

Exploring Classism Experiences of Children in South African Schools: A Narrative Inquiry

By

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ABSTRACT

Discrimination in society has shifted from racial discrimination to being class related discrimination due to our different socio-economic backgrounds, especially in schools. All forms of oppression have been abolished since 1994 as South Africa moved into a new democratic dispensation. However, classism is one of the forms of oppression that are commonplace in schools and is still gaining interest. Most of the research has focused on college students and very little research has addressed the experiences of classism of high school students. Hence, the present study provides an overview of the classism experiences of children in South African schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, with specific attention paid to learners from poverty-stricken backgrounds. The purpose of the study was not to make generalisations, but rather to explore the classism experiences of children in South African schools, proceeding to exploring the impact of classism on learners' participation in their school's activities. The study lastly determined the factors that promote the manifestation of classism in schools. The rationale for conducting this study is rooted in my personal experiences and observations as a school teacher in a secondary school in Durban. The study was influenced by the Theory of Intersectionality by Crenshaw (1989). A qualitative approach was used in this study. Moreover, this study was conducted using the critical paradigm as a lens for the research. A narrative inquiry design was utilised as it was appropriate since it allowed the participants to narrate their experiences of classism in their schools. The data were collected using the critical conversations method. Nine participants were purposively selected from three different schools in Durban, and in each school, three participants were selected. The findings of the study emphasise the fact that children from impoverished backgrounds are the victims of classism in schools. It is evident from the findings that children's experiences of classism negatively impact their participation in their schools' activities. Finally, the study concludes by suggesting that government, school stakeholders and society at large play a vital role in eliminating class discrimination in South African schools.

Key words: Classism; Theory of Intersectionality; socio-economic background; school participation; the impact of classism; racism

DECLARATION

I, **Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele** student number: **211544212**, declare that:

- i. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
- ii. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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(Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele)

STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

As the candidate's supervisor, I agree to the submission of this thesis.

Signed :.....

Date :.....

(Dr. Claire Gaillard-Thurston)

ETHICAL CLEARANCE



11 January 2018

Mr Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Ceie 211544212
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Kenneth

Protocol reference number: HSS/2283/017M
Project title: Exploring children's experiences of Classism in South African schools: A narrative inquiry

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 5 December 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr C Gaillard-Thurston
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc. School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

DEDICATION OF THE STUDY

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents. My late King (Father) Mr Ndulo Elton Cele and my Queen (Mother) Dolly Lochenberg-Cele. With this dissertation I stand to acknowledge the fact that you both acted so strong for me that I often forget just how fragile you were. I know you were not very rich but however you have always found a way to make sure I had anything I ever needed and for that I am forever grateful. Mom and Dad, this study is all dedicated to you. Thank you for being such wonderful parents, you have been in the best of my times and also in the worst. You were both passionate about education and encouraged me to forge ahead and excel in education, I am keen to make you proud all the time.

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The principals of the three schools participated in this study.

Nine school children (participants) and their parents for their voluntarily participation in this research project. This study would not have been possible without you.

May God bless you all in Jesus name!

ABBREVIATIONS

SES	Socio Economic Status
SA	South Africa
DoE	Department of Education
KZN	Kwa-Zulu Natal
US	United States
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	Schools Management Team
VSS	Vico Secondary School
CHS	Cebo High School
MCS	Mber Christain School
RCL	Representative Council of Learners

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

For more than 100 years, the social and political landscape of South Africa has been shaped by colonial rule and apartheid policies (Lemmer, Meyer & Van Wyk, 2006). However, in 1994, the apartheid governance was officially abolished and a new democratic government was instated. It was a moment of great achievement for all people who had struggled, in many ways, to achieve a fair and more equal society (Christie, 2008). Much has changed since then, including the South African education system, which has undergone, and is still undergoing major reforms and transformation. A non-racial national Department of Education, together with the nine provincial Departments of Education now provide schooling for the learners of this country. The problem, however, arises in that in South Africa, many communities have become heterogeneous as a result of various social, economic and political developments; thus making it difficult for education policy-makers to deal with such diversity in schooling spaces. Hence, this study considers the fact that class diversity and the difficulties faced with integration in places like schools is still problematic. According to Gorski (2005), although South Africa is perceived as a country of democracy where everyone is free from any form of discrimination whether racial, emotional, gender-based or any other, there are people who suffer under oppression, especially in the education sector. “Classism is one form of oppression that is common in our South African schools and is gaining interest” (Glance, Smith & Pietrantoni, 2017, p.13).

Alternatively, some scholars and practitioners conclude that classist problems faced by schools are too great for one person to solve alone; however, school stakeholders (parents, learners, and teachers) and the community at large need to be aware of such behaviour in schools, and it impacts learners’ learning (Glance, Smith & Pietrantoni, 2017). This study attempts to address this gap by raising awareness of classism in schools as experienced by learners.

In this introductory chapter, I briefly discuss the background, rationale and motivation for the study; the research questions and objectives; demarcation of the study; as well as the limitations of the study. Furthermore, this chapter will explore the theoretical framework on which this study is based. The suitability of this theoretical orientation to the study will then be discussed,

as well as the definition of key concepts. In the conclusion to this first chapter, I will give an overview of the entire thesis.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Growing up as a young Black teenager in a poverty-stricken community almost destroyed my self-esteem. Whilst some might view it as a privilege, attending a school with students from different ('better') socio-economic backgrounds to mine was difficult. I had to assimilate in order to fit in; but in many ways, the socio-economic class from which I came could easily be seen in various aspects of my daily schooling experiences. For example, it was apparent in the condition of my school uniform and extra-curricular attire, in the quality of my learning resources, in my participation in extra-curricular activities and even in my lunchbox - and what I brought from home to school. As Glance, Pietrantonio and Smith (2012) recognise, poor children in schools may chronically experience classism from their peers or staff members because of their socio-economic status, and this could make them feel inferior in schools and lose their self-esteem. They add that school counsellors need to be aware of such classist type behaviours in schools and their effects so that they can have a major influence on closing the achievement gap. My own experience, as well as my current observations as an educator, confirms this assertion. Furthermore, as a Social Justice and Education scholar, I have become aware of many factors that contributed to perpetuating classism while I was growing up, which still prevail in many schools. This is what primarily motivated me, via this research, to confront classism in schools - by specifically looking at how it manifests, how it impacts learners' everyday school lives and how it can be mitigated.

However, a literature survey on the subject suggests that despite the high poverty rate of most township school children, there appears to be little South African research on children's experiences of classism in schools its impact on their formal and informal learning experiences. Rather, issues of social justice such as racism, unequal distribution of resources in schools, ageism, sexism, religious oppression, heterosexist, ableism and language prejudice have gained extensive research focus. Hence, this study will explore classism in schools and its impact on children's learning.

1.3 RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to explore children's experiences of classism in South African schools. I was motivated to pursue this study because of my personal experiences and observations as a teacher in a secondary school in the KwaZulu-Natal province in Durban. As a school teacher, I have observed in my school that most of the learners enrolled are from very poor backgrounds, some come from informal settlements in the city, with unemployed parents, highly populated homes and community at large. Being an educator in such an environment raised my consciousness and I ended up observing neighbourhood schools. I also had conversations with my friends who teach in nearby schools, and found that they seemed to observe the same phenomenon. Based on my personal observations, I also found out that most of these learners from poor families experience classism and social class discrimination within the school environment, and are having a very bad schooling experience. These observations prompted me to explore children's experiences of classism in schools, not only in poor township schools, but also in former White (Model C) and religious schools (Christian schools). Another motivating factor which prompted me to conduct this study is related to the literature that was explored. International and national scholars note that inequalities in the schooling system have moved from being race to class-based. As aforementioned, this study sought to research children's experiences of classism in schools around Durban, hence this was done with respect to my personal growth as an academic and professional.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It was of pivotal importance for this study to be conducted as in our schools there is a need to create situations in which all learners have equal access to information and facilities, and the chance to develop their full potential without being discriminated against based on their socio-economic circumstances. This means that all learners should have an equal chance of success in the classroom (Lemmer, Meier & Van Wyk, 2006).

Although various studies have been conducted with regard to perspectives on classism in education as a whole (Russelli, 2015), this study sought to explore children's experiences of classism in schools. In addition, it will expose the factors that contribute to the perpetuation of classism in schools, and determine the impact that classism has on children's learning in schools. Undertaking this study was significant on various levels and will help teachers and learners to understand the fact that classism exists and needs to be challenged. As the

participants in this study shared their experiences of classism in school, this gives all stakeholders the opportunity to discover the impact of such discrimination on children's schooling life. This research is significant as it will raise consciousness about classism in our schools. Finally, this study attempted to add to the growing body of knowledge on classism in schools and will contribute positively towards deepening the debate on the children's experiences in schools.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were:

- a) To explore the participants' experiences of classism in South African schools.
- b) To expose how classism affects the participants' participation in school activities.
- c) To determine the factors that promote the manifestation of classism in schools.

1.6 QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED

This research is guided by the following main research question:

What are the experiences, manifestations and impact of classism within learners' formal learning and recreational spaces in three South African schools?

The sub-research questions posed to answer the main question are:

- a) What are the participants' experiences of classism in schools?
- b) Which factors promote the manifestation of classism?
- c) How does classism affect the participants' participation in school activities?

1.7 LOCATION OF THE STUDY

When conducting research, an early and careful demarcation of the domain under study is essential (Swarborn, 2010). This study was located in schools from different quintiles (perceived as rich and poor schools). The participating schools were comprised of learners from various races who did not all speak the same language. The first school was located in the south of Durban central, and it was a Christian, Model C school with classes from Grade R to Grade 12. The school was diverse in terms of race, gender, the economic status of the learners, ages, as well as language. The second school was an urban school located in the city of Durban,

which was a boys only boarding, Model C school. During the apartheid era, this school was strictly for White learners only. This is why it is still recognised as a school for rich/well to do children. The third and last school was a township school located in Umlazi in the south of Durban. This was historically a school for Black learners from impoverished backgrounds. The socio-economic background of this secondary school is relatively poor as per a 2009 census. Most of the learners from this secondary school came from the informal settlements. The learners could not afford the low school fees (R500) that the school required in order to operate effectively, however, not all of the children in this school were from poor backgrounds, and could not therefore provide a valid basis for making comparisons and generalisations.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Vithal and Jansen (2006), the limitations of a study allow those reading the report thereof to appreciate the constraints as well as to understand the context in which the research claims are made. First and foremost, in the present study I focused on three schools in Durban. The use of only three schools limits the representativeness of the wider population. This implies that the findings of this study cannot be generalised as representative of all secondary schools in Durban or even the country. However, it must be emphasised that the aim of this study was not to indicate general trends, but rather to obtain a rich description of the perspectives of children's experiences of classism in schools.

Another limitation, which I acknowledge in this study, is that the sample focused only on three participants from each school in these three schools, which made a total of nine participants. Hence, nine participants may not necessarily reflect the same classism experiences that all learners experience in their daily schooling.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Vinz (2015) defines a theoretical framework as the structure that holds or supports the theory of a study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory explaining why the research problem under study exists. This study sought to employ the Theory of Intersectionality.

1.9.1 The Theory of Intersectionality

Chapter 2 provides a more detailed description of this theory, here I provide a brief description of its application to the present study. The following is a brief background of this theory:

The Intersectionality Theory is a feminist sociological theory first coined by legal scholar Crenshaw in 1989. “In her work, Crenshaw discussed black feminist which argues that the experiences of being a black woman cannot be understood in terms of being black and of being woman considered separately, but must include the interactions which frequently reinforce each other” (Davis, 2008, p.68). Davis further explains that according to Crenshaw, the intersectionality experience of black women is more powerful than the sum of their race and sex, and that any observations that do not accurately address the manner in which black women are subordinated do not do the topic justice.

1.9.2 Crenshaw’s Theory of Intersectionality:

Intersectionality is the methodology of studying the relationship among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formation (McCall, 2005). According to Davis (2008), intersectionality is the idea that multiple identities intersect to create a whole that is different from the component identities. He further illustrates that these identities that may intersect include gender, race, social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental disability, physical disability, mental illness and physical illness, as well as other forms of identities. This is further asserted by Truth (2007), who contends that intersectionality implies that all aspects of one’s identity need to be examined as simultaneously interacting with each other and affecting one’s privilege and perception in society. Moreover, these facets of identity cannot simply be observed separately. The framework of intersectionality also provides an insight into how multiple systems of oppression interrelate and interact.

Collins (1991) sought to create a framework to think about intersectionality rather than expanding on the theory itself. She identified three main branches of study within intersectionality. The first branch deals with the background, ideas, issues, conflicts, and debates within intersectionality. The second branch seeks to apply intersectionality as an analytical strategy for various social institutions in order to examine how they might perpetuate social inequality. The final branch formulates intersectionality as a critical praxis to determine how social justice initiatives can use intersectionality to bring about social change.

1.9.3 Application of the Intersectionality Theory in this study

According to Crenshaw (2017), intersectionality can be used to understand how systemic injustice and social inequality occur on a multidimensional basis. Hence, since this study seeks to explore children's experiences of classism in South African schools, this theory helped me to understand how such injustice occurs in a school environment through the exploration of children's experiences in schools. In addition to this, intersectionality holds that the classical conceptualisation of oppression within society, such as racism, sexism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia and belief-based bigotry do not act independently of each other (Crenshaw, 1989). Instead, those forms of oppression interrelate, creating a system of oppression that reflects the 'intersection' of multiple forms of discrimination. Therefore, this theory helped me to understand that classism as a form of oppression in schools does not act independently or separately from other forms of oppression, which contribute to the perpetuation of classism in schools.

1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Classism

According to Bulk (2009), classism refers to the process of discriminating against people based on their social standing.

Discrimination

Bulk (2009), when people act on prejudices and give some people benefits and others penalties on the basis of who they are. It involves treating some groups well, and others badly, and is usually based on prejudice.

Oppression

The term oppression rather than discrimination, bias, prejudice or bigotry is used to emphasise the nature of social inequality. Oppression signifies a hierarchical relationship in which the dominant group benefits, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups (Bell, 1997, p.4).

Horizontal oppression

This occurs when members of a dominated group, based on their internalised oppression and/or prejudices, mistreat other members of their own group or members of other dominated groups (Bell, 1997, p.4).

Racism

A system of oppression based on race. This is a system of advantage based on race, (Bell, 1997, p.4).

Collusion

According to Bulk (2009) collusion refers to thinking and acting in ways that support the system of oppression, e.g. telling racist jokes or remaining silent when hearing someone make classist comments or remarks. Both agent and targets can and do collude with a system of oppression.

1.11 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study is organised into five chapters, which are as follows:

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction and lays the foundation of this study. It provides the background to the study, the purpose and rationale for the study, the significance of the study, research aims and critical questions guiding the study. In this chapter, I also discuss the demarcation of the study and limitations of the study, with a brief description of the theoretical framework that underpins this study. Further, the definition of key concepts is given. Finally, the structure of the thesis is provided.

Chapter 2

This provides the literature review that informed the study, focusing on key themes of classism in education. I reflect on many of the voices that speak about classism in schools, particularly the experiences of children in this regard. Firstly, within the review of literature, this chapter discusses equity and social justice in education, where classism as a form of oppression is explicitly defined. The different types of socio-economic statuses, namely, working/lower class, middle class and owning class was also discussed. This chapter further discusses classism in education together with the ways in which classism is manifested in schools. Finally, the

literature review exposes the negative consequences of classism in schools for learners with low socio-economic status. This chapter also discusses the theoretical framework that underpins this study, which is the Theory of Intersectionality.

Chapter 3

This provides a documented and in-depth discussion of the research design and methodology. This study is underpinned by the critical paradigm and adopts a qualitative research approach utilising a narrative inquiry. This chapter also broaches issues of sampling and details with regard to the data generation methods used, which are critical conversations. It also addresses issues pertaining to data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical issues.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the presented data and an interpretation of the emergent findings derived from the data generation methods explained in Chapter 3. This chapter is structured according to the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data in order to answer the research questions.

Chapter 5

This chapter discusses the main findings from the data. It concludes this research by firstly providing a synopsis of the study, secondly, discussing the main findings, and lastly, presenting the implications for future research.

1.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the entire study on children's experiences of classism in schools. I have provided the background information to this study, which has been set within a thorough discussion of the purpose and rationale, significance of the study, research aims and critical questions, and definition of key concepts. I have provided the demarcation, limitations of the study, brief theoretical framework adopted in this study, as well as a definition of the concepts used in this study. Finally, this chapter concluded with the structure of the study. In the next chapter, I present a review of the literature that guided this research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented an introduction to the study. This chapter provides and discusses the views of different national and international scholars. It further outlines the major trends and critical issues relating to participatory decision-making and power in schools.

This chapter contains two significant main topics. Firstly, there will be a literature review, which provides an overview of previous research on classism in South African schools. Basically, according to Mohamed (2010), a literature review is a critical analysis of published sources, as well as classification, comparison and evaluations thereof. Hence, the main purpose of this literature review was to survey previous studies on issues related to classism in schools. This literature drew on ideas from local, national, continental, as well as international scholars. The following are the sub topics that this literature review will discuss:

- (i) Equity and social justice in education.
 - (a) The definition of classism:
 - Working/lower class;
 - Middle class; and
 - Owning/upper class.
- (ii) Classism in schools/education.
- (iii) Ways in which classism is manifested in schools:
 - (a) Classism manifested through school fees/cost of schooling.
 - (b) Classism manifested through school uniform/uniform policy.
- (iv) Negative consequences of classism in schools for learners from impoverished backgrounds.

Extending this chapter further, I will secondly cover the theoretical framework. Petter (2010) explains that theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical assumptions. He adds that a theoretical framework is the structure that holds or supports the

theory of a study. Hence, in this section, there will be a critical engagement with the Theory of Intersectionality as an adopted theory framing this study.

2.2 EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETIES

According to Christie (2008), in 1994, democracy was launched in South Africa and all apartheid agendas were brought to an end. Extending this perspective further, Christie (2008) contends that the South African example of eradicating apartheid agendas shows that it is possible to bring an unjust system to an end without major bloodshed. Hence, it shows that opponents can negotiate with each other successfully to reach a settlement, and that they can share a government of national unity. Furthermore, it shows that people can work together to achieve social change. This is further supported by Leon-Guerrero (2005), who states that after 1994, South Africa had to build a democracy, develop the economy, and regulate society in line with the values of human dignity, equality and justice.

Christie (2008) adds that amongst racial inequalities, the government built more schools and classrooms, and improved the resources in the poorest and most disadvantaged schools. However, international scholars like Glance, Smith and Pietrantoni (2014) argue that social justice is a long and continuous journey since there are a lot of injustices and social inequalities that still exist in our society. Taking the preceding argument further, Hunter (2016) contends that in our society, some types of people systematically experience advantages in society, while other types of people are systematically disadvantaged in society. He adds that some members of are thought of as haves and others as have nots.

2.2.1 Equity and social justice in education

According to the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, it is stipulated that no child in school shall experience any form of oppression, whether it be in the form of racism, sexism, religious oppression, heterosexism, classism, ageism, ableism and language or any inequality and segregation. This Act further stipulates that:

This country [South Africa] requires a new national system for schools which will redress past injustices in education provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of

poverty and other economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse culture and languages, uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organization, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the state.

However, Gorski (2005) argues that in our schools, discrimination based on race, gender, economic status (class), language and other differences still exist. The preceding argument is further echoed by Glance, Smith and Pietrantonio (2014), who posit that classism is one form of oppression that is commonplace in schools and is gaining interest. The authors (2014) add that much like other forms of oppression, classism is a type of discrimination. A large number of studies have found that, in general terms, inequalities in the schooling system have moved from being race to class based. This is deduced from international scholars such as Gorski (2005), who concludes that child poverty in the United States (US) continues to rise as their government continues to cut programs for people in poverty as conservative educational policy continues to gut public schools, particularly in poor areas. Thus the need to understand the relationship between poverty and education grows increasingly urgent.

2.2.1.1 Definition of classism

According to Bulk (2009), classism refers to a process of discriminating against people based on their social standing. “We treat people much better or worse based on their social class position” (Bulk, 2009, p.2). Alternatively, Glance, Smith and Pietrantonio (2014) define classism as a combination of stereotypes (i.e. beliefs) and prejudice (i.e. attitude) that result in discriminatory type behaviour such as ignoring or isolating a group based solely on perceived social class. They further assert that classism is typically directed at those of low social class/socio-economic status (SES) also referred to as poor. According to Gorski (2009), the educational system perpetuates the class system, which leads to great disparities in wealth between people. He further adds that school experiences contribute to the maintenance of social and economic injustice. “Socioeconomic class depends on values as well as on income. Socioeconomic class are referred to as (i) working/lower class, (ii) middle class (iii) owning/upper class” (Gorski, 2005, p. 2).

(i) Working/lower class:

According to Gorski (2005), working class refers to people whose livelihood mainly comes from their own labour in factories or farms or whose livelihood depends on people doing this type of work.

(ii) Middle class:

“The term middle class refers to the professional working class, for example, engineers, educator, lawyers, accountants, health professionals”, (Gorski, 2005, p. 3). This is further illustrated by Hunter (2016), who asserts that middle class people may have some income from investments but are still dependent on their job for survival, hence they play an important role in managing society.

(iii) Owning/upper class:

Gorski (2005) refers to people whose income comes primarily from investments as the ‘owning’ class. These people receive wages for their work, but they are not dependent on their salary for their survival (Gorski, 2005).

2.3 CLASSISM IN SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

Bajaj (2009) reveals that institutional factors such as school culture, policies, and norms, which tend to correspond with middle class forms of cultural, capital and socialisation in the United States, frequently interact to further disadvantage low-income children. This revelation was further expanded by Glance, Smith and Pietrantonio (2014), who explain that chronically poor children in schools may experience classism from their peers or school faculty and staff because of their low socio-economic status. “School aged children may hear and/or see classist messages in many different contexts in their school days such as discussions about family vacations or show and tell. Friends, classmates and school environment might communicate directly or indirectly such classist messages to low socioeconomic students” (Glance et al., 2014, pp. 3-4).

In addition to the above assertions, Bajaj (2009) conducted research about home-school conflicts and barriers to the academic achievement of children of Latin American Immigrants. He found that poverty is one of the most critical problems faced by immigrant families today, and it has significant implications for children’s educational outcomes. This aforementioned argument is further illustrated by a South African researcher, Hunter (2016), who contends that

the most critical problem faced by Black South African citizens today is poverty. Bajaj (2009) and Wilson (1996) further contends that other risk factors frequently accompany situations of poverty, such as living in single parent families, residing in poorly resourced and dangerous neighbourhoods, and attending low quality schools. The preceding argument is in line with Hunter (2016), who believes that the problem with what amounts to the semi-privatisation of schooling in South Africa is that the majority of children live in poor households and attend poorly-performing township schools.

Furthermore, Bajaj (2014) finds that many children of Latin American Immigrant backgrounds struggle against segregation by race, poverty, and language. This is apparent through diminishing employment opportunities, smaller tax bases, and low per pupil allocation. This is likely to create dysfunctional, under-resourced schools with high concentrations of low-income students, less qualified teachers, overcrowded classrooms, less rigorous curriculum, and an environment less conducive to educational achievement (Bajaj, 2014). Alternatively, Gorski (2005) concurs with the preceding argument by stating that schools with large percentages of low-income students are more likely than schools with large percentages of wealthy students to have an abundance of teachers who are unlicensed in the subjects they teach, serious teacher turnover problems, teacher vacancies and large numbers of substitute teachers, limited access to computers and the internet, inadequate facilities such as science laboratories, dirty or incorporate student toilets, and insufficient classroom materials. Extending this notion, Gorski (2005, p.13) states that “children who come from poor economic backgrounds are not being given an opportunity to learn that is equal to that offered to children from the most privileged families. This inequality lies in the finding that the most disadvantaged children attend schools that do not have basic facilities and conditions conducive to providing them with quality education.”

Bajaj (2014) explicitly explains that parents of poor learners do not involve themselves actively in the education of their children. They feel that their primary role is to raise a respectful child, while the academic development belongs in the hands of the school/teacher. Whereas, Glance and Jacoby (2017) believe that active engagement in a child’s classroom learning and frequent communication with teachers, and physical presence at school events are generally taken as signs of parents’ involvement and investment in their children’s schooling. Bajaj (2014) points out that parents who do not conform to these behavioural expectations are often assumed to be uninvolved in their children’s education (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991).

Gorski (2005) postulates that people in poverty do not value education and that the failure to value education is thus a component of the culture of poverty. However, classist scholars such as Rank (2004), who agrees with Payne (2001), reveals that many individuals stay in poverty because they do not know that there is a choice. They believe that “poverty has been conceptualized primarily as a consequence of individual failing and deficiencies. Poverty is associated with laziness, lack of effort, and low ability while reasons of poverty such as unemployment or discrimination are typically viewed as less important” (Rank, 2004, p. 50). Therefore, Gorski (2005) asserts that this victim-blaming practice is the epitome of classism.

