PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES:
STORIES OF TEACHERS' LIVED DILEMMATIC EXPERIENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILES

By

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DECLARATION

I, Reena Ramkelewan (student number: 8523462), declare that:

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2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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SUPERVISORS' AUTHORISATION

This thesis is submitted with our approval.

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Dr I. Naicker (Co-Supervisor)

8 Jan 2021
Date: _____

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DEDICATION

For my grandchildren,

Tyren Levi, Thea Eden, Taara Lianna and Tahlia Everly

You make my heart smile.

ABSTRACT/OVERVIEW

This study, *Personal-professional identities: Stories of teachers' lived dilemmatic experiences in the context of school quintiles*, explored the identities and dilemmatic experiences of five teachers who each represented one of the five school quintiles in the South African public school system. Quintiling is used in the South African educational system to categorise schools based on their poverty ranking. This qualitative study, guided by an interpretive paradigm that employed narrative inquiry, aimed to understand who these teachers were, what personal meanings shaped their professional practices as teachers, and finally, how they could negotiate their professional practices within their different school quintiles. A multiple-method approach for the generation of field texts was employed. These included narrative interviews and art-based methods (photovoice, collage inquiry and poetic inquiry) to respond to the three critical research questions. These field texts were subsequently reconstructed into research texts. The researcher drew on social identity theory, the dilemmatic space conceptual framework, the ethical dilemma decision-making model, and teacher identity theory, to produce stories that reflected the five participants' subjective experiences. The stories encompassed critical moments of the teachers' lives in relation to the diverse socio-cultural, historical, economic and political contexts within which they found themselves. These stories were analysed using narrative analysis and analysis of narratives. The analyses were written as storied narratives and vignettes, and attempted to understand the critical moments and experiences of my participants. The teachers' experiences were found to be the result of socialisation within their families and the communities within which they lived. The study found that various difficulties that were a consequence of the system of school quintiling challenged the teachers professionally, emotionally, mentally and physically. In addition, dominant social identities (race, class, gender, and ethnicity, amongst others) intersected in complex ways to shape the teachers' personal lives, and what and how they thought and acted as teachers within the context of school quintiling. The study revealed that school quintiling had consequences for the practices of these teachers. However, in undertaking their practice they were able to draw from their reservoir of past and present experiences, beliefs and values to make ethical choices in negotiating their personal-professional lives and dilemmas in the context of school quintiling.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABH   Aryan Benevolent Home

C2005   Curriculum 2005

CAPS   Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

DBE   Department of Basic Education

DoE   Department of Education

ECD   Early Childhood Development

HSRC   Human Sciences Research Council

IEJ   Institute for Economic Justice

KZN   KwaZulu-Natal

LTSM   Learner-Teacher Support Material

MEC   Member of the Executive Council

MGP   Minimal Group Paradigm

NDPE   National Professional Diploma in Education

NEIMS   National Education Infrastructure Management System

NGO   Non-governmental Organisation

NNSSF   National Norms and Standards for School Funding

OECD   Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OVC   Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Q1   Quintile one

Q2   Quintile two

Q3   Quintile three

Q4   Quintile four

Q5   Quintile five

R&R   Rationalisation and Redeployment

RCNS   Revised National Curriculum Statement

RDP   Reconstruction and Development Programme

SGB   School Governing Body

SIP   School Improvement Plan

SIT   Social Identity Theory

SMT   School Management Team

TIT   Teacher Identity Theory

UDW	University of Durban-Westville
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
WHO	World Health Organization
WSG	Wits School of Governance

CHAPTER 1

CAN I CARVE A MASTERPIECE OF TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING?

1.1   PRACTICAL JUSTIFICATION: "I SEE NO LIGHT…" — TROUBLING MY TEACHER SELF

"I see no light". I commence this study with these profound words as I reflect on a conversation I had with a colleague who was going to retire, and who had four months left at school. One day she made a statement: "I see the light at the end of the tunnel". Without thinking, I replied: "I see no light. I have not entered the tunnel as yet". Light conveys something positive. It expresses life or hope. However, it was difficult to be positive and hopeful when I felt overwhelmed and despondent as I contemplated my lived experiences as a teacher in the South African educational landscape, within a quintile-four township school.

These feelings disturbed me as a teacher, as deep down I knew, with every fibre of my being, that being a teacher was who I was born to be. As a person who loves my job, I had to take a step back and question myself. Could reasons be found for my unsettled state of being? Why did I feel so overwhelmed that retiring was an option I was willing to entertain when I was years away from actually retiring? Moreover, I was curious about what life was like for other teachers at rural and township public schools, particularly in relation to the difficulties produced by the system of dividing schools into quintiles. I wondered how these teachers negotiated their personal-professional dilemmas against the external macro-political, social and economic realities that impact what transpires within schools, and the micro, internal contextual realities of everyday schooling (Adendorff, Mason, Modiba, Faragher & Kunene, 2010). These feelings and personal conflicts disturbed me, and I felt that they needed to be unravelled and addressed.

I then began to reflect on the reasons for my mental and physical discomfort as a teacher. I am a teacher at a quintile four (Q4) township school in Chatsworth that borders the Welbedacht and Naickers Farm areas. Being ranked Q4 by the Department of Education (DoE) means that we are considered a "rich" school (Mestry, 2013). However, over the

past few years I have experienced and personally witnessed the changing life circumstances and working conditions of teachers at the school. The school buildings are in a state of disrepair as a result of years of neglect brought on by reduced funding from the DoE, and of the school's inability to retrieve school fees from the community to maintain the infrastructure.

Figure 1.1 The state of the school buildings/infrastructure

The school is also situated in a context of extreme poverty and lack. Most learners live in informal shacks or Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) homes. It is a community that is experiencing difficulties brought on by years of neglect (Vahed &

Desai, 2012) as a result of apartheid policies, which saw Chatsworth become a "dumping ground" for Indians as a result of the Group Areas Act (Ndimande, 2016).

Figure 1.2 The community surrounding the school

However, with the abolition of apartheid the community has now evolved into an all-inclusive township. The population demographic of Welbedacht has changed, and it is now inhabited by Indian, Black, Coloured and a sprinkling of White people. In addition to the challenges of unemployment and poverty, this diverse community has to also contend with difficulties that plague the township (Vahed & Desai, 2012). Vahed and Desai (2012) provided an apt description of the area:

> Welbedacht may be the face of the "new" Chatsworth. It was one of the first areas where Indians and Africans lived in close proximity. It is now home to approximately 35,000 residents. It is a very poor area, characterized by high levels of unemployment, poor nutrition, inadequate medical facilities, domestic violence, and child abuse. In 1994, when the new South Africa dawned, Welbedacht was described as 'an unusual community of Indians and Africans living side by side in wood-and iron homes and shacks…'. Many of the residents in Welbedacht survive on unemployment and other welfare benefits, and casual work on construction sites. (p. 228–229)

As a result, the immediate context of the population surrounding the school can best be described as experiencing financial hardship. Issues such as drugs, teenage pregnancy, poor discipline, unemployment, single-parent homes and a lack of parental involvement in the lives of children find their way into the school. If I teach for 50% of the time, I can, with confidence, say that the other 50% gets taken up by the social issues of the community that spill over into the school environment. What is also discouraging is that for the past few years we have listed these issues in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) that is handed to the DoE, so that the necessary assistance can be delivered to teachers and the school. To date, however, there has not been a single occasion of positive feedback from the DoE to acknowledge that we as teachers have to work in such trying contexts, or to reassure us that help is on the way. It is as if those lengthy reports that we are compelled to supply are filed away and forgotten.

In addition, as a result of the changes to the population dynamics and the commodification of education (Connell, 2013), most middle-class Indian families that still reside in the immediate vicinity have moved their children to more affluent and therefore better equipped schools within the area (Bell & McKay, 2011). This is an example of the results of the commodification of education, which has contributed to the sidelining of vulnerable individuals and groups within the area (Connell, 2013). Learners that do remain at the school can best be described as coming from working-class families or from households that are experiencing unemployment and poverty. This scenario is explained by the fact that the South African unemployment rate is close to 27.2% (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Government further exacerbates this hardship by investing in areas that are considered more reliable and efficient, in order for market forces to prosper (Cheshire, Nathan & Overman, 2014). Large cities are usually seen as hubs for growth, as their economic concentration and density are conducive to productivity and innovation, and this is where the government therefore chooses to invest (Lall, Henderson & Venables, 2017). Hence, one can deduce that townships and informal settlements are not viewed as potential spaces for investment. As a result of the unemployment and poverty in the area, the school is always cash strapped because school fee contributions from the parents are so low. Coupled with this is the fact that

> geography and not the socio-economic status of learners is taken into
> account when the state hands out its annual subsidies. This definition is

crucial because it cuts off Chatsworth schools from state funds while at the same time preventing those schools from denying access to non-paying learners. These schools are left to compete with others in more affluent areas which receive the same level of state funding. (Vahed & Desai, 2012, p. 227)

As a result, the teachers at my school have very little choice. We are forced to engage in non-curriculum work such as fundraising to allow the school to keep operating, as the quintile ranking of the school means that it receives reduced funding from the department (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019).

In addition, the demands of the curriculum have changed (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). Stuart, Van Niekerk, McDonald and De Klerk (1987, p. 4) explain that under apartheid, "education was a one-way process where only the adult (the teacher) was expected to 'impart knowledge' to the otherwise less competent child. The child was regarded as a blank slate, a tabula rasa". However, this type of education, according to Msila (2007), did not create conscientious, critical citizens. We now fast forward to 2020, where "education is seen as a weapon of transformation" (Msila, 2007, p. 146), with aspects of democracy, social justice, redress, and equity now constituting an integral part of the South African education system (Msila, 2007). According to the DoE (2000), a teacher is also expected to be a mediator of learning, an interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials, a leader, an administrator and manager, a scholar, a researcher and lifelong learner, a community member, a citizen and pastor, an assessor, and a learning area or phase specialist.

