judgments, being pathologized, issues not faced by same-race/faith/cultural couples, has implications for mental-health professionals. The couples in the study did report being feeling ostracized at one point by family, friends, colleagues and the community e.g., their children called derogatory names, e.g., zibinu, or them labeled rebels, traitors and prostitutes. They also did report that ignoring what people said about them and remembering that negotiating differences between themselves was an ongoing process that took a lot of work, patience and compromise. This study therefore, supports the idea of developing theoretical models and designing treatment programs for working with intermarried couples.

It is clear that as proposed in the study, no such research has been done regarding
interacial couples' experiences in Botswana, and less effort has been focused on mental health issues as they pertain to intermarriages. This, then, calls for extensive research on the topic; it also challenges the approaches used with these families and implies that new theories, incorporating these diverse groups, need to be developed. Because most couples in the study raised some concerns about their children, a specific area I propose for research will be a biracial study from a multicultural perspective on learning, focusing on how biracial/bicultural identity can impact child development. Wardel (1992) reported that schools have served society as a means of legitimizing the inequities of our social system. Teachers need to be educated on how they should explore their feelings and myths about biracial children. Teachers, like therapists, must examine their own beliefs, attitudes and assumptions about biracial children. If they themselves are judgmental of biracial children, then other children in the school will not accept them as peers. I have heard people say that "the teacher is always right." Children, especially in lower grades would copy the teachers negative behavior, and the stereotypes around biracial children will perpetuate.

Other areas of research that I propose include: research on Botswana Black men who are married to White women of European/American/Australian heritage and compare the results to what came out in my study. And, research on parents of daughters and sons who married interracially would also make an interesting study.
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Appendix A

Oral Script
My name is Nomagugu Ongile. I am a doctoral student in the Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Therapy Program in the department of Professional Psychology and Family Therapy at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ. I am soliciting your participation for my research to fulfill requirements for my dissertation.

Explanation of Research and Duration of Participation

My study focuses on interviewing couples in intermarriage in Botswana specifically, Batswana women married to European/U.S./Australian men. The purpose of this study is to explore the subjective experiences of couples engaged in these marriages. I will be conducting interviews which will include open-ended questions, a theme-focused genogram and an ecomap which will take approximately 120 to 180 minutes in one day with breaks or in two days, at your discretion. With your permission, the interview will be audio taped.

Description of Procedure

I will conduct an interview that will focus on the experiences related to your intermarriage. Specifically, attention will be given to factors that influenced the marriage, challenges and strengths related to the marriage, negotiation of cultural differences and societal attitudes and perceptions of the marriage. Once interviews are completed, I will transcribe the tapes and provide you with transcripts so you could review, add, or correct. If there is need for clarification, you may be requested to participate in a follow-up interview.

Participation is Voluntary

Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw from the process at any time without consequences.

Protecting Participants' Identity
For anonymity you will be assigned a number (e.g., Case# B1 W/H). Your identity and all information gathered will be maintained in the strictest confidence. Publication of this study will in no way identify you.

Confidentiality Maintenance

I will be the only one who will know your identity. Audiotapes will be kept in a secure place and will be destroyed after completion of the study. Audiotapes will be assigned code numbers (e.g., Case# B1 W/H) rather than using your name to ensure confidentiality.

Anticipated Risks and Discomfort

It is believed that there are no foreseen risks or discomforts involved in the completion of the study. The interview questions may lead to new levels of self awareness, possible changes in lifestyle, and shifting priorities of living. However, if you experience some discomfort, you may speak to me or I could make some referrals available to you.

Benefits for Participation

No such study has been conducted in Botswana. In countries such as the U.S. where intermarried couples were studied, couples reported positive benefits such as offering insights to the public into the transformative power of love. Some participants reported that being researched meant being validated, seen as contributing to awareness of multicultural issues.

Asking for Oral Asent

If you are interested in becoming one of the participants, let me know and I will send a Letter of Solicitation with more details
Appendix B

Letter of Solicitation
My name is Nomagugu Osagile. I am a doctoral student in the Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Program in the department of Professional Psychology and Family Therapy at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ. U.S.A. This is my doctoral dissertation, I am the investigator, and I am requesting your participation in my study.

With the growing number of intermarriages in Botswana, it becomes relevant to understand the specific issues that might emerge in such interracial marriages, specifically since these relationships may involve negotiating multiple familial, cultural, and societal attitudes and perceptions within the context of a colonized history. My study focuses on interviewing couples in intermarriages in Botswana, i.e., Batswana women married to European/U.S./Australian men. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to explore the subjective experiences of couples engaged in these marriages.