Nevertheless, it is noted from Gorski (2005, as cited in Darling, Hammond & Post, 2000) that an education system is designed to benefit the middle class and wealthy at the expense of those who are poverty-stricken. Bajaj (2009) claims that school rules, norms, expectations, and even the curriculum are based on dominant forms of cultural capital that children from rich backgrounds acquire early through family socialisation. “Not all students have equal access to those arbitrary instruments of knowledge, yet these instruments are made to appear universal and objective and are required for advancement in capital societies” (Bajaj, 2014, p. 10). Expanding this notion further, Rank (2004) states that even policies, practices, and programs designed to expand access only expand it for private schools. However, in South Africa, a country marked by high levels of unemployment - the school that a child attends is particularly important, although it is well known that poor children from poor families attend under-resourced schools where resources and infrastructure are challenging in implementing the curriculum as a one-size-fits-all package (Hunter, 2016). In addition, “While the ‘White’ middle-class view schooling as a way to maintain past privileges, many ‘Black’ South Africans see schooling as a means to realize integrational class mobility” (Hunter, 2016, P. 12).

According to Bajaj (2014), low-income children of American Immigrants suffer in classrooms where their cultural forms are devalued, and they do not automatically possess the tools to effectively participate in learning in the same way as other students. Hunter (2016) concurs as he asserts that in South Africa, former ‘White’ schools in particular have sought mainly to assimilate ‘Black’ learners into Euro-centric pedagogy and, therefore, ‘Black’ children may perform worse at these schools. Hence, this deprives Black students the opportunity to practice their culture in these schools. The preceding argument is substantiated by Gorski (2005), who believes that middle-class schools believe that the language used in low-income homes do not prepare students for the type of language used in the classroom. Hunter (2016) reveals that,

notwithstanding the existence of an educational market within the South African context, whether a child attends a historically better-funded school outside the township is a very important indicator of the quality of schooling that she/he will receive. This further relates to the child's exposure to native English-speaking teachers. This is why parents prefer to enrol their children in these schools.

According to Pillay (2006), if schools do not take cognisance of the environmental context of learners, or of their cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, then both learners and educators are likely to have negative experiences in their schools. He further outlines that this problem is further compounded if educators are not trained to work with learners from diverse backgrounds.

Leathwood and Archer (2014) postulate that middle-class families select private schools for their children simply because they do not want them to attend schools where children from impoverished families attend. They further outline that "educational systems are becoming more unequal as private schools function increasingly as outlets for the rich, allowing the middle classes to escape poor public schools and contributing to a downwards spiral" (Leathwood & Archer, 2014, p. 9). They argue that education is intended for change and social mobility, and as a method for the reproduction of inequalities and the status quo.

According to Spaul (2012), although racial segregation has been abolished for more than twenty years, schools which served predominantly White students under the apartheid remain functional, while those that served Black students remain dysfunctional and unable to impart the necessary numeracy and literacy skills that students should be acquiring. He further outlines that in the years following the political transition in South Africa, the most important item on the national agenda was the social, economic and political integration of all South African people, particularly those marginalised under apartheid.

2.4 WAYS IN WHICH CLASSISM IS MANIFESTED IN SCHOOLS

"According to Plato, the famous ancient Greek Philosopher, justice is about the right and the good. Social justice, then is about how societies may act in terms of what is right and good" (Christie, 2008, p. 7). According to international and national scholars (Heyneman & Stern, 2013; Leon-Guerrero, 2005; Hall, 2017; Hunter, 2016), it is stipulated that classism in schools

is manifested in numerous ways, but to count a few, classism can be manifested through school fees/cost of schooling and school uniform/uniform policy.

2.4.1 Classism manifested through school fees/cost of schooling

According to Hunter (2016), it is noted that when apartheid crumbled in the early 1990s, the government of South Africa allowed Black children to enter Whites schools but introduced fees as a way to push costs onto parents and preserve White privilege. International scholars such as Leon-Guerrero (2005) argue that the cost of tuition is rising at faster rate than family income or student financial aid. “Although most Americans believe that all students have an opportunity to earn a college Degree, a recent study concluded that the promise of a college education is an empty one for low- and moderate-income students. It is estimated that nearly one half of all college qualified, low- and moderate-income high school graduates are unable to afford college”, (Leon-Guerrero, 2005, pp. 2-3).

Alternatively, Hunter (2016) contends that while access to schools has been improved, what amounts to the semi-privatisation of the best schools means that massive inequalities persist within the educational system (Chisholm, 2004). Chisholm (2004) further contends that the controversial decision not to provide a universally free education and instead to encourage some schools to charge school fees was justified by the past apartheid government as a way of preventing an exodus of White students to private schools and to allow state resources to be directed toward poorer schools. The preceding argument is in line with that of Heynema and Stern (2013), who believe that the introduction of fees in top-tier schools tend to increase inequalities between schools, despite government interventions to redistribute state funds.

It is noted from previous researchers that “classism can be manifested in the charging of school fees” (Hall and Giese, 2009, p. 82). This is due to the fact that many South African learners are from poor backgrounds and parents cannot afford to pay school fees for their children. Glewwe and Jacoby (2017) assert that this unaffordability, in turn, dictates which schools learners will attend. However, according to the South African Schools Act no 86 of 1996, it is stipulated that the aim of education is to “redress past injustices in educational provision and provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners.” This act also introduces the school fee exemption policy, which is outlined in the amended national norms of standards for school funding of 2006. According to Hall and Giese (2009), school fee exemption is meant to be redistributive in that it enables children from poor areas to access fee-charging schools in better

resourced areas. While not paying fees, some learners in such schools cannot afford to pay for other requirements of the schools; which increases the number of fee-exempt learners who drop out from such schools (Bulk, 2009, p. 3).

Additionally, according to Heyneman and Stern (2013), it is noted that even though the government provides free public education, low-income parents still enrol their children in private, fee-charging schools. According to Hunter (2013, p. 121), “This raises the question as to why would a low-income family choose to send a child to a fee-paying school if a place in a free school were available?” In response to the aforementioned question, Heyneman and Stern (2013) argue that the public sector is inadequate and in many ways has failed in its ambition to provide a minimum quality for every child. According to Heyneman and Stern (2013), as cited by (Tooley, 2009), low-cost private schools are likely to provide lower teacher absenteeism due to increased accountability to parents and school owners, more engaged teachers due to more local recruitment, small class sizes and more individualised attention. Hence, this is why parents may choose to enrol their children in non-government schools because of the short comings in the public system.

Nevertheless, one would have expected free primary education to reduce the use of private schools, but the results reveal that in spite of free primary education, parents still search for a good school for their child. However, Hunter (2016) postulates that in the South African context, former ‘White’ schools in particular use interviews with parents and reports from feeder schools to give preference to non-local pupils from higher-income families. “These schools also tend to favour admitting students from the legacy race (only whites)” (Hunter, 2016, pp. 3-4). He further exposes that former White, Coloured and Indian schools fear that being perceived as ‘going Black’ will result in an erosion of their prestige and ultimately their fee base, this is due to the fact that Black ‘African’ people are perceived as poor citizens; hence, they would not afford to pay school fees. Leathwood and Archer (2014) recommend that there must be a universal, free, high-quality pre-school education for all, and also financial support for children and adults to sustain education, and state-funded access to compulsory tertiary education.

2.4.2 Classism manifested through school uniform/uniform policy

The school uniform policy was adopted with the aim of “eliminating class distinctions in high school and placing the poor on an equal footing with the rich” (Bodine, 2010, p. 67). He further

notes that before uniform policy was introduced, wearing private clothes in schools was problematic because a lack of desirable clothes caused some poor students to drop out of school, and economically struggling parents paid more for clothes than they could afford because clothing was a status maker at school. However, even though uniforms are worn in schools with the purpose of eliminating class divisions, there are still parents who cannot afford to buy uniforms for their children (Gaillard-Thurston, 2017). “Common dress was also advocated for simplicity, practicality and frugality and they increase students’ self-esteem and motivation” (Brunsmma, 2006, p. 51). Conversely, Gaillard-Thurston’s (2012; 2017) studies on this phenomenon raises questions about the self-esteem of those students who do not have a uniform at all due to their parents’ inability to pay for it. Her findings reveal that such children may feel inferior and their self-esteem will be further reduced on account of their socio-economic class being visible through the poor condition of their school uniforms (Gaillard-Thurston, 2012, 2017).

2.5 NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF CLASSISM IN SCHOOLS FOR LEARNERS OF LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Like any other forms of oppression, classism as a form of oppression hurts us all. This is apparent through the work of scholars like Bajaj (2009); Gorski (2005); Glance, Smith, and Pietrantonio (2016); Christie (2008), Leon-Guerrero (2005); and Hunter (2016) who posit that classism in schools negatively affects learners from low socio-economic backgrounds, whether classist messages are communicated directly or indirectly to them. “United State census data suggest that classism affects a large number of school-aged children than in years past” (Glance et al., 2017, 2012, as cited in Glance et al., 2017, p. 23).

Spencer and Castano (2007; Heyneman & Stern, 2013) contend that classism has a negative impact on the confidence and performance levels of groups with low socio-economic status. Glance, Smith and Pietrantonio (2017) had similar results to Heyneman and Stern (2007) that students of low socio-economic status are less likely to complete a college program than their higher socio-economic peers. Taking the preceding argument further, Bajaj (2009) contends that Latin American Immigrants from poor backgrounds have the highest dropout rate in US schools. Moreover, “Low socioeconomic students are less likely to have positive college experience, and receive less support from family and friends than their high socioeconomic status peers. A lack of social support may have a negative impact on academic performance

and outcomes which may increase school dropout rates due to a lack of belonging” (Glance et al., 2017). They further expand this argument by asserting that a lack of school belonging is associated with low academic performance, which might lead to early drop out from school. This limits opportunities for low SES students to succeed both in and out of school (Spencer & Castano, 2007).

According to Letsoalo, Simelane and Timaeus (2013), school-based research has concluded that poor children, who are mostly African, remain disadvantaged by the continuing low performance of former Black schools. They further expose that the educational disadvantages of African children, including their matriculation rates are accounted for by household poverty and their mother’s own limited education. According to Letsoalo, Simelane and Timaeus (2013), poverty continues to hold Black children’s progress back at schools in South Africa. They further reveal that children from middle-class households do better at school than those from poorer households. They explain that socio-economic status has the most influence on the eventual outcome of children’s schooling. They further outline that African children remain more likely to have to repeat one grade at school than other children, even after controlling for their socio-economic disadvantage. In their conclusion, it is evident that children raised in poor households, who are mostly African, experience major educational disadvantages as compared to children from better-off households.

Pillay (2006) found that learners from impoverished families felt lonely when middle-class peers/pupils did not want to socialise with them. Similar results were found by Spaul (2012), who explains that Black learners from low socio-economic areas in townships are isolated in schools by those from middle-class households. Furthermore, Pillay (2006) found that learners from the townships did not want to associate with learners from informal settlements because they perceived themselves as being of a higher class based on having their own houses and material possessions.

PART 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.6 INTRODUCTION

The previous part of this chapter reviewed the literature on classism in schools. Hence, this part discusses the theoretical framework, which was the Theory of Intersectionality developed by Crenshaw (1989). This theory is relevant with regard to children's experiences of classism in South African schools.

2.6.1 Theory of Intersectionality

2.6.1.1 Brief history of the Theory of Intersectionality

According to Bowleg (2012), the Theory of Intersectionality was first developed by legal scholar Crenshaw in 1989. In her work, she discussed Black feminism, which argues that the experience of being a Black woman cannot be understood in terms of being Black or of being a woman independently, it must include the interactions between both identities, which reinforce each other. Bowleg (2012) adds that from the very beginning, intersectionality was introduced as meaning to devote ways in which people of colour cross gender. Furthermore, Nash (2008) reveals that intersectionality emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s from critical race students, and was a scholarly movement born in the legal academy, who were committed to problematising law's purported colour-blindness, neutrality and objectivity.

2.6.1.2 Crenshaw's Theory of Intersectionality

Crenshaw (1989) postulates that intersectionality is the theory of how different types of discrimination interact. Crenshaw (1989) adds that Intersectionality Theory is the study of how different power structures interact in the lives of minorities, specifically Black woman. According to Knudsen (2018), intersectionality attempts to capture the relationship between socio-cultural categories and identities. He further expands this notion by stating that intersectionality may be defined as a theory used to analyse how social and cultural categories intertwine. Bowleg (2012) concur with this notion by stating that intersectionality points to the critical view of becoming 'the other' in a normative setting within a general Western culture or more locally, within a schoolyard.

According to Bowleg (2012), intersectionality is a theoretical framework that posits that multiple social categories such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-

economic status intersect at the micro level of individual experience to reflect multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at the macro, social-structural level. Examples of these are classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, among others. Taking the preceding argument further, Grant and Zwier (2011) reveal that in intersectionality, the classical models of oppression within society, such as those based on race/ethnicity, gender, religion, and nationality do not act independently of one another. Instead, these forms of oppression interrelate, creating a system of oppression that reflects the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination. “Intersectionality serves a few theoretical and political purposes for both feminist and anti-racist scholarship due to the fact that it aspires to provide a vocabulary to respond to critiques of identity politics” (Nash, 2008, p. 89). However, Crenshaw (1989) argues that the real problem of identity politics is that it elides intra-group difference.

The following figures/diagrams illustrate various axes of human identity converging to a point of intersection

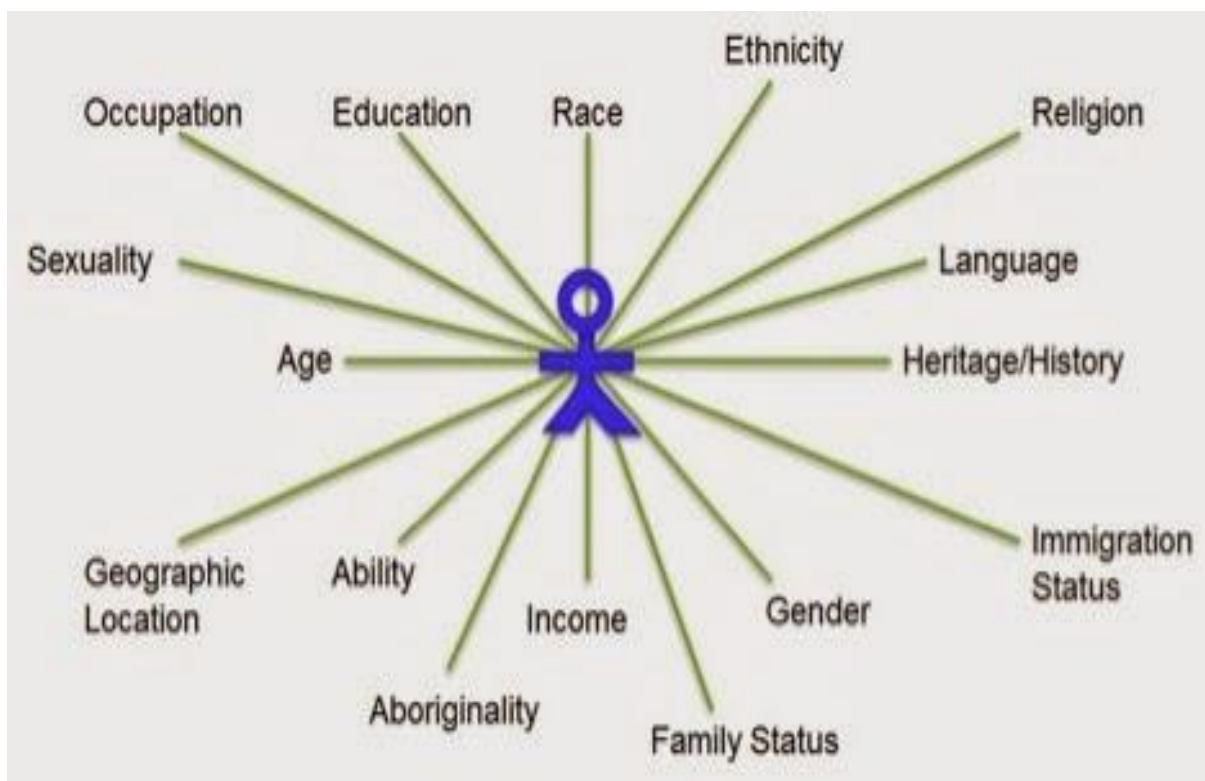


Figure 2.1: Axes of human identity converging to a point of intersection (Crenshaw, 1989)

Intersecting Axes of Privilege, Domination, and Oppression

Adapted from Kathryn Pauly Morgan, "Describing the Emperor's New Clothes: Three Myths of Educational (In)Equality,"
The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy & Politics, Ann Diller et al., Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996.

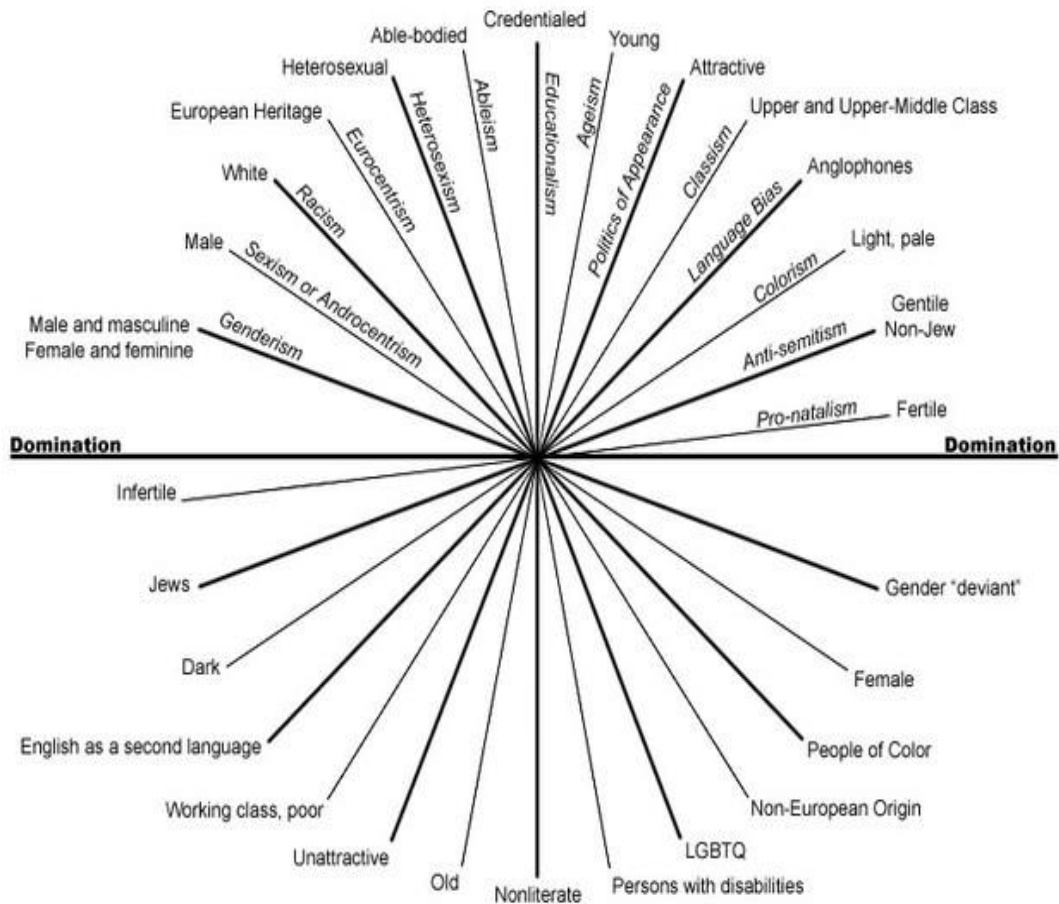


Figure 2.2: Intersecting axes of privilege, domination and oppression (Crenshaw, 1989)

2.6.1.3 Intersectionality and classism

According to Crenshaw (1989), neither classism nor racism are new as we still continue contest and talk about it. Even though it is not a new theory, intersectionality draws attention to invisibilities that exist in class politics, feminism and anti-racism. Thus, it takes a lot of work to consistently challenge ourselves to be attentive to aspects of power that we ourselves do not experience.

Nash (2008) postulates that Intersectional Theory sees class as just another intersection, while economic class has a far more complex relationship with other marginalised identities. "Marginalised people typically make less than non-marginalised people, meaning marginalised are more likely to be economically oppressed as well in this sense, and economic class is

mechanism of oppression, not just another intersection. For this reason, many marginalised groups can find common cause fighting economic oppression” (Nash, 2008, p. 92). However, Grant and Zwier (2011, p. 197) contend that “a failure to consider the integration of race, social class, and gender leads at times to an inaccurate understanding of what occurs in schools, and therefore to inappropriate or simplistic prescriptions for educational equity.” Therefore, Grant and Zwier (2011) advocate that intersectionality will better support teaching and learning that promotes improved student outcomes in schools.

2.6.1.4 Intersectionality and education

According to Grant and Zweir (2011), scholars and teachers should use intersectionality when teaching, crafting policies and conducting research. Grant and Zweir (2011) add that teachers need to develop and strategically use intersectional knowledge about their students’ backgrounds for instructional purposes. This is further supported by Nash (2008), who asserts that using intersectionality as a frame for differentiating curricula and instruction to meet students’ academic needs will better support equal opportunities and equity in the learning environment. Taking this further, Akom (2009) postulates that pre-service teachers should be prepared to strategically consider students’ identity axes in their curricular and pedagogical decisions. He expands this notion by revealing that pre-service teachers are beginning to realise that contrary to what they have always believed, socially-constructed categories of difference such as class, gender, race, and ability rather than merit alone do matter and contribute significantly to students’ experiences, successful outcomes, and future life opportunities.

“Through teacher education programs, prospective teachers can learn about and experience intersectionality-aware pedagogies and develop knowledge about diverse students, their communities, and the histories of intersectional groups” (Grant & Zweir, 2011, p. 198). Scholars such as Akom (2009) and Bowleg (2012) suggest that pre-service teachers need opportunities to reflect on how their identities have shaped their educational experiences, and in turn, how this will shape how they prepare to engage in this type of thinking. According to Heilman (2010), including content about the history of intersectional marginalised groups can expand teachers background knowledge and, in some cases, motivate its inclusion in their practice. The preceding argument is substantiated by Akom (2009), who suggests that pre-service teacher educators can support students’ development of a critical lens for thinking about diverse students and their families and communities.

Moreover, Akom (2009) suggests that teacher education should centre students, families and communities, resources, resiliency and resistance to foster teachers' development of critical consciousness. He adds that pre-service teacher education should challenge teacher ideologies that have negative effects on diverse students, such as individualism, meritocracy, colour-blindness and White privilege. Allard and Santoro (2008) report that the White middle-class teacher candidates often claim to have achieved educational success through individual effort, rather than recognising how meritocracy and White privilege have enabled these outcomes. However, Heilman (2010) cautions that teacher stereotypes can be resistant to change despite experiencing a curriculum that encourages critical self-examination and includes the histories of intersectional marginalised groups.

Furthermore, Akom (2009) asserts that developing experiential knowledge by engaging with diverse communities is key to future teachers' propensity to analyse their teaching and their students' learning in an intersectional manner. To further illustrate this assertion, Gay (2009) mentions that teacher educators also need experiential knowledge of diversity in order to help prospective teachers to learn to teach all students. According to Grant and Zweir (2011), intersectional teaching and learning that promotes improved student outcomes centres students' voices and experiences. It further helps teachers to respect students' production of their individual and collective identities, listen to students' counter-storytelling, enact culturally responsive pedagogy, and embody an intersectionally aware teacher identity. Basically, Gay (2009) explains that culturally responsive pedagogy implies teaching that draws on students' interests and backgrounds to make curriculum content personally meaningful and improve learning outcomes.

Grant and Zweir (2011) have identified seven components of pedagogy that is culturally responsive to students' intersectional identities: teachers' lenses, knowledge, experience, challenging, relevant content, modes of expression, differentiation, and critical consciousness and engagement; all are applicable to the present study.

The following table illustrates seven components of pedagogy that is culturally responsive to student's intersectional identities.

Table 2.1: Components of pedagogy that is culturally responsive

Components of pedagogy that is culturally responsive to students’ intersectional identities:	Explanation:
1. Lenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally responsive pedagogy requires teachers to develop an asset-based view of students and their families. Such an educational approach views students as resources, focuses on their lived experiences and values their culture and cultural practices as “Hybrid funds of knowledge” (Irizarry, 2007, p. 23).
2. Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to be responsive to their students, teachers need to be aware of the history and culture of groups their students may belong to, connect to youth and pop culture, and be in touch with relevant technological and socio-political knowledge (Heilman, 2010).
3. Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers’ knowledge of and experience in their students’ communities helps them become connected and improve this practice. Irizarry (2007) asserts that community experience is valuable for all teachers, facilitating connections even for those who are not members of the same racial group as their students.
4. Challenging, relevant content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging the curriculum rather than basic-skills instruction increases the rates of high school completion for remedial students (Camarron, 2008). Grant and Zweir (2011) state that when students of novice teachers of colour challenge the authenticity of their teachers’ identities, teachers

broaden students' conceptions by connecting these discussions to curriculum content.