The conditions under which teachers are expected to execute their roles, and the numerous additional duties placed on them, have them buckling under the weight of these responsibilities. These roles and responsibilities are overwhelming, as they do not take into account the contextual realities of rural and township schools, and the impracticalities of the curriculum innovations (Singh, 2015). All these titles and the expectations that come with being a teacher can be too demanding. Teaching in South Africa has therefore gained a reputation for being a difficult job to handle, especially within public township schools (Vandeyar, 2010).

As a teacher, I understand that teaching is an important profession. We are called to build the nation, impart skills and knowledge to our learners, and help shape their minds

(Adendorff et al., 2010). However, while I acknowledge the importance of my profession, I also feel that there is a great deal that is expected from me as a teacher. I am called to mould children intellectually, as well as to mould their characters and shape their outlook for the future (Edwards, 2018). Such multiple expectations might seem 'normal' and achievable for teachers at schools that are privileged and financially secure (Van Jaarsveld & Van der Walt, 2018), but are not realistic or achievable for teachers at South African schools situated within a context of poverty and want (Spaull, 2013), or teachers at rural or township public schools that experienced years of neglect under the apartheid regime (Blose & Naicker, 2018). This study, therefore, listens to the voices of teachers in order to understand their work by exploring their lived experiences at schools that fall within different quintiles. It intends to focus on teachers' personal-professional identities and the dilemmas, and on how teachers negotiate the personal-professional tensions they experience when trying to adopt the prescribed, 'normal' perspectives to manage the situations they are faced with inside and outside the classroom at schools that fall within different school quintiles (Atkin, 2012).

1.2   PERSONAL JUSTIFICATION

Reflecting on my educational journey and my present status as a teacher, I have to firstly acknowledge that I am a product of a pre-1994, fragmented and deprived apartheid educational system. My personal-professional identity was therefore formed within a landscape that was defined by race, class and gender. Reflecting on my life through a collage inquiry exercise as a doctoral student showed me that my narrative and my identity as a teacher were shaped by my past experiences, my ethnicity, my habits, my culture, my upbringing and my religious beliefs. My life experiences and identity as an Indian woman were fashioned within the racially segregated township of Chatsworth in the 1970s and 1980s (Vahed, 2013). It was my reflections on what it means to be a teacher, in particular that revealed aspects of my life that I knew I could not talk to anyone about. As a teacher, I felt that although I had a voice, there was no one willing to listen, and that this dilemma needed to be addressed.

The opportunity to address my predicaments presented itself when I decided to pursue my PhD and was contemplating my topic. I was invited to attend a research support retreat

for PhD students. The aim was to empower us to 'play' with a research idea using collage inquiry to assist us in arriving at the focus for our PhD. A method to help with this exercise was poetry writing. The task before actually writing the poem was to compose a collage (Van Schalkwyk, 2010).

All in a Day's Work
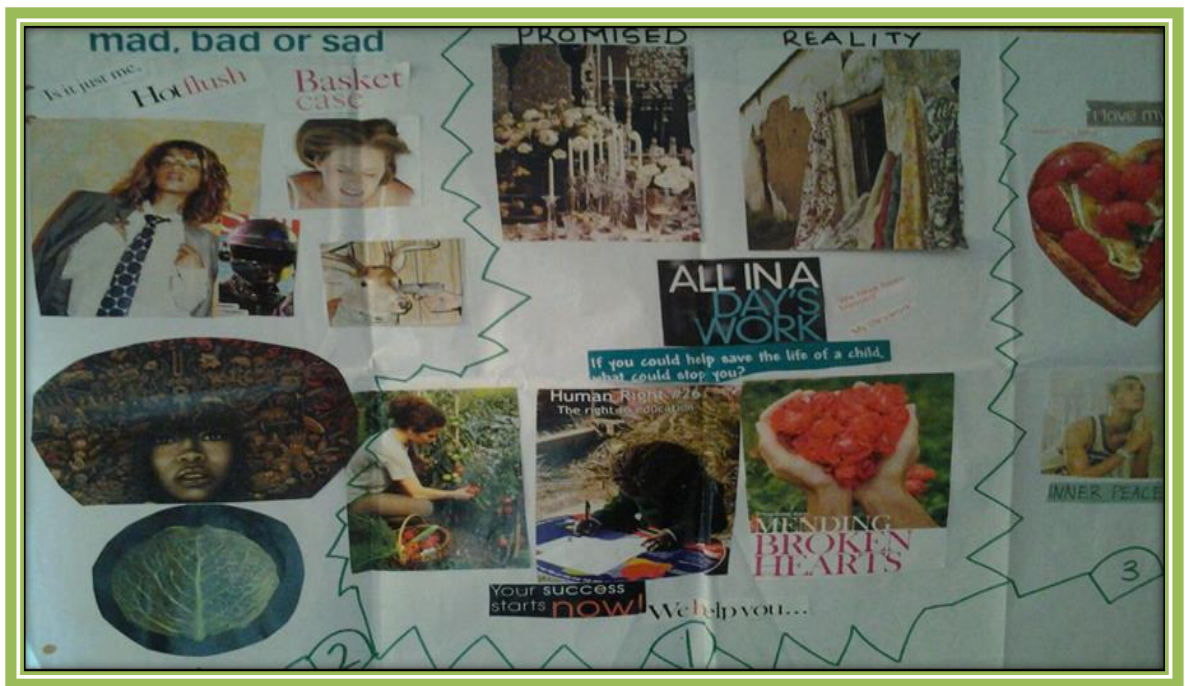
Figure 1.3 My collage portrait compiled to assist with the rationale for the study

When reflecting on my personal-professional life and identity through the collage inquiry exercise, I started from the premise that the school environment, with an emphasis on teachers' personal-professional lives, was going to be central to my research. Compiling the collage captivated my attention, as individual pictures reminded me of critical moments and incidents from my present and past experiences as a teacher. As I engaged in this exercise I found myself drawn to pictures that encapsulated how I felt as a teacher. This process helped to stimulate my thinking and I began to understand myself better. Aristotle's observation that "the soul never thinks without an image" (cited in Arnheim, 1969, p. 13) became a reality, as the collage helped me to make explicit my tacit awareness of my physical and mental state of mind as a teacher through the pictures and words that I selected (Simmons & Daley, 2013).

After compiling the collage, I grouped words and pictures by conceptualising them (Van Schalkwyk, 2010). I looked at the collage and then selected words and phrases that spoke to my life as a teacher. After that, these words and phrases were read and re-read to provide a canvas to portray my life as a teacher. These selected words and phrases were written up using the structure of a pantoum poem. Pantoum is a type of poetry consisting of any number of quatrains with a set pattern of repetitive lines. The second and fourth line of each quatrain is repeated as the first and third of the next. The pattern changes though for the last quatrain, where the first and third line are a repeat of the second and fourth lines of the preceding (penultimate) quatrain. The second and fourth lines of the final quatrain may be a repeat of the first or third lines of the first quatrain of the poem (Padgett, 1987). I also added punctuation at specific points in the poem, which helped me to interpret meaning, to organise words into discernible verses/lines, and to add impact to particular lines. After the poem was completed, I selected verses from the poem that informed the discussion below.

My Personal and Professional life

Who, am **I?**

What is it that I-**you** want?

Mental, physical **overload…**

Inner **peace?**

What is it that I-**you** want?

Promised **reality!**

Inner peace?

Service **commitment …**

Promised **reality!**

Mental, physical **overload…**

Service **commitment…**

Who am **I?**

The completed poem spoke to my personal and professional meanings and identities. By asking "*Who am I?*" I focused on my personal and professional life and identities as a teacher (Karaolis & Philippou, 2019). At school, I have multiple identities — caregiver, counsellor, nurse, security officer, teacher, manager and mentor — and I occupy multiple roles that speak to these multiple identities (Burke & Stets, 2009). A satisfactory enactment of my roles should have brought me a sense of positive self-esteem; however, at the time I felt inadequate and suffered distress. My self-concept and my self-worth (Mbuva, 2016) was brought into question by the mental and physical demands placed on me, and the dilemmas presented to me, of being and doing within a poor, deprived educational context. My role identity was instrumental in cultivating my sense of meaning and self-definition as a frustrated teacher (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). My professional identity was influenced by the school environment (Bosso, 2017), and was dynamically relational to the educational context (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). Thus, my emotional state was being influenced by factors external to me (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). My professional construction of myself as a teacher — my ideas of "how to be", "how to act", and "how to understand" my work (Sachs, 2005, p. 15) — was fashioned by my experience and how I made sense of that experience (Day & Gu, 2010).

1.2.1   Like a cabbage

Of the assemblage of pictures that made up my collage, one in particular — the cabbage — struck a chord with me. The cabbage picture I had selected showed just the outer leaves. From the outside the cabbage looked "good and healthy", but the state of its inside was hidden from view. I felt that this aptly resembled my life as a teacher. To keep up the appearance of a teacher on top of her game, I presented a "good and healthy" façade to the school community. I did not allow anyone past the first layer of leaves to the core of my being as a tired, frustrated teacher. However, the cabbage metaphorically helped me understand and explain how I felt as an emotionally frustrated and physically depleted teacher. It helped me see that I was fixed and functional in my work, but incapable of recognising and making sense of the organic, complex and multiple layers and perspectives that constituted my personal-professional selves in the context of school quintiling. Comparing the complexity of the layers (of leaves) of the cabbage with my life as a teacher provided a tangible example and a creative way of understanding my

personal-professional (inner-outer) "teacher self", which also incorporated multiple layers of stories, experiences and meanings. Opening up about the responsibilities that I assume beyond the personal and professional binaries, offered a way to understand the "*mental and physical overload*" I felt at school. I was '*forced*' to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship that existed between my professional and personal self, which saw the activities and experiences in my life as having shaped, and as continuing to shape, being a teacher (Djigic, 2018). It allowed me to see that my personal-professional life within my school context had placed me in a quandary. It had presented me with a dilemma, and it was now up to me to choose how I wanted my teacher life to play out. Did I want to remain as a dead cabbage, or did I choose to bring this dead cabbage back to life?

