SPACE, GEOGRAPHY AND GENDERED EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN: A NARRATIVE STUDY OF FOUR HIGH SCHOOLS IN HHOHHO REGION, ESWATINI

By

GIBSON MAKAMURE

A thesis submitted in fulfilment for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisor: Professor Pholoho Morojele

Co-Supervisor: Professor Reshma Sookrajh

School of Education- Edgewood campus

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Durban

South Africa

2022

DECLARATION

I, Gibson Makamure, hereby declare that:

The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.

The dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs, or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as sourced from other persons.

This dissertation does not contain other persons writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted then:

a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;

b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed in quotation marks and referenced.

c) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the reference section.

Signed: [redacted]

Date : 07/02/2022

Signature: [redacted] **Date:** 09 February 2022

Professor Pholoho Morojele (Supervisor)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following:

- Thanks be to the Almighty God, Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit, for giving me strength during the course of this whole project. Without this strength, nothing could have moved.
- My Supervisors, Professor Pholoho Morojele and Prof Reshma Sookrajh, for their unparalleled support and invaluable guidance throughout the study. The constructive remarks and comments on each phase of the dissertation contributed to the fruitful outcome of this research.
- Prof Nyna Amin, thank you for supporting me. May God favor you with good health and abundant life.
- My family, for the support they gave me during the long academic journey.
- The Former Director of Education in Eswatini, Dr Sibongile Mtshali, for allowing me to carry out the research in the schools.
- The Head teachers in the four high schools where the research was carried out: thank you very much for being cooperative.
- The pupils who availed themselves for the research: thank you very much; likewise, to the parents for allowing your children to participate in this research. May you be blessed by the Lord.
- All my friends, who too many to mention, thank you for the different roles you played in encouraging me through this long journey.

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to explore the space, geography and gendered experiences of children in four coeducational high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini (formerly Swaziland). Guided by Social Constructionism theory, the study drew narratives of space, geography and gendered experiences of children and what could be learnt from their accounts, in order to understand and improve their educational experiences. The research draws from Massey's (2005, 1994) theorisation of space in helping to understand the experiences children have with space and the entanglement of space, geography and gender in the school environment. In order to explore the specific school spaces that children occupy as well as how they navigate through and negotiate these spaces, the thesis used a qualitative approach and a narrative enquiry as its research design. Semi-structured individual interviews and focus group discussions were used as data generation methods. The participants were aged between 16-18 age groups and were in Form Five. A non- probability sampling technique was used, in which convenience and purposeful sampling strategies were used.

The research found out that boys and girls in school spaces experienced different gendered experiences. Evidence from the research showed that school spaces, which are highly gendered, acted as a constraint to opportunities of learning especially to girls. Boys are dominant in school spaces as found out by the research. Teachers who are patriarchal and gender stereotyped support the domineering positions of boys over girls. Volunteering activities performed by community members and parents follow traditional gender roles which send the messages of a patriarchal society. Girls, for example, suffered more from sexual based violence both from teachers and from boys. They were most vulnerable to issues such as unwanted touching, body shaming and forced kissing from boys. Teachers, on the other hand, proposed love to them and were not in a position to report these cases because of fear of victimisation. Physical spaces, which included, among others, the bathrooms/toilets and libraries, needed improvement in order to promote equitable learning between boys and girls as was revealed by the study. Dirty and malfunctioning bathrooms discouraged girls from attending school, especially during their menstrual periods. Some of the bathrooms/toilets lacked privacy, which is a requirement for toilet use and also a personal space.

It was further revealed that, both boys and girls in the school lacked agency. Adults, in this case, teachers and administrator dominated schools spaces. Teachers and administrators influenced most decisions that touched on their academic lives. Learners felt this as an unfair way of doing things since they wanted to take responsibility, especially on things that affected their future, like the selection of subjects. A platform for learner empowerment has been made available by the availability of guidance and counselling in schools. This has resulted in some of the learners especially the girls to stand up against any form gender inequalities that they faced within the school spaces. Some girls are now able to challenge bullying and sexually based violence in spaces that are male-dominated. Some boys are now able to respect girls as part of the empowerment processes gained through guidance and counselling.

The study recommends that the Ministry of Education and Training makes sure that gender responsive spaces are provided in schools to make positive the learners' gendered experiences. This may include, among others, the construction of well -designed bathrooms to cater for the different needs of learners, ensuring that they have their voices heard in schools and their complaints addressed. Also, the Ministry of Education and Training should make a gender module in all teacher training colleges compulsory, to ensure that teachers are well equipped with knowledge and skills to deal with gender issues in schools.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS (Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome)

CRC (Convention on Rights of the Child)

FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists)

GBV (Gender-based Violence)

GoS (Government of Eswatini)

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

MOET (Ministry of Education and Training)

GEMR (Global Education Monitoring Report)

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)

SRGBV (School Related Gender-based Violence)

UN (United Nations)

UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children)

UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework)

(UNDP) United Nations. Development Programme

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation)

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund)

UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)

UNGEI (United Nations Girls Education Initiative)

USA (United States of America)

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

		Page
Figure 2.1	Lefebvre's conceptual triad production of space ……	22
Table 4.1	Research sites visited and their participants ……	106
Table 5.1	Information of participants and duration of interviews ……..	114

.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ii
ABSTRACT iv
ABBREVIATIONS vi
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES vii
CHAPTER ONE 1
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY 1
1.0 Introduction 1
1.1 Background to the study 2
1.1.2 National education policy 4
1.3 Rationale for the study 7
1.4 Aims and objectives of the study 8
1.4.1 The research objectives: 8
1.5 The research questions 8
1.6 Putting the study in context 9
1.6.1 Geographic context and administrative regions 9
1.6.2 Socio-economic context of the study 9
1.7 Significance of the study 10
1.7.2 The policy makers 11
1.7.3 The researcher and the academic community 12
1.8 Delimitations of the study 12
1.9 Chapter Outlines 13
1.10 Conclusions 14
CHAPTER 2 16
EXPLORING SPACE, GEOGRAPHY AND GENDERED EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN: A LITERATURE REVIEW 16
2.0 Introduction 16
2.1 Space and children's geographies 17
2.1.1. Relational view of space 21
2.2. The production of space 22
2.3 Introducing children's geographies 24

2.3.1 What is a child? 24
2.3.2 Children geographies 26
2.4 Gender and gendered schooling experiences of children 28
2.4.1 Gendered spaces 29
2.5 Gendered schooling experiences of children 31
2.5.1 Schools as engines of gender transformation 33
2.5.2.1 Gendered seating space arrangements 34
2.5.2.4 Differential treatment of girls and boys in school spaces 36
2.5.2.5 Varied gendered dimension of abusive nature of school spaces 37
2.5.2.6 Hegemonic masculinity through physical education in school spaces 39
2.5.2.7 Gendered nature on functionality of ablution spaces 39
2.5.3.1 Teachers' gendered expectations and perceptions 41
2.5.3.2 Gendered teacher-pupil dynamics 43
2.5.3.3 Teacher training and development: Gender perspective 47
2.5.4 Gender and curriculum 51
2.5.4.1 Gender and curriculum: subject and subject choice 52
2.5.4.2 Spaces for girls: Rules and regulations on pregnancy 54
2.5.4.3 Peers' gendered influences 55
2.5.5 Unruly spaces: School related gender-based violence 57
2.6 Mechanisms to enhance gender equality and equity in schools 61
2.6.1 The role of communities 61
2.6.2 The role of schools and teachers 62
2.6.3 Contribution of policy makers 63
2.7 Conclusion 64
CHAPTER THREE 66
THEORISING GENDER AND CHILDREN IN SCHOOLING CONTEXTS 66
3.0 Introduction 66
3.1 The theoretical perspective of social constructionism 67
3.1.1 Unpacking social constructionism 71
3.1.2 Features of social constructionism 71
3.1.3 Cardinal principles of social constructionism 72

3.2 Persuasive case for choice of social constructionism 75
3.3 Children as citizens in their own right: social constructions of childhood 76
3.3.1 Childhood evolution as part of social construct 78
3.4 Social constructionism as gender construct in school spaces 79
3.5 Conclusion 83
CHAPTER FOUR 84
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 84
4.0 Introduction 84
4.1 Research Aims 84
4.2 Locating the study within the Interpretive Paradigm 85
4.3. Qualitative Research Approach 85
4.3.1 Rationale for Narrative Inquiry Design 89
4.4. Population, sample and sampling of the study 90
4.5 The Researcher's Positionality 92
4.6 Methods of data generation 93
4.6.1 Focus group interview 94
4.6.2 Individual Interviews 96
4.6.3 Pilot Interviews 99
4.7 Data Analysis 100
4.8 Establishing Trustworthiness in the Study 102
4.9 Language of Choice 105
4.10 Number of Visits 105
4.11 Feedback to Participants after the Research 106
4.12 Data Storage 107
4.13 Negotiating Access to the Research Sites 107
4. 14 Ethical Considerations 108
4.15 Conclusion 110
CHAPTER FIVE 111
NEGOTIATIONS OF SCHOOL GENDERED SPACES AND CHILDREN GEOGRAPHIES 111
5.1 Introduction 111

5.2 Description of participants' information 112
5.3 Discussion of data 113
5.4 Gendered spaces and places of boys and girls: A case of four high schools in Hhohho Region in Eswatini 114
5.4.1. Physical Spaces 114
5.4.1.1 Inside Spaces 114
5.4.1.2 Gendered experiences of outside school space: spatial distance/travelling space 118
5.4.2. Gender and positionality 121
5.4.2.1 Positionality and learning space 122
5.4.3 Curriculum and gender spaces 126
5.4.3.1 Children's geographies in subject choices 128
5.4.3.2 Gender dynamics in extra mural curriculum 133
5.5 Schools as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation 138
5.5.1 Teachers' understanding of gendered spaces 138
5.5.2 Perceptions of community members and parents 145
5.6 Agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools 150
5.6.1 Negotiations of space: students' experiences of participation in decision-making 150
5.6.2 Gender dimensions of guidance and counselling 154
5.7 Conducive spaces for learners: gender responsive environments 162
5.7.1 Gendered spaces: students' experiences of the physical school spaces 162
5.7.2 Gendered spaces: experiences of students' academic school spaces 166
5.7.3 Gendered spaces: students' experiences of the social school spaces 171
5.7.3.1 Boys social relations and masculinities 173
5.7.3.2 Girls social relations and femininities 175
5.8 Conclusion 177
CHAPTER SIX 178
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 178
6.1 Introduction 178
6.2 Summary of the Study 178
6.2.1 Gendered spaces and places of boys and girls within schools and practices in four high schools in Hhohho Region 178

6.2.2 Schools as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation 179
6.2.3 Agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools 180
6.2.4 Conducive spaces for learners: gender responsive environments..... 180
6.3 Theoretical and Methodological Reflections 181
6.4 Limitations of the Study..... 182
6.5 Recommendations of the Study 183
6.5.1 Recommendations for Policy and Practice..... 183
6.5.1.1 Recommendations to MOET..... 183
6.5.1.2 Recommendations to Principals..... 184
6.5.1.3 Recommendations to Teachers 184
6.6 Recommendations for further Study 184
6.7 Conclusion..... 185
References 186
APPENDICES:..... 219
APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance..... 219
APPENDIX: B: Consent letter from the Director of the Ministry of Education and Training in Eswatini..... 221
APPENDIX C: Informed Consent letter to Principal..... 222
APPENDIX D: Informed Consent letter for Parent/guardian..... 223
APPENDIX E: Informed Consent Letter to Participant..... 225
APPENDIX F: Interview Guide..... 226
APPENDIX G- Turnitin Originality Report 229
APPENDIX H: Editors Certificate..... 230

CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Massey (2005) states that space is not simply a neutral physical surface on which social action takes place; it is socially created in a variety of ways. Space has an impact on children's gendered experiences as well as their overall well-being because it is such an important part of their life. This research study utilises a qualitative narrative enquiry in trying to explore the space, geography and gendered experiences of children in four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. Savard (2016, p. 4) states that gender has a weighty impact on how girls' and boys' characters' act in certain social school contexts and is "intimately tied to society". White, Ruther and Kahn (2016) state that gender inequalities in education are a persistent problem within society with girls being the most affected. The school spaces should be free from any type of gender inequalities, discrimination and gender-based violence.

The provision of gender inclusive education is a human right. There should be educational programmes that integrate elementary values or tenets of gender equitable teaching and learning. According to UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework, 2002-2007, gender responsive objectives which are non-discriminatory, equally benefit girls and boys and have the aim of correcting gender imbalances within the schooling contexts. They go beyond program objectives to promote an active gender approach in all areas of education. This includes training methods, curriculum, and even learning outcomes. Education is frequently acknowledged as a fundamental contributor to the problem of gender inequality, allowing it to endure by restricting girls' access to school or propagating gender-biased attitudes to the detriment of both girls and boys. There is now widespread agreement that the best way to overcome gender inequities is to provide learners with life skills through education (GEMR, 2017). These skills should help in the overall emotional, physical, social and cognitive development of all learners (Stromquist, 2007). Guided by Social constructionism theory, the study sought to understand and identify the space, geography and gendered experiences of high school children within the school practices in the selected four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. This chapter provides a brief overview of the study, including Eswatini's commitment to education and national educational

policy, the statement of the problem, the rationale for the study, the research objectives and key questions that guided this research, the study's limitations and delimitations, and the study's significance. This chapter concludes with a synopsis of the following chapters.

1.1 Background to the study

It is a basic human right for girls and boys to have equal access to education. Gender equality in education is critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations' commitment to Education for All (Stromquist, 2007). Education is necessary not only for the transmission of knowledge and skills, but also for the comprehension and acceptance of fundamental principles such as gender equality (Stromquist, 2007). Schools play an important role in combating gender stereotypes (Ministry of Education Denmark, 2008). GEMR (2017) states that it is the responsibility of schools to create gender responsive school spaces. School spaces should be free from discrimination and gender-based violence. As such, governments should facilitate the development on non-discriminatory curricula to ensure the provision of quality education for both boys and girls.

Policies to ensure equal access to education by both boys and girls and ensuring non-violent school spaces should be prioritised by governments to make certain the provision of equitable quality education for girls and boys (GEMR, 2017). In Eswatini, the school curriculum has no gender component, which leaves teachers with the only option of resorting to dominant gender constructions in the implementation of their pedagogical practices. The gender constructions were swamped in contradictions of equal opportunities for all children, with different expectations for boys and girls (Motsa, 2018). The construction of femininities and masculinities by learners and teachers as two different homogeneous groups produces different gendered experiences for boys and girls. Historically, it was a general practice in Eswatini not to educate girls, as the belief was that they would get married and move away from families (Amnesty International, 2010; UNDP, 2015). As a result, drawing from this historical perspective, women and girls were expected to operate within the limitations of being housewives, caregivers, nurturers and subordinates. Patriarchal views, based upon the notion that men and boys are superior to women and girls, are evident in the African traditions (Phendla, 2004). Education is frequently acknowledged as a fundamental contributor to inequality, helping it to endure by denying girls' access to school or

propagating gender-biased stereotypes to the detriment of both girls and boys. In Eswatini school spaces, girls face this dilemma. There is marginalisation of girls in school spaces through practices in schools, that happen within and outside classrooms. Even with a good Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) that advocates for equal treatment of all learners regardless of gender, race and religion, gender inequalities persist. In high schools, for example, there is evidence of sex-oriented curriculum; there is an expectation for boys to dominate in technical subjects and science, while the expectation is for girls to take commercial subjects and arts. The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) stipulates in principle that learners can take subjects of their choice. However, in practice, the choice is mostly gender- oriented. This points to gender imbalances within Eswatini schools. As a result, the United Nations (2015) identified the need for the Government of Eswatini (GoE) to implement gender-sensitive policies, planning, and learning settings in order to improve children's gendered experiences.

In order to achieve the above, GoE and partners were to have gender concerns mainstreamed in the training of teachers and processes of curricula monitoring, and violence and discrimination based on gender and were to be eliminated in educational institutions. This was done to ensure that boys and girls, women and men are equally impacted by teaching and learning (UN, 2015). Gender stereotypes should be eliminated, and gender equality should be promoted as the target. In all cases, special measures were to be implemented to safeguard the individual safety of girls and women in and around educational institutions, as well as on their way from and to them. Eswatini is part of this international vision to make sure that education is accessible by all, and that equality and equity becomes the cornerstone in the provision of education. Hence, Eswatini committed to the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 (UNICEF, 2015).

1.1.1 Eswatini's international commitment to education

Eswatini was among other countries in attendance of the Jomtien meeting in Thailand in 1990. This was a platform where countries gathered to commit themselves to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs were intended to produce healthy economy and promote peace for all the countries (Motsa, 2018). By 2015, the goals included eliminating child poverty, achieving primary education for all, attaining gender parity, and the empowerment of girls and women. Eswatini also committed herself to the Dakar Declaration (Education for All) in 2000. Of

particular interest was the resolve to eradicate gender gaps in elementary and secondary education by 2005 and to achieve gender equality in education by 2015 (UNESCO, 2000). The Republic of Korea-Incheon was the place for the launch of the World Education Forum 2015. It was an event that UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR together with UNDP and UNFPA had organised. Participants from 160 countries, civil society representatives, those who work in the private sector as well as those who work in the teaching profession, and heads of agencies of multilateral organisations, adopted the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030. Eswatini formed part of the countries who took part and signed this declaration (UNICEF, 2015). It focuses on setting a new education vision until 2030. It is based on the Sustainable Development Goal 4, which seeks to guarantee equitable and quality education for all, together with promoting long-lasting learning opportunities for everyone. In order to eradicate cultural and social practices that perpetuate gender inequality, educational systems must actively remove gender prejudice and discrimination, as well as economic standing, to ensure gender equality. Apart from signing the Incheon Declaration, Eswatini's education sector is guided by the Swaziland Education Sector Policy of 2011 and the currently enacted, Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018).

1.1.2 National education policy

The Eswatini Constitution of 2005 provided a legal basis for children's rights and also access to Free Primary Education (The Constitution of Kingdom of Swaziland, 2005). In 2011, Swaziland (Eswatini) enacted its National Education and Training Sector Policy. A first-of-its-kind document to be produced in the country to look holistically at and address educational issues. Since there was no consolidated education and training sector policy, departments and units operated in isolation, which led to replication of duties and mass wastage of scarce resources. The Education and Training Sector was guided by a 1999 Draft Education Policy, which never saw the light to become a full policy document. The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is responsible for developing and implementing Swaziland Education Training Sector Policy training sector policy as one policy to address all issues in the education sector (Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy, 2011). As the second document in Eswatini that addresses education and training concerns holistically, the Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018) was recently enacted. This document incorporated new and pertinent issues connected to education and training.

The policy is based on international and regional treaties, as well as national laws, rules, guidelines, and regulations. It should be noted that these principles are in line with the Constitution of Swaziland, which is premised on the promotion of quality education for all. The Government of Eswatini proclaimed vision 2022 which has a 25-year span that began in 1997 (Shongwe, 2017). Vision 2022 speaks on the need to provide school spaces that are gender responsive (Shongwe, 2017). It speaks of making sure that learners are equally treated with them being key players in their learning. The education spaces should be made more democratic and ensure conducive learning for learners. It emphasises respecting the rights of children, especially those with special educational needs. By 2022, according to the vision, all manner of gender-based violence will have been eliminated out of school spaces (Shongwe, 2017). Vision 2022 laid down some principles that include easy accessibility of education to all and rights of protection of learners from stigma and discrimination. This vision led to the establishment of the Swaziland Education Sector Policy of 2011.

The Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy ((2011, p. 24) discourages gender discrimination: it states that it "abhors, severely proscribes any exclusion, restriction which purposefully impair or nullify the recognition, enjoyment by any person of the educational rights of a person or gender." The policy promotes gender equality and advocates for the creation of gender responsive school spaces. In this context, it looks at equal enjoyment to access and opportunities and outcomes which includes resources by both boys and girls. There is thus the promotion of gender mainstreaming in all components of the education sector. Despite having such a well-crafted policy, there is no awareness even among teachers who are chief curriculum implementers on the negative consequences of constructing gender and socialising learners in ways that uphold unequal gendered power relations (Motsa, 2018). In practice, there is lack of strategy to promote gender equitable and gender responsive school environments. Critical to this study is the statement of the problem.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Swaziland's Sector Policy on Education and Training (2011) seeks to annihilate gender inequalities and inequities in schools so as to guarantee that both boys and girls receive a good education. The aim is to create school spaces that are fair and equitable. Education on the other hand is commonly regarded as a fundamental contributor to the problem of inequality, allowing it to endure by restricting girls' access to education (Walker, 2019). To the detriment of both girls and boys, education perpetuates gender-biased stereotypes. As a result, gender stereotypes prevent learners from developing since they mould their personalities to fit social norms. Once stereotypes are formed, it has a significant and negative effect on learners' development. Gender stereotypes have negatively influenced learners, especially girls and minimized their impact within school spaces (Pan, 2018). Gender stereotypes have created prejudices and discrimination among high school learners in Eswatini. This has resulted in learners especially girls developing low self-esteem, avoid activities associated with brilliance, show less academic interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and have poor future career choices (Motsa, 2016).

Low (2006) asserts that schools are gendered spaces where gender is practiced. Just because spaces are themselves gendered, they both reflect and affect how gender is constructed and understood. School spaces are home to patriarchy, stereotypes and adult domination with children being marginalised within high school spaces in Eswatini. High schools in Eswatini have been reported to be places of unequal treatment for boys and girls, with girls being the mostly negatively affected. Illicit love affairs between teachers and learners have been on the rise, with some leaners dropping out of school due teenage pregnancies. Parents and MOET officials have expressed concern over this since girls in particular now see schools as insecure spaces (UNICEF, 2015). Excessive and unregulated corporal punishment has been reported in high schools in Eswatini, resulting in chaotic scenes within school spaces. When compared to girls, boys are the primary recipients of corporal punishment. Inflicting severe physical punishment on learners, particularly boys, has been linked to personality disorders, substance use issues, anxiety disorders, and mood disorders such as depression or bipolar disorder. As such, negative and discriminatory experiences are an everyday experience for girls and boys in high school spaces in Eswatini. The negative and discriminatory experiences of learners is forcing several learners to behave negatively and despite functional preventive interventions, little is being done by administrators to address the issue

(OECD, 2015). Violence based on gender, including sexual abuse, aggressive behaviour, bullying and criminality, have been on the increase in Eswatini high school spaces (World Bank, 2016). Girls and boys experience sexual, physical, and/or psychological harm as a result of gender-based violence within school spaces. However, Caputo (2014) claims that, boys are more often perpetrators than girls are. Unequal treatment given to boys and girls in schools resulting in unequal outcomes have given rise to violation of children's rights as enshrined in the Education For all (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action 2000, especially goal number 5. Hence, the focus of the study is on investigating the space, geographies and gendered experience of children in four coeducational Eswatini high schools in the Hhohho region.

1.3 Rationale for the study

Research conducted in sub-Saharan Africa by UNESCO (2017) found that despite government initiatives to improve gender equality, boys and girls in schooling environments continue to be treated unequally. Eswatini had a widespread policy of not educating girls since it was thought that they would get married and leave their homes (Simelane, 2011). As a result, women and girls were expected to operate within the limitations of being housewives, caregivers, nurtures and subordinates. Patriarchal views, based upon the notion that men and boys are superior to women and girls, are evident in the African traditions (Phendla, 2004). Morojele (2012) posits that boys have no inclination from being superiors as it takes away their childhood and put them on pressure to satisfy societal expectations of acting like men while they are still young. As a result, the notion of domineering boys and subordinate and subservient girls tends to be evident in schools in Eswatini (Simelane, 2011).

Morojele (2012) asserts that power leads to submission, which enables gender inequalities to be viewed as normal and therefore with no need to question its unfair practice. Leach, Dunne and Salvi (2014) confirm this argument by stating that female teachers use verbal chastisement, while male teachers, on the other hand, utilise physical discipline to enforce their control to make the students compliant to their gender stereotypes. Given these facts, this study sought to explore the actual children's space and gendered experiences in schooling environments in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. Researchers such as Henwood, Dlamini and Obare (2015) have used school clubs as a means of combating sexual and gender-based violence. Reza (2007) dealt with violence against

children in Eswatini. Motsa and Morojele (2019) explored vulnerable masculinities, implications of gender socialisation in rural schools in Eswatini. While these studies gave the researcher some valuable insights into spaces occupied by females, there are no studies dealing with both the space and children's geographies and their gendered experiences in Eswatini. This is where this researcher's work could have an impact on policy. Taking from these approaches, this research will substantially contribute to and extend scholarly work on gendered experiences, space and geographies of high school children.

The researcher discussed the study's research aim, objectives, and research questions, which are at the heart of this investigation of children's space, geography, and gendered experiences.

1.4 Aims and objectives of the study

The aim of the study was to explore the gendered spaces and geographies that boys and girls occupy in four selected high schools in Eswatini within the schooling contexts.

1.4.1 The research objectives:

1.4.1 To identify gendered spaces and geographies of boys and girls within school practices in the coeducational context of the four selected high schools in the Hhohho region.

1.4.2 To find out if schools play a role as patriarchal agent of gender socialisation

1.4.3 To explore the ways in which children exercise agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within the schools.

1.4.4 To suggest ways in which the school may be turned into a gender responsive environment.

1.5 The research questions

The study's research questions are as follows:

1.5.1 What are the gendered spaces and places of boys and girls within the schools and practices in the coeducational context of high schools?

1.5.2 What role do schools in Eswatini play as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation?

1.5.3 How do children exercise agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools?

1.5.4 How can schools be turned into gender responsive environments?

1.6 Putting the study in context

1.6.1 Geographic context and administrative regions

This research was conducted in four high schools in Eswatini's Hhohho region. Eswatini, formally the Kingdom of Eswatini and also known as *kaNgwane*, is a separate nation in Southern Africa that has a border with South Africa on all sides except the east, where it borders Mozambique. Mswati II, the 19th-century king under whose authority Swazi territory was enlarged and consolidated, is the namesake of this country and its ethnic people (Swaziland UNDAF, 2016-2020). Eswatini is one of Africa's smallest countries. The Kingdom of Eswatini is not more than 200 kilometres (km) north to south and is just over 130km east to west (World Bank, 2016). The country has four administrative regions, namely, Hhohho, Manzini, Lubombo and Shiselweni. The study was carried out in the Hhohho region, which carries the capital Mbabane. The schools covered in this research study are located around this capital. As such, they are all urban high schools. The schools are all coeducational.

1.6.2 Socio-economic context of the study

The culture of Eswatini is well known. The most major national events are *umhlanga*, which takes place in August/September, and *incwala*, the kingship dance, which takes place in December and January. Women and girls are culturally bound to respect men (Rossi and Rouanet, 2015). This is evident in the practice of the Eswatini curriculum as classroom practice continues to perpetuate gender inequalities (Simelane, 2011). Largely ignored is the need to understand the gender practices in the schooling context. As a result, little is known about how children navigate their gender experiences (Swaziland UNDAF, 2016-2020). The culture values adults more than children. Children are regarded as subordinates who need to conform and suffer from cultural exclusion, as their voices are still not permitted. The Eswatini Education Act No.9 o1981 and the country's Gender Policy (2010) advocate for equality irrespective of age, gender and race (Swaziland UNDAF, 2016-2020).

The majority of the people are ethnic Swazis who speak SiSwati. Eswatini is a developing country, with a small economy. Sugar is the country's principal export; many Swazis work in South Africa and transfer their earnings back to Eswatini (BBC, 8 June 2017). Eswatini is not capable of economically sustaining itself because of its heavy reliance on the revenue from Southern African

Customs Union (SACU). SACU provides about 60% of the country's total budget (Braithwaite, Djimba, and Pickmans, 2013). There is inconsistency of the funds from SACU. For example, in the 2010/2011 budget year, there was reduction in revenue from R5.1 billion in 2009/2010 to as low as R1,9 billion, which resulted in a budget deficit that was huge (Khumalo, 2013). This economic turmoil has a negative impact on how the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) implements its policies. For example, funds for in-service training are not availed when teachers need capacity building, especially to deal with many contemporary gender issues emerging from schools. Schools have to be made gender friendly spaces with little to no violence, sexual abuse, gender segregation, gender stereotyping and exclusivity, among other things. The stereotypes in society permeates the school spaces and affect the gendered experiences of children (Lukhele, 2014). Girls are easy targets for sexual gender-based violence and other unruly behaviour like bullying. Hence, the unavailability of funds to MOET hampers processes to capacitate teachers and put in place infrastructure that will make schools gender responsive environments.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study's purpose is to explore the space, geography, and gendered experiences of students in four coeducational high schools in Eswatini's Hhohho region. It is the researcher's belief that this study will particularly help understand the roles that children play in determining their schooling lives. This understanding could be harnessed to explore further how children's participation in matters that affect their lives could be conceived and implemented within schooling environment. A sector gender analysis could be important in the formulation of education programs to detect inequalities between boys and girls with consequences for school attendance, interactions, involvement, and achievements.

The following people are positioned to gain from the results of this study: the general mainstream community, policy makers, researcher and academic community and teachers. These were discussed in detail next.

1.7.1 The general mainstream community

The community may be helped in that understanding the space, geography and gendered experiences of children in schools may give them viewpoints on the spaces that children occupy in their quest for academic success. The community may appreciate challenges faced by boys and girls in school spaces thereby assisting where possible (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020). An understanding of gender issues by the community means that they will also appreciate initiatives by school management in creating gender responsive environments. The findings of this research will inform teachers about proper ways to treat males and females in order to promote equality and equity. Teachers may benefit in adjusting their expectations on boys and girls so as to fairly treat boys and girls (Cater, Mustafaa & Leath, 2017). Deep, hidden experiences of students will be made aware to teachers thereby allowing teachers to guide and counsel the learners.

1.7.2 The policy makers

The (MOET) may be helped by the findings of this research in that it will be able to come up with wide range of policies to promote equality and equity in areas initially not catered for with current policies. The MOET may be in a position to guide and direct concerned stakeholders in finding ways to engage them on issues affecting children in their learning spaces. The researcher noted that even in the limited studies the nation has on children's schooling experiences, researchers have only relied on adults' judgments and the voices of children are not heard (Khumalo, 2013; Sukati, 2013). The findings of this research may again be of use to the MOET in that it may be able to adjust existing policy to incorporate the issues raised by the children in promoting gender responsive environments. Understanding children's gendered spaces will help MOET to deal with issues of gender stereotypes within school spaces (Pinto, 2013).

Not only will the MOET the policy maker, but also the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister may be helped by the findings, in terms of its National Gender policy (Swaziland UNDAF, 2016-2020). The Office of DPM may be assisted with gender sensitive policies that touch on children's issues. The Office of DPM will find it useful for coming up with programmes that are meant to sensitise the nation on issues that affect school children within their spaces in Eswatini (Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy, 2018). Also, principals will benefit from this research by getting first-

hand information about the students' gendered experiences. This will help them come up with school policies that promote equality and equity. The way schools treat boys and girls may change if they read the research findings. The study may help by finding ways of creating gender responsive environments in their schools.

1.7.3 The researcher and the academic community

The findings of this research will assist the researcher to understand better the school spaces such as classrooms and playgrounds where gender identities are reproduced and performed (Connell & Messerchmidt, 2005). Furthermore, as an educator, the researcher is placed in a position of authority that can be leveraged to better understand children's gendered schooling experiences. Knowledge and awareness of the space and geography of children, as well as gendered experiences may assist the researcher in helping in supporting in the establishment of clubs in schools that promote gender responsiveness. The researcher will benefit in understanding how children navigate and negotiate the different spaces within the school and how this affects their gendered experiences.

The academic community may benefit in getting to understand the children's world in the schooling environments in Eswatini. Further research can also be done in areas that are not covered by the research. Those carrying out similar research may benefit through the literature used in this research.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study focused on the space, geography and gendered experiences of children, and utilized a narrative inquiry of four selected high schools in the Hhohho region in Eswatini, as its methodology. The schools under study where all found in urban areas, so the findings cannot be generalised to other high schools in the rural areas. Also, the study focused only in one region, hence it may not be easy to generalise results to other high schools in other regions, where conditions of teaching and learning are different. Social constructionism was the theory of choice used in this study, as this was the most appropriate for the purpose of this study that focuses on children's spaces, geographies and gendered experiences. Social constructionism holds that knowledge and reality are created via social interactions. According to Guterman (2006), social

constructionism attributes knowledge in the area of social interchange. As such, the focus of the study was on what is happening between children and their spaces as they are joined together in creating realities within the school. In this study, social constructionism was theory of choice since it generally concentrates on the process through which meanings are formed, negotiated, sustained, and modified. The objective of proponents is to comprehend the world of lived experience from the viewpoint of individuals who live there. As such, this study focused on the space, geography and the children's gendered experiences within the schooling environment. Central to social constructionism is the view that, knowledge is created by interaction of individuals within society (Tom, 2012). The idea of social constructionism places a strong emphasis on how individuals interact with one another on a daily basis and how they create their reality through language. It views people's social behaviours as the primary object of study.

1.9 Chapter Outlines

In this chapter, the researcher covered a wide overview of the study. The study's background, problem statement, justification, aim, research objectives, and research questions, as well as the study's context, significance, and delimitations, were all presented.

In Chapter Two, the literature will be reviewed to provide meanings of gendered spaces, children's geographies and gendered experiences in school spaces. The study builds on Massey's (1994, 2005, 2008) influential studies on space to create the groundwork for understanding space and how space affects gender and gendered experiences. Massey (2008) views space as a dimension where actors coexist; which have their stories and energies; which may harmoniously mingle, collide and which may even annihilate one another. Thrift (2009) takes a relational approach to space, seeing it as more than just an ordinary container for the world. Space is co-constitutive or co-productive of non-human and human interactions, according to the relational perspective. The production of the geographical has been deeply influenced by gender (Massey, 2005). Gender refers the wide range of socially created roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, and relative power and influence that society assigns to the two sexes (boys and girls) on a separate basis. Gender is a learned identity that varies greatly both within and between cultural contexts (Massey, 2008). The chapter will cover children's geographies and gendered schooling experiences of children.

In Chapter Three, the theoretical perspective of social constructionism will be presented as a guiding theory for the research. Gergen (1985) postulates that, social constructionism is the belief that a vast majority of human lives exist as they do as a result of social and interpersonal forces. As such, social constructionism believes that human life does exist as it is because of social and interpersonal influences. This chapter offers a persuasive case for the choice of social constructionism, the perspective of social constructionism and social constructionism as a gender construct.

Chapter Four describes the research methodology. Underpinned by a qualitative research approach to have a better grasp as to just how people are make sense of their surroundings and the events that occur in it (Merriam, 2009), the research questions were explored through a narrative enquiry, by analysing participants' words to get an understanding of the subjective world of their viewpoints on their space and gendered experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

In Chapter Five, the researcher presents and analyses data that was collected from participants through focus groups and individual interviews. Data was critically looked at and allowed interrogation of the children's responses with support of literature. Data was analysed in themes suggesting several factors that integrate to possibly influence the spaces and children's gendered experiences. The themes were analysed according to the study's objectives. The participants' responses in this study indicate an awareness of issues of space and gendered experiences.

A summary of the study's findings, as well as some methodological and theoretical observations, are explored in Chapter 6. Limitations of the study are also discussed. The study's conclusions and ramifications were also discussed in this chapter. Area for further research is given at the end.

1.10 Conclusions

In order to ensure that both boys and girls receive a quality education, Swaziland's Sector Policy on Education and Training (2011) aims to eliminate gender disparities and inequities in schools. The goal is to have fair and equitable school spaces. Because there is no gender component to the Eswatini school curriculum, teachers are forced to execute their educational practices using

prevailing gender constructs. The expectations for boys and girls were different, and the gender constructions were riddled with inconsistencies regarding equal opportunities for all children. Boys and girls have diverse gendered experiences as a result of the learners' and teachers' conceptualization of femininities and masculinities as two distinct homogeneous groups. Therefore, gender stereotypes have had a negative influence on students, especially girls, and have reduced their impact in school spaces. Prejudice and discrimination are results of gender stereotypes among high school learners in Eswatini. Due to this, learners, particularly girls, have poor employment choices in the future, low self-esteem, avoidance of brilliance-related activities, and reduced academic interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). For both girls and boys in high school spaces in Eswatini, unpleasant and discriminatory experiences are commonplace. Despite effective preventive interventions, administrators are not doing much to address the problem, which is causing a number of learners to behave inappropriately.

The next chapter covers literature review. This chapter looked at space as a connected and dynamic concept, as well as how gender and gendered experiences are influenced by space. The concept of children's geographies is further explained in this literature study. Massey (2005) reiterates the interplay between space and gender, which informs the way the researcher, views the children’s experiences of spaces in the four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini.

CHAPTER 2

EXPLORING SPACE, GEOGRAPHY AND GENDERED EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The ability to determine what is known and, by extension, what is unknown about a topic area is a critical skill for researchers and students (Arshed and Danson, 2015). The intention of literature review is to find a study within current debates in order to analyse the topic on a national or international level. Reading and examining what other scholars have written on a topic of interest is indeed a part of any level of inquiry. It would also entail reading in order to obtain data to confirm or reject one's arguments as well as writings about empirical discoveries (Bell, 2004).

This review of the literature is significant since, according to (Mouton, 2001, p. 87), it enables the researcher to prevent replicating or reproducing past research and to learn how the other researchers have previously hypothesised about the topic he or she is studying. Mouton further notes that literature study assists the researcher in identifying the most broadly established research evidences in the subject of study as well as identifying the presented equipment that has proven legitimacy and dependability. These points from Mouton helped the researcher in this study by increasing knowledge in the research topic, discovering existing knowledge that is related to the topic and also finding gaps in published research. Henwood and Pidgeon (2006) state that literature review helps in possible theory development and can bring about clarity in thinking about concepts. There will be clarity of concepts because of the literature used in this study. Concepts of space and children's geographies were made clear. The use of different authors authenticated the clarification of these concepts. A narrative of space, children's geographies, and gendered experiences of children in Eswatini high schools are included in the literature review for this study. The research questions for this thesis contextualised this research in gender and education. However, the specific focus is on how space shapes and informs schoolchildren's gendered experiences. In the first section, the idea of space and geographies is explored, looking particularly at the work of Massey (2005). Massey (2005, p. 9) argued that space should "be perceived as a product of interrelations; as established by exchanges." Morrow (2011) noted that the concept of children geographies deals with the study of places and spaces for everyday lives for children. In

other words, children interact in their spaces through their everyday living. Their spaces change physically as well as discursively as they go through the course of the school day. Further, it explores gender and gendered schooling experiences of children. This outlines the children's gendered spaces and their experiences within those spaces.

2.1 Space and children's geographies

Research over the past two decades focused on the notions of human experience, place and space (Morojele, 2012), and cuts across various disciplines. This is because place and space are shaped by human beings and also shape the lives of human beings. In these studies, the importance of space to the lives of people and the several meanings, subjectivities and power dynamics linked with space are put across in the body of research. Space, according to (Massey, 2008, p. 22), is a dimension where actors coexist, with their stories and energies, "which may harmoniously mingle, collide and even annihilate one another**".** Children within the school spaces coexist, and they share their stories, which they may agree or disagree. This process will result in children leaving old beliefs and values and accepting dominant discourses within the school spaces**.** The inability to share and listen to the stories and not examining the trajectories, Massey argues, is a great risk, both limiting space and time to a fixed uniformity, and not taking space seriously, in which hegemonic imaginations of the world remain unchallenged. Simply put, we no longer ask, "Whose geography?" Thrift (2009, p. 85) compares sex to the concept of space, quoting anthropologist Edward Hall: "It exists, but we don't discuss it." Even if we do, don't expect us to take it seriously or be extremely technical." Thrift's statement appears to contradict the notion that space is a 'meta' concept. However, Lampert and Morgan (2010) argue that this could be due to the intricacies of academic space debates, as well as the fact that school geography has sometimes disregarded Massey's concern about "whose geography."

The production of the geographical has been deeply influenced by gender (Massey, 2005). Tetlow (2018, p. 32) found out that places and spaces are themselves gendered and they both reflect and affect how gender is constructed and understood. The combination of space and history was critical when Massey outlined the problematic dissociation between space and place that happened inside geography and broader cultural debates. Massey (2005, p. 6) identified that within societal and cultural discourses, on a regular basis, the place was utilised as an 'essentialising' force and a

'politically conservative sanctuary.' Her argument was that there are underlying assumptions within the dominant discourses on place. The place was closed, unified, and integrated as genuine, as 'home,' and a safe haven; space was regionalised in some sense, as it had always been divided up asserted Massey (2005, p. 6). These views show the binary division explored between place and space. The place is positioned as a genuine and local destination of daily practice, whereas space is positioned as theoretical, abstract, regional, and national, with the implication that this distinction limits and suppresses our awareness of the world's natural spatiality. The place is represented by the site, which is the school, while the space entails the happenings within the place. The gendered experiences by learners and how they navigate, negotiate and relate through interactions is what constitutes the school space.

Massey (2005, p. 9) writes that, space should be "identified as a consequence of interrelations; as generated by encounters, from the vastness of the global to the very little," In other words, what produces space are the interactions and interrelations. In school spaces, children relate with one another from how the wider society behaves and still relate in a small school community that is amongst themselves and teachers. The interaction between learners and their teachers is one of many learning-related subjects addressed in school spaces. Safe school environments enable and inspire learners to interact with one another and develop a range of skills, including language and social behaviour. Peer groups typically accept learners who successfully interact with peers who display desirable characteristics. As a result, social behaviour would seem to be a good indicator of how well-liked a person is by their peers. Children's interactions with others help them form attachments that motivate them to pursue further social and academic interests (Trawick-Smith, 2013). Massey's conceptualisations and definitions of space are the bedrock for the choice to use the term "space" rather than the phrase "place" throughout this thesis. Space is also understood as the domain in which there is a concept of multiplicity that refers to the existence of multiple things at the same time (Massey, 2005). It is the domain in which separate routes co-exist, the domain of contemporaneous heterogeneity. The school space is characterised with different behavioural patterns with plurality in how learners interpret their environment. The school space is not comprised of homogeneous behavioural patterns. Without space there is no diversity and heterogeneity; without diversity there is no space (Tetlow, 2018). The assertion that that space is the result of interrelations should be based on the fact that there is multiplicity. As children meet

within the school spaces, they come from diverse backgrounds, hence the plurality within the school space. The way learners interact and relate with one another within the school spaces, is largely determined by their history and culture. Dillard-Knox (2014) have looked at how, for instance, aggressive communication techniques and competitive standards place girls in school spaces —who are also typically expected to be cooperative and docile—in an unavoidable catch-22 with negative social and competitive repercussions. Space is continuously being constructed just like politics; as long as nothing has been chosen, the space stays open and full of possibilities. Exploring the gendered experiences of children in high schools means exploring the multiplicity of interactions that take place among the learners themselves, teachers and the administration. There is a plurality of views on gender issues that confront children. There is no homogeneity in thinking and interpretations among the learners as they relate with the schooling environment. Schools are unique spaces for the expression of personal cultures and gendered power dynamics. Girls' social and competitive experiences at school are influenced by unconscious gender bias. Poapst and Harper (2017) made a connection between the experience of girls in school spaces and muted group theory, which contends that members of muted groups must follow the dominant script in order to succeed. The school space plays a significant role in maintaining prevailing discourses and supporting or obstructing various forms of social interaction (Wilson and Randal, 2013).

Space must be foregrounded upon the existence of plurality since it is a product of interrelations. Massey refers to space as containing multiplicities (Massey, 2005, p. 9), inherently, that were used to confront the dominant Western history and culture of patriarchy. Indeed, because space is a result of interactions, particularly those that are rooted in the material acts that must be carried out, it is always in the making. Massey (2005.p. 9) says that space can be imagined as simultaneity of stories. Children's stories are ever being made within the school spaces. Learners' gendered experiences are a product of the interrelations that take place with the schooling environment. It is believed that the associational lives of leaners outside of the school have a significant impact on what occurs there (Granito, 2013). However, the researcher contends that it is necessary to go beyond this straightforward inside/outside dichotomy by using the concept of topologies, in which school spaces are viewed as the intersections of a particular constellation of relations, or articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings. School spaces are thus the dynamic

result of intricately interrelated social interaction processes. Although we should keep in mind that the social relations that make up space are not organized into scales so much as constellations of transitory coherence, such a space is the result of relationships and linkages that range from the school to the community. Such ideas provide us the opportunity to abandon the idea that spaces are "local" and “closed,".

In his book "La production de l'espace" (1991), Lefebvre employs Marxist theories and ideas of production to introduce us to the idea that "because space is a product, our comprehension of it should be anticipated to replicate and illuminate the process of reproduction" (Hammond 2019, p. 6). Given that his argument that social space is a social product may appear repetitive, Lefebvre tries to explain why it is necessary and important in the first sentence of the book: "The word space, not so many years ago, had a strictly geometrical meaning: the assumption it suggested was merely that of an empty field... speaking of 'social space' would have thus made it sound odd" (Hammond, 2019, p. 7).

Post structuralist and post humanist feminism on space share some theoretical connections with Massey's concepts on space and feminist approach theories on geographies and space. There is also an encouragement to look at spaces through the lens of gender. Space, according to Tetlow (2019, p. 3), is a dynamic, repetitive "positioning of social encounters" within which the expressly spatial can be viewed of as a dynamic simultaneity in and of itself. Space, according to geographers, is a 'given' idea and that needs no further analysis (Thrift, 2010). However, Thrift endeavoured to unpack the concept of space. Human geographers have been attempting to break free from this oversimplification. Thrift (2003, p. 96) assets that, human geographers are leaving the idea of preexisting space in which objects are embedded in the idea that "space undergoes ongoing production precisely via the agency of objects meeting one other in almost organized exchanges," he says Children’s school spaces continuously goes through construction, as learners continue to meet in different circumstances and events. The different environments within the school lead to a change of how they relate one with the other, more especially between boys and girls.

In this vein, Thrift views space from a relational perspective, seeing it as more than just a container for the world. Space is co-constitutive or co-productive of non-human and people interactions, according to the relational perspective. The study focused on the spaces in the school that diverse children inhabit that are co-constructive in nature. The social relationships that children have with adults and other children are addressed in children's spaces (Wyness, 2003). Children's social relationships in school areas are defined by their interactions with teachers and amongst themselves. The way that learners interact with their peers, teachers and staff affects not just their academic performance but also their overall growth and well-being. While the physical environment may have an impact on learners' physical safety, it is also possible to make the case that learners' social interactions inside the school have an impact on their emotional safety.

2.1.1. Relational view of space

The researcher had interest not only in what was routine and normal, but in how diverse children disrupted, negotiated and challenged the different gendered spaces within the school as they moved in and through those spaces. Thrift's relational conception of space, which was backed up by other human geographers like Massey, allowed access to everyday routines and variations within the given spaces. The researcher explored how children in the four high schools in Hhohho region experienced the spaces and geographies of those institutions, and how they went about their regular lives in those institutions. Thrift (2003, p. 103) noted that if the intricacies of the daily interactions are monitored closely, there are not just routines, but also a range of non-routine innovative improvisations though the effects may allow that routine to continue. Children have the ability to co-constitute, improvise or even create different spaces within the school. Through the use of bodily movement, gesture and using talk, pockets of interaction can be opened up over which they can have control (Sangiorgio, 2015). Someone under the age of eighteen is referred to as a child (CRC, 2009). For the purposes of this research, this definition was adopted.

The thesis attempted to explore and analyse how children of particular age tried to negotiate and make claims about spaces in their different schools, and how these negotiations impacted and affected their gendered experiences and well-being. Why use the terms space and spaces to describe how youngsters act and move across the four high schools would be a good question? This is because space encompasses trying to understand how new performances are able to "pass

the gaps in the rhythm of everyday life" (Thrift, 2003, p. 105). Space, in this case, is not the theoretical container of humanist tradition, but spaces for particular places (four high schools in Hhohho region), their co-constitutive nature intertwined with the personified children's experiences negotiating such available spaces. The school has been socially selective regarding what is taught, as argued by Lambert and Morgan (2010). The production of space and the production of culture are concepts that are important in academic fields but are not often studied or explored. The following sections explored how space is 'produced'. It relays how the space is produced, understood and how it evolves within a given environment, in this case the school.

2.2. The production of space

This is an idea that was famously made by Henri Lefebvre, a prolific writer who authored over 60 books, a view shared by Elden (2006). He argued that social space is a product. Creswell (2005, p. 112) argues that this argument has continued to be echoed in the academic world, by stating that "space creates society, and society creates space." Massey (2005, p. 17) adds her voice by suggesting that the word 'space' is usually used by people without being "completely aware of its meaning" and that it is used both in academic and everyday discourse. Despite the fact that geographers today accept that social space (school space) is more than just an empty vacuum, our 'genetic ideas' of space and 'inherited ideas' of space are highly constitutive; there is no longer any consideration given to how space is created, maintained, comprehended, or developed (Massey, 2005). Lefebvre's conceptual triad will help in examining the production of space. Hammond (2019) says the triad is known as the 'perceived-conceived-lived' shown in Figure 2.1, which is made up of three dimensions, namely, the spatial practice, representations of space and representational space.

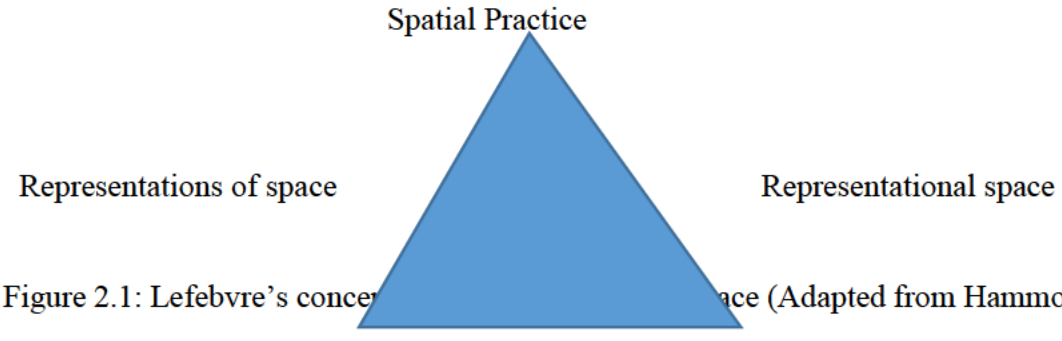


Figure 2.1: Lefebvre's conce ace (Adapted from Hammond, 2019, p. 8)

Spatial practice includes production and reproduction and spatial sets characteristics and particular location of each social formation. There is some degree of cohesion and continuity ensured by spatial practice. Regarding social space, and members of a society and school community, the relationship with space and the cohesiveness ensures a certain degree of competency and particular levels of performance. A school is a collection of sports fields, trees, gardens, buildings and paths. In the school, children's habitual spatial practices include sitting on desks, switching on of computers and moving on well-trodden routes to school.

Space representations are bound by the production relations and the order imposed by those relations, thus to knowledge, codes, frontal relations and signs. In the school, this includes the administrative divisions of school classes or departments, and those in administration control the way learners behave in school spaces. These codes imposed by the administrative divisions of school decides whether children practise agency or not.

Representational spaces exhibit a wide range of symbolic meanings, some of which are coded and others which are not, and which are tied to the foundation of social life as well as to art (which may be less defined as a code of space than a code of representational spaces). Middleton and McKinley (2010) say that the location of the school may be on lands that have a spiritual significance to indigenous people. As such, this will decide on how learners interact. Schools with cultural significance have an important influence on how learners conduct themselves. There are some schools, which follow strict gendered roles because of the cultural value the schools have in society. In some of these schools, certain traditional gender roles are followed both by learners and by teachers. Girls and boys have activities that they are do and cannot do (Middleton and McKinley, 2010). These actions build a certain environment within the school spaces. The learners' gendered experiences will then be different.