5. Models of expression

- According to Grant and Zweir (2011), students value pedagogies that incorporate multiple models of expression including: music, e.g. Writing rap songs about social justice issues, code switching English and vernacular, and educators' stories about their life experiences.
-

6. Differentiation

- Grant and Zweir (2011) note that in Grade R to 12 teaching, differentiation is usually thought about with regard to process differentiation and use of learning activities and experiences that incorporate students' different learning styles while meeting common standards, content differentiation, production differentiation. It must also provide different ways for students to demonstrate learning, and the differentiation of learning environments. They further add that differentiation seeks to provide equal opportunities and equity in the learning environment for every student.
-

7. Critical consciousness and engagement

- Pedagogy that is culturally responsive to students' intersectional identities fosters their critical consciousness and encourages participation in activities that respond to social justice issues in their lived context (Camarrota, 2008). A skilled teacher will be "able to help students identify the flows that students create and govern their lives, students will critically look at the rules of the game and institute change that is meaningful to them" (Gallagher-Geurtensen, 2009, p. 202). Camarrota (2008) finds that critiquing the social injustices that constrain students' educational journeys helps
-

clear emotional and intellectual space for engagement and learning.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have discussed the literature as it pertains to this study. Two significant topics were discussed: the literature review and theoretical framework. Within the review of the literature, this chapter discussed equity and social justice in education where classism as a form of oppression was explicitly defined. Moreover, different types of socio-economic statuses, namely, working/lower class, middle class and upper class were also discussed. This chapter further discussed classism in education together with the ways in which classism is manifested in schools. The literature revealed that classism is manifested in two pervasive ways in schools through (i) School fees/cost of schooling, and (ii) School uniform/uniform policy. Finally, the literature review exposed the negative consequences of classism in schools for learners of a low socio-economic status. However, the finding of this literature review is that there is little research that exposes the factors that contribute to the perpetuation of classism in schools, which was the interest of this study. Secondly, the literature reveals very limited research on the impact that classism has on children's learning. However, this research sought to unveil these limitations and expose all the factors that contribute to the perpetuation of classism in schools, as well as the impact that classism has on learners' learning. Thereafter, the theoretical framework was then discussed in the second part of this chapter. This chapter critically engaged in a discussion of the Theory of Intersectionality as the theory adopted to frame this study.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed a review of the literature, as well the theoretical framework that guided this study. In this chapter, I commence by discussing the different types of paradigms and extend my discussion to the critical paradigm as it was the methodological lens through which I viewed and analysed this study. I then continue to discuss the research design, which formed the structure of this study. I proceed to describe the narrative enquiry approach as it was utilised in this study. Concerning the specific ways of understanding our world, I then proceed to discuss the research methodology. This study is framed by qualitative research, therefore I focus on the issues related to data generation methods, sampling, data analysis and the issues of trustworthiness in this study. In the conclusion of this chapter, the ethical issues are then discussed in depth.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology concerns the various ways of bringing meaning to our world so as to improve our understanding of it (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith, 2004). This study was qualitative in nature.

3.2.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour (Hennins, Gravet & Van Ransburg, 2004). This is further supported by Nieuwenhuis (2012), who postulates that qualitative research as a methodology is concerned with understanding the process, social and cultural contexts that underlie various behavioural patterns, and is mostly concerned with exploring ‘why’ questions. Given the purpose of this study, a qualitative approach seemed relevant since it investigates variables (learners) in their natural setting, which in this case was in schools where teaching and learning takes place.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Durrheim and Terre-Blanch (2006), a research design provides a detailed overview of the plan of the study and how data is generated and analysed. On the one hand, a

research design is a strategic framework for action that links research questions to the execution or implementation of the research (Durrheim & Terre-Blanch, 2006). On the other hand, McMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe a research design as a descriptive methodology that is used to obtain answers to the questions about phenomena. Basically, the research design focuses on what the researcher wants to do, which in this case was to explore children's experiences of classism in South African schools. Creswell (2007) and Nieuwenhuis (2012) state that there are three types of research designs, namely, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. According to Cresswell (2007), qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding where a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture analysis, words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. However, Nieuwenhuis (2012) states that in quantitative research, an investigator relies on numerical data to test the relationships between the variables. He further outlines that, alternatively, mixed methods research is relatively new and builds on both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In this study, I opted to use a qualitative research design. Qualitative research focuses on the lived experiences of the participants. Terre-Blanche, Durrehien and Painter (2006) further argue that qualitative researchers intend to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world and they therefore want to study them in their natural setting. Through the qualitative research design, I was able to critically enter to the participants' world and explore their lived experiences of classism in their schools.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2012), the types of qualitative design are: conceptual studies, historical research, action research, case study research, narrative enquiry, ethnography and Grounded Theory. Hence, within the qualitative research design, I opted to utilise a narrative inquiry design as it was deemed appropriate and relevant to this study since it allowed the participants to narrate their experiences of classism in their schools, which was the main focus of this study.

3.3.1 Narrative inquiry

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), narratives are testimonies and stories that are told by people about how they behave, where they are at any point in time and how they understand the world. Yet, Gallo, Muylaert, Neto, Reis and Sarrubbi (2014) postulate that narrative inquiry is about collecting and telling a story or stories (in detail). Gallo et al. (2014) further outline that researchers write narratives about individual's experiences, describe a life experience and discuss the meaning of the experience with the individual. According to Cresswell (2012), in

narrative inquiry, the researcher seeks out information through interviews, family stories, journals, field notes, letter, autobiography, conversations, photos and other artefacts. In order to gather adequate data from the participants in this study, I, as the researcher, used interviews as a data generation method, which fulfils the intentions of narrative inquiry.

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) explain that narrative inquiry goes beyond just telling stories because in narrative inquiry, participants are encouraged to express, explain, describe and translate their life stories, which makes narrative inquiry different from a narrative. They add that narrative inquiry helps us to examine social evils and injustices that occur and consider how change might be brought about. This study also was intended to expose classism in schools through the exploration of children's experiences of classism in schools as a social evil, which is a form of oppression that perpetuates social inequality. According to Cresswell (2012), in education, narrative studies are not usually about a person's entire life, they focus on a single event or episode in an individual's life. In this study, I did not look at the learners' experience of classism in society as a whole, but rather focused on their experiences of classism in school. Clandinin (2008) maintains that narrative inquiry allows us insight into the lives and experiences of other people that are both important and significant to us:

Narrative inquiry allows us to work with one another in different settings. What we hear about others' stories is important so that we can see and understand society, culture and place those we live with. It is for this reason that our lives become enriched and changed when we can learn from other's experiences (Clandinin, 2008, p. 46).

I am aware of the possible pitfalls and limitations that are inherent in narrative research, as well as its disadvantages as compared to other research methodologies. One of the advantages of narrative inquiry is that it helps us examine social evils and injustices that occur and consider how change might be brought about (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). In addition to this, Cresswell (2012) postulates that another advantage of the narrative inquiry method is that it is a very naturalistic approach, allowing the participants to talk easily about their stories. However, narrative inquiry has also got its limitations and pitfalls. In narrative research, participants may present a false story, which could result in false data being gathered (Gallo et al., 2014). According to Gallo et al. (2014), another disadvantage of narrative inquiry is that participants may also be unable or unwilling to provide the complete story due to trauma or memory limitations.

3.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Merters (2009) defines paradigms as an approach to looking at the world and is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct actions and thinking. This view is supported by Creswell and Clarke (2007), who define paradigms as world views that we bring to our research, which influence how we design and conduct research projects. According to Creswell (2012), Nieuwenhuis (2012), Guba and Lincoln (1994), there are four major paradigms in research: positivism, interpretivism, critical and post-positivism. They further outline that these four paradigms are of pivotal importance to any scientist due to the fact that they imply a different way of social theorising. Henning (2004) reveals that the positivism paradigm is rational and operates according to scientific laws and rules. According to Nieuwenhuis (2012), interpretivism contains the meaning that individuals or communities assign to their lived experiences. The critical paradigm is concerned with the critical meanings of experiences as they relate to gender, race, class and other forms of social oppression (Nieuwenhuis, 2012). Lastly, Creswell (2012) contends that post-positivism comprises multiple perspectives of participants rather than a single reality. In this study, I opted to use the critical paradigm. Creswell (1998) points out that the critical paradigm perceives reality as shaped by social, political, cultural, economic and other dynamics. Since this study sought to expose the factors that contribute to the perpetuation of classism in schools, and the impact of classism on learners' learning in schools, the critical paradigm was deemed to be the most suitable.

3.4.1 The critical paradigm

This study was located in the qualitative critical paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), the critical paradigm is explicitly prescriptive and normative, entailing a view of what behaviour in a social democracy should entail. The critical paradigm sees reality as shaped by social, political, cultural, economic and other dynamics (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). In addition, the intention of the critical paradigm is not merely to give an account of society and behaviour, but to realise a society that is based on equality and democracy for all its members (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This is further supported by Cohen et al. (2011), who posit that the purpose of the critical paradigm is not merely to understand situations and phenomena but to change them, which was the intention in this study. This view is supported by Lincoln and Guba (1994), who state that in particular, the critical paradigm seeks to emancipate the disempowered, to redress inequality, and to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society.

According to Cohen et al. (2011), Critical Theory argues that behaviour (including research behaviour) is the outcome of particular illegitimate, dominatory and repressive factors - illegitimate in the sense that in the general interest, one person or a group's freedom and power is bought at the price of another's freedom and power. Extending this idea, Cohen et al. (2011) contend that with the critical paradigm and critical educational research, researchers can no longer claim neutrality and ideological or political innocence. Taking the preceding argument further, Bertram and Christiansen (2014) explain that critical researchers do not believe that it is possible to be an objective outsider and to collect objective or neutral knowledge. Since I opted for this paradigmatic approach to this study, I am aware that my perspective will be recognised in drawing conclusions in this study given the fact that what we claim to know about the world is always subjective, influenced by our own place in society and our values. Furthermore, critical researchers recognise that their starting point in research is informed by their values (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Hence, throughout the research, I consciously guarded against that perspective in producing a biased and self-serving study in exploring these children's experiences of classism in their schools.

Furthermore, research in the critical paradigm focuses on bringing about some kind of social change that will benefit the participants, who are understood to have little power, or fewer opportunities open to them (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Expanding this idea further, Cohen et al. (2011) expound that the intention of the critical paradigm is transformative: to change society and individuals to social democracy. Having situated this study within the critical paradigm, the intention of this study was to bring about change through the product (the findings of the research) since the findings will show how children's classism experiences affect them at school and open up avenues to address this problem.

3.5 SAMPLING

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2009) point out that sampling involves where and from whom the data will be generated. This is a process through which the researcher chooses his/her target group or participants. Newby (2010) explains that the selection of respondents in research is referred to as sampling. He adds that sampling is effective because it seeks to link the findings from a selection of respondents or instances to the entirety of respondents or instances. Cresswell (1998) postulates that there are two main methods of sampling, the first of which is random sampling (also called non-probability sampling). The examples of probability methods are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, quota sampling,

snowball sampling and purposive sampling (Nieuwenhuis, 2012). For this study, I opted to use purposive sampling. Purposive sampling means that the researcher makes specific choices about which people, groups and objects to include in the sample. This is where the researcher targets a specific group knowing that the group does not reflect the wider population, but rather represents itself. Thus, in this study, I was interested in school children in Durban schools in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province in South Africa. As indicated earlier, this study took place in a school environment as I focused on three schools in Durban. These schools were selected based on their differences in terms of their economic status (rich/poor), location (urban/township), and ethos (Christian/mixed religions). This allowed me to show learners' experiences across a spectrum of contexts.

The first school was an impoverished section of a public township school located in the Umlazi township. This school was chosen to represent a poor environment/context as it is a poor Black township school with no resources, and most of the learners from this school are from poor backgrounds. The second school was an urban school, perceived as a rich school because most of the learners from this school were from middle/upper class families. Then, the last school was a Christian school, which was perceived as a rich school. In each of these schools, three participants (learners) were selected to participate in the study. These were selected based on their socio-economic status as I selected three children (learners) from low socioeconomic status families as they were victims of classism. Within these schools, I chose participants that would be able to supply the information that would allow me to critically engage with the children's experiences. Cohen (2011) reveals that sample size is determined by the style of the research, and in qualitative research, it is more likely that the sample size is small. I now proceed to discuss the research site, which was the schools included in this study.

3.6 RESEARCH SITES

The following is a brief description of the research sites, which are the schools that participated in this research. For issues relates to confidentiality as well as sensitivity of the research, the three schools that were used in this study were given the pseudonyms of Cebo High School, Vico Secondary School and lastly, Mber Christian school.

3.6.1 Cebo High School

This is a multi-racial boys only public school in Durban, South Africa. The school is situated in the east of Durban in Musgrave, and is located approximately 3.4 kilometres from the city centre of Durban, which is 8 minutes' drive from the city. The school has approximately 1000 enrolled students, all of whom are boys, and includes a small boarding establishment that is located on the school grounds and provides a home away from home for up to 130 boys. The school has over 70 educators. It is the oldest standing school in Durban and one of the oldest in South Africa. This school is shaping the future by producing young men who excel in all areas of academic life: sporting, culture and leadership. In each of these areas, this school offers unsurpassed facilities, which include an award-winning centre, an iPad learning centre, a fully functioning theatre, an indoor cricket centre, music school, and a maths and science centre to highlight the few. School fees per learner amount to R43 490.00 per annum. It has always striven for high levels of parent and community involvement and support, hence it has a functioning School Governing Body (SGB). The School Management Team (SMT) consists of the school headmaster and two deputy head masters, and ten Heads of Department (HODs).

The school has provided a safe, clean, caring and well-organised school climate that has always been conducive to learning (it is well fenced with security officers by the gate). It has very attractive school buildings with a beautiful garden that is well maintained daily, as well as big sports fields that are neat and clean. The school offers a variety of extra-mural activities, which include soccer, swimming, rugby, hockey, cricket, a fitness gym and many others. As a result of this, its learners have always ranked among the best young sportsmen in the city of Durban, and the province of KZN. Many of the students from this school have gone on to become leading figures in the national sporting scene.

3.6.2 Vico Secondary School

This is a poor public Black school situated in the south of Durban, south of the Umlazi township, and is located approximately 23 kilometres from the city of Durban. The school has approximately 1130 enrolled students, which comprises 528 girls and 602 boys. The school fees currently amount to R500.00 per learner per annum. The teaching staff comprises 39 educators, this includes the School Management Team (SMT), which consists of one principal, two deputy principals and five HODS (commerce, science, languages, technology and humanities). Non-teaching staff currently comprise five members (one clerk, two cleaners, and

two security officers). There are 23 teaching classrooms, four staffrooms, one science laboratory, one computer laboratory and a library, one office for the principal, and one office for both deputy principals, which they share.

The school buildings are not attractive at all, they look very old with dirty walls, and look very untidy with broken windows and doors. However, there is a very beautiful garden next to the administration building that is maintained daily. The road to the school is tarred and it is easy to access the school in all weather conditions. Most of the classes have electricity, even though a few of them have no lightbulbs, and there are not enough toilets for the learners and educators. The school offers very few extra-mural activities for learners, which includes soccer for both boys and girls, netball, volleyball and athletics.

3.6.3 Mber Christian School

This is a private Christian school comprising learners from different ethnic groups. It is situated at the top of Ridge in the leafy Suburb of Glenmore, across from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It is a 2 Kilometre distance from the city of Durban, which is approximately 10 minutes' drive from the city of Durban. It is easily accessible and situated on a bus route, on a prime site with panoramic views of Durban Harbour and the Indian Ocean. As catholic school, they believe in growing their students in a value-based ethos and provide them with the tools to embrace their own individuality, as well as that of others. This school was the first private catholic school to be established in Durban, which makes it be the second oldest school in Durban to open its doors to pupils from all ethnic groups. The school has approximately 1200 enrolled students from different ethnic groups. The school fees currently amount to a maximum of R54 000.00 per annum per learner, depending on the grade in which they are. It comprises 56 educators and has a functioning School Governing Body (SGB). The School Management Team (SMT) consists of a school principal, two deputy principals and six HODs. The non-teaching staff comprises 21 members (cleaners, clerks, security officers).

The school has very beautiful and attractive buildings, which are relatively well looked after and well maintained. This is a well-resourced school with all the relevant teaching and learning resources. It has a physical education programme, which is part of the academic day. In terms of extra-mural activities, they offer basketball, cricket, karate, netball, swimming, table tennis, tennis, and the following clubs: chess, art, computers, debating, drama, library, philosophy, photography, public speaking and scrabble. Each learner is obligated to participate in at least

one of either a sport or a club. In addition to this, they have the following facilities: computer laboratories, science laboratories, swimming pools, tennis court, soccer field, netball courts and these premises are well looked after and are in very good condition.

Table 3.1: Summary of the research sites

Detail	Cebo High School	Vico Secondary School	Mber Christian School
School location	Musgrave	Umlazi	Glenmore
Learner enrolment	1000	1130	1200
School fees	R43 490.00	R500.00	R54 000.00
Facilities offered	Computer labs, science labs, library, swimming pools, soccer fields.	Computer lab, science lab, soccer field and library	Computer labs, library, science labs, swimming pools, tennis courts, soccer fields, netball, tennis court.
Extra-mural activities	Basketball, cricket, soccer, swimming, tennis, table tennis, karate, rugby.	Soccer, netball and athletics.	Basketball, cricket, karate, netball, rugby, soccer, swimming, table tennis, clubs: art, chess, computers, debates, drams, libraries, philosophy, photography and public speaking.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014) researchers need to choose a method that will be the most effective in obtaining the information that they need to answer the questions asked

in their research. Creswell et al. (2011) further outline that researchers must choose methods that will get them the information in a reasonable amount of time, at a reasonable cost. They state that social scientists tend to use questionnaires, interviews, observations, testing, artefact analysis or secondary data as means of data collection methods. In this study, I opted to use critical conversations as the method of collecting data. As a researcher within the critical paradigm, I was motivated to make use critical conversations as a data collection method due to the fact that critical researchers try to play two different perspectives out against each other in order to come to a deeper understanding of a phenomenon (the dialogue method). They may do so through dialogue with others, including the participants (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Hence, having a dialogue with the participants (learners in this study) helped me to critically engage with their experiences of classism in schools.

3.7.1 Critical conversations

An interview is a conversation between the researcher and respondents (Creswell, et al., 2011). However, Bertram and Christiansen (2014) posit that even though an interview is a conversation between the researcher and the respondents, it is different from an everyday conversation in that the researcher is the person who sets the agenda and asks the questions. This is further supported by Nieuwenhuis (2012), who describes this interaction as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participants questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. It is also noted from Lincoln (2007) and Creswell et al. (2011) that interviews can be used in research across all paradigms.

In addition to this, the aim of using critical conversations is to obtain rich descriptive data that will help to understand the participants' construction of knowledge and social reality. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) concur, explaining that during interviews, a researcher can ask more questions to obtain more detailed information if the respondent has not given sufficient detail initially. Yet, Bell (2006) contends that although interviews are time consuming, they provide opportunities for in-depth probing and also allow for immediate follow-up on response.

Before I initiated the conversations, the time, venue and date were discussed and agreed upon together with the interviewees. Prior to the conversations, the participants were informed about the fact that the interaction would take thirty minutes. The full purpose and intentions of the narratives and research as a whole were outlined. I also informed them as to how the data

collected was going to be used. The conversations took place at the school of each participant; however, teaching and learning was not disturbed since the conversations took place after school hours. As for the children whose parents did not want their children to remain at school after hours, I then arranged with them and came to their homes, thus these conversations were conducted at a venue of the participants' choice. A critical conversation schedule/guide was crafted and prepared in advance to guide the conversation. This schedule was a written list of questions, open-ended or closed, prepared for use by interviewer in a person-to-person interaction (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

The questions that appeared on the schedule were addressed, hence the participants were assured of that the information provided was confidential and their names would not be mentioned in the research notes or report. The anonymity of all of the participants was ensured completely, hence pseudonyms were utilised. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), language also influences the information given because people tend to be more communicative in their own language than when speaking a second language. Therefore, in honouring this notion, each participant was given an opportunity to speak in their language of choice, especially learners from Vico Secondary School, most of whom preferred to speak in IsiZulu, their mother tongue, which was their comfort zone.

These conversations were conducted face to face. I made sure that the participants had enough time to respond, hence, the thirty minutes that was given was enough time and everything was covered thoroughly. At each school, I had critical conversations with three learners. The focus was on critically analysing these children's experiences of classism in schools so as to expose factors that contributed to the perpetuation of classism in schools, as well as the impact thereof on children's learning. While the conversation was in process, I made it a point to jot down not only the main points, but every word of the participants; I also utilised a voice recorder to tape the interviews. In concluding the conversations, the participants were given a chance to say whatever they felt was left out. I forwarded a word of thanks to them for their time and participation in the study. They were also informed of the fact that all the transcribed documents, tape records and notes from the conversations would be kept safe in my supervisor's office and would be destroyed after five years.

Table 3.2: Brief qualities of the participants from these three schools

Interviewee	Race	Gender	Age	Grade	Number of Years in the same school
CEBO HIGH SCHOOL					
Seun	White	Boy	16	10	3
Selu	Black	Boy	19	11	5
Luba	Indian	Boy	17	10	4
VICO SECONDARY SCHOOL					
Zuki	Black	Girl	18	12	5
Nosie	Black	Girl	21	10	8
Sethu	Black	Boy	20	11	7
MBER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL					
David	Coloured	Boy	16	10	3
Zolo	Black	Girl	15	9	2
Mini	Black	Girl	19	11	6

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Nieuwenhuis (2012) refers to data analysis as a search for patterns and recurrent behaviours, objects, or a body of knowledge in the data. Similarly, De Vos (2010) posits that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the quantities of data collected. In other words, it brings meaning to and makes sense of the data obtained. Voluminous data collected can be overwhelming, therefore the analysis of the data should be done systematically so that there is some order in the process. This study was carried out within the critical paradigm, and I thus analysed the data using a thematic content analysis. Content analysis is a

process in which texts are coded and classified into fewer categories (Cohen et al, 2011). Similarly, Nieuwenhuis (2012) refers to content analysis as a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises the message of the content. It is a process of looking at the data from different angles with a view to identifying keys in the text that will help us to understand and critically analyse raw data. In other words, it is an inductive and iterative process where we look for similarities and differences in the text that corroborate or disprove theory. This means that the data from the semi-structured interviews were analysed qualitatively using a thematic content analysis. I analysed the interview transcripts to identify core consistencies and meanings. The reason for using a content analysis was because it was flexible in analysing the data. Creswell (2012) details that coding data enables the researcher to describe people and places and to develop themes.

I adopted a qualitative data analysis to provide detailed accounts of the children's experiences of classism in school. I familiarised myself with the data gathered by reading the transcripts and notes several times. I searched for similarities and differences that emerged from the participant's individual interviews. I then arranged the data into themes or categories. Cohen et al. (2011) declare that coding and categorising information may lose the nuanced richness of specific words and their connotations. I looked for ideas and themes and made detailed notes to link these. I then generated thematic concepts through a process of coding, which is described as an operation in which data is broken down, conceptualised and put back together in new forms (Neuman, 2006). I analysed the data for each of the three schools and generated concepts through the process of coding.

The common concepts and themes were inductively derived from the data. I analysed the data by searching for code words and common themes. While reading and re-reading each data set, I tried to identify the emerging patterns and themes (Cohen et al., 2011). I first read through these texts several times to get a holistic impression of the overall data content. As I analysed the data, I moved back and forth between the data and theory until I found the best fit between the data and the theory. In this data, a common theme of affiliation emerged, which is human's functional capability (Nussbaum, 2000). Within the theme of affiliation, various common theme emerged. Litchman (2006) emphasises that making meaning from qualitative data involves the process of moving between questions, data and meaning. Having discussed the data analysis, I proceed to discuss issues of trustworthiness.

3.9 ISSUES OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

Babbie and Mouton (2009) and Kamar (2011) posit that trustworthiness in qualitative research is determined by credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Yin (2012) argues that it is important for the researcher to check and recheck the consistency of the findings from different as well as the same source. It is very important that any critical paradigm study takes into account the social, political, cultural and gender context of situations (Bertram & Christensen, 2014). According to Donnelly and Trochim (2008), credibility refers to the extent to which the results of a qualitative study are credible and believable. Cohen et al. (2011) agree, saying that credibility maintains that the results of a study are trustworthy and reasonable. I maintained complete integrity and accuracy throughout the study to ensure credibility. This was done through taking into consideration the issues of social justice during the data collection process. Trustworthiness and credibility were regarded as a significant measure in this research, where the participants' interview responses were transcribed. Also, the data was given to other researchers to read and check the themes so as to ensure credibility and dependency.