1.2.2 The "cabbage": Thinking with a metaphor to open up layered and entangled lives

While the cabbage in my collage portrait depicted the "dejected" state of my own teacher life, I then shifted my perspective to cast a scholarly gaze on other teachers' lives. I achieved this by employing the metaphor of the cabbage to open up a creative space for me to understand better the multiple stories of teachers and their different perspectives. I aimed to understand the embodied and organic ways that teachers choose to connect with their everyday situations in different school quintiles. This forced me to contemplate other versions of the cabbage that I could draw on to understand teachers in a different light. I now intended to open up the cabbage head and remove the leaves to come to the heart at the centre. I wanted to show teachers as having a heart and head connection to the pupils they teach, and I wanted to present the teachers as complex, creative, multi-layered beings, rather than fixed and dysfunctional individuals.

In a moment of uncertainty about how to convey this message, I came across a piece that depicted the "humble" cabbage as a work of art. It was written by Ellen Jensen (2007) and was titled "The Jadeite Cabbage". According to the story, there was a piece of jade that had numerous imperfections and, therefore, no carver took an interest in it. However, eventually a master carver came along and saw the beauty and potential that the jade

possessed, and decided to carve a cabbage out of it. This piece became known as *The Jadeite Cabbage*.

What makes *The Jadeite Cabbage* so amazing is that the anonymous master carver used the imperfections of the jade — the two colours, the cracks, and the ripples — to make the cabbage all the more lifelike. The flaws were integrated into the sculpture and became the veins in the cabbage's stalks and leaves (Ju, 2009). If it were not for the "imperfections" of this jade, the cabbage would not look so real. Because of the beauty of this piece of art, it became a gift for one of the Chinese emperors, and adorned the halls of beautiful Asian palaces until it ended up at the National Palace Museum in Taiwan (Jensen, 2007). The insignificant cabbage carved into flawed jade became known as the most famous masterpiece of the entire National Palace Museum (Huang, 2013).

Figure 1.4 *The Jadeite Cabbage*, introduced as the metaphor for the study (http://www.pinterest.com/pin/417779302917072716/)

Reading this piece allowed me to see that there are always many sides to a story. *The Jadeite Cabbage* had different facets to it. I noticed how the master carver managed to turn a flawed piece of jade into an intricate, multi-layered, multi-dimensional masterpiece of great beauty. As a scholar, I now became the master carver and sculptor of this

research. I took the metaphor of the cabbage and used it to explore and understand ordinary public school teachers working in the context of different school quintiles. Applying the metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* to teachers' lives, as a way of representing and understanding their complex personal-professional dimensions, allowed me to see how teachers themselves live complex, entangled lives, and how they could nevertheless turn their "flawed" entanglements creatively into moments of beauty when they engage in the specific issues associated with their school quintiles by turning their negative encounters into positive masterpieces. The artefact of the cabbage offered me the potential to see the teachers as beautiful works of art. Hence, I took another more creative approach to understanding teachers' personal-professional lives. As a scholar, I wanted to learn through the stories of other teachers how they could negotiate their everyday dilemmas as complex, interrelated personal-professional shifts, open to new and creative spaces as an ethical practice. As a scholar, I believe that teachers' subjective experiences within their different school quintiles are worth researching. Golombek and Johnson (2017) argue that inquiry into their experiences motivates teachers to question and reinterpret their ways of knowing and teaching. It was, therefore, my intention to understand the experiences of other teachers who teach in different educational contexts. I wanted to know if I was the only cabbage in the educational field. Was it just me, or was there an entire field of cabbages? Thus, in trying to make sense of my disconnected, instrumentalist life as a teacher, it was vital for me to explore the personal-professional lives of other teachers to understand what dilemmas they encountered daily as teachers in the context of school quintiling, and the cabbage metaphor was a creative way to achieve this.

Additionally, just as the cabbage has multiple leaves, the story and metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* was used to serve several purposes. It applied to my feelings and experiences as a teacher, and also to my role as a researcher. It applied to my participants and the multiple experiences they had. It assisted with the analysis of the data. Finally, it applied to this research itself, as I have tweaked selected lines from the story as titles for the various chapters of my thesis.

1.3 SOCIAL JUSTIFICATION: THE POLICY LANDSCAPE AND SCHOOL QUINTILING

1.3.1 Social action and policy justification

Social action or policy justification comes in terms of social activities, such as making visible the lives of teachers within particular socio-cultural and institutional contexts, to which teachers are irreducibly connected (Moen, 2006). For the purpose of this research that setting is schools within particular school quintiles.

According to the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996, the South African government caters for two types of schools: independent and public schools (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The majority of schools are public schools, all of which are primarily funded by the state. However, the allocation of funding is not uniform, but is based on addressing the unequal funding model practised during apartheid (Dass & Rinquest, 2017). To address this funding imbalance, the government affords financial support to all public schools through the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF), which was implemented in 1998 with the aim of addressing past racial inequalities and discriminatory practices (Republic of South Africa, 1998). Policies directed towards addressing this backlog have resulted in funding being directed to the most deprived schools, with steps also being undertaken to address the infrastructural backlog resulting from apartheid policies (Murtin, 2013). This funding decision has resulted in schools that were formerly designated for Black learners receiving more financial assistance from the government than those previously designated for White learners (Dass & Rinquest, 2017). As shown by Dieltiens and Motala (2012), public schools within South Africa do not receive uniform financial assistance, as funding is determined by a school's quintile ranking based on their poverty score. Previously, the socio-economic status of a school was determined by the provincial DoE. Funding was dependant on the relative poverty and the facilities that were available within the area. This funding model proved problematic, as learners within poor provinces received less funding as a result of regional disparities (Dieltiens & Motala, 2012). This inconsistency resulted in the quintile allocation being placed in the hands of the national DoE (Longueira, 2014). The changeover from provincial to national administration of funding led to a significant number of children from poverty-stricken families becoming beneficiaries of the no-fee schools introduced in 2007 to the poorest 60% of South African children. Presently,

schools that are considered to cater for learners from homes that experience poverty, unemployment, and high illiteracy rates are ranked as Quintile 1, 2 and 3 (Q1, Q2 and Q3) schools, and are exempt from paying school fees (DoE, 2002). These exempted schools also receive a larger NNSSF portion of funds than schools classified as "fee-paying" schools, which are ranked Quintiles 4 and 5 (Q4 and Q5) (Grant, 2013).

Schools classified as Q4 and Q5 are regarded as "less poor" and receive only 15% and 5% of their resources from the provincial DoE, respectively (Giese, Zide, Koch & Hall, 2009). Q4 and Q5 schools are expected to charge school fees as determined by the school governing body (SGB). The SGB is then expected to supplement the funds received from the DoE to run the school (Mestry, 2016). According to Nzuza (2015), requiring the SGB and the school to be responsible for the financial management of schools has consequences for the way the school is managed and for the experiences that teachers have at that institution.

The consequences of the government's funding decisions regarding schools are evident. According to the Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ) and Section27 report (2019, p. 1) on funding basic education, "austerity measures adopted during the 5th democratic administration have resulted in decreased funding per learner in real terms. Additionally, spending cuts in education programmes have resulted in slowed progress towards realising quality education for all learners". This observation that spending on learners has decreased is supported by Spaull (2019). In addition, a speech on KwaZulu-Natal's (KZN) budget for education for the 2019/2020 financial year, delivered by the KZN MEC for Education Kwazi Mshengu (2019), indicated that the provincial DoE had allocated a budget of R2.1 billion for the funding of schools. (I focus on the province of KZN because this research was conducted in KZN.) Of this amount, R1.9 billion was to be used to fund Q1–Q3 schools. These schools were to receive the amounts shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Funding allocation to schools in Q1–Q5

School quintile ranking	KZN provincial allocation	National allocation
Q1	R955	R1394
Q2	R955	R1394
Q3	R955	R1394
Q4	R522	R699
Q5	R179	R241

The figures in Table 1.1 show that the KZN provincial funding allocation was below the national threshold. Mshengu (2019) also admitted that the KZN provincial DoE was extremely underfunded and that additional finances were needed to realise the department's vision. As explained by the IEJ and Section27 Report (2019),

> funding no-fee schools below this threshold is particularly damaging as these schools cannot raise additional funds through fees. However, almost 1 000 fee-charging schools also failed to make up for their underfunding by Provincial Education Departments in 2017 and as a result, had school budgets that were below the minimum per learner threshold. (p. 3)

The decrease in funding to schools has also resulted in allocation for school infrastructure upgrades being reduced. Evidence of learners dying in pit latrines and the lack of water and electricity also speaks to the infrastructure backlog that some schools experience (IEJ and Section27 Report, 2019).

While financial difficulties are a burden to most schools, they are not the only challenges. Schools are divided into quintiles according to their context, and this process also locates the teachers who operate within these contexts. It foregrounds who the teachers are, and the capital (various resources), knowledge and skills they bring with them (Bourdieu, 1987). It also incorporates the external socio-cultural and economic context, and the internal organisational and environmental settings within which schools function (Hallinger, 2016). Therefore, teachers positioned within certain contexts may experience dilemmas concerning their educational context, and the socio-economic conditions of the

educational environment, amongst others. For that reason, the physical location, condition and quintile ranking of the school can either enable or restrict teachers (Nzuza, 2015) and in turn, result in personal-professional dilemmas depending on the quintile ranking of their schools. As a result, according to (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013), teachers may be forced to teach in dilemmatic spaces.