The language of Lefebvre's triad allows us to comprehend and analyse the production of space. According to Hammond (2019, p. 7) the "dialectical linkages between them provide the epicenter of a dramatic tension wherein history of spatial activity can be interpreted.") Lefebvre used the street as an example of how to critically apply the idea. The street is a place where people walk, play, and socialize; it is also a place where people learn spatial awareness. He described the street

as a location where people are separated from their houses and personal space, and where common rules and standards are observed. It might, however, be a location that is appropriated by different individuals (for example, a sleeping homeless person in a private entryway). People also oppose main and ruling powers on the street through marches and union strikes. Music and advertising may also contain representations of space. Young and Muller (2010) argue that the construction of space in this way reflects daily geographies. The triad, according to Lefebvre, signifies "the connectivity of the three aspects so that individual members of social groups can move apart from one another without becoming confused" (Hammond, 2019, p. 8).

2.3 Introducing children's geographies

In this research, the focus is on children as they are the active agents. Morrow (2011) says that the concept of children geographies deals with the study of places and spaces for the everyday lives for children. There is need, first, to understand and engage on what is the meaning of a child.

2.3.1 What is a child?

The researcher begins by asking the question 'what is a child?' Thorough examination of this question leads to a consideration of another related question 'what is childhood?' This looks like an obvious question since children and childhood are constructs that most people are familiar with, but Hammond (2019:40) quotes Lefebvre and argues that people need to think about what is happening around them, within them, each and every day. Lefebvre states that as much as we live on familiar terms with many people such as the family, that imprint of acquaintances does not transfer to our knowledge and understanding of a person, that they are defined for us or see themselves in the same way. Applying Lefebvre's argument of child and childhood then makes sense when asking the question 'what is a child?' He states that it is not acceptable to take childhood or child from a common-sense understanding. Childhood is determined societally, politically and ideologically. Freeman and Tranter (2015) aver that, it is valuable to examine childhood as a social construct that is regularly embedded in shared social imaginations, and seems natural to us. Holloway (2014) noted that child and childhood are broadly recognised in the academy to be more than biologically defined, but as historically situated and socially constructed, a view that is affirmed by Fass (2013). Holloway and Valentine (2000) further recommended that the child should be seen as a social identity, partly constructed by the child and children

themselves, as noted by Skelton (2008). Regardless of the arguments for teachers to engage with these debates as laid down (Roberts, 2017), the recognition of children's experiences and knowledge has been greatly omitted from gender education in schools. This leads to the feeling of being misunderstood by the children and not represented, with under- consideration of their voices and geographies in education.

A child, according to the UNCRC, is any person under the age of 18 years; the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights, on the other hand, states that a child as a human being aged 0 and 18 years (Kuruvilla, 2018, p. 7). The UN in its preamble to UNCRC, specified their ideological vision for the convention, declaring 'that special care and assistance is entitlement to childhood' and implored for cooperation internationally for improvement of the conditions of living of children in every country. There is an attempt by UNCRC in providing vision for the rights of child and how this might be supported. However, there is always a gap between the planned and enacted. Horschelmann and van Blerk (2012) weighed in to say the gaps are further exacerbated by the varied nature of all the countries that ratified the convention. These are the complexities in defining the child. What it means is that children and childhood are social constructs that remain debated, and vary between people, places and time. While, for example, the UNCRC (2009) requests governments to protect children from child labour as articulated in article 31 of UNCRC, to some children's survival this might be essential. Section 29 (1) of the Constitution of Swaziland protects children from child labour. Strictly administering this universal declaration of rights could end with children being denied the support they need the most.

Childhood, according to Motsa (2016), is a condition of a child's life and experiences as children. Childhood, as defined by Motsa (2016, p. 17) is a period during which children are able to reach their full potential as human beings while enjoying life at school while being loved, cared for, and protected by family and community. Past conceptions of childhood and children, where childhood is defined only in biological terms, have been de-stabilised (Freeman and Tranter, 2015). The domination and construction of conceptualisations by adult perspectives have been raised as being seriously problematic (Skelton, 2008; Jeffery. 2010; Freeman & Tranter, 2011; Horschelmann & van Blerk, 2012). Horschelmann & Blerk (2012, p. 11) strongly argue that the concern is valid and relevant given that perspectives of adults have dominant tendencies over children in political

discourses, media and theoretical debates. This will affect children's daily lives and even their futures since these spaces have the power to affect how they are represented, treated and perceived. There is high recognition, however, that children are affected by the social space they happen to stay in, and its production. Hence, children cannot be passive recipients of their social identity; they play a part in constructing it argues Skelton (2008). A child can thus be viewed as a social identity. A central aspect of developing knowledge of children, childhood and society, is the recognition and examination of the role of children in the construction of childhood and social identities (Fass, 2013). The understanding of the nature of 'Being' can be enhanced. This is a peculiar notion that represents being aware or self-consciousness, as we exist in the world. This is unique in that these debates mirror an understanding that children as 'Being', yet more broadly schooling and school geography do not continually show this conception of child, argues Mulhal (2013).

This section outlined the concept of space and how it differs and relates with place. The purpose was to contextualise the borders and relationships that currently exist between the various spaces. There was further development of these ideas as they are being drawn upon throughout the study, through the interaction with participants. The next section is literature review about the discipline of children's geographies.

2.3.2 Children geographies

Research concerning children's geographies started in America in the 1970s with the work carried out by Bunge and Bordessa in 1973 and 1975 respectively, as put forward by Holloway and Valentine (2000). Geographical expeditions were used by Bunge to explore the everyday lives and the spatial repression of children as claimed by Aitken, Lund, and Kjørholt (2007). Children's geographies are a subset of human geography that has progressed from traditional conceptions of childhood to the emerging Sociology of Childhood Studies. The sub discipline of children's geographies since its emergence continuously grows and evolves. Aitken (2018, p. 4) argued that what pushed the "agency and rights of children sprang from feminism and margins of Marxism". He further suggested that this push came from debates and academic research on everyday life and spaces of politics and highlighted two events that he argued pushed the concept of children's geographies on to the world stage. Firstly, it was the signing of the UNCRC, which pressured

geographers to consider critically the meaning of the child and the rise of the New Sociology of Childhood, which explored power relations between age and other social differences. Eswatini ratified the Commission on the Rights of Children (CRC) on the 6th of October 1995, as sign of the country's awareness and commitment to improve children's spaces and rights as stated by World Vision International (2018). Being a signatory to the instrument gave courage to geographers in considering the importance of interdisciplinary research on children. The Swaziland Constitution (2005) Section 29 (1-7) covers the rights of children, which supports the CRC's conditions for children.

Relationships with political discourse and growing socio-political engagement with children on children's geographies showed an increasing questioning of 'whose geography?' in the space of everyday life as claimed by Horschelmann and van Blerk (2012). The emerging social studies of childhood affected the geographers' thinking in this regard. Geographers' perspectives on this topic have been impacted by their involvement with the new social studies of childhood. Prout (2005) weighed in to say children's geographies emerged from sociology and anthropology, together with wider interdisciplinary engagement. This was a reaction to children's absence in sociology and models in biology of child development in psychology, where children were viewed as potential adults, rather than children in a condition of being. More attention was given to the agents of socialisation like the family and school, with minimal direct concern being given to children themselves (Jenks, 2004). Shared convictions regarding the "moral status of children and childhood," according to James (2010, p. 16), "created the prospect for collaborative working through a single philosophical goal." That is, it was agreed that children should indeed be thought of as social participants or agents, and that childhood could be regarded as a social construction throughout life. Lastly, it was agreed to contact children's views first hand in order to understand their world.

The researcher in this study has to get the children's lived gendered experiences in the school spaces through face-to-face individual and focus group interviews so as to get children's first hand views. The geographers' engagement to scrutinise the diverse lived experiences of children has been done through participatory or ethnographic methods. This method has been criticised in that it emphasised children's different micro-locations at the expenses of an analysis on a grand scale,

as (Ansell, 2009) suggested. In the Global North, children's geographers have been tracking the increasing marginalisation of young people from public spaces: younger children are seen as needing protection from traffic accidents and stranger danger, while older children are typically seen as threats to peace and control of public space (Mattsson, 2002; Karsten, 2005).

According to Morojele and Muthukrishna (2013), the study of children's lives by children's geographers is done experientially, politically and ethically. Their major concern is on children's positioning in any given society, meaning the place where they are located and the spaces within the place. Reflections on a Global North study revealed new insights into challenges that have shaped and continue to shape children's geographies. The study reaffirmed early geographers for children's idea that we must listen to children's voices, as Bordonaro and Payne (2012) suggested. Although children's perspectives may contradict traditional academic and activist expertise, their voices are valuable and contribute to discussions about their lives. This does not amount to casting them as all knowing. This is meant to reify children, whose voices put something valuable to debate as independent knowing subjects (Holloway, 2014). Children are unable to write accounts of their lives on their own, but parents, educators and others with the power to influence or be influenced by the lives of children must be heard because they have the power to shape or be molded by the lives of children (Mitchell & Elwood, 2012; Creswell, 2012). It is worth noting that, regardless of the benefits of considering social identities construction by children of their own, it can be an uncomfortable process for some adults. Skelton (2008) suggested that accommodating in part that children construct their childhoods and social identities, means that it is difficult if not impossible, for adults to fully comprehend the experiences of children and imaginations of the world, hence the need to allow them to be heard. Hence, this study gave children in four high schools in Hhohho region an opportunity for their voices to be heard by engaging them through interviews as they narrate their lived gendered experiences in their spaces.

2.4 Gender and gendered schooling experiences of children

Ullah and Khan (2016, p. 2810) declared that educational institutions act as strong agents of gender socialisation. Gender socialisation is a subset of socialisation studies, which concentrates on how society socialises boys and girls into appropriate behaviour. Bolich (2007, p. 64) asserts that gender socialisation is "a process that is ongoing that begins with gender assignment and ends with the

construction of gender identity and gender role. Apart from educating children in subject areas, the role and status that are open to them are taught in these educational places and spaces. The moment children enter school and continue throughout their educational journey, the formal educational gendering process begins. Children are taught by the time they enter the classroom that girls and boys are categorically and fundamentally different. Wood (2005) emphasises that boys are made to believe that they are good in math and science, violently play in the playground, and shout when in class; on the other hand, girls are good in literature, speak softly and sit quietly in class. Wood and Eagly (2012) say that children navigate these experiences to create their own gendered spaces within place (school) to either go along with the norms or resist the 'normal'. The gendering process continues throughout their educational lives. This creates gendered spaces for the children within the schooling environment.

2.4.1 Gendered spaces

Spaces are gendered, according to Alzeer (2016, p. 5), when they are "made for and associated with one certain gender." Gendered spaces, according to Savard (2016, p. 10), are places where "clearly masculine and female behaviours occur." A gendered space is regarded feminine or masculine based on the behaviours of men/boys and women/girls, rather than by their fundamental nature. Savard further says that gendered spaces depend on what behaviour is deemed appropriate by society for men/boys and women/girls, and this determines at each location whether behaviours performed are considered masculine or feminine. Massey (2005) considers gendered spaces as a manifestation of an abstruse and intricate connection of space and place with gender. Low (2006, p. 119) states that "gender is seen as engraved through body practices in this connection, in the production of spaces, creating gendered spaces". Ranade (2007, p. 1520) states that depending among other things gender, age and sexuality, "differently bodies have a different experience of space because access to space is socio-culturally determined by these different variables. Hence, children in high schools give different meaning to gender in the spaces they occupy and operate in. In high school spaces, learners' activities are guided by what is masculine and feminine. In other words, learners' activities are determined by heterosexual scripts and heteronormative values (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Since spaces and places are gendered, gendering varies among communities and cultures (Alzeer, 2016, p. 5). In each given society, the gendering of space and place reflects and is influenced by how gender is constituted. The sweeping of classes is deemed girls' duty, while cutting of grass is considered boys' duty in school. This resonates well with this investigative study to find out how children navigate the terrain of their spaces as they relate and give meanings to their gendered experiences within the school spaces. Gender relations are "tied up with both direct and indirect in ways of thinking about space and place" in particular social constructions (Massey, 1994, p. 2). The researcher uses this idea to explore and explain the gendered spaces that evolved inside the lived spaces of children in four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini, as well as the dynamics with which those spaces are related, for the objectives of this study. The focus on the gendered spaces and experiences of learners relates to the scarcity of studies on high schools in Eswatini. There are few studies on space and gender, which address children's geographies in high school education. Hammond (2019) investigated children's geographies and their values to geography education, and in South Wales, Sion (2018) investigated students' engagement of space, well-being, and gender.

The notion of "doing gender" was first proposed by West and Zimmerman (1987), who demonstrated that women and men's views and behaviours regarding the conceptions of "man" and "woman" are instilled in us through various socialisation processes. As a result, masculine and feminine attributes of manhood and womanhood are not defined biologically, but rather socially formed via normal social interaction. When a boy and a girl, for example, approach a classroom door at the same time, gendered methods of acting and gender socialisation tell us that the boy is supposed to open the door for the girl since that is what society considers appropriate.

Savard (2016, p. 16) states that gender as a socially constructed concept dictates, "how the daily lives of children go in relation to how they behave, think, and interact with others." Ideas of gender and the places we visit in the public sphere influence our everyday routine activities**.** Children are part of the greater society, and the public spaces they visit has an influence on their daily routine activities within the school spaces. "The normal accomplishments that take place while people go about their day" have a part in the development of gendered spaces based on concepts of femininity and masculinity, according to Savard (2016, p. 17). Girls' and boys' gendered experiences as they navigate and negotiate school spaces are influenced by what the school society considers proper

behaviour for boys and girls based on gender beliefs and the subsequent establishment of gendered spaces. This is what is at the heart of social constructionism, which is learners' understanding of gender draws from the dominant discourses of gender from the society. Lorber (1994, p. 114) avers that "the social inequalities that characterise "girl" and "boy" are generated by gender as a process. Throughout their lives, in social interaction, children understand what is required of them and respond and react accordingly, hence they promptly create and sustain this gender order within school spaces. It is anticipated that gendered spaces will influence children's gendered experiences in schools; therefore, detailed gendered schooling experiences will be discussed next.

2.5 Gendered schooling experiences of children

This section first explores the various school environments and the part they play in influencing children's spaces and their gendered experiences. It starts by giving an outline on how gender has changed over time to giving various schooling experiences children go through.

Stromquist (2007, p. 5) says that, society's serious approach to gender has gone through "many eras." The disparity amongst men and women was initially a source of concern, as well as the degree to which these disparities could be explained by biological characteristics. The emphasis was on the differential socialisation processes, men/boys and women/ girls went through in their respective communities. Gender is today seen as a regulating factor in all aspects of society, from academic institutions to the workplace to justice systems, according to recent studies (Islam, 2018). In education, a similar phenomenon could be seen. There were considerable initiatives and attempts between 1980 and 1990 to minimise sexual stereotypes in textbooks and lobby and promote for co-education. Throughout that ten year-year period, there was a concentration and emphasis on school sexual discrimination and the gendered character of schools, as well as a concentration on girls rather than males (Leaper & Brown, 2014). There were great concerns that came up in the 1990s: access of women and girls to education in the developing countries and women's unfavourable position in technological and scientific fields together with the assessment of gendered behaviours in developed countries' schools (Stromquist, 2007).

In the 21st century, the developed countries, as noted by Jha (2017), have indeed been preoccupied with male students' academic underperformance There have been far too many adjustments and

improvements in education, however, only a few have specifically addressed gender in their consideration of anti-racist and intercultural education. Focusing on gender in schools and its implications on how children navigate the gendered spaces for effective holistic learning, however, has been constrained or hampered by a lack of public engagement and participation in education. This is due to widespread changes in the state's definition and obligations, as a result of economic policies that place a strong focus on international competitiveness and the privatisation of social services including education. Ball and Youdell (2007) say that privatisation of schools has led to covert and overt selection practices introduced in schools as they attempt to make sure they have a population they feel will likely perform well. The assessments of student population that will serve the school best in the marketplace are based on the intersections of gender with ability. These kinds of assessments lead to segregation and to school populations that are homogeneous. Dunne and Leach (2005) found out that in Ghana, boys dropped out at greater rates than girls in low performing schools because they would have been left out through screening in private schools and end up in public schools**.** In Eswatini, boys' dropout levels were made high due to higher repetition rates. Once they were over-age, they dropped out of school (Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy, 2018). Dune and Leach (2005) also found that large enrolments of girls were in the same low achieving schools. Robertson and Verger (2012) argue that there is increasing evidence that privatisation of education is posing a big threat to equitable participation in teaching and learning. Stromquist (2005) outlined the deleterious effects of privatisation of schools, indicting the policies and practices for reproducing the parlous state of quality public education, and hence encouraging the growth of privatisation. Hanushek (2013) added that many countries worldwide have mounted challenges against the failure of the state to provide good quality public schooling and concurrently against marketisation and privatisation of education. Marketisation and privatisation of education was central in school authorities ignoring contemporary issues of gender in education. Schools no longer focus on the effects of gender discrimination, gender- based violence and sexual abuse within school spaces but concentrated much on the economic side of learning (Hanushek, 2013). The focus on privatisation ignored the hugely important contemporary and pressing subject of gender-based violence and gender inequalities in schools. The schools, especially in the private sector, are no longer vehicles for gender transformation (Dunne and Leach, 2005).

Stromquist (2007, p. 5) noted that, in the U. S., for instance, reform efforts have prioritized school success, which includes academic achievement, site-based monitoring, educator subject and teaching methods knowledge, leadership ability and competency, and parents' selection of schools, at the expenses of checking on the different gendered experiences of boys and girls and its influence on their performance in classrooms. Ball and Youdell (2007, p. 48) noted that OECD nations have adopted a similar, although perhaps not identical pattern. Education reforms in less developed nations "have mostly been administrative in nature," with a focus or emphasis on decentralisation, parental engagement, and school effectiveness. Less effort have been put in finding out the gendered experiences of children and the impact on their academic performance (Ball & Youdell, 2007).

2.5.1 Schools as engines of gender transformation

The schools in Eswatini are going through a transformational process to make them centres for gender transformation. Issues of removing gender stereotypes in all books and even choice of subjects have been prioritised (MOET, 2018). Schools in Eswatini schools are harnessed to be spaces that promote equality between boys and girls. The Inqaba initiative by the Ministry of Education is meant to create school spaces that are gender friendly. It seeks to create school spaces that are free from any form violence, discrimination and abuse. As such, school spaces in Eswatini are touted to be the engines for change, to bring about behavioural change in societal insofar as issues of patriarchal attitudes are concerned. Schools are seen as centres for promoting equality and equity between boys and girls to achieve the number 5 sustainable goal of gender equality and empowering all girls and women (MOET, 2018).

In terms of gender transition, schools have yet to play a substantial role, based on a focus on social change efforts on school efficacy, parental choice of schools, teacher content knowledge and pedagogy, and leadership, among other things. Josh (2011) stated that this issue led to studies focusing on the small-scale social processes that occur on a regular basis in classrooms and schools, usually referred to as socialisation dynamics. In the meantime, the classical concept of socialisation of sex roles has been demonstrated to have limited utility. The focus of socialisation of sex roles is on childhood activities, making transmitted communications appear least questioned and opposed; additionally, it is a micro-level-focused strategy that ignores the complex interplay

between micro-, meso- and large scale variables (Gouvias & Alexopoulos, 2016). Believing in sex roles means accepting the traditional "normal' of the society. This has an influence on how children 'perform' and 'do' gender in their given spaces and places in schools. From birth onward, even in schools, children are socialised by gender. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008, p. 6) "likened schools to 'factories' which produced gendered individuals". He indicated that when they come to school, boys and girls come with a sense of their own sexual identity (whether they are a girl or a boy), but do not have the sense of gendered identity, that is, characteristics associated with being a boy or girl. This view resonates with this research as the researcher notes the manner in which specific spaces in school related to several types of behaviour and the ways in which gendered identities of children were seen to be involved in distinct educational environments that they preferred. The following section explores the different contexts that affect and influences children's geographies and gendered experiences in school spaces. It explores the adoption of a gender perspective in the analysis of children's gendered experiences within educational spaces. The educational spaces designed for girls and boys differ, therefore space would be utilised differently.

2.5.2 Gender perspectives of school spaces

This section begins with a discussion of seating arrangements for children in schools in different countries. Thereafter, behavioural aspects of learners in classroom spaces; sexual identity in school spaces; differential treatment for girls and boys in school spaces; varied abusive nature of school spaces; hegemonic masculinity through physical education in school spaces, and ablution spaces, are discussed.

2.5.2.1 Gendered seating space arrangements

Schools serve as societal environments in which gender and sexual traits are developed, shared and formally and publicly approved, and this broader learning environment sends out significant messages about gender (Rhodes, 2018). Stromquist (2007) took note of Thorne's 1993 publication 'Gender Play: boys and girls in school' and reported that gender bias in primary school is an important part of socialisation in children. Inasmuch as learners can choose to be split by gender, teachers adopt spatial layouts that emphasise gender discrimination (Nathan, 2010). Croll and Hastings (2013) discovered that sitting in same sex pairs and groupings in classroom is how the

majority of students sit in class in California. As explained by Lund and Kirk (2019), in Liberia, during playtime, female and male learners sit in distinct sections of the classroom and play in distinct groups. As Lewis and Lockheed (2008) discovered, girls in Yemen are frequently situated at the rear of the classroom, as is the case in some circumstances. This is different in Ghana, for example, UNESCO (2016) observed that girls are not placed at the back half of the classroom but are dispersed throughout the room, in small clusters or isolated amongst male learners. Students, who sat fairly close to the teacher or in the "zone of action," that is, at the front of the classroom or central areas of the classroom, contributed more towards the learning task than learners that sat outside of this area of action in the United States, according to Starhawk (2011). The majority of the time, it is girls that seat closest to the educators, which can be advantageous to them, as stated by McGuire (2018).

2.5.2.2 Behavioural gendered aspects of learners in classroom spaces

Very obedient, subservient, and silent girls were found alongside more active, vibrant, and self-confident boys in a classroom study of individuals in natural contexts (ethnography) in one of Venezuela's rural parts of the country (Avramov and Cliquet, 2005). Female students were particularly shy during class demonstrations, compared to self-assured but less prepared boys. In an attempt to explain the high percentages of female achievement and male dropout, Avramov and Cliquet (2005) linked these two findings to the incentives girls acquire in school for being respectable, submissive, subservient, and industrious. In the classroom spaces, teachers expect girls to be cautious than boys before they speak (Hosseini, 2015). Hossein further says that not everyone is affected by these differences, but it is ideally believed that language and gender variations exist between boys and girls in classroom spaces. These differences are leant from childhood, and internalised during youth, during which adult identity is acquired. Girls' and boys' use of language in the classroom spaces is different. Girls are expected to master the social communicative structures. The girls are expected not to be loud and vulgar when expressing themselves as boys are (Yule, 2006).

2.5.2.3 Gender and sexual identity in school spaces

According to Stangor (2014), between youth and early adulthood, the question of sexual identity emerges from cultural practices and unconscious identification processes. In the United Kingdom, for example, to have a girlfriend throughout the latter years of elementary education is a common occurrence, which supports formation of a culture heterosexuality in which boys can express power and independence. According to Stromquist (2007), peer cultures foster the sexual objectification of girls, the presentation of heteronormative characteristics by boys, and harsh monitoring by peers of boys who are not deemed to possess conventional types of masculinity. In their study of the British context, Gonick and Conrads (2022) identified two types of heteronormative sexual morality and identity regulation: homophobic harassment of males by boys and sexist harassment of females by boys, both of which are predominantly attained and refined through the uttered words. According to Renold (2013), boys who attempt establishing alternate masculine identities and being less confrontational and more compassionate may have emotional and social consequences. These males, who are as young as 10 years of age, frequently protect their masculinity in front of their classmates by dismissing girls and femininity values (Blackbeard and Lindegger, 2014). Male and female students, according to Kalra and Bhugra (2013), do not act passively in their schooling contexts, as is commonly supposed. This means that, in their given schooling spaces, students navigate their environments, change and are changed with the happenings through their different interactions. Students are neither indifferent nor ignorant to what transpires around them. Children in the United States participate in "border work," in which they join single-sex relationship groups to construct and enforce wider gender boundaries and utilise space to segregate themselves, according to Bjorck (2011). She also noted instances of "border crossing," or when children depart from gender stereotypes and navigate less polarised versions of femininity and masculinity identity. The deliberate encouragement of the latter would contribute in the development of less adversarial gender expression.

2.5.2.4 Differential treatment of girls and boys in school spaces

There is strong evidence that school spaces are a discouragement to girls when boys get more advice (CEDAW 2017). Some major academic subjects are regarded inappropriate for girls by teachers, boys are allowed to abuse females, and boys do not share girls' concerns of discriminatory treatment. Lloyd, Walsh, and Yailagh (2005) uncovered evidence in a study including 35 Kenyan

rural schools and 551 pupils between the ages of 13 and 19. The study relied on structured questions with school leaders and instructors, as well as self-administered student questionnaires and observations of Mathematics and English teachers. Through regression analysis, more variables were employed to predict dropout. Many of the pupils stated that they were treated equally by both sexes. Only 63% of educators said mathematics was "important" for girls, and 14% of the girls stated they were coerced into sex. Educators' views on the importance of mathematics for girls were not a factor in school dropouts, but age was, particularly among girls aged 15 to 19. Holder and Kessels (2017) discovered that teachers regard boys as outperforming girls in mathematics, hence, they interact more with them during mathematics lessons. Furthermore, Holder and Kessels believed that boys were more intelligent individuals and that science and mathematics were easier for boys than for girls. This bias frequently showed in the positive affirmations boys received during class time in the two subjects. Elliot (2006) confirms that teachers have a tendency to give attention more to boys than girls through having more interactions with them. Teachers are tolerant to boys' behaviour that they do not tolerate in girls. She claims that boys are subjected to greater criticism and adulation than girls. Boys receive more attention because they tend to demand it, whereas girls are more reserved and silent. Elliot (2006) says that with the support from teachers, boys dominate classroom discussions and more often than girls, have access to computers and technology.

2.5.2.5 Varied gendered dimension of abusive nature of school spaces

There is widespread agreement that schools are safe environments for children (Gross, Haines, Hill, Francis, Blue-Banning and Turnbull, 2014). Surprisingly, though, certain significant types of abuse and violence have been observed there. Because the school is a socialising agent, differences in violence levels between girls and boys emerge from such socialisation into masculine and feminine characteristics. Benbenishty and Astor (2005) used a sample size of 15 816 children in Grades 5-11 from 216 Israeli elementary, secondary and high schools to conduct their research. They examined a range of different models of violence in schools. Based on the results of a survey and a multiple regression, they classified a pattern of violence and abuse into three categories: bodily, verbal/social, and threatening acts. They discovered during their study that boys face greater physical abuse than girls, and that the harassment, bullying, and aggression escalated as they as they progressed from primary to junior high school. Victimisation is equally strong for

boys in religious and non-religious institutions, according to their data, however, only a small percentage of girls at religious schools are affected. More crucially, they discovered that gender predicts violence better than culture, ethnicity, or culture, demonstrating gender's ubiquitous role in creating people's identities.

Sexual assault in schools is endemic in South Africa, as it is in numerous adjacent nations such as Eswatini, according to Vally (2003). Teachers abuse and assault female students, and the majority of females are assaulted by their classmates. The majority of schools lack psychotherapists, as well as platforms and programs to address the issue. Low self-esteem in girls, dropping out of school due to a lack of motivation in studying, and, in the worst-case scenario, acts of suicide are the repercussions of this bodily trauma. Meinck, Fry, Ginidza- Maternowska and Dunne (2017) added that the risk factors for child abuse victimisation have grown with evidence of physical and sexual abuse victimisation.

Leach (2006) revealed commonalities in a rare comparative study of violence against females in schools observed both in urban and rural and learners aged 11 to 18 in Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Ghana, and Malawi. The findings of interviews with students and teachers revealed that sexual assault is a taboo subject for many people, who are frequently accompanied by denial. Nonetheless, the vast majority of females were the targets Leach (2006, p. 1131) puts it clearly that boys' sexual assault of girls was commonly accepted by teachers as "part of growing up." There was generally a sexual favour exchange in order for female learners to receive preferential treatment in class and excellent exam scores. As part of the disciplinary measures against educators, that generally results in the misbehaving teacher being moved to another school, the "appropriateness of the school as a place to teach youthful people about the dangers of and significance of sexual relations based on negotiation and informed consent" was raised (Leach, 2006, p. 1132). In any endeavour to make school spaces gender friendly for both boys and girls, Key student safety components like background and reference checks, interviews, norms of professional conduct, and disciplinary procedures must be included in policies on teachers (UNICEF, 2014). Additionally, policies should support teachers in managing their classrooms successfully, preventing bullying and gender based violence using positive discipline techniques rather than physical punishment, and

identifying students at danger by spotting indicators of child abuse and reporting it in the right places.

2.5.2.6 Hegemonic masculinity through physical education in school spaces

There is connection between masculinity and violence, and that violent behaviour is seen as an extension of masculinity cult (McCarry, 2003). Masculinities are linked with the dominant position of men. Physical education is one such area where masculinities are exercised. Boys dominate over girls in physical education to sustain the gender order of their superiority over girls (Connell, 2005). Physical education's importance cannot be overstated. It is a part of the formal education program that has a significant impact on the development of masculinity (Gerdin, 2016). Sport functions as a channel for aggressive action, according to a study conducted by Parker (1996) and later used by Stromquist (2007) regarding British schools, in which verbal abuse reinforces masculinity and ridicules mistakes as feminine. Male students utilise their physical might to persuade other schoolboys to change their ideas in order to conform to hegemonic masculinity. The *Washington Post* (2019) reported on a situation in Brazil of a particular girl who excelled as a goalkeeper for a women's soccer team, and discovered that she faced a lot of hostility. A father of a child from the opposing side sought confirmation that this girl was not a boy.

2.5.2.7 Gendered nature on functionality of ablution spaces

A number of international organisations, including UNICEF, are supporting efforts to create girl-friendly environments. Cueto and Secada (2004) found evidence that such settings or surroundings have a responsibility to extend beyond the schoolroom. The shortage of lavatories and restrooms in rural Peru is a major issue that makes it difficult for girls to attend school. Similarly, in the African context, there have been allegations that female students suffer difficulty during their menstruation cycles due to the lack of latrines. According to Muito (2005), one of the outcomes is that they (girls) give the impression of being dumb in order to avoid being called by teachers during menstruation. Girod, Ellis, Karen, Andes, Freeman and Caruso (2017) averred that girls suffer most since they may not have safe and adequate ablution facilities with functional door locks and privacy. School spaces with inadequate menstrual hygiene management jeopardise the ability of girls to remain in school. This in turn makes them achieve fewer life outcomes for themselves and their future families as compared to boys (Girod et al., 2017). Gershenson and Penner (2009) note

that discrimination in the allocation of ablution facilities poses a health risk. They argue that long queues form most often at girls' designated facilities while this is hardly a problem in boys' designated ones. The suggestion is that girls endure discomfort and spend more time in accessing ablution facilities. This could result in health complaints such as urinary infections (Greed, 2009). The Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018) stipulates that gender-sensitive, and healthy bathroom environments should be provided for in schools to meet the requirements of both girls and boys.

Teachers have an important part in the process of socialization of children. The influence of teachers on gendered experiences of children explores the influential role they play in influencing children's spaces and gendered experiences. The following section looks at how teachers influence gendered experiences of children within school spaces.

2.5.3 'Doing' gender: Teacher constructed dynamics

Teachers are influential role models since most of the time in school is spent with them. Through the curriculum and organisational decisions, teachers send multiple gendered messages to students and they negotiate meanings as part of their everyday lives (Gerdin, 2017). With limited books in the developing countries, the role of the teacher becomes very important, as noted by Stromquist (2007). In light of this research exploring the spaces, geographies and gendered experiences of children, it becomes pertinent to ask these questions in connection with how different spaces influence and affect children's gendered experiences. What differential expectations and attitudes do teachers hold toward girls and boys? How do the teachers value the work of boys and girls? What is the reaction of students to the prevailing gendered messages and practices? How are students treated in the classroom? These questions will be answered in the following section on teachers' gendered expectations and perceptions while others will be addressed by participants during the interview sessions, as these questions formed part of the interview guide (see Appendix F).

2.5.3.1 Teachers' gendered expectations and perceptions

Skolnick (2011) claims that teachers spend more time with children than any other adult apart from their parents. As a result, the expectations and actions of teachers have a serious effect on learners' achievements, aspirations as well as their self-esteem. Sadker and Sadker (2004) argue that what teachers do not say and say, who they call upon and what they do, are more powerful than any lesson from the textbook. In school spaces, teachers reinforce and normalise gender stereotypes, to the disadvantage of their learners (Gansen, 2017). In Eswatini, Lumadi and Shongwe (2010, p. 47) found out that the teacher training colleges curricula were silent on gender issues and reproduced a patriarchal culture. These stereotypical perceptions are what guide the majority of schools and how teachers teach and act in the country. Teachers regulate behaviour that is gendered through their overt gender norms, resulting in inequitable gendered school spaces. Bhana, Nzimakwe and Nzimakwe (2011) state that, in South Africa, teachers take from the dominant discourses of society and construct gender in stereotypical manner, hence encouraging learners to make meaning about femininities and masculinities in the same manner.

According to Hammond (2019), there is proof that teachers' gendered expectations and strong concepts of potential outcomes encourage imbalances in effective interaction, which affects learners' achievement (2019). Expectations led to disparities in opportunities for contact classrooms in schools, and therefore in children's opportunities to learn or the amount of time spent on mental tasks, according to widespread experimental research led by Cohen (1986) and reported by Stromquist (2007) in the United States. Teachers continue to regard boys as more "naturally brilliant" and girls as persons who would be successful succeed through persistence in silence and a lot of effort, according to one among the most commonly mentioned findings of both elementary and high school research. This makes girls push their limits in the given educational spaces in order to fit in the hard worker category, while boys spent time outside in adventures (Skelton, 2006; Stromquist, 2007). Legewie and DiPrete (2012) support this view by revealing that teachers have a gendered perception that Male students are thought to be disengaged from their studies in comparison to their female counterparts, hence more likely to misbehave, resulting in their becoming potential candidates for disciplinary action.

Olwig and Gulov (2013, p. 191) cited a study of Guinean schools conducted by Anderson- Levitt, Block, and Soumare (1998), which found that teachers expected girls to take care of the school's daily cleaning, particularly sweeping classrooms; boys were also involved in manual work, but not on a daily basis. This supports the view by Savard (2016, p. 16), that gender as a socially constructed concept dictates "how the daily lives of people go in relation to how they behave, think, and interact with others". Teachers also appear to have the assumption that they and their female students will form love bonds; as a result, they make fun of their peers for not being able to locate a girlfriend among the student community (Bank, 2014). Teachers' expectations (i.e. inaccuracy) can be predicted, according to Hinnant, O'Brien, and Ghazarian (2009). Teachers' expectations for their learners' academic performance were reliably predicted by a number of child features. At all-time points, the gender of the child was found to be a reliable predictor of teacher reading expectations, with girls being more likely to be overestimated.

Teachers' expectations influenced the pupils, according to Stromquist (2007, p. 10), no prejudices about what boys and girls are like or can do in school were preserved by either first-grade girls or first-grade boys. By the fifth or sixth grade, both boys and girls had recognised significant differences between the sexes. Boys and girls concurred that boys were more likely to pay attention in class, raise their hands regularly, and appropriately answer questions from the teacher. They could do math, show mental toughness, enjoy competition, and be intelligent. This was a Guinean research project. Rural students in Kenya, Malawi, and Rwanda have also voiced discontent with educators' negative views of female students, resulting in teachers prioritising boys in the classrooms and overlooking girls (Mungai, 2002). In the Guinean study, on the other hand, it was discovered that teachers were likely to approach girls on a regular basis and encourage them to participate, "but usually excellent learners" (Olwig & Gulov, 2013, p. 191).

Stromquist (2007) used data from a study of teachers in two rural primary schools in Senegal done by Daun (1995), which looked at teacher predictions regarding academic accomplishments in end-of-year national examinations and later life trajectories ten years apart between 1980 and 1990. The teachers' short-term forecasts of student failure were correct in 65% of males and 78% of females. After nine years, 54 percent of girls and 26% of boys who were anticipated to fail had not completed elementary school.

According to Lorenz, Gentrup, Kristen, Stanat, and Kogan (2016), teacher expectations inaccuracy is systematic and it does not occur spontaneously for different groups of pupils. Negative bias in teacher expectations has been identified for students from socially impoverished homes, students from ethnic minorities, and girls and boys from gender nontypical domains, according to Holder and Kessels (2017) and Meisse (2017). The systemically biased expectations that teacher expectancy have the potential to contribute to educational inequalities (Gentrup & Rjosk, 2018; Muntoni and Retelsdorf, 2018). Prejudices concerning gender, home wealth, and race were revealed in a study evaluating Brazilian educators' expectations for the academic achievement of Grade 5 students. During that study, de Oliveira Barbosa (2004) found that the expectations teachers were higher for girls and lower for black and impoverished learners.

2.5.3.2 Gendered teacher-pupil dynamics

In international studies undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Proficiency (IEA), the ability to study has been indisputably demonstrated as a strong correlation of science and math achievement (Stromquist, 2007). Competent performance is linked to self-assurance and self-esteem, both of which are derived from classroom recognition and relevance. As a result, teacher-student relationships are held in high regard, both in terms of quantity and quality (Timmermans, de Boer, and van der Werf, 2016). Lee (2005), Murray (2005), Garcia (2008), and Halpern (2014) researched about how boys control the time and space of teachers and other students in the classroom. Boys are more self-assured, aggressive, competitive, and opinionated than girls, relegating girls to second-class citizens in class and restricting their participation spaces. Teachers have a tendency to provide more commendation, censure, and comments to boys than to girls because boys receive more attention. This is something that both male and female teachers do indistinguishably. Similar trends were observed in more recent investigations by Meisse (2017), Pakzadian, and Tootkaboni (2018). In countries with drastically different social and political situations, such as Sweden, as Einarsson and Granstrom (2004) point out, and the U.S, as Jones and Dindia (2004) point out and Peru, as reported by Espinosa, boy students receive more priority than girls in general (2006).

Boys, according to Warrington, Younger, and Williams (2007) and Francis (2004), have a tendency to be more disruptive and dictate the classroom climate, whereas girls have a habit of working together (Hammond, 2019). Merrett and Wheldall (1987) and Beaman, Wheldall and Kemp (2006), discovered that more girls than boys initiate teacher exchanges. The less prevalent and worse quality of teacher communication with girls, according to Stromquist (2007), disrupts learning chance structures, which are defined as who speaks during a conversation and who is permitted to seize an opportunity. As a result, the indication for opportunity structure favours boys, despite the fact that not all boys talk; rather, the boys who talk the most are the boys who talk the most. This disregard for girls has a huge impact on the equality of chances since it makes girls less noticeable and deserving of attention, eroding their feeling of self-respect and utility. Teachers and students both contribute to a pattern in which girls have less opportunities to engage in classroom recitations (Stromquist, 2007).

In a British study of eight secondary schools, Beaman, Wheldall, and Kemp (2007) discovered that, while most teachers believe that treating girls and boys equally will help them learn, focus group discussions with learners and classroom observations of teacher-student interactions revealed that this is rarely the case. In some classrooms dialogues were dictated by the boys, while teacher-student exchanges that sustained learning were dominated by the girls. The boys had the impression that they were given more unfavourable or negative treatment by their teachers; they were unquestionably penalised more severely and subjected to fewer questioning in order to earn their teachers' assistance. According to the survey, the girls asked more intellectual questions, "focused on valuing topic expertise, information, and concepts" (Pircon 2019, p. 4).

Pakzadian and Tootkaboni (2018) noted that while girls show greater acceptance during conversations and have a more facilitative role, boys try to be domineering over topics and more assertive during the development of topics. Boys use tactics like shifting the topic, interrupting girls, criticising and engaging in conflict and even silence, to try to keep dominance over the conversation. Warrington et al., (2007) conducted similar research in the United Kingdom, which included a four-year investigation in a variety of localities and four famous secondary schools. Based on interviews and observations of learner enquiries and pleas for aid in the classroom, their findings were startling. They noticed that guys started fewer requests for help or inquiries from

teachers than girls, and that boys were more interested in sports, friends, and extracurricular activities. On the other hand, teachers' reactions to boys reinforced stereotypical behaviour. Boys were much more prepared to disengage from academic competition instead of being labelled as failures, according to the study. The boys thought their behaviour was far more disruptive than that of the girls. Girls were more prone to speak and chuckle in class, whereas boys were more likely to scream, crack jokes, hurl objects, and start fighting, causing higher teacher response and attention (Warrington et al., 2007). Another study looked at twelve (12) quantitative studies on classroom contact in the United States, and revealed that teachers demonstrate more negative behaviours (condemnation, censure, and behaviour warning) toward boys than girls, and that these behaviours are most intense throughout junior high (Jones & Dindia, 2004).

Streitmatter (1994) conducted an ethnographic study of eight excellent teachers in the United States, which was later confirmed by Stromquist (2007), who spent 14-20 hours in each teacher's classroom over a six-month period interviewing and observing each teacher's class. According to Jabeen, Chaudhary, and Omar (2014), teachers that were deemed successful in incorporating gender issues into their classrooms by peers and supervisors had different approaches in their teaching styles and relationships with students. Individual approaches ranged from gender-neutral, or overlooking the function of gender stereotypes in schools and classroom practices, to non-sexist, or an effort to eliminate sex stereotypes, despite the fact that the teachers taught at diverse levels of education, from playschool to high school (UNESCO, 2015). The same study found that teachers' treatment of students varied, with some attempting to counter stereotyped messaging while others engaging with their students in a similar fashion. Streitmatter's (1994) study is significant, according to Stromquist (2007), since it reveals that even among educators who are dedicated to gender equity, different strategies can be used in the classroom. Some teachers utilize an equal behaviour paradigm to urge students to improve, while others employ the uneven treatment implied by the equity framework.

Davies (2005) used videotape and quantitative analysis to conduct a five-year research on the occurrence, frequency, and kind of interaction in classes in co-educational secondary schools in Ireland. Teachers interacted with male students more than female students, showed greater appreciation for their contributions and responses, asked them higher-order questions, and praised

and fortified them more than female students. The gender layout of classes exacerbated dealing arrangements. Craig (2016) observed that when girls made up the majority of students in the class, they were more likely to participate, and when boys made up the majority, they were less likely to participate; educator practices were unrelated to years of experience.

Other academics, such as Aikman and Rao (2012), believe that gender discrimination is not the main reason why boys get greater attention from teachers. Teachers may not be fully to blame for the increased attention boys get, as more interactions with males may reflect student effects on teachers rather than teacher effects on students. Certainly, the growth of masculinity in schools may necessitate an increase in boys' confidence, resulting in them being more energetic and so requiring greater teacher attention. Espinosa (2006) states that, male students made up two-thirds of the student participation in Peruvian elementary schools, despite teachers requesting about the same amount of input from boys and girls. Both teachers and students, as Boyd (2015) points out, might contribute to a design that restricts girls' participation in classroom recitation. In other words, neither girls nor boys are aware that boys are more likely to participate in certain activities (Patchen, 2006; Skelton; 2009). According to a Canadian intervention that taught first-year educators in gender and feminist themes, students play a substantial impact in setting the classroom climate. Feminist teachers were the hub of unfriendliness because they challenged boys and girls to scrutinize social interactions they had taken for granted. Educators' usage of the pronouns "he" and "she" caused learners distress, according to Pircon (2018), and teachers' actions celebrating girls' accomplishment were viewed as favouritism.

The majority of research on gender issues in schools concentrates on teacher behaviour and concepts conveyed through speech and action (UNIGEI, 2010; UNICEF, 2014; Pinheiro, 2006). Davies (2005) observed 53 boys and girls in their first year of secondary school in the United Kingdom and questioned them about their educators' gender attitudes in order to expand on previous research on students' observations of teacher behaviour. The pupils believed their teachers were fair, but that they scolded boys more than girls because boys are considered to be more unruly. Nearly half of students thought teachers treated them fairly when it came to difficult homework, while boys felt they were "chosen upon" by teachers more often than girls. As part of the recognised norms of schools in Israel, Benbenishty and Astor (2005) noted various patterns of

behaviour by girls and boys. The data also revealed that boys have higher degrees of discipline than girls, including corporate punishment. The boys claimed to be brighter and to have received higher grades than the girls; the girls, on the other hand, were more likely to believe that girls and boys received similar grades. Riley (2014) agrees that the girls' vocal behaviour in fourth grade was less than in first grade. According to Bain (2011), different member structures were observed by grade: in pre-school, boys and girls were treated fairly and had exactly the same amount of interactions with teachers; in first grade, schoolchildren encountered more demands for individual response and, at times, girls appeared indifferent; in fourth grade, girls were called upon less frequently and came forward less frequently, were reluctant to speak in front of their peers, and preferred to write responses on the board; in fifth grade, girls were called upon less frequently and came forward less frequently, were unwilling to speak in front By fourth grade, 40 percent of the females had dropped out; those who remained were from wealthier households, fared better, and even outperformed boys academically.

Loewen (2008) found that from first to fifth grade, girls' self-confidence declined in Guinea, partly as a result of earlier teachers' low expectations, which translated into lower teacher-student engagement. Teachers' reports of how time and attention are distributed in the classroom are not always correct. In response to the question of what accounts for the lack of similarity between educators' ideas and classroom actions, the following responses were given: (1) highly embedded and naturalised gender norms, and (2) strong administrative, social, and curriculum constraints that prevent teachers from behaving differently, even if they wanted to. Dunne (2007) asserts that a greater understanding of the type of teacher attention students receive is required, particularly in secondary or high school classes, which have been disregarded in favour of a primary school focus that excludes math and scientific categories. This study aims to close the attention gap among high school teachers.

2.5.3.3 Teacher training and development: Gender perspective

When children begin school, they come with their strong gender prejudices from their homes and society (Berns, 2012). It is the responsibility of the school and educators to change these negative philosophies. Regardless of the fact that more women are attaining senior management positions and moving into situations where conventional nurturing femininity conflicts with the demands of

their job, Alghrani (2017) observed that in developed countries, female teachers' overarching creation, particularly in primary schools, remains one of "surrogate mother." It has been noticed that societal opinions about teachers have changed over time. A woman's main purpose in Brazil in the early 1900s was to marry and produce children According to Louro's 1997 study, which was later adopted by Stromquist (2007), women who first taught were women who "stayed alone" and hence were distinct from other women. Female teachers were also frequently scrutinised and viewed with a solemn look. In Brazil, however, this is no longer the case, where women dominate as teachers even in the junior and high schools (OECD, 2013). According to Poduvai and Poduvai (2009), American teachers perceived themselves as mothers, but men were less ready to nurture learners. The Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018) stipulates that teachers for both sexes should be adequately trained based on demand and supply. The needs of the nation are what determine the numbers that should be trained**.**

Furthermore, most women who have become teachers do this at an early age in their lives, usually before they have developed strong sense of self, which in the majority of countries reinforces an outdated feminine identity (Hammond, 2019). As a result, it is advised that before teachers can evaluate their own and their students' attitudes, expectations, and beliefs, they should get training that creates a full understanding of how gender interacts with other identity features. According to Stromquist (2007), teachers' union engagement left out ideals of femininity that portrayed women as subservient, passive, and compliant; also, family life elements, such as the husband's strict surveillance of the wife's trips, restricted their union engagement. Nevertheless, several male and female educators were conscious of the unions' masculine domination and recognized the importance of interpersonal ties in both educational and labour union work, and that they were not just a component of traditional feminine culture (Stromquist, 2007; Yilmaz and Altinkurt, 2016). Bonder (1999) discovered that Argentine female instructors had gender stereotypes and prejudices, but that training to change sexist norms was well received. Female teachers in Guinea, on the other hand, offered students with uncommon role models of women who had completed education, according to the Anderson-Levitt et al. study, however, having a female teacher did not ensure that girls would attend class and participate more actively.

Gender development of teachers in Africa has received insufficient attention, according to the Global Monitoring Report (2008). Despite periodic efforts to provide instructors with sex education instruction, similar observations may be made in other parts of the world. According to Montoya (2003), sex education training reached 11% of teachers in Peru's primary and secondary schools between 1996 and 2002, while provincial-level training in Argentina provided information about sexual abuse, sex education, early pregnancies, and harassment of non-sexual boys for a limited time (Bonder, 1999). According to Hexagrama Consultoras (2006), in Chile in 2000, the Women's Ministry and the Ministry of Education worked on a short-term teacher education programme.

Younger et al. (1999) and Wong (2016) assert that, there is a need for gender training of instructors, which is still an unmet requirement. According to Drudy and Chatáin (2002) and Cherng and Halpin (2016), such initiatives would prepare them to work more effectively with boys, create cooperative and collaborative teaching and learning, and involve them in systematic analysis and critical reflection on their instruction. According to Davis (1993) and Connell (1996), teachers must grasp how students feel about the classroom's cultural context and show confidence and respect to all learners while avoiding any types of violence and sexual harassment. Sexual education programs, according to Thomson (1994), should challenge and demand answers about gender roles and sexual prejudices, as well as include topics such as sexual identity, control, and consent in sexual relationships. On the other hand, some authors (Jackson, 2002; Warrington et al., 2000) argue that the general curriculum should be changed to teach boys how to examine gender relations, challenge traditional masculine conceptions, and comprehend alternative methods to identify one's gender identity.

Given South Africa's democratic worldview and unwavering resolve and dedication to achieving racial and sexual equality since its independence more than two decades ago, the country's experience is particularly relevant to school administrators. Despite the fact that they are supported by social justice discourses, women in higher administrative positions in South Africa operate in a frame that ties leadership and competence with masculinity, reason, and whiteness, according to Hoeritz (2013). Ineptitude was associated to femininity and a lack of assertiveness in interviews with both male and female administrators. Black female administrators were challenged by their

subordinates' perceptions of black people in general, and black women in particular, as inferior. White female administrators felt powerless in comparison to white males, but not in comparison to black men and women (Perry, Harp and Oser, 2013). Domestic home obligations, in addition to preconceptions, disturbed women's engagement in the public sphere, prompting them to concede or give up their potential for leadership roles. As a result, there has been a balanced or consistent shift of women away from administrative posts in South Africa's education sector, and as a result, more men are filling these roles. According to Porter and Sweetman (2005), all South African education department officials need gender awareness training, and additional gender officers need to be strategically located in order to gender mainstream and satisfy the country's policies' purposes. The South African government launched the Girls' Education Movement to support girls' education from a gender perspective and to teach girls who are taking on roles that were traditionally considered masculine (King and Winthrop, 2015).

Muñoz Villalobos (2006) cited an amazing performance in Ethiopia, which provided gender equality training to teachers and scholars. Frei and Leoniwinata (2014) address the necessity of enhancing teacher training and curriculum integration of gender issues, as well as teachers' acquisition of gender knowledge and skills. Pearlman et al. discovered the similar requirement throughout Latin America (2004). According to Schulmeyer (2004), Frei, and Leoniwinata (2014), an overview of the types of evaluations pre-service teachers receive in seven Latin American countries and the types of evaluations in-service teachers receive in nine Latin American countries reveals that attention is given to teaching methods and the central curriculum, but no mention is made of gender sensitivity training. Some Latin American relationship studies looking at gender programs from a gender perspective corroborate the idea that gender training receives very little attention (Barcena, 2017).