Cresswell (2012) explains that in the critical paradigm, transferability holds the idea that the research should inspire social change or social action to enhance trustworthiness. Hence, this study attempted to inspire social change regarding classism in schools. The conclusions reached in this study advocate for social action, which challenges classism as a form of oppression in schools. According to De Vos (2010), conformability requires the research to account for how and why previous research in interpretivist and post-positivist paradigms have fallen short. It also considers social justice issues and self-flexibility. Given this notion, this study addresses the issue of dependability thoroughly.

3.10 ETHICAL ISSUES

Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) refer to ethics as adhering to the accepted conduct for acceptable professional practice. This entails ensuring that no harm comes to the research participants concerned. Similarly, Strydom (2010) describes ethics as a set of moral principles that offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents. In the same vein, Babbie (2007) asserts that ethics are typically associated with morality, which is concerned with what is right and wrong. As a result, I took adequate steps to prevent any psychological harm or any stress or embarrassment that participants may have experienced. I did not expose the research participants to undue

physical or psychological harm, nor were they subjected to unusual stress. I guided, protected and oversaw the interests of the research participants. This view is supported by Mertens (2009), who posits that ethical guidelines in research are needed to guard against any possible harm coming to the participants.

Ethical issues are important when conducting research. I observed ethical principles in order to prevent any problems that could arise during the fieldwork and also to protect the rights of the participants. Cohen et al. (2011) define ethics as a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others. In this regard, all due ethical considerations were discussed with the participants before the research was undertaken. I requested permission to conduct this study at each school before any data was collected.

It was necessary to obtain ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the approval of the KwaZulu-Natal Education authorities to conduct research within the province. I further signed and undertook to comply with the university's Code of Conduct for Research. I applied to the ethics committee for clearance and waited for written approval to proceed. The ethical committee ensured that the research did not infringe on the rights and dignity of the participants (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007). Ethical clearance was approved. In applying for ethical clearance, I provided letters to the gatekeepers and the critical conversation protocol, as well as an outline of how I intended to use the data. In addition, I elaborated on informed consent and confidentiality.

I also applied to the KZN Department of Education, requesting permission to conduct the study in the three schools; permission was granted. Ethical considerations were discussed with the participants before the research was undertaken. The participants, as indicated earlier, were three high school learners from three different schools. I wrote a letter to the school principals requesting permission for access to conduct this study at their schools. The letter explained the nature and purpose of the research. I also explained to the school principals that my research would not encroach on teaching time. The letter also contained details about my identity, the tertiary institution at which I am registered as a student, as well as the contact details of my supervisor. Ethical considerations were discussed with the participants before the study was undertaken.

Cohen et al. (2011) posit that access and acceptance are relevant stages when one is conducting research. Access to the institution or organisation where the research is to be conducted, and

acceptance by those whose permission one needs before embarking on the task is vital. In this regard, I gained access to the school through arranging a personal meeting with the school principal. I then outlined the purpose of the research, and a description of the methods that I was going to use. I informed the school principals and the participants of the exact details of the methods of data production that I was going to employ in the study. The aim of the study was also outlined.

Christians (2008) mentions four codes of professional ethics, namely, informed consent, freedom from deception, respect of privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy. The principle of informed consent arises from the respondents' right to freedom and self-determination. The participants were informed that their participation and consent were voluntary for the research to be valid (Silverman, 2010). In addition, Silverman (2010) asserts that when participants are assured that the research is approved by an accredited, legitimate institution, the researcher earns their trust. Written permission from the relevant education authority was obtained and attached to the letter to the school principal as proof that the research project was legitimate and approved. The participants freely volunteered to be in the study and signed an informed consent form. The consent form indicated that participation was voluntary and that the participants had the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Since the participants were under age (below 18 years) a parental consent form was also signed where the parents declared that they allowed their children to take part in this study.

It is important for researchers to be honest and transparent when conducting a study. According to Drew, Hardman and Hosp (2008), deception involves an intentional misrepresentation of facts associated with the purpose, nature or consequences of an investigation. To ensure honesty, I outlined the purpose of my study in the informed consent forms and also provided the individuals time to deliberate about their participation.

The participants were informed that their names would not be used, their identities would not be revealed, and they were free to withdraw at any stage of the research once they felt the need to do so. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Bell (2006) distinguishes between confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality is a promise made by the researcher to the participants that they will not be identified or presented in identifiable form, whilst, anonymity is a promise that even the researcher will not be able to tell which responses come from which respondent. Confidentiality is upheld when the information from a participant is not disclosed in a way that may identify the individual or that may enable the

individual to be traced (Cohen et al., 2011). Within the context of this study, I assured the participants of confidentiality. Fictitious names (pseudonyms) were used, not only for the schools, but also to refer the individual participants, i.e. Nosi, Zolo, Luba, David, Seun, Zuki, Selu, Mini and Sethu.

The participants were given full assurance that the findings of the study would be used strictly for academic purposes and the transcripts would eventually be destroyed. The participants were also given transcripts of the critical conversations to review and make changes if needed.

3.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I conducted a discussion of the research methodology and design used in this study. I proceeded to discuss the research paradigms. The study is located within a critical paradigm with emphasis on qualitative research and a narrative approach, which was deemed appropriate for this study. I also provided details with regard to issues of sampling, data generation methods and data analysis. The data gathering techniques used in qualitative research were discussed. This ensured the validity and quality of the study, meaning that the findings of the study were informed by the data gathered rather than the researcher's own pre-conceptions. Furthermore, issues of trustworthiness were also discussed. Finally, I detailed the ethical issues considered in this research.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided a discussion of the research design and methodology adopted in this study. This chapter presents an analysis of the collected data relating to the experiences of classism among learner participants from the three schools, namely, Cebo High School, Vico Secondary School and Mber Christian School (pseudonyms). The analysis of their responses sought to explore the experiences, manifestation and impact of classism within formal learning and recreational spaces on nine children in three South African schools. Within this focus, three critical questions informed the inquiry. They are as follows:

- (a) What are participants' experiences of classism in schools?
- (b) Which factors promote the manifestation of classism?
- (c) How does classism affect the participants' participation in school activities?

4.2 EXPRESSIONS OF CLASSISM

The following discussion presents an analysis of the data relating to the narratives of the nine participating school children at the three researched schools. Their accounts describe their individual experiences of classism in classroom and recreational spaces – and more specifically, the ways in which classism was expressed towards them and how they navigated these experiences of classism in such spaces. More broadly, using a thematic content analysis to interpret their responses, it was revealed that all nine participants from the three different schools shared the same experience regarding where class discrimination normally took place in their respective schools. Also common in their narratives was that classism manifests within both formal learning and recreational spaces. Addressing the first critical question (as outlined above), their shared experiences of classism in these spaces further revealed the ways in which classism was expressed towards, and experienced by them. Relating to this, the themes that emerged from the data were:

- Exclusion;
- Public humiliation;
- Intolerance;
- Stigmatisation; and

- Segregation.

4.2.1 Exclusion

The above finding is consistent with that of Pillay (2006), who found the same in terms of the experiences of learners from informal settlements at secondary schools in Lanasia. Like the children in Pillay's (2006) research, what David, a participant in the present study reinforced was the notion that children from impoverished contexts are not worthy of being fully assimilated into classrooms comprised predominantly of middle-class children. They are therefore physically and verbally excluded from "middle-classroom membership." Drawing from the participant's response below, this seemed to be the case in Mber Christian School.

I experience classism inside the classroom mostly because I barely leave my class since I feel so ashamed about my class background. Children from other classes do not know anything about me, so they won't discriminate me based on my background because they do not even know where I am coming from. But the problem is with my classmates, they know everything about me, so they do not want to associate themselves with me, they I know I am coming from a very poor background. They would constantly remind me about my home background [David, 16-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

Even though Mber is a Cristian school whose ethos is to discourage any form of discrimination, and to encourage societal stability and equal treatment amongst the members of any society, the children at this school still children discriminate against one another based on their social standing. Noted from the above experience of David, he revealed that his peers did not want to associate themselves with him in the classroom because of the fact that he came from a poverty-stricken family; he even mentioned that he was constantly reminded of where he came from. Pillay (2006), in his research, found that the learners from informal impoverished families felt lonely when the other learners from middle-class families did not want to socialise with them, indicating that the latter had a tendency to stick together, making them feel isolated. This is again evident in the narrative of Zuki, who attended Vico Secondary School:

When I am talking about inside the classroom, I mean like in terms of stationary and the attitudes of other learners towards me. I cannot afford some staff, and I do not want to borrow other children's stuff, I chose to sit alone at the corner just because I do not want to bother them. Even with the teachers, it really disturbing having child busy borrowing from others. Teachers do not understand! They kick me out of the classroom as they say I am disturbing them [Zuki, 18-year-old girl, Vico Secondary school].

What is evident in Zuki's statement, as captured in the above extract, is that not only are children from poor backgrounds excluded socially, sometimes they experience academic exclusion because of their socio-economic identity. In Zuki's case, the fact that the teacher would "kick her" out of the class claiming that she was disturbing other learners as she would borrow some of their things was a source of exclusion on the part of her peers and teacher. Pillay (2006) expounds on this behaviour by explaining that learners feel sad when teachers insult them and treat them differently from middle-class learners. Similar results have been observed in other studies, such as that of Spaul (2012), which indicates that learners from low socio-economic areas in the townships are isolated in schools. This response is further witnessed in Luba and Selu's narrative. They shared the following experiences:

I have not enough stationary, as I told you, I lost my calculator last year and I found it so difficult to learn during accounting period. Also, I do not have a laptop, I cannot do my practical when I am at home. I only get to practice CAT when I am here at school. So, during accounting period, I go outside because the teacher instructed me to do so until I get a calculator [Selu, 19-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

I also don't have enough school stationary. Teachers would always fight with me wanting me to have stationary, but I don't know what to do because my mom manages to afford those basic stationary things [Luba, 17-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

It can be seen in the above excerpts that stationary was a huge issue, which caused them to be victims of exclusion in the classroom. Hence, the discussions above suggest that these classroom environments were also not conducive to protecting these children from being discriminated against based on their socio-economic background. Seemingly, the teachers themselves partook in this discrimination, or did nothing to mitigate it. Glance (2014) contends that much like other forms of oppression, classism is a type of discrimination. Moreover, he asserts that inequalities in the schooling system have moved from being race to class based. Additionally, these discussions reveal school stationary as a factor that also perpetuates classism in schools. Children from poor families are unlikely to receive proper education because in most cases they struggle to even purchase the proper resources required, as indicated in the above discussion. Gorski (2015) concurs by stating that schools with a large percentage of low-income students are more likely to have limited access to computers, inadequate facilities such as science laboratories and insufficient classroom materials. Hence this perpetuates classism in our schools due to the fact that poor learners are being chased out of classrooms by educators if they do not have the required stationary.

4.2.2 Public humiliation

The above finding is similar to that of Glance (2014), who researched the classism experiences of high school children in his study. Like the participants in Glance's (2014) research, Zuki explained that children from impoverished contexts are being publicly humiliated by their peers and even teachers in schools. Zuki's statement was as follows:

In terms of school uniform, I do not have full school uniform. One day I was called in front of the class by the principal, it was me and another learner. I had no school shoes, hence I wore my sandals with school skirt, whereas this other girl was in full school uniform, so the principal made an example with me; he goes on saying, "This is the school uniform." He pointed his finger to the other girl and he proceeded to me and said "and this is disrespect" he pointed at me. All the other learners looked at me and laughed at me. I was so humiliated, and I cried the whole day not knowing what was next [Zuki, 18-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

It can be seen from this excerpt that children from poverty-stricken families are not only excluded in their schools, but are also humiliated in public in many ways. In Zuki's case, she was a victim of public humiliation due to the fact that she was not able to afford school shoes. This humiliating experience evidently affected her, as she cried the whole day after the incident. According to Pillay (2006), Black learners from low socio-economic backgrounds are found to be an embarrassment because they are perceived by their educators to be stupid and a disgrace. This is again evident in the narrative of Nosi, who attended Vico Secondary School:

School uniform, I only have one school skirt and my skirt is very short. The teachers are always complaining about that. They do not understand why I am wearing this skirt. They think I am trying to attract and seduce boys. Which is not true, no boy is attracted to me because of where I am coming from! I don't even care about them, it does not matter, I am trying by all means to avoid boys. As for my school jersey, one kid from my class gave me a jersey, but now the jersey is torn. It has holes in the elbows and children laugh about it [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

The above shared experience shows that learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds experience public humiliation in their schools. This experience of public humiliation experienced by Nosi is similar to what happened to Mini who attended Mber Christian School:

During class hours, sometime during free periods, my peers would make jokes about where my mother works. My mom is working as a domestic worker, so they sometimes class me based on that [Mini, 19-year-old girl, Mber Christian School].

It is evident that not only are children from poor backgrounds excluded, they are also ridiculed because of their socio-economic identity. In Mini's case, the fact that her mother was a domestic worker was a source of ridicule. Thurston (2016) expounds on this by explaining how the self-esteem of children like Mini may become eroded and they may self-alienate.

These discussions reveal that the school uniform does not serve the purpose of eliminating class distinctions in high schools, nor does it place the poor on an equal footing with the rich (Bodine, 2010). This is further supported by Gaillard-Thurston (2017), who found that even though uniforms are worn in schools with the purpose of eliminating class divisions, there are still parents who cannot afford to buy uniforms for their children. Therefore, this study has also proven that the uniform policy fails to make a difference in the context of classist-based discrimination.

4.2.3 Detestation

Similar results were observed in this study to those of Spaul (2012) as teachers were found to be classist towards children from poverty-stricken families. Teachers are regarded as the protectors of children and are supposed to play a parental role in the classroom, however, the findings of this study indicate that teachers are perpetrators of classism as they too mistreat learners from poor socio-economic class backgrounds. David, a learner at Mber Christian School, said the following:

Teachers do not give me any attention, but not all of them. Like, let's say we are in class, they only give attention to those learners from high economic class, they do not care about us, especially me, because you could tell by looking at me that I am from a very poor family. Teachers do not like me at all [David, 16-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

Pillay (2006) also mentions teachers as one of the perpetrators of classism in schools. It is also evident from David's experience that some teachers are biased towards impoverished children and are classist. Correspondingly, David disclosed that his teachers did not treat the learners as equal, and only gave their attention to learners from rich families. Mini affirmed this in the following statement:

Teachers treats us differently, my class teacher loves learners from upper class. Even if I want to say something, teachers would be like "who the hell are you, because you stay in the shacks." Even though they do not say it by mouth, but you could tell by the looks, the gesture they give us tells it all [Mini, 19 years old girl, Mber Christian School].

Mini's description resonates with David about teachers as she explained that impoverished learners were not treated as well as learners from the upper class. Pillay (2006) supports likewise that impoverished children believed that educators have no understanding of their lives, which is why they dislike them so much.

Echoed Mini and David's sentiments by adding that teachers were also classist:

Some other teachers are classist. Especially our subjects are demanding. Since I am doing consumer studies, so we had to pay money for practical, so I had no money! The teacher beated me up! Why did she do that? Why did she beat me up? Well it was simple: because I am poor! She was supposed to understand that my parents did not afford such money! But she chose to beat me up. These teachers are classist! [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

The excerpts and discussions above suggest that classism in schools are not only observed between children, but is also perpetuated by teachers who verbally or non-verbally discriminate against children from poor backgrounds. Hence, like any other form of oppression, classism hurts us all (Bajaj, 2009).

4.2.4 Victimization

The above findings are congruous with those of Hunter (2016), who found in his research about classism in schools; this demonstrates that learners are victims of all sorts of abuse, crime, and bullying. According to Hunter (2016), bullying in general is defined as the use of superior strength or influence to intimidate someone typically to force them to do something. Heynesman and Stern (2013) reveal that bullying in school is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. He further illustrates that bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. Hence, this study found that in school, classism can take the form of bullying where children from poor backgrounds are bullied by other learners based on their socio-economic status. Most of the participants in this study mentioned that they were being bullied verbally and even physically by their peers. This is apparent in the following statement from David:

What has been difficult for me is that firstly, when I came to this school, I was constantly bullied and that affected me a lot. Learners could see I was from a very poor background. Sometimes I could not concentrate in class, even sometimes I am hungry, and I cannot concentrate as well in

class. You cannot learn as normal as other kids with an empty stomach! [David, 16-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

It can thus be seen that learners from impoverished families are victimised through bullying because of their economic background. According to Pillay (2006), fighting, teasing, mocking and name calling is viewed as forms of bullying, which children from poverty-stricken families experience at school on a daily basis. Zolo stated the following with regard to victimisation:

This year, we had a RCL elections, so I was nominated as well to take part in elections. Then there was this Indian guy, he asked me why I was there and I told him I came for RCL elections and was like “are you being serious? He told me I have no style; I was not supposed to be there. “oh please, do you really think you will take this? Oh no, please, what do you know? The only thing you know is to stay in your squatter camps at Umlazi, nothing else. Here we are talking about people who have style, what do you have? You have nothing ... You don’t own even a R100 cell phone, let alone a R10 in your pocket! Then you tell me you going to be a RCL chairperson?” And I was like oh my God! I have never been so humiliated this much in my whole blessed life! He embarrassed me in front of other students. Fortunately, I was selected and I won the elections and I became RCL chairperson. People who are rich think that poor people know nothing, they are useless. They only think that we are vulnerable, that all [Zolo, 15-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

Zolo was bullied verbally by one of his peers because of his background, as captured in the above extract. Troyna and Hatcher (2012) indicate that learners call each other names for different reasons, sometimes as a result of racism and at other times, to achieve social dominance. Nosi also experienced bullying, as shown in the excerpt below.

Well, it affects me because like I said, when you raise your hand and you want to say something, somebody cracks joke and say “it’s the child from the shacks, the child who does not have a jersey”. So, it becomes difficult as a learner to express yourself because you are afraid that when you trying to express yourself, they will make a joke about where you coming from. I just shut up even if I know what to say [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

It can be seen in the excerpt that the other learners believed that she had nothing to say because she was a child from the squatter camps. Pillay (2006) also found that name calling was evident with learners from informal settlements and that they were mocked, teased and called names by middle class Indian learners. This suggests that impoverished children are being bullied in schools because of their social background. The study thus found that chronically poor children are victims of bullying in schools.

4.2.5 Stigmatisation

Furthermore, the above finding is in agreement with that of Gorski (2008) regarding the myths of the “culture of poverty.” There is a stigma about poor people being criminals. When something is missing, a person from a poverty-stricken house is the first suspect because she/he is known to be in need. This study confirms this behaviour in school, as mentioned by Zuki:

Oh yes! I have been accused of being a criminal by a learner. This learner accused me of stealing and I was like “I did not steal from you” and he was like “you stole my money! I know that you are poor, you stole my money because you needed it, you are poor.” I told him I didn’t steal his money. He beat me up just because he accused me of stealing because I am poor. When you are poor, you are always associated with crime, even if you have not done anything of such nature. It really hurts me to be seen as a criminal just because I am poor. Yes, I am poor, but I don’t steal. I am not a criminal! [Zuki, 18-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

4.3 EXPERIENCES OF CLASSISM IN RECREATIONAL SPACES

It was also noted from the participants that class discrimination not only happens in the classroom, but outside the classroom, which is perceived as a place where all learners are free and supposed to enjoy childhood activities. However, the research shows that outside the classroom is sometimes the most frightening place for learners from poverty-stricken homes. The following sub-themes emerged:

- Exclusion from sports; and
- Segregation.

4.3.1 Exclusion from sports

Pillay’s (2006) findings are similar to those of this study. It was evident that all of the participants experienced exclusion from sports in their schools. They all mentioned that due to their socio-economic status, they did not participate in sports in their schools. They explained that sports are demanding and sports kits are expensive. Hence, their parents could not afford to buy them the necessary resources, which then forced them to not participate in sports at all. In this regard, the participants from Mber Christian School had this to say:

I don’t play sport. Yet I would love to play hockey, but I know my mom won’t afford to buy me sports kits. I love sports very much though. There is nothing I can do about it [David, 16-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

Not exactly! I do not fit in. even soccer, since soccer is a common sport but still, I can't play soccer since I do not have boots for soccer. I don't want to force things [Mini, 19-year-old girl, Mber Christian School].

The experiences of exclusion from sports seemed to be a common experience at Mber Christian School. It is evident from David and Mini's excerpts that they did not participate in sports at all due to the fact that their economic background hindered them from doing so. According to Letsoalo, Simelane and Timaeus (2013), at recreational facilities like sports grounds, classism is manifested, which was confirmed by these accounts. There is further evidence from two of the other from Cebo High School who made the following comments about their experiences of being excluded from participating in sport at school.

Sport codes are compulsory in our school, hence I was rejected in cricket because of the aforementioned reason, so I ended up with soccer, which is not my favourite sport, but I choose it because soccer is not that much demanding for me. I do not attend trips because my uncle made it clear at the beginning that he would not have money to waste for trips. When it comes to lunch, I sometime bring along lunch but in most instances, I don't bring lunch at all [Selu, 19-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

I used to love rugby and athletics. I love athletics, but now I do not participate; the problem is with the kits. I cannot afford to buy enough kits. Sports are my favourite extra-mural activities though [Luba, 17-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

They both mentioned that they were excluded from sports because they did not have kits, which is a prerequisite in every sport. Similar experiences were shared by two of the participants from Vico Secondary School based on sports.

I don't participate in sports. You know when you in sports, you have to have sport kits, so sometimes you find that they going to trips and all of that. w\then where can I get that money, because I know my mom does not have it. So, I don't want to trouble my parents [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary school].

I don't participate in sports at all. I love sport. But I can't do anything about it. Sports are demanding. I am very passionate about sports. I will be there watching them and pretend as if I am cool about it [Zuki, 18-year-old girl, Vico Secondary school].

It is evident in the preceding discussion that sports in South African schools can be a manifestation of classism due to the fact that only learners from middle and upper class backgrounds participate in sports whose parents can afford sports kits and medical expenses if

their children get injured. Those from impoverished families do not participate in sports and are thus excluded because they do not have sports kits as their parents cannot afford it. Bajaj (2009) reveals that institutional factors such as school culture, policies and norms, which tend to correspond with middle class forms of cultural, capital and socialisation in the US, frequently interact to further disadvantage low-income children. Therefore, these children were oppressed in their schools because of their socio-economic status.

4.3.2 Segregation

The present study also reinforces the notion that children from impoverished contexts are segregated in their schools (Pillay, 2006). In all of the researched schools, the participants seemed to experience segregation outside of the classroom. Most of the participants mentioned that they were isolated from other learners and tended to feel different from others outside of the classroom environment. From the findings of this research, it was found that the learners' experiences of segregation in other school spaces were caused by the issue of having food or a lunchbox. The participants mentioned that they did not bring a lunchbox at school due to the fact that their lunchboxes may not be the same as those of the other children. Even those who confirmed that they did bring lunchbox disclosed that they were laughed at by other learners for bringing 'disgusting' food to school. This was evident from the shared experiences of one participant from Vico Secondary School, who narrated that he did not bring lunch to school.

Outside the classroom during break time. I am from a very lower-class background, hence during break time I do not fit to other students because I do not bring lunch at school. One day, I was with my friends and I told them about my class background. One day we had an argument with my friends, they said to me "vele uyahlupheka we do not want to be your friend anymore" in front of other learners. I was so humiliated! From that day on, I tried by all means to avoid myself from them [Sethu, 20-year-old boy, Vico Secondary School].

In this regard, Pillay (2006) mentions that learners from middle-class families do not want to associate themselves at school with those from informal settlements, who are perceived to be poor. This segregation experience occurred outside of the classroom, but had a terrible impact on Sethu's schooling experience nonetheless. The lunchbox issue was at the root of the segregation experiences that the participants experienced. This was further confirmed by Seun, who attended Cebo High School:

I get alienated during the break time. During break time you would see me standing alone by the corners of the school buildings eating my home cooked phuthu and beans. Other learners

would be looking at me like a fool. I do not have friends, those I used to have isolated themselves from me because they said I am poor, I am “imbungulu” sucking up their blood, meaning “I don’t provide but instead I always eat their food” [Seun, 16-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

Seun confirmed that he was alienated because of his socio-economic background; and he was very ashamed of who he is. These discussions suggest that no matter the school, there are learners who are chronically poor who sometimes do not even have a meal to eat during the day at school, as noted from Sethu’s shared experience of alienation, which basically affects learners’ learning. I strongly believe that it is very difficult to concentrate in the classroom with an empty stomach. This is in agreement with the findings of Hunter (2016), who notes that the most critical problem facing Black South African citizens today is poverty and hunger.

4.4 FORMAL LEARNING SPACES

It was also noted from the participants that class discrimination also happened in formal learning spaces. By formal learning spaces, I am referring to school fees, as well as experiences related to access to school. The following sub-themes emerged:

- Experiences of school fees; and
- Experiences of access to school.