Thus, this research suggested that my feelings and experiences as a teacher were not peculiar to me (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007; Malm, 2008). It also provided a platform to ask questions and raise debates about teaching, care and social practices within the dilemmatic spaces of public schools in South Africa, such as classroom management (Hong, 2012), teachers working with large class sizes, conflicts with learners, feelings of inadequacy (Manassero et al., 2006), lack of material resources, having to deal with vulnerable children and children with special needs (Grimmett, Dagenais, D'Amico, Jacquet, & Ilieva, 2008), and excessive workloads (Day et al., 2007).

However, while the literature points to the challenges that teachers face, the critical questions are: What do teachers do within these dilemmatic spaces? How do they negotiate the challenges they face? Do they allow the challenges to de-motivate them or do they draw on their past experiences, resilience and endurance to navigate the dilemmas they face? Do different school quintiles present different challenges for the teachers that work within these contexts? And what are the issues that increase the dilemmas at an individual and social level within schools classified according to these different quintiles? These issues need to be addressed by making visible teachers' lived experiences and the dilemmas that they face in particular school quintiles. Therefore, the importance of paying attention to the voices of the teachers who work in such contexts needs to be emphasised.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to produce data about the personal-professional identities and lived dilemmatic experiences of teachers in the context of school quintiles, I asked three critical questions:

1. What are the personal-professional stories of teachers teaching in the dilemmatic context of different school quintiles?

In addition to having a significant influence on their learners' achievements, teachers are said to be instrumental in bringing about change in their social context (Altan & Lane, 2018). The values that teachers bring to the educational landscape are phenomenal (Langelholf, Komdeur, & Oldehinkel, 2016). However, these values and dispositions have been formed over the course of their lives. It is, therefore, essential to look at the teachers' life experiences and their learning. The influence of immediate family and the broader environment on their construction of self is vital, as it is their personal dispositions that are called into play when they enact their teacher role in school (Cabrera & Tamis-Lemonda, 2013). A teacher's life experiences and other background factors are crucial to understanding who the teacher is (Goodson & Gill, 2014), and the stories that teachers tell of themselves afford us a window into their lives.

2. What personal beliefs and meanings inform the teachers' professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles?

While the first question examined the stories that teachers tell of their lives, this question looked at how the teachers drew from their personal experiences to enact their professional roles in the context of their schools. Here, I explored how teachers' various relationships and experiences influenced their meanings of self and their identities in the context of school quintiling. This question looked at the possibilities/challenges that teachers encountered concerning their varying socio-cultural, race, class, gender, and political and historical experiences, and how these experiences fashioned their meanings of self. The question offered a lens into how their socialisation within their families and community aided in their identity formation, and translated into the performance of negotiating everyday dilemmatic situations in the context of school quintiling.

3. How are teachers' personal-professional identities negotiated in everyday dilemmatic situations of school quintiles?

The purpose of this question was to research the influence of quintile ranking on the school community. The question intended to explore how teachers situated within different school quintiles could negotiate their personal-professional identities and meanings of self within their educational contexts, and aimed at investigating how these contexts shaped their daily practices. This question focused on how the teachers' meanings informed their professional choices, and how this entangled, synergetic relationship between the individual and professional self-offered another space for the portrayal of a different, ethical teacher self.

1.5   LOCATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at five primary schools ranked from Q1–Q5, with five primary school teachers. These schools were therefore different with respect to their financial circumstances, infrastructure, school size, and locality. I selected two rural schools, ranked Q1 and Q2. The third school, ranked Q3, was located in a semi-rural setting.

South Africa has a diverse array of settlement types. A rural area is a geographical area that is located outside of the metropolitan areas. These areas were created during apartheid to cater for the Black population. They are usually made up of small towns and engage mostly in agriculture. Most rural areas experience immense financial hardship (Atkinson, 2014). Schools in rural areas are mostly "poor schools" that face severe challenges that are specific to their environment, such as inadequate funding from the state, a lack of sufficient resources, and underqualified teachers (du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Quintile categorisation is based on the socio-economic standing of the community in which the schools are situated, and most schools in economically disadvantaged geographical areas are classified as Q1–Q3 schools (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019).

One school ranked Q4, situated in the township of Chatsworth was included in the study. Townships within the South African context refer to settlements created during apartheid as a means to separate people along racial lines. The township of Chatsworth was created during apartheid for the Indian population. It housed mostly poor and working-class

people. When it was first established it lacked many resources and had poor infrastructure (Vahed & Desai, 2012). Schools ranked Q4 may be considered equal or marginally above the national average in relation to the percentage of needy families, and may, therefore, receive reduced funding as compared to schools ranked Q1–Q3 (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019).

Lastly, one suburban school was included in the study, ranked Q5. This school was closer to the city of Durban. Schools closer to metropolitan areas have better infrastructure and better service delivery. Schools in suburbia appear to be better maintained and may charge higher school fees than township schools (Xaba, 2012). They may also be located in middle to upper-middle-class formerly White areas (van Dyk & White, 2019).

1.6   THEORETICAL FRAMING OF THE STUDY

To understand the teachers' personal-professional lives and identities in the context of school quintiling, I selected Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory and Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory. To understand school quintiling as a dilemmatic space, I selected Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework. I then chose Ehrich, Kimber, Millwater & Cranston's (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model to describe the choices and ethical reasoning that teachers employ when negotiating their dilemmas and dilemmatic spaces within the context of school quintiles. This grouping of theories provided a lens for understanding the multifaceted, complex, personal-professional entangled lives of the teachers holistically.

1.7   METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE OF THE STUDY

In addressing the questions above, I adopted a qualitative approach since it has the "ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, p. 1). I found a qualitative research design appropriate for this research inquiry because according to Creswell (2012), the experience of people may only be explored qualitatively. Also, a qualitative design offers researchers a means to "empower individuals to share their stories and hear their voices" (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). I therefore used narrative inquiry, since it afforded

me as a researcher the opportunity to explore and understand the personal-professional identities and lived experiences of my participants (Caine, Estefan & Clandinin, 2013). It was through the stories that teachers told of their lived experiences that I could gain insight into how they experienced school quintiling as a dilemmatic space, and how they could draw on the ethics of care to negotiate their everyday experiences.

1.8   CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS UNDERPINNING TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

A number of key concepts emerged from the focus and purpose of this study, and the personal, practical and social justification. These concepts were used throughout my study. Below I present an explanation of these concepts.

1.8.1   Personal identity

Understanding a teacher's personal life and identity is important in understanding who the teacher is. According to Deschamps and Devos (1998), personal identity is what makes you unique and different from others. Doise (1998, p. 23) expanded on this definition by including personal identity within a social context: "Personal identity can be considered to be a social representation, an organizing principle of individual positioning in a field of symbolic relationships between individuals and groups". Hence, for teachers within this study knowledge of the self was vital for how they understood the principles of their work (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994), which took place within the social context of schools.

1.8.2   Professional identity

According to Day and Kington (2008),

> the professional dimension reflects social and policy expectations of what a good teacher is and the educational ideals of the teacher. It is open to the influence of

policy and social trends as to what constitutes a good teacher. It may have elements that conflict, such as professional development, workload, roles and responsibilities, etc. (cited in Chong, Low & Goh, 2011, p. 51)

A teacher's professional identity, which comprises their meanings of self and their self-esteem, in conjunction with the definitions others afford them within the school context, influences how they enact the role of teacher in the classroom (Day & Gu, 2010). This is because a teacher's identity is formed and reformed with others in a professional context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Teachers who are willing to blur the boundary between their personal and professional world can be instrumental in building a supportive relationship with their learners. When this happens, one witnesses a fluid shift between the teacher's personal and professional lives (Djigic, 2018).

1.8.3 School categorisation

The Welsh government's (2018) system of school categorisation systematically assesses a school's performance, and is centred on publicly available data on the school's self-evaluation in relation to aspects of leadership, learning and teaching. The OECD (2012), on the other hand, categorises schools according to their funding model (public or private), which entails creating "classes" of learners according to their socio-economic backgrounds and level of wealth. These examples show that schools can be grouped according to different criteria: their performance, their funding model, or their geographical location. Within the South African educational system school categorisation includes, amongst other aspects, learner performance, geographical demarcation (rural, township, peri-urban or urban schools), quintile rankings (Q1–Q5), fee-paying or non-fee paying schools, Section 20 or Section 21 schools, and functional or dysfunctional schools (Nzuza, 2015). Irrespective of the type of public school, according to the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 the state is mandated to fund all public schools through a quintile-ranking mechanism to address equity in schools (Mestry, 2013).

1.8.4 Dilemmas

Goldberg and Welsh (2006) and Kelchtermans (2012) describe dilemmas as conflicts where there are several, equally workable alternatives, which can comprise both gains and drawbacks. Honig (1996, p. 258) describes dilemmas as "situations in which two values, obligations, or commitments conflict, and there seems to be no right thing to do". However, according to Honig (1996), rather than viewing dilemmas as discrete situations or events, dilemmas should be considered as standard features in people's lives concerning their experiences of the world.

1.8.5 Dilemmatic spaces

Honig (1996) uses the concept of dilemmas as the entry point to explain dilemmatic spaces. A dilemmatic space is a place where there is usually "no right way of acting" (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013) but only the possibility of "acting for the best" (Honig, 1996). Fransson and Grannäs (2013) contend that dilemmatic spaces are social constructions emanating from structural conditions and relational aspects in everyday practices. According to Honig (1996), people therefore always react to dilemmatic spaces. For this research, the consequences of the system of school quintiling are considered to create a dilemmatic space.

1.9   ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS: OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

This research study has seven chapters. This study does not have a literature review chapter for the different scholarship on teachers' personal and professional lives, as many conventionally organised theses do. Instead, I have opted to address each critical question and to provide an analysis in each section based on the theoretical framework and literature. I refer to recent PhD theses that have employed this approach (Masinga, 2013; Naicker, 2014; Pithouse, 2007). As such, I have opted to separate my literature review into my remaining contributing chapters to prevent a repetition of pertinent scholarship around my focus. My intention is to avoid annoying my readers by unnecessarily repeating information and introducing redundancy.