The curriculum in Eswatini's teacher training colleges was found not to say anything about gender issues, thereby replicating the culture of patriarchy (Lumadi and Shongwe, 2010). This leads to most school teachers being guided by guided by social stereotypical perceptions concerning children. Most teachers' pedagogic practices in Eswatini are guided by societal stereotypes (Motsa, 2018). Because of the teachers' inherent gender norms, they control children's gendered behaviours, which support unequal gender relations. According to Stromquist (2007), gender

considerations in teacher pre-service training are not addressed in policies in countries such as Costa Rica, Peru, and Brazil, and the decision to focus on in-service teacher training is only found in Brazil's national plans. Hexagrama Consultoras (2006) conducted a study in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Peru, finding that gender management is still lacking, but that progress is being made in the use of an all-encompassing language, as well as the amplification of pedagogical guiding principles, with specific suggestions, rather than the inclusion of gender in the program of study.

In addition, according to Stromquist (2006) and Barcena (2017), the amount of gender equality and sex education instruction received by in-service teachers is relatively small, and it is absent from pre-service teacher training programs in Latin America. Ministries of education, on the other hand, additional organizational divisions dealing with gender equity and sex education are being established. Based on the available facts, it can be stated that the majority of existing pledges to innovation and efficiency in the teaching profession ignore gender issues in the classroom. The current curriculum modifications do not take gender into account.

2.5.4 Gender and curriculum

Curriculum is challenged in the same way as the term "gender" is. Elwood (2016, p. 6-7) claims that the term "curriculum" is placed differently depending on the "ideological and theoretical leanings of the researchers concerned." Lawton (1975, p. 6) proposed a classic definition of curriculum, arguing that it is a "selection from society's culture... certain kinds of knowledge, certain aspects of our way of life, certain attitudes and values are regarded as important enough that their transmission to the next generation is not left to chance." Riddell (1992) in his work which was later utilised by Elwood (2016, p. 8), says that curriculum is thus formed and informed across many settings and societies by cultural and social values, skills and knowledge, that are considered essential for young people to know and which prepare them for future work and life. Curriculum then is a dynamic identity that is not a fixed thing. Economic changes, political ideologies, and societal changes, as well as beliefs, traditions, and values, all have an impact on curricula. When Lawton considers education as a pick from society's culture, curriculum becomes problematic. Its connection to 'selection' is where those who see gender and its interaction with curriculum as a problem raise a concern. Elwood (2016, p. 8) claims that cultural selection is

influenced by powerful organisations who "dictate what is to be taught, how it is to be taught, and the assessment to be utilised." Vale (2010) asserted that the curriculum is a significant site for cultural selection because it problematises and underlines assumptions about culture, knowledge, and gender that are taken for granted, and it mediates these assumptions inside educational institutions and classrooms.

Because curriculum is socially constructed, "it is a reflection of both dominant ideas and a place where ideas are restricted or played out through practice, as is also implicated in the definition and construction of gender relations," determining how much curriculum promotes or reflects appropriate gender behaviour and perceptions about girls and boys and what/how they should learn is critical (Elwood, 2016, p. 9). "Especially in how curriculum reflects or fosters gender appropriate behaviour and beliefs about boys and girls and how/what they should study," says Weiner (1994, p. 4). According to Mugodzwa and Matope (2011, p. 76), “the school curriculum plays an important role in preparing females and males for their different traditional social roles and therefore helps to maintain a division of labour founded on sexual differences. The nature of school curriculum materials and their connection to boys’ and girls' worlds gives us significant insight into the knowledge that schools disseminate.

2.5.4.1 Gender and curriculum: subject and subject choice

Young students perceive the "socially constructed curriculum in schools" through subjects, according to Elwood (2016, p. 9). Contexts of subject knowledge and socially constructed curricula have shaped ideas about what constitutes a suitable education for girls and boys, as well as what subjects they should study. Subject suitability criteria have evolved over time, but there are still strong curriculum roots that drive the gender problem and disparities in accomplishment, as stated by Weiner (1994), where specific information has historically been associated with various groups (Murphy, 2008).

Learners’ choices of particular subjects have been legitimised by the variety of discipline-specific discourses and have signalled their relevance to them. As such many studies (Dee, 2006; Roohani and Zarei, 2013; Quenzel & Hurrelmann, 2013) have revealed, subjects categorised as technologies, sciences and mathematics, have been legitimised and deemed more relevant for boys

for a long time, whereas mother tongue and foreign languages and the category of languages, arts and humanities, are considered appropriate and more relevant for girls. These messages are reinforced by performance trends in international assessments and examinations (Hadjar, Krolak-Schwerddt, Priem & Glock, 2014; OECD, 2015). Different patterns of performance for females and males in these worldwide achievement examinations have been discovered over time and across topics such as native language, science, and math. Females outperform males in all major components of English language assessment, especially reading and writing, according to the OECD (OECD, 2015). Males and females perform similarly in early stages of schooling, according to the OECD (2015), but boys outperform girls, as they get older.

As noted by Neuschmidt, Barth and Hastedt (2008) and OECD (2013), boys perform better than girls in science, according to evidence from international large-scale assessment programs. The differences in curriculum topic preferences and choices between boys and girls, on the other hand, had more to do with access to the diversity of curriculum on offer. Murphy (2008) also remarked that, rather than innate inclinations with girls and boys being better in particular topics, the choice of subjects interacts with gender identities and how they are acted out in school. What restricts individuals' freedom of choice are the gendered connotations associated with the subjects.

According to Murphy (2008), sociocultural perspectives emerging in relation to subject knowledge, choice, and gender propose that how gender values are honoured in subject communities in school, and how teachers often unconsciously mediate these gender values through their own pedagogical subject knowledge and practice, have a greater impact on the deep curriculum roots of (under) achievement. Elwood (2016, p.12) state that, understanding sociocultural learning prioritises humans as social agents who are always working upon the environment, learning and coming to know in relationships, through learning that occurs "in and coming up from the socially and culturally ordered world." According to Ivinson and Murphy (2007, p. 7), gender is an "aspect of the social order, intertwined with symbolic networks and the dynamic of social circumstances". The gendered, cultural legacies associated with subjects that are duplicated and mediated by both female and male educators on the pretext of classic subject knowledge develop identities, positions within subjects that are different depending on whether they are a girl or boy, and the gendered, cultural legacies associated with subjects that are

duplicated and mediated by both female and male educators on the pretext of classic subject knowledge.

2.5.4.2 Spaces for girls: Rules and regulations on pregnancy

As Human Rights Watch (2018) points out, it has traditionally been the practice to discharge girls who became pregnant). School pregnancies are one issue that is topical and brings about different sentiments among all stakeholders. Tanzanian president John Magufuli said that those who give birth should not be allowed to go back to school. Magufuli warned schoolgirls that after getting pregnant while still in school spaces, they will be chased away from school and this marks the end to their education (BBC News, 23 June, 2017).

The school spaces become war zones for pregnant girls with much ridicule and unfriendly characterisation of their interactions with other learners. These are the relics of a bygone era when premarital sex was considered "wicked, depraved, and sinful" (Stromquist, 2007, p. 24). In the majority of countries, however, the tendency is shifting. There are two major differences in policies that accommodate pregnant students: continuation policies allow students to continue their studies without interruption. The non-stop policy for pregnant girls is used by many African countries, including Cameroon, Madagascar, Namibia, and Sierra Leone (Human Rights Watch, 2018). On a bigger scale, however, policies exist in a growing number of countries that require students to take mandatory leave for pregnancy and lactation before returning to school. Botswana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, South Africa, and Eswatini are among them. "Every child, regardless of their circumstances in life (teenage moms included), has the right to be reintegrated into the same school where the child was previously," according to the Swaziland Education Sector Policy (2011, p. 27). This was made to counter the negative gender experiences of teenage girls without the boys facing the same sanctions. According to a research conducted by Botswana's Human Rights Watch (Human Rights Watch, 2018), an insignificant percentage of females were readmitted based on survey data. Students who were pregnant or had young daughters felt uncomfortable in the school community. Female students were subjected to stigmatizing labels that stigmatized the mother, as well as mythology such as "when pregnant, girls put the rest of the pupils to sleep." Nonetheless, there are some uncommon practices. According to Muñoz Villalobos (2006), pregnant females in Denmark and Portugal are allowed to return to school after giving

birth, whereas pregnant teenagers and adolescent moms in Costa Rica are protected by the Inter-Institutional Council on Adolescent Mothers.

2.5.4.3 Peers' gendered influences

In schools, peer interaction is critical to the socialisation process (The Economist, 2014). Learners develop their own identities not just as a result of their interactions with teachers and the formal curriculum, but also as a result of conversations with classmates, playground activities, and participation in related extracurricular activities. Jeynes (2012) observed that peer exchanges could either increase or weaken gender messages that originate in the school setting. According to Martin (2010), peer interactions are more supportive of traditional gender norms than school personnel. During the 1980s, it was noticed that both boys and girls brought rigorous definitions of sex appropriate adult roles to school. According to McInturff (2013), learners now get more diversified gender communications as a result of increased mass media coverage paired with Western ideas on femininity and masculinity. However, according to Stromquist (2007), some communications contain racial slurs, such as the concept of uncontainable black manhood, while others criticize school programs and still others promote gender equality. Those who investigated adolescent interactions discovered that boys' peer discussion frequently employs sexuality in order to construct hierarchies. The simultaneous formation of masculinity, according to Scott and Adams (2008), is anchored in significant oral aggravation and provocation of girls by boys. Lansford, Skinner, Sorbring, Dodge, Malone, Oburu, & Di Guinta (2012) conducted research in nine countries, including China, Italy, Colombia, Jordan, Kenya, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States, to examine associations between factor structure and gender differences in relational and physical aggression. The results found a common factor in relational and physical aggression across countries. According to the survey, both girls and boys believe that boys are more likely to engage in physical aggression, while verbal attacks are the most common unpleasant conduct in same-sex interactions and communications, as well as in boy-girl contacts. Relational aggression is a type of violence, antagonism, or hostility that occurs between people. It is defined as asking peers to exclude someone from the group, asking them to stop liking a specific student, ignoring or not talking to someone, telling friends that you will no longer like them unless they do what you say, and keeping someone out when playing or doing something else (O'Connor, 2011).

Stromquist (2007) states that girls participate in more relational violence and verbal insults, whereas boys engage in more physical aggression and verbal insults. Physical aggressiveness is avoided by girls because it may prevent them from attaining goals that are important to them, such as building or sustaining strong interpersonal relationships (Stangor, 2014). Relationally manipulative activities are viewed by the children as aggressive with the purpose to damage them. These are acts that are meant to fulfill the unmet emotional needs through means that are socially dubious. This includes acts of making others feel bad through ridicule, mockery and denigration. Vindictive actions such as these that are meant to bring about the greatest emotional harm, a technique usually utilised by boys (Archer & Coyne, 2005). The authors further note that relationally manipulative acts encourage children to commit or collaborate in offences or bullying. The desire of the manipulative children is to have control over social status and relationship with others. Children who have been the victims of relational aggression are more depressed and lonely than children who have not been victims.

In a study of three secondary schools in the United Kingdom of various social classes and ethnic compositions, Gablinske (2014) studied the development of gender through classroom observations of teacher and student actions, as well as interviews with students. Gender construction persists in polarised ways, with significant disparities between what is perceived masculine and feminine, according to the study. Boys were challenged to become vivacious, lively, energetic, strong, ambitious, and engaged in heterosexual classroom contests, despite the fact that, unlike previous decades, they were no longer deemed superior; girls demonstrated greater confidence in their intellectual abilities. Male heterosexuality was openly displayed among peers on a regular basis. According to Frelin (2010), male students made sexual remarks designed to criticize, ridicule, and demean female students, and academic interest and capability demonstrations were more difficult for boys than for girls.

It was also discovered that girls were substantially more likely than boys to be subjected to verbal abuse. Girls had a distinct tendency than boys to create, construct, and build themselves: they saw their acts as practical, workable, altruistic, and self-sacrificing, whereas boys' actions were stupid, egotistical, and self-seeking (Gablinske, 2014). Male students had a tendency to be disruptive in the classroom, to be disorganized and raucous, and to take up too much space (Gablinske, 2014).

Researchers in the United Kingdom researched the social contexts, processes, and meanings for a year. The focus of this study was on how students in their final year of primary school create gender and sexual identities. According to Hartley and Sutton (2013), "square girls" pursuing academic achievement struggled to build a femininity that was not centered on boys, a particular bodily appearance, or supportive dyadic connections. Both boys and girls ridiculed, teased, harassed, and insulted the girls for transgressing traditional masculine and feminine norms, hence the term 'square.'

In a poll performed in Peru, Bornstein (2016) discovered that a greater percentage of Peruvian primary school boys believe men are better at arithmetic than women and that politics is a man's priority while household responsibilities are a woman's concern. Many of the girls, according to Espinosa (2006), disputed the idea that politics is just for boys and men, while a larger majority agreed that domestic responsibilities are only for women and girls. Stromquist (2007), on the other hand, observed youngsters between the ages of 10 and 14 in Norway and found that a model of the ideal student had evolved. Traditional girl values, particularly those related to collaborating abilities, are more widely accepted than traditional masculine values, a result that is likely to have negative effects for boys as the girls become the norm for the expectations that boys are expected to meet.

This section looked at how peer socialisation influences children's gender experiences in school spaces. The way peers relate in school spaces play a vital role in how children's self-concepts are developed and strongly impact on how they view the roles of males and females in the society. The gender stereotypes and biases were started and perpetuated in homes and then strengthened by the peer group. This overview shows that peers influence gender role socialisation and encourages adherence to traditional gender roles. The next section will deal with specific nature of school related gender-based violence, and how this differently affects boys and girls.

2.5.5 Unruly spaces: School related gender-based violence

"Acts or threats of sexual, physical, or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes, and enforced by unequal power relations," according to GMR (2015, p.4). It also refers to the disparities in how girls and boys deal with

violence and how vulnerable they are to it. Physical aggressiveness, abuse, verbal or sexual harassment, unwelcome contact, coercion into sexual activity combined with physical assault, and rape are all manifestations of gender-based violence at school (SRGBV) In schools, corporal punishment and discipline are frequently gendered and discriminatory. Other forms of SRGBV are hidden in ordinary school activities that reinforce stereotyping and gender inequality while also encouraging aggressive or hazardous environments.

Despite the fact that most types of school violence are deeply established in unequal gender relations, gendered social norms, and prejudiced actions, according to Dunne, Sabates, Bosumtwi, and Owusu (2013), research on school violence has disregarded the importance of gender. While there is an increasing awareness of SRGBV, which is a positive development, Parkes (2015) noted that it has rarely been turned into operational strategies that indicate a decrease in frequency. In actuality, both girls and boys can be victims or perpetrators of SRGBV. SRGBV is not just concerned with sexual violence or violence against girls, but also violence that boys suffer in the hands of other boys, teachers and to some extend even girls. Psychological bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence, and harassment are more commonplace in girls. Boys, on the other hand, frequently endure more corporal punishment than girls do, and they are expected to handle it "like a man." According to Pinheiro (2006), there is a lot of evidence indicating girls are more likely to face sexual abuse, harassment, and victimisation, whilst boys are more likely to face frequent and severe physical abuse. Boys are more likely to be bullied physically, whilst girls are more likely to be bullied verbally or psychologically. The discrepancies, according to UNESCO (2012), are not evident. At school, both girls and boys commit violent crimes and are subjected to sexual assault. The various types of gender-based violence in schools interact with one another and encourage each other. Their rates vary a lot between countries and even within countries.

Important issues of physical aggression based on real or perceived sexual orientation are becoming more frequent, according to UNESCO (2012, p. 8). SRGBV can occur in a variety of locations, including school buildings, grounds, and entrances. Toilets, classrooms, and corridors, as well as, in rare cases, staff housing, are the most common sites for violence. There is also a good chance that girls staying in official or ad-hoc boarding facilities would be subjected to sexual abuse or harassment. The problem is exacerbated by the physical isolation of institutions and their lack of

supervision. Millions of children are assaulted physically, sexually, and verbally on their way to and from school. According to UNESCO (2017), intimidating, cyberbullying, and sexual harassment have gone beyond the school boundaries now that everyone has access to information and communication technology (ICT). There is no conclusive information about the global scope of SRGBV. Greene, Robles, Stout, and Suvilaakso (2013) made data on violence against children, such as bullying and physical assault, available through Plan International, allowing us to piece together a fragmented picture of the prevalence of gender-based violence in schools. Plan International believes that 246 million boys and girls are affected by school-related violence each year, based on the number of students affected by verbal bullying, a major form of violence in schools. According to Blaya (2013), 40% of French kids' report being bullied online, while Fleming and Jacobsen (2010) found that 61 percent of Zambian schoolchildren were bullied.

Millions of children are subjected to physical abuse at school under the guise of discipline, according to a disturbing UNESCO (2014) report, although more than half of all children live in countries where corporal punishment is outlawed. Surprisingly, the size and scope of gender-based violence in schools are still unknown. On the various forms of SRGBV, there is insufficient internationally comparable information. According to UNESCO (2014), data available across and within nations is inconsistent and insufficient. Many studies on school violence have tended to focus on physical violence and bullying, and have frequently taken a gender perspective. In many nations, keeping records on incidents of violence is extremely difficult. As Parkes (2015) points out, when these variables are paired with societal shame, restrictions, and the fear of punishments, peaceful spaces for children to notice, accept, own up to, and report school-related gender-based violence are reduced. Teachers in Malawi, according to a research (Moleni, 2008), would send girls to drop books at the office and then follow them and propose sex. As a result of their dread, the girls would quit attending to school. The girl would not notify their parents because of the shame of being offered in this manner, and she would prefer to stay at home. If the girl returns to school, the teacher will become irritated with her and intimidate her, causing her to fail. Accepting the teacher's suggestion will lead to pregnancy and dropping out in the long run.

Sexual violence is a degrading and harmful act that occurs in and around schools through verbal and emotional abuse, persecution and provocation, sexual assault, rape, coercion, taking advantage

of, and prejudice (Bester, du Plessis and Treurnich, 2017). Despite the fact that sexual assault in schools is a global concern, lack of comparable statistics and records limits awareness of the extent of the problem and the development of viable guiding principles and preventative programs. A better knowledge of sexual assault among schoolchildren has resulted from extensive research on violence against women and girls (Guedes, Bott, Moreno & Collombini, 2016)

According to a UNICEF research from 2014, sexual violence is prevalent in the lives of the majority of girls. According to data from 40 low- and middle-income countries, including Eswatini, up to 10% of adolescent girls aged 15–19 had forced sexual intercourse or other sexual activities. Some illustrative national surveys, as well as small-scale investigations, paint a less-than-complete, but alarming, picture. The majority of the studies were carried out in Sub-Saharan Africa, in response to original concerns about limited females' education participation and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Older male students may abuse female pupils by abusing their position of power at school. According to Devers, Henry, Hofmann, and Benabdallah (2012), 30 percent of sexual violence against schoolgirls in Cameroon was perpetrated by male pupils. Teachers, as adults in the school setting, have a key role to play in speaking out against SRGBV, but some are also abusers and perpetrators of sexual abuse and exploitation, and they often act with impunity.

In 2010, the Ministry of National Education in Côte d'Ivoire conducted a poll and discovered that 49% of educators admitted to having unlawful sexual encounters with students (Dedy, 2010). According to Burton and Leoschut (2013), a national survey in South Africa indicated that 11% of secondary school girls had experienced severe sexual assault or rape in the previous year while at school. According to the Global Education Monitoring Report (2019), certain small-scale investigations in countries such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan revealed sexual activity by educators toward girls. Most occurrences of sexual gender-based violence occur in the home or community, according to existing evidence in Eswatini, although schools are not fully safe zones for female students or girl children. According to Reza, Breiding, Blanton, Mercy, Anderson, and Bamrah (2007), 13 percent of sexual violence occurrences in Eswatini occurred in school, while another 11 percent occurred on the way to and from school. Furthermore, teachers were responsible for 5% of all occurrences of sexual violence committed before the age of 18. Despite this, only a small percentage of SRGBV cases are reported. Despite this expanding amount of evidence, sexual

abuse, assault, coercion, and bullying at school remain largely unreported and unheard about. In many places, societal taboo and proscriptions make it impossible to examine these concerns. Not only is the prevalence of various types of SRGBV under-reported, but it is also under-researched.

2.6 Mechanisms to enhance gender equality and equity in schools

Having a gender equitable school is at the centre of the human rights agenda. Attaining gender equality in schools means giving equal responsibilities to boys and girls, or equal opportunities, equal rights and allowing equal power to both boys and girls, so that they are able to mould and form their own lives and make contribution to society. This is key to achieve gender-responsive school spaces.

2.6.1 The role of communities

Communities play an important role in ensuring that school spaces are gender equitable, to make sure that children have the same experiences. It is logical that parents, civic groups, minority groups get involved in developing school spaces that are gender equitable (Ainscow, 2020). The involvement of the family is of particular importance. The perceptions of families, and children included, could be helpful in bringing about new thinking to efforts that schools put in to create gender equitable school spaces. Parents and school authorities should cooperate if they are to make sure that schools become gender equitable. USAID (2008) states that the wider local communities should understand the different positioning of boys and girls in order for them to change their attitudes and support changes that schools will be inculcating in them. This means changing the way in which communities work to enrich what they give to children. It may also mean having community-based programmes to work with some learners who may be excluded from school due to gender identity, race or religion (Ainscow, 2020).

The Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018) stipulates that no learner should be discriminated based on status, religion and gender. The communities support will multiply the impact of the school efforts. The non-presentation of non-stereotypic attitudes and behaviours by communities will go a long way in ensuring that school spaces become gender-responsive and promote equality. Communities help in deconstructing present day community discourses on gender equality and this paves the way to shape new discourses that will be more

gender friendly and inclusive to both boys and girls. The communities can provide children with the required skills to deal with challenges they face because of their gender within the school spaces (Wood and Goba, 2011). Empowerment of children begins in their homes.

2.6.2 The role of schools and teachers

The important role that schools play cannot be over emphasized in controlling the b the social life of children and moulding their social identities (Collins and Coleman, 2008). This is supported by social constructionism theory, which says that children become who they are because of what happens in their society (Gergen, 1985). Schools can build or break the child. Therefore, it is important for schools and teachers to play their role well for boys and girls to experience school spaces that are gender-responsive. UNICEF (2009) avers that as a way of making school spaces gender equitable, they should be child enabling. When analysing and addressing gender equality in school spaces, it is necessary to include not only equality of access, but also equality in the learning process, educational outcomes, and societal outcomes. All school-related problems that may obstruct the achievement of equality are explicitly put out in The Dakar Framework, which calls for schools to promote nonviolent and gender-responsive learning environments (OECD, 2012).

Schools and teachers should also work together to eradicate school related sexual-based violence, as this has been found to affect girls more. As Leach, Dune and Salvi (2014) put it; school-related gender-based violence dampens efforts to promote gender equality in schools and is one of the most egregious forms and demonstrations of gender discrimination. Both male and female pupils are affected by gender-based violence in the short and long term. In addition to the well-documented physical and psychological harm, gender-based violence in schools has long-term health and social consequences. Boys' and girls' achievement and academic accomplishment have been demonstrated to be negatively impacted by unsafe and aggressive school situations (UNESCO, 2008).

Glover (2009) posits that schools can be made to be gender friendly and gender equitable when teachers and learners maintain trust and good relationships. Teachers should interact in equally with boys and girls. This promotes rapport between them and will help in ensuring that equal time

is spend helping both boys and girls. Praise should be given to both boys and girls so as to build their confidence. This will help in developing children's agency, which is a key component for children' day-to-day living within the school spaces, and will help children to cope with the demands of their everyday lives within the school spaces. Building of learners' self-esteem is affected adversely if their confidence is diminished, hence they will be less agency for them (Mitchell, 2011).

2.6.3 Contribution of policy makers

According to UNESCO (2008), three essential strategies could promote school-based equity and, as a result, the quality of learning in general, and for girls in particular. These include boosting the number and quality of educators, particularly female teachers; reforming, restructuring, and modifying curricula and texts to minimize gender bias; and gender-sensitive classroom training. Female teacher percentages are an important indicator of progress toward gender equality. Increasing the number of female teachers has been found to have a positive impact in countries where females face barriers to participation in education (UNESCO, 2009). Female teachers in schools might help alleviate parents' concerns about security and raise demand for girls' education, especially in countries where cultural and social hurdles to enrolment exist (Huisman & Smits, 2009). As such, the government should ensure that more female teachers are trained and placed in schools where female learners are few. This is the work of MOET in Eswatini. Wood and Goba (2011) state that the government should make sure that attendance of development seminars should be for all teachers, not just a selected few. The responsibility to ensure that gender bias is eliminated within the school spaces will then be overwhelming, showing that all are responsible.

Curriculum content, textbooks, and learning tools, without a doubt, play an important role in building gender-responsive classroom environments. In other words, not only pedagogical approaches, but also curriculum content, textbooks, and other learning resources that serve as socialization vehicles have an impact on gender-responsive teaching (Brugeilles and Cromer, 2009). Schools may be a significant entry point for promoting gender equality and a wide range of responsibilities for boys and girls. Children can use the curricula to challenge gender stereotypes, resulting in more equal behaviour. Esplen (2009), on the other hand, indicates that discriminatory gender standards in textbooks have the ability to undermine children's self-esteem and interest

while also limiting their expectations. The Dakar Framework of Action emphasised the importance of learning content and materials that promote and support gender equality and respect. UNGEI (2010) avers that it is important to eradicate gender bias in school teaching and learning materials, as this should be part of the policy issue for government.

Gender-sensitive training that equips teachers to promote diversity in teaching and assessment techniques, according to Postles (2013), can assist ensure that boys and girls participate equally in class. According to Jha, Bakshi and Faria, (2012), learner-centered collaborative teaching strategies can help both boys and girls improve their learning

2.7 Conclusion

The literature review attempted to set out the empirical literature that underpins and informs this research. Key elements that are outstanding in the thesis were discussed, namely, space, geographies and gendered experiences of children in schools. The foundation for the research focus on space is found in the rethinking of space as something that is evolving and dynamic. Thus, social interaction processes that are closely intertwined create dynamic school spaces. Literature exposed that school spaces were gendered. The spaces were classified as feminine or masculine based on the behaviours that occurred. Children within the school spaces experienced differentiated gendered experiences. Physical punishment and other forms of discipline are typically gendered and biased in schools. Boys are consistently more likely to report corporal punishment than girls are. They were spaces within the school, which were found to be violent. Buildings, in the grounds and near the entrances of schools, as well as during transit, were all places where School Related Gender-Based Violence occurred. Toilets, classrooms, and corridors were also the most common spaces for violence. Teachers' gendered expectations and preconceived notions of future results had a tendency to promote inequities in social communication, which affected children's performance. Subjects categorised in the technologies, sciences and mathematics have been legitimised and considered more relevant for boys, whereas mother tongue and foreign language categories in the arts and humanities are considered appropriate and more relevant for girls.

The next chapter outlines the theory guiding this thesis. Social constructionism is the theory chosen to underpin this study. It is premised on the main tenet that knowledge is communal and socially constructed (Gergen, 1985). It believes that for a story to make sense, we rely on social and interpersonal patterns of interpretations.

CHAPTER THREE
THEORISING GENDER AND CHILDREN IN SCHOOLING CONTEXTS

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the space, geography, and gendered experiences of students in four coeducational high schools in Eswatini's Hhohho region of Eswatini. Guided by social constructionism theory, the study sought to establish the narratives of children on how they navigate the different spaces of their schooling and how they experience gender. The conceptualisation of childhood as a social construct formed the substrate for the choice of social constructionism as theory of choice for this study. The major thrust of this chapter was to conceptualise social constructionism theory and its relations to gender and children in schooling contexts. Theory can be a complex endeavour for researchers but it "forms the base where subsequent stages of the scientific method move and forms part of the initial major component of an enquiry that uses scientific method" (Connaway & Powell, 2010, p. 47).

The word 'theory' is evocative. It conjures up "disorientation, discomfort, frustration, confusion, trepidation, invention shame and joy" (Rasmussen, 2017, p. 53). There is a likelihood that researchers will experience all or some of these emotions regarding theory. Experiences of confusion are part of the joy of grappling with theory as someone encounters new ideas (Rasmussen, 2017). There is joy and frustration as researchers attempt to create new ideas by bringing theory to a new problem or existing one, with different parts of theories together, so as to look at a problem anew. It is an invention to work with theory and the invention is not abstract. Due to its intrinsic nature to education, theory is indispensable. More often, people think and associate theory with science and its capacity to make things intelligible or visible that are not observable immediately. Theory in natural sciences "makes plausible why certain laws are as they are in social sciences theory tries to make plausible why people act as they act or do as they do" (Biesta, Allan & Edwards, 2011, p. 227).

Theory aids in understanding how others see and experience the world and about how the world works and develops our understanding about how we work. In exploring the children's spaces, geographies and gendered experiences in four selected high schools in Eswatini, the researcher

chose social constructionism by Gergen (1985) as the supporting theory for the study. This chapter covers an explanation of the theoretical perspective of social constructionism, making a persuasive case for choice of social constructionism as a guiding theory for the research. Unpacking social constructionism follows, where features of social constructionism and cardinal principles of social constructionism are explained. The topic 'to be adults to people on their own right' is an explanation on social construction of childhood, which speaks to the spaces children occupy in society and their geographies. Lastly, social constructionism as a gender construct discusses how social constructionism views gender and this closes the chapter.

3.1 The theoretical perspective of social constructionism

Galbin (2014, p. 82) asserts that social constructionism, also referred as social construction of reality, is a knowledge theory in sociology and communication that explores "cooperatively constructed understanding of the world. A foundational definition was also given by Gergen (1985, p. 265), who said social constructionism is "a viewpoint that believes that human life does exist as it is because of interpersonal and social influences". To put it another way, individuals socially construct reality through the use of agreed-upon and shared meanings transmitted through language. Children in schools interact and create a shared meaning about what it means to be a boy or girl through language use. This means that the children's beliefs about the world are social inventions. Social constructionism does not dismiss the relevance of intrinsic heredity; rather, it concentrates its research on social impacts on community and individual life, even when genetically inherited and social factors are simultaneously at work. What anthropologists call culture and sociologists call society, as well as the psychologically shared social elements of both, are of importance to social constructionism. (Galbin, 2014). de Beauvoir's (1997) most quoted statement confirms that reality is socially constructed: "one is not born a woman but becomes a woman." By translation, it can be said that one is not born a man or homosexual, but society creates them. Children in school spaces are the ones who create meaning of what it is to be a boy or girl. This comes up from how they interact amongst themselves, with their families and teachers.

Gergen (1985) postulates that social constructionism is a viewpoint that holds that a vast majority of human lives exist as they do as a result of social and interpersonal forces. Children in school spaces construct meaning of their gendered experiences through the relationships they have with

other learners and teachers. Galbin (2014) elaborates that social constructionism as a perspective believes that human beings cannot know what is good or bad, universally true or false. School children do not have to be told about what is good or bad, true or false by anyone, because these variables are subjective. The only truth they can agree to is what they establish themselves through their interaction with the community.

The truth about their gendered experiences in school spaces is what they experience and not necessarily what they learn from literature (Owen, 1995). School children have stories they can tell concerning their gendered experiences. Galbin (2014) argues that social constructionism rejects the constructivist idea that "a mirror of reality is in an individual's mind" (Galbin, 2014, p. 82). The concern of social constructionism is with how people relate one with the other and their world and how reality is created through this relationship. Individual relationships with other learners and teachers help high school learners make sense of their gendered experiences in the classroom. As a result, the focus of social constructionism is on the relationships that sustain an individual's participation in the construction of reality. Boys in school spaces have mastered the art of male hegemony with success from time to time and also from society to society. Girls, on the other hand, have learnt what it means to lose and how to lose (Sheetal, 2014). Engaging with children is the only way to establish their day-to-day gendered experiences within the schooling spaces and how they construct their realities. This was done through focus group and individual interviewing learners within the school spaces in order to understand how they experienced the world around them and how they experienced gender. Identifying and knowing the social construction of high school children's voice is important, in that what they narrate and voice is determined by societal discourses where they are situated (Spryou, 2011).

Social constructionism is a "theoretical perspective that looks into how reality is negotiated through people's everyday life interactions and through sets of discourses," according to James & James (2008, p. 122). The community and school discourses have an influence on how high school leaners behave, think, and even talk about their gendered experiences. Gergen (2010) asserts that techniques in which teachers and students collaborate and others decide on important matters are valuable to constructionists. The groups also decide on kinds of activities that would best allow engagement that is significant. This augurs well with exploration of this study in finding out how

children navigate and negotiate well their spaces and experience gender. Spaces and gender are social constructs, which result from how people interact. Kapur (2018) notes that social constructionism as a theory of teaching and learning backs that knowledge is gained better when learners in their school spaces construct it by themselves, shared, and probed to the world. An elaboration of this is that if learners have concerns about gender discrimination, sexual abuse, drugs and many other demands imposed by society, they should air their views openly and be supported by those in authority. Learners should interact and engage in those domains, discuss with each other and eventually formulate views that can be brought to the consideration of parents, government officials and community at large (Kapur, 2018). Thus, learners will be able to give meaning to their spaces, navigate and interpret it through their interactive processes. Educational dialogues and narratives for the constructionist, should be closely wedded as possible to the circumstances of application. Understanding how children navigate and negotiate their school spaces need a deep interaction with them before passing on unfounded assumptions about them (Kapur, 2018).

According to Cojocaru (2013), social constructionism challenges most of our common sense knowledge of ourselves and the world we live in. This means that social constructionism can offer a new analysis of topics such as children's attitudes concerning their everyday gendered experiences within school spaces, which can basically be positioned into the present framework of understanding. "There has to be a transformation of the framework itself, and with it our understanding of every area of social and psychological existence," argues Galbin (2014), using Burr (1995, p. 12). In this respect, social constructionism is strongly similar to social constructionism, in which students collaborate to create artifacts (Galbin, 2014). However, there is a key distinction: social constructionism focuses on the artifacts created because of a group's social interactions, whereas social constructionism focuses on an individual's learning as a result of group interactions. In order to understand how high school learners, make meaning of their gendered experiences, there is need to understand their societal discourses and how they learn as individuals because of their interactions in a group.

Galbin (2014) used Glaserfeld's (1995, p. 5) statement to describe how the "child functions in connection to its environment" in constructionism. In other words, the child creates, amends,

adjusts and interprets the information s/he meets in his /her relationship with the world. In high school spaces, children create, modify and give interpretations to information concerning their gender-based experiences and their relationship with each other (Galbin, 2014). For example, a high school boy who has a feminine name or a high school girl with a masculine name is an invitation to jokes and ridicule from others. There may be strong discouragement by either of the sexes in the interchangeable use of stereotypical language.

Thinking and the ability to construct are linked to an individual's ability to develop his or her own understanding of the universe. This is in opposite stance to the essence of constructivism, which talks of "maps for the same territory" (Galbin, 2014, p. 82). This means that from a viewpoint of the constructivist, any one person's construction or interpretation of events are as true as any other person's construction and interpretation as longs it applies within a particular context (Rapmund, 2000). The interest of social constructionism is not the creation of maps, but discloses the processes that maps form. In high school spaces, children's making of meaning of the world is a consequence of how they relate with their community. Societal discourses are founded and designed upon cultural structures, social interactions and ideologies of any given society. Hence, the school community develops relationships with learners based on pre-existing discourses as foundations for social interaction (Morojele, 2012).

For example, in a society where teachers have strong traditional gender roles beliefs, they will think that the acquisition of academic skills as not vital for girls since they may not implement them later in life. By permitting multiple sorts of feedback, these teachers will reflect these views in their classroom practice. A teacher who believes strongly in traditional gender roles may believe that acquiring to boys and girls is a waste of time. They may selectively dismiss/answer questions and focus on boys when teaching (Sadker and Sadker, 2010). Social constructionism says that our experiences and how we perceive them form our maps. In other words, each person creates his or her own world from perceptions of the actual world (Galbin, 2014). Children in school spaces create their world and experience gender from what actually happens around them. Hence, their interpretation of school spaces and gendered experiences and how they navigate these spaces is through their lived experiences. Children's gendered experiences are reflected by how children act, how other learners act towards them and how all the learners combined will behave in school

contexts. This is in line with social constructionism's thrust that the society where learners live, constructs and shapes their everyday life experiences.

3.1.1 Unpacking social constructionism

Sandu and Ponea (2011) defined social constructionism as a semiotic paradigm that starts with an interpretative axiom based on the map through which reality is read and ends with unending negotiation. Children within the school spaces are in constant negotiation with what they always encounter and what happens within their schooling contexts. They interpret their realities based on their daily life experiences as they navigate their gendered spaces. Speech of any type from a cultural consensus is interpreted as a social construction. Cojocaru, Bragaru, and Ciuchi (2012) went on to say that, the meanings of social constructionism in cultural discourse are derived from scientific language, which is a paradigmatic model that is largely independent from science. Meanings of cultural derivation underlie the semantic convergence of any socio-cultural paradigms. Relations are the base for constructionism and sustains the individual role in the social construction of realities (Cojocaru, 2013). In school spaces, children relate with each other, and these relationships sustain the individual role in the social construction of realities. In relaying the features of social constructionism, Galbin (2014) used McLeod's (1997) features, which will be discussed next.

3.1.2 Features of social constructionism

Firstly, Gablin (2014) points out, social constructionists reject standard positivistic approaches to knowing, which are inherently non-reflexive. Amongst schoolchildren, realities are complex because of the interrelatedness of many features of individuals within their school communities. Social constructionism challenges our common sense knowledge of the world we live in and the knowledge of ourselves. It is the children's daily experiences that mould their behaviour in school spaces, not what has been positively identified to be. The children's schooling contexts are dynamic, hence their gendered experiences differ spatially and temporally.

Secondly, social constructionists take a critical position with regard to assumptions that area taken for granted about the social world, seen as buttressing interests of social groups which are dominant. In school spaces, dominant social discourses are challenged by learners as they interact

with teachers and other learners. As pointed out by Morojele (2012), social constructionism concerns itself with the normalising effect of discourse. For example, the application of corporal punishment in schools is a normal discourse that its reality is ignored by everyone (Motsa, 2016). In Eswatini, social discourses dictate that, corporal punishment should be used so as to bring up a responsible child. However, this notion has been disputed and rejected, hence, positive discipline has replaced the use of corporal punishment (Eswatini Education Sector Policy, 2018). Thirdly, social constructionists maintain the belief that how we understand the world is a creation of historical interaction and negotiation between groups. Social discourses have their base in cultural structures and are designed upon values and social interactions of any particular society (Morojele, 2012). As such, relationships are created through the school community with learners through pre-existing discourses as a means for social interaction with these learners in the given school contexts.

Finally, according to Galbin (2014), social constructionism is a shift toward understanding psychological notions like emotion, self, and mind as socially produced processes that are not fundamental to the individual but rather a product of social discourse. Stoddart (2007) sates that social discourses are a source where teachers come up with ways of governing and making of rules within the school spaces. How teachers and principals act with regards to boys and girls reflect how they treat issues of gender. This will then determine the children's daily gendered experiences within the school spaces. Social constructionism is based on important principles.

3.1.3 Cardinal principles of social constructionism

According to Galbin, social constructionism emphasizes several key ideas (2014). These are the following principles: realities are socially produced and constituted through language; social processes sustain knowledge; and human beings place a premium on reflexivity. Society is seen as a subjective as well as an objective reality. Cojocaru and Bragaru (2012) state that there is a focus on meaning and power in social constructionism. In other words, meaning is not a property of events and objects themselves, but a construction. Meaning is derived from the predominant cultural frame comprising the discursive, social, linguistic and symbolic practices. Children in educational spaces debate and discuss issues among themselves and teachers and derive and interpret meanings from these interactions. Concepts and mental representations of each other's

actions are formed over time when children, parents and teachers interact together in a social system. In school spaces, children construct images of what they perceive to be acceptable behaviour to be performed by either boys or girls due to these interactions. There is reciprocity in roles played by the actors in relation to each other as the concepts eventually become adopted or habituated.

Cojocaru (2010) accentuates that reciprocal interactions are said to be institutionalised when the roles are availed to be entered into and played out by other members of society. In the institutionalisation process, meaning is embedded in society. In school spaces, when learners engage each other, they establish some understandings among themselves as to what is acceptable and not. This is the pattern that they will follow as they continue to interact. The process of having shared understanding among the learners requires one to view concepts in the same way (Sheetal, 2014). For example, hegemonic masculinity should be understood in the same way and interpreted in the same manner among boys and girls in school spaces. Knowledge and people's perceptions of reality get ingrained in society's institutional fabric. Owen (1995, p. 186) says that social constructionism claims that the content of our awareness and that how we associate one with another, 'is instructed by our culture and society' and all the quantities that are metaphysical are taken for granted are learnt from others around us. Learners learn the content of consciousness through relating one with another and is taught by culture and society. The language, communication and speech are seen in social constructionism as playing a role that is central of the interactive process through which the world and learners are understood.

From a social constructionist perspective, language is more than just a means of linking people. Language is where people exist. Galbin (2014) used Gergen and Gergen (1991) to say consequently, that the focus is on social interaction, not on the individual person in which language is generated, sustained and abandoned. Learners socially construct reality through the use of agreed-upon and shared meaning expressed through language Children's spaces and gendered experiences are actively interpreted and reproduced by them 'through play, lore and language' (Biddle, 2017, p. 17). It is not surprising that children, in keeping with a constructionist model to the sociology of childhood, experience, observe, and absorb gendered and educational thinking and apply it in their peer culture and play. This means that children's beliefs concerning gender

are social inventions. According to Gergen and Gergen (2012), there are no material outside establishments that can be accurately described or comprehended from a social constructionist perspective. Therefore, children are forced to discard their cherished position of knowing it all and assumptions, because there are realities they will come to know through interactions with others and through the language learners use. Galbin (2014) says that these realities are social constructions and inventions of socially mediated discourse, along with other notions and assumptions. What children in school spaces know, largely depends inherently upon communities of shared thoughts and values. Children in school spaces are largely governed by normative rules that are historically and culturally situated. There is no claim to provide the truth by social constructionists. As claimed by Gergen (1999), the criteria, established in identifying behaviours, entities and events are circumscribed largely by history, culture and the social context. The way children address issues of gender within the school spaces is largely determined by their historical setting and societal contexts. Therefore, Galbin (2014) utilizing Dickerson and Zimmermann (1996, p. 80) state that as opposed to a constructivist view, the social constructionist perspective over time within a social or community context, “finds meaning in understanding of how ideas and attitudes are advanced and refined”. In getting to understand children’s spaces and gendered experiences, meanings and attitudes can only be understood through an interactive process with children about how they negotiate and navigate their spaces.

In the 'common world' domain and the 'common dance,' all knowledge evolves in the space between people (Galbin, 2014, p. 85). "Children live in a conversational world of narrative with one other, and they comprehend themselves through changing stories and self-descriptions," writes Hart (1995, p. 184). High school children come to understand each other through how they narrate their stories amongst themselves. Their narration of their daily lives within the school spaces allows them to navigate and negotiate their gendered spaces. This occurs at certain times and places, resituating psychological processes in social and temporal contexts across cultures. Apart from the inherited and developmental dimensions of humanity, social constructionism proposes that all characteristics of humanity are established, sustained, and eliminated over time as we interact with others (Galbin, 2014). This indicates that in the lives of children, all social behaviours emerge, are repeated in the present, and eventually end. The thought processes of children and behaviour in schooling environments is guided by societal discourses, but they are shaped,

maintained and destroyed as they interact with others and teachers in the school. For example, the learners' attitude towards activities that are deemed feminine and masculine are shaped, maintained and changed as they continuously meet among themselves and teachers (Sadker and Sadker, 2010). Galbin (2014) claims that, according to social constructionism, there is no true objectivity in human sciences because all approaches require one group of subjective humans to grade another set of subjective humans. Inevitably so, the tool for knowing is subjective people themselves. Social constructionism maintains that every significant reality is socially produced. This means that, in a continuous dialectic, society moulds the children, who then create society (Garcia, 2015).

Humans are born into a social milieu by which they are influenced, even though they develop their own realities, an emphasis is placed on meaning that is collectively generated. According to Dreher (2012), collective knowledge is converted into rules by which individuals live, but agency means that rules are more likely to be modified over time as new, shared understandings are negotiated. Theys (2018) argues that social structures are reshaped by individuals who are themselves socially constructed, maintained and modified. Kale (2003) cited Michael's (1997, p. 315) comment to emphasize that spoken and written language standards, as well as other 'social practices,' form shared meaning. Norozi and Moen (2016) argue that social constructionism seeks to find out how the knowledge of children and childhood is constructed and by whom and why. It furthers seeks to understand what purpose this constructed knowledge would serve. Social constructionism is an alternative way in finding out about children and childhood. The researcher interacted with learners through interviews in this study so as to get an understanding of children's views about their spaces and how they construct their world. The social constructions of childhood are important topic in understanding the spaces children occupy in the society and their geographies.

3.2 Persuasive case for choice of social constructionism

Owen (2013) avers that social constructionism is interested in topics that anthropologists refer to as culture and sociologists refer to as society. The common components of all that is psychological are included in social constructionism. It emphasises the interconnectedness and diversity of numerous perspectives held by individuals within their communities. As such, the spaces that children occupy, their geographies and gendered experiences in Eswatini high schools have to do

with power dynamics in school spaces. Children's spaces, according to Motsa (2016, p. 24), are concerned with the "social relationships children have with adults and other children." Children navigate and negotiate their spaces as they continuously mingle with teachers and other learners. Their gendered experiences and perceptions are shaped and reshaped as they relate with the school spaces daily.

This theory was chosen in accordance with Galbin's (2014, p. 83) statement that "child functions in relation to its surroundings, constructing, redesigning, and interpreting the information he or she meets in his or her contact with the world." According to social constructionism, all aspects of humanity are formed, maintained, and destroyed over time as a result of our relationships with others (Owen, 2013). This augurs well with the study in that schoolchildren's spaces and their gendered experiences are created, maintained and even changed in their interactions with teachers and other learners. Galbin (2014) concurs by saying that social practices of all life begin, are recreated in the present and finally, in the end. Owen (2013) argues that social constructionism is in the human sciences, where true objectivity is absent. This is due to the fact that all methods depend upon one set of subjective humans to rate another set of subjective humans. Since pupils live and interact in school spaces, they are not separate bodies. According to (Galbin, 2014), social constructionism looks into how people are both individual and collective, as well as how similar or distinct they are from one another. Individuals do not have sole control over their emotions and thoughts just because they say "I" and have separate bodies. These are more common among individuals. Children are a part of a community's common beliefs, goals, and experiences. As such, the "tool for knowing" is inescapably subjective people themselves (Maltseva, 2013). The study was meant to give clarity as to why children see and act the way they do and how they experienced their world. It is the researcher's claim that what is perceived as reality, what is often assumed to be true and unchanging experience, is in fact socially situated.

3.3 Children as citizens in their own right: social constructions of childhood

Developmentalism, according to the social constructionist perspective, is a discourse in which "children are constructed as to be adults rather than individuals in their own right" (Woodhead, 2013, p. 144). Children are considered as the ones who lack something. There is clear evidence globally that children are a marginalised group. Sharpe (2015) says that children are not taken

seriously in political circles and are disallowed from voting; are not allowed in public spaces (Valentine, 2004); negotiate uninhabitable working conditions (Gamlin, Camacho, Ong and Hesketh, 2015), and are quickly losing the time and space to cultivate and promote their own child culture (Woolley and Griffin, 2014). Adults continue to institutionalise children's play and restrict children's access to public spaces. As a result, children's status as second-class citizens is perpetuated. Clements (2004) and Staempfli (2008) showed that due to this continued marginalisation, children in school spaces are suffering in their physical and social development. The deliberations about children is that they are less socially skilled and less emotionally mature that decisions they make in schools are scrutinised by adults, who are the teachers and administrators. Children are regarded as those that are less expressive and hold less competencies in terms of life skills (Norozi & Moen (2016). They are contemplated and deliberated as being in a relatively powerless position in relation to adults. Given these attributes from adults and the distinguishing traits, children are just seen as children, while adults are calculated willfully as grown-ups (James &James, 2008).

According to Qvortrup (2009), adults have less understanding and recognition of children's praxis. Competence as a faculty is defined by adults in relation to adults' praxis. Therefore, the troubling and naturalised dynamic between children and adults has to be examined critically so as to cultivate a healthy and socially just society. Horgan, Forde, Parkes and Martin (2015) aver that UNCRC accepts that children and young people are citizens in their own right and hence recognise their capabilities to determine their own lives. This view is shared by Percy-Smith and Burns (2013), who point out that new sociology of childhood or social constructionist position recognises the ability of children to shape their own lives. Children should construct their own lives and the lives of people around them in school environments, as well as the societies in which they live (Ferreira, Karila, Muniz, Amaral & Kupiainen, 2018).

Rather than a static, completely biological life stage, childhood is a global social construct (Valentine, 2004). The childhood's social construct empowers adults to rationalise their attempted control over children. Adults exercise control by excluding children from public spaces, denigrating and institutionalising their social and political contributions. By investigating the space and language utilised by children on a worldwide scale, Biddle (2017, p. 11) claims that "children

are active social actors already, rather than the not-yet-adults waiting to be moulded into useful members of society." Childhood means different things to different societies, as demonstrated by this evidence, furthering the argument that childhood is a social construct. Horgan et al. (2015) highlighted the need for children in learning spaces to take a more active role in their learning environment. They should not be perceived as recipients of knowledge but as active members in the learning process. Harris (2009, p. 338) stated that in the "operation and governance of schools, children's participation tends not to be systematic and occur only on occasional basis." He argued that giving pupils a sincere voice required some transfer of influence and power to them. This gives rise to the notion that children are people.

3.3.1 Childhood evolution as part of social construct

In presenting the historical backdrop of childhood in western culture, Biddle (2017) draws on Corsaro (1997) and Valentine (2004), revealing a wide range of cultural attitudes toward children. Children began to be seen as a separate social class from adults at the end of the 16th century, during the Enlightenment period (Aries, 1962). On his landmark study on historical concepts of childhood, Aries focused on children's changing roles in society. As Aries points out, there was a significant transition from a lack of understanding of childhood to a period when children were considered as a source of entertainment for adults, to a period of moralistic discourse in which childhood was seen as a time of discipline and training for maturity. According to Biddle (2017), proof that childhood is a social construct is evidenced by a distinct shift in societal attitudes about children, citing Corsaro (1997). Historical studies of cultural attitudes about childhood reveal a tension contradiction between Dionysian and Apollonian perspectives of childhood. Dionysian's opinion of childhood is that "children are a wildness" (Biddle, 2017). Youngsters are considered as naturally immoral in this paradigm, which presents children as beings who must be socialized into 'normal' people and disciplined (Valentine, 2004). On childhood, the Apollonian and Dionysian viewpoints are fundamentally opposed. Children are born with an intrinsic innocence and goodness that, as they grow older, gets corrupted by the world. Despite the fact that the two childhood perspectives appear to be utterly contradictory, both the Apollonian and Dionysian paradigms support adult-based authority over children. Both are predicated on the premise that children are polluted, broken, and unfit to be fully human. In these ideas, adults are portrayed as the only source of salvation for children. Children are positioned as powerless and inept in both

the Dionysian and Apollonian viewpoints, whereas adults are positioned as competent authorities (Biddle, 2017Schools nurture children's inner possibilities, which goes beyond academic achievement. Schooling does have the capability to construct and nurture children's behavioural patterns and roles in terms of societal norms. As such, the school constructs gender identities (Mim, 2016).

Little (2016) claims that social constructionist beliefs emphasize gender as a practice, as opposed to biological sex, which is assigned at birth based on outward genitalia. Given this perspective, girls' and boys' identity, behaviour, and expectations reflect socially constructed concepts about femininity and masculinity. Gender is determinedly produced, maintained, recreated, and displayed in family and other realms of life interactions and daily activities. Hence, social constructionism is an important construct of gender as will be discussed next.