4.4.1 Experiences of school fees

The above finding is consistent with that of Heynema and Stern (2013), who find that school fees may perpetuate classism. With regard to the issue of school fees, it was found that learners who come from impoverished families experience difficulties in paying school fees. The data collected shows that the cost of schooling manifests as classism in schools. The participants in this study expressed the same view regarding school fees and the cost of schooling. They mentioned that in their schools, the cost of schooling was very high and demanding, which made it difficult for their unemployed parents to afford. Some even mentioned that their school fees were being taken care of by bursaries or their extended families due to the fact that their biological parents could not afford all the costs of schooling their children. Some were being raised by single parents and some were orphans. The most sensitive part of it all is that these learners mentioned that the school held back their results if they did not pay school fees. Linked closely to the notion of the cost of schooling, the participants from Cebo high school narrated a similar experience as follows:

I told you earlier that my uncle is paying my school fees of 43 490 per annum, my parents cannot afford such money since they are both unemployed. This school is ridiculously expensive! [Selu, 19-year-old boy, Cebo Secondary School].

My parents cannot afford paying my school fees. My neighbour is the one who is paying my school fees because I am a very hardworking child. I stay in the informal settlement, sometimes even the teachers would ask how come that I am attending such a very expensive school while I come from such environment. They do not know that my neighbour who is extremely rich is paying for my schooling fees [Luba, 17-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

Taking into consideration the fact that Cebo High School is a Model C, boys only school where children from well earning families attend, there are children who come from poverty-stricken families who attend this school like Selu and Luba. These two young men revealed that their parents were both unemployed and their schooling was being sponsored by someone else. In Selu's case, his uncle was paying for him, whereas Luba was sponsored by a neighbour. The participants further complained about the fact that their school fee was extremely expensive. Heynema and Stern (2013) reveal that not all learners in schools can afford to pay school fees due to the fact that they all come from different economic backgrounds. Similar experiences were shared by two participants from Mber Christian School, whose parents could not afford to pay school fees:

I cannot afford paying school fees. My results are always withheld at school because I do not pay school fees. So I see the results the following year [Mini, 19-year-old girl, Mber Christian School].

School fees? All I could say about school fees is that it is very expensive! So I cannot afford the school fees since my mother and father are both unemployed. However, my funder [bursary] is taking care of my study fees [Zolo, 15-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

Mber Christian School is a Private school, which is very expensive, as discussed in the preceding chapter. Hence, some of the learners who attend this school do so through a bursary, and their parents do not pay at all. Thus, not all of them could afford school fees, therefore participants like Zolo and Mini complained about the expensive school fees. Likewise, one participant from Vico Secondary School echoed a similar sentiment about school fees.

My school fees experience in this school is very sad. I remember last year I did not get my report. The school said if you do not pay the school fees by the end of the year, you will not get your report. Even the following year I did not get the report until my mom came to explain she

does not have the money. I see the following year whether I passed or not. The school fee is 600 rands and it is difficult for my mother to pay such because sometimes we even struggle for a single potato [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

Nosi's experience of school fees was different to that of the other four participants from Mber Christian School and Cebo High School because in Nosi's case, she attended a public school, which is far cheaper than a private school. The other participants indicated that they had external funders of their studies, however in Nosi's case, her parents were responsible to pay her school fees. Even though it is not very expensive, they struggled to pay it nonetheless. These discussions show that the cost of schooling is one of the factors that contributes to the perpetuation of classism in South African schools. This is due to the fact that most of the learners come from very disadvantaged backgrounds where parents cannot afford to pay their children's education. This idea is supported by Heynema and Stern (2013), who believe that the introduction of fees in schools tends to increase inequalities in society despite the government's intervention to redistribute state funds for this very reason.

4.4.2 Experiences of access to school

Seemingly, the participants in Pillay's (2006) research had similar experiences to those of the learners in this study, especially with regard to access to school as the participants' experiences of access to school includes, amongst others, the distances they travel to and from school. The data generated indicates that the cost of transport for learners to and from school is a huge problem in terms of access to the school premises. All of the participants in this study mentioned that they travelled very long distances from their homes to school, which then cost their parents a lot of much money for transport. However, the participants also mentioned that sometimes they did not go to school due to a lack of funds for transport. Some revealed that they had to walk very long distances from their homes to school because their parents could not buy them tickets for the bus or train. This was evident from the responses most of the participants, including those from Mber Christian school, who had the following to share.

I take a bus to and from school. Sometimes I come late at school if the buses delay. Some other days I do not come to school because my parents sometimes they don't afford to give me money for the transport. Absenting myself to school is a problem because I am left behind in school work [Zolo, 15-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

It can be seen that access to school was a significant problem for Zolo, sometimes even requiring him to miss school when there were insufficient funds for transport. Similar

experiences were shared by a participant from Cebo High School, who also mentioned that the cost of transport was also problematic for him, which then led to him absenting himself from school.

I do travel when I am coming to school. I use a bus, but not always. Sometime I don't come to school cause my mother cannot afford transport cost the whole month. However, I am quite aware of the fact that I am being left behind at school because the teachers do not wait for me, they continue with the syllabus whether I am present at school or not, but they do not care [Luba, 17-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

Consequently, Luba from Cebo High School experienced the same as Zolo, leading to being absent from school. A different experience was mentioned by Nosi, who had the following to say about access to the school:

I walk when I am coming to school. I always come late because it is too far. Well, the teachers do not understand. I am always on detention for being late. Everyday cleaning windows has become my daily school chore [Nosi, 21year old girl, Vico Secondary School].

Nosi's experience was quite different from those of the other participants as she walked to school rather than taking transport, however, this caused her to be late every day and get into trouble. Pillay (2006) finds that some of the practical problems encountered by learners from informal settlements are a result of traveling long distances to schools that are located far from the informal settlements. He further explains that they do not have money, so they have to walk to school, which this makes them late every day, which was confirmed by Nosi's experience.

The discussions above suggest that access to school for learners from poverty-stricken families is problematic, hence it affects their learning since they mentioned that some days, if their parents do not have money for transport, they would stay at home and miss out on teaching and learning. This does not reflect well on these children's parent's valuation of education as they allow their children to miss school simply because they do not have transport money. Gorski (2015) postulates that impoverished people do not value education and that the failure to value education is a component of the culture of poverty.

4.5 THE IMPACT OF CLASSISM ON FORMAL LEARNING

The following discussion contains the findings of the responses that were provided by the nine participants at the three researched schools. These responses were based on their individual

perceptions that classism has impacted their formal learning experiences. Furthermore, the findings were based on a thematic content analysis. The following themes emerged:

- Confidence;
- Academic achievement; and
- Demotivation.

4.5.1 Confidence

Like the participants in Pillay's (2006) research, the same results were found in this study as it was found that the participants perceived classism to negatively impact their formal learning experiences, as well as their confidence in the classroom. The data generated from the three schools indicate that learners from poverty-stricken families are affected at schools in such a way that even their self-esteem drops eventually and they develop a feeling of inferiority. This was apparent from the responses of most of the participants, including Nosi.

Being discriminated against based on my economic background decreases my potential, it makes me think that I am less of a human being, I sometimes don't even study because I know that I will not be recognised, no matter what I do, nobody wants to recognise what I am doing. I don't believe in myself as a human being anymore, it makes me feel like I am worth nothing [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

In the above extract, it is apparent that children from poverty-stricken communities seem to perceive their experiences of classism as a major cause of the decrease in their confidence. In Nosi's case, her self-esteem was damaged. According to Pillay (2006), learners from impoverished families have a fear of educators and a fear of active participation in the classroom. A similar experience was shared by a participant from Cebo high school, who had the following to say.

I got discriminated in class. And it always happens in my class. So, I remember the day I was discriminated by my peer learner, I got high marks in maths and the teacher was like "Luba got 92% in Maths, he is the highest" one of my peer classmate said, "oh well, even if he got 100% we would not care much cause we know he is not going anywhere with those marks, there is no free education in varsity, we know he is poor so he is not going to varsity, who is going to pay varsity fee" and everybody was like "yeeeeeeees." I cried the whole day, I was so humiliated that day. From that day onwards, I am quit in the classroom. I do not participate anymore. I feel less important, if you know what I mean [Luba, 17-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

It is perceptible from the above shared experience of Luba that his self-confidence was damaged by the remarks made, leading to him never participating in class again. The same results were found by Glance (2014), who mentions that children from poverty-stricken homes have very low self-confidence, self-doubt, fear and anxiety in schools because of their socio-economic background. Furthermore, similar feelings were expressed by participant from Mber Christian School.

I think it affects me in a psychological way. My mentality changes, I cannot concentrate and my marks dropped. My ability to learn is affected. [David, 16-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

David believed that being discriminated against impacted negatively on his ability to learn at school. Hence, these discussions above concur that classism can easily affect the mind of children who are victims of classism. They could easily think that they are less important and give up in life. Self-esteem and self-realisation are very important in a person's life. This study shows that learners from impoverished families easily lose their self-esteem because of the discrimination that they experience in their daily schooling life.

4.5.2 Academic achievement

Furthermore, the above finding is compatible with that of Glence (2014), who found that the classism experiences of the participants had a negative impact on the achievement potential of the participants. This is due to the fact that in the data generated, it was evident that the learners who experienced classism and discrimination based on their class background experienced a decrease in their achievement potential. The nine participants, who come from poverty-stricken families, mentioned that they decreased in achievement potential. As a result, some of them ended up repeating the same grade several times. In this regard, one participant from Cebo High School had this to say.

Firstly, do you still remember what I told you earlier? I told you I failed my Grade 8, though I never told you my reasons. Okay, now that you deserve to know. My uncle had problems at work when I was in Grade 8 and that affected me a lot because there were some days when I would not come to school because I had no money for transport, I was left behind in my school work. If I was from a rich family, I would be doing my Grade 12 this year, but look at me now. Fine, also it really hurts me to be so discriminated based on my social class here at school, as a results, I even fail to concentrate in the class. Coming to school with no lunchbox is another

problem, during break time I would starve and it is quite difficult to concentrate when I am hungry in the classroom [Selu, 19-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

It is evident from Selu's narrative that classism negatively impacted his achievement potential. Similar results were found in Glence's study as a lack of school 'belonging' is associated with the low academic performance of learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds. Likewise, one participant from Mber Christian school expressed a similar view about the impact that classism had on her learning.

It really has bad impact. It really discourages me to learn, I would say what is the use of me bothering myself with books because I won't be recognised! My marks do drop drastically in such a way that I even fail during first term due to the fact that I was discriminated in my class because I had no calculator, my maths teacher would kick me out of the class room the whole term until my friend asked her parents to buy me one. So, this affected me very much [Mini, 19-year-old girl, Mber Christian School].

This implies that impoverished learners' academic potential decreased when they experienced classist behaviour in their schools. This is also noted by Pillay (2006), who states that the poor academic performance of learners from impoverished backgrounds is caused by the discrimination they experience at school. A similar experience was narrated by a participant from Vico secondary school, who also believed that being discriminated against based on her social class had affected her academic performance in school. She had the following to say:

My performance in class is really affected cause sometime I come to class without breakfast without lunch and I lack concentration, so it's really hard for me because you find that sometimes I fail because I don't have anything in my stomach and I cannot concentrate on an empty stomach [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

Nosi echoed a similar experience to those of the other participants regarding learning on an empty stomach, which she believed impacted negatively her achievement potential. These discussions above expose the fact that learners who are discriminated against based on their poor socio-economic class and a lack of social support may have negatively impacted their academic performance and outcomes, which may increase the school dropout rate due to a lack of belonging (Glance, 2017). This has been happening in the three researched school as Selu and Nosi revealed that they repeated their 8th grade due to the fact that they were discriminated against and ill-treated by other students at the school, which resulted in poor academic performance.

4.5.3 Demotivation

The above finding is consistent with what Glence (2014) found in his research. Based on Glence's (2014) participants' formal learning, it was found that the classism experiences of participants impacted negatively on their school attendance. Similar findings were observed in this research as the data generated revealed that classism and class discrimination may directly and even indirectly cause learners to drop out of school. This was evident in the responses of most of the participants when asked about the way in which they thought their experiences of classism had affected them in terms of their learning at school. This is what one participant from Mber High School said regarding this:

It changes your mindset. I do not want to go to school anymore. I don't want to go there; I always feel sick when am about to go to school. It really hurts because I am losing my mentality in terms of being an academic student [David, 16-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

It is apparent from David's response that classist experiences impacted his formal learning experiences. According to Glence (2014), children who experience classism in their schools might end up dropping out of school. A similar feeling was shared by Luba from Cebo High School, who also mentioned that he did not want to come to school anymore:

To be honest with you, I do not want to come to school anymore! I hate school. I once thought of dropping out of school. At school I am a laughing stock. Even in the class, I cannot concentrate properly. I am not even doing very well in my subjects. This create some sort of anger inside me. I am very aggressive. I trust no one! [Luba, 17-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

It is evident in the above extract that children from impoverished families basically end up hating school. Another participant from Cebo High School also shared a similar experience regarding the way he felt about the impact of classist experiences on his attendance.

I failed my Grade 8 due to this. Secondly, I do not want to come to school anymore because I am not doing well anymore, I think a lot about my social class and the pressure I get from school. [Selu, 19-year-old boy, Cebo high school]

The discussions above show that classism in schools results in learners who are victims of classism (poor children) dropping out from school at a very young age. Some learners cannot bear to be constantly reminded of how poor they are, especially in terms of the issue of school fees; some learners chose to dropout from school due to the fact that their parents could not

afford to pay school fees. Hence, they did not see a need to continue attending knowing that they would not see their results at the end of the term/year due to outstanding fees. Bulk (2009) reveals that learners who cannot afford to pay other school requirements, like school fees, are likely to drop out from school.

4.6 FACTORS PROMOTING THE MANIFESTATION OF CLASSISM

The following discussion relates to the responses that were provided by the nine participating school children at the three researched schools. The responses were based on their individual perceptions of the rationale of the impact of classism. The findings were based on a thematic content analysis. The following themes emerged:

- Powerlessness;
- Internalised oppression; and
- Racism.

4.6.1 Powerlessness

Firstly, the above finding is congruent the findings of Spaul (2012). Like in Spaul's (2012) research, the participants in the current study believed that classism had impacted them the way in which it did because of the fact that they were powerless. Powerlessness is a lack of ability, influence or power in society (Glence, 2014). The participants mentioned that they did not have power over their situation, which is why classism had negatively impacted their lives, as further discussed in the preceding discussion. They indicated that they had no power over their teachers because firstly they were older than them, and secondly, they had all the authority to make informed decisions. As discussed earlier, some teachers are classist and the participants said that they had no power over that either. Taking, for instance, a shared experience of one of the participants from Vico Secondary School:

Some other teachers are classist. Especially our subjects are demanding. Since I am doing consumer studies, so we had to pay money for practical, so I had no money! The teacher beated me up! Why did she do that? Why did she beat me up? Well it was simple because I am poor! She was supposed to understand that my parents did not afford such money! But she chose to beat me up. These teachers are classist! [Zuki, 18-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

It is obvious from Zuki's experience that children have no power over their educators. From Zuki's narrative it is apparent that firstly, the teacher was older than her, which on its own

means that the teacher exercised power over her. Secondly, the teacher had all the authority to make informed decisions, no matter how wrong they were, which in this case led to the teacher physically, and illegally, abusing the learner. Lastly, the teacher had money, which may also be why she behaved that way. According to Spaul (2012), learners do not participate in making decisions that affect the conditions of their lives and actions, and in this sense, all learners lack significant power. Thus, the issue of powerlessness is a rationale for classism impacting in the way that is described in the preceding discussions.

4.6.2 Internalised oppression

The participants in Pillay's (2006) study, like the participants in the current study, believed that classism impacted them way in which it did because of the fact that they had internalised their own oppression. This was evident as the participants shared the fact that they did not want to tell anyone about their economic status. They all mentioned that it was very difficult to tell a friend or even a teacher about their home background. They expressed the same idea that, if they happened to tell anyone where they came from, it would make them the laughing stock at school. They felt that being poor is something that you should keep secret. This shows that they did not want to challenge their own oppression. Linked closely to this idea, Zolo from Mber Christian School made the following statement:

It is not easy at all! Once you tell one person about you home background, he/she won't keep quiet, you will be the talk of the town. So I better shut up! You better keep your story and shut your mouth! There is no need to tell people about my home background, it won't change anything, and I cannot change their attitude towards me [Zolo, 15-year-old boy, Mber Christian School].

It can be seen that children from impoverished backgrounds internalise their own oppression. They do not want to challenge or question it, and simply accept their situation. According to Pillay (2006), children from poverty-stricken families like those from informal settlements collude in their own oppression. Likewise, one participant from Vico secondary echoed a similar sentiment on the issue of telling a friend/teachers about her socio-economic status:

Teachers, NO! But learners and friends it is very difficult. Because in our days you cannot trust anyone. You find that you talk to someone about your problems, the next day you get in a small fight then they disclose everything you have told them. That is why it is so difficult to discuss your issues with learners or someone you call a friend [Nosi, 21-year-old girl, Vico Secondary School].

It is evident from Nosi's shared experience that she was not willing to tell anyone about her economic background. This also shows that she was not willing to challenge her oppression. It is noted from the above discussions that learners find it difficult to tell anyone about their class/backgrounds. Most of them indicated that they had trust issues because revealing their secret could lead to public humiliation. Heyneman and Stern (2013) explain that classism has a negative impact on the self-confidence and self-esteem of poor socio-economic status children in such a way that they find it difficult to tell other people about their economic background, which then leads to them being part of the perpetuation of their own oppression.

4.6.3 Racism

Lastly, the above finding is consistent with what Letsoalo (2013) found in his study about classism in schools. Like the participants in Letsoalo's (2013) research, this study's participants' reports reinforce the notion that classism and racism can never be separated. The participants believed that classism had impacted them the way in which it did because of the agency of non-Black races. The participants revealed that White teachers and other learners still exercised agency over Black learners. They still held the idea that Black learners come from poverty-stricken backgrounds. It was clearly seen in this research that some non-Black teachers as well as learners made the Black participants in this study feel inferior and subordinated. Crenshaw (1989) posits that it is very difficult to separate class and race, therefore these two are intertwined. The data generated revealed that classism and racism cannot be separated from each other. This was evident from the experiences shared by most of the participants who mentioned that children and teachers from other races were very classist and always wanted to exercise their agency over Black learners. They did not like Black learners because of their class/background. One participant from Mber Christian school had this to say based on the issue of class and race:

In class, obviously! In our classroom we are divided in rows, where we have rows for Whites, one for Blacks, one for Indians and Coloureds. We are not allowed to go to the White's territory, Indians territory as well as Coloured territory. So, we are there as Blacks, we are not their friends as well. However, nobody told me to go and sit where Black students were seated [Zolo, 15-year-old boy, Mber Christian, School].

It is evident from Zolo's narrative that class and race cannot be separated. Pre-1994, White people were the richest population in South Africa, following Indians, Coloured people and lastly, Black Africans, who were the poorest population. Thus, the stigma of poverty about

Black people still exists, which is why in other schools like Mber Christian School, learners were still segregating themselves according to their races. According to Spaul (2012), racism negatively affects the mental health of those who are being discriminated against by denying them essential experiences such as a sense of security and warmth, freedom for personal growth, and identification with a community of equals. In the current study, the participants believed that White individuals were doing this purposefully because they did not want to associate themselves with poor Black learners since White learners were perceived as an agent racial group and Blacks were still perceived as a target racial group.

The finding of racist behaviour in this research is confirmed by similar results in the study conducted by Pillay (2006), who points out that educators are still racist in schools even though schools are now open to all races. Likewise, horizontal racism was observed in his study as he found that Black learners from higher socio-economic classes joined forces against Black learners from the informal settlements. He said that this may indicate that classism is a stronger issue than racism. A similar perception was shared by another participant from Cebo High School, who said that class and race cannot be separated, and he believed that racial agency is a rationale for classism to impact him in the in which it did.

Last year, I joined cricket as sport code since in my school it is compulsory to join sports, so they (White coach) denied me to join cricket club because they said I won't afford to buy crickets kits. I was so embarrassed and disappointed and regretted I was born from such background. Especially, teachers from other races would try to hide they are racist, but I know because I am a victim [Selu, a 19-year-old boy, Cebo High School].

According to Bowleg (2012), the theory of intersectionality posits that multiple social categories such as class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status intersect at the micro level of individual experience to reflect multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at the macro level. Taking the preceding argument further, Crenshaw (1989) believes that neither classism nor racism are new and we will still continue to contest and talk about it. She further notes that classism and racism cannot be separated from each other. This is why these children believe that in schools' people of other races always have the mentality that Black people are poor and they mistreat them based on their social background.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has consolidated aspects from the participants in terms of each research question, the theoretical framework, as well as the literature review. In essence, some essential points were discussed as they relate to the findings of the children's experiences of classism in their schools. Firstly, the key issues relating to the findings on the participants' experiences of classism and spaces in which the participants identified classism to manifest included, amongst others, but in no particular order of importance: exclusion, public humiliation, intolerance, stigmatisation, exclusion from sports, segregation, experiences of school fees and experiences of access to school.

Secondly, key issues that relate to the impact of classism on the participants' participation in school include, among others, but not limited to the following: impact on confidence, impact on achievement potential, and impact on motivation. Lastly, the factors that promote the manifestation of classism include, amongst others, the following: powerlessness, internalised oppression, and racism. In the next chapter, which is the concluding chapter, the main conclusions and recommendations of this research are presented.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter presented an analysis of the collected data. This chapter concludes this research by firstly providing a synopsis of the study. Secondly, a discussion of the main finding.

5.2 SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY

The focus of this research was to explore the experiences and impact of classism within the formal and recreational spaces of children in three South African schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

Chapter 1 introduced the study by proving the background and the rationale of the study. I highlighted the significance of undertaking this study by presenting a problem statement. This study was undertaken to explore children's experiences of classism in their schools, expose the factors that promote the manifestation of classism and lastly, reveal the impact that classism has on children's participation in their school activities. Chapter 1 also provided the objectives, key research questions, limitations and key concepts used in the study, as well as an overview of the entire study.

Chapter 2 offered a review of the literature and theoretical framework. The literature review included relevant information regarding the issue of classism in schools. The following themes pertaining to classism in education were discussed: equity and social justice in education, where classism as a form of oppression was explicitly defined; and different types of socio-economic statuses, namely, working/lower class, middle class and upper class. This chapter further discussed classism in education together with the ways in which classism is manifested in schools. Finally, the literature review exposed the negative consequences of classism in schools for learners with poor socio-economic status. Chapter 2 further discussed the theoretical framework that underpinned this study, which was the Theory of Intersectionality.

Chapter 3 provided a documented and in-depth description of the research design and methodology. This study was underpinned by the critical paradigm and adopted a qualitative research approach. The research design employed was a narrative enquiry. It utilised the purposive sampling method in selecting the participants. The data generation methods used in

this study included critical conversations during the narratives of the participants. This chapter also discussed the relevant ethical considerations and issues of trustworthiness in the study.

Chapter 4 presented an analysis and discussions of the presented data and an interpretation of the emergent findings derived from the data generation methods explained in Chapter 3. This chapter was structured according to the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data in order to answer the research questions. The findings indicated that children from impoverished families were excluded, publicly humiliated, stigmatised and segregated in their schools. It further outlined that classism impacts negatively on their participation in school activities as it decreases their confidence, academic performance and their motivation to continue with schooling. In this chapter, the findings unveiled that powerlessness, internalised oppression and racism were the factors that promote the manifestation of classism in schools.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The key research question that this study sought to address was: What are the experiences, manifestations and impact of classism within learners' formal learning and recreational spaces in three South African schools?

While the sub-research questions were as follows:

- a) What are the participants' experiences of classism in schools?
- b) Which factors promote the manifestation of classism?
- c) How does classism affect the participants' participation in school activities?

In addressing the above questions, the findings of this study indicate that all of the learners participating in this research were marginalised in their school environment because of their socio-economic standing. The participants revealed the fact that they were excluded in their schools, which was evident from the shared experiences of participants such as David (Mber Christian School), Nosi (Vico Secondary School) and Zuki (Vico Secondary School), who revealed that they were excluded from most of the school activities because of their economic background. A lack of school stationary, and uniforms that were not in good condition were the primary causes of this marginalisation. The findings of the study seem to show that marginalisation has a negative impact on students' psychological, emotional and physical health (Pillay, 2006). This is due to the fact that these learners from poverty-stricken families

were isolated as teachers and other learners from middle-class families did not want to associate with them.

In essence, the findings of this study demonstrate that the participants' experiences of marginalisation went beyond what we could observe as these learners' experiences resulted in hopelessness, powerlessness and self-doubt. The majority of the participants stated that they no longer saw a need to participate in their classes or to go to school because they felt invisible in their classrooms as even their teachers did not treat them well.

Additionally, the findings of this research show that most of the participants from the three researched schools appeared to have very low-self-esteem, hence they were reluctant to interact with other learners. Moreover, they did not find it comfortable participating in class discussions, study groups, extra-mural sports and other institutionally sponsored events. This was apparent from the conversations that I had with the participants where they revealed that they did not actively get involved in sports at their respective schools due to the reasons discussed in Chapter 4, which included limited funds to pay for sportswear and sports kits. These findings convey the idea that children from poverty-stricken families feel inferior at school.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the participants' academic performance was negatively affected by their daily classist experiences at school. This further resulted in poor academic performance due to the negative impact of classism on concentration in the classroom, as well as the emotional well-being of these children. It was found that these learners would come to school hungry and would go without food at break time. This resulted in a lack of concentration in the classroom as they were always hungry. Therefore, the findings of the research illustrate that children from impoverished families do poorly at school and their work potential diminishes because their emotional well-being is damaged.