I will conduct interviews that will focus on the experiences related to your marriage. The interview protocol which will include open ended questions, a theme focused genogram and an ecomap will take approximately 120 to 180 minutes in one day with breaks or in two days, at your discretion. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped. Specifically, attention will be given to factors that influenced the marriage, challenges and strengths related to the marriage, negotiation of cultural differences and societal attitudes and perceptions of the marriage. Once interviews are completed, I will transcribe the tapes and provide you with transcripts so you could review them. If there is need for clarification, you may be requested to participate in a follow up interview. Participants will be comprised of intermarried couples ages 30 years and above, with educational levels of 12th
grade (Form 5) or above, the women fluent in English. The couple will be required to be married for over a year. I will construct a three-generational theme-focused genogram which will represent names, birth order, sex, and relationships of members of your family to detect recurrent patterns in your family history. I will also construct an ecnmap to portray your relationship as a couple with the extended family, and formal-systems, such as workplaces, friendship networks, churchet and the community in general.

Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw from the process at any time without consequences.

Your identity and all information gathered will be maintained in the strictest confidence. Publication of this study will in no way identify you. I will be the only one who will know your identity. Audiotapes will be kept in a secure place and will be destroyed after completion of the study. Audiotapes will be assigned code numbers (e.g., Case# B1) rather than using your name to ensure confidentiality.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research. The IRB believes that research procedures adequately protect participant’s welfare, civil liberties and rights. The IRB Chairperson may be reached at (973)275-2977 or (973)313-6314.

Sincerely,

Nomagugu Oagile
Appendix C

Informed Consent Form
My name is Nomagugu Oagile. I am a doctoral student in the Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Program in the department of Professional Psychology and Family Therapy at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, U.S.A. This is my doctoral dissertation and I am the primary investigator of this project.

Explanation of Research and Duration of Participation

Interracial marriages emerged in the 1900's and intraracial marriages became evident when the first president of this country married a British woman in 1948. This phenomenon has continually become an established fact of life with each succeeding generation, within ethnic and racial communities. Specifically, intermarriages between a Motswana woman and a European/U.S./Australian man have been on the increase. With the growing number of these intermarriages in Botswana, it becomes relevant to understand the specific issues that might emerge in such marriages, specifically since these relationships may involve negotiating multiple familial, cultural and societal attitudes and perceptions within the context of a colonized history. My study focuses on interviewing couples in intermarriage in Botswana, specifically Batswana women married to European/American/Australian men. The purpose of this study is to explore the subjective experiences of couples engaged in these marriages.

The interview protocol which will include open-ended questions, a thematic genogram and an ecomap will take approximately 120 to 180 minutes in one day with breaks or in two days, at your discretion. With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped.
Description of Procedure

I will conduct an interview that will focus on the experiences related to your marriage. Specifically, attention will be given to factors that influenced the marriage, challenges and strengths related to the marriage, negotiation of cultural differences and societal attitudes and perceptions of the marriage. Once interviews are completed, I will transcribe the tapes and provide you with transcripts so you could review and correct. If there is need for clarification you may be requested to participate in a follow up interview.

Participants will be comprised of intermarried couples ages 30 years and above, with educational levels of 12th grade (Form 5) or above, women fluent in English, and the couple will be required to be married for over a year.

Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary and you may withdraw from the process at any time without consequences.

Instruments

The interview protocol, which will ask for demographic data that defines the social location of each person in terms of education, occupation, and income, will be approximately 120 to 180 minutes. It will include open ended questions regarding how you met and the reactions of member families of origin and friends and societal reactions. I will construct a three-generational cultural genogram which will represent names, birth order, sex, and relationships of members of your family to detect recurrent patterns in your family history. I will also construct an ecomap to portray your relationship as a couple with the
extended family and formal systems, such as workplaces, friendship networks, churches and the community in general.

Anonymity Preservation
For anonymity you will be assigned a number (e.g., Case# B1 W/H). Your identity and all information gathered will be maintained in the strictest confidence. Publication of this study will in no way identify you.

Confidentiality Maintenance
The primary researcher will be the only one who will know your identity. Taping will begin after introductions have been made so that your name will not appear in the taped conversations. Audiotapes will be kept in a secure place and will be destroyed after completion of the study. Audiotapes will be assigned code numbers (e.g., Case# B1 W/H) rather than using your name to ensure confidentiality.