3.4 Social constructionism as gender construct in school spaces

Gerdin (2017, p. 21) succinctly says that in the production of gendered identities, discourses of gender play a significant role since they reinforce specific images of female and male identities through techniques of normalisation. Gerdin (2017, p. 21) claims that the process of normalisation produces both persons and differences by defining what and who is to be perceived as 'normal' or 'deviant.' Unlike the biological essentialist perspective, which asserts that gender is a product of fundamental differences, the social constructionist perspective, as Verploegh (2015, p. 12) notes, claims that gender categories are built in society via interaction. This gives rise to the need to differentiate sex and gender. Sex is a biological construct where a male or female as an individual is defined by "genetics, anatomy and physiology" (Tannenbaum, Greaves, and Graham, 2016, p. 2). Gender is described as "the socially created disparities between men and women's duties and obligations that are learnt, vary from culture to culture, and change over time," according to the UNGEI (2012, p. 3). These are differences and relationships that are socially created and fluctuate depending on the situation and setting. The investigation of gender experiences takes place in space. Gender is a complicated and fluid construct that is changed throughout time by cultural and social contexts and situations to form gender norms. Children in school spaces, therefore, learn what is acceptable for a girl and boy from their society. The culture from which children live in

determines what is feminine and what is masculine. However, what culture dictates among children is not permanent, and changes with time as they interact with the school community.

Verploegh (2015, p. 13) notes that how people behave, perceive themselves and each other, interact and act, how power and resources are distributed in society, are influenced by gender norms. This discovery opens the prospect that gender hierarchies that emerge during encounters may not have to be fixed. The social constructionist viewpoint assumes that gender and sex differences are influenced by familial and social behaviours. However, it departs from the notion that gender differences are exclusively a result of socialization. The notion is that historical, contextual, and, most importantly, interpersonal processes impact children's unique behaviour and identity, particularly in the school setting (Khan, 2009). In contrast to the biological essentialist approach, which maintains that gender hierarchy is the result of fundamental distinctions, Verploegh (2015, p. 13) contends that because gender is a manufactured meaning, there is a great possibility for resistance and subversion of gender norms among youngsters. According to Deustch (2007), the social constructionist theory investigates how gender is learned from the larger culture and embedded throughout society. In other words, it moves further than just modelling gender as a product of biological difference or something learnt during the socialisation process. Gerson and Peiss (1985) claimed that social constructionists believe gender is a collection of relationships that are produced and sustained by individual behaviour. Verploegh (2015, p. 13) agreed. As a result, gender is a social relationship that exists within social interactions and dynamics and that no single person can hold.

It is, however, noted by Verploegh (2015) that for gender to occur, it does not need to be done in a mixed gendered setting or a particularised gendered setting. It is possible for individuals to perform gender alone without being engaged in interaction. For example, in school spaces, a girl could be seen sweeping the classroom and putting the dirty in the bin without having spoken to anyone, while a boy could start cutting grass in the sports field. This comes about as soon as they learn and are socialised in the gender system, and internalised expectations are maintained through the development of an understanding by an individual about the social world. Fenstemaker and West (2002) allude that the separation of activities for children in schools who are young, shapes the assumption for children and adults that behaviour that is different for boys and girls is natural.

Butler (1990) acknowledges that the perception of gender as natural, is because individuals repeatedly perform it over time. As a result of these performances, traditional gender categories are maintained.

The performance of gender comprises both confirming acceptable philosophies of gender and the rejection of what is considered unacceptable within a particular discourse, which Lunneblad and Johansson (2019, p. 3) called "constitutive outside". Those gendered identities which are identified as unrecognisable and unacceptable or abject identities, are what the constitutive outside comprises. In order to reaffirm their own identity as 'normal' or culturally intelligible, individuals should reject those identities that are considered 'abject' or abnormal, as argued by Butler (cited in Lunneblad and Johansson, 2019). For example, as opposed to femininity, masculinity is often understood, the reason why being a boy stereotypically involves rebuffing that which is considered feminine like being aggressive as opposed to being passive and at school playing rugby instead of netball, a trend found in many high schools in Eswatini (Reza et al., 2007).

Further development of the idea of gender as a social construction was done by West and Zimmerman (1987). They revealed gender as sequences of social practices incessantly getting constructed in daily interactions between people. They were successful in decoupling the relationship between biology and behaviour, which was a significant conceptual shift in how academics handled gender differences. West and Zimmerman questioned the inherent relationship between behaviour and biology, proposing a new framework for comprehending the 'chemistry,' or interplay, between behaviour in social interactions and social structure in general. They also advanced the idea that, while gender is a master identity that is significant in situations beyond the level of interaction, it is a master identity that is important in situations beyond the level of interaction. The master identity operates by developing cultural standards and expectations during interaction and incorporating them into the normative expectation of appropriate gender behaviour. Verploegh (2015) comments that situations that may not be specifically gendered is where these expectations will get carried over. Gender, in this context, structures both interaction and is structured by interaction.

Gender is constructed in individuals and how they interact in structural ways to create an environment. A product of the interactions between individuals and their environments creates gender roles. The gender roles give cues to individuals on what behaviour the society believes to be appropriate for what sex. For example, in schools' spaces, girls tend to choose arts subjects and leave out Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to boys. This is because of the stereotypes that STEM is high status to which boys are forced to aspire, while girls are discouraged (Beede, Juilan, Langdon, McKitttrick, Khan & Doms, 2011). This thinking is basically based on societal stereotypes and the thinking by society that STEM jobs demand more physical and cognitive strength in comparison to the arts. In other words, the definition of gender roles is the differences between the sexes according to a society's beliefs. Managing one's behaviour according to the normative understandings of appropriate gendered behaviour is the gender process.

The activity employed to link oneself or make claims to a category of a particular sex is not inherently gender, but rather the mere reflection of one's sex category. As a result, gender is constantly performed or done during engagement, spanning time and context, and performance is evaluated by those with whom we contact. Gender and sex are not innate in persons, according to the social constructionist view, but continuous performance and appraisal of gender and sex contribute to beliefs of the naturalness of gender disparities. West and Zimmerman (1987) outline how sex differences are created in their essay. They explored different aspects in social life that work in the production of differences between boys and girls and make that difference appear to be natural. Boys' and girls' school toilets, for example, cause distinctions that appear natural, despite the fact that the behaviour in the bathroom; waste elimination is the same for both boys and girls. Also, at public sporting events, boys and girls from different schools are separated into separate spaces on the field and in the stands, and this separation encourages different types of behaviour that reinforce the expectation that behaviour is natural, despite the fact that it is a social structure product. A female in class waiting for assistance to have her desk moved for her is a circumstance that, according to Goffman (1977), appears to be an expression of a specific inborn gendered trait, situations of social interaction, and which could be defined as feminine or masculine.

3.5 Conclusion

As a philosophical movement, social constructionism offers an alternative philosophical assumption about the construction of reality and the production of knowledge. Its main concerns are with the historical context of knowledge and how it is embedded in cultural behaviours and beliefs. Meanings are socially produced through the coordination of people in their many encounters; as a result, it is always dynamic and fluid. Because social constructionism is concerned with the created nature of reality, it has been inspired by a variety of psychological, sociological, and philosophical views, including sociology of knowledge and analytical philosophy. In contrast to biological sex, which is assigned at birth based on outward genitalia, social constructionist theories emphasise gender as something that is done. The social constructionism approach recognises that gender is ingrained across society and is taught from the greater culture. In other words, it goes beyond just representing gender as a result of biological diversity or as something acquired through socialization. Social constructionists think that gender is a group of relationships that are created and maintained by human action. Different techniques in the field of education have been supported by social constructionist ideas based on the process of social construction of reality. Across civilizations, children are subjected to institutionalised oppression by adults. They create unique child peer cultures to resist adult authority, negotiate personal identities and relationships, and creatively interpret the world around them in order to combat injustice. All children are oppressed in some way and they experience this oppression to varying degrees. Childhood is a social construction enforcing their systematic marginalisation, creating actual consequences for individuals and society.

The study's research methodology is discussed in the following chapter. The study took a qualitative approach and used a narrative inquiry design.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology that was utilised in the study. It provides the road map of the complete journey of the enquiry process of the study. The chapter begins with outlining the research methodology that includes the research paradigm and design; thereafter the population and sample is described, and finally, the data collection and data processing procedures are explained.

4.1 Research Aims

The aim of this study was to explore how children navigated the spaces, geography and gendered experiences in the four high schools within the Hhohho region. In view of the main research question, four research sub-questions that connect to children's gendered experiences were formulated as follows:

- What are the gendered spaces of boys and girls within the schools and practices in the co-educational context of four high schools in the Hhohho region?
- What role do high schools in Eswatini play as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation?
- How do children exercise agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools?
- How can schools be turned into gender responsive environments?

4.2 Locating the study within the Interpretive Paradigm

The purposeful placement of this study inside the interpretive paradigm is due to interpretivism's rejection of objectivity and embracing of the subjective truths arising from the distinctive, socially constructed realities of individuals (Cohen et al., 2011). According to Packer (2011), interpretive researchers make the assumption that as people engage with the outside world, they create and combine their own subjective and intersubjective meanings. Similar to this, interpretive research holds that people's subjective perceptions of the outside world make up reality. The interpretive researchers access the meanings that participants associate with those social worlds in an effort to comprehend the people they have been studying (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Through the perceptions, backgrounds, and experiences of the participants, interpretivist scholars learn about reality. Given the foregoing, the researcher used an interpretive paradigm in the study to provide an explicit comprehension of the space, geography, and gendered experiences of high school students in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. To gain a better understanding of the lived realities of the space, geographies and gendered experiences of these high school children, focus group discussions and individual interviews were used to generate data.

An interpretivist paradigm in this research is supported by "the assumption that the participants become actively involved in all the phases of the process," according to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011, p. 7). "Thus, it is appropriate for this study since it will enable the researcher to comprehend the gendered experiences of the children. Participants look for comprehension of the environment in which they live. With the use of the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher was able to see the world from the perspectives and experiences of the participants.

4.3. Qualitative Research Approach

Because the goal of this empirical exploration was to gain a deep understanding of space, geography, and gendered experiences of children through a narrative inquiry in four high schools in Eswatini, the qualitative narrative research approach was chosen above the quantitative research style. Houser (2016) states that if the research questions are the why and “what” questions, these could be answered best through a qualitative study. Examining and exploring the space, geography and gendered experiences of children in Eswatini needs a comprehensive and thorough analysis and description of their lived experiences in their learning environments. Robertson (2020) says qualitative research design is defined as "a collection or assemblage of methods of investigation

or inquest." He went on to clarify that these various methodologies rely on oral, pictorial, auditory, and olfactory information in order to ensure and guarantee an in-depth, full comprehension of the event or phenomenon being examined. Cresswell (2016) noted that there are some advantages that the qualitative researcher enjoys when employing this methodology. Chief amongst them for this study are the following:

- Flexibility: the researcher did not follow inflexible structure that might have limited the gathering of emotional and authentic data on the gendered experiences of schoolchildren. The researcher used follow up questions and triangulation on answers that he wished to generate more in-depth data or verify whether he understood the answer by the participants (Leavy, 2017). The researcher was able to follow any interesting thought tangent and generated critical data that enriched the research outcome.
- Emotionally rich descriptions: qualitative research produces thick descriptions of the participants' feelings, attitudes and perceptions that cannot be captured by any other approach (Creswell, 2016). The researcher was able to have an insight into different perspectives of the lived, gendered experiences of the children which were then incorporated into the conclusions of the study. In other words, no single perspective was given prominence by the researcher; he tried to capture all the converging and conflicting perspectives to produce a rich repository narrative of the children's experiences. The researcher was able to delve into the emotional fuel that drives the children's behaviours and views using qualitative research.

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) identified features that uniquely apply to qualitative research as the assumptions, goals, researcher's role and context sensitivity. These same features as identified by McMillan and Schumacher (2014) apply to the study on space, geography and gendered experience of children in the learning environments in Eswatini. This qualitative study adopted McMillan and Schumacher's (2014) basic tenets of effective research. Firstly, the underlying assumption is that qualitative research is founded or grounded on social constructionism. Social Constructionism makes the assumption that reality is multidimensional and multifaceted, collaborative and shared social experience which is inferred and understood by the individuals (Thomas, 2017). The thought processes and learners' views are what directs their actions, their thoughts and how they feel, and that is what they consider 'real' to them. Based on

that line of thinking, the phenomenon of this study is that learners construct their own realities from gendered experiences, which naturally vary from one learner to another. When carrying out a study that requires a current view or focus in real life situation, then "qualitative research design becomes more appropriate", according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 376).

Secondly, the goals are also of equal importance. An initial understanding of the social phenomenon from the participants' viewpoint is what most concerns qualitative research. It is through analysing that we gain an understanding of the several settings of participants and also through describing and recounting participants' meanings from these situations and events, as alluded by Austin and Sutton (2014) and Thomas (2017). Thirdly, the researcher's role is of paramount importance. Munhall (2010) says that, qualitative researchers immerse themselves in the situation and phenomena being examined. They adopt participatory social roles in which they record participant interviews and exchanges.

Lastly, context sensitivity is considered a factor. The environment or settings strongly influence human actions. There is data collection by the researcher from specific individuals or a specific site. In this sense, only the words, perspectives, and thoughts of children attending Swazi schools in their specific setting may be used to explore and describe the space, geography, and gendered experiences of children in learning environments. A qualitative study's researcher, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001) and Merriam (2009), analyses phenomena in terms of the meanings people ascribe to them. Hamersley (2007) contends that these meanings assist the researcher in comprehending and representing opinions that are typically ignored and hidden. The study's context is described as a relational inquiry area. To support the fluidity and coauthoring that occurs in the narrative inquiry, it uses a terminology that is distinct from more traditional qualitative methodologies (Snider, 2010). In this study on the space, geography and gendered experiences of children, the researcher assumed that the Emaswati children are best equipped to relay and speak out about their spaces and their gender based experiences. Through interaction with pupils who shared their views, meanings, opinions, and perceptions on their space, geography, and gendered experiences within their various learning environments, the researcher was able to gain a deep understanding of how the learners felt and lived with regard to gender experiences using a qualitative research design.

The use of qualitative approach in the study of space, geography and gendered experiences of children of four high schools in Hhohho region in Eswatini, thus came with advantages. Hammersley (2007, p. 3) says that when data is to be captured and presented as distinctly as possible, then the "designatory capacity has the ability to do so". This allows the tuning in of the researcher to the participants and the specific situations, as noted by Mendez (2013). This allowed the researcher to obtain the necessary information regarding the space, geography, and gendered experiences of children in a particular context in a clear and concise manner. According to Hamersley (2007, p. 3), there is a building of 'introspection before, during and after the research' in qualitative research in the quest for endless and incessant search for more relevant answers to the framed research questions. The importance of this particular aspect of the methodology becomes crucial because the researcher should be in a position to continuously mirror and reproduce all raised issues so that an in depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation can be gained (Leavy, 2017).

Educational policies and practices could be improved through qualitative research since by design, this methodology develops bottom-up abstractions and observations, a view shared by Snider (2010). The focus on students' real thoughts and opinions about their space, geographies, and gendered experiences of children in Eswatini's Hhohho region could raise the Ministry of Education and Training's awareness and sensitivity to factors critical to children's aspirations with respect to their lived gendered experiences.

The Eswatini government's attempt to attain first world status by 2022, as is always articulated by the Head of State, the Ingwenyama King Mswati the III, can only remain a pipe dream if there is no proper introspection in gender issues that affect school going children in the country (Simelane, 2011). The qualitative study approach was chosen for an exploration into the space, geography, and gendered experiences of children in Eswatini because of these qualities and advantages. According to Pallai (2019), allowing participants to speak and say their storylines using their own words and from their viewpoints allows us to look at issues holistically. Thus, the researcher built a holistic perspective of the gendered experiences of children in Eswatini by gathering and considering numerous opinions and views of people through interviewing. The researcher used the

narrative inquiry as the research design to get to understand the stories behind the children‘s spaces, geographies and gendered experiences. Hence, the next paragraph covers the rationale for the use of narrative enquiry.

4.3.1 Rationale for Narrative Inquiry Design

Relevant data was collected to focus on a narrative inquiry on children’s space, geographies and gendered experiences in the learning environments in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. Clandinin (2013) is of the opinion that in a narrative inquiry, the researcher will be in the midst of his life's experiences and those of the participants. We are experiencing the narrative as we tell our experiences, hence there is no end to the story. People are always rewriting their life narratives and redesigning their futures via those lenses, so narrative inquiry never ends. During the study, the researcher co-experiences and co-authors the tale of the investigation, as well as exerting influence on the stories of the participants, as he lives alongside them (Cresswell, 2016).

The concept captured the compilations of natural contexts where participants and researcher experience their lives socially, culturally, familially, and in other ways. The field of inquiry was children's space, geographies, and gendered experiences, and the notion captured the compilations of natural contexts where participants and researchers experience their lives socially, culturally, familially, and in other ways. Cowger and Tritz (2019) further point out that leaving is never a final exit for the inquirer because the field of inquiry is now embedded in the never-ending narrative of participants and researcher. The researcher can use narrative inquiry to collect stories (narratives) from participants about their experiences with phenomena (Cowger & Tritz, 2019). As a result, narratives were helpful in this study in capturing the subjective voices of the participants about the contextual dynamics affecting space, geographies, and gendered experiences of children in these four high schools. It was also used to discuss the meaning of the personal experiences of the participants (Cresswell, 2016). From framing the research puzzle to being in the field, to writing field texts, to writing research texts, thinking about the phenomena in a narrative style is required throughout the investigation. The researcher focused on social, cultural, and institutional narratives in which specific children's lives unfolded while thinking narratively about gendered experiences in high school settings.

In this method of thinking, the researcher paid attention to the unique characteristics of the places where each child lives and attends school, as well as each child's unique interactions and relationships, as well as how each child responds in aesthetic, emotional, and moral ways. Such an approach emphasizes the phenomenon's fluctuating, changeable, personal, and social aspects. Although society views gender roles as strict and appropriate, thinking narratively about children's gendered experiences questioned the mainstream tale of traditionally assigned male-centric gender roles as incorrect and in need of reform (Clandinin, 2016). The narrative enquiry used in this study located the experiences within place and it looks inwards and outwards and also backward and forward, critically appraising the *status quo,* as Creswell (2016) puts it. The narrative approach examined the completeness of an experience positioned within the lives and realities of the school children. It was a method of collecting and telling the stories of the high school children about their spaces, geographies and gendered experiences in their learning environment.

4.4. Population, sample and sampling of the study

A population is a collection of items that researchers are interested in studying. In other words, a sample is a collection of elements or units drawn from a studied population. According to Majid (2017), the population denotes a group to which you want to generalise your findings. Populations are commonly defined by demographics, geography, occupation, time, care requirements, diagnosis, or a combination of these variables. The phrase "population" can also refer to a set of probable measurements or values, which includes not only observed but also potentially observable cases. The study's population consisted of 66 high schools in the Hhohho region, with the assumption that all of the high schools could be chosen as participating schools. However, studying the entire populations of the learners would be difficult to manage and would be too large and impractical. As such, sampling becomes an important activity. Thus, four high schools were sampled using convenience sampling technique. The reason for choosing these schools was that they were easily accessible to the researcher, therefore proffering convenience of studying the selected schools. Convenience sampling, also known as "haphazard or accidental sampling," is a non-random or non-probability sampling method in which members of the target population meet specific practical criteria such as "geographical proximity, easy accessibility, and availability at a given time, and participation willingness are included for the purpose of the study," according to Etkani, Musa, and Alkassim (2016, p. 2).

A sample is a "group of respondents picked from a larger population" for the aim of performing a survey or experiment, according to Majid (2017, p. 3). By monitoring the characteristics and researching the perceptions, opinions, and views of the selected sample, the researcher was in a better position to make certain legitimate assumptions about the perceptions, opinions, and views of the total population. Expectations of preferred characteristics or attributes of persons with knowledge on the topic should be used for the selection of participants for interactive inquiry (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). As a result, the people chosen must have had similar experiences, be affected by similar conditions, and be associated with people who are affected by these circumstances on a daily basis

According to the researcher, a research sample of 24 participants was sufficient because, as Aspers (2019) argues, in qualitative research, a small distinct group of participants is normally explored to acquire an in-depth grasp of the topic. In the view of the researcher, a consideration of a research sample of 24 participants was adequate because to get an in-depth understanding of the problem in qualitative research, a small distinctive group of participants is usually investigated, as argued by Aspers (2019). The participants were sampled using purposive sampling technique. It was planned that students who were identified for data collection would be contacted and a sample drawn from them. Expectations of preferred characteristics or attributes of learners with knowledge on the topic were used for the selection of participants for interactive inquiry (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014). Therefore, the participants selected shared some experiences on gendered experiences, had been affected by the same set of circumstances and were daily affected by these circumstances. The learners were asked to write half a page on their gendered experiences in the school. The researcher read through all of them and selected the best who became the selected participants. In carrying out the research, the major aim was to get a deep understanding of the phenomenon of space, geography and gendered experiences of children in four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini not generalisation. The research used 24 learner participants (12 boys and 12 girls) from four high schools, aged between 16 and 18 years in Form 5. As declared by Flick (2008, p. 33), sampling helps the researcher in the reduction of the huge numbers of cases “to a manageable” selection and instantaneously ensures “justifiable selection of cases and materials.”

4.5 The Researcher's Positionality

According to Scharp and Thomas (2019), academics conducting critical social science research should consider how their personal views and experiences might contribute to their interpretations of people's lived experiences. Positionality "reflects the position that the researcher has chosen to embrace inside a given research topic," according to Savin-Baden and Major (2013, p. 71). It affects the methods used in research as well as the findings and conclusions. In this study, the researcher occupied the roles of both an insider and an outsider. He has intimate knowledge of the field of educational research because he is an educator. The researcher is exposed to the country's discourses on education because he is an educator. The researcher is also an insider in that he sometimes works with an organisation that deals with issues of gender based violence in communities, therefore he easily relates with gendered experiences of children. This helped as a means in knowledge production and thus improved the production of a quality study (Rowe, 2014). However, despite being an educator and having experience with people's gendered experiences, the researcher was an outsider to the geographies and gendered experiences of high school learners in the Hhohho region. This enabled the researcher to approach the topic critically.

The concept of the role of the "researcher" is one of the distinctive aspects of qualitative research. Unlike quantitative research, which examines independent realities through "objective" observation, qualitative research "locates the observer in the world," according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 2). Ormston, Spencer, Barnard, and Snape all admit the existence of a "connection between the researcher and the studied" (2014, p. 8). This therefore confirms what Corbin and Strauss (2015) say, that research is co-constructed by researchers and participants. In this research, the researcher played a crucial role of being a facilitator and repository of all the feelings, perceptions, attitudes and lived experiences of the children who were part of the study. This necessitated the researcher's participation in reflective practices that required him to become conscious of his position in the research process. Watt (2007) rightly summed the researcher's role as a vital instrument that determined the efficacy of the research itself. It was imperative for the researcher to become aware of his prejudices, biases and preconceived realities. The realisation that the researcher had preconceived ideas about what constituted "proper" gender roles made him reflect on the biases this assertion had on the way he was able to see things in a professional and neutral manner after listening to the lived experiences of the participants. Furthermore, the

researcher had to choose the most appropriate role to play in the research. The researcher has a significant role to play in the data collection process in order to get valid data to answer the study questions. A researcher can play a variety of roles in influencing the social structure and behaviour of research participants. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), the researcher might have selected from a variety of positions, including total observer, full participant, participant observer, insider-observer, or the dual function of participant researcher. By interviewing the participants, the researcher assumed the position of participant researcher in this study. In qualitative research, this is a common function for the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p.435). In interviews, the researcher took the conventional neutral posture of not influencing participants' perceptions, beliefs, or opinions as a participant researcher. To maintain his neutrality, the researcher refrained from acting like an expert. In regards to the phenomenon under inquiry, the researcher took into account the fact that participants are information-rich specialists in their natural environments. The researcher used a variety of ways to collect data from learners' day-to-day life experiences in their learning contexts in order to explore the research problem. When data was collected, due diligence was exercised in the interpretation of the collected data in quest for an in-depth understanding of perceptions and feelings of the participants' learners' spaces, geographies and their gendered experiences in the school spaces.

4.6 Methods of data generation

The process of gathering data about a phenomenon in order to address the research problem by answering the research questions is known as research. Because this was a qualitative, narrative study, the researcher worked with the participants to ensure the most credible and meaningful data was acquired. Focus group discussions and face-to-face individual interviews were the data generation methods employed in this study. Because the narrative develops through the interviewer and participants' interaction, exchange, and dialogue, collaboration is a key component of narrative interviews. Scârneci (2012) states that, the majority of interviews conducted for qualitative research are narrative interviews, particularly those conducted early on in the process when the conversations are unstructured and participants are free to share their experiences, thoughts, and ideas. In this study, participants were afforded the opportunity to freely express themselves about the space, geography and gendered experiences within their schooling spaces. As such, interviews are thus techniques for creating stories because it focuses on both what is said and how it is said

during the narrative process, interviewing is essential to comprehending the unspoken. The qualities of language, tone of voice, pauses, variations in intonation, silence that can convert into unheard narratives, expressions, and others are important to understanding the unsaid because during the interview process, the researcher examines both what is said and how it is said (Scârneci, 2012). The researcher found it very helpful to start with individual (in-depth) interviews and then explore further the issues that come out of the individual interviews in focus groups. Conducting individual interviews first and then focus groups later was the most fruitful, especially since the focus groups were made up of the individuals who originally participated in the individual interviews. They had already gone through the less scary process of an individual interview, and if they found it enjoyable, they were more likely to be open to continuing participation in a group environment to keep the study moving forward.

4.6.1 Focus group interview

A group that is assembled for the reason of finding out a specific research problem is a focus group (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2013). The focus group interviews used in this study allowed the children to share knowledge and experiences with others who were having the same experiences. It is worth noting that data that was generated emerged from the interactions of participants in the group as they related to one another rather than with the interviewer in focus group interview, a view shared by Neuman (2016). Having the focus groups gave the researcher an opportunity to substantiate the comments made by learners during the individual interviews so this helped in "data triangulation" (Winslow, Honein and Elzubeir 2002, p. 566). A focus group, according to Winslow et al., (2002) can elicit a level of honesty, sincerity, fairness, alertness, and naturalness from participants, resulting in uniquely useful data that cannot be readily acquired by other traditional interviewing techniques. This was one of the most distinctive advantages of using focus group interviewing in this study. Focus group interviewing gave the researcher the chance to interview several participants at once. The advantage was that it minimised the time and effort required to obtain the information compared to the individual interviews.

Focus groups offered a deep and thorough collection of information on the learners' views, thoughts, feelings, and impressions in their own words about the space, geography and gendered

experiences within the school spaces. Green (2010) states that, focus groups are most helpful when a researcher wants to learn about people's perceptions of the issue, their experiences with it, and the reasons that underlie their particular way of thinking. Since some information was sensitive, for example issues of sexual abuse, focus group was suitable for examining these issues and get information from this very sensitive population. Laws, Marcus, Jones and Harper (2013) argue that, focus groups are frequently used to allow marginalised groups in society, such as minorities and girls the chance to express their needs and difficulties. Hence, this study afforded girls the opportunity to freely express their feelings concerning their space, geography and gendered experience in the school setup. Focus groups' open answer structure gave the researcher the chance to collect extensive and in-depth amounts of data in the participants' own words. Deeper levels of meaning were achieved, significant linkages were discovered, and minute differences in expression or meaning were noted. Focus groups give participants the chance to respond to and expand upon other group members' responses. Green (2010) opines that, due to the group's synergistic effect, information or concepts that might not have been discovered through individual interviews may emerge.

Because of its versatility, focus group interviews allow for a lot of response variety, according to Fontana and Frey (2005). This is owing to the notion that participants are valuable sources of information about themselves and the issues that concern them, and that they can articulate their thoughts, feelings, and opinions clearly. Due to the time constraints that Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003, p. 288) mention, focus group interviews was ideal for both the participants and the researcher due to its cost-effectiveness in giving a large volume of data in a short period. The researcher employed four focus group interviews, each with six participants, for a total of 24 participants who took part in focus group interviews. There were telephonic or personal invitations to the participants. When sending the invitations, clear explanations were given about the purpose of the interview, assuring participants of the data's privacy and secrecy, as well as the anonymity of their involvement. The chosen individuals were asked to choose a convenient time and day, which was agreed upon by all participants and the researcher. Permission to record audio of e the focus group interviews was sought from guardians and school authorities. Impulsive, unstructured, natural and open conversations were encouraged by the researcher to the participants. Thus, questions were directed at each other and responses given according to comments made. Taking

into consideration issues of group dynamics, an opportunity was afforded to each participant to answer the questions and issues raised.

Reference was made to the interview schedule during the focus group interview sessions. The researcher noted that the children actually encouraged each other to open up on their experiences. One child would relate their experiences which encouraged another to pick up from where he/she left off, thereby affording the researcher a wide view of the issues at hand. The advantage was that information that would have been lost when individual interviews were carried out, was recovered. Participants were afforded an opportunity to listen to the recorded interview sessions by the researcher for them to add any additional comments.

In order for the researcher to derive maximum value from focus groups, he devised an interview guide to address most of the pertinent issues about space, geography and gendered experiences of children in the high schools in Eswatini. As mentioned, semi-structured focus group interviewing was used in this study. The researcher-interviewer devised an interview guide that covered a wide range of topics related to space, geography, and gendered experiences in the schooling environment. Probing questions were asked to address these themes and also a follow up questions to dig and find out the reality of the perceptions, feelings, views and opinions of participants about their gendered experiences in the schooling environment.

4.6.2 Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were employed by the researcher to acquire data from the study's chosen sample. An individual interview, according to Jamshed (2014), is an oral exchange of information between two people in which one person collects information from the other (Jamshed, 2014). An interview, according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016), is a conversation between two or more people (the one asking and the other answering). In other words, the interviewer poses questions to the interviewee in order to gather information.

Interviewing was used to gather data so as to:

- Gain clarification on unclear statements;
- Allow examination and investigation of topics.

To bring about an in-depth experiential account of the spaces, geographies and gendered experiences of children in the school spaces in Eswatini high schools was tackled using the individual interviews. The individual interviews were chosen guided by Leavy (2017), who postulates that interviews use conversation as a learning tool and this was found by the researcher to be more appropriate for the study. Furthermore, people as social beings are naturally conversant, which afforded the researcher the opportunity to gather information from the respondents in natural conversations. Individual interviewing was used by the researcher as a data collecting instrument. Because the study expected to hear a multiplicity of stories regarding the children's spaces, geographies, and gendered experiences, individual interviews were more acceptable in this study. The researcher was interested in learning more about these variations. Participants may have been reluctant to share specific details of their experiences in front of others because some issues were sensitive hence, individual interviewees were more appropriate (Saunders et al., (2016).

The possibility that the stories being told could taint the experiences of other participants was diminished by undertaking individual interviews. With individual interviews, the researcher was able to better grasp what was being said by interpreting nonverbal cues such as body language, eye contact, and facial expressions. In order to achieve this, it enabled the researcher to delve into and examine obscure interpretations of the learners' space, geographies, and gendered experiences (Berg, 2009). One participant was interviewed per research site. The researcher chose a convenient, and serene place within the schools for the individual interviews. The individual interviews took no less than an hour at each site with the participants. An affirmation is given by Neuman (2014), that interviewing individuals allows them to speak what is on their minds and to give themselves to a profound investigation, especially when it comes to personal accounts of their feelings together with experiences. The researcher observed that those learners who participated in the interviews discussed how they interpreted the world in which they lived, and gave expression to their gendered experiences and their daily experiences within the school spaces. They feely gave their viewpoints regarding their situations, as posited by Alamri (2019). Social constructionism states that learners exist with each other in school spaces of conversational narratives. They understand themselves and others through relaying their own stories of gendered experiences through self-descriptions (Hart, 1995).

The following are the situations under which a qualitative research interview takes occur, according to Saunders et al., (2016):

- When a study focuses on the participants' interpretations of specific phenomena; Where individual perceptions are to be studied prospectively;
- When individual historical explanations of how a certain phenomenon originated, such as a new shift system, are necessary;
- Where exploratory work is required before a quantitative study can be carried out, and
- When a quantitative study is completed and qualitative data is necessary to validate certain measures or to clarify and demonstrate the meaning of the results.

The interviewer gathered extensive material on the subject of children's gendered experiences. Standardised, open-ended, semi-structured, and structured interviews are used in educational research. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule by the researcher. The semi-structured interviews, according to Saunders et al., (2016) and Neuman (2014), were best for the exploratory, explanatory, and evaluative aims of the study. This study employed semi-structured interviews to learn about the reasons for school children's gendered experiences in the school spaces, as well as their thoughts and attitudes regarding those experiences. The ability to probe participants also led the researcher into unanticipated areas of study that enriched the study. In line with Saunders et al., (2016), the semi-structured interviews proved to be more popular with the children as the topic seemed to be of interest to them, which made them to freely proffer information about their gendered experiences in the school learning environment.

The researcher chose interviewing as a data collection method for this study because the information needed should be based on emotions, experiences, and sentiments in order to gain a thorough knowledge. Subjectivity and prejudice on the side of the interviewer is a key disadvantage of interviews as a data collection tool, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2013). However, knowing that predetermined opinions and views of the world by the researcher can lead to biased results, the researcher took it upon himself to examine his own perspectives about gender roles and experiences that would have prejudiced the study. In this way, the researcher was able to realise instances when prejudices creeped into the interview and quickly

reverted to neutrality. The interview approach was also chosen by the researcher since it provided essential information not only in terms of the participants' words, but also in terms of non-verbal communication, such as tone of voice and facial expressions. Since the study was framed on the theory of Social Constructionism which put emphasis on active participation of participants to construct knowledge, participants were free to speak more about their daily gendered experiences within the school spaces. This resulted in more detailed and nuanced interpretations of the acquired data.

4.6.3 Pilot Interviews

A pilot study was conducted to determine the adequacy and suitability of the methodology, sample, instruments, and analysis before a large-scale, complete study was commissioned (Leavy, 2017). This assertion by Leavy (2017) resonates with Saunders et al., (2016) who posited that it is vital to initially pilot the interview schedule with some participants before the actual data collection is done. The use of the pilot study by the researcher helped the study by giving allowance to the researcher to establish if the interview schedule was capable of answering the research questions, whether the questions were clear and understandable, and if any changes to the interview schedule were required. Prior to the interview sessions with the selected participants, two pilot focus group interviews and two pilot individual interviews were done. Students in Form Five from two different schools were among those chosen. They offered helpful tips on how to maintain the flow of information and ask pertinent follow-up questions. The original interview guide was piloted and the researcher noted the ensuring issues that needed attention. Chief amongst the issues was the order of interview guide questions which needed to be reshuffled in order to give logical and consistent sequencing of the interview. The researcher was also given a clue as to the markers that the potential participants would make, which made him design more appropriate probing questions.

Lim (2017, p. 1076) agreed that in qualitative research, the pilot test allows the researcher to use the actual qualitative interviews to fine tune his research instruments to perfection, and which increases their reliability and vigor. By piloting or making a test with a selected few people, the researcher was able to establish the clarity levels of the research instrument, and identify and correct any imperfections (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003, p. 52). The removal of unclear

questions and production of useful feedback on how the interview would be structured were all indicated in the pilot test. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2009, p. 148) and De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011, p. 237) summarised the purpose of the pilot study that was carried out by the researcher as follows:

- The researcher discovered likely faults in the process of measurement which included unclear instructions and insufficient time limits;
- During the course of the pilot study, unclearly framed questions were identified and amendments made to them for the purposes of removing ambiguities.
- Non-verbal behaviour displayed by participants were noted by the researcher, which gave him the indication of discomfort or ambiguous wording of the questions (Neuman, 2014).

4.7 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2013, p. 738), refers to accounting, organising, and explaining data. In other words, it is how the researcher makes sense of the data in line with how participants define the situation, taking note of patterns, categories and themes. Thematic analysis was used in this study. Braun and Clarke (2006) say that thematic analysis is a method that is systematic, utilised to classify, analyse and report data in a detailed manner with minimal organisation. It is applied to classify data and display themes (patterns) that are connected to it. It presents the information in great depth and uses interpretations to discuss a variety of topics. Thematic analysis is considered the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover using interpretations. In this study, it was important to get opinions and feelings about the space, geography and gendered experiences of learners within high school set up and interpret those opinions and feelings. Thematic analysis provides a systematic element to data analysis. It allowed the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole content. This added precision and intricacy and strengthened the overall meaning of the research. Qualitative research requires understanding and collecting diverse aspects of data.

In order to get a wide and complete picture of children's space, geography and gendered experiences within school environments, themes fitted more in this study than short narratives. Tracy (2013) says that, thematic analysis gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely and is flexible for many different types of texts. As opposed to narrative

analysis that insists on maintaining the integrity of the text being utilised as data and do not break it down into meaning units, thematic analysis goes beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas (Saldaña, 2016). The codes produced for concepts or themes are then applied to or connected to raw data as summary markers for further analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or subjects within a data collection, checking for code co-occurrence, or visually presenting code associations. By employing thematic analysis, it was possible to compare the various conceptions and viewpoints of the learners with the data that had been collected in various contexts throughout the research. All possibilities for interpretation are possible. Thematic analysis allowed researcher to reach data saturation with much smaller sample numbers, even if they are useful for condensing enormous data sets into a manageable set of common themes (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016).

What makes thematic analysis popular is its flexibility and accessibility to the researcher and that it requires no pre-requisite skills to conduct thematic analysis. As opposed to discourse analysis that requires significant linguistic skills to understand language patterns, the technique utilised in this research study was concerned with the identification of themes. There are no prior linguistic skills required in using thematic analysis. The research questions that are suitable for utilising thematic analysis technique involve questions on people's lived experiences, perceptions and understandings of the research phenomenon (Braun & Clarke, 2014).

The researcher was actively involved in collecting the data using semi-structured focus group interviews and individual interviews as primary instruments in data collection. What produced the analysis and the process of making sense of data, was the researcher's subjective knowledge and understanding, as highlighted by Hemming, Teague, Crowe and Levine (2016). The researcher listened to the voice recordings many times and read the documents as a way of understanding the issues and concepts that were surfacing. He transcribed the interviews as he listened repeatedly to the voice recordings. This engagement with data helped the researcher to absorb the data and make meaningful sense of the meanings and patterns that came up. It was reading these written categories, that themes emerged and were organised and connected to the study.

4.8 Establishing Trustworthiness in the Study

The trustworthiness criterion as a means to evaluate qualitative research was founded by Lincoln and Guba (1985). These authors asserted that it did not make sense to use the same criteria to judge quantitative research with qualitative research since "the epistemological underpinnings for both approaches differ" (Lemon and Hayes, 2020, p. 605). Quality criteria that are used in quantitative research such as objectivity, reliability, internal validity and generalisability, are unsuitable to judge qualitative research. The purpose of trustworthiness in qualitative research, according to Elo, Kaariainen, Kanste, and Polkki (2014, p. 2), is to promote the assumption that the study's findings are "worth drawing attention." 'Trustworthiness' as a term used in qualitative research, is composed of the following aspects: credibility (instead of internal validity), transferability (a form of external validity/generalisability), dependability (relates to reliability), and conformability (instead of objectivity/presentation). These concepts are derived from Hadi and Closs (2015) and the researcher describes next how they were used in the study to implement trustworthiness.

Credibility deals with the question of congruence of the research findings with reality. The purpose of credibility is to build confidence so that "the results are true, believable and credible" (Hadi & Closs, 2015, p. 3), from the participants' perspective. The use of well-established research methods also determines credibility. The researcher employed two methods of data collection in this study: four focus group semi-structured interviews and four individual semi-structured interviews were used to elicit data. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) suggest that data gathering methods and type of questioning can be modeled on other research that has been successful to increase its effectiveness and hence credibility. This research was modelled around the previous studies that were discussed in the literature review. Ethics is an aspect of credibility. The participation of those approached was voluntary and participants had the right to withdraw from the research. Details about the ethical considerations observed in this study were discussed in Section 4.13. Hadi and Closs (2015) further suggest there should be prolonged and varied engagement with each given setting. The researcher in all the interviews spent an average of over an hour per site to engage with the participants. This was considered enough time to probe issues at hand as way of achieving trustworthiness of the study. Iterative questioning in the interview itself establishes credibility, with probing, prompting and seeking clarification that allows the researcher to elicit more information and also locate discrepancies in participants' responses. This is the process the

researcher conducted during the interviews.

The researcher also gave the interview questions and the semi-structured focus group discussion questions to two professionals in the field of study, to verify the questions and whether they met the stated objectives. Both are holders of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) qualifications in the education sector. The first Doctor has a PhD in educational management, with over twenty-five years of lecturing experience at a local university, and the second has twenty years of lecturing experience in philosophy at another local university. Both these lecturers went through the whole semi-structured interview guide and all the focus group questions. They made their suggestions, which were then considered by the researcher, with some being incorporated, and others discarded after consultations with the supervisor. These experts therefore improved the trustworthiness of the study. Another way of establishing trustworthiness was through the use of preceding, similar research on the topic. The researcher relied on reviewing literature in the construction of interview questions.

The researcher also established credibility by piloting the interview guide questions and feedback was requested from the participants in the pilot study to determine the suitability of the interview questions. Also, the responses from participants were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Accuracy for the transcripts was checked, and after transcribing the interviews, where clarity is required, the researcher reverted to participants either in person or telephonically. Using triangulation, this study narrowed the validity and reliability gap. Focus group interviewing and individual interviewing were used. This is because gathering data from different sources allowed the researcher to determine whether the results were consistent. Despite the fact that diverse methods were utilized to gather data for the study, the data's consistency should reflect the validity and reliability of the data collection tools. As a result, the researcher wanted to see if the data from the interview guide and the focus group discussions worked together, establishing provisional trustworthiness. Validity is usually determined by asking a series of questions. As a result, participants were asked a series of questions in order to elicit the best possible responses to the research questions.

Bush (2007) discussed eternal validity of the findings, which is the generalisability of the findings,

and refers to the extent to which research findings may be generalised to a wider population or to contexts that are similar. The emphasis is on generalisability (Lemon and Hayes, 2020, p. 605). It is worth noting that for generalisations to be valid, there should be very high probability that another researcher using the same approach can replicate the findings of the study. However, this cannot be claimed for the study on gendered experiences that was carried out. This research was small scale, conducted with twenty-four learners from four high schools in the Hhohho region in Eswatini, and it therefore cannot claim that similar data could be elicited at other high schools. The sample size was small, to dovetail with the law of large numbers, which posits that the larger the sample size, the smaller the sampling error (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016).

Reliability is another expectation by positivists. This refers to how consistent results can be achieved in the same situation with the same methodology and participants. This is not applicable in qualitative research; as social researchers proclaim that phenomena of social nature are subject to change. The researcher, by reporting in detail the process employed in the study, suggests that this could address the dependability issue (Neuman, 2014). In order to guarantee the reasonableness and traceability of the research process and document it reflexively, care was taken by giving a thorough and comprehensive account of the process as this would make it more accessible to other researchers who may wish to replicate the study. The researcher can argue that all aspects of the methodology were described so that the reader could understand the employed methodological aspects.

Confirmability as a feature focuses on the objectivity of the phenomenon under investigation and addresses whether the findings and interpretations of the study emanates from the participants' lived experiences and notions, and not from the researcher's biases, as advocated by Lemon and Hayes (2020). Researcher bias is inevitable since humans design questionnaires and other methods of exploration. The researcher made sure that the questions given to participants were clear and precise, for them to respond appropriately. According to Ramson (2015), objectivity is a methodological concern that is gained through maximising validity. Participants were encouraged to speak their lived realities without fear. They were given time to express their thoughts without any undue interference from the researcher. In qualitative research, however, 'understanding' is the term that is more appropriate than 'validity'. Since researchers form an important part of the

research context, they cannot claim complete objectivity. Ramson (2015, p. 56) points out that the perspectives of participants are as valid as the researcher's, "and it is the role of the researcher to discover and understand these rather than assume it". The aim for such a study is acuteness rather than quantity of understating. The depth, honesty, richness and the scope of the data achieved can establish validity. Therefore, the inferences drawn from the data as well as the meaning subjects give to data, and the honesty of the researcher becomes a factor of primary importance. The researcher stated upfront his own perspective and type of approach to the study.

4.9 Language of Choice

The language that was used in the interview process was clear and precise. It was ensured that the targeted high school participants understood the communication's whole message rather than just portions of it. Where technical or acronyms were deemed necessary, clear definitions were given, even if terms seemed self-explanatory. The researcher used formal English language during data collection, but allowed the participants in interviews and focus group discussions to use their mother tongue (SiSwati) to explain in detail issues they could not correctly express in English. Interpretations to these SiSwati sentences were given. Direct language was used to the participants instead of a more impersonal manner. The researcher identified the important emotions and interests of the participants as they related to the research**.** Drawing from a social constructionism viewpoint, language is not only a way to connect people, but people live in language (Gergen and Gergen, 1991). As such, learners through language, socially construct their gendered school reality experiences, using agreed, established and shared meanings (Berger and Luckman, 1996). Hence, the learners' beliefs about their space and gendered experiences within school spaces are social inventions.

4.10 Number of Visits

There were three visits per research site. There was one for the focus group and two for individual interviews. Table 4.1 shows how the visits were carried out. A total of 12 visits occurred to make sure that data was effectively collected. An advance visit was made at all sites to arrange for the final visit. Interviews were semi-structured. An interview guide was provided to the interviewees, emphasising the need to elicit their views and perceptions on their spaces and lived gendered experiences in the school environment.

Table 4.1: Research sites visited and their participants

Site	Focus Group	Individual interview
Site A (School A)	Lee, Lily and Leah (females Asher, Ayden and Adam (Males)	Leah
Site B (School B)	Banele, Bruce and Bheka (males) Khanyi, Khetsiwe, and Hlengiwe (females)	Hlengiwe
Site C (School C)	Celiwe, Gabi and Gugu (females) Jabu, Linda and Lunga (males)	Lunga
Site D (School D)	Lwazi, Musa and Nathi (males) Ndumo, Buhle and Owethu (females	Nathi

Table 4.1 shows the sites and names of participants that were used. These are pseudonyms to cater for confidentiality of participants. The researcher had a minimum of an hour in both interviews to discuss the issues, as guided by the interview guide. There were two interview dates for each individual, because of the complications of having these individuals for long periods in one sitting. It was a little easier to organise focus group interviews than individual interviews.

4.11 Feedback to Participants after the Research

Providing information about research findings to the people who make it possible is good practice, and in this case, the participants were the school children. The researcher provided a summary report to participants of key findings. This was done because of the promise made as part of the consent process. Even if the researcher had not promised to report back, many of the

participants may be eager to know what happens as a result of the research in which they have participated. Otherwise, they could feel that their information disappeared into a 'black hole'. Information was tailored to provide characteristics of the sample. The researcher struck a delicate balance where the provided information is deemed subjectively to be just enough to elicit interest by avoiding giving too little or too much. Also, the researcher avoided academic jargon to suit the level of literacy of the participants.

4.12 Data Storage

The researcher ensured the safety, security and integrity of the research data collected and generated. The research data was stored in a flash drive with a strong password and two back-up copies made and stored in two different locations, accessible to the researcher only. As for audio or video tapes, the researcher undertook to make sure they were securely stored in a lockable locker. Only the research supervisors will have unfettered access to the stored data at any time they need it. The generated data will be stored in the University of KwaZulu-Natal School of Education and Development storeroom for the period of five years, after which the data will be destroyed. The interview schedules will then be shredded. Information from the digital recorders and cameras will be erased.

4.13 Negotiating Access to the Research Sites

According to Fobosi (2019), accessing the field for research purposes begins with negotiating and engaging with the gatekeepers. The inability to gain access in the field can hinder qualitative researchers from carrying out research. Researchers are put under pressure to live up to the required standards when they gain access in the field and prove that they have done so. The first step taken by the researcher was that of gaining access to the informants through negotiations until rapport was reached. According to Azungah (2019, p. 4), the most important initial task for the researcher is the process of "negotiating with gatekeepers" for permission into the school environment in order to gain access of the children. Cunliffe and Alcadipani (2016, p. 3) defined access as "getting permission to get into the organisation to carry out research and building relationships to get access to people and information within the organisation." The researcher in a study such as this, will encounter a plethora of gatekeepers such as security guards manning the school premises, receptionists and secretaries, who may attempt to prevent him from accessing responsible

authorities such as school administrators, principals and the children. The researcher here politely explained the purpose of the requests and showed the gatekeepers the authorisation from the Ministry of Education. The researcher requested authorisation from the Ministry of Education before determining the research site and selecting the participants. The Director of Education was hand-delivered a letter requesting authorisation. A concise proposal was used to request admittance to research sites in the form of a letter. This provided a true reflection on the research's main goal. The research title, research problem and objectives, the significance of the investigation, and the research tools that would be employed in the study were all addressed in the letter.

4. 14 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics, according to Ketefian (2015), is the type of agreement a researcher makes with his or her research participants. Following ethical norms in research is important for a variety of reasons. First, research goals such as knowledge, truth, and error avoidance are aided by standards (Cacciattolo, 2015). For example, prohibiting the creation, manipulation, or misrepresentation of research data promotes the truth and reduces the danger of error. Second, because research typically necessitates a great deal of collaboration and coordination among many different people from many professions and institutions, ethical norms promote attributes such as trust, responsibility, mutual respect, and fairness, which are essential to collaborative work. Third, several ethical rules assist in ensuring that the researcher is held accountable to the general public. This was accomplished through the Ministry of Education's clearance and the delivery of copies of the completed study to participants via principals of consenting schools, ensuring that any questions regarding the study's credibility were thoroughly explored.

Fourth, ethical research practices help to increase public support for research (Resnik, 2015). To guarantee transparency and informed consent, school officials, parents, and guardians were all told about the study's nature and goal. Following the researcher's declaration of intent in any study, there may be widespread support from the public and society at large. Finally, many research norms promote a number of other essential moral and social values, including social responsibility, human rights, animal care, legal compliance, and health and safety. Ethical flaws in research can have serious consequences for human and animal subjects, students, and the general public (Friis, 2017). According to Leavy (2017), citing Bell, the researcher had to “seek the consent of the

Ministry of Education and Training, minors' parents and guardians and school administrations where the research was to be conducted. Furthermore, the researcher must agree with them on the usage of the data as well as how the analysis will be presented and disseminated.

Ethical guidelines in terms of data collection, data processing, and dissemination of findings were carefully followed for this study. In this case, the researcher personally called the Director of Education to obtain his consent to distribute the research instruments to the selected schools. The request was approved (see Appendix 2). Before conducting the study, the researcher obtained informed consent from the guardians and parents, as advised by Kaewkungwal (2019). He then asked for informed consent from the parents/guardians via a letter, as supported by Morrow (2016). The researcher did this to try and avoid doing any harm, and to ensure parents and guardians were aware of their children's activities and movements. Each participant was provided adequate information about the research's goals, methodology, and how the data would be used. The University of KwaZulu Natal ethical clearance committee approved the study by giving out an ethical clearance. The ethical approval demonstrated that the researcher had adhered to the accepted ethical standards of genuine research study.

The information from the participants was regarded as confidential and anonymity was assured. Longhurst (2016) puts across the value of protecting participants' confidentiality and highlighted the complexity of this in group discussions. The participants were asked to treat all discussions as confidential. Focus group discussions were held following Longhurst's recommendations of asking participants to treat one another's viewpoints and narratives as confidential. The study's findings would be used purely for academic purposes, and the taped interviews and recorded transcripts would be destroyed at some point in the future, according to the participants. The researcher also highlighted Neuman's (2014) suggestion that all participants be given the option to remain anonymous as a prerequisite for ethical research in practice. This was accomplished by using pseudonyms to assure anonymity and that the participants were not subjected to any wrongdoing. When the research was in draft form, all interviewees had the option to double-check statements.