Chapter One: Can I carve a masterpiece of teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling?

Chapter One affords an insight into the entire study. This chapter provides a window into what it means for me to be a teacher at a poor, Q4 public school in the township of Chatsworth in South Africa. I discuss the mental, physical and emotional predicaments and challenges that I experience as a teacher. As the introductory chapter that discusses the overall design of my study, Chapter One provides the focus, purpose and context for the study. The three critical questions that inform my study are also presented. The chapter also offers insight into the metaphor I employ throughout my research, which is the metaphor of the Jadeite Cabbage.

Chapter Two: Tools required to carve a masterpiece around teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

In Chapter Two, I discuss the theoretical framework of my study. I describe the theoretical lens that I employ for the research as the framework needed to assist with composing my masterpiece around teachers' work. The theoretical framework will be used by me, the master carver, to better understand, interpret and shape the claims that I make for this research. The framework is composed of Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory, Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory, Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework, and Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model. These eclectic theories assist in establishing a holistic picture of teachers' social lives within the dilemmatic spaces of school quintiling, and assist in understanding how teachers negotiate the dilemmas produced by these spaces while drawing on an ethics of care.

Chapter Three: Developing the tools as a master carver: Producing and collecting the material to creatively understand teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

In Chapter Three, I offer the methodological positioning of the study. I explain my paradigmatic position and discuss narrative inquiry as the chosen methodology. The chapter also includes a review of the research methods that are used to understand the personal and professional lives of teachers in the context of school quintiles. I then

proceed to the process involved in the analysis of the field texts, namely, narrative analysis and analysis of narratives. I culminate by addressing the issue of rigour and trustworthiness, and the matter of ethics in this study.

Chapter Four: Carving the first layer of my masterpiece around teachers' lived and told stories of their personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

Chapter Four offers an analysis of my first critical question: *What are the personal-professional stories of teachers teaching in the dilemmatic context of different school quintiles?* This chapter shows how data from the interviews, collage inquiry, photovoice and poetic inquiry was taken and transformed into a multi-dimensional story. The section represents the reconstructed stories of my five participants. The stories were written in the first person, and the narrative recount captures my participants' lives from childhood to adulthood. The stories are intended to provide a reflective gaze into the teachers' identity formation in relation to their interpersonal relationships with family and community, and the diverse experiences that they encounter in relation to their socio-cultural, historical, economic and political backgrounds.

Chapter Five: Carving unique portraits of teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

Chapter Five looks at the second critical question: *What personal beliefs and meanings inform the teachers' professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles?* The analyses are written as vignettes and attempt to understand the experiences of my participants. The meanings of the teacher-participants are presented individually and incorporate both the personal and professional aspects of their subjective selves. I also employed Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory as an analytical tool to better understand the person in relation to the many social forces that influence and shape human behaviour.

Chapter Six: Carving the third layer of my masterpiece on teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

Chapter Six addresses the third critical question: *How are teachers' personal-professional identities negotiated in everyday dilemmatic situations of school quintiles?* This chapter aims to explore how teachers positioned within different school quintiles can negotiate their personal-professional identities and meanings of self within their social contexts. It also looks at how these contexts shape their daily practices. This chapter highlights how personal meanings inform professional choices, and shows how this intertwined symbiotic relationship between the personal and the professional selves opens up creative spaces for reinventing self. This chapter also offers insight into the teachers' practice in the context of school quintiling as a dilemmatic space, focusing on negotiation as a two-way interactive process. The chapter examines the negotiation between the teachers' personal and professional selves, and also their negotiation with other teachers, learners, parents and stakeholders in the context of school quintiling, drawing on the ethics of care.

Chapter Seven: From flawed teacher to a Jadeite understanding of teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

Chapter Seven is the final thesis chapter. The section pulls the whole research study together, and intends to bring my masterpiece on teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling to completion. This chapter offers a reflection on my learning, and describes the methodological and theoretical contribution of this research study, as well as its findings and implications. It also presents a model developed for future research.

1.10   CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In conceptualising this study I drew on my personal-professional life and experiences of being a teacher. My account provided a window into my life at a poor, deprived Q4 school within the township of Chatsworth. It foregrounded my difficulties in respect of lack of resources, poor discipline, lack of parental involvement, the need to engage in fundraising, and the task of addressing the socio-economic and contextual realities of the

community that finds their way into the school. These are just some of my personal-professional experiences. I then described the focus and purpose of the study, and provided a justification for it. The research questions were also explained. I described the creative visual arts method that has assisted me in orientating my research and also provided insight into the metaphor of the Jadeite Cabbage that is employed throughout my study. The final section offered a brief overview of the subsequent chapters in the thesis, and explained that this thesis does not have a literature review section. However, literature has been interspersed throughout the thesis in appropriate sections that address pertinent issues.

CHAPTER 2

TOOLS REQUIRED TO CARVE A MASTERPIECE AROUND TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING? THEORETICAL FRAMING OF THE STUDY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I provided the orientation to the study. I then presented the focus and purpose of the research, and the rationale for the study, which incorporated three levels of justification: practical, personal and social. Drawing from the focus, purpose, and rationale for the study, I unpacked the key concepts that were pertinent to this study. These were teachers' personal and professional lives, school categorisation, dilemmas, and dilemmatic spaces.

This chapter expands these key concepts to focus on the theoretical and conceptual framework of this research study. I also lean on the metaphor of the Jadeite Cabbage to position myself as a master carver of this research. In assisting me in carving my masterpiece out of my jade, the teachers, I now select the appropriate conceptual tools that will be needed. The focus of this research study is on teachers' personal-professional identities and their negotiation of their dilemmatic experiences in the context of school quintiling. The purpose is to understand teachers' stories of their experiences and the perspectives that shaped their choices in negotiating the dilemmatic experiences. I consider the interplay between the personal self and the professional self, especially the symbiotic relationship that exists between the two, and how teachers draw on their past and present understandings to help shape their negotiations in the dilemmatic contexts produced by the system of school quintiling.

To unpack teachers' personal-professional meaning-making in their everyday lives, I have drawn on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as a theoretical frame. To understand teachers' experiences within the context of school quintiling, I have used teacher identity theory (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). The educational terrain is a configuration of multiple forces that impact the teachers' work within it. These multiple forces give rise to multiple complex issues that make that school context into a dilemmatic space. I

therefore selected Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework to analyse everyday situations that arise that present a dilemma for teachers within that context. I then chose Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model to explain the choices and ethical reasoning that teachers engage in to negotiate their dilemmas and dilemmatic situations within the context of school quintiles. These eclectic theories allowed for the complex, multi-layered, personal-professional intertwined lives of the teachers to be understood holistically.

SIT to unpack teachers' personal-professional meanings in their everyday lives

SCHOOL QUINTILES 1-5

Dilemmatic space conceptual framework to analyse everyday situations that arise that present a dilemma for teachers within the context of school quintiling

Ethical dilemma decision-making model to explain the choices and ethical reasoning that teachers engage in to negotiate their dilemmas and dilemmatic situations within the context of school quintiles

Figure 2.1 A visual representation of the theories

SECTION A

2.2   SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY AS THE FIRST TOOL

I now present the first tool used to understand teachers' personal and professional identities in this study: social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, to understand the personal-professional identities of teachers within schools, we first have to know who the teacher is. I commence from the premise that a teacher is a social being located within the social context of schools, and that teaching is a social activity that takes

place with other teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders. Social relationships within social spaces are fundamental to a teacher's identity formation. Being part of a social space brings a teacher into contact with other teachers, thus becoming part of the collective identity of other teachers (Coldron & Smith, 1999). As Danielewicz (2001, p. 38) states, "we come to know who we are through social relationships with others". Hence, a teacher's sense of self, behaviour and their personal-professional lives are shaped and negotiated by constant collaboration with others.

2.2.1   A broad orientation

Social identity theory (SIT) was developed from a series of studies frequently referred to as the minimal-group studies, conducted by the British social psychologist Henri Tajfel and his colleagues in the early 1970s (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Tajfel (1970) initially employed the minimal group paradigm (MGP) to understand how humans formed groups. MGP is a rough draft of SIT, and was designed to test the necessary and sufficient conditions for in-group favouritism and out-group derogation (Tajfel, 1970). SIT is the study of the interaction between personal and social identities, and aims to identify and predict the conditions under which people think of themselves as individuals or as group members. The theory also reflects on the significance of personal and social identities for individual perceptions and group behaviour. SIT was developed from the belief that group membership can aid people to impart meaning in social situations. Group membership assists people to define who they are and to establish how they connect to others (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). SIT can also be used to understand how the group can contribute to an individual's identity, and focuses on the "group in the individual" (Hogg & Abrams, 1988, p. 3) and also the influence of the individual on the group.

2.2.2   Social groups

SIT has been used to explain people's understanding, reasoning and behaviours with the help of group processes, and also how people may be identified through social groups (Trepte, 2006). In this study, teachers were seen as belonging to several social groups. Hence, their personal and professional lives were understood through their membership

in these various social groups to which they were affiliated. Their affiliation and association with these different social groups, in turn, gave rise to a social identity which then structured the way they should think, feel and act as members of the group (Hogg et al., 1995).

A range of studies has highlighted the importance of belonging to social groups, and the necessity for teachers to interact and collaborate (Badugela, 2012; Brown, 2004; Lasky, 2005). Being in a collaborative relationship necessitates that teachers have a shared understanding of the aims, objectives and values of the group (Malone, 2017). However, for the goals and objectives to be realised, teachers need to be part of the group and need to sustain contact with each other. It is a joint venture. Such collaboration allows for the sharing of norms, values and goals (Malone, 2017). Moreover, being within such a collaborative network of teachers provides for and shapes professional identity and agency (Lasky, 2005).