Anticipated Risks and Discomfort
It is believed that there are no foreseen risks or discomforts involved in the completion of the study. The interview questions may lead to new levels of self awareness, possible changes in lifestyle, and shifting priorities of living. I will not pressure, persuade or coerce you to respond and provide information that makes you feel angry or disgusted. However, if you experience some discomfort, you may speak to me. I am an experienced clinician but, if not comfortable processing your feelings with me, you could seek professional help from your counselor or contact the University Careers and Counseling Center (Botswana).
Benefit for Participation

No such study has been conducted in Botswana. In countries such as the U.S. where couples in intermarriages were studied, couples reported positive benefits such as offering insights to the public into the transformative power of love, that, times have changed, that success or failure of any marriage does not depend on one’s skin color. Some participants reported that being researched meant being validated, that, there were researchers out there who were interested in their experiences and that alone made them feel important.

Permission to Tape

I agree to have the interviews audio-taped for transcription. I understand that these tapes will not be presented without my prior written permission. I also understand that I have the right to review all or any portion of the tape and request that it be destroyed.

Circle one  Yes  No

Contact Information

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Review Board for Human Subjects Research. The IRB believes that the review procedures safeguard the subject’s privacy, welfare, and civil liberty rights. The Chairperson of the IRB may be reached at (973) 275-2974. If you have any questions regarding this study or what is expected of your voluntary participation, please feel free to contact me at (973) 313-9407, email: oagileno@shu.edu or Dr Wesley Matsui, Ph.D., at (973) 275-2855, email:
natsuwe@ahu.edu.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation, time and consideration. If you are interested in getting the copy of this study, I would be glad to provide you with it as soon as they are available.

In signing this form, you are giving your consent to participate in this study.

I, _________________________ have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realizing that I may withdraw at any time.

____________________________
Signature of the participant Date

____________________________
Name of Participant

____________________________
Signature of interviewer Date
Name of interviewer __________________________

Thank you once again for your invaluable support.

Sincerely,

Yomagugu Oagde, MA. Doctoral Student,

Wesley Matsui, Ph.D., Advisor, Assistant Professor, Department of Professional Psychology and Family Therapy, Seton Hall University, 400 South Orange Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079, USA
Appendix D

Motivation to Migrate to Botswana
Motivation to Migrate to Botswana

Mark
Boredom in England.

Jerry
Visiting a relative working in Botswana, later met his wife.

James
Fear of being drafted to the war. Joined Peace Corps as a volunteer and was sent to Botswana.

Alfred
Dutch Peace Corp Volunteer.

Tom
First came in as a financial consultant.

William
Migrated with his family when he was 8-years-old

Ben
Met wife in the U.S. and moved to Botswana with her.
His University in Holland sent him to Botswana as a student assistant for the pre-entry science course at University of Botswana.

First came to visit his sister who lived in Botswana with her husband. Felt liberated and stayed.
Appendix E

Demographic Data
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Appendix F

Theme-Focused Genogram Questions
1. What social groups do you belong to?
2. How do you describe yourself?
3. If you were to define yourself, what would be the defining qualities or characteristics?
4. How do other people define you socially?
5. How would you define your family?
6. How much does your family follow or conceal their cultural/religious heritage?
7. What relationships does your family have with outsiders in general and mental health professionals?
8. What role does religion play in your life and the lives of members of your family?
9. What assumptions are made about gender roles in your family?
10. What are the most important values in your family?
11. Who do you think understands you best?
Appendix G

Interview Questionnaire
1. Factors leading to intermarriage
   a. Try to remember the first time you met your husband/wife. Please tell me about the situation.
   b. Where and how did you meet your husband/wife?
   c. What attracted you to him/her?
   d. What made you decide to marry out?
   e. Tell me about your decision to marry your husband/wife?
   f. How was it like for you going through the rituals of marriage (patu, bogadi)?

2. Patterns of dating
   a. Tell me about your previous dating relationships/patterns?
   b. Have you always dated from the same or different background?

3. Family Reactions
   a. Try to remember the times you discussed your plans to marry with your family. Please tell me about their reactions and how you felt.
   b. Was your family involved in your decision to marry your husband/wife? If so how?
   c. Please describe the extent to which your family was involved in the decision making.
   d. How did your wife's/husband's side of the family respond to your decision?

4. Friends/Community Reactions
   a. Tell me about your friends' involvement in your choice of partner?
   b. What were your friend's reactions to your marriage?
   c. What were your colleague's reactions to your marriage?
   d. What percentage of your current friends are in marriages like your own?
   e. What were/are some of the community's reactions to your marriage?
f. How have you dealt with those reactions?

g. Do you utilize any support groups?

h. If you were to teach the community about your kind of marriage, what would that be?