According to Rubin and Rubin (2011), rapport has found a home in the dynamic and person-centered area where the institutional objective and activity of acquiring information interacts with the relational work required of the interviewer and interviewee. Conversational ease, mutual comfort and feeling connected, constitutes rapport. Gremler and Gwinner (2008) declare that rapport is the chemistry and 'being in tune' between the interviewer and interviewee. Belle (2007:107) suggests that "human and social behaviour must be understood from the "insider's perspective". The researcher looked at focusing and establishing cordial and working relationships with the participants to augment the credibility of the research. The researcher established rapport by showing highly attentive behaviour, friendly interaction, asking questions, showing honesty, empathy and civility to the respondents. Trust has to be developed together with reciprocal relationships with the participants by the researcher so as to "ensure them of the privacy and secrecy of their responses to allow fruitful interaction" (Sidhu, 2001, p.87).

4.15 Conclusion

The chapter provided an overview of the methodological paradigm in keeping with the study's goal, which was to explore the space, geography, and gendered experiences of students in four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. It included information about the researcher's positionality, the study's research methodology and design. The researcher described the sampling procedures and sample size. The researcher had confidence in children's competencies as co-researchers and in their ability to communicate their opinions on matters influencing their space, geography, and gendered experiences within the school spaces. This perception was mirrored in the methods of data generation employed to address the study's research topics. This chapter also discussed the process of ensuring trustworthiness and data analysis. It covered the ethical considerations that the researcher adhered to during the empirical investigation. The findings of the research study were presented and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

NEGOTIATIONS OF SCHOOL GENDERED SPACES AND CHILDREN GEOGRAPHIES

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher gave an explanation of the narrative qualitative research paradigm to collect data to understand spaces, geographies and gendered experiences of children in four selected high schools in Eswatini. Key issues such as qualitative research approach, data generation instruments, data processing and ethical considerations were discussed. In this chapter, data generated from individual and focus group interviews for the study, analysis of the data and the discussion of the findings are presented. For the purposes of this study, twenty-four learners were approached to be participants: their responses in the semi-structured interviews with regard to their space, geographies and gendered experiences are engaged with in this chapter. The discussions are organised around themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data and supported by literature.

This chapter also responds to the critical questions asked in this study. In order to gain relevant information, the major questions that the researcher used to obtain the relevant data in interviews were:

- What are the gendered spaces and places of boys and girls within the schools and practices in the coeducational context of four high schools in the Hhohho region?
- What role do schools in Eswatini play a patriarchal agents of gender socialisation?
- How do children exercise agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools?
- How can schools be turned into gender responsive environments?

The data was presented in response to these questions. . The biographical information of the participants and the research sites is outlined before the presentation and analysis of data.

5.2 Description of participants' information

It is worth noting that the participants in this study were form five learners between the ages of 16-17 years. These participants were attending four urban high schools in the Hhohho region in Eswatini. In an effort to make fluent the presentation and take great consideration to the issue of confidentiality, the four high schools were named Site A, B, C and D, respectively. Also worth noting is the fact that pseudonyms were used for ethical reasons and anonymity purposes to participants. They were further differentiated according to their gender.

Table 5.1 shows the data of the participants, dates and duration of the interviews. It is vital to reiterate that these participants were currently students at the time of the interviews, as this is an important influence on how they articulated their responses.

Table 5.1: Information of participants and duration of interviews

Research Sites	Names of participants	Gender	Focus group interviews Frequency and Duration		Individual interviews Frequency and duration
Site A	Lee, Lily and Leah Asher, Ayden and Adam	Females Males	Once 95 minutes		Twice 80 minutes
Site B	Banele, Bruce and Bheka Khanyi, Khetsiwe, and Hlengiwe	Males Females	Once 90 minutes		Twice 75 minutes
Site C	Celiwe, Gabi and Gugu Jabu, Linda and Lunga	Females Males	Once 90 minutes		Twice 75 minutes

Site D	Lwazi, Musa and Nathi Ndumo, Buhle and Owethu	Males Females	Once 93 minutes		Twice 78 minutes

5.3 Discussion of data

With the help of the appropriate literature, the findings were analysed and interpreted in connection to the research objectives and crucial research questions. In the analysis, appropriate verbatim quotations, which were taken from the raw data, were used to support the analysis and interpretations. Themes that emanated from the first critical question were physical spaces, inside spaces gendered experiences of outside school space: spatial distance /travelling space, gender and positionality, positionality and learning space, curriculum and gender spaces, children's geographies in subject choices and gender dynamics in extra mural curriculum. Those from the second critical question were teachers' understanding of gendered spaces, perceptions of community members and parents. The third critical question had negotiations of space: students' experiences of participation in decision-making and gender dimensions of guidance and counselling. Covered in the last critical question were gendered spaces: students' experiences of the physical school spaces, gendered spaces: experiences of students' academic school spaces, gendered spaces: students' experiences of the social school spaces as its themes. These will be covered in detail in the sections that follow.

In response to the first critical question, the following themes were generated from the data. This chapter reports the research findings. Empirical data generated by the focus group discussions, individual interviews and non-participant observations are used to support claims made in respect of findings. The findings are linked to literature, theory and debate in the field. The chapter presents data in form of verbatim data excerpts.

5.4 Gendered spaces and places of boys and girls: A case of four high schools in Hhohho Region in Eswatini

The following themes and sub themes were generated from the data: physical spaces with inside and outside spaces as sub-themes, gender positionality with positionality and learning as a sub-theme and curriculum and gender spaces with children's geographies in subject choices and gender dynamics in extra mural curriculum as sub-themes.

5.4.1. Physical Spaces

The physical spaces had the inside and outside spaces as its sub-themes. These will be presented below as they emerged from the data.

5.4.1.1 Inside Spaces

The study found out that boys were comfortable with the cleanliness of their bathrooms. The bathrooms/toilets, however, did not cater for transgender learners. This made it difficult for them since the bathrooms catered only for boys and girls. It was also revealed that girls were not happy with their bathrooms, since they lacked some basic things for their comfortable use. Amenities like toilet paper and she bins were not found. The girls complained strongly that their toilets were not hygienic, which discouraged them from using them, especially during their menstrual periods. This led to some girls to absent themselves from school during their menstrual periods as a way to avoid using the dirty bathrooms. Some bathrooms had no privacy, which made it more uncomfortable to use, especially for girls.

In responding to the question whether the designs and maintenance/functionality of ablution facilities are the same for both boys and girls, Hlengiwe (individual interview) from site B stated:

> *Something must be done because the ablution facilities were built in such a way that someone can see us from outside. It's known that peeing and relieving yourself are a private affair. We need our privacy when in these private spaces. Some guys even want to talk to you when they find you in. It is impolite to greet someone while relieving themselves.*

She suggests that the design of the bathrooms/toilets exposes the learners when they are using them. Female-friendly bathrooms have been defined as gender-separate spaces with security, privacy, illumination, water, soap, and a culturally acceptable method of menstrual waste disposal.

Such bathrooms must contain attributes wanted in all bathrooms and be sensitive to gendered needs. In the school context, a lack of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities is regarded as a contributor to higher rates of repetition and dropout among girls (Ingrey, 2013). This reveals that this school was a single sex school where issues of privacy could not have been of importance before it switched to a co-educational school. Hlengiwe affirms that privacy is important when using these spaces, to the extent that even talking to each other while inside is impolite. Burton and Leoschut (2013) notes this idea by claiming that for children, privacy is important not just as a requirement for toilet use, but a personal space. Ingrey (2013, p. 47) agrees that "the public binary bathroom is a form of closet." She further alludes that bathroom/washroom confines and conceals its users. The bathroom space separates its occupants from the environment.

There are other important aspects that were raised concerning the design and maintenance of bathrooms and provision of water in school spaces. Celiwe at site C (focus group) claimed:

> *Girls' bathrooms are filthy and untidy. That is one place that should be clean to avoid contamination. We use that space more during our menstrual period, as such we need them neat. We absent ourselves during menstruation to avoid dirty bathrooms. Water is available which is a must for girls for hygiene purposes. For boys, they can do with little water but still it is needed. Girls need toilet paper more than boys.*

This expression by Celiwe shows that the bathrooms' spaces have to be kept clean so as to avoid the spread of diseases. Clean bathrooms/toilets are a necessity more especially to girls, who go through menstrual cycle. Girls tend to use the bathrooms/toilets more than the boys, which suggests that their bathrooms/toilets have to be well maintained. This means that dirty bathrooms/toilets can cause contamination, and if they are not cleaned, as suggested by the Celiwe, girls may absent themselves during menstruation to avoid dirty bathrooms. Girls, it seems, have a distinct need for sanitation, more so than boys. This is in support with Muito (2004), in that that the unavailability of latrines and clean bathrooms disturbs the school attendance of girls. Schmitt, Clatworthy, Ogello and Sommer (2018) agree that access to clean, comfortable and private toilets for girls in schools around the world remains a critical challenge. They went on to say generally, girls frequently use toilets more and for longer periods than boys, especially when they are

managing their monthly menstruation. Clean water in the school spaces should be present since there can never be cleanliness without clean water. Ingrey (2013, p. 39) argues that "the bathroom is a space dedicated to hygiene."

Buhle (focus group) from site D, averred:

> *Girls need the bathroom more than boys to clean their bodies, they need more water than boys and more concealed bathroom spaces with locks, especially during the menstruation and some vaginal bleeding, so that when they leave the bathroom, nothing suspicious can be seen, especially by boys. Design and good quality of ablution facilities is important here.*

Drawing from the comments on the inside spaces of children's ablution facilities and the need for clean water, these spaces are gendered. It suggests that the girls' bathrooms need more security by having locks. Toilets at school are a fundamental right, not a privilege, regardless of a child's situation or where they reside. Maintaining clean, well-kept restrooms in schools shows respect for students and their wellbeing while also assisting them in their academic life. Since they have one less worry when using the restroom at school, students are better able to concentrate and pay attention in class. The design of the ablution facilities is important, since the privacy of users is vital. Girls require more privacy compared to boys, especially during menstrual periods. The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) stipulates that there should be well-designed and well-maintained infrastructure in educational establishments that are gender sensitive, with functioning hygiene facilities. Schmitt et al. (2018) note that girls compared to boys have increased sanitation requirements and water, linked to conditions such as vaginal bleeding and menstruation. Cavanagh (2010) says that, upon examination, the physical structure of facilities and the practices of hygiene mean that the bathroom/toilet space is in some cases constructed upon a religious principle: cleansing of the masses in order to submit to a higher order. The bathroom and a religious operation both work to individualise bodies, to divide them through the toilet cubicle and then to direct them to cleanse the body in the sight of others as witnesses. As captured above, Buhle elaborated:

> *Design and good quality of toilets is important here. Actually, in comparison to boys, girls' ablution facilities need to be smarter than boys because of increased risk of contamination. Attendance can be greatly affected if water supplies and cleanliness are not attended to for us girls.*

This suggests that designs for ablution facilities are important, in concealing the users. The quality in terms of smartness of the girls' ablution facilities should be better than the ones for boys, due to increased risk of contamination. Dreibelbis, Freeman, Greene, and Saboori (2013) feel that the quality of primary and secondary school bathrooms, in terms of cleanliness and maintenance, is more important than the quantity, as indicated by studies from Kenya.

According to the Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy (2011), MOET is to carry out a phased plan in order to upgrade, renovate and build new facilities and spaces that are gender sensitive, together with the provision of water and sanitation facilities, to improve children's experiences in these educational spaces**.** However, the issue raised by the participant makes bathroom spaces a negative for transgender students. The Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy (2011) guarantees equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities for all Emaswati students. It further guarantees protection of citizens from all forms of discrimination and stigma. This includes discrimination based on culture, gender faith and gender. Schools in Eswatini, on the other hand, handle transgender learners in a way that is consistent with their biological sex solely, according to the study's findings. Asher from site A said:

> *From my experiences, the boys' ablution facilities are well-maintained; however, they do not cater for transgender students, making them unsafe spaces for them. They are subjected to ridicule and harassment.*

According to Ahlgrim (2016), in the United States, the Trump administration revoked a letter from the Education Department urging schools to treat transgender students according to their gender identification rather than their biological sex, rendering toilets unsuitable for them. This is because, according to Robbins and Helfenbein (2016), gender is perceived as a binary in the United States, with only female and male as different categories of identification.

The data from this theme revealed that the inside spaces within the school are gendered. This supports the idea that spaces are gendered when they are built for and associated with a specific gender (Alzeer, 2016; Savard, 2016). The responses of the participants back up the idea that gendered settings are areas where uniquely boys and girls behaviours occur. Indeed, bathrooms and or toilets and clean drinking water within schools were found to be deeply gendered. Drawing from the comments on the inside spaces of children's ablution facilities; the spaces are gendered.

It suggests that the girls' bathrooms need more security by having locks. The design of the ablution facilities is important, since the privacy of users is vital. Girls need more privacy than boys do.

5.4.1.2 Gendered experiences of outside school space: spatial distance/travelling space

In responding to the question of whether the school was close enough for all school age boys and girls to walk to, the research found that the majority of participants were happy with the distance they travelled to and from school. The learners felt safe to travel to and from school. The availability of transport made it safe for the learners, hence the chances of them being hurt were minimal. However, the study revealed that the spaces outside the school were more difficult for girls. They faced sexual harassment both from the boys and teachers. They found it difficult to fight this sexual harassment by virtue of them being physically weaker than boys.

Bruce (focus group) from site B stated:

> *The schools were both accessible and students felt safe especially because of the availability of good road infrastructure and transport availability*.

To substantiate what Bruce said Nathi (individual interview) from site D said:

> *We feel safe to and from school because of the availability of transport. Our school is in town, so we quickly get to the bus rank to get transport back home. So, yes chances of getting mugged are few though it can sometimes happen.*

From the responses given, it is clear that transport is readily available for students to be taken to and from school. Public transport plays an important role in minimising the cost of congestion and maximising economic productivity. Children's learning time is not wasted because of delays. Because of the effectiveness of the public transportation system, students' safety while travelling to and from school is ensured. This gives the children a sense of safe spaces outside the school. The Swaziland Education Sector Policy (2011) says that the school or the infrastructure should be located close to the learner to facilitate the learners' regular entry. Linden and Burde (2008) see that children's enrolment occurs smoothly when a school was not found in their village and coupled with increased distances, girls' enrolment went more quickly than boys. Building of schools in almost all inhabited areas that sometimes do not deserve to have, has the impact of overcoming barriers related to distance to students especially girls.

Leah (individual interview) from site A reported:

> *We safe from bullying within the school because if you are found to be a bully, you will get punished. However, when we leave the school premises, that is where we have challenges with boys and male teachers. Male teachers show some bias against boys as a way of getting our hearts. They propose love to us. We find it hard to report them because we may be victimised. We (girls) are sexually harassed by both by teachers and boys. So they end up kissing up in the road and hug us. It's not like what we like it but sometimes you don't want to be seen fighting so just keep it cool.*

This suggests extreme cases of unruliness for spaces occupied by girls. The outside spaces are not peaceful for them. The girls face sexual harassment not only from the boys, but also from the teachers. The responses suggest that teachers pretend to be nice towards girls as a way to curry favour with them when they propose love to them. Girls are left more vulnerable to sexual abuse with no one to support them. When someone is subjected to sexual harassment in or outside school, it can diminish their sense of self-worth and safety, interfere with their education, and prevent them from realizing their full potential. Sexual harassment in a school environment has the potential to develop into violent behaviour, including sexual assault, if left unchecked. According to the Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2011), everyone in the education sector has a responsibility to protect each other, particularly children, from any form of sexual abuse, such as harassment, sexual exploitation, molestation, and rape. Anyone found guilty of perpetrating any of these offences is considered a criminal and will go through disciplinary process, according to the laws of Eswatini.

Jabu (focus group) from site C confirmed this:

> *There is a lot of sexual harassment that takes place on our way home by our peers. Some of the boys' kiss girls forcefully and inappropriately touch them and they can't report this to the teachers because they also make advances to the girls. The kombis should now be allowed to come and pick us right at the school gate so that we cut the distance to the station. This will serve girls better. We boys suffer physical violence from other stronger guys. It is rough outside there.*

This response shows that the unruly spaces are not only for girls but also boys who suffer bullying from other boys. Bullying is a type of peer abuse that includes physical harassment of a weaker victim by one or more students. It happens when there is an imbalance of power between individuals, and it is an ongoing or continuous unwanted behaviour. It is a kind of behaviour characterized by intentionality and hurtfulness. Teachers are also culprits on sexual based harassment. Jabu suggests that the distance travelled to station must be reduced to save girls from abuse during travel. According to Pinheiro (2006) and UNICEF (2014), male students are more likely to be subjected to frequent and serious physical violence, whereas female students are more likely to be subjected to sexual harassment and abuse, perpetrated to varying degrees by male students and teachers. The distance that pupils travel to and from school has a significant impact on them. Girls' attendance and enrolment are influenced by their distance to school. This is especially true in circumstances where parents are concerned about their children's safety on their way to and from school. Sexual violence is endemic in many Southern African schools, Eswatini included (Vally, 2003).

Dunne et al. (2005) agree that, sexual violence is entrenched, deeply rooted, and deeply lodged in dictatorial and highly gendered school contexts. The older male students are the ones that take advantage of their position and abuse female students. Devers, Henry, Hofmann and Banabdallah, (2012) showed that male students in Cameroon perpetrated 30% of sexual abuse against schoolgirls. Leah (focus group) from site A stated this as well: *male teachers show some bias against boys as a way of getting our hearts. They propose love to us. We find it hard to report them because we may be victimised. We, (girls) are sexually harassed by both by teachers and boys. So they end up kissing up in the road and hug us.* Teachers are hardly saints, as they are guilty of sexual abuse and exploitation, often with impunity. In Eswatini, the available evidence shows that most cases of Sexual Gender-Based Violence occur in the home and community, and schools are not safe havens for girls. A study conducted in Eswatini by Reza et al., (2007), 10% of sexual assault suffered before the age of 18 occurred in school and 10% occurred on the way to and from school. Before the age of 18, teachers were involved in 2% of sexual violence instances.

Lwazi (focus group) from site D boasted:

> *We do enjoy as guys to tap the downs of girls. It's just nice to have a feel of their beautiful bodies. You know how women are, God made them attractive so that they attract us men. I*

am not saying it is a good thing, yes, but we are growing guys, we just find it interesting. They in turn run after us trying to beat us and that is the game. Girls are violent with words. They humiliate us verbally. When you go home, you feel the effects of the words.

The responses suggest that boys have pleasure in touching girls inappropriately, and are ignorant of the implications of gender-based violence. Inappropriate physical contact such as kissing, touching, pinching, or groping, as well as sexual approaches, name-calling, taunts, and verbal abuse, are examples of explicit SRGBV. Mncube and Harber (2013), found out that in the Netherlands, 27 percent of pupils had been sexually harassed by peers within the school. Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) (2013) found out that the most reported forms of sexual violence by students included making sexual comments or teasing about sex and touching of private parts. Physical bullying is usually perpetrated by boys, while verbal or psychological forms of violence are widely used by girls. UNESCO, (2012).

Based on all the responses given, girls suffer the most from sexual based violence especially when they are outside the school spaces. The major perpetrators of sexual violence are the boys and teachers. The outside spaces is where much physical bullying and teasing take place since it is difficult for school authorities to control. Boys suffer physical violence from other boys.

5.4.2. Gender and positionality

The study revealed that all schools had enough seating spaces, equally distributed between boys and girls. The seating spaces allowed for group interactions between boys and girls. They were no physical fights for seating positions which, according to girls, was good, since they were the ones who would have suffered more with inadequate seats and seating positions.

Gender discrimination can be encouraged through the use of space in classroom by teachers. Students themselves can make a choice to be divided by gender. It was gathered during both interviews that all the schools had enough seats in their schools. In responding to the question of whether there were enough seats and seating spaces for both girl and boy students, Banele (focus group) from site B remarked:

We are comfortable. Even during break time, we have enough space outside the school and chairs for us to relax. In class, we can easily work together in groups and any collaborative work given to us by teachers. No time is wasted looking for chairs like in other schools. It makes learning better for us.

Leah (individual interview) from site A stated:

We do have enough space and enough seats in the school. We do not quarrel for the seats. If these seats were not enough, we know that the more aggressive boys are the ones who will always be seating while girls learn either sitting on the floor or standing.

The above data suggests contested and limited spaces. With limited spaces there is contestation among the learners, but with availability of space, there is a positive link between availability of seats and a positive leaning environment. Banele and Leah's views suggest that the physical space of the classroom influences learning and has an impact on the attitude of teachers and students towards school. Availability of seats and seating space has a positive impact on the learners' experiences. It can be argued that the Government of Eswatini through the MOET has tried its best to build adequate classrooms with enough seats for both boys and girls in school to improve the children's learning experiences. Barret, Davies, Zhang and Barrret (2015) agree that when space allows, the flexibility in the arrangement of equipment and furniture within spaces assist students to practice collaboration, teamwork, and other interpersonal skills.

This theme reveals that, limited spaces for occupying lead to contestations among the learners resulting in negative learning outcomes especially for girls while adequate space has a positive link to a positive leaning environment. The MOET had made tremendous improvements in making available big and more learning spaces and provision of equipment and furniture. This has led to improved working relationships between boys and girls.

5.4.2.1 Positionality and learning space

Various seating positions were found to exist in the schools, according to the findings of the study. These seating arrangements had a different impact on how learners experienced gender. The study revealed that the seating arrangement in other instances is decided by how learners score in tests. Boys seem to score higher marks than girls in mathematics and science, and are allowed to sit in

the back. This has led to teachers to interact more with boys during math and science than with girls. On the contrary, during SiSwati and English, girls outperform boys and sit in the back, but sadly in this case, teachers interact more with boys and seem to pay less attention to girls. Also, the study found that mixed sex-seating arrangement allow learners to concentrate and focus, unlike the same-sex seating arrangement. Boys had to appreciate girls and treat them with respect because of the mixed sex seating arrangement.

Responding to the question on whether the physical seating arrangements give an equal opportunity for both boys and girls to participate in class and interact with the teacher and other students, Adam (focus group) from site A said:

> *The seating arrangement is not good especially in maths and sciences, because teachers interact more with boys. Since high scorers in tests sit in the back, the majority of boys are seated in the back because they usually score high marks in maths and science. They participate more with much teacher interaction. This belief that boys outperform girls in maths and science makes it frustrating for girls during lesson in these subjects. Girls feel left out and out of place.*

Seating arrangements are important classroom setting events because they have the potential to help prevent problem behaviours that decrease student attention and diminish available instructional time. The suggestion here is that science and mathematics have been legitimised as more relevant for boys. Interacting more with boys during science and mathematics is spreading the stereotypical belief that boys are better in mathematics and science than girls (OECD, 2015). It can also be gathered from the response that there is no reason to suggest the underachievement of girls in science and mathematics. This is in line with Mugodzwa and Matope (2011), that science and mathematics have a traditionally strong masculine image. Teacher interactions in science and mathematics classes tend to favour boys. Males and females perform similarly in early stages of schooling, according to the OECD (2015), but males outperform females as they get older. According to evidence from international large-scale evaluation programs, males do better than females in science, as reported by Neuschmidt, Barth, and Hastedt (2008) and the OECD (2013). Khanyi (focus group) from site B described another seating arrangement:

Boys sit in the back and this doesn't facilitate participation. Girls have an advantage over boys in that they get teachers' attention. Boys in the back lazily participate unless when they are called to participate - they will not participate.

The responses show that a particular seating arrangement used is where boys sit in the back. This allows for participation of girls as compared to boys. Accordingly, it is a sitting arrangement that girls seem to notice give them an advantage over boys. Teachers interact more with the ones in the front. This holds true according to a study conducted in the United States by Marx, Fuhrer, and Hartig (2012), students who sit near the teacher or inside what is known as the 'zone of action,' usually in the front or middle of the classroom, have a habit of contributing more in the learning processes and activities than students who sit far from this zone of action. Marx et al. (2012) further allude that most times, it is girls who sit close to the teachers in front and this is to their advantage as they get maximum attention.

Nathi (individual interview) from site D asserted:

The seating arrangement allows participation for both boys and girls. It's a common practice that boys sit in the back and girls sit in the front. From what I have seen here from the SiSwati and English lessons, we have more girls sitting in the back since they score high in these subjects, [and] teachers seem not to talk to them more. They end up complaining to be involved in the lessons. You know with boys, they shout answers from the back and get teachers attention.

Nathi sees another sitting arrangement in SiSwati and English lessons, where girls sit in the back. This, according to him, is because the seating arrangement is performance based with top performers sitting in the back. The suggestion is that those who score high marks in the subjects sit in the back. Girls score high marks in SiSwati and English subjects and therefore usually occupy the back seats. Teachers do not interact with them more. The assumption could be that teachers will be concentrating with the boys who score lower marks in the subject. Lewis and Lockheed (2008) found a similar arrangement in Yemen, where girls usually were seated in the back of the classroom. They were not talked to much and were left to look for ways of gaining the teachers' attention.

The data from site C shows that one more different seating arrangement was at play in the school which affected children's spaces, geographies and gendered experiences.

Linda (focus group interview) stated:

> *Teachers sometimes re-arrange us. They do not want us to sit in same-sex format. They mix us sometimes as a way to curb naughtiness and also as a way to make sure that we value each other, boys and girls. This works well because now some of us now appreciate girls as humans and equal and capable beings like boys.*

The participant is expressing that same the sex seating arrangement is not conducive for effective learning to take place. Mixing boys and girls help in curbing disruptive behaviour. In this submission, learners appreciate the 'mixed' type of seating arrangement instead of the same-sex seating arrangement. The 'mixed' type of seating arrangement has enabled boys to appreciate and value girls, which a positive aspect. Laslett and Smith (2008, p. 2) support the view that a seating arrangement that is proper "takes care of students disruptive behaviours in the class." This also helps in avoiding the disruptive behaviours of learners and helps teachers in remembering the names of learners quickly. In this study, a mixed sex seating arrangement seems to be working well, as Laslett and Smith (2008, p. 2) assert that a mixed sex seating arrangement helps to restructure children for different activities and tasks, decrease distraction and increase involvement.

Mixed sex seating arrangement is effective in teaching and learning environments. It allows students to appreciate those of opposite sex. Stromquist (2007) claims that in the majority of countries, children are forced to sit in same-sex pairs or groups in the classroom, based on study by Warrington et al. (2000). In Liberia, female and male students are frequently compelled to sit in separate sections of the classroom and play in separate groups during recess. Children have different gender experiences from home and at school. The school space therefore plays an important role in opening children's eyes to important gender issues and help them navigate their spaces.

From the responses on positionality and learning space, seating arrangements played a role in the performance of boys and girls. Boys were interacted with more during science and mathematics

while seating in the back, while girls are interacted with more during siSwati and English lessons. Boys scored higher marks in Mathematics and science while girls did the same in SiSwati and English. Interacting more with boys during science and mathematics is spreading the stereotypical belief that boys are better in mathematics and science than girls (OECD, 2015) are. Mixing boys and girls help in curbing disruptive behaviour. In this submission, learners appreciate the 'mixed' type of seating arrangement instead of the same-sex seating arrangement. The 'mixed' type of seating arrangement has enabled boys to appreciate and value girls, which a positive aspect.

5.4.3 Curriculum and gender spaces

The study found that learners in other schools were free to choose subjects according to their abilities and without any influences from teachers. In those schools, girls even took up subjects perceived to be masculine, like agriculture and technical drawing. However, in other schools, teachers heavily influenced the subjects' learners chose. In most cases, the subjects were chosen according to femininity and masculinity**.**

In responding to the question whether curriculum reflects the needs and life experiences of both boys and girls by providing a varied range of subjects that will provide both with necessary knowledge and skills needed in adult life, participants had varied views.

It is without doubt a factor that plays a major role in defining the space, geography and gendered experiences of children is the curriculum. Bruce (focus group) from site B asserted:

> *There are a variety of subjects at school. We choose our subjects according to our abilities. Girls also do agriculture and TD and some boys are doing Home Economics. You take subjects according to what you want to be in the future.*

The suggestion from this response is that stereotypes in subjects is being done away with. There are no more subjects reserved for boys and girls. Students have an opportunity to shift subjects to fit what they would like to do in future. A sex-stereotyped view of subjects was associated with sex-stereotyped attitudes towards occupations and roles. Learners whose attitudes were stereotyped and who saw themselves conforming to traditional notions of masculinity and femininity would be more likely to choose sex-appropriate subjects. There are varied and changing dynamism pertaining to gender and curriculum. Tetlow (2016, p. 78) drawing from Tamboukou and Ball (2006, p. 254), agrees that children are equated to nomads: as nomads wander, they are

"subjects in transition". As such, curriculum influences gender and gender affects the curriculum, hence both affect the gendered spaces and places of boys and girls within the schools and practices.

Ayden (focus group) from site A described whether curriculum reflects the needs and life experiences of both boys and girls by providing a varied range of subjects that will provide both with necessary knowledge and with skills needed in adult life:

> *We do have many subjects to choose from. Some subjects we do not do them because they are not much related to what we experience in life. For example, some left history for ICT because it relates with what we having now. We shift the subjects.*

Ayden acknowledges that curriculum provides a variety of subjects from which they can choose from. In the choice of the subjects, some subjects are seen to be more relevant than the others which result in students 'migrating' from one subject to another. He sees ICT to be more relevant than history, maybe due to the fact that technology is dominating educational spaces. This augurs well with the notion of nomadism in curriculum. Tamboukou and Ball (2006) state that nomadism in the curriculum is when learners are afforded an opportunity to try and experience different subjects and then settle for their best. Nomads have the quality of recreating their homes everywhere, not of homelessness (Tamboukou and Ball, 2006). The threat of spatial transitions and changes is what nomads are always dealing with, as such they do not have security in the spaces they inhabit. This means that students have the ability to change their subjects to fit their circumstances instead of staying in a traditionally ascribed subjects.

Stromquist (2007) alluded that in Sub-Saharan Africa, there are fields in which maleness is fashioned in schools, especially in recognised subjects for boys. This entails that subjects are still studied based on masculinity and femininity. Celiwe (group interview) from site C contradicted the response given by Bruce:

> *Most of the curriculum (subjects) favour boys. TD, woodwork and agriculture are mostly done by the boys. Girls only do consumer sciences only. The teachers don't want to give us the subjects that boys normally do. They don't say they are for boys but action speaks louder than words.*

The suggestion from this response is that there is still gender stereotyping as far as subjects allocated to learners is concerned. Traditionally, masculine subjects are given to boys while

traditional female subjects are taken by girls. Gender plays a role in deciding the spaces children occupy in curriculum. Elwood (2016, p. 8) agrees that curriculum is created and informed by cultural and social values, skills, and information that are considered essential for learners to know in order to prepare them for future work and life in a range of contexts and communities. Stromquist (2007) agrees with Connell (1996) that the curriculum is still separated between girls and boys, with girls learning more about family life and home science and boys learning more about productive skills and sports. This confirms the view that curriculum is a gendered space, and the view that the school is a gendered space. Savard (2016, p. 10) points out that gendered spaces are places where "behaviours that are distinctly male and female occur". In this case, subjects are done based on femininity and masculinity.

The responses from this theme show that stereotypes in subjects is being done away with in other schools. There are no more subjects reserved for boys and girls. Students have an opportunity to shift subjects to fit what they would like to do in future. Findings, however, also show that gender stereotypes still exist in other schools with regard to the subjects chosen for students. Boys typically take traditionally masculine subjects, whereas girls typically study traditionally female subjects. The spaces that children occupy in the curriculum are determined in part by their gender.

5.4.3.1 Children's geographies in subject choices

The study found out that the children's daily lives were dominated by adults. Their decisions in choosing subjects had much interference from teachers. In some cases, teachers greatly influenced learners' subject choices. Subject choices done by teachers was according to tradition. However, in other situations learners had the freedom to choose their preferred subjects, according to their ability and desire**.**

Morrow (2011) says that the concept of children geographies deals with the study of places and spaces for everyday lives for children. As children attend school, they have to decide on which subjects to take. In the Eswatini context, children have the right to choose subjects (Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy, 2011); however, on the ground, teachers make decisions on behalf of the learners. This puts into context Holloway's view (2014) that children's voices should be heard: they add value to debates, as independent knowing subjects. In responding to a question

on the freedom of learners to confidently make subject choices that may not be traditionally male or female subjects, different responses were achieved:

Musa (individual interview) from site D alleged:

> *In my view, boys are capable of doing vocational education. We like doing things like agriculture, mechanics, plumbing and TD. They (teachers) give us geography, history and other such which do not give us skills needed in the near future. For girls is fine because they are doing Home Economics (H E) because they end up being married and should know how to cook and manage the homes. We are boys who will be heads of families we need productive subjects.*

This response from Musa suggests that the students are not given a chance to decide on the subjects that they like to do. Subjects are allocated to them, which means that the voices of the learners are not heard. The response from this participant disapproves the hand of administrators and teachers in deciding subjects for them. There is also the issue of masculine or feminine subjects raised by the participant. This line of argument is supported by Yarwood and Tyrrell (2012) drawing from Philo (1992), that children's perspectives and experiences were traditionally overlooked in mainstream geography. As such, there is restriction and control in their use of space by adults, legislation and institutions such as schools. Children find it difficult to change or shape their spaces and environment because they do not have the same voice or power as adults. This shows that the boy learners' choice of subjects is limited. In later life, they will not be able to do careers of their choices because they have been short-changed with the curriculum decided for them by teachers. Norozi and Moen (2016) say that children are contemplated and deliberated as being in a relatively powerless position in relation to adults in deciding on subjects to take. This means that the destiny of the children is in the hands of the teachers and to some degree, the administrators.

Linda (focus group) from site C suggested the hand of teachers in subject selection was based on gender stereotypes:

> *We have more girls in home economics and more boys in woodwork. Teachers assume that we are lazy to write so we should do woodwork when actually some of us want to cook. The teachers in a way want us to do subjects that boys normally do and not take female subjects.*

The suggestion from this participant is that there is stereotyping by teachers in subject choices. Subjects are allocated to students based on tradition. Because curriculum is socially created, it is "a mirror of both dominant ideas and a space where ideas are restricted or played out through practice, as well as implicated in the defining and formation of gender relations" (Elwood, 2016, p. 9). With this, there is an understanding of how much curriculum promotes or reflects appropriate gender behaviour and perceptions about girls and boys and what/how they should learn. Mugodzwa and Matope (2011) agree that girls are expected to take home economics, while the boys are made to take courses such as metal work, woodwork and mathematics, which are subjects that prepare them for work and to support the family. There are limited spaces for girls in those subjects, while wide and assured spaces are guaranteed for boys. This is a sign that there is gender stereotyping in the choice of subjects.

While the responses show the influence of teachers and administrators in subject choice decisions, research site B seemed to be doing things differently. The following are the responses to the question on subjects' offerings:

Bheka (focus group) asserted:

> *We chose our subjects according to our abilities. Anyone does what he/she is best at. Teachers support our decisions since that is what we will have chosen. Girls also do agriculture and TD and even some boys do home economics.*

This response alludes to the fact that autonomy is given to students to make academic subject choice decisions. It reveals that all subjects are free to all students despite sexual orientation. Girls are now occupying spaces that were traditionally reserved for boys. This shows that in as much there are still stereotypes in the choice of subjects, but through counselling and training and education, there is a shift from the *status quo*. The submission suggests that teenage learners are happy in choosing subjects for themselves. Viklund and Wikblad (2009, p. 3269) agree that teenagers in schools should be respected "for their imperfect decision-making abilities". They deserve constructive support to compensate for their deficiencies from teachers and parents as their social network. Female students now look broadly at the different types of professions than in the past when they choose their subjects (Kring, 2016).

The MOET came up with a project called 'Take your girl child to work', which is meant to encourage the participation of girls in science and technology to encourage girls to take up careers that were male-dominated (National Education and Training Sector Policy, 2018). It is meant to ensure that girls and women are adequately represented in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM). In response to the question of how the participation and achievement rate of girls in relation to boys in math and science, and boys in disciplines such as literature and history, participants spoke their minds out and their experiences.

Asher (focus group) from site A claimed:

> *Boys perform better in maths and science. Boys are born mathematicians and scientists. However, there are girls who are also good in these subjects. Boys find it difficult in literature and history. I do get higher marks in maths and sciences than on literature and history.*

This submission suggests that boys are better in maths and science than girls. However, girls seem to be also doing well in maths and science. Asher's assertion is supported by Ma (2007), who found that there were small differences in Grades Four and Five in the sciences between boys and girls, but by Grade 12, there were huge and very reasonable differences in favour of the boys.

Of note was participant Adam (focus group) from site A, who averred:

> *Boys hate reading and enjoy maths and science. They enjoy figures, hate reading and like practical work. Most girls do not like science and maths. They need motivation in those subjects.*

From this response, it seems obvious that boys enjoy maths and science, while girls enjoy literature and history. Many studies by (Dee, 2006) in USA, (Roohani & Zarei, 2013), in Iran and (Quenzel & Hurrelmann, 2013), in USA, have revealed how subjects categorised in the technologies, sciences and mathematics, have been legitimised and deemed more relevant for boys for a long time as appropriate spheres of learning, whereas mother tongue and foreign languages, a categorisation of languages, arts and humanities, are considered appropriate and relevant for girls. Stromquist (2007) notes that science is associated with hegemonic masculinity, and physics is seen as the most masculine of subjects in the West. Girls are more attached to their homes than boys,

and girls are typically associated with writing and reading, despite the assumption that they prefer romance literature. One of the participants Owethu (focus group) from site D declared:

> *Girls love reading literature books and magazines. They love romantic novels and this keeps them busy much of the time. That is the reason I think girls do well in literature and history. Boys, on the other hand, are lazy to read; they enjoy calculations and more hands-on subjects like science. One more thing I see here is that out of all our eight Form Five maths and science teachers, only three are females. Vele ungatsi tifundo tebafana (It's like these subjects are for boys).*

Owethu suggests that girls are good in literature because of their love to read magazines and novels, while boys are good in maths and science because they enjoy calculations and are lazy to read. Girls read more than boys and have a wide experience with fiction. Boys undoubtedly spend more time outside, and reading is not considered as particularly masculine among adolescents. Mcpherson (2012) commented on the under-representation of women in science post-secondary schools in the United States, stating that women are under-represented in the sciences due to the philosophy of home comforts and the social and political conditions of science, rather than a lack of curiosity or aptitude. In all parts of the subject, females tend to perform better than males in the examination of English language. Murphy (2008) notes that, the differences in curriculum subject preferences and choices between boys and girls had more to do with access to the range of curriculum on offer as well as the choice of subjects that interact with gender identities and how they are played out in school, rather than natural tendencies with females and males being better in particular subjects, after detailed analyses. This resonates with Owethu's assertion. Pinar (2011) and Slattery (2013) noted that maths and science are predominantly taught by male teachers, which gives the subject an impression of masculinity. The gender stereotypes of those teaching science and maths send the unspoken message, is that mathematics is for males.

As regards to children's geographies in subject choices, the findings were that, the students are not given a chance to decide on the subjects that they like to do. They students are allocated certain subjects, so the students' voices are not taken into consideration in some schools. However, in other schools T autonomy is given to students to make academic subject choice decisions. Despite sexual orientation. Girls are now occupying spaces that were traditionally reserved for boys because they have the freedom to choose subjects they want to do.

5.4.3.2 Gender dynamics in extra mural curriculum

The study revealed that sporting activities are highly gendered. Boys are supported more in sporting activities and allowed to compete, while girls are only allowed to participate in sporting activities as a pastime. Some sporting activities like rugby were found to be played only by boys, with girls taking a cheer leading role. Many gender inequalities in how boys and girls were treated were found in respect of both support and participation. Boys had the upper hand in both instances.

In responding to a question to find out if extracurricular activities attract the participation of both boys and girls, the data showed varied responses from participants.

Jabu (focus group) from site C, however, noted:

> *Rugby is where the majority of 'real' boys go. It's tough, you get injured but still we like the injuries as they act as proof of being male. Rugby is physical game; as such you cannot be soft. It is a place for the strong, not cowards. Boys bully each other, we beat and also get beaten here. Girls do not play rugby here but they love watching us play. The girls who like watching us are our cheer leaders and we end up inappropriately playing with them. We kiss and touch them. We love it.*

The existence of gender stereotypes in sport may be the result of society's ongoing reinforcement of these notions, which has resulted in the development of ideas like male and female sport. This influences sport practice causing a decrease in practice opportunities for boys and girls, because they adjust their sport participation, even if unconscious. Sports that emphasise flexibility or balance, which support the formation of femininity, have historically been the only ones in which girls have participated. Due to the consistent displays of power, aggression, and speed in their sporting activities, boys' participation in sports has allowed them to strengthen their sense of masculinity. The submission by Jabu suggests that extramural activities, in this case rugby, is only for boys. It is seen as a tough sport that can only be played by boys. The rugby pitch appears rather a boundaried sense of space that could and should be occupied by boys. Girls in this case are there to cheer on the boys playing. Mwambwa (2010) asserts that stereotypes around girls and boys encompass the type of extramural activities they can do. As a result, it is possible to argue that spaces are extremely gendered. The sports pitch is a space where physicality and unruliness are promoted and expected through the given rules of the sport being played (Clark, 2010). Besides

the sports (rugby) being gendered, there is also an issue of space being an unruly space for both girls and boys.

Lily (focus group) from site A asserted:

> *Co-curricular activities attract the participation of both boys and girls. All are allowed to play basketball and volleyball. But the problem is that the girls play these games only for leisure and not to compete. Only boys go for competitions. Girls are taken to competitions to cheer up the boys. This is unfair since we are able also to compete like boys.*

Khetsiwe (focus group) from site B retorted:

> *There is discrimination in co-curricular activities. Boys participate in soccer, rugby and basketball. The school has not introduced ladies' soccer. Girls only participate in netball and volleyball. We want to play rugby because we have the ability and the skills required just like boys.*

The data suggests that participation in co-curricular activities is done by both boys and girls. The school authorities, on the other hand, do not take the girls' participation in these activities seriously. The data also reveals that girls play a supportive role when it comes to competitive sporting. There are more sporting activities available for boys as compared to girls. As suggested by Khetsiwe, the girls are not only navigating the spaces themselves, but also examining the meanings of those places as part of their growing gendered selves. Boys are the ones who play these games and are sponsored to compete. Mwamba (2010) in his study on the influence of masculinity in sporting activities in Zambia, asserted that through increased involvement in sports, girls are able to challenge sexist barriers and notions that are restrictive about women's physical appearance, participation in sports and their athletic ability. These activities have a role on how spaces are navigated and gender is experienced by boys and girls in school spaces in Eswatini. The Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy (2011) says that all co-curricular activities in schools should be done by all students without bias and discrimination.

Literature supports the findings on that boys' activities are sponsored as Lily agreed:

> *...the problem is that the girls play these games only for leisure and not to compete. Only boys go for competitions. Girls are taken to competitions to cheer up the boys. This is unfair since we are able also to compete like boys*.

The views concur with what Mugodzwa and Matope (2011) noted: attention and financing tend to be concentrated more on activities that are carried out by boys. They further allude that as much as the female students want to participate in team sporting activities, their efforts are frustrated by administrators who give them less funding and very little attention. This means that there is still perpetuation of space dominance based on gender in the school sports activities. Girls are not considered competitive, while boys get the opportunity to compete. This unequal treatment between girls and boys creates low self-esteem among the girls, while boosting the self-esteem of boys. The cheer-leading role assigned to girls is in line with Renold (2005), who avers that, in schools, boys use sports to take over spaces and to commandeer and downgrade girls to watching and moving around them. Mugodzwa and Matope (2011) noted that in Zimbabwe, because of the emphasis in the sports done by males, females assume supportive roles as observers or cheer leaders.

Hlengiwe (individual interview) from site B narrated:

We participate in all activities. Girls play soccer because it was introduced and we are happy about it. Chess used only to be played by boys but the sports director encouraged and opened the floor for girls to play and participate.

This response shows a shift on gender stereotyping and spaces that are masculine and feminine as far as sporting activities are concerned. It is suggested in this response that this school is trying to counter negative stereotypes by introducing ladies' soccer and to make sure that the girls participate in male dominated sporting spaces like chess. The girls are adapting to what the spaces provide them with to shape their behaviour, rather what the environment or society expects.

Ndumo (focus group) from site D shared her view concerning co-curricular activities:

> *We want boys to play netball to show that we are now equal. Our school space should show equality in all spheres. We are now playing soccer which used to be for boys only. This will make sure that even at home the boys can do chores which were traditionally feminine. Let us see boys competing in netball.*

Musa (focus group) used his experience in school traditional dance to argue the above proposition:

We can't play netball as boys. It is like asking boys to dance 'umiso' (traditional girls dance) and ask girls to dance 'sibaca' (traditional boys dance). The challenge we have is that girls want to imitate boys. We can be equal but can never be the same.

These responses expose important issues on gender and sex. Ndumo speaks about gender equality which she thinks that should be practicalised even in sports. Also, she tries to differentiate sex roles and gender roles by articulating that boys should do what girls do as chores in their homes. There is much confidence by girls in doing activities that were thought to be masculine. Musa, on the other hand, shows that gender stereotypes are part of everyday living by arguing that the dances meant for girls cannot be done by boys and *vice versa*. He is expressing a more traditional view. Issues of socialisation seem to be the argument by this participant. Girls do not want to be confined in traditionally feminine bounded spaces. The girls seem to take pride in not being afraid of spaces that are occupied by boys. Paechter (2010) agrees that acting out of their own embodied femininity is when girls move into spaces that are masculine dominated. In this case, girls are getting involved in playing soccer. Bowley (2016) noted that there are vital areas or fields within the school where maleness is fashioned, such as boys' subjects, sports and peer culture. One such instance occurred in Brazil, where a particular girl excelled as a goalkeeper for a women's soccer squad. This sparked outrage, as the parent of one of the other team's youngsters demanded proof that this girl was not actually a boy (Salvini, 2016). It shows that exceptional female sporting talent is doubted because of the hegemonic masculinity belief that dominates sport.

Responding to the question on who organises the extramural activities (such as sports, cultural events).

Leah (individual interview) from site A declared:

Sports directors do that and we are not involved.

Banele (focus group) from site B asserted:

Ours is to participate, we have no decision on how, and when the activities will take place. We have no say, teachers have.

A slightly different response came from Jabu (focus group) from site C who retorted:

We only get consulted on cultural events since they usually involve people from the community, so they need participants who volunteer. As for sports, we are not consulted, we are only notified.

Buhle (focus group) from site D reported:

Organising is done by the sports teachers. It comes to us as announcements.

In all schools, as shown from these responses, it was discovered that students play no role in the organisation of all extramural activities, which were organised by sports directors or teachers. This alone shows that the students are not given space to make decisions. They lack exposure to take decisions in activities they are to take part in; their role is to follow the directions given by the school sporting directors. The UNCRC states that in making decisions for children, adults should consider how those decisions would affect them.

As revealed by the study, children are marginalised; they are not taken seriously and are kept away from decision-making public spaces, the world over (Sharpe, 2015). To confirm the findings of the study on lack of children in decision0making process, Clements (2004) and Staempfli (2008) noted that due to this continued marginalisation, children in school spaces are suffering in their physical and social development. The thinking about children is that they are less socially skilled and less emotionally mature; their decisions in schools are scrutinised by adults, who are the teachers and administrators.

Based on data from this theme, some extramural activities, in this case rugby is a space for boys. It is seen as a tough sport that can only be played by boys. The rugby pitch appears rather a boundaried sense of space that could and should be occupied by boys. In this instance, girls are present to support the participating boys. The kinds of extracurricular activities that boys and girls can engage in are stereotyped, as well. Spaces in extramural activities are highly gendered as a result. Physicality and disorderliness are encouraged and anticipated on the sports field, which then favour the boys. Attention and financing tend to be concentrated more on activities that are carried out by boys. Despite the fact that female students want to play team sports, authorities discourage them from doing so by providing them with less assistance and funding.

5.5 Schools as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation

The study revealed that schools have a role they play as gender socialisation agents. This has an impact on how boys and girls relate one with the other. Activities that take place in the schools, according to the study, either perpetuate gender stereotypes or fight against them. Teachers as adults in schools, had a great influence on how learners experienced gender. The study found out that, there were more female teachers in all schools which sends a message to learners that teaching was feminine profession. This view made learners have different gender relations with teachers. Also, the way community members and parents related with schools had an impact on how learners 'did gender' and how they experienced it.

Responding to the second critical question on whether schools in Eswatini play a role as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation, the following theme emerged from the data: Teachers' understanding of gendered spaces and perceptions of community members and parents.

5.5.1 Teachers' understanding of gendered spaces

The teacher male: female ratio imbalance has an effect on children's performance and their perceptions of the profession, and impacted on their gendered experiences, according to the findings of the study. There were more female teachers than male teachers in all the schools. This imbalance in this ratio impacted more on how boys and girls treated each other. Gender stereotypes developed among the learners due to this imbalance. In response to the question on what the ratio of male teachers to female teachers in school spaces was, there were similar results in all schools. Participants unanimously agreed that there were more female teachers than male teachers.

Nathi (individual) from site D said:

> *There are more female teachers than males in the school, hence we interpret that teaching is a female dominated space. It is like we are at girls' high school. Our school is female dominated space in as far as teachers are concerned. Rules in our schools are given by them because they are the majority. We are now used to the screaming and yelling of our madams but they are loving and so much motherly compared to male teachers. There are other things we end up doing and not doing because of the attitude and behaviours of our female teachers.*

Responding to the same question, Banele (focus group) from site B submitted*:*

> *Our school here has more female teachers than male teachers. You may be tempted to think that we have no male teachers.*

Lunga (focus group) from site C asserted*:*

> *Teaching seems to be a job for ladies for sure. Women teachers more than triple the male teachers here. This is the reason why boys behave well within the school premises. They fear to be embarrassed by the female teachers.*

From site D, Musa (focus group) averred:

> *Our school is a women-dominated school in the teaching staff. As you can see, since you entered here - how many male teachers have you met?*

The responses clearly show that schools have more women teachers than males. In this study, it would appear that female teachers dominate the space. Students, especially boys, behave different when they are in the presence of female teachers. Lunga said:

> *Women teachers more than triple the male teachers here. This is the reason why boys behave well within the school premises. They fear to be embarrassed by the female teachers.*

School spaces dominated by female teachers socialise boys to discard unruly behaviour, as alluded to by Lunga. These socialisation experiences promote children's perceptions. Similarly, Ullah (2016, p. 5) in his study of school teaching as a female profession, found that school teaching is a social field and space: "school teaching is viewed as an extension of mothering role". In this case, the teaching profession is viewed as feminine, gauged by the many more female teachers in the schools, as Banele asserted.

Skelton (2009) agrees, arguing that working with children has historically been connected with childcare rather than teaching, which is why school teaching has long been considered of as a woman's career and employment. This calls into question gender stereotypes about feminine and

masculine jobs. Teachers negotiate rules for pupils to follow, and those rules face children in their settings as externally generated 'givens' that they are powerless to change. One of these 'givens' is gender roles since they are a product of social structural interactions. However, Gaskell and Mullen (2006) claim that both in the developed and developing societies, primary and secondary school teaching are a female-dominated space. OECD (2016) corroborates that there is a striking gender imbalance in the teaching profession, with women making up the majority of teachers in pre-primary and secondary levels in the majority of OECD countries.

Mim (2016) argues that schools are key sites in constructing masculinities and femininities which required close attention to the daily practices, conscious or unconscious. She drew attention from Reay (2001, p. 153), who revealed that "gendered power relations were more complicated than the simplistic binary dialogue of boys versus girls." As such, at schools, teachers become vital role models. They have a role in the multiplicity of competing gender discourses within the school spaces where the children socialise. Mim (2016, p. 30) draws a statement from Connell (1995, p. 77), that it is important to reflect the hegemonic masculinity referred to as "legitimacy configuration of patriarchy", which guarantees the dominant position of boys and subordination of girls by teachers in educational spaces. Teachers have a role to play in children's gendered and spatial experiences.