However, there is evidence that schools lack a robust collaborative environment (Ertesvåg, 2014) that supports relationships, teamwork, and associations, which is a crucial factor in job satisfaction and a source of emotional and social support for teachers (Vassallo, 2014). One major explanation for the absence of collaboration that is often highlighted is the lack of time. The scarcity of available time impedes collaboration, as teachers spend more time alone in their classrooms (Badugela, 2012) negotiating piles of paperwork (Vassallo, 2014), planning endless streams of assessments as a gauge for knowledge checks (Smith & Kovacs, 2011) and engaging in fundraising (Mestry, 2016). Additionally, they are also called upon to see to the social and emotional needs of children (Toch & Headden, 2014). They also attempt to secure resources in deprived school contexts (Grimmett et al., 2008), for example by providing nutrition for learners in schools that do not qualify for the free nutritional programmes (Mawela & van den Berg, 2018), amongst others. These numerous roles and responsibilities have the potential to deprive teachers of time to collaborate. This workload creates a scenario that is contrary to what a productive school culture should look like — where teachers have sufficient time to undertake their tasks to the best of their ability (Bland, 2012). Such toxic cultures can result in schools becoming unproductive, adding to a state of despair (Roffey, 2012). Therefore, providing teachers with the space to form social networks where they can draw encouragement and assistance from each other is vital. Teachers' emotional wellbeing,

therefore, needs to be championed both within and outside the school, as it impacts their self-concept and self-esteem, which are instrumental in shaping their professional and personal identities (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Hargreaves, 1998; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). However, numerous roles and responsibilities have the potential to deprive teachers of time to collaborate and impact their sense of self.

2.2.3   Importance of self-concept and self esteem

The importance of self-esteem and a positive self-concept has been highlighted by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and Rodgers and Scott (2008). Tajfel (1981) originally defined social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 225). Since social identity is centred on the safeguarding and enhancement of self-concepts, any risk to the self-concept will, in turn, have an impact on identity. This concept of identity is also supported by Khan, Fleva and Qazi (2015), who show that teachers' self-concept and self-esteem are tied to their identity.

The importance of self-concept for teachers within this study was essential. All the participants, whether directly or indirectly, were impacted by apartheid. Coming from a history of apartheid, where people of colour were reduced to nothing, changed their sense of self (Birkisdóttir, 2018). Puttick (2011) explained that many Black South Africans still bear the scars of labels attached to them during apartheid, and that this sadly continues, albeit in a more underhanded and devious way in post-apartheid South Africa. Many teachers have also internalised and accepted these labels that were thrust upon them.

Additionally, according to Puttick (2011), "this internalised oppression is liable to be expressed in deep-seated feelings of self-hatred, self-concealment, feelings of inferiority, resignation, isolation, powerlessness, and gratefulness for being allowed to survive" Puttick (2011, p. 37). The sad part is that over time teachers with such perceptions about themselves may start to believe what is said about them — that they are inferior and a problem to society — thereby reinforcing self-fulfilling, damaging and undesirable stereotypes (Henrard, 2002). It is these very teachers who are now tasked with educating the next generation of South African learners. However, according to Mbuva (2016),

teachers need to know who they are, and if they know who they are then they will have a self-concept of themselves. So if, according to Islam (2014), self-concept is the way people feel or think about themselves, and if teachers continue to see themselves as downtrodden, oppressed, inferior individuals, then they become incapacitated in their teaching career (Mbuva, 2016). For teachers to be able to negotiate their personal-professional lives in challenging contexts requires that they display the characteristics of confidence, self-direction, optimism, an ability to solve problems, and a cooperative attitude. Only a teacher who knows his/her worth will be able to step up and engage in these responsibilities (Mbuva, 2016). Therefore, teachers' self-esteem and self-concept are essential ingredients for their success as teachers, for the progress of their learners (Mbuva, 2016), and for their personal-professional sense of self. Having a healthy self-concept is vital to withstand the difficulties of teaching (Rogers, 1969).

However, while a positive self-concept is essential for teachers' emotional sense of self, evidence of teachers coming under pressure is well documented. According to Gold and Roth (1993), the teaching profession is increasingly seen as characterised by three conditions: "the prevalence and influence of stress, the declining morale of teachers, and the number of teachers leaving or intending leaving the profession" (Gold & Roth, 1993, p. 2). In the past twenty years, the role and description of teachers' jobs around the world have changed, increasing their role expectation (Gold & Roth, 1993). The result of stressful situations on teachers can lead to an emotional and professional defeatist mentality (Coetzee, Jansen, & Muller, 2009). These stresses, coupled with the impact on their mental state, can have a psychological effect on their relationship with the children under their care, which affects not only teacher performance but also learner performance (Greenwood, 2002).

It is therefore important that teachers' personal-professional lives be taken in totality and that teachers' emotional states of being are also considered. The reason for this, according to Hargreaves (1998), is that the emotional significance of teachers' work is often minimised due to teachers being viewed more as technicians, and their work being labelled merely in terms of knowledge, abilities and capabilities. Hargreaves (2001) goes a step further by including not only the emotional lives of teachers but also how their emotional lives are moulded by the way teaching is organised, planned and controlled. He further states that if the powers that be do not focus on teachers' emotional wellbeing,

then such neglect can create political uncertainty. This neglect may lead to damaging emotions emerging from angry and frustrated teachers during times when political initiatives within education need to be implemented. Educational researchers have therefore agreed that the emotional state of teachers cannot be ignored, as it is an integral part of teachers' professional lives (Kelchtermans, 2009; Zembylas, 2003).

2.3   THE THREE COGNITIVE PROCESSES OF SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Tajfel and Turner's (1979) study on an integrative theory of intergroup conflict broke SIT down into three components. In order to understand SIT, and how we categorise ourselves personally and socially, there is a mental process involved. This process involves three steps, and it is these three steps that we use when we are evaluating ourselves and others in the relationship between personal and social identity. These three cognitive processes — social categorisation, social identification and social comparison — are pertinent to a person being accepted as part of an in-group, or an out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

2.3.1   Social categorisation

Social categorisation is vital in social identity because it aids us in determining whether an individual is part of the in-group or the out-group (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). This concept is important for South Africa, which is a multifaceted, multi-layered and diverse society, with several available identities entrenched in its societal fabric. Additionally, studies by Booysen and Nkomo (2006) and Cilliers and Smit (2006) indicate that the most significant social identity groups in South Africa are race, gender, ethnicity and language.

2.3.1.1 In-group and out-group

Social categorisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) is a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership. Tajfel, Billig, Bundy and Flament (1971), state that members of the in-group will discriminate against members of the out-group in order to enhance their self-image. The in-group is the favoured group that a person wants to belong to. The

out-group is the group that a person does not like and does not want to be involved in. The in-group is the "us" and the out-group is the "them" (Tajfel et al., 1971). The concept of the in-group (those who belong) and the out-group (those who do not belong) is central for the educational field in South Africa, and is important for the racial integration of both learners and teachers within South African schools.

According to Vandeyar (2010) post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed the dismantling of the atrocious Group Areas Act, which separated people along racial lines. This has resulted in learners of all race groups being able to access any public school within South Africa. Also, research has shown that there is an increase in the racial integration of Black learners into former Model C schools, which form part of the upper quintile (Karassellos, 2014).

However, a study undertaken by Phatlane (2007) showed that schools initially resisted certain changes, such as sticking to Afrikaans as the medium of instruction, which in effect kept many of its learners as outsiders. Fataar (2007) further indicated that by offering rugby as a sport and excluding soccer, which is enjoyed by Black learners, the practice of exclusion was further entrenched. Additionally, a qualitative study undertaken by Makoelle (2014), in which Black learners attending previously White advantaged secondary schools were interviewed, found that some learners felt socially excluded from the larger group because of their race. This racial division persisted despite attempts to create non-racial, inclusive schools and subsequently a non-racial, inclusive society. The study further determined that teachers themselves were guilty of racial separation of learners and of treating them differently according to their race. It was established that White teachers were biased towards White learners, and Black teachers toward Black learners (Makoelle, 2014). The study further concluded that although on the surface the issue of race seemed to be resolved, deeper analysis revealed that in the "actual setting there is a lot of pretending that all is working well, the notion of the rainbow nation, [however] the true nature of reality is that very little has shifted in terms of racial attitudes" (Makoelle, 2014, p. 288). People are still made to feel like outsiders, and are kept in the out-group. The importance of social categorisation was, therefore, vital for my research, as the integration of learners is a reality in most upper quintile schools in the post-apartheid era (Vahed & Desai, 2012). However, the predicament arises when

teachers are unable to handle the diversity that exists within their classrooms (Vandeyar, 2010), and separate and treat learners differently because of race.

2.3.2   Social identification

According to Tajfel & Turner (1979), once a person has been categorised into a group based on his or her similarities with those in the group, then the process of identification begins. The person internalises the identity of the group, and their subsequent actions tend to reflect the acceptable norms of the group. Tajfel and Turner (1979) described how the person now openly identifies with the group and even emulates the activities of the people within the group. Similarly, Ashford and Mael (1989) explained how during this process the person adopts the identity of the group that they have categorised themselves as belonging to, and that the chosen category now determines the behaviour and action of the person. Being part of the group helps to bolster their self-esteem. There is also an emotional significance to the identification, because their self-esteem starts to become bound with the group identification and creates a sense of belonging (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Teaching can be viewed as a social activity that allows for such social identification within a social group. This idea is supported by Cochran-Smith (2005), who described teaching as not just an intellectual or technical process, but an amalgam of sophisticated personal and social practices that encompass the whole person.

Olsen (2012) also stated that

> teacher identity encourages a view of teachers both as three-dimensional individuals (with particular lived experiences that become personal/professional influences and effects) and as social beings simultaneously constrained and empowered in relation to the groups, structures, and roles in which they participate — and even those in which they do not. (p. 1124)

I therefore resolved to adopt Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory as a lens through which I could examine and understood the personal and professional identities of teachers as social beings within social groups. This theory offered me the tools to better understand teachers as a holistic being who have been influenced by their socialisation, both primary and secondary, in addition to the various contexts and circumstances that

they have to negotiate (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It is these experiences that they draw on as teachers to negotiate their experiences at school.