It is imperative to also mention that the findings of this study suggest that we can never separate classism and racism as both are forms of oppression and are intertwined. Most of the participants, especially those from Mber Christian School and Cebo High School, in their individual interviews mentioned the practice of racial discrimination at their schools, which goes together with classism. They expressed that some teachers were racist and did not like Black learners because they held the stigma that Black people are poor. They even mentioned that learners from other races, especially those from White families, would not associate

themselves with Black children because they believed that Black people are from poor, township communities. This research further revealed that the practice of racism negatively affects the mental health of Black children from impoverished families, which concurs with Pillay (2006), who postulates that racism negatively affects the mental health of Black children, denying them essential needs such as a sense of security and warmth, freedom for personal growth and the identification with a community equals.

Nevertheless, this study also found that public humiliation was a frequent classist experience amongst the interviewed participants. This public humiliation was found to be another cause of the self-doubt that impoverished children have and their reluctance to interact with others. Most of the participants mentioned that they were constantly reminded about their family background in public spaces by their teachers and sometimes their peers. They further emphasised that they found it difficult to tell other learners or teachers about their socio-economic background because of their fear of being publicly humiliated. The experience of public humiliation that these participants went through demonstrates how they were detested and badly treated by staff members as well as peers. These findings have implications for South African educationalists in their planning of programmes and policies aimed at addressing class related issues in schools, and the education system as a whole. This would assist in challenging classism and promoting class integration and equity in schools. Having presented the findings of this study, an outline of the implications thereof is detailed below.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings in this study indicate that children from poverty-stricken families have many classist experiences at school, both inside the classroom, as well as outside the classroom, which affected them in their daily school activities. Therefore, it is proposed that in interrelating these learners' experiences of classism, intersectionality should be adopted, which considers that various forms of social stratification such as class, race, age, creed, religion, gender and sexual orientation do not exist separately from each other, but are interwoven (Crenshaw, 1989).

This section presents and discusses the implications of this study, which are based on the research questions as well as the findings of this study. To address the findings of the data, the following implications are presented: the implications for government, implications for schools, and lastly the implications for society.

5.4.1 Implications for government

One of the findings of the study was that children from poverty-stricken families are marginalised at school and are excluded from most school activities. Inadequate school stationary and uniforms seemed to be a cause of this marginalisation. I therefore recommend that government has to play a central role in changing the situation of such children. It has to find ways of creating job opportunities for the many unemployed parents so that learners can afford to buy themselves enough school stationary and adequate uniforms. It was also found in that the poor academic achievement potential of learners from impoverished families is caused by hunger since these children sometimes find it difficult to concentrate on an empty stomach. Therefore, I propose that the Department of Health could monitor nutritional and feeding schemes in schools so as to ensure that children are indeed being fed.

5.4.2 Implications for schools

Schools themselves could play a vital role in challenging the issue of classism within the school environment. Schools should commence with creating personal and group empowerment. In this regard, learners could be exposed to activities that help them to change their negative mentality about each other and learn to tolerate and appreciate each other's differences. These groups will help to bring together children from different backgrounds to learn from each other. This would create a positive learning and socialising environment for all learners. I propose that this could be done in schools through youth development programmes, workshops on team building, as well as diversity management. Life Orientation teachers could co-ordinate such activities. A lot could be achieved in these sessions, and learners' self-esteem and confidence would be boosted, racial discrimination could also be addressed because learners would learn to appreciate diversity.

I also propose that the curriculum should include topics about classism and teachers should be encouraged to approach such topics by being shown the value embedded in so doing. This could create a platform for learners to share their experiences from their economic backgrounds and help them to learn from each other. In support of this proposal Pillay (2006) postulates that "the experiences of learners could be included as part of the curriculum, for example if a lesson on different types of homes are taught, the teachers should not have pictures of middle- and upper-class homes only, but pictures of shacks should also be included". Nevertheless, this could also assist teachers to know more about people who live in poverty and also learn to

tolerate them, as it was noted from the findings that some of the participants' teachers did like children from impoverished backgrounds. I recommend that teachers need to be trained to work with school children from diverse backgrounds, inclusive of those from poverty-stricken families.

5.4.3 Implications for society

A school belongs to the whole community; hence it is the property of everyone who lives in that community. Therefore, the community has a big role to play in ensuring the well-being of children who attend schools, including staff members. Thus, the community at large can fight against classism in schools. I therefore recommend that parents should also become active members in school governance. This could help because parents would campaign for equity in schools and create campaigns where they would teach their children about classism and its impact on the lives of those who are victims of such exclusion. In addition to this, I recommend that the parents of children from middle-class backgrounds could sponsor or donate food, uniforms, stationary or even pay the school fees of children from poverty-stricken families instead of simply laughing at them. This recommendation means that the school and community should be partners in creating a non-oppressive and free school environment that is non-classist and conducive for teaching and learning to take place. My recommendations also include implications for future research.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Derived from the research findings are the implications for further research.

As mentioned earlier, the focus of this study was on learners' experiences of classism in three South African schools, but it would be valuable for further research to focus on *educators'* experiences of classism at schools. This is due to the fact that the school environment also includes teachers, therefore they may also experience classism from other colleagues, negatively affecting their working experience and their work relations with colleagues as well as learners. It was apparent in this study that the classist experiences of learners negatively impacted their schooling experience and affected their wellbeing at school. This is why I recommend that teachers should be included by future researchers as they may be experiencing the same exclusion as learners.

In this study, three schools were purposefully selected in an urban area in Durban (KZN). Therefore, I propose that schools in rural areas should be selected for future research as the research indicates that most people there live in poverty, thus learners from these areas may be experiencing horizontal classism from their peers or teachers as well. Secondly, this would add positively to the classist research sites analysed in research in this field. However, this study proved that classism in urban schools does exist. Therefore, future research should look at what is happening in rural schools regarding the classist experiences of children.

Furthermore, most of the selected participants from the three schools were exclusively Black, which indicates a racial imbalance amongst the participants. Therefore, further research should consider learners from other races to introduce racial balance. This study showed that Black learners are more often than not the victims of classism in schools, however, this would perhaps not be the case if the majority of participants were from the White/Indian/Coloured population. This further resulted in the finding that racism is a manifestation of classism.

Future studies should also look at various factors like increasing the sample size because this study had a limited number of participants (nine learners). I therefore suggest more participants be interviewed in future studies. Increasing the sample size would provide more data, as well as more varied and rich data on the classist experiences of school children. While those who participated in this study gave explicit narratives, I stand by the recommendation of a larger sample for future research.

Finally, future studies could explore legitimate ways to fight/challenge classism in South African schools. It has been shown that discrimination in our schools has changed from racism to classism, thus we need legitimate ways to fight/challenge classist behaviour in schools. The youth of today are the future civil servants of the state, and for that reason, the school environment must be conducive to assisting children to achieve their goals to the best of their ability. In order to make this a reality, learners need to have positive experiences at school, where there is no discrimination. Therefore, to achieve this, we need future researchers to find ways of eliminating classism in our schools.

5.6 CLOSE OF THE DISSERTATION

This chapter has concluded this study and has revealed that if schools are not more conscious of the environmental contexts of learners, or other cultural and socio-economic backgrounds,

then learners are likely to have negative experiences at school. This study also focused on the implications resulting from the data gathered in this study. It further suggests some areas of focus that other researchers could consider to further study the phenomenon of classism in South African schools, particularly in the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Questions that are based on the learner's experiences with classism in School.

1. Do you know your economic class background?
 - Well, now that you know your class background, tell me what you know about classism.
 - Have you experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this.
 - When and where in this school do you experience such behaviours?
 - When did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?
2. Do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers/friends/other learners about your own class background? If YES/NO explain why do you find it easy/difficult.
3. What has been good for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in? what has been difficult?
4. In what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner
5. Have you ever been discriminated (verbally/non verbally) by anyone in this school (teacher/learner) based on your social background? If yes, then explain how did this happen.
6. How did this discrimination you have mentioned above affects your learning in this school?

Questions based on forms on which classism is perpetuated/exists in school:

- a) Tell me about the following things pertaining your schooling experience:
 - School fees/ cost of schooling

- School uniform
- School stationary
- Cost of transport to and from school
- Sport codes
- School trips
- Lunch

APPENDIX B



UNIVERSITY OF
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INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Bedford Hall
Room 3
Hospital Road
Durban
4001
03/May/2018

The School Principal
Vico Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. As part of my degree fulfilment, I am required to conduct research. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education. I therefore, kindly seek permission to conduct research in your school. The title of my study is **Exploring Children's Experiences of Classism in Schools: Narrative Inquiry**.

This study aims to explore the children's experiences of classism in schools. It will therefore focus on learners. I'm interested to conduct my research in your school I will only select three learners to participate in this study where semi structured interviews will be conducted. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-40 minutes at the times convenient to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Each interview will be voice recorded for trustworthiness of the study.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research study.

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s, during and after the reporting process.

All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names will be used to represent your names.

Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequences/penalty on your part.

The interviews shall be voice-recorded.

For further information on this research, please feel free to contact my supervisors Dr. Claire Gaillard-Thurston who can be contacted on [REDACTED], Email: [REDACTED].

My contact details: SMK Cele: Cell; [REDACTED], email: [REDACTED].

Your anticipated positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated. I would like to thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully

SMK Cele (Mr)

APPENDIX C



Bedford Hall
Room 3
Hospital Road
Durban
4001
03/May/2018

The School Principal
Mber Christian School

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. As part of my degree fulfilment, I am required to conduct research. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education. I therefore, kindly seek permission to conduct research in your school. The title of my study is **Exploring Children's Experiences of Classism in Schools: Narrative Inquiry**.

This study aims to explore the children's experiences of classism in schools. It will therefore focus on learners. I'm interested to conduct my research in your school I will only select three learners to participate in this study where semi structured interviews will be conducted. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-40 minutes at the times convenient to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Each interview will be voice recorded for trustworthiness of the study.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research study.

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s, during and after the reporting process.

All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names will be used to represent your names.

Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequences/penalty on your part.

The interviews shall be voice-recorded.

For further information on this research, please feel free to contact my supervisors Dr. Claire Gaillard-Thurston who can be contacted on [REDACTED], Email: [REDACTED].

My contact details: SMK Cele: Cell; [REDACTED], email: [REDACTED].

Your anticipated positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated. I would like to thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully

SMK Cele (Mr)

APPENDIX D



Bedford Hall
Room 3
Hospital Road
Durban
4001
03/May/2018

The School Principal
Cebo High School

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele a Masters student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. As part of my degree fulfilment, I am required to conduct research. Please be informed that I have sought the necessary permission in advance from the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education. I therefore, kindly seek permission to conduct research in your school. The title of my study is **Exploring Children's Experiences of Classism in Schools: Narrative Inquiry**.

This study aims to explore the children's experiences of classism in schools. It will therefore focus on learners. I'm interested to conduct my research in your school I will only select three learners to participate in this study where semi structured interviews will be conducted. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-40 minutes at the times convenient to them which will not disturb teaching and learning. Each interview will be voice recorded for trustworthiness of the study.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research study.

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance/s, during and after the reporting process.

All your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names will be used to represent your names.

Participation is voluntary; therefore, you are free to withdraw at any time you so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequences/penalty on your part.

The interviews shall be voice-recorded.

For further information on this research, please feel free to contact my supervisors Dr. Claire Gaillard-Thurston who can be contacted on [REDACTED], Email: [REDACTED].

My contact details: SMK Cele: Cell; [REDACTED], email: [REDACTED].

Your anticipated positive response in this regard will be highly appreciated. I would like to thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully

SMK Cele (Mr)

APPENDIX E



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YAKWAZULU-NATALI

INFORMED CONSENT SHEET PRINCIPAL

I, _____ (Full Name)

hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this study,
and do hereby grant permission for the study to be conducted.

Signature of Principal

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

APPENDIX F



School of Education, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Edgewood Campus,

Dear Parent/Guardian

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa. I am interested in doing a research about the topic: **Exploring Children's Experiences of Classism in South African Schools: A Narrative Inquiry**

To gather the information, I am interested in asking you to allow your child to participate in this study by asking him/her some questions.

Please note that:

- Your child's confidentiality is guaranteed as his/her inputs will not be attributed to him in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
- Any information given by your child cannot be used against him, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- Your child has a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. He/she will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your child's involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

I can be contacted at:

Email : [REDACTED]

Cell : [REDACTED]

My supervisor is Dr. Claire Gaillard-Thurston who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email: [REDACTED], Phone number: [REDACTED]

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms P Ximba (HSSREC Research Office)

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: kimbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

APPENDIX G



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YAKWAZULU-NATALI

PARENT CONSENT FORM

I..... (Full name of parent) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Exploring Children’s Experiences of Classism in South African Schools: A Narrative Inquiry.**

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me, and I consent voluntarily agree for my child (Full Names of a child) to take part in the study.

I understand that my child is at liberty to withdraw from the research any time should he/she so desire.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

----- Date-----

Thanking you in advance

Mr. SMK Cele

APPENDIX H



School of Education, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Edgewood Campus,

Dear Participant (Learner)

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Siyanda Mluleki Kenneth Cele I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa. I am interested in doing a research about the topic: **Exploring Children's Experiences of Classism in South African Schools: A Narrative Inquiry**

To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

I can be contacted at:

Email : [REDACTED]

Cell : [REDACTED]

My supervisor is Dr. Claire Gaillard-Thurston who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email: [REDACTED], Phone number: [REDACTED]

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms P Ximba (HSSREC Research Office)

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

APPENDIX I



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CHILD ASSENT FORM

I..... (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: **Exploring Children’s Experiences of Classism in South African Schools: A Narrative Inquiry.**

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me, and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant (Child)

----- Date-----

Signature of Parent/Guidant (If the participant is below 18 years)

----- Date-----

Thanking you in advance

Mr. SMK Cele

APPENDIX J



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma

Tel: 033 392 1041

Ref.:2/4/8/1386

Mr SMK Cele
PO Box 49825
Port Shepstone
4642

Dear Mr Cele

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"EXPLORING CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF CLASSISM IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 November 2017 to 09 July 2020.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Phindile Duma at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

Umlazi District

Dr. EV Nzama

APPENDIX K

Exclamation Translations

To whom it may concern

The dissertation entitled, "Exploring Classism Experiences of Children in South African Schools: A Narrative Inquiry" has been edited and proofread as of 26 February 2019.

As a language practitioner, I have a Basic degree in Languages, an Honours degree in French and a Master's degree in Assessment and Quality Assurance. I have been translating, editing, proofreading and technically formatting documents for the past seven years. Furthermore, I am a member of the South African Translators' Institute (SATI) and the Professional Editors' Guild (PEG).

Please take note that Exclamation Translations takes no responsibility for any content changes made to the document after the issuing of this certificate. Furthermore, Exclamation Translations takes no responsibility for the reversal or rejection of the changes made to this document.

Kind regards



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TRANSCRIPTIONS

VICO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Interviews conducted at Vico Secondary School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date : 23 May 2018

Time : 2:30

Venue : School laboratory

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Nosi who is a learner from Vico Secondary School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the school laboratory at 2;30 pm after school hours on the 23 of May 2018. Nosi is a 21 years old African (black) Girl who is doing grade 10 in this school. She has 8 years in the same school. She has repeated some other grades due to some reasons she explained during the interview.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Nosi, do you know your economic class background?

Nosi : Yes, I know my economic class background very well. And if I may be specific, I would proudly tell you that I am coming from a very struggling home. Hence I am coming from a very poor background.

Researcher : Well, that you know your economic class background, tell me what you know about classism?

Nosi : Classism is when people in our societies normally categorise each other how financially well at home, where you coming from where your house, if you house is in suburbs, sharks etc. So classism is basically about classing each other based on what we know about each other. We normally say “ooh this one is from the squatter camps, and I am from the suburbs” well, that is classism.

Researcher : I am very happy that you seem to understand what classism is. Now tell me have you ever experience classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this?

Nosi : Fortunately, I have experienced classism in this school.

Researcher : Then go ahead my girl. Tell me about it.

Nosi : Well, when I was in grade eight, people got me better and they found where I leave. I even got scared to talk in the class because they would class me based on where live.

Researcher : Is that all?

Nosi : Even in the class I was scared to say anything cause the learners would say “that a child from squatter camps” that hurt me badly because they classed me based on where I live, which is unfortunately not my choice.

Researcher : Tell me when and were in this school do you experience such behaviour.

Nosi : During class hours. Sometime during free periods, my peers would make jokes about where my mother works. My mom is working as a domestic worker, so they sometimes class me based on that.

Researcher : When did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

Nosi : I first learnt about classism and attitude of people when I was doing grade 9 again in 2016. In grade 8 we were all new, nobody cared where you coming from, and we did not judge each other. But when we were in grade 9 it was a different story.

Researcher : Do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers/friends/other learners about your own class background?

Nosi : Teachers, NO! But learners and friends it is very difficult. Because in our days you cannot trust anyone. You find that you talk to someone about your problems the next day you get in a small fight then they disclose everything you have told them. That is why it is so difficult to discuss your issues with learners or someone you call a friend.

Researcher : And teachers?

Nosi : With the teachers, sometimes it's easy and sometimes it is not. You find that some teachers are easily approachable and some are not. some you can talk to them and they understand your issue cause sometimes when they were younger they go through that. But some teachers they don't understand you tell a teacher your problem the next day they make an example about your issues din class, they talk about your issues in class which is something that is not really nice to experience when other kids be looking at you and be like that one has gone through that.

Researcher : What has been good for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in?

Nosi : Well, basically it has taught me responsibility, respect it taught me that in life you have to work harder from what you have.

Researcher : Can you explain more my dear...

Nosi : You have to grow from what you are. So every time people say "she is from there" it makes me grow stronger, it makes me want to do more for myself and prove to them that I did choose the background I am in. they can at least judge me 10 years from now. So it teaches me to work hard and that perseverance is everything, that if I can bare the background that I am in right now I can achieve more for myself.

Researcher : Then what has been difficult?

Nosi : Oh well! It's been difficult to interact with other kids, because you be when you are putting groups in class to do activities no one would want to be with you because I am not like them.

Researcher : Proceed!

Nosi : It really difficult because during break time I sometime do not have money for lunch so sometimes I would go outside because everyone would be pitying for me saying "oh she is from the sharks, she does not have food, she is poor"

Researcher : So and tell me in what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?

Nosi : Well, it affects me because like I said, when you raise your hand and you want to lay something somebody cracks joke and say "it's the child from the sharks, the child who does not have a Jessy". So it becomes difficult as a learner to express yourself because you are afraid that when you trying to express yourself they will make a joke about where you coming from. I just shut up even if I know what to say.

Researcher : Have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school based on your social background?

Nosi : Yes! I have by the learners. Not the teachers, teachers do not know very much about me because I am quiet. But the learners since they know here I am from they have discriminated me. Especially nobody wants to be my friends, they be we don't want to talk to that child who is from the sharks. She does not have money for lunch so she will eat your money.

Researcher : What about the teachers?

Nosi : Some teachers they are nice, maybe it how they grew up. I don't know. But others be like, "this is the school not the sharks, is this how you do things in the sharks?" it really hurts!

Researcher : Then how did this discrimination you have mentioned affects your learning in this school?

Nosi : It decreases my potential, it makes me think that I am less of a human being, I sometimes don't even study because I know that I will not be recognised, no

matter what I do nobody wants to recognise what I am doing. Myself as a human being, it makes me feel like I am not worth anything.

Researcher : What about your performance?

Nosi : My performance in class is really affected cause sometime I come to class without breakfast without lunch and I lack concentration so it's really hard for me because you find that sometimes I fail because I don't have anything in my stomach and I cannot concentrate on an empty stomach.

Researcher : Do you have something to say about the cost of schooling?

Nosi : Yes, I do because I remember last year I did not get my report. The school said if you do not pay the school fees by the end of the year you will not get your report, even the following I did not get the report until my mom came to explain she does not have the money. I see the following year whether I passed or not. The school fees are 600 rands and it is difficult for my mother to pay such because sometimes we even struggle for a single potato.

Researcher : School uniform?

Nosi : School uniform, my school skirt is very short. The teachers always complaining about that. They do not understand why I am wearing this skirt.

Researcher : Mmh! Tell me more please.

Nosi : They think I am trying to attract and seduce boys. Which is not true, no boy is attracted to me because of where I am I don't even care about them it does not matter. As for my school Jessy, one kid from my class gave me a Jessy, but now the Jessy is torn. It has holes in the elbows and children laugh about it.

Researcher : Do you have everything for the school stationary?

Nosi : Not everything. I don't have a calculator; I am doing science but I don't have all necessary staff. My maths teacher would kick me out every day, and its only me who goes out of the class. I am also doing EGD but I don't have ruler to draw.

Researcher : Cost of transport?

Nosi : I walk when I am coming to school. I always come late because it is too far. Well, the teachers do not understand. I am always on detention for being late. Everyday cleaning windows has become my daily school chore.

Researcher : Sport codes?

Nosi : I don't participate in sports. You know when you in sports, you have to have sport kits, so sometimes you find that they going to trips and all of that. w\then where can I get that money, because I know my mom does not have it. So I don't want to trouble my parents.

Researcher : Do you attend school trips?

Nosi : No as I have said before that I don't attend school trips. School trips are for learners who can afford not all of us.

Researcher : What about lunch?

Nosi : I don't bring lunch to school. Not even once.

Researcher : Thank you so much Nosi for participating in this remarkable research. But do you have any question, any suggestion, comment based on what we were discussing in here?

Nosi : I would love to say, perseverance beats it all. And you have to tolerate everything other people say about you, people will always talk. They always have something to say. Keep on being yourself. No matter what background you coming from, be yourself and make sure you succeed and kill everyone with success. Make them say how did she do that, make them believe who you are!

Researcher : Thank you once again.

Nosi : My pleasure

Researcher : Goodbye, have a good evening.

Nosi : You too have a good one.

THE END!

Interviews conducted at Vico Secondary School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date : 19 May 2018

Time : 2:30

Venue: School laboratory

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Sethu who is a learner from Vico Secondary School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the school laboratory at 2;30 pm after school hours on the 19th of May 2018. Zolo is a 20 years old African (black) boy who is doing grade 11 in this school. He has five years in the same school.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Do you know your class background?

Sethu : Yes, I do. Very well.

Researcher : Now that you know your class background, tell me what you know about classism?

Sethu : In my point of view classism is how we categorise standard of living of people, so we have those in lower, middle and higher class. Those in lower class are being oppressed and looked down upon by those in upper class.

Researcher : Proceed!

Sethu : You will find those in lower class feeling inferior because they are voiceless, they are the ones who are being discriminated against because of their economic background. Hence that how I understand classism in my own perspective.

Researcher : Tell me, have you ever experience classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this?

Sethu : Well, ok. In this school absolutely not. Just that it's a school locally in the area, it knows the people's needs. So they provide everything we need a s student to get. Everyone in here is at the same standard. But where I was before I came here there was classism. It was a private school, then the teachers and the students have the mentality that you there cause you rich. So we experience classism due to our race as well. So now being there we had to categorise ourselves, I knew there were those in higher level and those in lower level. So I knew there were those higher than me and those lower than I was.

Researcher : So tell me, where and when in that private school did you experience such behaviours?

Sethu : It was literally in the class room if I have to be honest. I think I have to tell you; it was the stationary. There is something about stationary. It comes with the books, the covers, the highlighters we used, you don't just use any highlighters. You don't just use any stationary. For me it was different, mine was very bad. I was a bit different from other kids based on the stationary I was using, hence I was also discriminated and isolated from the others based on what I used to carry at school "stationary".

Researcher : So when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

Sethu : Okay. I learnt that at home in my background. If I may share this little. My mom is a domestic worker so I grew up where she worked.

Researcher : Oh okay...

Sethu : So I grew up with white people and I grew up as a white person, hanging around with white kids. So people used to call me a "coconut", so i saw the kids

the way they looked at me. They would say “how come that you black, and you got everything like white kids?”, then that when I tend to understand that people are from different levels of society. We saw each other in different perspective you understand?

Researcher : In which class background you belong to? How would you define your class background since you grew up from such?

Sethu : I can say I am from the average background. I get what I need not what I want. Its average, that’s how I can define it.

Researcher : Do you find easy or difficult to talk to your teachers/friends/other learners about your own class background?

Sethu : Mmh! No! it’s not very easy... I just find it very difficult I may say...

Researcher : I so?

Sethu : Because if I talk to those below my level, it’s like I am bragging because I get more than they getting. And when I talk about to those upper than me, I feel ashamed. So the only way is to talk to those who are of my same level.

Researcher : So what has been good for you as a learner about being raised in a class you are in?