Gabi (focus group) from site C contributed:

> *Having many female teachers is good for us girls. We feel secure having females' teachers around us. They are like mothers to us. We enjoy going to school. There is less abuse that befall us because they protect us from bullying and abuse. You see, boys always want to inappropriately touch our bodies. There is so much order around because even the boys they behave well when there are female teachers.*

The suggestion here points to the differentiated spaces boys and girls occupy due to the presence of more female teachers in the school. Students are socialised in particular ways. Girls want to attend school because they feel safe from bullying due to the presence of female teachers. Boys' bullying is curtailed by the presence of more female teachers. Tamboukou (2000, p. 5) agrees that girls in classroom are safe under the care of women teachers since the private classroom space is a setting that "still promotes the cultivation and expression of women's natural inclinations." The

natural inclination of women is to be with children and to care for others. The presence of female teachers in schools removes the fears parents have on the security of their children. This helps in having girls' voices heard in school spaces. Huisman and Smits (2009) asserted that raising the share of female teachers in a district enhanced girls' access and retention in education, especially in rural regions, and hence increased their educational spaces across 30 developing nations surveyed.

Asked whether teachers encourage both girls and boys to speak within the classroom spaces and attach equal valuation of views of both boys and girls, the views from the research were many. However, they pointed to the same thing: teachers do not interact with and value girls and boys the same way.

Khanyi (focus group) from site B mentioned:

> *Boys dominate classroom discussions. The girls are hesitant in engaging in debates and classroom discussions. You find boys replying to teachers' questions more than girls. These boys really do not have genuine interest in the discussions, while the girls are quick and correct and show genuine interest during classroom discussions. It is like boys speak so that they become famous. The boys usually cut the girls down when arguing. Teachers do not reprimand them. They actually engage with them more compared to girls.*

Nathi (individual) from site D said:

> *There is always the exhibition by boys of stereotypical masculinity in the classroom. The boys in class make unnecessary noise, shout in the classroom, talk, they just disturb the lesson. This behaviour seems to get the attention of teachers and they engage with them more. This is unfair because it is like rules for orderliness are for girls. Girls are told to raise hands and behave nicely like girls. Boys feel superior than girls.*

The views suggest that boys dominate classroom spaces and they do that without much hindrances from the teachers. These statements were made in all the schools, showing a patriarchal attitude which is a belief of male superiority. The boys are spoken more to by teachers leaving girls to obscure spaces. Girls are socialised to be subservient to boys. Classroom rules seem to be binding on girls, while boys are allowed to do as they wish. Gomendio (2016) agrees that teachers spend as much as two thirds of their time talking to boys, which also translates to two thirds of talk time.

Dunne (2007) proves that the gender of the teacher matters, and that teachers would know about the boys' personal details, while the girls remain an anonymous group about whom few personal details are known.

Responding to the question on the kind of activities boys and girls are assigned by teachers, the participants responses were interesting.

Celiwe (focus group) from site C mentioned:

> *Most girls do the cleaning of the classrooms and boys supervise the maintenance of grounds. Where physical strengths are needed, boys are called to do it. The pitching of tents and lifting of tables is done by boys.*

From this response, the study revealed gender segregation through arrangement and management regarding school premises spaces. A powerful and insistent way of segregating was to use physical spaces assigning indoors activities for girls and outdoors for boys (Mim, 2016). This results in differentiated use of and dominance over space by boys. One of the most significant places for the socialization and identity formation of children and teens is schools. Nevertheless, educational curriculum, teaching and learning materials and classroom instruction continue to reinforce traditional gender stereotypes across many nations. Teachers may perpetuate gender preconceptions that are handed down to children through conscious and unconscious bias.

Owethu (focus group) from site D averred:

> *We are sometimes asked to clean staffroom and we girls change the curtains. Boys arrange desks, and are sometimes asked to repair the broken chairs and desks. I once objected to cleaning and asked to join boys in arranging desks but I was told by the teacher that housekeeping was a basic girl's responsibility.*

From the data, it suggests that tasks are assigned according to sex. Teachers, according to the submission, are gender stereotyped. Ryle (2011) agrees that gender socialisation as a process transfers gender norms and rules to new generations, as dictated by their culture. As such, the different social roles for men and women are defined by the society. Dean, Joldoshalieva and Hussainy (2007), in their study on the role of schooling in gender identities construction in high schools in Pakistan, agree with the findings of this study that teachers had a belief that gender roles

and responsibilities were fixed: beautifying the class was the responsibility of girls and boys had to fix and repair broken desks and chairs.

Asher (focus group) from site A highlighted:

> *Girls are given light work by teachers here, sweeping and cleaning classroom, while boys cut grass and erect tents for events.*

Bruce (focus group) from site B said:

> *Boys are the ones who water the school garden, cut shrubs, while girls help in cooking food and washing pots for school events.*

The submissions from Asher and Bruce suggest that teachers allocate activities according to traditional gender roles. Teachers believe that each sex has a natural affinity to particular activities. Leaper and Farkas (2018), in their study of traditional masculinity in relation to high school students in the USA, teachers have been shown to play a critical role in the creation of gender roles and identities when they use different activities for boys and girls. As leaders in classrooms, teachers can fully create a gendered environment built upon gender stereotypes and gender roles.

In response to the question about gender training for teachers to support both boys and girls in school spaces,

Gugu (focus group) from site C said:

> *In as far as I am concerned, some of our teachers do not understand this issue of gender. It is a new thing that is now being talked about these days. It is not surprising that they are as confused as some of us are. Especially our male teachers consider boys to be more important. They don't realise that these days there are equal rights. They must be taken to courses that deal with gender issues so that they will know how to treat boys and girls equally and with respect.*

Also Nathi (individual) from site D said:

> *From the way we see things here, there seem to be little knowledge exhibited by our teachers. They treat both boys and girls in traditional ways. Fine, there are few of the teachers who seem to be knowledgeable about gender. They seem to take sex and gender as the same thing hence their treatment of students on that notion. If I was the principal, I*

would ask the MOET to have courses for all teachers on gender because the way we are treated now will affect our future in a big way. Boys in all they do, they are taken to be special. Our culture in Eswatini sees boys as more important than girls since they will carry the family name.

These two responses sum up the general feelings of all participants. Teachers were seen to be lacking knowledge on gender issues. They were not knowledgeable, hence their stereotypical and patriarchal attitudes. Teachers have to be knowledgeable so that they put knowledge into practice in dealing with gender issues in school spaces.

Nathi expressed that:

They treat both boys and girls in traditional ways. Fine, there are few of the teachers who seem to be knowledgeable about gender. They seem to take sex and gender as the same thing hence their treatment of students on that notion.

This is just an indication that gender training programs are necessary to allow equal treatment in the school spaces of boys and girls. Because of the patriarchal culture and extended sex aggregated education, girls' spaces are limited in schools due to teachers lack of gender education (Ullah and Khan, 2016). The authors further stated that girls are expected to be quiet and polite, while boys are expected to be assertive. Teachers must understand how learners feel about the classroom's cultural atmosphere and communicate a feeling of respect and confidence to all learners, while eradicating all gender stereotypes and biases within the school spaces (UNICEF, 2015). The Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy (2011) stipulates that all gender stereotypes and gender bias of any nature within education sector in Eswatini must be discouraged and done away with through enlightened, modern-day teachers.

The findings from this theme are that, female teachers dominated the schools. In this case, the teaching profession is viewed as feminine, gauged by the many female teachers in the schools. School teaching has long been considered of as a woman's career and employment (Ullah (2016). School spaces dominated by female teachers socialise boys to discard unruly behaviour. This calls into question gender stereotypes about feminine and masculine jobs. Because of the patriarchal culture and extended sex aggregated education, girls' spaces are limited in schools due to teachers' lack of gender education. They were not knowledgeable, hence their stereotypical and patriarchal

attitudes. Teachers believe that each sex has a natural affinity to particular activities. Teachers have been shown to play a critical role in the creation of gender roles and identities when they use different activities for boys and girls. Boys dominated classroom spaces and they did that without much hindrance from the teachers. This shows a patriarchal attitude, which is a belief of male superiority. Teachers leaving girls to obscure spaces speak to boys more. Girls are socialised to be subservient to boys. Girls had to abide by the rules in the classroom, but boys were free to act whatever they pleased.

5.5.2 Perceptions of community members and parents

The study revealed that the community members and parents support both boys and girls equally. The community and parents strive to make school spaces gender responsive. They fight to eliminate the scourge of gender-based violence and sex discrimination in schools. However, it is only through volunteering activities that learners noticed disparities. The volunteering on activities by parents and community leaders is done based on traditional gender roles. The activities are distributed along masculinity and femininity lines. This had an impact on learners' gender perceptions, in that they learnt what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman.

In responding to the question on whether community leaders and parents equally supportive of both boys and girls to attend school, participants gave varied views.

Hlengiwe (individual interview) from site B mentioned:

> *The community leaders and parents support both the boys and girls in accessing the education. It's not like the old days, where girls were sacrificed for boys to go to school. Our parents in communities took government to court to allow access to free primary education. Now we are learning again that they are fighting for free secondary and high school education. They advocated that everyone who is school-going age must be physically at school. They asked the government to quickly put many classes and even mobile classes.*

This response shows sophistication in how learners comprehend issues that affects them. The participant shows that community leaders and parents understand the importance of the attendance of children in school. The also lobbied for the improvement of the physical space for both boys and girls. This is in keeping with the Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy (2011), which

states that the MOET is responsible for ensuring that the physical look of schools improves learners' health and well-being. Banbeis (2013) states that there has been largely an elimination of the gender gap favouring boys in school enrollment visible in the past.

Leah (individual interview) from site A acknowledged the role played by community leaders and parents:

> *We see community members and parents coming here to support us as learners. They want to make sure our school is safe space for both boys and girls. They want us to be equally and fairly treated by our teachers without sex discrimination. Community leaders are the ones who always emphasise that we report any threats of violence we may face to and from school. They want us both boys and girls to succeed in our studies.*

This submission from Leah suggests that community leaders and parents support the learners by ensuring the safety of school spaces. The parents and community leaders also support the learners by advocating for a violence free school space. Having a school space that is free from sex discrimination is another way that community leaders and parents support the children. Adelman and Taylor (2002, p. 5) noted that community members and teachers collaboratively can "create the conditions needed by learners to flourish".

Lunga (individual interview) from site C acknowledged the support that the community leaders and parents give the school:

> *Our parents and community leaders like to see us safe, and succeeding. However, as they try all they can to achieve this, they have a tendency to dictate things on us. They tells that they know what is best for us. So we are embarrassed at times to challenge their thoughts and decisions. We end up doing things we do not want to do. Our voices are drowned by our parents and community leaders.*

The participant acknowledges the support that is given by the community leaders and parents. However, the suggestion is that parents and community leaders force their decisions on them by claiming that they know better what is good for the learners. Learners, not out of respect but fear of embarrassing the elders, end up accepting things they do not want to do. This finding from the study agrees with Gramlin, Camacho, Ong and Hesketh (2015), who said that children are a marginalised group, since community members and parents remove their voice in public spaces.

Jabu noted that adults dictate things to them without giving them room to voice their concerns. Sharpe (2015) states that children are not take seriously and are kept away from public spaces.

The socialisation role of community members and parents is very influential in influencing the spaces of children. Responding to the question if community members and parents volunteer in the school and to assess whether the school volunteering activities of fathers/men and women/mothers reinforce or challenge gender stereotypical roles, participants gave their views.

Lwazi (focus group) from site D said:

> *Yes, males volunteer to repair chairs and tables in the school. I have never seen women coming to repair tables and chairs in the school. Women come to volunteer to cook when we are having big events like sports or parents-teachers' meetings.*

This shows that spaces are demarcated based on gender and activities are gendered. The message of what has to be done by males and females is passed to children. Savard (2016, p. 16) affirms that gender as a socially constructed concept dictates "how the daily lives of people go in relation to how they behave, think, and interact with others." Hence, Ngigi (2014) affirms that through recognisable allocation of roles at community level, gender conditioning messages are reinforced. The submission by Lwazi agrees with Savard (2016) that gendered spaces depends on what behaviour is deemed appropriate by society for boys and girls, and this determines at each location whether behaviours performed are considered masculine or feminine. Social constructionism views childhood as part of the construction of what children will be as adults (Skelton, 2008). As such, what they see the elders do in community is what they will become as adults. Seeing work divided according to gender stereotypes, conditions the learners to continue with such stereotypes in adult life.

On the same note, Lee (focus group) from site A made an observation about volunteering:

> *What we see here is tasks that are done by females at home are the ones that our female volunteers from the community do here. Same with tasks done by males at home are what they volunteer to do. We have never seen men cleaning during events but setting up tents and clearing the grounds. We grew up knowing duties for males and those for females. It is what we see. We hear these gender things but it will take time to change.*

The participant suggests that roles are categorised in a stereotypical manner. Roles are performed based on masculinity and femininity. She further suggests that males and females have learnt and refined doing gender by internalising gender roles and norms. To have such stereotypical gender roles performed in front of learners has an impact on learners as to what they perceive to be socially acceptable behaviour. Social constructionism postulates that the learning of an individual takes place due to interactions in a group (von Glaserfeld, 1995). As such, the functioning of a child takes place in relation to its environment, creating, altering and give meaning to the information he/she comes across in her/his association with the world. Women and men's attitudes and behaviours regarding what it means to be a "man" and "woman" are inculcated in us through various socialisation processes, according to West and Zimmerman (1987), who originally established the concept of "doing gender."

However, Khetsiwe (focus group) from site B noted a little difference on volunteering:

> *Volunteering by parents happens. I see them helping each other in the work that will be in progress. They do not segregate activities according to sex. It is interesting to see women working in the grounds with men and men helping with food preparation during important events.*

There is evidence from the participant that males and females volunteer in the school. What is striking in this submission is that, unlike the other schools A and D, here volunteers do not share their volunteering activities according to sex. There is an understanding that gender roles are not sex roles. Gender roles can change depending on a cultural group's considerations on duties and tasks that appropriate for its males and females based on meaning attached to them (Chauraya and Mugodzwa, 2011).

The study found that volunteering does occur in schools. However, the majority of activities reinforce gender stereotypes. These activities point to the spaces that boys and girls should occupy in their daily lives. This may place children in traditional gender roles. However, at other communities like site B, activities by volunteers do not reinforce gender stereotypes.

Community women and men with unique knowledge or talents who are brought into the class or school as resource individuals are one way that students experience space and gendered experiences. In responding to this question, Gabi (focus group) from site C asserted:

> *We usually see more males coming to the school. I think these are the top executives in companies we see by the powerful cars they drive. Yes, the school does bring people as resource persons in class with special knowledge and skills. However, it's like they like to bring more men than women with these skills. We ask ourselves, where are the successful women we usually see on televisions. Successful businessmen are always coming and few women come here.*

This response suggests that students believe that men are better than women in as far as skills are concerned, and that important and powerful posts are a preserve of men. Parents and community members play an important role in how children view men and women in society. The under-representation of women in leadership and top jobs shows that men dominate in the exercise of power and authority (Akgul, 2016).

Ayden (focus group) from Alpha High School averred:

> *Resource persons come to help us in different areas. What surprises us though is that males are more than females. We wonder if we have less women qualified and less motivational. As a boy, this is teaching me something that I grew up hearing, men are better than women and always on top and are superior to females.*

There is a suggestion of patriarchy as evidenced in this case, and gender discrimination. Ayden's view also suggests that gender discrimination can take place in clear and simple ways, in this case, overlooking inviting women as resource persons. This may perpetuate gender stereotypes among the learners, limiting girls, thinking that they must always work under boys and supporting the notion that they cannot be as successful as boys (Akgul, 2016). This places girls in spaces of low influence than boys. Ayden is pointing out to some gender inequality in the way resource persons are deployed in the school. It is a concern, since women seem not to be well represented in this case, yet the Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) speaks of promotion of gender equality in all representations as one of the 2030 sustainable development goals.

Based on submission from this theme, that community leaders and parents support the learners by ensuring the safety of school spaces. The parents and local authorities assist learners by pushing for a violence free school space. Having a school space that is free from sex discrimination is another way that community leaders and parents support the children. The study found that volunteering does occur in schools, but roles are performed based on masculinity and femininity. The majority of activities reinforce gender stereotypes. These activities point to the spaces that boys and girls should occupy in their daily lives. Spaces are demarcated based on gender and activities are gendered.

5.6 Agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools

This study revealed that the learners had little or no say in decision-making processes that took place in their schools. The decisions which schools made on behalf of the learners were not approved by learners. This affected the way they acted within the school spaces and how they experienced gender in schools. Some rules which the schools made without consulting the learners, according to findings, were biased against girls and this disadvantaged them. Guidance and counselling produced both positive and negative gendered experiences. Positive experiences such as empowerment for girls to challenge hegemonic masculinity were outcomes of guidance and counselling. On the other hand, some counsellors were traditionally stereotypical in the way they dealt with cases, which again placed girls at a disadvantage.

In response to the critical question on how children exercise agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools, two themes emerged. These were negotiations of space: Students' experiences of participation in decision-making and gender dimensions of guidance and counselling. These themes are discussed next as they emerged from participants.

5.6.1 Negotiations of space: students' experiences of participation in decision-making

The study revealed that, most decisions taken in schools are done by the administrators and teachers. The learners practiced little agency. They felt powerless, oppressed and repressed as they felt that some of the decisions taken were not in their favour. The decisions taken by the schools would be what the decision-makers thought was good for the learners. However, some participants felt that they had a partial role in decision-making through the representation they had with

prefects. The participants felt that prefects would have watered down whatever they would have relayed to them to pass to administrators given the prefects' fear of victimisation.

In responding to the question on whether students take part in deciding the school rules, Lily (focus group) from site A mentioned:

> *We partially can say yes because the prefects represent the students when decisions are made. But we know that as they relay the information to authorities it will not be as we would have said. We would like a situation where we are called in the school hall and we as students make binding rules together with administrators. For fear of victimization, the prefects will act nice towards the administrators.*

This collaborates well with what Banele (focus group) from site B noted:

> *We are represented by prefects in the decision-making process. So we cannot really say we fully take part because the prefects cannot say exactly what we feel or want. We do tell them what we want, but we see when rules are made that our inputs were not fully taken into consideration. Our voices are not complete in this process.*

Drawing from these comments on learners' participation in decision-making, participants expressed concern over their inability to fully participate in decision-making. This suggests that some of the decisions and rules made by administrators are not what the learners would have suggested, and that the learners are not acting with full agency. Mullay (2016) says that acting without agency implies that one's actions are not self-directed and motivated; rather they are subjected to a 'constraint'. Teachers and administrators can impose constraints or through the processes and established structures of the school they work within. This confirms what Banele said. In this study, it can be said that in high schools, children's constraints are imposed by teachers and administrators.

Buhle (focus group) from site D saw the decision-making process in the school as being partly done by the students:

> *Prefects are our mouthpieces. They represent us when rules are being made and decided by those in administration. We are not completely in it.*

These responses were the general feeling from the three sites, A B and D. This suggests that decisions taken by schools do not fully represent the needs of the learners. Learners are taken to be children who cannot really be trusted in making complete decisions without adults. Children cannot really make free, independent decisions. The view of the participants concurs with Horgan, Forde, Parkes and Martin (2015), who say school principals and teachers felt the need to involve students in decisions. However, the feeling was that adequate spaces for students' voices in the school context already existed through the representative structures such as student councils. On the contrary, students regarded schools as hierarchical establishments where even the formalised participation structures such as student representative councils, were experienced as ineffective and undemocratic.

This view was shared by Ndumo (focus group) at site D:

> *The false view that we are represented by prefects must not be taken seriously the reason being that we start by giving our views to class representatives who will then meet the prefects' board. The prefects' board then discuses and then meet the school administration. This really doesn't work due to a lot of people involved. So it really does not represent our voice. Why can't we be engaged as in directly? Rules are given to us.*

However, there was a difference that was noticed at school C, where it was revealed that students are not involved in the rule making process of the school.

Celiwe (focus group) at site C averred:

> *School rules are made by the administration, and students are not involved. We are only told what must be done. We do not a have a say at all. If we try to voice our concerns, we are told that we are children who need guidance from the elders. They tell us that they are more experienced, and more knowledgeable than us. There is no freedom of choice.*

This response suggests that children's destinies are in the hands of adults since they make no decision on what affects them. The children have no voice in the school spaces. The participant concedes that there is nothing they can do to change the *status quo* because their views and suggestions are taken lightly by virtue of the fact that they are children. In the context of this finding, it can be said that the students do not have complete rights. The revelation from this study

is supported by Horgan et al. (2015), that students were dissatisfied with the level of input in the decision-making processes in schools in Ireland. Due to their continued marginalisation, children in school spaces are suffering in their physical and social development (Staempfli, 2008). Children are said to be less socially skilled and less emotionally mature, such that decisions they make in schools are scrutinised by adults, who are the teachers and administrators. Children are regarded as those that are less expressive and hold lower competencies in terms of life skills (Norozi and Moen, 2016). They are contemplated and deliberated as being in a relatively powerless position in relation to adults.

Gugu (focus group) from site C commented:

> *Since we have no voice in the way decisions are taken in the school, we tend to have rules that are biased against girls. This creates unequal treatment between boys and girls. The school leadership seems not to understand the impact these biased rules have on how we interact as boys and girls. We are sometimes told as girls that 'we are girls' so we should behave as such when decisions in class are taken. We have no one to tell because even the female teachers themselves seem to side with everything given by the leaders.*

This response shows that the gendered experiences of students are different between boys and girls, depending on the rules set by teachers and administrators. Issues of male dominance can be felt from the tone of the participant. Decision-making then seems to be the preserve for males. Rules are made to suppress one sex to the other creates inequalities. Meiers (2007) and Byra and Wallhead (2012) found that in Ireland, girls were encouraged by teachers to use conventional methods when seeking attention like the raising of hands, whereas boys would make verbal outbursts, which resulted in teacher responding immediately. This leads to space dominance by boys in the classroom. Byra and Wallhead (2012) used videotape and quantitative analysis of teacher/student exchanges to conduct a six-year study in Irish secondary schools on the prevalence and types of decisions made in co-educational classes. Teachers reacted to male students' decisions more than female students' decisions, indicated a better reception of boys' contributions, and gave them superior praise and reinforcement for their decisions, according to the researchers.

In light of the remarks made on this theme, learners voiced concern about their limited ability to engage fully in decision-making. This implies that not all of the decisions and regulations implemented by administrators are those that the learners would have recommended, and that the learners are not acting with full agency. These results imply that since children have no say in matters that impact them, their fates are in the hands of adults. In school settings, children are voiceless. The students admit that because their opinions and proposals are dismissed because they are young, there is nothing they can do to alter the current situation.

5.6.2 Gender dimensions of guidance and counselling

The findings from the study were that guidance and counselling played an important role in shaping children's spaces and in influencing their gendered experiences. Guidance and counselling were discovered to have provided an empowerment platform especially to girls. Girls were now able to stand up against perceived and actual issues of sexual abuse and bullying. It was, however, revealed that guidance and counselling meant leaving the boy child behind, since many of the programmes were biased towards girls. Boys were finding it difficult to deal with some of their issues because, and less attention was given to them in guidance and counselling sessions. Concerns were raised in career guidance and counselling. It was revealed that guidance and counselling teachers push learners into classes that point them towards feminine and masculine roles.

Asked what role that guidance and counselling play in shaping the spaces that children occupy, their geographies and gendered experiences, Leah (individual interview) from site A submitted:

> *Guidance and counselling is done in the school. It helps in changing our views on a lot of issues. We get to know how we girls and boys should relate as human beings. We have come to realise that we have same value because of the lessons we get. Lessons usually cover abuse, empowerment, sexuality and career choices. The counsellors around here, however, seem to be biased especially in career choices. They encourage us to take our careers based on sex. This is not fair because some of us are ambitious to get into male dominated spaces.*

The interpretation here is that children are empowered through guidance and counselling to exercise agency. Programs for guidance and counselling are designed to mentor and direct learners

by helping them complete developmental goals. In order to maximize their degree of fulfilment and social contribution, students can find and develop their educational, career, and psychological potential with the aid of guidance and counselling. The goal of guidance and counselling programs in schools is to help students become better equipped to understand themselves, solve their own problems, and adapt to their surroundings. Guidance and counselling are designed to keep students from engaging in detrimental social evils and assist them in making the proper decisions in life so they can successfully pursue their future goals. They learn important provisions of life, which in the end affects how they negotiate their spaces, and change how they experience gender. The children are even able to see the flaws in counsellors, which means that children know what they want in life and do not need adults to decide for them. This concurs with Qvortrup (2009) in his study of childhood as a social construction, that it is not children's inactivity that results in their unfair treatment from adults, but that they are not at the same level of being active as adults. This means that there is nothing that children lack; rather adults have less understanding and recognition of children's praxis. Competence as a faculty is defined by adults in relation to adults' praxis (Norozi and Moen, 2016). Social constructionism believes that childhood forms part of who children would be as adults (Skelton, 2008). As such, what the learners learn during guidance and counselling has an impact on their gendered schooling experiences and what would happen in adult life.

Gabi (focus group) at site C commented:

> *We are glad that we have guidance and counselling in the school. This service has helped us, especially girls, to understand our worth and position in and out of school and we able to make decisions. We are now able to stand up for what we believe in. However, we still face challenges with the majority of information we get that always glorifies what boys and men do. For example, in career choices, we are always guided as girls into doing subjects that are traditionally believed to be for girls. Once you try to be vocal about it, you are treated with suspicion. For the sake of peace, we end up doing what we are told during those counselling sessions.*

The data suggests that guidance and counselling has helped girls improve how they understand and position themselves, and that girls are now able to make independent decisions in other areas of their lives. However, problems still exist in that counsellors still see boys as more important

than girls. Career counselling is still done in a stereotypical manner. Gabi confirms that. This submission tells a story of teachers channelling learners into categories that help them for conventional masculine and feminine roles through guidance and counselling (Mugodzwa and Matope, 2011). Girls are given advice to take home economics while boys are channelled in taking courses such as mathematics and woodwork that prepare them for work that would support the family. This contrasts with Kanga (2017, p. 3), who states that guidance and counselling should aid students to "solve problems, establish personal goals, make decisions, select related courses based on individual interests as well as establishing educational plans". Students should be responsible for their actions and choices. This entails a conversational approach to creating children's spaces.

Khanyi (focus group) from site B affirmed the presence of guidance and counselling:

> *Mostly, subject choices, sexuality issues and drug abuse are discussed. We are taught about the dangers of getting pregnant, drug abuse and choosing subjects for future careers while at school. The issue of pregnancy is prominent given the reported high levels of school dropouts due to early pregnancies. The issue seems to focus more on girls as victims and speak less about boys. It is biased because the boys who impregnate seem to receive no chastisement from the counsellors. The girl child is the one who is negatively viewed and punished while the boy goes free without consequences.*

This response shows that children know the issues that are discussed during the guidance and counselling sessions. The girls understand that falling pregnant is one of the prominent problems befalling them. If allowed the space, they can make informed decisions pertaining to their life outcomes. The students understand issues of gender relations. They understand when there is a bias towards one sex. Gerdin (2016, p. 21) says that in the production of gendered identities, discourses of gender play a significant role since they reinforce specific images of female and male identities through techniques of normalisation. Gerdin (2016) argues that subjects are produced both as individuals and as different through the process of normalization, by constituting what and who is to be seen as 'normal' or 'deviant'. Women and girls have to accept the spaces of blame while men and boys are celebrated as "pure." In the school spaces, girls get blamed for getting pregnant while boys are exonerated from an issue in which they are heavily implicated.

The study's findings support Kanga (2016) in his study on effectiveness of guidance and counselling in schools in Kenya, that teachers in school set up have an obligation to give guidance to students on a number of aspects of school and social life in general, as a way of helping them to adjust to school and society so that they occupy given spaces. The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2011) notes that teachers should be fully capacitated on issues of counselling, guidance, life skills, STIs and many other issues to create fair and just gendered spaces for children. Linda (focus group) from site C mentioned:

> *Most of our guidance and counselling issues seem to speak more about girls and less of boys. I am not sure, but I think may be women/girls are the ones that suffer more from abuse, rape and many other bad things. We have more clubs that are siding more with girls than boys. The reason may be, is to try to empower them so that they have the same aspirations and ambitions like boys. For example, AGAPE club is girls club. I have seen girls' attitude changing. They have started challenging boys in many issues.*

The response shows awareness by learners on issues of gender inequalities that exist between men and women. The impact of the clubs promoting issues of girls seem to be paying dividends, as articulated by the participant. At the same time, the guidance and counselling sessions seem to be leaving boys behind which may end up having undesirable effects upon boys. Empowerment seems to be working, as witnessed by the change in attitude of the girls.

As pointed out by Fullan (2013), having active students would enable them to assume agency in negotiation with peers, teachers and administrators who simultaneously exercise agency to facilitate learning of students. By engaging them in guidance and counselling, the girls are eager to change and occupy masculine spaces. The response shows that student agency is inherently relational (Annan, 2016). This means that the way people act and with whom students interact, would influence their aspirations and their possibilities. The more knowledgeable and skilled they are and the more access to information learners have, the better positioned they are to assume agency. This is claimed by Linda who says … *for example, AGAPE club is a girls' club. I have seen girls' attitude changing. They have started challenging boys in many issues.*

Guidance and counselling play a role in shaping the spaces those children occupy, their geographies and gendered experiences. Linda's claims suggest that guidance and counselling

allow girls to have high aspirations and ambitions like boys. The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) has its guidance and counselling aim of ensuring a complete development, safe transitioning of learners to adulthood and their survival. The empowering target for guidance and counselling as revealed from this study, resonates well with Rgniyd (2008), who observed that guidance and counselling's major aim was for human empowerment through helping individuals find their space in the society. Girls in Eswatini high schools in the Hhohho region are finding their space through guidance and counselling.

Nathi (individual interview) from site D made a contribution on two questions on the role guidance and counselling play in shaping the spaces that children occupy, their geographies and gendered experiences, and on what kind of aspects are discussed during the guidance and counselling sessions:

Nathi said:

> *Guidance and counselling has had a tremendous effect on how boys and girls relate. We boys have learnt that we are not more special than girls. We have learnt that there are no areas that are specifically reserved for boys where girls cannot go. Girls have become confident when they interact with boys, they can argue and stand their ground. They are now willing to take risky jobs that were seen to be for boys.*

He further asserted:

> *Issues usually discussed are career choices, pregnancy and many other social problems that we meet in life. This has been helpful because many girls are falling pregnant and dropping out of school. So it is empowering. We are finding solutions to our problems. Two of my classmates wanted to commit suicide but they later confessed that through the counselling sessions, they stopped thinking about it. Violence is one issue that is always tackled here. Boys and even teachers sexually abuse girls. 'Bayasomana botishela' (they propose love teachers). We are advised to stop violence of any nature so that we have peaceful school spaces.*

Drawing from these comments, it is suggested that interactions between boys and girls during guidance and counselling sessions have produced a different space altogether, a space in which girls are able to stand their ground, and where boys now have regard for girls. From "the enormity

of the global to the extremely little," according to Massey (2005, p. 9), space should be recognized as the outcome of interrelations produced through encounters In other words, what produces space are the interactions and interrelations among individuals. This is the whole argument of Social Constructionism, that reality is constructed through interactions and interrelations among individuals and groups, and is supported by part of Nathi's statement that,

> *Girls have become confident when they interact with boys, they can argue and stand their ground. They are now willing to take risky jobs that were seen to be for boys.*

.

Interactions can be on an international level, but the major focus of this study was on the students in the four high schools. Social constructionism focuses on social influences on individual life (Galbin, 2014). Through interactions during guidance and counselling sessions, children are given space to exercise agency. There is little that the majority of schools do to motivate students to question gender stereotypes so as to acquire and even learn skills which are, by tradition, 'connected to the opposite' sex, a view shared by Mugodzwa and Matope (2011, p. 80).

Nathi also commented on friends who were suicidal. Guidance and counselling can help learners in proffering solutions to problems in their spaces. Annan (2016) avers that promoting learners' agency involves the creation of solutions in real-life situations as well as providing support to young learners. This is done so that they embrace uncertainty as they persevere through calculated trial and error. For agency to be clear, it should involve the articulation of relations that exist between children and their worlds. Guidance and counselling fulfil that role, as seen from the responses in the study.

Linda stated from site C:

> *...there were more clubs that are siding more with girls than boys. The reason may be, is to try to empower them so that they have the same aspirations and ambitions like boys. For example, AGAPE club is girls club. I have seen girls' attitude changing.*

This suggests the need to empower girls and probably to give them a voice in school spaces. Encouraging girls to participate in established school clubs help them to see things in a different manner so as to disrupt traditions of boys' superiority. Having discussions that seem to be

promoting the issues of girls to encourage them in exercising agency and positioning in school spaces, and is supported by international organisations such as the UNFPA. UNFPA (2015) declared safe spaces for women and girls. UNFPA (2015, p. 4) says "girls have limited space in most schools to meet, and often public spaces are often inhabited largely by boys. It becomes important to nurture girls' sense of optimism, hope and trust. The MOET has allowed some NGOs like Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse to produce material in schools to support girls (UNICEF, 2015).

Linda's comment about *girls*' attitudes changing suggests that the environment of having empowerment messages passed on to girls has been effective. There is a positive correlation between guidance and counselling sessions and girls' behaviour. The navigation of the school spaces by learners is influenced by what takes place within that space, a view shared by Tetlow (2016, p. 110) and Massumi (2010, p. 180), who suggested that "human beings experience and navigate space by sensing and orienting more by the shape of space." This is in line with what Eurydice (2009) found out that, gender sensitive guidance programmes are more targeted towards girls than boys. According to Linda, this has helped girls choose particularly natural science and technology-oriented subjects, thereby breaking traditional gender patterns.

Leah (individual interview) at Alpha high school asserted:

> *The counsellors around here, however, seem to be biased especially in career choices. They encourage us to take our careers based on sex. This is not fair because some of us are ambitious to get into male dominated spaces.*

The argument has been that, there is reason for vocational guidance to help address specific gender-related career choices. The encouragement is towards making career advisors more gender aware so that they are in a position to stand up against the stereotyping that exists in school spaces and even among the body of students.

Nathi in his submission on guidance and counselling programmes noted:

> *Violence is one issue that is always tackled here. Boys and even teachers sexually abuse girls. 'Bayasomana botishela' (they propose love teachers). We are advised during*

guidance and counselling to stop violence of any nature so that we have peaceful school spaces and be successful in our school work. Violence in schools makes us fail.

It is a necessity to have the guidance and counselling sessions to discuss the issues of abuse and violence in and outside the school environment. Violent school spaces have a negative result on students. Mullis, Martin Foy and Drucker (2012) and UNESCO (2012) agree that unsafe and aggressive school environments have a negative influence on boys' and girls' achievement and attainment. Gender-based violence has been on the rise in Eswatini schools, which runs counter to the goals and objectives of the Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018), which states that life skills education should be provided in schools to encourage positive behaviours that lead to problem-solving without the use of violence. Many instances of gender-based violence took place in the Sub Saharan region, Eswatini, especially against girls. This was attested by several authors (Burton, 2005; Dunne, Humphreys & Leach, 2006; Parkes & Heslop, 2013). Dunne, Humphreys & Leach (2006) note that implicit gender-based violence in schools is widely perpetrated by teachers and students against girls. Parkes and Heslop (2013) allude that most violence against girls is committed by people known to them, including school mates, teachers and boyfriends. This confirms what Nathi said. Guidance and counselling become necessary to minimise the negative impact of violence, especially to the girl child and to improve their schooling space.

The research found that guidance and counselling services are available to both girls and boys without discrimination. This is a plus in the schools and this goes on to show that the Eswatini Ministry of Education is following up on what is in the Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2011). The policy makes the guidance programmes compulsory and an examinable subject and a stand-alone at all the levels of Teacher Education in Eswatini.

The interpretation from this theme is that children are empowered through guidance and counselling to exercise agency. They learn important provisions of life, which in the end affects how they negotiate their spaces, and change how they experience gender. Through interactions during guidance and counselling sessions, children are given space to exercise agency. Guidance and counselling's major aim is for human empowerment through helping individuals find their space in the society. Girls in Eswatini high schools in the Hhohho region are finding their space through guidance and counselling. Girls' attitudes changing indicates that the environment of

having empowerment messages passed on to girls has been effective. There is a positive correlation between guidance and counselling sessions and girls' behaviour. However, there is need for vocational guidance and counselling to help address specific gender-related career choices. The encouragement is towards making career advisors more gender aware so that they are in a position to stand up against the stereotyping that exists in school spaces and even among the body of students.

5.7 Conducive spaces for learners: gender responsive environments

From this study, it was found out that gender responsive environments encourage and support learning. These environments uniquely improve the gendered experiences of both boys and girls within the school spaces. School spaces that are not gender responsive negatively affect learners' academic achievements and also result in unwelcome gendered experiences. A gender responsive school space, according to FAWE (2018), is one in which the physical, intellectual/academic, and social space recognises the individual requirements of both boys and girls.

In responding to the question on how schools can be turned into gender-responsive environments, themes centered on the physical, academic and social spaces, participants made several comments.

5.7.1 Gendered spaces: students' experiences of the physical school spaces

The study revealed that the physical spaces needed to be improved to make them gender-responsive. Learners complained of small libraries that made it difficult to accommodate all learners with the result that there are more boys inside, given their use of physical strength to gain entrance. Ablution facilities were found to be wanting, especially to the detriment of the girl child. Specialised needs were not met in the ablution facilities for girls, which led to girls absenting themselves from school especially during menstrual periods. This may have a negative impact on girls' academic achievement, since the days they are absent may not be recovered. Some of the bathrooms lacked privacy to users which made them uncomfortable. As such, the participants requested the construction of bigger libraries and improvement of the ablution facilities as a way of making these spaces gender-responsive. Social constructionism as a theory that supports this study claims that reality is constructed through interactions. These interactions created the true reality of the learners' gendered experiences.

The physical space makes reference to the infrastructure such as school buildings, sports grounds, toilets, libraries water, sanitation and electricity (FAWE, 2016). The participants gave suggestions of what they thought should be done in order to make their physical school spaces gender-responsive.

Leah (individual interview) from site A said:

> *Bigger libraries should be built to avoid pressure when entering so that both boys and girls have equal access. As it is, boys usually because of their physical strength, muscle themselves in first. Our ablution facilities need to be cleaned regularly specially to cater for girls during the menstrual cycles. More toilet paper should be made available in girls' facilities since girls use it more than boys. Dirty and smelling ablution facilities result in girls absenting themselves from school during menstruation.*

Hlengiwe (individual interview) from site B commented:

> *Our ablution facilities should provide privacy for us girls. Someone can see us from outside if standing on high ground. The administrators have to move with speed and change the design. We need privacy because the bathroom/toilet is a place for privacy. They were fine when the school was girls only school. Our sports fields should be maintained well, grass should be cut, and more showers for us to bath after work outs should be built. We do have sports fields to refresh, we exercise which is good for the brain and health.*

Issues raised touch on infrastructure which according to Leah and Hlengiwe, affect and influence their daily lives especially as girls. Leah suggests that library should be made bigger to accommodate both boys and girls. She suggests that the library is a contested physical space to the advantage of boys. Both indicated that boys dominate and exhibit hegemonic masculinity and sexist attitudes and behaviours in the library spaces. The response by Leah concerning the library indicates the library is gendered space, as Ullah and Khan (2016) noted in a study of learners' spaces in Pakistan, that it is not the classroom only but spaces such as the library that are gendered. The Eswatini Education Sector policy (2018) says that there should be adequate and resourced school libraries in all Eswatini public secondary/high schools.

Hlengiwe showed her gender awareness as she articulated that the bathroom designs were not changed when the school was turned into a co-educational one, from being girls only school. This suggests gender blindness on the part of the administrators, as observed from the participants in their recognition of the different needs for girls and boys. The findings from this study show that ablution facilities are not comfortable spaces for learners since they provide no privacy, especially to girls. Chouraya and Mugodzwa (2011) concur that the administrators in schools are gender blind because out of sheer ignorance, they fail to recognise the differences between boys and girls, resulting in failure to cater for their differences. UNICEF (2009) corroborates that having well equipped big libraries enhances the learning environment for both boys and girls. The physical space in the ablution facilities is not conducive for girls. Leah noted that they would lose much learning time which would in the end negatively affect the girls' academic performance. The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) states that there should be buildings and classrooms that should be well repaired and there should be available and accessible gender-sensitive hygiene facilities. McPhedran, Pearson and Cairncross (2010) noted that girls feel uncomfortable using toilets because they smelt bad, were overcrowded and dirty. In contrast, cleanliness and better maintenance were associated with higher toilet use (Carlos, 2014). UNESCO (2012) points out that the unavailability of clean ablution facilities disturbs the school attendance of girls. Muito (2004) says that girls put an impression that they are dumb so that they cannot be called on by teachers during their menstrual period if they attend classes.

There is also acknowledgment from Hlengiwe from site B that the ablution facilities space should offer privacy. She says: *Our ablution facilities should provide privacy for us girls. Someone can see us from outside if standing on high ground. Privacy when using ablution facilities is important.* Burton and Leoschut (2013) reveal that for children, privacy is a personal space and not just a vital requirement for toilet use. This view corroborates well with Ingrey (2013, p. 47), who said that "the public binary bathroom is a form of closet." She further alludes that bathroom/washroom confines and conceals its users. The bathroom space separates its occupants from the environment as such it should conceal its users.

Hlengiwe also speaks on the improvements that should be made on the sports field when she said:

... our sports fields should be maintained well, grass should be cut, and more showers for us to bath after work outs should be built. We do have sports fields to refresh, we exercise which is good for the brain and health.

The participant also reveals the importance of sports and that they should be made user-friendly. It is of importance for learners to have time for recreation and physical activity. This study confirms Sharif's (2014) assertion that schools should provide recreational and physical activities. This would strike a balance between cerebral schoolwork and play, both of which have a significant impact on children's development. Also, from Hlengiwe's submission, it is evident that the body and mind are one unit and that what happens to one would affect the other (Alsauidi, 2015). As such, the whole child goes to school to be educated and that requires both physical and mental training.

Jabu (focus group) from site C however noted something different from the above participants:

Buildings need to be ventilated and painted to look attractive. Our sports fields are not safe because of violence that takes place there even though we love spending time there. There should be codes of conduct there to avoid violence and bullying. I think cameras should be inserted in the sport fields and their bathrooms for both boys and girls because a lot of bad things happen there, bullying, sexual violence, smoking. Rugby, yes, is a very physical sport but I think it should be allowed to girls since it's only boys who play it and girls act as cheerleaders.

Evidence from this extract shows that buildings need to be ventilated and painted. This suggests that good looking buildings have a positive impact on learners. Unwelcoming buildings have a negative influence on learners. Sports fields were school spaces that were found to harbour violent behaviour. The bathrooms at the sport fields were not safe spaces for learners as vices such as bullying, sexual violence and smoking took place there. The study's findings are in line with Aamayreh (2011) that various kinds of learning environments should be provided such as welcoming, painted buildings. This is important as it creates an attractive and appropriate teaching and learning space. This study's findings are in line with Alsauidi (2015), who found that in Boston schools, Latino children were affected by poor school buildings conditions and boys liked spending time outside on sports fields. The rugby field appears rather a boundaried sense of space

that could and should be occupied by boys. Jabu's remarks demonstrate how extremely gendered spaces in the sports fields are. The sports pitch is a space where physicality and unruliness are promoted and expected, though the given rules of sports are at play (Clark, 2010). Girls just like boys should be allowed to play rugby and not be discriminated against by school authorities. Boys, from the submission given by Jabu, suffer bullying in the sports bathrooms. Students cited incidents of bullying, pushing, harassment and physical abuse in bathrooms/toilets as a reason for fearing to use them (McPhedran et al., 2010). Inserting cameras in the sports fields could make the grounds user-friendly and make them gender-responsive.

Issues raised on this theme touch on infrastructure, which affect and influence the learners' daily lives especially as girls. Infrastructure like library should be made bigger to accommodate both boys and girls. Small libraries are a contested physical space to the advantage of boys. Boys dominate and exhibit hegemonic masculinity and sexist attitudes and behaviours in the library spaces. Evidence from t extracts shows that buildings need to be ventilated and painted. Good looking buildings have a positive impact on learners. Unwelcoming buildings have a negative influence on learners. Sports fields were physical school spaces that were found to harbour violent behaviour.

5.7.2 Gendered spaces: experiences of students' academic school spaces

The study revealed that learners were not given the autonomy to make decisions by themselves. In other words, they did not practise agency. Teachers seemed to be interfering in how learners made decisions. They felt that they were not empowered. They could not make decisions on issues that concerned them, for example, the choice of subjects they would want to take. They demanded to be autonomous to make decisions that affect their academic life. It was also revealed through the study that boys were treated better than girls. Boys were given a lot of freedom in the classroom, a privilege that was not extended to girls**.** Academic spaces, according to Mawere and Chauraya (2011), are places where students are empowered and teachers are gender responsive, imaginative, and creative. It is a setting featuring gender-sensitive teaching and learning resources, as well as gender-sensitive school administration. Children's gendered experiences of these spaces are varied, according to the school they attend though there are areas where their experiences are the same throughout the different research sites. The participants quoted here responded to issues on

empowerment, teacher gender-responsiveness and on gender- responsive teaching and learning materials.

Adam (focus group) from site A stated:

> *The government should train our teachers not to micro manage us. Teachers should stop this too much controlling us and allow us to make independent decisions. Guidance and counselling should be fully supported since it is trying to build our capabilities and give us greater control and choice over our learning through empowerment programs.*

The uneasy feelings expressed by Adam alludes to how academic spaces are still controlled by adults and how it affects the learners. This was substantiated by Khanyi (focus group) from site B who said:

> *Learners should be supported in the decisions they make, not to be told what to do always. This empowers us and it make us feel important. The school spaces should be democratic not autocratic. Subject choices should be left to us without teachers' intervention. We should be engaged in decisions that affect our academic life. Teachers should trust us in how we make our decisions so that we do not resist them.*

These responses show that the children desire to exercise agency in the academic spaces. Children are not allowed to make independent decisions in high schools in the Hhohho region. Children's spaces are dominated by adults and this results in them having less room to manoeuvre as far as decision-making is concerned. Broom (2015) notes that teachers have a tendency of controlling and micromanaging their learners. The academic space can be negatively affected as students take power by resisting teachers. Broom further states that students can resist to be controlled by teachers and this hurt the academic space, as they can lose their self-motivation and love for learning. He (2015, p. 82) advocates that for academic spaces to be gender responsive and fruitful, "trusting students is key". Believing in students' ability to do their work and guide their own learning in Eswatini's high schools should be promoted (Broom, 2015). Teachers who trust their students establish trusting academic environments, build capabilities, and empower students to manage themselves by trusting them. Thomas (2011) avers that the UNCRC has placed children on the social and political agenda in the context of rights. The engagement of students in decision-

making processes takes place at different levels. Participation in decision-making processes impacts the leadership skills, life skills and in many other for students in high schools. Khanyi highlights this:

> … *we should be engaged in decisions that affects our academic life. Teachers should trust us in how we make our decisions so that we do not resist them.*

Further alternative views on the academic spaces came from Lunga (individual interview) at site C:

> *Our teachers should treat boys and girls the same. They should not give preferential treatment to boys. Boys should not be allowed to dominate classroom discussions and made to be supreme. Girls should be allowed to speak freely to share their experiences without disturbances from boys. Girls should be encouraged to speak. Boys should not be allowed to disturb lessons, and respect male teachers' lessons like they do in female teachers' lessons.*

The narrative exposes how students in Eswatini high schools experience gender and how they negotiate the spaces. Teachers show patriarchal attitudes and support the masculine superiority of boys. There is no gender equality in the way boys and girls are treated. The findings concur with Ullah and Khan (2016) in that academic spaces are highly gendered as boys threaten male teachers' authority and smooth functioning of classroom more often than girls. To substantiate Lunga's finding, Ullah and Khan (2016, p. 3) underline that boys refrain from disturbing female teachers' lessons "to safeguard their masculinity by avoiding to be chided by a female teacher". The self-esteem damage and insult are worse when the chiding comes from a female teacher. Boys, by keeping silent in female teachers' lessons, show their perceived masculinity and superiority (Ullah & Khan, 2016).

Musa (focus group) from site D said:

> *Girls should not do a lot of 'signaling' that is showing greater docility, keenness to welcome and cooperate with all what teachers say. They should stop giving teachers signals, and stop flattering teachers for good grades. For their academic progress, however, they should not fear talking to male teachers as they always do. Male teachers*

should stop proposing love to girls. This will make them lose concentration in their studies and fail while boys excel.

This just goes to show that the interpretation of academic spaces is not the same between boys and girls. Their experiences of the gendered spaces are not the same. Boys perceive girls to be manipulative in influencing teachers' behaviours in the academic spaces. Also, girls seem to have less contact with male teachers. This suggests that male teachers propose love to girls which has a negative impact on their academic performance. Girls also seem not to like talking much to male teachers, which may reduce their academic contact with these teachers and may have a negative academic outcome. This finding concurs with Ullah (2015) in that there is little contact between most girls and their male teachers because of a variety of reasons. These include defamation and fear of scandals. He asserts that male teachers give more eye contact to male students. The teachers, however, give more significant and longer non-verbal and even verbal responses to girls' comments than boys'. Ullah (2015) suggests that equal contact should be afforded to both learners in and outside classrooms for equity in teaching and learning to be realised. Male students are more likely than female students to be subjected to regular and serious physical violence, while female students are subjected to sexual harassment and abuse perpetrated to varying degrees by male students and teachers, as Pinheiro (2006) and UNICEF (2014) concur with the findings. They suggest setting out centres around schools to quickly deal with issues pertaining to sexual based violence. The Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy (2011) has zero tolerance to issues of sexual violence. Those found guilty of perpetrating these acts are dismissed from the profession.

Nathi (individual interview) from site D asserted:

Books should be republished because the ones we have send wrong messages about what it means to be a boy/man or girl/woman. Males are given more attention than females. Girls are portrayed as nurses and teachers while boys are portrayed as doctors and engineers. The main actors in literature books are never females but males.

For both boys and girls, a gender-responsive academic space should offer suitable and responsive teaching and learning materials. The way books portray boys and girls is different. Boys are more favourably portrayed than girls. This suggests that boys dominate the given academic spaces. These images send messages on the spaces that should be occupied by males and females. This

goes to show that men/boys occupy important spaces compared to the lowly and insignificant spaces occupied by women/girls. Mustapha and Mills (2015, p. 3) agree that it is necessary to critique the "images which bombard us every day in the books and literature since they have an impact on the way we view ourselves and others". Most books still present the lives of females and males in stereotypical ways that puts males at an advantage in most spaces (Mugodzwa & Matope, 2011). Mugodzwa and Matope (2011, p. 77) further agree that males were portrayed in different occupations, whereas females were confined to fantasy roles or narrow, traditional female roles, such as that of being housewife or nurse. UNESCO (2015) advocates that females should be portrayed, described and represented with the same images as males in language and literature books.

The MOET has done revisions of books to remove gender stereotypes in some textbooks, to place both boys and girls at par in the academic spaces that they occupy.

Owethu (focus group) from site D confirmed:

> *The books don't portray gender inequalities anymore. Let me say that there has been an improvement in the way teaching and learning materials portray boys and girls. Science books now show successful female doctors. Books have dropped the use of the word 'he' now. It is now 'he/she'. This also goes to show that girls also now occupy important spaces in the society. This should continue so that boys and girls are portrayed the same in books.*

This finding from this participant shows an improvement in the teaching and learning materials. Gender-responsive images are now in textbooks. In addition, gender-responsive language can be witnessed in the teaching and learning materials. This suggests that there are now guidelines for authors and there is evaluation by officials of materials, from a gender perspective (Eurydice, 2009). The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) has revised curriculum instruction materials to meet changing needs and demands as one of its strategic goals. Language used has an impact on how the students interpret their spaces affects the way they think about the spaces they occupy (Jirata and Kjorholt, 2015). Careful selection of language used should be done to make sure that no learner feels discriminated against.