Rodgers and Scott (2008) elaborated on the concept of identity by indicating that contemporary conceptions of identity share four underlying assumptions. They noted that identity is dependent upon and is formed within multiple contexts, which bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation; that identity is formed in relationship with others and involves emotions; that identity is shifting, unstable, and multiple; and that identity consists of the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time (Rodgers & Scott, 2008, p. 733).

2.3.2.1 Context as an external force influencing identity

Context has been described as an external factor influencing identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). While Clandinin and Huber (2005) referred to context as previous and present environments in which teachers live and work, Coldron and Smith (1999, p. 714) spoke of context as a matter of "space and location" and the identity of a teacher as "a matter of where, within the professional pertinent array of possibilities, a particular person is located". Britzman (2003) also viewed identity as being dependent upon the context within which one engages and participates. For teachers, these could be within their families, their social context and their school. Context is an essential component, as context inevitably shapes our ideas of who we identify ourselves to be, and how others identify us (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Hence, the experiences of teachers will differ depending on where they live and work, and who they are (Jacklin, 2001).

Context has the potential to influence teacher identity. A backward glance at the history of South Africa shows how context under apartheid structured the experiences of teachers within the educational landscape (Msila, 2007). Context is still vital for schooling in particular, which still experiences specific challenges due to the socio-economic legacies inherited from years of colonial and apartheid rule (Finn, Leibbrandt & Oosthuizen, 2014. Many sectors of the population, according to Smith (2011), were and are still marginalised. They are still denied economic opportunities and quality education as a result of politics and where they are located as a result of their race (Smith, 2011). The

contextual challenges experienced by certain race groups, brought on by years of deprivation and neglect, have the potential to impact teachers within the context of their respective school quintiles (Msila, 2007). This view was supported by Meiring, Kannemeyer and Potgieter (2018), who maintained that there is still inequality between the different race groups in terms of the unequal distribution of resources, especially for the lower classes, the majority of which is made up of Black people. Finally, while I accept that our identity is being influenced by our social surroundings and our contexts (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler, & Dowsett, 1982), I subscribe to the view that individuals can also construct and shape their own identities, that the self is created rather than inherited (Vignoles, 2017), and that one can be reflective and provide a biographical narrative of one's subjective selves, and the journey to one's present situation and positioning in life (Giddens, 1990).

2.3.2.2 Identity as relational and emotional

Rodgers and Scott (2008) revealed that teacher identity is relational and emotional, and that the identities of teachers are co-constructed through collaboration with others in social and cultural practices. As such, teachers within various contexts establish multiple relationships with family, colleagues, learners, parents and other stakeholders. These relationships, in turn, give rise to numerous aspects of the self and also aid in socialisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, in informing these relationships, the question of emotions is addressed, as emotions can be manifest in their relationships (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Therefore, over the last couple of years, there has been an increasing emphasis on the importance of teacher emotions in teaching, with particular reference to the relationship between emotion and identity (Fried, Mansfield & Dobozy, 2015; Sutton, Mudrey-Camino, & Knight, 2009). For that reason, the emotional aspect of teaching is a vital ingredient in identity formation because to have an identity, according to Gee (2001), you have to be recognised by others as a particular kind of person. Zembylas (2003) also supports the view that emotions are an essential component for identity formation.

The importance of identity as being relational and emotional has a bearing on this research. Teachers located within challenging school spaces are called upon to be more than just technical implementers of the curriculum. They are called upon to offer love and

engage in an ethics of care, especially within contexts of deprivation and lack. This action calls into play the emotional aspect of teaching. However, while the emotional aspect is important, the relational or interactive aspect of teaching also needs consideration. Teachers need to be seen as approachable and welcoming, especially within trying school contexts. This approach is vital in a society that is experiencing social and economic difficulties, such as child-headed homes, poverty and unemployment. For a child, the teachers who embrace them with love and attempt to understand their plight may be the only loving contact they experience.

2.3.2.3 Identity as shifting and multiple

According to Rodgers and Scott (2008, p. 736), "when teachers' identities are shaped, at least in part, by the external forces of context and relationships, identity necessarily becomes a multiple and shifting affair, in-process and changeable". Gee (2001) wrote that the "kind of person" one is recognised as "being", at a given time and place, can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and, of course, can be ambiguous or unstable" (Gee, 2001, p. 99). Thus identity is regarded as a continually evolving (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) and relational phenomenon (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

2.3.2.4 Identity as the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time

Rodgers and Scott (2008) consider identity to be storied. They deliberated on a way to make sense of the complex construction of identity, and the solution to this conundrum was to view identity as storied. They indicated that identity is both interpreted and constructed through the stories that someone tells of themselves and others. These stories are modified and adapted depending on context, and are contingent on the relationships fostered. This is because of the dynamic, shifting and multiple nature of identity.

Teacher identity thus incorporates two features: personal and professional identities. Teacher personal identity includes the meanings made by the teachers of life outside the school (Claessens et al., 2017). These may include the teachers' subjective history,

present life experiences, family and social relationships (Bolívar, Domingo & Pérez-García, 2014), the different roles they undertake (Stets & Burke, 2000), their gender and ethnicity (Deaux, 2001), and the identities that they have foregrounded in their lives (Stryker, 1980).

According to Thomas and Beauchamp (2011), teachers may also experience identity shifts in the course of their careers as a result of their interaction with others within the context of the school and also within the school community at large. These shifts and changes can be the result of factors both internal or subjective, such as emotion (Rodgers & Scott, 2008), or external to a person, such as job and life experiences in particular contexts (Flores & Day, 2006; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Identity is also regarded as a process that is constantly progressing and changing, and is therefore dynamic rather than stable (Beijaard et al., 2004).

The importance of exploring how teachers are called upon to teach diverse groups of learners in diverse contexts as embodied beings is an essential aspect of this study. With the dismantling of apartheid, and with the integration of schools, teachers have been faced with learners of different racial, social, economic and cultural backgrounds. A teacher who knows himself or herself will accept this integration without passing judgement on the learners (Kohn, 2005). In addition, according to Rogers (1969), instead of condemning learners (for their race, gender or class), a decent and worthy teacher will approach a learner with compassion and care. Only a teacher who is able to identify with the learners will understand those learners (McCallum & Price, 2010). Hence, when considering school quintiling and the inherited inequalities experienced by rural or township schools, teachers are called to be compassionate and to undertake actions to help alleviate the plight of those learners deemed less fortunate (Wolpow, Johnson, Hertel & Kincaid, 2011). Only a teacher who identifies that a need exists will be able to take the necessary action. Compassion and care, especially within trying school contexts of poverty and lack, will help a good teacher to make a difference in the life of the child (Mbuva, 2016). It is, therefore, important that teachers have a positive self-concept of themselves, because how they view themselves will affect their response to their learners (McCallum & Price, 2010).

2.3.3 Social comparison

For Tajfel and Turner (1979), social comparison is the last and final stage of the cognitive process of social identity theory, where we compare ourselves to others, whether consciously or unconsciously. Not only do we start comparing ourselves to others within the group, but we also begin comparing one group against another to maintain our self-esteem. According to Hogg (2000), we want to compare ourselves to other groups in a favourable way. This comparison is essential in understanding differences, because once two groups identify themselves as being different or rivals, then these groups start to compete to maintain self-esteem. During this cognitive process we also see the development of prejudices and discriminatory practices because of our competitive nature as humans (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

This question of social comparison was also relevant to my research. Teachers may compare themselves with teachers from schools in other quintiles, as there are certain comparisons that can be made between teachers from schools in different quintiles. Teachers at Q4 and Q5 fee-paying schools that receive less funding may have to engage in far more fundraising to make up for the loss of income (Mestry, 2016), as opposed to teachers at no-fee schools (Clarke, 2012) that receive substantially more funding from the DoE (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014), who may therefore not need to engage in fundraising. Teachers at certain schools may be moved to secure sponsors to cater for the nutritional requirements of indigent learners, as opposed to teachers at schools that qualify for the free nutrition programme (Mawela & van den Berg, 2018). Teachers located at schools that lack facilities (du Plessis, 2014) and infrastructure (Spaull, 2013), may compare themselves with teachers at schools that have good facilities. Teachers from rural schools may compare themselves with teachers in township or urban schools (du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Teachers may work at schools that are labelled as underperforming schools due to numerous factors beyond their control, as opposed to schools that are praised for achieving a 100% pass rate (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019).

2.4   A BRIEF CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

SIT gave me as a researcher the tools to understand the social constructedness of the five participants in respect of their race, class and gender in relation to their context. However,

while SIT allowed me to understand how each teacher's identity was socially constructed, it was limiting in the sense that it did not assist with the moral and ethical decision making that teachers engage in within the dilemmatic context of school quintiling. It did not allow me access into the inner feelings of the person. This is supported by Islam (2014), who indicates that SIT is less able to unpack the psychological bases of conflict and is more focused on an individual psychology of concept formation. In this respect, SIT may have developed increasingly in the direction of an individualist cognitive approach at the cost of its sociological origins (Islam, 2014, p. 1782). I had to therefore rely on the ethical decision-making model to understand teachers' inner feelings in negotiating their dilemmatic contexts of school quintiling.