Sethu : Being good about it for me is about understanding and knowing what I need and putting first and first, prioritising. Doing what is supposed to be done and not wasting doing things for fun. It taught me self-control and being more matured and understanding what you need and not that you want it.

Researcher : What has been difficult?

Sethu : Sometimes you want to live in that high class, and you see that you in average. We as kids we sometimes demand. We see things then we go home “mom I need this and that” but knowing very well that parents and children don’t see eye to eye. So difficult comes there, my mom would not buy me because she would say I will buy you only the needs not the wants. Let us prioritise.

Researcher : In what way do you think being raised in a social class you belong to affects you as a learner?

Sethu : It affects your mind set. My mind set and affects my behaviour at school. Being born in this social class in a white place, I got everything and you become a spoilt brat all the time. You become selfish as well, you don't think about other kids and how they feel. Being in the average it really hard, so I now have to maintain and adapt, but I have been doing very good but it hard. Its affects me in the schooling, I am no longer doing very well at school.

Researcher : Have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school teacher/learner based on your social background?

Sethu : Have I been discriminated in this school?

Researcher : That's what I am asking.

Sethu : Mmmmh... what can I say... well when I speak they would discriminate me. Those kids from upper classes don't want to associate themselves with me anymore.

Researcher : How did this discrimination you have mentioned affects your learning in this school?

Sethu : It really affects me a lot in my learning. I actually don't want to come to school anymore. I am now very neglecting my school work; all I think about is me not being the same as others. I actually have mixed emotions.

Researcher : What about school fees. Do you actually have anything to say about school?

Sethu : My mom believes that school fees first. She pays school fees for the following year a year before. But as for those kids you cannot afford school fees, it really hard for them I don't want to lie.

Researcher : School stationary?

Sethu : My mom also prioritises school uniform so much. So with regards my school uniform is on point. I have no problem with it anyway.

Researcher : School stationary?

Sethu : I always have school stationary, my mom would buy me everything, but sometimes I am very careless, I lose all my stationary. I believe poor kids steal

from me I guess. I am sorry if I am being mean or something, but I am very convinced that these poor kids do steal from me.

Researcher : Do you travel from and to school?

Sethu : No! I walk from my house to here. It's not a long distance. Very short.

Researcher : What about the sports?

Sethu : I don't do sports. We hardly participate in sports in this school. If I may say, we only have basic sports in this school.

Researcher : With the school trips?

Sethu : I don't go to school trips. There are no school trips either!

Researcher : Lunch box? Do you bring lunch at school?

Sethu : Yes, I do bring lunch box at school. I love food.... Basically I and my friend do love food so much!

Researcher : Sethu, thank you so much for participating in this study. but before we close, do you have anything to say regarding what we have been doing.

Sethu : Let me fist thank you for including me in this study. me being included in this study made me to realise there is a lot to learn about classism.

Researcher : Once again, I am humbled! Have a good evening.

Sethu : Thank you sir, have a fantastic evening as well. Goodbye.

Researcher : Goodbye!

THE END!

Interviews conducted at Vico Secondary School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date : 19 May 2018

Time : 2:30

Venue: School laboratory

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Zuki who is a learner from Vico Secondary School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the school laboratory at 2:30 pm after school hours on the 19th of May 2018. Zuki is an 18 years old African (black) Girl who is doing grade 12 in this school. He has five years in the same school.

Researcher : well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Zuki basically, there are questions I would to ask you

Zuki : No problem Sir, I am listening.

Researcher : Now tell me, do you know your economic class background?

Zuki : Definitely yes. I know it very well

Researcher : Thank you for that, now that you know your economic class background, tell me what you know about classism?

Zuki : Yes. Classism is how people see you. Your economic status, since we have three socio-economic classes, so there is lower, middle and high economic classes. So there those in the lower class which are those people who cannot afford, and in the middle there are those who have satisfactory income who are able to provide.

Researcher : Yeah... proceed.

Zuki : Then high economic class are those who are able to maintain, high financial income who buy whatever they want at any time.

Researcher : Which level of class you belong to from the three you have mentioned?

Zuki : I am from a lower class.

Researcher : How so?

Zuki : I am saying this because I am one of those who cannot afford the basic needs, which I can count food, clothes even don't even have proper school shoes.

Researcher : Have you ever experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this?

Zuki : Yes

Researcher : Tell me about it.

Zuki : It started in primary school though. But in the primary, it was better because I was still young and at that time we had feeding scheme at school. Now that I am in the high school level, then now it quite different because we even have no feeding scheme in here.

Researcher : Now that you have experienced classism in school, then tell me where and when in this school do you experience such behaviour?

Zuki : I would say, both inside and outside the classroom. When I am talking about inside the classroom I mean like in terms of stationary and the attitudes of other learners towards me. I cannot afford some staff, and I do not want to borrow other children's staff, I chose to sit alone at the corner just because I do not want to bother them.

Researcher : Yeah makes sense...

Zuki : Even with the teachers it really disturbing having child busy borrowing from others. Teachers do not understand!

Researcher : So when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

Zuki : Well, I started to know this at a very young age. My mom would tell me about all the class issues, she told me about the fact that I was from a very low class level. Since I was a very demanding child,

Researcher : Tell me Zuki, do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers, friends and other learners about your own class background?

Zuki : I used to find it very difficult! But then as time went, I find it easy now because it's who I am. At this stage I can't change it but I am working very hard to change it. Now I talk about it cause it actually who I am.

Researcher : So what has been good for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in?

Zuki : I am able to appreciate and embrace my life. I am learning to not to depend on material things for my happiness. It not always about material things to be happy, this life teaches me to work very hard as a human being.

Researcher : What has been difficult?

Zuki : It very difficult at some times. In life there are things which really do need money. For instance, the school fees and staff. As I am doing grade twelve, I need money to apply for varsity next year, but now it really difficult for me to get this money, it really hurting I do not want to lie.

Researcher : Proceed!

Zuki : Money is not everything I know, but I need it. I even suffer from depression, and it really stressing me and it lowered my self-esteem because I cannot afford what my friends have.

Researcher : Do you have friends?

Zuki : Friends? Yes, I do have friends.

Researcher : Do they like you?

- Zuki : I don't know. My friends are from middle class, they used to help me with everything I do not have. But when times went by they ended up saying I was using them. Even with lunch box, they would bring all that nice food and I would come with phuthu you know, and they would be like "Zuki, are you being for real? phuthu at school?" Hence I ended up avoiding them and during break time I would say to them "guys I am not eating today, I am fasting, we are praying at church" whereas I knew very well from the inside that in was lying! Like bloody lying!
- Researcher : In what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?
- Zuki : As a learner, I apply for varsity we do assignments which needs research, so as a learner this background has been affecting me very much because all these things needs some money, which I do not have. My parents cannot afford all those varsity application fees. It really affecting me as a learner.
- Researcher : So, have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school based on your social background?
- Zuki : Oh yes! I have been discriminated by a learner, this learner accused me of stealing. And I was like "I did not steal from you" and he was like "you stole my money! I know that you poor, you stole my money because you needed it, you are poor". I told him I didn't steal his money. He bitted me up, just because he accused me of stealing just because I am poor.
- Researcher : What about teachers?
- Zuki : Some other teachers are classist. Especially our subjects are demanding. Since I am doing consumer studies, so we had to pay money for practical, so I had no money! The teacher bitted me up!
- Researcher : Then how did this discrimination you have mentioned affects your learning in this school?
- Zuki : It has affected me because when I am there I cannot concentrate in class. At time I think, I am here in school and break time is coming, I don't have money!

What am I going to do! Sports, I won't participate because I won't afford kits!
It always stressing me. I even suffer from depression.

Researcher : Do you have anything to share with about your school fees?

Zuki : Paying a school fee is a must! My mother has no choice, but to pay my school fees. It's a pity because our school fees are as little as 500 rands, but my mom still do not afford.

Researcher : What about school uniform? Anything to share?

Zuki : In terms of school uniform, I do not have full school uniform. One day I was called at the assemble. I and another learner. It was me with my sandals with school skirt and the shirt and this other girl was in full school uniform, so the principal made an example with me he goes on saying "this is the school uniform" he pointed his finger to the other girl and he proceeded to me and said "and this is disrespect" he pointed at me. All the other learners looked at me and laughed at me. I was so humiliated and I cried the whole day not knowing what was next.

Researcher : With the school stationary

Zuki : I have friends, some of them do understand. They give me previous year exercise books. Sometimes I would use one book for more than on subject. At the front its English, and then at the back I would write Maths and at the centre perhaps put in Geography. And teachers would fight with me, however I have no choice because of the circumstances.

Researcher : Transport?

Zuki : I take a train to and from school, my house is too far from here. Sometimes I would come late at school, and I would be punished for that.

Researcher : Sport codes?

Zuki : I don't participate in sports. At all, I love sport. But I can't do anything about it. Sports are demanding. I am very passionate about sports. I will be there watching them and pretend as if I am cool about it.

Researcher : What about the school trips?

Zuki : I have never attended school trips. I don't even tell my mom about them because I know she won't afford one. I just be there to watch them going when the bus goes. I would be hiding just to see them going.

Researcher : Lunchbox

Zuki : I don't bring lunchbox at school. I share with my friends, even though sometimes I would say "guys I am not eating today" sometime I would be starving at home no food, even when I am at school still no food.

Researcher : We have to an end of our interview. Zuki, thank you very much for participating in this interview. God bless.

Zuki :My pleasure

Researcher : Have a good evening

Zuki : Thank you!

THE END!

TRANSCRIPTIONS

CEBO HIGH SCHOOL

Interviews conducted at Cebo High School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date : 22 May 2018

Time : 2:30

Venue : School Laboratory

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Luba who is a learner from Cebo High School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the school laboratory at 2:30 pm after school hours on the 22 of May 2018. Luba is a 17 years old African (Indian) boy who is doing grade 10 in this school. He has three years in the same school.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Do you know your economic class background?

Luba : Yes! Definitely I know it!

Researcher : So tell me what is your economic class background?

Luba : I am from a very poor background I must say. Others refer to it as a lower class background.

Researcher : Tell me more what you know about classism?

Luba : Classism is where people from different class background discriminate each other based on their social class backgrounds. With classism you will find rich people oppressing poor people and poor people would be inferior about their class backgrounds.

Researcher : Well, have you ever experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this one?

Luba : Yes! Both schools, the previous school and this school as well.

Researcher : So tell me when and where in this school do you experience such behaviour?

Luba : I get discriminated during the break time. During break time you would see me standing alone by the corners of the school buildings eating my home cooked phuthu and beans. Other learners would be looking at me like a fool. I do not have friends, those I used to have isolated themselves from me because they said I am poor, I am “imbugulu” sucking up their blood meaning “I don’t provide but instead I always eat their food.

Researcher : So when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class Luba?

Luba : I first observe that when I was in Grade 5. We had a trip at school and my mom tried to get money for me. Then I went to my friend’s place to iron my clothes since at home we had no electricity. Then the mother of my friend classed me a lot, she said I have ugly clothes because at home we are poor. She even instructed my friend “her son” to stop being a friend with a parasite because I am poor.

Researcher : Do you find out easy or difficult to talk to your teachers, friends or other learners about your own class background?

Luba : It is quite difficult. Some do not take it serious! Some learners are too judgemental; they make our problems a laughing stock. My friends would always laugh at me and say “kini niyahlupheka aniyazi inyam”. It really hurt me to be treated so different.

Researcher : What has been good for you as a learner being raised in the class you are in?

- Luba : I may say, my home background makes me strong and it encourage me to learn more, and work harder to achieve my goals. I do want to change the situation of my parents of my house. So my poverty motivates me and be like “one day I want to see myself somewhere”. I want to break the cycle of poverty.
- Researcher : What has been bad about you being raised from such background?
- Luba : The most difficult part of it all is that, I am different from my peers! I am always feeling inferior. My friends are from very rich backgrounds, but mine is different. I have made peace with the fact that my family is poor, so end of the story!
- Researcher : In what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?
- Luba : It really affects me a lot, cause my school stationary is not enough. Teachers are always fighting with me. Uniform I have is in a bad condition. I don’t have kits for most of the sports. I don’t even bring along lunch at school. So yeah!
- Researcher : Have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school whether a teacher or your peer learner based on your social background?
- Luba : I got discriminated in class. And it always happens in my class. So I remember the day I was discriminated by my peer learner, I got high marks in Maths and the teacher was like “Luba got 92% in Maths, he is the highest” one of my peer classmate said “oh well, even if he got 100% we would not care much cause we know he is not going anywhere with those marks, there is no free education in varsity, we know he is poor so he is not going to varsity, who is going to pay varsity fee” and everybody was like “yeeeeeeees” I cried the whole day, I was so humiliated that day. From that day onwards, I am quit in the classroom. I do not participate anymore. I feel less important. If you know what I mean!
- Researcher :So how did this discrimination you have mentioned affects your learning in this school?

Luba : To be honest with you, I do not want to come to school anymore! I hate school. I once thought of dropping out of school. At school I am a laughing stock. Even in the class, I cannot concentrate properly. I am not even doing very well in my subjects. This create some sort of anger inside me. I am very aggressive. I trust no one!

Researcher : What are your experiences based on the school fees?

Luba : My parents cannot afford paying my school fees. My neighbour is the one who is paying my school fees because I am a very hardworking child. I stay in the informal settlement, sometimes even the teachers would ask how come that I am attending such a very expensive school while I come from such environment. They do not know that my neighbour who is extremely rich is paying for my schooling fees.

Researcher : What about your schooling uniform? Do you have enough uniform?

Luba : I don't have school uniform. It has never been enough. My shoes are torn; I have no blazer. I care no more though because this has been my life since I came to this school.

Researcher : Do you have enough school stationary?

Luba : I also don't have enough school stationary. Teachers would always fight with me wanting me to have stationary, but I don't know what to do because my mom manages to afford those basic stationary things.

Researcher : What about cost of transport, to and from school?

Luba : I do travel when I am coming to school. I use a bus, but not always. Sometime I don't come to school cause my mother cannot afford transport cost the whole month. However, I am quite aware of the fact that I am being left behind at school because the teachers do not wait for me, they continue with the syllabus whether I am present at school or not, but they do not care.

Researcher : Do you participate in sports?

Luba : I used to love rugby and athletics. I love athletics, but now I do not participate the problem is with the kits. I cannot afford to buy enough kits. Sports is my favourite thing.

Researcher : And what is the school doing about that?

Luba : The school careless as I told you. They “teachers” and school staff have that mentality that since this is a public school in the 5th quintile, so it is perceived as a school where kids from rich families attend. However, they do not take into consideration the fact that not all of us are from those families. They are not aware of the fact that there are children who are like me. Who got sponsors whom they pay for their fees. Not that we all coming from “thee” families.

Researcher : Do you go to the school trips?

Luba : Not at all. My mom cannot afford school trips. Even the who is paying me school fees made it clear that he will not pay me trips costs. So yeah!

Luba : Nooo! Not at all! I don’t bring lunch here at school.

Researcher : We have come to an end of our interview, but before we close do you have anything to share or anything you want to say in conclusion of this interview?

Luba : All I could say is that, we do need sponsors in our ex model C school because it is not guaranteed that we are all from rich families. There are kids like me, who are very poor and they suffering from oppression based on their socio economic status in these schools. So yeah.

Researcher : Thank you Luba for your participation to this study. have a very good evening.

Luba : You too have a good evening.

Researcher : Goodbye.

THE END!

Interviews conducted at Cebo High School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date : 18 May 2018

Time : 2:30

Venue: School Library

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Selu who is a learner from Cebo High School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the library of the school at 2;30 pm after school hours on the 18th of May 2018. Selu is a 19 years old African (black) boy who is doing grade 11 in this school. He has five years in the same school, hence he is supposed to be doing his grade 12 this year, but however he repeated his grade 8 twice due to some reasons he mentioned during the interviews.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Selu : Okay, I am happy to know you.

Researcher : So, tell me Selu.... Do you know your economic class background?

Selu : Mmmmh..... I am sorry to ask Kenny. What do you mean by my economic class background? Or maybe you mean my "family" economic class background?

Researcher : Exactly?

Selu : yes, I know it very well.

Researcher : Well, now that you know your class background, tell me what you know about classism.

- Selu : To be honest with you. I may not have a proper definition of classism; all I know about it is that classism is where people of lower economic background are being discriminated against based on their class background by those from upper class. To be specific, classism is where poor people are being discriminated by rich people based on their poorness.
- Researcher : Oh well said. Now tell me something have you experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this.
- Selu : Listen do not even say “in my previous school” but in this school itself there is a lot of classism behaviour I have experienced so far, even way back when I was in Grade 8 four years ago. So, YES I have experienced a numerous discrimination based on class in this school.
- Researcher : Now, that you said you have a plenty of experiences of classism in this school. So please tell me Selu: when and where in this school do you experience such behaviour?
- Selu : I think I said earlier that in this school since I started in Grade 8 I experienced classism inside the classroom and even outside the classroom environment.
- Researcher : Mmmh! Really? That sad hey... So tell me something, when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?
- Selu : Well, to be honest with you I never had any idea about class issues until I was enrolled in this school. I was born and grew up in uMlazi Location as well so in my township I was never discriminated based on my economic background because at Mlazi most of us are all from the same economic class (lower and working class), so my friends and neighbours never discriminated me based on my family background. However, when I came to this school that is where I realised I was not the same as them “rich kids”.
- Researcher : Well said, thanks. So now do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers/Friends or other learners about your own class background?
- Selu : Mmmmh not at all. I do not find it that easy.
- Researcher : No? why not? Explain to me why do you find it so difficult.

- Selu : It is not easy at all.... Eish, Kenny I cannot just feel free to tell others, especially other kids, my classmates about my economic background. It is very difficult I do not want to lie. Firstly, I am from a very poor family. My mother and father are both unemployed. So that I learn here in this school which is basically perceived as a school where children from rich families attend, my uncle “my mother’s brother” is taking care of my school fees. Well, it is not very easy to tell my friends that because they would laugh at me. I do not want to be looked like that, I know I am poor hence me being poor is my business not to explain myself to them. I am sorry for that.
- Researcher : Mmh... so is your uncle also responsible for all your school costs such as lunch box, transport to and from school, stationary, trips and staff?
- Selu : Yes, he is taking care of all those costs voluntarily.
- Researcher : Wow! You have a very loving uncle. I am inspired. Selu, what has been good for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in?
- Selu : There is absolutely nothing good about being raised in such background, but rather been stressful and difficult for me.
- Researcher : Then if it is so, tell me what has been difficult?
- Selu : Everything has been so difficult.... Where should I start? Well, in the classroom I am the only one who have unemployed parents, hence my peers are making fun of me. Sometimes I would come to school with no lunchbox, no money to buy at the school cafe. If my uncle did not give me any money for lunch, I would starve the whole day. My school stationary is not yet enough, sometimes I struggle to get some. I remember last year I lost my scientific calculator, it was so difficult to learn due to the fact that our Mem, whom I do not want to reveal in here, she would not allow me to borrow from my peers. Last year I joined cricket as sport code since in my school it is compulsory to join sports, so they (white coach) denied me to join cricket club because they said I won’t afford to buy crickets kits. I was so embarrassed and disappointed and regretted I was born from such background. Especially, teachers from other races would try to hide they are racist but I know because I am a victim.
- Researcher : Stop, Selu now why you talking about racism? How did you come to such?

Selu : Because teachers of other races, do not like me because I am poor. It is apparent from my uniform because I only have one blazer which my uncle bought when I was enrolled in this school in grade 8. So teachers would see I am from a very poor background, one of my Commerce subjects' teacher who is white, made an example in the classroom about me and being black when she was teaching Business studies, she said black people like Selu are very poor. And I was like, OMG! I did not know what was that about, if it was a racism remark or classism remark but she made that comment. All these things made me to say it is very difficult being raised in such background.

Kenny : So tell me Selu: in what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?

Selu : Firstly, do you still remember what I told you earlier? I told you I failed my grade 8, though I never told you my reasons. Okay, now that you deserve to know. My uncle had problems at work when I was in grade 8 and that affected me a lot because there were some days when I would not come to school because I had no money for transport, I was left behind in my school work. If I was from a rich family I would be doing my grade 12 this year, but look at me now. Fine, also it really hurts me to be so discriminated based on my social class here at school, as a results I even fail to concentrate in the class. Coming to school with no lunch box is another problem, during break time I would starve an it is quite difficult to concentrate when I am hungry in the classroom.

Researcher : Yes, I do remember you told me that you repeated your 8th grade. So besides your business studies teacher who made fun of you and being poor, is there any incident where you felt discriminated against based on your social class in this school be it a teacher or your peer learner?

Selu : There was this incident of a white cricket coach who denied me membership in cricket due to the fact that he assumed I would not afford crickets kits because I am poor, well he was correct but it was wrong to be addressed as such. I think I told you about that. My peers in the classroom would laugh at me uniform blazer which is torn at the bottom of each arm. I have no friends, even those of my same racial group "Blacks" do not want to associate themselves with me

because they know during break time I would not contribute anything when its lunch.

Researcher : So, do you think this discrimination you have mentioned earlier affected your learning in this school?

Selu : Definitely!

Researcher : How did this discrimination affects your learning though?

Selu : I failed my grade 8 due to this. Secondly I do not want to come to school anymore because I am not doing well anymore, I think a lot about my social class and the pressure I get from school.

Researcher : Tell me your schooling experiences pertaining school fees?

Selu : I told you earlier that, my uncle is paying my school fees of 43 490 per annum, my parents cannot afford such money since they are both unemployed. This school is ridiculously expensive!

Researcher : What about your school uniform?

Selu : my school uniform is very bad. I only have two shirts and one blazer, and two grey pants my uncle bough me at the begging of the year. my uniform is not okay at all; I feel different when I am with other kids.

Researcher : Tell me about your stationary

Selu : What about it? I have not enough stationary as I told you I lost my calculator last year and I found it so difficult to learn during accounting period. Also I do not have a laptop, I cannot do my practical when I am at home. I only get to practice CAT when I am here at school.

Researcher : Do you have something to say about transport cost to and from school?

Selu : I failed my 8th grade because I had a problem of getting transport money to and from school, which is the same problem I am currently experiencing, it is very expensive to travel from Mlazi to here every day which every month it is approximately 1500 rends and my parents sometimes struggle to afford such money.

Researcher : Mmmh..... I understand Selu, I only have one last question for you now. Tell me a little bit about sports codes, school trips and your lunch.

Selu : Sport codes are compulsory in our school, hence I was rejected in cricket because of the aforementioned reason, so I ended up with soccer which is not my favourite sport, but I choose it because soccer is not that much demanding for me. I do not attend trips because my uncle made it clear at the beginning that he would not have money to waste for trips. When it comes to lunch, I sometime bring along lunch but in most instances I don't bring lunch at all.

Researcher : Selu, thank you very much for participating in this study. do you have any questions so far, or anything to add or any suggestion based on this interview?

Selu : Let me be honest with you. I am also pleased with the fact that you chose me to participate in this study of yours, I feel honoured. But one last thing I wish to share with you is that, classism really exists in our schools and teachers and parents should do something about this. Thank you.

Researcher : Thanks for your time once again. Goodbye

Selu : Goodbye.

THE END!

Interviews conducted at Cebo High School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date: 18 May 2018

Time: 15:00

Venue: School Library

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Seun who is a learner from Cebo High School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the library of the school at 15:00 pm after school hours on the 18th of May 2018. Seun is a 16 years old (White) boy who is doing grade 10 in this school. He has three years in the same school.

Kenny : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Gooday Seun

Seun : Gooday Mr Kenny

Researcher : Seun, tell me a bit. Do you know your economic class background?

Seun : Yes, but before I go more on that I would love to thank you for involving me in your study, and yes oi do want to proceed.

Researcher : Wow! Thank you for that, I am humbled!

Seun : Yes, I do. I actually come from a very wealthy background.

Researcher : Now that you know your economic class background, so you tell me what you understand about classism?

Seun : Classism is actually a rating or the judging of levels financial backgrounds in our families, communities, schools and everywhere around the world.

Researcher : Have you ever experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this?

Seun : Yes, it once happened in this school.

Researcher : Where and when in this school do you experience such behaviour?

Seun : In the classroom.

Researcher : Then when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

Seun : I first learn this through in movies and also with my dad and having his friends “wealthy” next to him they always see people who are people as nothing, so yeah that’s how I learnt about it.

Researcher : Which then for me I strongly believe that you do have a lot to share with me about classism.

Seun : Definitely yes! I have observed so many incidents which I believe they are relevant to classism.

Researcher : Now classism issues in this interview will be relevant to a school context.

Seun : fantastic sir

Researcher : No, Seun tell me do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers/friends/other learners about your own class background? Do you find it easy or difficult?

Seun : I always find it very difficult. Because I will be like I am showing off when telling people about where am coming from. I don’t even show, nor tell people about it. Until people see it themselves, and I tell them to keep quiet about it because I don’t want to be perceived as a high class spoilt brat.

Researcher : You said to me you coming from a very rich background, which then shows to me that you are from a high economic class background rite?

Seun : Yes!