5. Negotiating the Intermarriage

a. Do you perceive your marriage to be "different", if so, how?

b. Do you perceive your marriage to be similar to marriages between persons from the same background? If so, how?

c. Do you perceive differences in gender roles within your current family from those practiced in your family of origin? If so, what is the difference?

d. Tell me about the struggles or challenges you have experienced in your marriage?

e. How do you negotiate between you and your husband's/wife's different backgrounds?

f. What has it been like living away from your country or family of origin?

7. Is there any other topic you would like to add, that I may not have touched on?

8. Do you have any questions for me?
Appendix H

Coding Categories
1. Self definition
2. Society definition
3. Family definition
4. Family values
5. Meeting
6. Attraction
7. Open relationship
8. Decision to marry
9. Motivation to marry
10. Religion
11. Rituals
12. Education
13. Motivation of men to migrate to Botswana
14. Dating patterns
15. Reactions by family, friends/coworkers, and community
16. Gender roles
17. Marriage same or different
18. Struggles
19. Social groups
20. Support groups
21. Relationship with outsiders
22. Mental-health services
Appendix I

Participants and Researcher's Genograms
Appendix J

Autobiography
I am a fourth-year doctoral and international student from Botswana. I am currently enrolled in the Ph.D program in Marriage and Family Therapy, in the Department of Professional Psychology and Family Therapy at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, U.S.A. I speak four languages: Zulu, Ndebele, Setswana and English. I was born in Zimbabwe, and when I was eight years my family moved to Botswana. My mother is Zulu/Nhosa and my father Motswana. My maternal parents immigrated to Zimbabwe from SA. My paternal grandfather was a teacher. They too immigrated to Zimbabwe where my parents met and got married and where I was subsequently born. I have two older sisters, two older brothers and one younger brother. My father is deceased. My mother now retired, was a home economist who won lots of prizes for knitting, sewing and baking. We are a very close family; helping one another is what we value most. I am married and have two daughters. My husband and children and my extended family have been such an inspiration and support to me as I move along this journey of becoming Dr. Sethlare-Oagile.

Looking at my career path, I have always held caring and helping in high esteem. After acquiring a diploma in registered nursing, midwifery, and a bachelor’s degree in nursing education, I worked for a while as a nurse in rural and urban areas in Botswana and even taught in a nursing school. My bachelor’s training exposed me to a class on guidance and counseling. This was the class which drew me to psychology. As soon as an opportunity came from the University of Botswana that advertised a position to train someone to become a Clinical Psychologist and become part of the newly established Counseling Center I applied. A year later I
was in Michigan pursuing master’s level degree in Counseling Psychology. I thoroughly enjoyed the internship part of my training which was in a substance-abuse agency. That was excellent exposure where I learnt about the different types of substances, what use and abuse meant, the impact of substances on the individual, and family, and what resources were available in the U.S. for these clients, information I took and used in my home country Botswana, where alcoholism is a health and national concern.

In Botswana there are rituals that we go through prior to marriage. To me that is informal/traditional pre-marital counseling. The younger generation think these traditional rituals are old fashioned, a waste of time. They meet and marry at times without even consulting the extended family and later feel overwhelmed and give up. It seems like the marital institution is disappearing in Botswana; a lot of people give up on their marriages. Because I am constantly growing, I began to see the importance of therapy with couples and families and have come to appreciate larger systems’ impact on families. This is how I ended up in the program I am currently in.

My dissertation proposal is on intermarriages. Specifically I will be studying interracial relationships. This is out of curiosity and simple observations. I have been in the U.S. for four years. Much as I do appreciate that the U.S. is humongous, compared to Botswana, I have not seen many interracial couples yet, even though literature suggests there are several of these unions.
What I found interesting about Botswana is the gender variable. The trend of interracial marriages between Batswana women and men from European/U.S./Australian heritages in Botswana is growing. Unfortunately, I do not have the statistics to prove that they are many; statistics on intermarriages are not kept. By embarking on this study, I, therefore, want to prove that these unions are in fact increasing and that they are just as normal as same race relationships. One other interesting notion is that interracial marriages are an intimate form of racial contact. Talking about interracial marriages uncovers how society sees color. The way society sees color affects the racial thinking of people in that society; the latter translates into attitudes and behaviors that have important implications for any society. I, therefore decided on this topic to learn and understand how interracial couples in Botswana relate to the concept of color, what motivates women to marry interracially, how the couple perceives their relationship, how they negotiate cultural differences, and how they maintain their relationships.