From this theme, children are not allowed to make independent decisions in high schools in the Hhohho region in their academic spaces. Children have less leeway to manoeuvre while making decisions since adults dominate the areas that are meant for them. Teachers have a propensity to micromanage and control their learners. Teachers exhibit patriarchal behaviour and encourage boys' supremacy through their masculinity. Boys and girls are not treated equally in terms of their gender. Boys think that girls are sophisticated when it comes to influencing teachers' actions in the classroom. Girls also appear to interact with male teachers less often than boys do. Boys and girls are portrayed in literature in different ways. Boys are portrayed more positively than girls, implying that boys predominate in the relevant academic spaces. Pictures in books convey messages about the areas that boys and girls should occupy. This theme's finding demonstrates how the instructional materials have improved. Textbooks now include gender-responsive illustrations. The teaching and learning materials also use language that is gender-responsive.

5.7.3 Gendered spaces: students' experiences of the social school spaces

The data from the study showed that boys and girls had different gendered experiences with regard to the school's social spaces. The social school spaces affected learners and how they accomplished their academic work. The learners complained because of the bad treatment they received from the teachers, which they said made them hate school. They complained about the many stringent rules that teachers enforced. As a way to make the social school spaces responsive, especially in terms of relations with teachers, the learners suggested the loosening up of stringent rules by teachers and to allow learners to make some decisions themselves. Social constructionism as a theory underpinning this study states that people's lives exist because of the social and interpersonal influences (Gergen, 1985). The lives of learners exist due to the inter-relationships they have with teachers.

The social school space also plays an important role in influencing children's geographies and gendered experiences. FAWE (2018) defines the social school space as all relationships between students and teachers, students and students, boys and girls, boys and boys, girls and girls, and school management and teachers. In this section, the learners discussed their relationship with teachers and boy-boy, and boy-girl relations and how these could be made gender-responsive.

Lily (focus group) from site A mentioned:

> *Teachers should stop the habit of constantly making up their own rules. They have to stop this dressing down or putting students down and giving out punishments when they are having bad days. The principal should allow us students to write in a suggestion box about how we feel about teachers. It disturbs our learning.*

Celiwe (focus group) at site C corroborated:

> *Our teachers should be friendly to us as this will help us to work peacefully with them and make us pass. This obsession with power annoys. School ends up boring. Good relations between teacher and learner are important. There are too many rules enforced by teachers. They should reduce them, for example, what effect does my hair style have on my academic performance? Few rules and allow us to make some independent decisions.*

Musa (focus group) from site D commented:

> *Rules in our school especially by teachers are too much and of course strict. We have no freedom; we will end rebelling. Teachers should be worried about drug abuse and gender violence not getting worried about our hair styles. School sucks. Teachers should reduce the rules and regulations and focus on bigger problems that the school is going through.*

An almost similar response came from Bruce (focus group) from site B:

> *School is painful thing for me. Yes, school is fun at times, but most of the time it is these group of teachers pushing us around because they have so much unrestrained power. Abasebentise emandla abo kancane (translated as let them use their power sparingly).*

Every learner, teacher, and member of the staff must follow rules and regulations in order to create a nonaggressive, well-organized school atmosphere. However, because they are intended to regulate children's actions and behaviour, school rules and regulations may not only affect the school but, more crucially, the attitudes of the learners. The school administration uses strict disciplinary methods to maintain control over the learners and force them to follow the many rules and regulations of the school. From submissions made, both boys and girls spoke out against what they considered minor and irrelevant regulations and rules by teachers meant to control and constrain their behaviour. In this light, school was seen as an unwanted imposition of authority and control that had little to do with fostering effective teaching and learning circumstances. The

learners appealed for the removal of the many unnecessary rules and regulations for them to enjoy school. Alnasseri (2014) supports the findings in her study of student –teacher relationship in Oman, that removal of unnecessary rules by teachers and presence of trust, support and respect in the school environment improves children's learning. Learners feel free to ask questions, and disclose what they did not understand without fear if their relationship with teachers is uniquely warm.

Regarding relationships amongst boys and girls, the following submissions were made:

5.7.3.1 Boys social relations and masculinities

The study revealed that boys have to act violently as a way of asserting their masculinity within the school spaces. Boys are depressed because of the bullying that they have to endure most of the times from other boys. The boys feel neglected with no support coming from guidance and counselling department in schools as they feel it only caters for girls. Boys end up acting violently and angrily towards others as a way of dealing with the bullying. This study also revealed that boys within the school spaces provoke each other as a way of testing each other's strength. Those who show signs of weakness are the ones who continue to be abused more. The study found that, the abused boys by other boys' requests for the intervention of the school administration to intervene with strict policies to curb the occurrence of these activities. These findings are reflected in the responses given by the participants.

Ayden (focus group) from site A highlighted:

> *Being a boy means you have to act macho, otherwise you will always get this junk treatment or crap treatment from other boys. Boys do not have ways of dealing with problems because we have nowhere to let out our emotions. We have no one to share our issues with. I go through depression and the only way to deal with it is for me to get angry and often offend other people and become mean to them. Guidance and counselling pays more attention to girls. That should change and focus on boys as well.*

Ayden's response is important in that he associates acting macho with gender-based harassment, and inability to deal with his emotions. He highlighted that there is need to get emotional support, the lack of which is linked to depression. The need for guidance and counselling to focus also more

on boys is noted, so that they benefit from it to deal with their problems (Gonick and Conrads, 2022).

Another participant also indicated how boys do surveillance of peers' masculinity, centering on the body, physical strength and the weight of the body. Bullying, according to the findings of this study, happens among the boys against each other. The bullying took place without any provocation. This could be regarded as an attention seeking behaviour and also a claim to occupation of space.

Banele (focus group) at site B mentioned:

> *Boys have to deal with an issue of the strength they have. As boys, we can just start pushing one another without any justifiable reason and if you indicate that you are injured, upset or hurt by what have been done to you, we will continue doing until you fight back. If you show that you weak, you will be called abusive names. This is stressful and I would like the administrators to put strict policies to stop this abuse that we boys put on each other. We want school to be interesting but the stress of the verbal and physical abuse is too much.*

Another boy mentions the increased pressure exerted on boys to have sex with girls. Lwazi (focus group) at site D commented:

> *It's an interesting thing to have girls at school. You can easily get chicks at school if you are a handsome dude. However, there is pressure that you do more with a chick. For example, kissing alone is seen as not doing enough so you are expected to go beyond it. Some immature guys bow down to this pressure and regret later because of the consequences. This is all because as boys we do not get proper advice while in school. We need more than the guidance and counselling sessions in schools.*

The emphasis here is the expectations of normalising certain behaviours that are constructed into the expectations of boys' behaviour within the school spaces and the peer group's role in the social masculinity practices (Martino and Kehler, 2005). The emphasis also is on proving oneself through things like drugs and ability to attract girls (pull *chicks),* which appear to be requirements for displaying masculinity successfully. Failure to succeed in these, result in risking being subjected to homophobic harassment. Having an atmosphere with drug use may result in violence and failure on part of the users and those affected. This shows that human

lives are made through how people interact with one another. The Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018) makes it plain that the school spaces should be free from drugs and alcohol as a way of promoting gender-responsive school spaces.

According to the study's data on this theme boys and girls experienced the school's social spaces differently based on their gender. The study revealed that boys have to act violently as a way of asserting their masculinity within the school spaces. Boys experience depression because of the bullying that they frequently experience from other boys. Because they believe the guidance and counselling department in schools solely helps girls, the boys feel ignored and without any support. As a means of coping with the bullying, boys often act violently and viciously toward others.

5.7.3.2 Girls social relations and femininities

The study revealed that the girls' bodies, their sexuality and their appearance, were of major concern to their lives. Slim bodies and being pretty conferred a femininity status and carried a social currency. The monitoring of sexual identity and femininities played a vital role in girls' peer group relations and impacted on the quality of their school lives. Martino and Kehler (2005) aver that the body and appearance are a major concern in the lives of girls. Hence, if they are body shamed and called names, this would negatively impact their schooling lives and make the school spaces an unwelcome environment for them to achieve their highest possible potential. Thus, some girls had comments to make.

Ndumo (focus group) at site D asserted:

> *Some girls want to live up to the standards of boys and ending being fake. They do things to get approved by boys. This makes girls subordinate to boys. Girls need to be empowered through all possible ways so that they live for themselves and stop to be intimidated by boys Girls clubs should be made strong in schools. Girls lose their personality since they are cornered to get boys approval. They get rewarded for conforming to being female and being sexually desirable for boys.*

The point that Ndumo makes is important regarding boys' power to intimidate. Boys use their power in intimidating girls and policing girls' sexuality and femininities. Schools need to upgrade

their girl empowerment programs to ensure that girls stand up for themselves. Jones, Moss and Tomlinson (2014) noted that, instead of defining girls according to their potentialities, doing so according to sexuality is a sure way of subordinating them to boys.

Gabi (focus group) at site C mentioned:

> *Boys think that they are superior to girls and think they can dictate as to what girls should look like, do and what not to do. If you do not fit in their image, then they start calling you names. This disturbs our social lives and have an impact on our school lives. Schools should be looking into these issues seriously.*

From the narrative, it seems boys have a tendency of surveillance on girls. Boys connect body image to the wider issues of how to gain social acceptance for girls. Name-calling should not form part of childhood. Children should be taught that words hurt just as much as being hit physically. Being called names can be carried far into adulthood. Name calling thus has a negative impact on girls schooling lives. As children interact socially, they reflect the negative judgements they have been told or observed, and if left unchecked, these beliefs can be the basis for life-long prejudices (Brynes, 1998). There is a clarion call for school authorities to look at the issue of name calling by boys, to make school spaces gender-friendly, as enshrined in the Eswatini Education Sector Policy (2018). The social constructionism perspective states that, as learners and groups interact together in a society and over time, they form mental representations and concepts about each other's actions. These concepts or mental representations created through name calling, finally become adopted into shared roles utilised by learners as they relate with each other (Cojacaru, 2010). It might be claimed that responsible education authorities should embrace a pedagogy of difference as a foundation for building gender and school-based reform agendas based on the learners' narratives of their schooling experiences. Learners' voices can be a great source of information about the impact and effects of power relations between boys and girls as they engage with schooling, as seen above. Social constructionism's emphasis on social relations is a foundation on which learners' behaviours are constructed and their lived realities established (Gergen, 2009).

In relation to this theme, boys use their power in intimidating girls and policing girls' sexuality and femininities. Name-calling especially to girls by boys has a negative impact on girls schooling

lives. Mental representations created through name-calling, finally become adopted into shared roles utilised by learners as they relate with each other.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented an analysis of the data of school spaces, geographies and gendered experiences of children. It did this by focusing on the ways in which school spaces were present both in and outside the classroom. The findings from the study illustrate that students engaged in complex spatial negotiations in respect of their daily behavior. It appears that for the pupils in the four selected high schools in Hhohho region, space and gender are ever "in the process of always being made" (Massey, 2005, p. 9). Children experienced the spaces differently. The outside school spaces were unruly and violent, with girls being the most negatively impacted. The curriculum played an important in children's gendered space, as some participants from such sites like C and D, were encouraged to take subjects according to masculinity and femininity. In other sites like A, however, the learners were allowed to choose subjects based on interest and ability. They way teachers and parents carried themselves around school also had an impact of how children negotiated and interpreted their spaces. The majority of participants from research sites indicated that teachers and parents showed gender stereotypical attitudes in the way they interacted and carried themselves within the school spaces. The construction of space is ongoing; it is never closed; never finished. It is true then that space is gendered, sensory and political and material to children of the four high schools in the Hhohho region. Social constructionism asserts that there is creation and recreation of gender because of human interactions and that it becomes the texture and order of social life (Lorber, 1994**).**

The next chapter covers the conclusions, implications and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The data acquired on the space, geography, and gendered experiences of children in the Hhohho region of Eswatini was analysed and interpreted in the preceding chapter (Five). Four high schools were used as research sites in the Hhohho region and data was collected among the students. The research sought to achieve several objectives, by a thorough review of literature on the issue of children's space and gendered experiences (Chapter Two). Chapter Three covered the explanation and application of the theory guiding the research, which is social constructionism. The research methodology was covered in Chapter Four, where the qualitative narrative inquiry was explained; both individual and focus group interviewing were used as data generation methods to obtain dependable and trustworthy data from the participants. Data presentation and analysis was done in Chapter Five.

This chapter presents a summary of the research study's findings as they relate to the research questions. The theoretical and methodological insights are then presented, as well as the study's limitations. Finally, recommendations for further research are made.

6.2 Summary of the Study

6.2.1 Gendered spaces and places of boys and girls within schools and practices in four high schools in Hhohho Region

The study found that more has to be done to improve the children's inside and outside spaces. The most spoken about inside space that seemed to have a negative impact on children's gendered experiences was the bathroom/toilet**.** It was revealed that bathrooms as a school space were not kept clean, which impacted negatively the most users of the bathrooms, girls. Dirty bathrooms discouraged girls to use them especially during their menstrual periods. This meant that some girls would absent themselves from schools during menstrual periods due to the fear of using dirty bathrooms. The girls pointed privacy more, again to hide them during use especially during their periods. The facilities were not gender sensitive.

The outside spaces were unruly, since both boys and girls suffered from gender-based violence. Boys suffered from severe physical violence from other boys, while girls suffered from sexual harassment and abuse from both boys and teachers. The classroom seating spaces also had an influence on children's gendered experiences. Teachers interacted more with boys during maths and science classes. Girls, on the other hand, had high scores in SiSwati and arts subjects. However, there was unfair treatment, as teachers interacted more with boys even during those arts subjects. There was differential treatment given to boys and girls by teachers and administrators in extramural activities. Boys' sporting events were well funded while those for girls lacked support. Boys were allowed to go for competitive matches, while girls were only allowed to play around the school. Some sporting activities, such as rugby, were spaces occupied by boys. They were regarded as highly physical and therefore a reserve for boys. The rugby pitch was a boundaried sense of space that was only occupied by boys.

6.2.2 Schools as patriarchal agents of gender socialisation

The study revealed that schools were important sites for creating masculinities and femininities. Teachers were vital role models where learners acquire what they perceive as acceptable ways of behaviour. Gendered power relations existed in schools with teachers reinforcing gender stereotypes. Gender socialisation had major consequences, as it created classroom experiences for children that were different especially on how they interacted with each other and teachers. Heteronormative gendered behaviour was supported within the school spaces.

Having more female teachers in schools had a positive impact on how boys behaved, as they seemed to have less confrontations with female teachers for fear of being dressed down. Girls felt safe under the guidance of female teachers than they were under male teachers. They felt that female teachers were more caring and understood their needs better than male teachers.

However, boys dominated classroom spaces with them getting minimum interruptions from teachers. The boys were spoken more to by teachers leaving girls to obscure spaces. Classroom rules were seen to be binding on girls, while boys were allowed to do as they wish. It was revealed that the community and parents strive to make school spaces gender responsive. They fought to eliminate the scourge of gender-based violence and sex discrimination in schools. However,

volunteering activities by parents and community leaders were undertaken based on traditional gender roles. The activities were distributed along masculinity and femininity lines. This had an impact on learners' gender perceptions in that they learnt what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman.

6.2.3 Agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools

The study revealed that learners' participation in decision making was a matter of great concern, as they were not able to be fully participate in decision-making. It was apparent that some of the decisions and rules made by administrators made had no input from the learners. Learners acted without agency.

However, children were empowered through guidance and counselling to exercise agency. They learn important provisions of life which in the end affected how they negotiated their spaces and changed how they experienced gender. Guidance and counselling helped girls improve on how they understood and position themselves in the school spaces. Girls were now able to make independent decisions in other areas of their lives. However, problems still exist in that counsellors still saw boys as more important than girls. Career counselling was still done in a stereotypical manner.

6.2.4 Conducive spaces for learners: gender responsive environments

Revelation from the study were that girls just like boys should be allowed to play rugby as well and not be discriminated against by school authorities. Sporting activities for girls should be sponsored just like what happens with boys sporting activities. Inserting cameras in the sports fields could make the grounds user friendly and make them gender responsive.

There was also a suggestion that policies should be put in place and implemented in schools' space to curb violent behaviour in and outside schools. Also, the study revealed the desire for having rules that punish body shaming by both girls and boys. The redesigning of ablution facilities was also suggested as a way of making spaces gender responsive. Privacy was the reason for the request to have these spaces redesigned.

6.3 Theoretical and Methodological Reflections

The research was directed by the social constructionism theory, which assisted the researcher in determining the gendered experiences of the children in school settings in connection to their surroundings. Students in high school are products of the society in which they live (Skelton, 2008). The school spaces had power dynamics which produced varied emotions for boys and girls. This had an influence on the educational outcomes of the high school learners. Children's gendered experiences within school spaces are influenced by their immediate society and families in which they live (Horgan, 2008). As with high school learners, their society is the teachers, other learners and the community. As such, exploring the children's gendered experiences within the school spaces without considering the wider society they live in would not have made the understanding of their experiences possible. The use of social constructionism helped the researcher to hear children's voices through their expression of their feelings, views and their opinions regarding their gendered experiences within the school spaces. The use of this theory helped the researcher to understand that even in very unfriendly situations within the school spaces, children maintain their agency. Despite the numerous challenges that boys and girls faced in their daily lives as they push for education, they found ways to negotiate and navigate their spaces with the goal of achieving dreams. Social constructionism helped the researcher to look at children as individuals with rights and competencies to practice agency (Morrow, 2011). This theory made it possible to comprehend the challenges that boys and girls face as they try to navigate and negotiate their school spaces and how they experienced gender differently. The researcher was able to explore the worries that children had, especially girls, with regard to high rates of sexual abuse they faced from both boys and teachers. Furthermore, the theory helped the researcher understand that the way teachers interact with leaners has a lasting impression on how the children practiced gender.

The research design that was used was the qualitative narrative design. This design was relevant for this study because generating data from participants gave the researcher first-hand experience about gendered experiences of high school learners. The participants were able to share with the researcher their gendered experiences freely, without them feeling pressured and violated. Interacting face-to-face with participants helped the researcher to hear their voices, and seeing their body language which was key in this study. The researcher took the view that children have lives that are punctuated with stories. As such, through the individual and focus group interviews,

the researcher was able to understand clearly the children's gendered experiences within the school spaces (Cowger & Tritz, 2019). This study focused on the completeness of an experience positioned within the life and realities of school children (Gergen & Gergen, 1985). Focus group interviews were useful to the researcher in that they elicited the high school children's narratives concerning their gendered experiences within the school spaces. Focus group interviewing gave the researcher the chance to interview several participants at once. Focus group interviewing was effective as it supplied voluminous amount of data in a short space of time about the gendered experiences of children in school spaces (Bell, 2007). Individual interviewing assisted the researcher in getting individuals to speak what was in their minds and to express their opinions, experiences and deeper feelings. Tape recording and writing of short notes during the generation of data ensured that the researcher produced a study that was authentic. Both English and SiSwati were allowed for participants to express themselves.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

There are limitations in every research, and this study is no exception. Vithal and Jansen (2009) state that in any study conducted, there are limitations which might be expected. Despite having vigorous design of the study in terms of planning, there were challenges related to actual execution of the study. Since the research involved children, getting consent forms signed was a complicated process. Some guardians did not understand the whole process of the research, even with letters written to them. It took long for some parents/guardians to sign the consent forms. They feared any breach of confidentiality and impact on their children. The researcher had to make arrangements to meet some guardians to explain face-to-face. Singh and Wassenaar (2016) state that researchers should expect issues of such nature to be raised but they should assure gatekeepers that reasonable care would be taken and monitored to prevent harm. The researcher assured the parents/guardians that high levels of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity would be maintained.

There was also a challenge with the responses of some participants. The researcher made it clear that participants could use their mother language to express difficult concepts. However, others probably for fear of ridicule struggled to express themselves in English. The researcher had to lead by example, by expressing some concepts in SiSwati to pave the way for others to follow suit. Some participants were providing responses that were general suggesting what they do rather than

what they experienced. The researcher clarified the issue so that they may express their actual gendered experiences.

6.5 Recommendations of the Study

If Eswatini is to make sure that schools are gender-responsive, as prescribed in the Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018), the MOET should make sure that it makes available the necessary infrastructure to support schools to make them gender-friendly. More resources should be put in place to upgrade designs for bathrooms to make them private for users in those schools with problems. Those that were meant to be for single sex schools should be changed to cater for co-educational learning.

6.5.1 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

6.5.1.1 Recommendations to MOET

The MOET should follow up on its project called 'Take your girl child to work', which was meant to encourage girls' participation in science and technology to ensure that girls are well represented in sciences and maths. This should be done so that boys do not dominate in these domains. This can be done by ensuring that enough number of girls take up these subjects in every school. The Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018) speaks about ensuring that there be an adequate representation by girls and women amongst the stem learners.

Training of teachers on gender is a prerogative of the MOET. As was noted by the findings, some teachers lack understanding on gender related issues. The MOET should make sure that gender studies become compulsory in teacher training to equip teachers with knowledge on this important aspect of today's world. Also related to this point, it is recommended that the MOET follow up on its policy of capacitating teachers on issues of counselling, guidance, life skills, STIs and many others, so that they are fully aware about these issues.

6.5.1.2 Recommendations to Principals

Principals should ensure that their bathrooms and toilets are always kept clean with adequate amenities to ensure that students do not find it difficult to use them. They should ensure that repairs of broken locks, taps and doors are quickly repaired to ensure proper that these places are like home to students, especially for girls, during their menstrual periods. Principals should also make sure that both girls and boys are given a chance to choose and take subjects of their choices, and not take the stereotyped view on subject selection. They should take their leadership role to ensure that this happens in their schools. It is recommended that Principals put in place in their schools, measures that are meant to reduce violence in schools. As was discovered (Mullis et al.,2012; UNESCO, 2008), unsafe and violent school experiences have a negative impact on boys' and girls' achievement, and call for measures to be put in place to make schools violent free. Creation of victim-friendly areas around the schools could reduce the incidence of violence in schools.

6.5.1.3 Recommendations to Teachers

Teachers should request to get in-service training on issues of guidance and counselling and gender related issues so that they would be in a position to help students accordingly and without prejudice and stereotypical behaviours. Teacher gender training is still an unmet requirement. Such programs would better educate teachers to work with males and foster cooperative and interactive teaching and learning, as well as engage them in systematic analysis and critical reflection on their own teaching. Teachers have a responsibility to act professionally and responsibly. They should avoid SGBV issues with students. According to Pinheiro (2006) and UNICEF (2014), female students are more commonly subjected to sexual harassment and abuse, which is perpetrated to varying degrees by male students and teachers. Teachers should spend equal time talking to both boys and girls during interaction with the children. Studies have revealed that teachers spend as much as two thirds of their time talking to boys, which then translates to two thirds of talk time (Dekker and Lemmer, 1994).

6.6 Recommendations for further Study

The study found that gendered experiences of children in high school affect how they perform in class and influence how learners interacted. The researcher recommends that future researchers should consider how children's gendered experiences within the school spaces have an impact on retention and achievement.

The study examined the gendered experiences of children in high schools in an urban setting. The researcher recommends that researchers can also a similar study while focusing on peri-urban and rural schools, where the environments are different. This would be of benefit to the country. An investigation into the gendered experiences of children in primary schools should be researched to find out how different they are from those of high schools.

The researcher carried out the research in the region in which he is working. Hence, the researcher recommends that future researchers should go out of their regions and research children's gendered experiences in these contexts. Finally, the researcher recommends that future researchers should use both mixed and single sex focus groups to ensure that there is no censorship during the discussions.

6.7 Conclusion

An analysis of the empirical data was done in this chapter. In addition, the results of the current study were covered in this chapter. A summary of the findings together with theoretical and methodological reflections were also presented in this chapter. The chapter concludes the study which is based on space, geography and gendered experiences of children in four high schools in the Hhohho region of Eswatini. It was underpinned by Massey's theory which gave it a theoretical base to understand space and helped to comprehend the children's geographies and gendered experiences in high schools in Eswatini. The study outlined some recommendations through the findings from the interviews which were made to key stakeholders within the education sector in the country.

References

Aamayreh, M. (2011). The modern school, message of teacher. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 3*(12), 38-42. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2015.031215.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990). UN, office of the High Commissioner. https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/2-african-charter-rights-and-welfare-child-1990.

Akgul, F. (2016). *Patriarchal theory reconsidered: torture and gender based violence in Turkey*. (Publication No. 161106548). [Doctoral dissertation, University of Westminster].

Ahlgrim, A. (2016). Consequences of transgender bathrooms bills. https://fenwayhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/COM-2485-Transgender-Bathroom-Bill-Brief_v8-pages.pdf

Ainscow, M. (2020). Guiding schools towards their journey to inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 24*(1), 58-76. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1450900

Aitken, S. C., Lund, R., & Kjørholt, A. Trine (2007). *Why Children? Why Now?' Children's Geographies, 5*(1), 3-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733280601108114.

Aitken, S. C. (2018). Children's geographies: Tracing the evolution and involution of a concept. *Geographical Review*, *108*(1), 3–23. https://doi.org/10.1111/gere.12289

Alamri, M. M. (2019). Students' Academic Achievement Performance and Satisfaction in a Flipped Classroom in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning*, 11, 103-119. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTEL.2019.096786.

Al Nasri, Y. (2014). Impact of Students-Teacher Relationship on Student's Learning: A Review of Literature. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship, 6*(1), 167-172. URL: https://www.academia.edu/download/71016951/Registered_Nurses_Perception_of_Medicati20211002-25955-nji113.pdf#page=173

Alsauidi, F. (2015). Effect of the School Facilities Factor and Sport Activities Factor on Parents in terms of Private and Public School Choice at Riyadh City Saudi Arabia. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 3*(12), 1054-1069. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2015.031215.

Alzeer, G. (2014). "Methodological map: a mixed methods approach to explore the role of space in an Emirati single-gender learning environment*", Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Gulf Perspectives,* 11(1), 98- 14. https://doi.org/10.18538/lthe.v11.n1.167.

Alzeer, G. (2016). Types and dynamics of gendered space: a case of Emirati female learners in a single-gender context. *Gender and Education*. 30. 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1205183.

Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report* (2010) - Swaziland: https://www.refworld.org/docid/4c03a7fdc.html

Anderson, J. L., Warren, C.A., Perez, E., Louis, R. I., Philips, S., Wheeler, J., & Misra, R. (2008). Gender and ethnic differences in hand hygiene practices among college students. *American Journal of Infection Control,* 36(5), 361-368. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajic.2007.09.007.

Anderson-Levitt, K.M., Bloch, M., &Soumaré, A. M. (1998). Inside classrooms in Guinea: girls' experiences, in Bloch, K.M. Beoku-Betts, J.A. and Tabachnick B.R.(eds) *Women and Education in Sub-Saharan Africa.* Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Ansell, N. (2009). Childhood and Politics of Scale: Descaling Children's Geographies? *Progress in Human geography* 33.2. 190 - 209. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132508090980

Archer, J., & Coyne, S. M. (2005). An integrated review of indirect, relational and social aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 9*(3), 212–230. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0903_2

Arshed, N. & Dansen, M. (2015). Chapter 3 The Literature Review" In: O& apos; Gorman, K.D. & MacIntosh, R. (ed). Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers http://doi.org/10.23912/978-1-910158-51-7-2790

Aspers P.C U. (2019). What is qualitative in qualitative research? *Qualitative sociology*, *42*(2), 139–160. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7.

Austin, Z., & Sutton, J. (2014). Qualitative research: getting started. *The Canadian journal of hospital pharmacy*, *67*(6), 436–440. https://doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v67i6.1406

Avramov, D., & Cliquet, R.L. (2005). *Integrated Policies on Gender Relations, Ageing and Migration in Europe:* Lessons from the Network for Integrated European Population Studies (NIEPS). Garant Publishers.

Azungah, T. (2019), "Challenges in accessing research sites in Ghana: a research note", Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management. *An International Journal*, 14(4), 410–427. https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-07-2018-1671

Bain, K. (2011). *What the best college teachers do*. Harvard University Press.

Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (2008). *Education system of Bangladesh.* Ministry of Education, Dhaka. http://www.banbeis.gov.bd/es_bd.htm

Ball, S.J., & Youdell, D. (2007) Hidden privatization in public education. https://pages.ei-ie.org/quadrennialreport/2007/upload/content_trsl_images/630/Hidden_privatisation-EN.pdf.

Barcena, A. (2017). Gender equality plans in Latin America and Caribbean road maps for development. https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/41015.

Barrett, P. S., Davies, F., Zhang, Y., &Barrett, L. (2015). The impact of classroom design on pupils' learning: results of a holistic, multi-level analysis. Building and environment, 89. 118-133. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.buildenv.2015.02.013.

Beaman, R., Wheldall, K., & Kemp, C. (2007). Recent research on troublesome classroom behaviour: a review. *Australasian Journal of Special Education*, *31*(1), 45-60. https://doi.org/10.1080/10300110701189014.

Beede, D., Julian, T., Langdon, D., McKittrick, G., Khan, B., & Doms, M. (2011). *Women in STEM: A gender gap to innovation.* Washington, DC: Economics and statistics administration, U.S. department of commerce. https://clear.dol.gov/study/women-stem-gender-gap-innovation-beede-et-al-2011.

Bell, J. (2004). *Doing your research project: a guide for first time researchers in education and social science.* Open University Press.

Bell, M. (2007). The ethics of management research: An exploratory content analysis. *British Journal of Management* 18. 63 – 77. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2006. 00487.

Benbenishty, R., &Astor, R. A (2005). *School violence in context: Culture, neighbourhood, family, school and gender.* Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195157802.001.0001.

Berg, B.L. (2009). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (8th ed.). Pearson.

Berger, P.L., & Luckmann, T. (1996). The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge. Doubleday & Company.

Bester S, Du Plessis A., & Treurnich J. (2017). A secondary school teacher's experiences as a victim of learner cyberbullying. *Africa Education Review*; 14(3–4):142–157.https:// doi.org/ 10.1080/18146627.2016.1269608.

Bhana, D., Nzimakwe, T. & Nzimakwe, P. (2011) 'Gender in the early years: Boys and girls in an African working class primary school', *International Journal of Educational Development* 31(5), 443–448. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2010.09.001

Biddle, S. K. (2017). "Social constructions of childhood: From not-yet-adults to people in their own right." *Anthós*: 8(1), 3. https://doi.org/10.15760/anthos.2017.10.

Biesta G.J.J., Allan, J., & Edwards, R. (2011). The theory question in research capacity building in education: Towards an agenda for research and practice. *British Journal of Educational Studies.* 59(3), 225-239. https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2011.599793

. Bjorck, C. (2011). Claiming space: Discourses on gender. *Finnish Journal of Music Education (Musiikkikasvatus),* 12(2), 8–21. ISSN: 1239-3908

Blackbeard, D., & Lindegger, G. (2015). The value of participatory visual methods in young masculinity research. *Procedia — Social and Behavioral Sciences*; 165, (1) 85—93. https://doi.org/10.17759/sps.2018090305

Blaya, C. (2013). Cyberbullying among young people. https://www.cairn.info/revue-enfance.

Blumberg, R.L. (2007). Gender bias textbooks: A hidden obstacle on the road to gender equality in education, UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001555/155509e.pdf.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods.* 5th Edition, Allyn & Bacon.

Bolich,G.(2007).Crossdressing in context. https : // books . google . com / books / about / Crossdressing _ in_Context_Vol_1_Dress_Gen.html?id=F905IS-FPmUC.

Bordonaro, L.I., &Payne, R. (2012). Ambiguous Agency: Critical perspectives on social interventions with children and youth in Africa. children's geographies 10(4), 365-372. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2012.726065

Bornstein, M. H. (2016). Determinants of parenting. In D. Cicchetti (Ed.), *Developmental psychopathology: Risk, resilience, and intervention*, *31*(2)*,* 180–270. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119125556.devpsy405 .

Boyd, M. P. (2015). Relations between teacher questioning and student talk in tne elementary ELL classroom. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 47, 370-404. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1086296X16632451.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology,* 3(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2014). What can ‘‘thematic analysis’’ offer health and wellbeing researchers? [Editorial]. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being, 9(26),* 152-160. https://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v9.26152.

Brookfield, S. (2005). The power of critical theory: Liberating adult learning and teaching. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED493249

Broom, C. (2015). Empowering students: Pedagogy that benefits educators and learners. Citizenship, Social and Economics Education. *Journal La Edusci* 14(2), 79–86. https://doi.org/10.37899/journallaedusci.v2i4.488

Brugeilles, C., & Cromer, S. (2009). *Analysing gender representations in school textbooks*. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Analysing-gender-representations-in-school-Brugeilles-Cromer/09b9c642a7e2896ab72f1f4a26ab748ca802c52f

Byrnes, D. A. (1998). Hurtful words; Addressing name calling at school and home. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED430059.pdf.

Burton, P., & Leoschut, L. (2013). *School violence in South Africa: Results of the 2012 National School Violence Study*. Claremont: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention. http://cjcp.skinthecat.co.za/articles PDF/65.

Bush, T. (2007) Authenticity in research-reliability validity and triangulation. Dimensions of critical care nursing. *Nursing Journal* (36.) 253 - 263. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473957695

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.

Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing Gender.* Routledge.

Byra, M., & Wallhead, T.L. (2012) Students’ perceptions of the command, practice, and inclusion styles of teaching. *Physical Education & Sport Pedagogy Journal*. (17) 317-330. https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2012.690864

Carter, R., Mustafaa, F., & Leath, S. (2017). Teachers’ expectations of girls’ classroom performance and behavior.*The Journal of Early Adolescence*, *38*(7), 885–907. https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431617699947.

Caputo, A. (2014). Students’ perception of school violence and math achievement in middle schools of southern Italy. *Journal of Substance abuse 18*(4), 269-284. https://doi.org/10.1080/10627197.2013.846679

Carlos, G. (2014). Learning in twenty-first century schools. https://publications.iadb.org/en/learning-21st-century-schools-toward-school-buildings-promote-learning-ensure-safety-and-protect

Cavanagh, S. (2010). Queering bathrooms: Gender, sexuality, and the hygienic Imagination: University of Toronto Press. https://www.deslibris.ca/ID/436408.

CEDAW, (2017). With reference to the seventh periodic report of Italy on the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW). https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf.

Chambers, D.J., Van Loon, J., & Tincknell, E. (2004). Peer regulation of teenage sexual identities. *Gender and education.* 16(3) 397-415. . http://doi.org/10.1080/09540250042000251515

Clandinin, D. J. (2016). *Engaging in narrative inquiry—developing qualitative* inquiry. Routledge.

Clark, A. J. (2010). Empathy: An integral model in the counseling process. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 88*(3), 348–356. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2010.tb00032.x

Cohen, L., Manion, L.,& Morrison, K. (2003) *Research Methods in Education*. 5th Edition. Routledge Falmer

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2008). *The methodology of educational research*. Metaichmio.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. &Morrison. (2011) *Research methods in education*.7th ed. Oxon: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2013) *Research methods in education*. (7th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203720967.

Cole, D. R. (2011). Educational life-forms: Deleuzian teaching and learning practice. Sense. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6091-612-0.

Connaway, L. S., & Ronald R. P. (2010). *Basic research methods for librarians* (5th.ed). Libraries Unlimited an imprint of ABC-CLIO LLC.

Collins, D., & Coleman, T. (2008). Social geography of education: Looking within, and Beyond, School boundaries. *Geography Compass*, 2(1), 281-299. 2. 281 - 299. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2007.00081.x

Connell, R.W. (1995) *Masculinities.* Cambridge: Polity.

Connell, R.W. (1996) 'Masculinities and globalization', Men and masculinities 1(1): 3-23. SAGE Publications, Inc., https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452233833

Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J.W. (2005) Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & Society,* 19(6), 829-859. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27640853

Convention on the Rights of the Child (2009). https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/advanceversions/crc-c-gc-12.pdf

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4rd Ed). SAGE Publications.

Corsaro W. A. (2005). *The sociology of childhood* (2nd ed.). Pine Forge Press /Sage Publications Co.

Cowger, T., & Tritz, J. (2019). Narrative analysis research: A tool for extension educators. *The Journal of Extension, 57*(6), Article 1. https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/joe/vol57/iss6/1

Cresswell, T. (2008). Place: encountering geography as philosophy. *Geography*, (*93*) 132-139.

Cresswell, T. (2012). Nonrepresentational theory and me: notes of an interested sceptic. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *30*(1), 96-105. https://doi.org/10.1068/d494

Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson.

Creswell, J. W (2016). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE Publications.

Croll, R., & Hastings. (2013). *Effective primary teaching: Research based classroom*. Routledge.

Cueto, S., & Secada, W. (2004). Learning opportunities and mathematics performance of Aimara, Quechua and Spanish speaking children in bilingual and mnolingual schools in Puno. Peru. In D Winkler and Cueto, S (Eds.) *Ethnicity, Race, Gender, and Education in Latin America*. James: PREAL, 130(2) 315-353. https://repository.upenn.edu/wpel/vol2/iss1/2

Cunlife, A.L., & Alcadipani, R. (2016). The politics of access in fieldwork: Immersion, backstage dramas, and deception. Organisational research methods. 19(4): 535-561. http://doi.org/10.1177/1094428116639134

Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2020). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science, 24*(2), 97–140. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1537791

Davies, J (2005). *Expression of gender. An analysis of pupils gendered discourse styles in small group discussions*. SAGE Publications.

Dean, B.L., Joldoshalieva, R., & Hussainy, A. (2007). The role of schooling in constructing gendered identities. *Journal of Research and reflections in Education*, 1(1), 87-114. https://ecommons.aku.edu/pakistan_ied_pdck/4

De Beauvoir, S. (1997). The Second Sex .https: // www. sfu. ca / ~ decaste / OISE / page 2 / files / deBeauvoir Intro.pdf

Dedy, W (2010). School-related gender-based violence is preventing the achievement of quality education for all. https://unesdoc.unesco.org.

Dee, T. (2007). Teachers and the gender gap in student achievement. *Journal of Human Resources*. 42(3), 528-554. https://doi.org/10.3102/1076998610396885

.Devers, M., Henry, P.E., Hofmann, E., & Banabdallah, H. (2012).Gender-based violence in schools in French –speaking sub-Saharan Africa: Understanding its impact on girls' education to better combat it9p. 32). French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

DeVos, A, S., Delport, C.S.L., Fouche, C.B., &Strydom, H. (2011). *Research at grass roots: A primer for the social science and human professions*. Van Schaik Publishers.

Dillard-Knox, T. Y. (2014). *Against the grain: the challenges of black discourse within intercollegiate policy debate.* Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 2161. https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/2161 .

Disney, T. (2018). Geographies of Children and Childhood. In *Oxford Bibliographies: Geography* (Oxford Bibliographies Online). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/OBO/9780199874002-0193.

Dreibelbis, R., Freeman, M.C., Greene, L.E., & Saboori, S. (2013). A cluster-randomized trial assessing the impact of school water, sanitation, and hygiene improvements on pupil enrollment and gender parity in enrollment. *Journal of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Development*. 3 (4): 592–601. https://doi.org/10.2166/washdev.2013.217

Dreher, J. (2012). *Tratado de metodologia de las ciencias sociales Mexico*: Universidad.

Duarte, J., Gargiulo, C., & Moreno. (2011). Infraestuctura Escolar y Aprendizajes en la Educacion Basica Latinoamericana: un Analisis a Partir Del Serce. https://publications.iadb.org/en/publication/11718/school-infrastructure-and-learning-latin-american-elementary-education-analysis.

Dumay, J.C. (2011) "The qualitative research interview", Qualitative research in accounting & management, 8(3), 238-264, https://doi.org/10.1108/11766091111162070

Dunne, M. (2007). Gender sexuality and schooling: Everyday life in junior secondary schools in Botswana and Ghana, *International Journal of Educational Development*. *Forthcoming.* 27. 499-511. https//doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2006.10.009.

Dunne, M., Humphreys. S, & Leach, F. (2006). Gender Violence in Schools in the Developing World. *Gender and education*, 18 :(1) 75. https://doi.org/10.1080/13548506.2016.1271955

Dunne, M., & Leach, F. (2006). Gendered school experiences an impact on retention in Ghana and Botswana. https: // www . researchgate .net/ publication/ 23508580 _Gendered _School _Experiences_The_Impact_on_Retention_and_Achievement_in_Botswana_and_Ghana

Dunne, M., Sabates, R., Bosumtwi-Sam, C., & Owusu, A. (2013). Peer relations, violence and school attendance: Analyses of bullying in senior high schools in Ghana. *Journal of Development Studies,* (49), 285-300. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2012.671472

Eckert, P., & McConnell-Ginet, S. (2013) *Language and Gender*. (2nd ed.).Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139245883.

Edwards, R. (2013). Index. *In what is qualitative interviewing?* (The 'what is?' Research methods series, (pp. 125–127).Bloomsbury Academic. http://www.bloomsburycollections.com/what-is-qualitative-interviewing/index.

Elden, S. (2006). Some are born posthumously: The French afterlife of Henri Lefebvre in *historical materialism* 14(4), 185-202. https://doi.org/10.1163/156920606778982473

Elliot, J. (2006). The formation of ethical identities in the classroom. *Journal of Moral education*.18 (3)61-65. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501502446-015

Elo, S., Kaariainen, M., Kanste, O.I., & Polkki, T. (2014). Qualitative content analysis: A focus on Trustworthiness. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62, 107-115. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2158244014522633

Elwood, R. W. (2016). Defining probability in sex offender risk assessment. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 60*(16), 1928–1941. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X15587912.

Enyew, B. E., & Mihrete, A. G. (2018). Liberal feminism: Assessing its compatibility and applicability in Ethiopia context. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 10(6), 59-64. https://doi.org/10.5897/IJSA2018.0769

Esplen, E. (2009) gender and Care overview report. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241194476_GENDER_and_CARE_Overview_Report.

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, (5) 1-4. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.1

Eurydice. (2009). Gender differences in educational outcomes: Study on the measures taken and the current situation in Europe. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452218533

FAWE, (2018). Gender Responsive Pedagogy. A toolkit for Teachers and Schools. FAWE, UNICEF and UNESCO-IICBA, Kenya. https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/6726/file/GRP-A-Toolkit-for-Teachers-and-Schools-2020.pdf

Ferreira, J.M., Karila, K., Muniz, L., Amaral. P.F., & Kupiainen, R. (2018). Children's perspectives in their learning spaces. What we can learn from Brazil and Finland. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, *50*(3), 259-277. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-018-0228-6

Flick, U. (2008). *Designing Qualitative research*. Sage Publications.

Freeman, C., & Tranter, P. (2015). Children's geographies. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.72019-8

Frei, S., & Leowinata, S. (2014) Gender mainstreaming toolkit for teachers and teacher educators, Commonwealth of learning. https://www.varkeyfoundation.org/media/4459/gender-mainstreaming-toollkit-1-copy.pdf

Fobosi, S.C. ((2019). Experience of negotiating access in the field. Lessons for future department of sociology.*World Journal of Social Science Research.* 6(.4). https://doi.org/10.22158/wjssr.v6n4p503

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish the birth of the prison*. Pantheon Book.

Gablinske, P.B. (2014). "A case study of student and teacher relationships and the effect on student learning". Open Access Dissertations. Paper 266. https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa_diss/266

Galbin, A. (2014). An introduction to social constructionism. Social research reports. 26. 82-92.

Gamlin, J., Camacho, A.Z., Ong, M., & Hesketh, T. (2015). Is domestic work a worst form of child labor? The findings of six country study of psychosocial effects of child domestic work. *Children's geographies.* 13(20), 212-225. http://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2013.829660

Gansen, H.M. (2017). 'Reproducing (and disrupting) heteronormativity: Gendered sexual socialization in preschool classrooms'. *Sociology of Education* 90(3), 255–272. . https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040717720981

Gaskell, J., & Mullen, A. (2006) Women in teaching: Participation power and possibility. In Skelton, C., Francis, B., and Smulyan, L (eds.) *Gender and education*. Sage publications.

Gerdin, G. (2016). *Boys, bodies and physical education*. Routledge. .

Gerdin, G. (2017). 'A "culture of everyone doing It" and "playinggames"—Discourses of pleasure in boys' physical education', *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport & Physical Education* 7(1): 55–75. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1103308816677120

Gergen, K. J. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist, 40*(3), 266–275. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.40.3.266.

Gergen, K. J. (2010). Scanning the landscape of narrative inquiry. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 4*(9), 728–735. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00294.x

Gershenson, O., & Penner, B. (2009). Public life of public convenience. In O. Gershenson & B. Penner (Eds.). *Ladies and gents: Public toilets and gender*. Temple University Press.

Gerson, J.M., & Peiss, K. (1985). Boundaries, negotiation, consciousness: Reconceptualising gender relations. *Social problems*. 32; 317-331. https://doi.org/10.1525/sp.1985.32.4.03a00020

Girod, C., Ellis, A., Karen L. Andes, K.L., Freeman, M.C., & Caruso, B.A. (2017). Physical, social and political inequalities constraining girls' menstrual management at schools in informal settlements of Nairobi, Kenya Candace. *Journal of Urban Health. 94*. 10.1007/s11524-017-0189-3.

Glasersfeld, E.V. (1995). *Radical constructivism. How to know and learn*. Routledge Falmer.

Global Education Monitoring Report (2017). Creating sustainable futures for all. http://unesco.hemsida.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/GEM-2017-Summary.pdf

Glover, J. (2009). Bouncing back: How can resilience be promoted in vulnerable children and young people. Believe in young people. https://www.leaplambeth.org.uk/files/documents/Bouncing-back-how-can-resilience-be-promoted-in-vulnerable-children-and-young-people.pdf.

Goffman, E. (1977). The arrangement between sexes. *Theory and society*. 4(3). 301-331. http://www.jstor.org/stable/656722.

Gomendio, M. (2017). *Empowering and enabling teachers to improve equity and outcomes for all*. International summit on the teaching profession, OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264273238-en.

Gonick, M., & Conrads, J. (2022). Gender, sexuality, adolescence, andidentity in schooling, in: Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education (peer-reviewed). 10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1596.

Gouvias, D., & Alexopoulos, C. (2016). Sexist stereotypes in the language textbooks of the Greek primary school; a multidimensional approach. *Gender and Education*. 30-;1-21. https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/73

Granito, V. J. (2013, March). Space as a mediator for a flipped model. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 24, 63-82.* ISSN 21586195

Grant, C., & Osanloo, A. (2015). Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your house. *Administrative Issues Journal*: Connecting education, practice, and research, 4(2). doi: 10.5929/2014.4.2.9

Greed, C. (2009). The role of toilet in public life. In Olga Gershenson and Barbra Penner (Ed.) *Ladies and gents.* Routledge.

Greeff, M. (2011). Information collection: Interviewing. In: DeVos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L.(Eds.), research for the grass roots: for social sciences and human service profession. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Green, D. (2010). 'Top tips on interviewing people in groups', From Poverty to Power blog, 29 September 2010, http://www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/?p=3640

Greene, M.E., Robles, O.J., Stout, K., & Suvilaakso, T. (2013). A girl's right to learn without fear. PlaninternationalLimited.https://plan-uk.org/file/plan-report-learn-without-fearpdf /download? Token = HMORNNVk

Gremler, D. D., & Gwinner, K. P. (2008). Rapport-building behaviors used by retail employees. *Journal of Retailing, 84*(3), 308–324. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2008.07.001

Gross, J. M. S., Haines, S. J., Hill, C., Francis, G. L., Blue-Banning, M., & Turnbull, A. P. (2015). Strong school–community partnerships in inclusive schools are "part of the fabric of the school. We count on them". *The School Community Journal, 25*(2), 9–34. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1085646.pdf

Grossman, L.R. (2008). The intersection of gender equity and gifted elementary education: does numerical parity tell the whole story. https:// citeseerx .ist.psu. edu/document? repid=rep1 &type=pdf &doi=530be3baef5c92e32094224f9a0af8646fc79443.

Gruenewald, D. A. (2003). Foundations of Place: A Multidisciplinary Framework for Place-Conscious Education. *American Educational Research Journal, 40*(3), 619–634. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312040003619.

Gudyanga, E., Wadesango, N., Manzira, R.L., & Gudyanga, A. (2015). Implementation of guidance and counselling in secondary schools in Chinhoyi urban. *International Journal of science education. 30(1), 12-30.* http://hdl.handle.net/11408/1664

Guedes, A., Bott, S., Garcia-Moreno, C,. & Colombin, M. (2016). Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children. *Journal: Global Health Action,* (1,), 31516 https://doi.org/10.3402/gha.v9.31516 .

Guterman, J.T. (2006).Reconstructing Social Constructionism: A Response to Albert Ellis. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling,* 18(1), 29-40. DOI: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2007.tb00606.x

Hadi, M. A., & José Closs, S. (2016). Ensuring rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research in clinical pharmacy. *International journal of clinical pharmacy*, *38*(3), 641–646. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11096-015-0237-6.

Hammersley, M. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*.: Routledge.

Hammond, L. (2019) Much more than just an empty void: utilizing the production of space to enhance young people's understanding of the concept of space in geography. *Children's Geographies* 104(1), 28-38. DOI:10.1080/00167487.2019.12094059.

Halpern, H.P. (2014) *Parents 'Gender ideology and gendered behaviour as predictors of parents gendered ideology and gender behaviour as predictors of children's gender role attitudes: A longitudinalExploratio*n..https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4945126/ doi: 10.1007/s11199-015-0539-0

Hanushek, E.A. (2013). Economic growth in developing countries: The role of human capital. *Economics of education journal review. 37*, 204-212.. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2013.04.005

Haradham M. K. (2018). Qualitative Research Methodology in Social Sciences and Related Subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment, and People*, 7, 23-48. https://doi.org/10.26458/jedep.v7i1.571

Harris, N. (2009). Playing catch up in the schoolyard. Children, young people's voice, and educational rights in the UK*; International Journal of Law, Policy and the family*. *.23*, 331-66. https://doi.org/10.1093/lawfam/ebp007

Hart, S.L. (1995). A Natural-resource-based View of the Firm. *The Academy of Management Review. 20* (4), 986-1014. https://doi.org/10.2307/258963

Hartley, B. L., & Sutton, R. M. (2013). A stereotype threat account of boys' academic underachievement. *Child development*, *84*(5), 1716–1733. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12079.

Hemming, P., Teague, P.J., Crowe, T., & Levine, R. (2016). Chaplains on the medical team: a qualitative analysis of an interprofessional curriculum for internal medicine residents and chaplain interns. *Journal of Religion and Health*, *55*(2), 560-571. https://doi.org/ 10.1007/s10943-015-0158-7.

Henwood, C.M., Dlamini, N., & Obare, F. (2015). School based girls' clubs as a means of addressing sexual and gender based violence in Eswatini. *BMC Proc* 9 (Suppl 4), . https://doi.org/10.1186/1753-6561-9-S4-A5.

Henwood, K.L., & Pidgeon, N.F. (2006). Qualitative research and psychological theorizing. *British journal of psychology*, (83), 97-111. https://doi.org/ 10.1111/j.2044-8295.1992.tb02426.x.

Hexagrama Consultoras. (2006). *Equidad de genero y reformas educativas. Agentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru. Santiago:* Hexagrama Consultora, FLACSO-Buenos Aires, and Instituto de Estudios. Sociales Contemporaneos.

Hinnant, B, O'Brien, M., & Ghazarian, S.R. (2009). The longitudinal relations of teachers' expectations to achievement in the early school years. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(3):662-670. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014306.

Hoeritz, K. (2013). *Stereotypes and Their Consequences for Women as Leaders in Higher Education Administration*. (Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University). Retrieved from https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/654

Holder, K., & Kessels, U. (2017). Gender and ethnic stereotypes in student teachers' judgments: A new look from a shifting standards perspective. *Social Psychology of Education: An International Journal, 20*(3), 471–490. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-017-9384-z.