Researcher : Now tell me what has been good for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in?

Seun : The good part of all this is that everything is always on point and order for me. Breakfast, lunch school uniform, pocket money and staff is always catered for. I don't suffer at all. I even learnt how to manage money myself, since money is not a problem, I managed how to handle the money. I do not steal unlike poor people who steal when they see it.

Researcher : Money is not everything, hence being raised from such background does not necessary mean you have everything and you are happy in life, hence that is my philosophical idea. Now tell me about it, what has been difficult for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in?

Seun : It actually being with children who are in a lower class than I am. When I am trying to help it like I am showing off and I am sympathising with them. So I found it difficult to provide some sort of help.

Researcher : So tell me, how do you identify if the person is from a low class? How do you know if one of your peer learner is from a poor background?

Seun : Sometimes if the learner in the class, classmate you always see them on daily biases, maybe they don't have lunch, pencils, shoes or anything then you know you can help.

Researcher : Since you have already identified your class background, now tell me in what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?

Seun : Not at all! It does not affect me anyway.

Researcher : Now tell me if you have ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school either a teacher or another learner based on your social background? Remember classism sometimes happen the other way around.

Seun : Yes, I have been verbally discriminated, when I came late at school the other day.

Researcher : Please tell me about it.

Seun : That day I arrived at school at 9:30, at home were alone with my siblings my parents were not around. So I woke up very late that day, trying to prepare lunch myself, then the bus I normally take in the morning left me, so I took a taxi

instead and I came late at school. when I came late, there was this teacher, my class teacher Mr X, said to me “just because your family has money, and Jacob Zuma is the president of your country does not mean you can do willingly in the school.

Researcher : Tell me more about the teacher? What was the race of the teacher?

Seun : The teacher is Muslim, and he is racist!

Researcher : How do you know the teacher was racist towards you?

Seun : Me and being late and president Zuma being president and family having money was a racist remark. He said I cannot do just the way I wish to because the country is free! So he was very rude towards me. I apologised I will never be late again. Later on my dad call to bring me some lunch from Debonairs pizza, then that got to an issue again! He said I continue I was showing off again. How come?? I was hungry! I was supposed to eat as well, it's a must!

Researcher : Now that you told me about such discrimination that you have experienced, how did this discrimination you have mentioned affects your learning in this school?

Seun : It affected me in many ways. In my actions, am scared of my actions now because I may never know again everything I do might involve with my class again. Even with the teacher we never get along anymore. He was my class teacher; I hardly did his work.

Researcher : How was your performance afterwards, especially his subject?

Seun : It dropped my academic performance dropped very much because I was very uncomfortable again.

Researcher : What about the attitude towards the teacher?

Seun : It never changed! I continue respect him the way I used to. Even though I was still very hurt inside. I had some pain inside I do not want to lie. But I kept it to myself.

Researcher : Let us proceed to questions based on your schooling experiences regarding school fees of this school. Tell me how much is the school fees?

Seun : It round about 43 000, which is quite a lot! But my parents don't find t difficult to pay such money. Money is not a problem with them I once mentioned that.

Researcher : Does this affect you in anyway?

Seun : Not at all, instead it I never get worried when it comes to the letters to remind our parents to pay school fees, because I never get such letter. My parents pay all the money at the beginning of the year.

Researcher : What about your school uniform?

Seun : School uniform is great. When I say it great I mean like, every activity we do has it uniform. Sports, practical, trips, soccer, cricket and everything is taken care of. Uniform is not a problem to me at all.

Researcher : What do you do for those students you said they have problems with uniform? Do you support them?

Seun : Yes, my parents buy me more than enough school uniform, so instead of being selfish I sometimes take those extra clothes and give to these learners who look untidy and unsatisfying school uniform.

Researcher : That's a very good gesture! Keep it up. Now tell me about cost of transport?

Seun : Transport is expensive, but I never find it difficult to afford money for transport.

Researcher : What about the sport codes? Do you have anything to share with me?

Seun : It is compulsory to participate in sports. They are all good, nothing to complain about them because I have everything for sports. I never have a problem for sport kits.

Researcher : What about school trips?

Seun : Those are actually fantastic! I love school trips! I never missed one! I am always in! every single school trip, no matter am sick or what but I can't miss fun! I am always there. I get pocket money from home. Everything is catered for.

Researcher : One last question, tell me more about lunch. Do you carry lunch to school?

Seun : Lunch? My lunch is always there and it's too much for some other people. I always have apple, juice or shake, cheese. Anything as long it's not fish. But sometimes I don't bring lunch but instead pocket money to buy at the school cafeteria.

Researcher : This is the end of our interview. Let me take this opportunity and thank you again for participating in this study. Thank you very much. But before we close, do you have any question? Or anything to say, any additional comment or something?

Seun : Aah, I would just say few sentences then I am done.

Researcher : Proceed!

Seun : No matter you poor or rich in life, we all the same all human being. At the end of the day we need to respect each other and treat each other the way we would love them to treat us!

Researcher : Wow! Brilliant! Thank you for sharing with me such information. Finally, let me remind you again, this study will protect your identity your name will not be mentioned. Once the whole project is completed, I will print your one copy and give it to you so that you will see the what were the findings of this study. thank you very much once again Seun.

Seun : My pleasure sir, thank I am happy that I am part of this project. Have a good evening sir. Goodbye.

Researcher : Enjoy your evening. Goodbye!

THE END!

TRANSCRIPTIONS

MBER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Interviews conducted at Mber Christian School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date : 21 May 2018

Time : 2:00

Venue: School Library

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and David who is a learner from Mber Christian School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the library of the school at 2:00 pm after school hours on the 21th of May 2018. David is a 16 years old coloured boy who is doing grade 10 in this school. He has 3 years in the same school.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Tell me, do you know your economic class background?

David : Yes, I know it very well.

Researcher : That you know your economic class background, David now tell me what you know about classism?

David : My class background is very poor. I am a very poor learner, I come from a very poor family. Sometimes we go to bed without eating

Researcher : So do you have any idea about what classism is?

David : To me classis is economic background, like your economic income which is measured in terms of what your parents can afford. It has to do with discrimination based on the social class you belong to.

Researcher : Now tell me, have you ever experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this?

David : In this school of course I always experience classism.

Researcher : So where and when do you experience such behaviour?

David : Yes, in this school. I experience it in class mostly because I barely leave my class since I feel so ashamed about my class background. Children from other classes do not know anything about me, so they won't discriminate me based on my background because they do not even know where I am coming from. But the problem is with my classmates, yet they know everything about me so they sometimes discriminate me based on where I am coming from.

Researcher : When did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

David : I learn a lot about classism when I was enrolled in grade 8, here in this school.

Researcher : Do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers/friend/other learners about your own class background?

David : Nooo! Not at all cause, I am so ashamed to talk about. I can't just tell other people about my class background, cause even the teachers they do not care about where I am coming from.

Researcher : What about teachers?

David : Teachers do not give me any attention, but not all of them. Like let's say we are in class, they only attention to those learners from high economic class, they do not care about us, especial to me.

Researcher : How do the teachers identify that you are from poor background?

David : My uniform tells the story. They could tell by my uniform. My uniforms speak the most, and the way I am persistence to do my work. Unlike rich kids, they are very spoiled!

Researcher : So what has been for you as a learner being raised in the class you are in?

David : It taught me not to judge people about what they have and what they do not have. As a person you have to be strong, and I feel like I am very strong now.

Researcher : Then, what has been difficult about you being raised from this poor background?

David : What has been difficult for me is that firstly when I came to this school I was constantly bullied and that affected me a lot. Sometimes I could not concentrate in class, even sometimes I am hungry and I cannot concentrate as well in class. You cannot learn as normal as other kids with an empty stomach!

Researcher : In what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?

David : I think it affects me in a psychological way. My mentality changes, I cannot concentrate and my marks dropped. My ability to learn is affected.

Researcher : Do you have anything to add on this?

David : There is also this thing where people think it okay to make fun of someone on how they dress, my uniform is very bad and the learners are laughing at me.

Researcher : Have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school? Based on your social background?

David : Yes, I have. I have been bullied by other children. They used to laugh at my hair since most of them go to expensive saloon. I do my natural hair at home and sometimes it looks very untidy as well. I am very introverted; I think I have no one to talk to. I am becoming introverted because of the circumstances in I am in.

Researcher : How did this discrimination you have mentioned above affects your learning in this school?

David : It changes your mind set. I do not want to go to school anymore. I don't want to go there; I always feel sick when about to go to school. It really hurts because I am loosing, my mentality in terms of being in academic student.

Researcher : Now let us talk about your school fees. Do you have any experiences based on your school fees?

David : You know these small cards! I constantly getting these small envelopes for those final notices about you not paying school fees, it really hard because my parents cannot afford this school fees. They brought me in here because they wanted me to get better education.

Researcher : Do have anything to share with me based on your school uniform?

David : I have torn shoes. These I am wearing was given by one of the teachers in here who said her child have two pairs. I do not have a school Jessy, I took one form lost and find staff. It was very cold the other day and I went to lost and found and said I lost my Jessy, I knew I was lying, so they gave me one and that is how I got the Jessy I am currently wearing.

Researcher : What about the school stationary?

David : I don't have a=everything I want with my school stationary. I do not have money to buy one. My parents cannot afford to buy me.

Researcher : How do you come to school?

David : I take a bus.

Researcher : Where do you stay though?

David : I stay in uMlazi, hence I wake up as early as 4:00 am everyday just to catch up 6:00 bus. Sometimes I miss the bus and have to stay behind at home. I am left behind if I do not come to school. Teachers do not care, but they are constantly complaining!

Researcher : Do you participate in sports?

David : I don't play sport. Yet I would love to play hockey, but I know my mom wont afford to buy me sports kits. I love sports very much though. There is nothing I can do about it.

Researcher : Do you go to school trips?

David : Not at all, my parents do not have money for me to go to trips.

Researcher : Do you bring lunch at school?

David : I don't have even lunch box. During break time I do my homework, because I know at home I have so many chores waiting for me.

Researcher : Do you have friend? Are they not assisting in any way?

David : Well, I do have friends but I open distance between I and them because I do not want to bother them anymore.

Researcher : That is the end of our interview, now do you have anything to add or any suggestion or comment based on the interview we have just got?

David : Yes. I would love to say that classism is basically I curse in our lives, we all wish to live that classy high level class, but unfortunately not all of us are going to be rich in this world. However, this taught me to be grateful and appreciate who I am just to keep myself as happy as I could.

Researcher : Thank you for everything, thank you for your time. Have a good evening David and be blessed.

David : My pleasure Mr Kenny. Have a good evening too.

Researcher : Goodbye

THE END!

Interviews conducted at Mber Christian School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date: 19 May 2018

Time: 2:30

Venue: School Laboratory

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Mini who is a learner from Mber Christian School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the school laboratory at 2:30 pm after school hours on the 19th of May 2018. Mini is a 19 years old African (black) Girl who is doing grade 11 in this school. She has six years in the same school.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Do you know your economic class background?

Mini : Yes, I do.

Researcher : Well, that you know your economic class background tell me what you know about classism?

Mini : Classism refers to financial background. Since in our communities we are divided into three, lower class, middle class and upper class as well. Where we are treated differently based on our economic background. Poor people are being oppressed and discriminated based on their background.

Researcher : So tell me, have you ever experienced classism behaviour at this school? Or in your previous school if not in this one?

Mini : Both this school and my previous school I did experience classism.

Researcher : When and where in this school do you experience classism?

Mini : Outside the classroom during break time. I am from a very lower class background, hence during break time I do not fit to other students because I do not bring lunch at school. One day with my friends I told them about my class background. One day we had in argument with my friends, they said to me “vele uyahlupheka we do not want to be your friend anymore” in front of other learners. Was so humiliated! From that day on, I tried by all means to avoid myself from them.

Researcher : Now tell me something: when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

Mini : Well I first learnt about this during Life Orientation lessons. Although I experienced this but I did not know it was it, until my teacher (Life orientation teacher) taught us about classism.

Researcher : So do you find it easy or difficult to talk to your teachers, friend's or other learners about your own class background?

Mini : Never! It never easy I won't lie; I find it very difficult. I don't tell other people anymore. Not that I am wearing musk about my life, but however I just keep quiet about it because I am the one who get hurt after it all.

Researcher : What has been good for you as a learner being raised in the class you are in?

Mini : I must say, being raised in this class helped me to learn so many things for an example patience, as I know from my background if I want something I won't get it as soon as I ask for it. Secondly I learnt respect for other people, respect is one of the keys to success so I have respect for other people. I am very matured.

Researcher : What has been difficult for being raised in the class you are in?

Mini : I may say, I am not who I am supposed to be who I am. I am not open at all; I try to push though. Also that sometimes I meet people who are from rich families and I feel inferior about who I am. I feel very small; the proper school uniform they wear. Who I am with my torn uniform. OMG! I even don't want to come to school.

Researcher : In what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?

Mini : It really difficult since I know I don't get anything I want. Even my mind is affected, I cannot learn properly at school. I even lose teachers concentration, suffering from depression and all of that. I over think!

Researcher : So now, have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school teacher or a learner based on your social background?

Mini : Yes!

Researcher : Tell me about it

Mini : In the class once did this. Teachers treat us differently, my class teacher loves learners from upper class. Even if I want to say something, teachers would be like "who the hell are you, because you stay in the sharks".

Researcher : How do they find out that you come from poor background? I mean the teachers?

Mini : Maybe they can see from unaffordability of school fees. They also see from my uniform, even if you don't attend school trips they could see that you don't afford. Other kids discriminate me; they judge me physically.

Researcher : Then how did this discrimination you have mentioned affects your learning in this school?

Mini : It really has bad influence. It really discourages me to learn, I would say what is the use of me bothering myself with books because I won't be recognised! My marks do drop drastically in such a way that I even fail during first term due to the fact that I was discriminated in my class because I had no calculator, my maths teacher would kick me out of the class room the whole term until my friend asked her parents to buy me one. So this affected me very much.

Researcher : Do you have something to share with me regarding your experience in terms of school fees?

Mini : I cannot afford paying school fees. My results re always withheld at school because I do not pay school fees. So I see the results the following year.

Researcher : School uniform?

Mini : I do not have proper school uniform. As you can see my shoes are torn and I use to have a problem if it's raining, I have only one shirt I wash everyday which really hurts me a lot.

Researcher : School stationary?

Mini : I have basic staff. I don't have computer, as a Computer application student I found it very difficult to do my school work since I only end up using computer at school. I even travel a very long distance to the library to find some internet if I want to do my school projects.

Researcher : What do you use when you going to school? Do you take a bus or what?

Mini : No! I walk a very long distance to come to school. My parents can't afford such money; I wake up very early every day to cover my morning class classes. Even if it's raining, I walk. It really dangerous though cause its very dark now since its winter.

Researcher : Do you participate in sports?

Mini : Not exactly! I do not fit in. even soccer, since soccer is a common sport but still I can't play soccer since I do not have boots for soccer. I don't want to force things.

Researcher : Do attend school trips?

Mini : Not at all. My mom told me long time ago that, even if there is school trip I must not bother myself asking her to give me money for trips because she would not afford all the costs. Even now I am doing matric but I am not going to the matric dance.

Researcher : Do you bring lunch at school?

Mini : No! I don't.

Researcher : Tell me more, why not?

Mini : During break at school as I said earlier, I just go and play outside because I cannot afford to stay with them in the class since they have all those fancy lunch boxes, sandwiches. So I just stay and watch them eat.

Researcher : We have to end of our interview now. Do you have anything to say?

Mini : All I would love to say is that, classism is a serious form of oppression and it really need to be taken into consideration since it affects most of the kids in these schools of ours but some just keep quiet about it.

Researcher : Thank you once again for participating in this remarkable study. have a good every thing

Mini : My pleasure Mr Kenny. Have a good evening too

Researcher : Goodbye.

Mini : Bye

THE END!

Interviews conducted at Mber Christian School about children's experiences of classism in their school.

Date: 19 May 2018

Time: 14:30

Venue: School laboratory

Interview between Kenny (researcher) and Zolo who is a learner from Mber Christian School about his classism experiences in this school which was conducted within the school premises in the school laboratory at 2;30 pm after school hours on the 19th of May 2018. Zolo is a 18 years old African (black) boy who is doing grade 12 in this school. He has five years in the same school.

Researcher : Well, I might as well introduce myself then. My name is Kenny and I am from Mlazi location here in Durban. I am a masters' student at Edgewood Campus school of education, doing my second final year. I am interested in doing a research about children's experiences of classism in schools. However, I am reminding you whereas I am aware of the fact that the consent letters I gave you explained all the intentions of this study. Hence, to cut the long story short, I want us to start this interview which will take less than 30 minutes of your time.

Researcher : Gooday boy, will you please introduce yourself

Zolo : I am Zolo a Grade 12 student here at Mber High school.

Researcher : Interesting, so next year you will be at varsity

Zolo : Yes, though there are some constrains

Researcher : I might as well introduce myself, I am Mr Kenny a Masters student at Edgewood campus UKZN. I am conducting this research about classism experiences of learners in schools. Listen, you are participating here voluntarily, so feel free to withdraw in the study. Everything that is happening in here is recorded as well. If you have any questions during the interview, please feel free to stop me for clarity. Interview will take less than 30 min.

Zolo : Wow! I know Edgewood campus, I once went there and I loved Edgewood. As a result, next year I want to see myself there. Well, I understand everything that you have just said. And thanks for making me be the participant in your study.

Researcher : Tell me Zolo, do you know your economic class background?

Zolo : Well, what I could say about economic class background was that, it started way back when the whites came to South Africa when they divided us as poor and rich

Researcher : So be specific now, do you know your economic class background?

Zolo : Definitely I know my economic class background

Researcher : Now that you know your economic class background, so tell me what you know about classism?

Zolo : It is how we are rated regarding our socio- economic class. Whether we are rich, in the middle or poor and we are treated as such. When you are rich you are treated special, middle you have that partial treatment and when you are poor, mmmh forgive us my brother or sister you are nothing.

Researcher : In short what would you say about classism? How would you define classism?

Zolo : I would say classism is how you are treated based on your social economic class. Whether you poor or rich. When you are rich and there is a person who is poor, then you show who is the boss in here, it must be seen!

Researcher : So tell me, have you ever experienced classism in this school

Zolo : Well, classism is everywhere we are breathing it. As a person who is coming al, the way from uMlazi to Mber high school, I came here with the way how we used to do things in black school so in here things are way different. Here I have to abide some rules by those certain learners, “thee” learners. Those learners are owning everything, just that life has differentiated us. This classism is dangerous, but because of this research I will talk about it

Researcher : Now tell me, where and when in this school you experience classism?

Zolo : In class obviously! In our classroom we are divided in rows, where we have rows for whites, one for blacks, one for Indians and coloureds.

Researcher : NOOOOO!

Zolo : We are not allowed to go to the white's territory, Indians territory as well as coloured territory. So we are there as blacks, we are not their friends as well. However, nobody told me to go and sit where black students were seated.

Researcher : Now, you talking about race issue which is differ from class issue we talking about in here, so how does this fits in here.

Zolo : It fits, because when I am talking about white learners am talking about those learners who come from very rich families in South Africa. I am talking about those kids who come to school driving their own fancy cars "Mercedes, porch, BMW", then who am I to associate myself with whereas I ride a bus or a train to school. I am not aloud! It has to be seen who is the boss around

Researcher : Then tell me, when did you first learn about class issues and attitudes that people of one class have about people of another class?

Zolo : When I came to this school. Because in my previous black school I never noticed anything since we were all from the same family background. So when I came to this school I learnt a lot about classism. Whenever rich kids talk, they ill middle come together and speak about those fancy things, who am I to talk about Mr price whereas they are talking about brands such as Louis Vuitton, so where do I feet there? You have to know your space and respect their magnitude.

Researcher : Since this is a Christian school, your ethos is stressing much about equity and no discrimination, so tell me what are the teachers saying about all this segregation thing which is happening here? Are they aware about such?

Zolo : Teachers? Did they pay attention? Teachers are just there to teach; they are not there to baby sit us or to build some relationships.

Researcher : So do you find it easy to talk about your social background? Or difficult?

Zolo : It is not easy at all! Once you tell one person about you home background, he/she won't keep quiet, you will be the talk of the town. So I better shut up! you better keep your story and shut your mouth!

Researcher : So, what has been good for you as a learner about being raised in the class you are in?

Zolo : I am coming from a poor background but I managed to come to this school because I got a bursary, but I cannot tell them about that. They will laugh at me!

Researcher : Now what has been good about you being raised from poor background?

Zolo : It has taught me to be strong. I have to be strong. I had to overcome some lot problems that has helped me to work hard and be independent. I am indeed very proud of myself.

Researcher : What has been difficult for you being raised from such background?

Zolo : It's that I am not free in my school. I want my voice to be heard, I am not recognised in this school. I am voiceless!

Researcher : As for me this shows that you are indeed not happy at all in this school premises. So in what way do you think being raised in a social class you are in affects you as a learner?

Zolo : It has affected me so much. Firstly, in this school I do not have those people who are close to me, whom we share common social class.

Researcher : Have you ever been discriminated verbally or non-verbally by anyone in this school whether a learner or a teacher based on your economic class background?

Zolo : Yes! By a learner.

Researcher : Tell me what happened...

Zolo : This year we had a RCL elections, so I was nominated as well to take part in elections. then there was this Indian guy, he asked me why in was there and I told him I came for RCL elections and was like "are being serious???" He told me I have no style; I was not supposed to be there. "oh please, do you really think you will take this? Oh no please, what do you know? The only thing you know is to stay in your squatter camps at uMlazi, nothing else. Here we are talking about people who have style, what do you have? You have nothing..... you don't own even a R100 cell phone, let alone a R10 in your pocket! Then you tell me you going to be a RCL chairperson? and I was like oh my God! I

have never been so humiliated this much in my whole blessed life! He embarrassed in front of other students. Fortunately, I was selected and I won the elections and I became RCL chairperson. People who are rich think that poor people know nothing, they are useless. They only think that we are vulnerable, that all.

Researcher : You told about the learner who insulted you, so which racial group was this learner?

Zolo : The guy is an Indian.

Researcher : So do you think the child was being racist towards you or he was discriminating you because you are poor?

Zolo : It was basically a classism remark, because he mentioned that I am poor so I cannot attend for the chairperson position. Yet he never mentioned anything pertaining my race. And that is why I am saying the guy was condoning classism not racism in his remark. But at the same time I cannot separate racism and classism because we all know that white people have good financial positions than us.

Researcher : How did this discrimination you have mentioned affected your learning in this school?

Zolo : According to me I see it affecting me because now I cannot do things that I want to do, I cannot take the decisions that I am supposed to take as a chairperson of the RCL since I am poor so I feel like there is nothing I can say to them, my voice will not be heard. So this thing affects me even in the classroom because now I fail to concentrate very well in my studies. If I could go back to my previous school, I would love that to happen. I even think of dropping out of school now.

Researcher : Do you have any experience you wish to share with me regarding your school fees?

Zolo : School fees? All I could say about school fees is that it is very expensive! So I cannot afford the school fees since my mother and father

are both unemployed. However, my funder (Bursary) is taking care of my study fees.

Researcher : What about your school uniform?

Zolo : Whenever I have to buy school uniform each and every year! sometimes we buy unnecessary things in school uniform. To me right now I do not have new school uniform because this year I have turned into a laughing stock to some other kids. But thanks God that this year is my final year in this school.

Researcher : What about your school stationary?

Zolo : I do have those important, basic inputs of stationary. I do not have those fancy stationary, worse part even if I do not have a pen I cannot borrow from them.

Researcher : Cost of transport?

Zolo : I take a bus to and from school. Sometimes I come late at school if the buses delay. Some other days I do not come to school because my parents sometimes they don't afford to give me money for the transport. Absenting myself to school is a problem because I am left behind in school work.

Researcher : Sport? Do you participate in sports?

Zolo : No I do not participate in sports.

Researcher : Is not it that the sports are compulsory here in your school?

Zolo : It is compulsory but they tried to convince me and they failed. Because whenever we go to sports, I cannot because looking at my social background, what I am I going to talk about when those kids talk about brands and staff? Who am I? so I chose to separate myself from them. One of them confronted me one day he said to me "oh please you are not in our level, we accommodate people of our level. So if you not one of us you better back off"!

Researcher : What about school trips? Do you attend those?

Zolo : Hell NO! school trips are quite expensive! I cannot afford those.

Researcher : Lunch box? Do you bring lunch at school?

Zolo : Yes. Even though my lunchbox is not that fascinating.

Researcher : Zolo, thank you very much for everything you have shared with me. You have just made everything be possible for me. But do you have anything to say? To add, any comment any suggestion?

Zolo : I would like to say that, even though you are discriminated, that does not stop you from being who you are. Show them who you are, do not abide their rules. Just perform the best you could and be positive.

Researcher : thanks once again, but let me indicate to you that this study will not mention your name for the benefit of protecting your identity.

Zolo : I can here you

Researcher : Have a great evening, goodbye

Zolo : Bye Mr Kenny.

THE END!

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