Holloway, S.& Valentine. (2000). Spatiality and the new social studies of childhood in sociology. *Sociology*, *34*(4), 763–783. https://doi.org/10.1177/S0038038500000468.

Holloway, S.L., &Pimlott-Wilson, H. (2011). Geographies of children, youth and families: defining achievements, debating the agenda. *In geographies of children, youth and families*: Loughborough University Press. https://hdl.handle.net/2134/13799

Holloway, S.L., &Pimlott-Wilson, H. (2014). Enriching Children, Institutionalising Childhood? Geographies of play, Extra Curricular activities, and parenting in England. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104(3):613-627. https://doi.org/10.1080/00045608.2013.846167.

Horgan, D., Forde, C., Parkes, A.& Martin, S. (2015) Children and young people's experiences of participating in decision making at home, in schools and in their communities. Dublin; Department of Children and youth Affairs.www.dcya.ie.

Horschelmann, K., & Van Blerk, L. (2012). Children, Youth and the City .Routledge

Houser, J. (2016). Reading, using and creating evidence (4th ed.). Jones and Bartlett. Hosseini, C. (2015). Gender differences in the classroom. *European Journal of Education Studies*-ISSN 2501-1111.

Howard, T.C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory into practice*. 42.195-202. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1477420

Hurst, B., Wallace, R., & Nixon, S.B. (2013). The impact of social interaction on student learning. Reading horizons: *A journal of literacy and language arts*, 52(4). ISSN (Print): 2709-9784, ISSN (Online): 2709-9792

Huisman, J., & Smits. (2009). Effects of household and district level factors on primary school enrollment in 30 developing countries, World Development . https : // www. Washington post. com/sports/2019/06/24/,

Ingrey, J.C. (2013). The Public School Washroom as Heterotopia: gendered specialty and subjectification. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Public-School-Washroom-as-Heterotopia%3A-Gendered-Ingrey/da74188ab96f6adfd38ef37f9df7aecea841522d.

Islam, K. Md, M. (2018). Gender stereotypes and education: A comparative content analysis of Malaysian, Indonesian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. *Bangladesh Journal of Agricultural Research* 43 (3), 489-497. https://doi.org/. 10.1371/journal.pone.0190807

Jabeen, S., Chaudhary, A.Q. & Omar, S. (2014). Gender Discrimination in Curriculum: A reflection from Punjab textbooks board. *Bulletin of Education and Research*. ; 36(1):55-77. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1210444

James, A. (1998). Theorising childhood. Polity Press.

James, A., & James, A. (2008). *Key concepts in childhood studies*. (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications. https://www.perlego.com/book/861273/key-concepts-in-childhood-studies-pdf.

James, A. (2010). Interdisciplinarity, for better or worse. *Children's geographies* 8(2): 215-216. https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/honors201019/85

Jamshed, S. (2014). Qualitative research method-interviewing and observation. *Journal of Basic and Clinical Pharmacy* 5(4):87-8. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4194943/

Jeffrey, C. 2010: Timepass: waiting, micropolitics and the Indian middle classes. *American Ethnologist*, 37(3), 465–481. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4194943/

Jenks, C. (2004). *A sociological approach to child development*. Blackwell.

Jenks, C. (2005). *Childhood.* Routledge.

Jeynes, W. (2012). A meta-analysis of the efficacy of different types of parental involvement programs for urban students. *Urban Education*, 47(4), 706-742. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085912445643

Jha, J. (2017). *Education and Gender*. Routledge .

Jha, J., Bakshi, S., & Faria, E. M. (2012). *Understanding and challenging boys' disadvantage in secondary education in developing countries*. Background paper for EFA Global Monitoring Report. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000217868

Jones, P., Moss. D., &Tomlinson, P. (2014). How do gender and sexual identity shape access to services in childhood. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8011357/

Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T.,& Smith, K.A. (2014). Cooperative learning: Improving university instruction by basing practice on validated theory. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching* 25,85-118. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284471328

Jones, S., & Dindia, K. (2004). A Meta Analytic Perspective on sex equity in the classroom. *Review of education Research,* 74(4):443-71. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074004443

Josh, (2011). *Are today's students too confident? Sixty percent they are above average*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Kabir, S.M.S. (2016). *Basic Guidelines for research: an introductory approach for all disciplines*. Book Zone publication.

Kachel, S., Steffens, M. C., & Niedlich, C. (2016). Traditional masculinity and femininity: Validation of a new scale assessing gender roles. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7,* Article 956. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00956

Kahn, J.S. (2009). *An Introduction to Masculinities*. Wiley-Blackwell. .

Kalra, G., & Bhugra, D. (2013). Sexual violence against women: Understanding cross cultural intersections. *Indian journal of psychiatry*, 55(3):244-249.

Karsten, L. (2005). It all used to be better? Different generations on continuity and change in urban children's daily use of space. *Children's Geographies* 3(3): 275–290. DOI: 10.1080/14733280500352912

Kate T. (2003). *The Child Language Reader*. Routledge

King, E.M.,& Winthrop, R. (2015). Today's challenges for girls' education. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Todays-Challenges-Girls-Educationv6..

Khumalo, T. 2013. *Swaziland: Effective Delivery of Public Education Services*. https://www.eldis.org/document/A70408.

Kohl III, H.W. (2013). *Approaches to physical education in schools. Educating the student body: Taking physical activity and physical education to school*. National Academies Press.

Kring, S.A. (2017). Gender in Employment policies and programmes. https://ideas.repec.org/p/ilo/ilowps/994972793402676.html

Kuruvilla, S. (2018). The Global strategy for women's, children's and adolescents' health (2016-2030) WHO. 94(5): 398–400. doi: 10.2471/BLT.16.170431

Lampert, D., & Morgan, J. (2010). Teaching Geography 11-18. A conceptual approach. Open University Press. .

Lansford, J.E., Skinner, A.T., Sorbring, E., Dodge, K.A., Malone, P.S., Oburu, P., & Di Guinta, L. (2012). Boys and girls relational and physical aggression in nine countries. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3736589/

Laws, S., Marcus, R., Jones ,N., & C Harper. (2013). *Research for development*: *A practical guide* (2nd edition): Sage Publications.

Leach, F. (2006). Researching Gender violence in schools: Methodical and ethical considerations. *World Development,* 34, 1129-1147. https://doi.org/: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2005.11.008

Leach, F., Dunne, M. & Salvi, F. (2014). A global review of current issues and approaches in policy, programming and implementation responses to school related gender based violence for the education sector. https: // www .saferspaces. org. za/ uploads/files/ SRGBV _UNESCO _Global_ReviewJan2014.

Leach, F., Slade, E., and Dunne, M. (2012). *Desk review for concern: Promising practice in school related gender based violence (SRGBV).* Prevention and response programming globally. https://www.concern.net/knowledge-hub/promising-practice-school-related-gender-based-violence-prevention-and-response

Leaper, C., Farkas, T., & Starr, C.R. (2018). Traditional masculinity, help avoidance and intrinsic, interest in relation to high school students English and math performance. *Psychology of men and masculinity , 20*(4), 603–611. https://doi.org/10.1037/men0000188.

Leavy, P. (2017). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-, and community based participatory research approaches*. Guilford Press. .

Legewie, J., & DiPrete, T. A. (2012). School context and the gender gap in educational achievement. *American Sociological Review,* 77(3).463-85. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122412440802

Lefebvre, H. (1991). The Production of space. Blackwell. Publishing.

Lemon, L.L,. & Hayes, J. (2016). *Enhancing Trustworthiness of qualitative findings*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Lesotho MOET Report (2006). Policy, planning and management of primary teachers. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/ADF-BD-IF-2007-109-EN-LESOTHO-PCR-BASIC-EDUCATION-IMPROVEMENT-EDUCATION-II.PDF

Lewis, M.,& Lockheed, M.E. (2008). Social exclusion and the gender gap in education. The World Bank, Policy Research Working Paper Series. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23550559_Social_exclusion_and_the_gender_gap_in_education/citation/download

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.

Linden, L., & Burde, D. (2008) Bringing Education to Afghan Girls: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Village-Based Schools. *American Economic Journal*: Applied Economics 2013, 5(3): 27–40. DOI: 10.1257/app.5.3.27. Little, W. (2016). Gender, Sex and Sexuality. https ://opentextbc .ca/introductiontosociology 2nd edition/chapter/chapter-12-gender-sex-and-sexuality/ .

Lloyd, J.E.V., Walsh, J., & Yailagh, M.S. (2005). Differences in performance, attributions, self-efficacy and achievement in mathematics: if I am so smart, why don't I know it? *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28(3), 384-408. https://doi.org/10.2307/4126476

Loewen, J. W. (1996). *Lies my teacher told me: everything your American history textbook got wrong. S*imon & Schuster*,*

Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of gender.* Yale University Press.

Low, M. (2006). The Social construction of Space and Gender. *European Journal of Women Studies* 13(2): 119-133. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506806062751

Lukhele BW (2014). Multiple sexual partnerships and their correlates among Facebook users in Swaziland: an online cross-sectional study. https://europepmc.org/article/med/27532641

Lumadi, M.W., & Shongwe, S.S. (2010) 'The need for training gender-sensitive teachers: Addressing education challenges for gender sensitive national development', *Contemporary Issues in Education Research* 3(3), 41–50.https://doi.org/ 10.19030/cier.v3i3.185

Lund, J.L. &Kirk, M.F. (2019). *Performance based assessment for middle and high school*. Human Kinetics Publishers.

Lunneblad, J.,& Johansson, T. (2019). Violent and gender thresholds: A study of the gender coding of violent behaviour in schools. *Gender and education* 33(3):1-16. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/09540253.2019.1583318

Maitra, P. (2016). Female disadvantage in enrolment in private school in India. https://ideas.repec.org/p/iza/izadps/dp9808.html

Majid U. (2017). Research Fundamentals: The Research Question, Objectives and Background. *URNCST Journal*, 1:2 (1-7). https://doi.org/ 10.26685/urncst.14

Malterud, K., Siersma, V. D., & Guassora, A. D. (2016). Sample size in qualitative interview studies: Guided by information power. *Qualitative Health Research,* 26, 1753–1760. https://doi.org/ 10.1177/1049732315617444

Maltseva, K. (2013). Distinguishing between individual and collective representation in value transmissions. *Journal of Cognition and Culture* 14(3-4):235-262.

Martin, C.L. (2010). Patterns of gender development-www. *Annu Rev Psychol*. 61:353-81. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.093008.100511. PMID: 19575615; PMCID: PMC374773

.Martino, W., & Kehler, M. (2005). Male teachers and the boy problem: An issue of recuperative masculinity politics. *McGill journal of education* 41(2). https://mje.mcgill.ca/article/view/559

Marx, A., Fuhrer, U., & Hartig, T. (2012). Effects of Classroom Seating Arrangements on Children's question asking learning. *Environments Research* 2(3):249-263. https://doi.org/ 10.1023/A:1009901922191

Massey, D. (1994). *Space, place and gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press.

Massey, D. (2005). *For space*. SAGE publications.

Massey, D. (2008). *World city*. Polity Press.

Massumi, B. (2010). *The future birth of the affective fact: the political ontology of threat*. : Duke University Press.

Mattsson, K. (2002). Children's (in)dependent mobility and parents chauffering in the town and countryside. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geograffe*. 93(4): 443–453.

Matope, N., Maruzani, N., & Mukoni, M. (2011). *Introduction to gender studies*. https://www.academia.edu/31223201/Introduction_to_Gender_Studies_Module. .

Matsa, W. (2011). *Introduction to gender gtudies*. https://www.academia.edu/31223201/Introduction_to_Gender_Studies_Module

Mawere, D., Chouraya, E., & Mugodzwa, T. (2011). *Introduction to gender studies*. https://www.academia.edu/31223201/Introduction_to_Gender_Studies_Module

McCarry, M. (2003) *The Connection Between Masculinity and Domestic Violence: What Young People Think.* [Doctoral Thesis › Doctor of Philosophy, University of Bristol]

McDowell. (1999). *Gender, identity and place: Understanding feminist geographies*. University of Minnesota Press.

McInturff, K. (2013). Closing Canada's gender gap: Year 2240 here we come. Canadian Centre/ for policy alternatives.https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295083714DOI:10.15299/ local. 2015. 11. 5.181 .

McGuire, M. (2018). Women, healing, and community: Cyber feminist activity on Reddit https://kairos.technorhetoric.net/25.2/topoi/mcguire/references.html.

MacMillan, J.H., & Schumacher, S. (2001) *Research in education. A conceptual introduction*. 5th Edition, Longman.

MacMillan, J.H., & Schumacher, S. (2014). *Research in education. evidence-based inquiry*, 7th Edition. Pearson Education.

McPhedran, K., Pearson, J., & Cairncross, S. (2010). The impact of school sanitation on girls' school attendance in the Dowa District of Malawi.2nd All Africa Environmental Health Congress 2010. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08b26e5274a27b20009b7/FINAL-Q27-Separate-Provision-of-toilets-Protocol-DFID-LSTMH.doc_P1.pdf

Mcpherson, E.M. (2012). *Under graduate African American women narratives in persistency in Science majors at PWI.[* Doctor of Philosophy in educational policy studies, University of Illinois]

Mcube, V., & Harber, C. (2013). Violence in South African Schools: What Is External and what is Internal to Schools? *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*. 5(14) https://doi.org/ 10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n3p324

Meiers, M. (2007). Teacher Professional Learning, Teaching practice and student learning outcomes: important issues. http://works.bepress.com/marion_meiers/24/

Mendez, M.G. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal* 15(2):279-287. DOI: 10.14483/udistrital.jour.calj.2013.2.a09.

Mensch, B.S., Singh, S., & Casterline, J.B. (2005). *Trends in the timing of first marriage among men and women in the developing world.* In C.B. LIoyd, J. R Behrman, N.P. Stromquist & B. Cohen (Eds.): National Academies Press. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240480908

Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. JosseyBass.

Middleton, S., &McKinley. (2010). The gown and the korowai: Maori doctoral students and the spatial organization of academic knowledge. *Higher Education Research and Development* 29(3):229-243. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360903510590

Miller, G., & Nowacek, D. (2016). *Social Construction of Reality*. Wiley online Library

Mim, S. A. (2016). Nature of Schooling: Construction of Gendered Identities in a secondary school, *Bangladesh Educational Journal* 39(1):1-16.https://doi.org/10.31756/jrsmte.132

Mitchell, F. (2011). *Resilience: concept, factors, and models for practice*. Stirling: Scottish

Childcare and protection unit. https://docplayer.net/22826188-Resilience-concept-factors-and-models-for-practice.html .

Mitchell, K., & Elwood, S. (2012). Mapping Children's politics: The promise of articulation and the limits of nonrepresentational theory. Environment and planning D: *Society and Space* 30(5):788-804. https://doi.org/10.1068/d9011

Moleni, C. (2008). Factors influencing access and retention in primary schooling for children and young people affected by HIV and AIDS: Case studies from rural Malawi. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242614388

Monette, D.R., Gullivan, T.J., & DeJong, C.R. (2010). *Applied social research: A tool for the human Resources*. Cengage Learning.

Morojele, P. (2012). D*iscourse as social communication: Implications for gender equitable learning environments*. http://hdl.handle.net/11660/3629

Morojele, P., & Muthukrishna, N. (2016). My journey to school. Photo voice accounts of rural children's everyday experiences in Lesotho. *African Journals online*. 14(3). https://www.ajol.info/index.php/gab/article/view/153133.

Morrow, V. (2011). Understanding Children and Childhood (2nd ed.). Centre for Children and Young People Background Briefing Series, No. 1, Centre for Children and Young People, Southern Cross University.

Motsa, N.D. (2016). *The Geographies of Schooling Experiences of Vulnerable Children in One Rural School in Swaziland* Durban (Edgewood Campus) ii. https://doi.org/ 10.13140/RG.2.2.14605.64488.

Motsa, N. D. & Morojele, P.J. (2019). Vulnerable masculinities: implications of gender socialisation in three rural Swazi primary schools. *SAJCE* [online]. vol.9, n.1, pp.1-11.: <http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2223768220190001000 12&lng=en&nrm=iso>. ISSN 2223-7682. http://.doi.org/10.4102/sajce.v9i1.580.

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book*. Van Schaik.

Muito, M. (2004). Gender equality in the classroom: reflections on practice. Paper presented at the Beyond Access: Gender, education and development project seminar on pedagogic strategies for gender equality and quality education in basic schools 2004. http://www.ioe.ac.uk/schools/efps/GenderEducDev/Muito%20paper.pdf.

Muito, M. (2005). Gender Quality in the Classroom. Reflections on Practice. *Gender and Development:* 13, (1). 44-55. https://www.jstor.org/stable/i20053128 .

Mulhal, S. (2013). *The Routledge Guide to Heiddeger's Being and Time*. Routledge.

Mullay, M.E. (2016). Exercising agency, making a difference in how projects are initiated, *PM World Journa*l 5(6),, . https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315581415

Murphy. (2008). Gender and subject cultures in practice, in P. Murphy. Hall (Eds.) *Learning and practice: Agency and Identities*. Sage/Open University Press.

Mustapha, A. S., & Mills, S. (2015). *Gender representation in learning Materials*. Routledge.

Mutekwe, E., Maphosa, C., Machingambi, S., Ndofirepi, A.P.& Wadesango N. (2013). Exploring the teachers' role in the social construction of gender through the hidden culture curriculum and pedagogy: A case of Zimbabwe. *Social Sciences* 37(3):307-18. ISSN 978-3-658-38450-9

Namey, E., Guest, G., Thairu, L., & Johnson, L. (2008). Data Reduction Techniques for Large Qualitative Data Sets. In: *Handbook for team-based qualitative research*. Rowman Altamira.

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (7th ed.). Pearson.

Neuschmidt, O., Barth, J.& Hastedt, D. (2008). Trends in gender differences in mathematics and science (TIMMS 1995-2003). *Studies in Educational evaluation*, 34. 56-72. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-017-9630-6

Ngigi, S.K (2014). The gender socialisation question in education: Influence on boys' and girls' academic performance. *European scientific journal.10 (9).* https//doi.org/10.19044/esj.2014.v.10n19p%25p

Norozi, S.A., & Moen, T. (2016). Childhood as a social construction. *Journal of educational and social research,* 6(2). https://doi.org/ 10.5901/jesr.2016.v6n2p75 .

Organisation for economic Co-operation and Development (OECD. (2013). PISA 2012 Results: what students know and can do-student performance in mathematics, science and reading. https://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-I.pdf

Organisation for economic Co-operation and Development (OECD. (2015). The ABC of gender equality in education: Aptitude, behaviour, confidence. https://www.oecd.org/education/the-abc-of-gender-equality-in-education-9789264229945-en.htm .

OECD (2016). Education at: Indicators. https://www.right-to-education.org/fr/node/852.

Owen, I.R. (2013). Using mindfulness, a teaching aid for phenomenology. *Indo Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, *13*(2).27-35. https://doi.org/10.2989/IPJP.2013.13.2.4.1178

Paechter, C. (2010). Tomboys and girly girls: embodied femininities in primary schools in Discourse: *Studies in the Cultural politics of education*, 31(2), 221-235. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596301003679743

Pain, R., Kindon, S.,& Kesby, M. (Eds.).(2007). *Participatory action research: origins, approaches and methods. Connecting people, participation and place* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Pan, P. (2018). Gender Discrimination in Education. Global Campaign For Education. https://campaignforeducation.org/en/what-we-do/campaigns/transformative-education/girls-education/gender-discrimination-in-education/.

Pakzadian, M.,& Tootkaboni, A.S. (2018). The role of gender in conversational dominance: A study of EFL learners Cogent Education. *Cogent Education*. 5(1) https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1560602

Parkes, J. (2015). The evolution of policy enactment on gender based violence.Springerlink.com.

Percy-Smith, B., &Burns, D. (2013). Exploring the role of children and young people as agents of change in sustainable community development, local environment: *The International Journal of justice and Sustainability, 18(3*), -323-339. https://doi.org/10. 1080/13549839.2012.729565

Phendla, T. (2004). Metaphors of leadership, metaphors of hope. Life stories of black women leaders in South Africa. *Africa Education Review*, 1(2)161-174.https://doi.org/ 10.1080/18146620408566277

Pinar, W. (2011). *What is curriculum theory?* (2nd ed.) : Routledge.

Pinheiro, P.S. (2006). World Report on Violence against Children. UN Secretary General's study on violence against Children. https://plan-international.org/uploads/2021/12/glo_the_rights_of_children_to_live_free_from_violence_position_paper_final_eng_nov18.pdf.

Pinto, T (ed.). (2013). Education Guide: Gender and Citizenship. 3rd cycle, CIG, [online] available in http://www.cig.gov.pt/pdf/2014/Education_Guide_3rd_Cicle.pdf

Pircon, B. (2016). Teacher Bias: The elephant in the classroom. The Graide Network. https://www.thegraidenetwork.com.

Porter, F. & Sweetman, C. (2005). Mainstreaming Gender in Development: A critical Review https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/121089/bk-mainstreaming-gender-development-010105-en.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y

Poapst, Jackie, and Allison Harper. 2017. "Reflections on the 2014 Celebration of Women in Debate Tournament at George Mason University." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 53 (2): 127–137. https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Reflections+on+the+2014+celebration+of+women+in+debate+tournament+at...-a0543611042

Poduvai, J. & Poduvai, P. (2009). Working mothers: How much working, how much mothers, and where is the womanhood? In: Some issues in women's studies, and others, and other essays (A.R Singh and S.A. Singh eds.), MSM,7, Jan-Dec 2009, p63-79.

Prout, A. (2005). The future of childhood: Towards the Interdisciplinary Study of Children. Routledge.

Quenzel, G., & Hurrelmann, K. (2013). The growing gender gap in education. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 18(2). 69-84. https://ecommons.aku.edu/pakistan_ied_pdck/4

Qvortrup J. (2009) Childhood as a Structural Form. In: Qvortrup J., Corsaro W.A., Honig MS. (eds) The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies. Palgrave Macmillan..

Ramson, S.M. (2015). Exploring Doctoral Students' Theory Choices in Education. University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban. ttps://ukzn-dspace.ukzn.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10413/12974/

Ranade, S. (2007). The way she moves: Mapping the everyday production of gender space, Review of women's studies, economic and political weekly https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Shilpa-Ranade/publication/262127061_

Rapmund, V. (2000). Women's stories of depression. Constructivist approach. *South African Journal of Psychology*. (30(2):20-30. https://doi.org/10.1177/008124630003000203

Rashidi, N.,& Naderi, S. (2013). The effect of gender on the patterns of classroom interaction. *Scientific and Academic Publishing.* 2(3):30-36.https://doi.org/10.5923/j.edu.20120203.02

Rasmussen, M.L. (2009). Beyond gender identity? Gender and Education,21(4) 431-47. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17341-2_21

Renold, E. (2001).'Square-girls', Femininity and the Negotiation of Academic Success in the Primary School. *British Educational Research Journal* 27(5):577-588. SAGE Publications Ltd, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848607996

Renold, E. (2013). Boys and girls speak out: a qualitative study of children's gender and sexual cultures Cardiff University, NSPCC and Children's Commissioner's Office for Wales. https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/basw_13524-6_0.pdf

Renold, E. (2005). *Girls, boys and junior sexualities: Exploring children's gender and sexual relations in the primary school.* Routledge Falmer. Reza, A. (2007). Violence against children in Swaziland. Findings from the national survey on violence against children in Swaziland. https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/swaziland_survey.pdf.

Reza, A., Breiding, M, Blanton, C., Mercy, J.A., Dahlberg, L. L., Anderson, M., & Bamrah. S. (2007). Violence against children in Swaziland: Findings from a national survey on violence against children in Swaziland. Mbabane . https : // www . cdc . gov / globalhealth / health protection/errb/pdf/publications/swaziland_violencechildren_fullreport_10_9_07_final.pdf

Ridell, S. (1992). Gender and the Politics of the curriculum. Routledge.

Ridgeway. (2011). *Framed by gender. Gender persists in the modern world*. online edn, Oxford Academic, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199755776.001.0001 .

Riley, T. (In press, 2014). "I know I'm generalizing but…"; How teachers; perceptions influence ESL learner placement. In TESOL Quarterly. *TESOL Quarterly*, 49(4,) 2015,659–80. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43893782.

Robbins, K.,& Helfenbein, R.J. (2016). Gendered bathrooms, critical geography, and the lived experiences of schools. *Journal of Curriculum and pedagogy*. https://doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2018.1527264.

Roberts. (2017). *Geographical Knowledge is powerful If…' in teaching Geography* 42(1).6-9. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2014.894481.

Robertson, S., &Verger, A. (2012) Governing education though Public Private Partnerships, in S. Robertson, K. Mundy, A. Verger and F. Menashy, (eds). Public Private Partnerships in Education: New Actors and New Modes of Governance, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Roohani, A., & Zarei, M. (2013). Evaluating gender bias in the Iranian pre university English textbooks, *Indonesian journal of Applied Linguistics* 3(1); 115. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v3i1.194

Rossi, P., & Rouanet, L. (2015. Gender preferences in Africa: A comparative Analysis of fertility choices, ideas. World Development, Elsevier, 72(C), 326-345.

Rowe, W. E. (2014). "*Positionality*." The Sage Encyclopedia of Action Research, edited by Coghlan, David and Mary Brydon-Miller. Sage.

Rubin, H.R., & Rubin, I.S. (2011). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*, 3rd edn.: SAGE.

Ryle, R. (20110. How do we learn gender? In: Question gender, 119. SAGE publications.

Sadker, M., & Sadker, D. (2004). *The miseducation of boys*. In the Jossey Bass reader on gender in education, pp,182-203), Simon & Schuester.Sage pu.

Sadker, M., & Sadker, D. (2010). "*Failing at fairness: How America's schools cheat girls*." Simon and Schuster. Maxwell Macmillan.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Sangiorgio, A. (2015). *Collaborative creativity in music education: Children's interactions in group creative music making*. University of Exeter Press.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2016) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 7th Edition, Pearson.

Savard, D.M. (2016). *The effect of gendered spaces on the gender gap in victimization: implications for private and public security*. Wayne State University Dissertations*. 1586.*

Savin-Baden, M., & Claire H. M. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice*. Routledge.

Scârneci, F. (2012). How I Became a Qualitative Researcher? In: Sociologija. Mintis ir veiksmas *Sociology. Thought and Action*) 1 (30), 258-275. https://doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456

Scharp, K., & Thomas, L. (2019). Disrupting the humanities and social science binary: Framing communication studies as a transformative discipline. *Review of Communication*. 19. 147-163. https://doi.org/10.1080/15358593.2019.1595702

Schmitt, M.L., Clatworthy, D., Ogello, T.,& Sommer, M. (2018). *Making a case for a female –friendly toilet.* Colombia University Press.

Sellers, W. & Gough, N. (2010). Sharing outsider thinking: Thinking (differently) with Deleuze in educational philosophy and curriculum inquiry. *International Journal of qualitative studies in education,* 23, 589-614.: https://doi.org/10.25159/1947-9417/11507

Sharif, S. (2014). School Playground, its impact on children's learning and development. Bangladesh: Institute of Educational Development, http://oer2go.org/mods/en-boundless/www.boundless.com/sociology/textbooks/boundless-sociology-textbook/index.html

Sharpe, D. (2015). Young people's involvement in policy research. Children's geographies, *Soc. Sci.* 13(2), 240-48; https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8020044 .

Sheetal, P. (2014). Social Construction of Gender in School. *International Journal of Social Science Volume,* 3 Special Issue: 2014: 299-304.

Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. Education for information, 22, 63-75.IOS Press.

Shongwe, T. (2017). An assessment of Swaziland vision 2022 strategic plan: opportunities and challenges. https://scholar.ufs.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11660/10298/ShongweT.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Simelane, D.P. (2011). Gender equality and equal opportunities in the work place. A case of public sector in Swaziland. University of South Africa, Pretoria.

Sinclair, M. (2007). Editorial: A guide to understanding theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Evidence Based Midwifery 5(2): 39. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071802656

Singh, S. & Wassenaar, D.R. (2016). Contextualizing the role gatekeeper in social science research. *South African Journal of Bioethics and Law*. 9(1), 42. https://doi.org/10.7196/SAJBL.2016.v9i1.465.

Skelton, T. (2008). Research with children and young people: exploring the tensions between ethics, competence and participation. *Children Geographies*, 6(1), 21-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733280701791876

Skelton, C. (2009). Failing to get men into primary teaching: a feminist critique. *Journal of Education Policy*, *24*(1), 39-54. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930802412677

Skolnick, J. (2011). How to encourage girls in math and science: Prentice Hall.

Slattery, P. (2013). Curriculum development in the postmodern era: Teaching and learning in an age of accountability. Routledge.

Snider, J. H. (2010). Deterring Fake Public Participation. *International Journal of Public Participation*, *4*(1), 89-103. https://www.iap2.org/page/429

Spyrou, S. (2011). The limits of children's voices: From authenticity to critical, reflexive representation. *Childhood: A Global Journal of Child Research, 18*(2), 151–165. https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568210387834 .

Staempfli, M. B. (2008). Reintroducing adventure into children's outdoor play environments. *Environment and Behavior,* 41(2), 268-280 . https://www.deepdyve.com/lp/sage/reintroducing-adventure-into-children-s-outdoor-play-environments-B9zfuMre23?key=sage.

Stangor, C. (2014). Principles of social psychology. openEd. https://opentextbc.ca/socialpsychology

Starhawk, S. (2011). The Empowerment manual: A Guide for Collaborative Groups. https://sustainabilitypopulareducation.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/the-empowerment-manual_nodrm.pdf .

Strom, K.J., & Martin, A.D. (2013). Putting philosophy to work in the classroom: Using rhizomatics to de-territorialise Neoliberal Thought and Practice. Studying Teacher education*: A journal of self-study of teacher education practices*, 9(3),219-235. https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2013.830970

Stromquist, N.P. (2007). The gender socialisation process in schools: a cross national Comparison: Radical shifts in university environments. *Higher Education* 53(1): 81–105. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000155587

Sukati, C. W .S. (2013). Education for all children by 2015: Mere Rhetoric or reality in Swaziland? *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(11), 1-12. ISSN: 2201-6333

Sullivan, A. (2009). Academic self-concept, gender and single sex schooling. *British Educational Research Journal* 35 (2) 259-88. . https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920802042960

Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (2013). Effectiveness of a comprehensive sexual and gender-based violence prevention project for in-school girls in Swaziland. Manzini: https://encompassworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AIDSTAR-One-Case-Study-Swaziland-Action-Group-Against.pdf

Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy, (2011). Mbabane.

Swaziland UNDAF, 2016-2020

Swift, J.,& Gould, H. (2020). Not an object: On sexualizing and exploitation of women and girls. https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/not-object-sexualization-and-exploitation-women-and-girls-0

Tamboukou, M.,& Ball, S, (2006). Nomadic subjects: young black women in Britain. Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education. 23 (3), pp. 267-284. https://doi.org/10.1080/0159630022000029777

Tannenbaum, C., Greaves, L.,& Graham, I. D. (2016). Why sex and gender matter in implementation research.Bmc Med. *Res Methodol* 16, 145 (2016). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-016-0247-7

Tetlow, S. (2018). Unruly School Spaces: An ethnographic exploration of year 8 students' experiences of space, gender and well-being in South Wales secondary school. The Open University.

Thanh, N. C., & Thanh, T. T. (2015). The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education. *American Journal of Educational Science*, *1*(2), 24-27. http://www.publicscienceframework.org/journal/paperInfo/ajes?paperId=672

The Kingdom of Swaziland. (2005). The Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland in English and Siswati. Mbabane: Government Printer.

The Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy (2011). Ministry of Education and Training. Mbabane: Government Printer.

The Eswatini National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018). Ministry of Education and Training. Mbabane: Government Printer.

Theys, S. (2018). Introducing Constructivism in International relations theory, Politics Department.Newcastle University Press: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139196598.010.

Thrift, N J, (2003). "Space", in Key Concepts in Geography Eds Holloway, S, Rice, S, Valentine, G .Sage Publications. .

Thrift N (2009) Space: The fundamental stuff of human geography. In: Clifford N, Holloway SL, Rice SP, et al. (eds) *Key Concepts in Geography*: SAGE

Thomas, G. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry. A guide for students*. Sage Publications.

Thomas, N. (2011). *Children's rights: Policy into practice*, Background Briefing series 4. Lismore.

Timmermans, A.C., de Boer, H., & van der Werf, M.P.C. (2016). An investigation of the relationship between teachers' expectations and teachers' perceptions of student attributes. *Social Psychology of Education,* 19 (2), 217-40. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-015-9326-6

Tong. (2009). Feminist thought: A more comprehensive introduction, West view Press.

Tom, A. (2012). *What is Social Constructionism?* The Grounded Theory Review; 21.2. https://groundedtheoryreview.com/2012/06/01/what-is-social-constructionism/

Tomlinson, C.A. (2014). *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the needs of alllearners*. 2nd Edition, Alexandria.

Tracy, S. J. (2013). Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact. Wiley-Blackwell. http://www.123library.org/book_details/?id=63971

Trawick-Smith, J., 2010. *Early childhood development: A multicultural perspective*. 5th Edn., NJ. Merrill.

Ullah, H. (2016). School teaching as a feminine profession: the legitimization and naturalization discourses in Pakistan context. *Educational Studies* 39 (2), 183-194. http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/education/courses/postgraduate-research/doctoral-research-conference.aspx

Ullah, H., & Khan, A.N. (2016). Gender Representation In Pakistani Print Media: *A Critical Analysis Pakistan Journal of Gender Studies* 12(1), 123-128. DOI: 10.46568/pjgs.v12i1.199

Ulimwengu, J. (2017, 8 June,). John Magufuli's pregnant schoolgirl ban angers Tanzanian women. *BBC World News.* https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40379113

UN, (2015). Confronting Gender Stereotypes, Closing Pay Gap Critical, Speakers Stress, as Commission on Status of Women Concludes Session's Fifth Day. https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2020/02/violence-against-women-stereotypes-and-gender-pay-gap-centre-dialogue.

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2009). General Comment No. 12: the right of the Child to be heard. https://www.refworld.org/docid/4ae562c52.html.

UNDP, (2015). Human Development Report 2015. https://www.undp.org/publications/human-development-report-2015.

UNESCO's gender mainstreaming Implementation Framework, (2002-2007).

UNESCO. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action 2000*. https://www.right-to-education.org/resource/dakar-framework-action.

UNESCO, (2009). Policy guidelines in inclusion in education.www. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000177849.

UNESCO, (2012). Good policy and Practice Series, Booklet 8: Education sector response to homophobic bullying. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000216493.

UNESCO (2014) Inclusion Policy and the Education of School Students with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities: Where to Now? https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=45388

UNESCO, (2016). Out in the open: education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000244756.

UNESCO, (2017) Education for Sustainable Development Goals - Learning Objectives. UNESCO, 7, Place e Fontenoy. https://www.sdg4education2030.org/education-sustainable-development-goals-learning-objectives-unesco-2017.

UNFPA, (2015). Women and girls Safe Spaces, Syria. https://www.unfpa.org/resources/women-girls-safe-spaces-guidance-note-based-lessons-learned-syrian-crisis

UNIGEI, (2010). A Journey to gender equality in education. https://www.macfound.org/media/files/ungei_at_10..

UNIGEI, (2012). A Journey to gender equality in education. https://www.macfound.org/media/files/ungei_at_10.pdf.

UNICEF, (2009). The State of the World's Children. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/686200?ln=en.

UNICEF, (2013). Annual report 2013. UNICEF publications.UNICEF, (2015). Procedure for ethical standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and analysis. https://www.unicef-irc.org/files/documents/d-4165-Final %20Procedure %20Ethical %20Standards %20 Evidence% 2004%202021.pdf

UNICEF, (2014). Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group, Measuring Violence against Children: Inventory and assessment of quantitative studies, Division of Data, Research and Policy. https://data.unicef.org/resources/measuring-violence-against-children-inventory-and-assessment-of-quantitative-studies-publication/.

UNICEF and UN Women, (2013). UNICEF announces initiatives to end violence. https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/7/unicef-announces-initiative-to-end-violence-against-children.

UN Women, (2016). Global guidance on addressing school related gender based violence. UN Women. https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/global-guidance-on-addressing-school-related-gender-based-violence.

USAID. (2008). Educational Programming for Orphaned and vulnerable children affected by or Vulnerable to HIV. Moving beyond school fees and uniforms. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADP105.pdf.

Vale, C. (2010). Gender mainstreaming: Maintaining attention on gender equality. In H. J. Forgasz, J. R. Becker, K.-H. Lee, & O. B. Steinthorsdottir (Eds.), *International perspectives on gender and mathematics education* (pp. 111–143). IAP Information Age Publishing.

Valentine,D. (2004). The categories themselves. GLQ: *A journal of lesbian and gay studies* 10,(2).215-220. Duke University Press

Vally, S. (2003). Education policy and implementation developments, June- August 1998.In L. Chisholm, S. Motala & Vally, S. *South African Education policy review*. Heinemann Publishers.

van Blerk, L., Barker, J., Ansell, N., Smith, F., & Kesby, M. (2009). Researching Children's Geographies: Methodological Issues in Research with young people. Routledge.

Verploegh, M.E. (2015). Not thinking straight: how sexual orientation and gender display shape inequality in task groups. *Front. Psychol. 6*. | https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01511.

Viklund, G., & Wikblad, K. (2009). Teenager's perceptions of factors affecting decision-making competence in the management of type 1 diabetes. *Journal of Clinical, Nursing*, 18, 3262-3270. DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2702.2009.02963.x

Vithal, R., & Jansen, J. (2009). *Designing your first proposal*. Juta & Co. Ltd.

Walker. J. (2019). The power of education to fight inequality. https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/bp-education-inequality-170919-summ-en.pdf.

Watt, S.K. (2007). (In Process). Difficult Dialogues, Privilege and Social Justice: Uses of the Privileged Identity Exploration (PIE) Model in Student Affairs Practice. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ899385.pdf

Weiner, B. (1994). Judgments of responsibility: A foundation for a theory of social conduct. New York Guilford (in press-b) *Revue Suisse de Psychologie, 60*(1), 35–46. https://doi.org/10.1024/1421-0185.60.1.35.

Welman, J.C., Kruger, S., & Mitchell, B. (2009). *Research Methodology* 3rd Ed. Oxford University Press.

Wendy, W. W., Honein, G., & Elzubeir, M.A. (2002). *Seeking Emirati Women's Voices: The Use of Focus Groups with an Arab Population.* Qualitative Health Research. 12(4), 566-575. https://doi.org/10.1177/104973202129119991

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and society* 1(2):125-151. Sage Publications

Wickramasinghe, V. (2010). Work-related dimensions and job stress: The moderating effect of coping strategies. *Stress and Health: Journal of the International Society for the Investigation of Stress, 26*(5), 417–429. https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.1314.

Wilson, G., & Randall, M. (2013). *The implementation and evaluation of a new learning space*: A pilot study. *Research in Learning Technology*, 20, 1-17. doi: 10.3402/rlt. v20i0.14431

Wood, L., & Goba, L. (2011). Care and support of orphaned and vulnerable children at school: Helping teachers to respond. *South African Journal of Education* 31(2):275-290. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1136757.pdf

Wood, W. (2005). Universal sex differences across patriarchal cultures ≠ evolved psychological dispositions. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 28,* 281-283. DOI: 10.1017/S0140525X05290052

Wood, W., & Eagly, A.H. (2012). Biosocial construction of sex differences and similarities in behavior. *Advances in social psychology*,46,55-123. http://www.elsevier.com/locate/permissionusematerial

Woodhead, M. (2013). Childhood. A development approach. In M.J. Kehily (Ed.) understanding childhood: The Open University.

Woolley, H.E., & Griffin, E. (2015). *Decreasing experiences of home range, outdoor spaces, activities and companions: Changes across three generations in Sheffield in north England*. *Children's Geographies*,13(6),677-691. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2014.952186

Wyness, M. (2003). Children's place and interests: *Constructing an agenda for student voice*. Children Geographies, 192) 223-239. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5067/1/randd-pupil-lship-johnson.pdf

White, G., Ruther, M., & Kahn, J. (2016). Educational Inequality in India: An analysis of gender differences in reading and mathematics. http://ihds.info/sites/default/files/publications/papers/EducationGenderInequalityinIndia.pdf

World Bank, (2016). Gender Based Violence against women, girls. https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialsustainability/brief/violence-against-women-and-girls.

Yarwood, R., &Tyrell, N. (2012). 'Why Children's Geographies' in Geography 97(3), 123-128. https://doi.org/10.1080/00167487.2012.12094350

Young, M., & Muller, J. (2010). Three educational scenarios for the future: Lessons from the sociology of knowledge. *European Journal of Education*, 45(1), 11-27. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2009.01413.x.

Yule, G. (2006). *The Study of Language. 3rd* ed. Cambridge University Press

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

27 September 2016

Mr Gibson Makamure 213573670
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Makamure

Protocol reference number: HSS/1524/016D
Project Title: Space, Geography and Gendered experiences of children: A narrative study at four high schools in Hhohho Region, Swaziland

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 13 September 2016, 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

[redacted]

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Professor Pholoto Morojele
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

APPENDIX: B: Consent letter from the Director of the Ministry of Education and Training in Eswatini

The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland

Ministry of Education & Training

Tel: (+268) 2 4042491/5
Fax: (+268) 2 404 3880

P.O. Box 39
Mbabane, SWAZILAND

14th November, 2014

Attention:
Head Teachers:
Sifundzani High School
Mbabane Central High School
St. Francis High School
St. Mark's High School

THROUGH
Hhohho Regional Education Officer

Dear Colleague,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECTION DATA FOR UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL STUDENT – MR. GIBSON MAKAMURE

1. Reference is made to the above mentioned subjects.
2. The Ministry of Education and Training has received a request from Mr. Gibson Makamure, a student at the University of Kwazulu-Natal that in order for him to fulfill his academic requirements at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, he has to collect data (conduct research) and his study or research topic is: *Space, Geography and Gendered Experiences of Children: A Narrative Study at Four High Schools in Hhohho Region, Swaziland*. The population for his study comprises of twenty-four learners from the above mentioned schools. All details concerning the study are stated in the participants' consent form which will have to be signed by all participants before Mr. Makamure begins his data collection. Please note that parents will have to consent for all participants below the age of 18 years participating in this study.

3. The Ministry of Education and Training requests your office to assist Mr. Makamure by allowing him to use above mentioned schools from Hhohho region as his research sites as well as facilitate him by giving him all the support he needs in his data collection process. Data collection period is one month

[redacted]

DR. SIBONGILE M. MTSHALI-DLAMINI
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

cc: Regional Education officers – Hhohho
Chief Inspector - Secondary
4 Head Teachers from the above mentioned schools
Prof. Pholoho Morojele

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TRAINING 2014 -11- 14 BOX 39 MBABANE SWAZILAND

Page 1

APPENDIX C: Informed Consent letter to Principal

Dear Principal,

I am a Gibson Makamure, a Ph.D. research student under the supervision of Professor P. Morojele in the School of Education and Development, Edgewood Campus University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am conducting a research study on schooling experiences of children in Eswatini. The title of my study is Space, Geography and Gendered Experiences of Children: A Narrative Study at Four High Schools in Hhohho region, Eswatini. I am seeking your consent for your learners' participation, which will involve interview and story account sessions, and they may be required to take photographs of their activities at school over a period of one (1) month.

Your leaners' participation in this research is voluntary, and continued participation is also by choice. You have the right to choose not to have your leaners participate, and to withdraw your learners from participating at any time.

DECLARATION BY THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

I……

(full name of principal), principal of ……

…… (full name of school)

Hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I hereby give my consent for my school/learners to participate in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw my school from the research project at any time, should I so desire, and any participant is also at liberty to withdraw from the research participant so desires.

…….. ……..

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL Date

APPENDIX D: Informed Consent letter for Parent/guardian

Dear Parent of participant,

My name is Gibson Makamure. I am a Ph.D. research student under the supervision of Professor P. Morojele in the School of Education and Development, Edgewood Campus University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am conducting a research study on schooling experiences of children in Eswatini. My research topic is, Space, Geography and Gendered Experiences of Children: A Narrative Study at Four High Schools in the Hhohho Region, Eswatini. I am seeking your consent for your child's participation, which will involve interview and story account sessions, and he/she will be required to take photographs of his/her activities at school over a period of one month. He/she will also be required to make a collage (assemble images) that will represent his/her experiences at school. Your child's participation in this research is voluntary, and continued participation is also by choice. You have the right to choose not to have your child participate, and to withdraw your child from participating at any time. There is no penalty if your child chooses not to participate in this research or chooses to withdraw from participation at any time. The outcome of this research may be published. In the event of this being the case, your child's name and identity will not be used.

All information your child will give will be confidential. A code or number will identify the information your child provides.

LETTER OF DECLARATION BY PARENT/S OF PARTICIPANT/S

I……
……

(full name of parent/s), parent/s of……...

…….. (full name of learner)

Hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I hereby give my consent for my child/children to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw my child from the research project at any time, should I so desire, and my child is also at liberty to withdraw from the research project at any time, should he/she so desires.

……

Signature of parent/guardian Date

APPENDIX E: Informed Consent Letter to Participant

Dear Participant

My name is Gibson Makamure. I am a PhD student under the supervision of Professor P. Morojele in the School of Education and Development, Edgewood Campus University of KwaZulu. The title of my study is: Space, geography and gendered experiences of children: a narrative study at four high schools in Hhohho region, Eswatini. Your school is one of the four high schools where I will be conducting my research. In order to gather information for the research, you will be asked some questions.

- 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 t hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- 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.
- The research aims at understanding how learners experience schooling in Eswatini. ' Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

DECLARATION

I ……. (full names or participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

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

Signature of participant Date

APPENDIX F: Interview Guide

Research Questions:

1. What are the gendered spaces and places of boys and girls within the schools and practices in the co-educational context of high schools?

School and Classroom Facilities

- Are the designs and maintenance/functionality of bathrooms and or toilets the same for both boys and girls?
- School spaces should have clean drinking water available. Is clean drinking water available and accessible to both boys and girls?
- Are there enough seats and seating spaces for both girl and boy students?
- Do the physical seating space, arrangements give an equal opportunity for both boys and girls to participate in class and interact with the teacher and other students?

Security and Healthy Issues

- Can you say that the school is close enough for all the school going boys and girls to walk to?
- Are the school spaces safe for girls and boys from bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse to and from school? To ensure safety, are services such as transportation provided?
- Do girls who get pregnant get supported by the school, and do they feel free to continue schooling?

Curriculum and Gender

- Is the curriculum a reflection of the needs and life experiences of both boys and girls by providing a varied range of subjects that will provide both with necessary knowledge and skills needed in adult life?
- How is the participation and achievement rate of girls' in relation to boys in math and science and boys in disciplines such as literature and history?
- Is there freedom for both boys and girls to feel confident in making subject choices that may not be traditionally male or female subjects?

- Considering the extracurricular activities, do they equally attract the participation of both boys and girls?

2. Are schools in Eswatini patriarchal agent of gender socialisation?

Teachers

- How is the ratio of male teachers to female teachers?
- Are female teachers and male teachers valued the same by community leaders and parents?
- Are both female and male teachers treated equally by the school head? For example, are given equal responsibilities and opportunities?
- Do teachers give equal encouragement to girls and boys to speak equally within the school spaces? Do teachers attach equal valuation of the views of boys and girls?
- What kind of activities are boys and girls offered or assigned by teachers?
- Have both female and male teachers and the school head participated in gender training courses?
- Do you think male and female teachers have relevant training to support both girls and boys on reproductive health issues in the school spaces?

Community Members and Parents

- Are community leaders and parents equally supportive of both boys and girls to attend school?
- Are community members and parents volunteering in the school? Do males and females participate equally as school volunteers? Do the school volunteering activities of males and females reinforce or challenge gender stereotypical roles?
- Are women and men with special knowledge or skills from the community brought into the class as resource persons?

3. How do children exercise agency to navigate gender-based experiences and positioning within schools?

Students Participation in Decision Making

- Do students take any role in deciding school rules?
- Are the voices of both girls' and boys' learners listened to by the school decision making body? If yes, how?

- Does freedom exist in the school exist to encourage both boys and girls to freely express their opinions, needs and concerns?
- Are equal opportunities to participate in school and classroom activities availed to both girls and boys?
- What kind of activities are boys and girls offered or assigned by teachers?

Guidance and Counseling

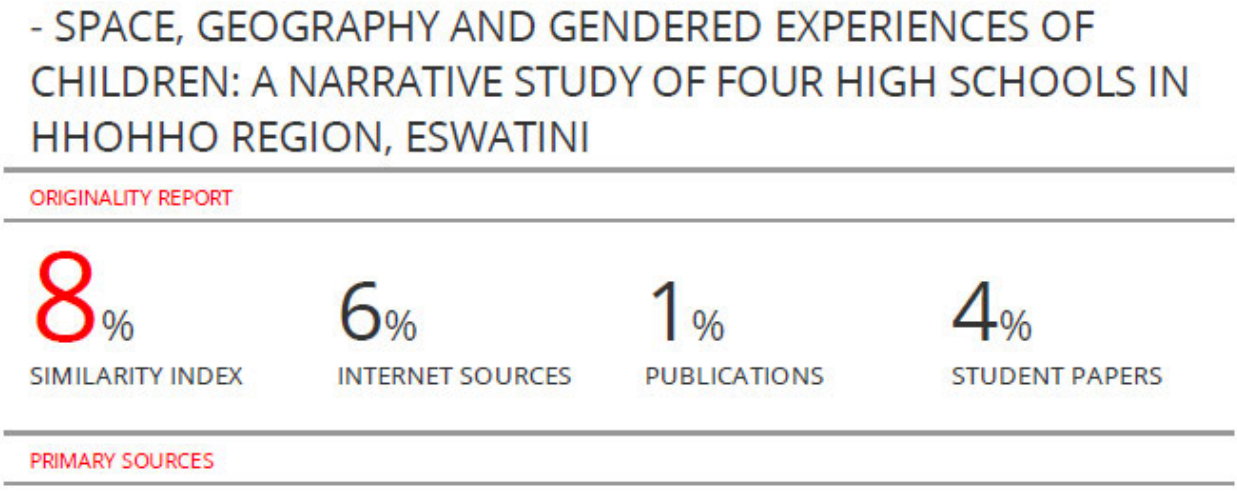
- Does the school have some guidance and counseling facilities?
- What role does guidance and counseling play in shaping the spaces that children occupy, their geographies and gendered experiences?
- What kind of aspects are discussed during the guidance and counseling sessions? For example, sexuality, subject choices and others.

Who between boys and girls has access to these programs?

4. How can schools be turned into gender responsive environments?

- What are your views about the physical space? i: e infrastructure, e.g. fence, school buildings, libraries, toilets, water and others.
- What can you say about the academic space which includes career guidance, teachers who gender responsive, teaching and learning materials that are gender responsive and gender responsive school management?
- How is the social space in the school? i: e relationships between teachers-students, students-students, boy-girl, girl-girl, boy-boy?

APPENDIX G- Turnitin Originality Report



APPENDIX H: Editors Certificate

THE WRITING STUDIO

Writing and Editing Practice

Certificate 0122

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

12 January 2022

This dissertation, entitled **Space, Geography and Gendered Experiences of Children: A Narrative Study at Four High Schools in Hhohho Region, Eswatini,** by Gibson Makamure, has been edited and reviewed to ensure technically accurate and contextually appropriate use of language for research at this level of study.

Yours sincerely

CM ISRAEL, BA Hons (UDW) MA (UND) MA (US) PhD (UNH)
LANGUAGE EDITOR AND WRITING CONSULTANT
Connieisrael90@gmail.com Mobile 082 4988166