SECTION B

2.5 THE DILEMMATIC SPACE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AS THE SECOND TOOL

I have explained teachers' personal and social lives and experiences using SIT as the theoretical framework in Section A, and now move on to examine teachers' experiences in relation to context. For this study, that context is the system of school quintiling. However, scholarship on teachers' personal-professional experiences of the school quintiling system is limited. Longueira (2014) studied the functionality of the South African education funding system as structured around quintiles, while Makhwanya (2015) examined factors that influence poor enrolment in the foundation phase in a no-fee school. Nzuza (2015) has emphasised how a school's ethos is influenced by school categorisation, while Khumalo (2014) has looked at the ineffectiveness of the school quintile funding system. Despite the different areas emphasised by these research studies, the one constant is that the quintile system is flawed. I intend to describe the school spaces produced by the quintile system as challenging spaces, within which I want to investigate the teachers' personal-professional experiences. However, there is a shortage of scholarship that has examined teachers' personal-professional experiences across school quintiles. Therefore, due to the limited research on teachers' personal-professional experiences in the context of school quintiling, I have unpacked the dilemmas that teachers may encounter within schools, as provided by scholarship around teachers' work in schools.

To explain the situations and tensions that arise within schools as a result of the quintile system, I leaned on Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework. Key concepts from this framework were used to explain the different types of dilemmas that teachers may be confronted with within their schools. Other researchers have also offered examples of the sorts of ethical dilemmas that teachers encounter in their daily work (Helton & Ray, 2005; Johns, McGrath, & Mathur, 2008). According to Fransson and Grannäs (2013), teachers work is complex work, and for this reason they introduced the concept of the dilemmatic space, where the complexities of teachers' work meet the complexities of the structures within which they operate, which creates tension. These complexities could emerge from the teachers themselves (personal/biographical), from the context (rich/poor/rural/urban), from structures that control the educational system (the state), from other teachers and stakeholders, from parents, and so on (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013). In unpacking this section, I have opted to locate these complexities according to the headings provided by Adendorff et al. (2010): global change, educational reforms, political and social transition, contextual factors, and race and class location. Drawing on the theoretical underpinnings of the dilemmatic space framework (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013), I relate the above aspects of teachers' everyday work practice to changes within society and to the educational field as a whole.

2.5.1 Global change contributing to teacher dilemmas

Qoyyimah's (2015) research on teachers' professional dilemmas in relation to curriculum reform in Indonesia found that "an educational context which is dynamic, complex, and political has consequences for both the educational system and for teachers' daily practices" (Qoyyimah, 2015, p. 86). For my research, the educational context is not restricted to a uniform, homogenous setting, but consists of five different backgrounds, each representing a particular school from Q1 to Q5. The one constant was that they were all public schools and were therefore subject to the control of the state (Marishane, 2017).

The influence of the state on education in South Africa has been highlighted by Marishane (2017). As part of the international community the state in South Africa is required to:

> commit to the realisation of the right to basic education for all learners, despite their different backgrounds. To meet this obligation, the right to basic education

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is embedded within the country's constitutional and legislative framework. Section 29 (1) (a) and Section 28 of Constitution (South Africa, 1996b), under the Bill of Rights, promote and protect children's right to education respectively. (Marishane, 2017, p. 1)

Hence, the state can be viewed as the broad field of power within the educational context, and any changes implemented at the macro level of power have the potential to influence teachers at the micro-level of the school, either positively or negatively. Adendorff et al. (2010) are of the opinion that teachers all over the world, including in South Africa, are experiencing pressure from government and parents to prepare learners for the global market and to provide the state with a competitive workforce which is vital for the growth of the economy. However, teachers located within different educational contexts are not provided with the same resources to accomplish these goals. A teacher in a poor rural school encounters a different set of challenges compared with a teacher in a well-resourced school, yet the expectations are the same for all teachers (Adendorff et al., 2010). In addition, even though schools are considered to be vital to the success of a country's economy (Verger, Fontdevila & Zancajo, 2017), states are trying to reduce their spending on public education — something that is considered a vital social service. Major cutbacks have been seen from states in the area of funding to schools (Biesta, 2004; Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019). However, while funding to schools has been reduced, states have tended to increase class sizes (Reid, 2009). Teachers are therefore placed in a dilemmatic situation. They may lack the necessary material resources to traverse a complex, overloaded curriculum that works best with small classes, rather than the large numbers found in most South African classrooms, of which the majority of learners are from working-class families (Hugo, 2010). These global, macro changes can create stressful work conditions for teachers within the micro field of schools.

2.5.2 Educational reform policies as contributing to teacher dilemmas

The educational environment is dynamic and complex (Maarman & Lamont-Mbawuli, 2017). In addition, political and administrative changes, for example, new socio-political or managerial ways of governing the educational system, can have consequences for the educational system and for teachers' work (Furlong, Cochran-Smith, & Brennan, 2008).

Fransson and Grannäs (2013) and Grimmett, Fleming and Trotter (2009) support the view that organisational changes have the potential to present teachers with dilemmas as they strive to meet the mounting expectations of society, parents and learners. One of those changes has been the decentralisation of the school's financial administration to schools.

2.5.2.1 Decentralisation of school financial administration

The need for equity and redress in South Africa was signalled as the reason for the decentralisation of school financial administration to schools. In response to this, the South African Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996a) placed more authority and decision making at the level of the school. The school governing body (SGB) is now required to take charge of a school's financial affairs (Mestry, 2016). While greater power has been delegated to local institutions to manage their finances, overall power and control are still vested in the national government at the central level (Lynch, 2014). However, the transfer of financial control to schools is an area of contention that has had far-reaching consequences (Mestry, 2013).

To meet their financial challenges and obligations, schools and teachers now have to market themselves (Weber, 2007) and present themselves in a favourable light to compete for fee-paying children (Sayed, 2002). The marketisation of schools has resulted in the commodification of education, with an emphasis on output and what it means to have a quality education (Yang, 2006). Thus, quality public education has been reserved for organisations that are able to promote themselves to those learners who can afford the fees to attend (Ross & Gibson, 2007). Consequently, learners can now choose the school that they wish to attend, and parents are able to choose which school to send their children to, based on the school's performance. These changes mirror policymakers' confidence in markets and competition, rather than in teachers and learners (Vally & Motala, 2017).

A negative consequence of this practice, according to Shalem and Hoadley (2009), is that schools that were previously disadvantaged are restricted in their ability to attract wealthier parents. Shalem and Hoadley (2009) further indicated that instead of levelling the playing field, the commodification of education is entrenching inequalities, as schools that are perceived as successful are able to decide on the learners they wish to enrol (Shalem & Hoadley, 2009). This financial gap between rich and poor, according to Smyth

and Shacklock (1998), speaks to the pertinent question of educational affordability. They added that financial self-reliance has become a reality in most schools, which is problematic. The challenge is that school teachers are required to fundraise to keep schools financially afloat (Mestry, 2006), which in turn contributes to an intensification of their work (Smyth & Shacklock, 1998). According to Taubman (2009), teachers are now increasingly called upon to assist with the financial viability and educational outcomes of their schools, irrespective of whether they have the necessary contextual conditions to reach their objectives and ends, and irrespective of whether they *should* be accountable or not. All that teachers can do within such dilemmatic spaces is act for the best (Honig, 1996).

2.5.2.2 Curriculum reforms

While financial self-reliance is one dilemma, another is the constant curricular reforms that plague the South African educational system. Post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed a barrage of policy reform and curricular changes (Ramatlapana & Makonye, 2012). Changes to the political landscape resulted in the introduction of a new curriculum in 1997, known as Curriculum 2005 (C2005). However, according to Botha (2002), this curriculum was politically charged and was considered neither successful nor transformational, as it failed to acknowledge South African classroom realities. These curriculum challenges resulted in the DoE's review of C2005, which led to the introduction of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002. However, despite assurances that RNCS would deliver, it failed to do so. The Minister of Basic Education then announced the end of the RNCS, and presented a repackaged curriculum known as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in 2012 (Singh, 2015).

While change for the betterment of education is good, programmatic reforms such as curriculum changes usually give rise to new requirements, such as new assessments, the introduction of new textbooks, and revised record-keeping systems (Samuel, 2009). The new requirements introduced by the CAPS curriculum have proved to be problematic. Msibi and Mchunu (2013) found that the CAPS assessments force teachers to implement teaching that does not align with their vision of best practice. This view was supported

by Ramatlapana and Makonye (2012), who find that the guidelines provided by the CAPS policy document and annual teaching plans are markedly prescriptive and restrictive. Teachers also lament the unrealistic assessments, which create a dilemma for them in terms of how to use their teaching time (Smith & Kovacs, 2011). The increased administrative work demanded by the CAPS curriculum erodes teachers' available time; as a result, they are not able to collaborate, and often work in isolation (Badugela, 2012).

However, the dilemmas faced by teachers within the South African educational landscape are amplified when all schools are treated the same, without due consideration for the specific contextual challenges that some schools confront, such as a lack of resources (Adendorff et al., 2010) and an increased necessity for fundraising (Mestry, 2016). These responsibilities take time away from teaching, yet schools are still expected to adhere to the curriculum timeframes as stipulated by the CAPS document (Msibi & Mchunu, 2013). Such demands have resulted in the intensification and de-professionalisation of teachers' work (Kostogritz, 2012).

2.5.3   Race, class and location as a contributing factor to teachers' dilemmas

Fransson and Grannäs (2013) refer to the difficult situations such as those experienced by certain race groups in South Africa as dilemmas. For Fransson and Grannäs (2013, p. 10), dilemmas are not simply intermittent situations requiring teachers to react; instead, they are "ever-present" in a space created by relations between teachers and their context, as well as between teachers and other individuals (learners or other teachers). Within the dilemmatic space, these relations cause teachers to be positioned in certain ways, and require them to negotiate their professional identities (Qoyyimah, 2015, p. 86). One crucial "ever-present" problem has been the aspect of race, which has been at the centre of the South African landscape for ages. Despite the abolition of apartheid, this aspect still influences every facet of people's lives (Tsoaledi & Thobejane, 2013).

Pre-1994, during the apartheid era, the South African education system was used as a vehicle for promoting discriminatory ideas and practices (Tsoaledi & Thobejane, 2013). For a long time, people were divided along racial, class and gender lines. These identities affected people's understanding of their position and place within the larger fabric of society (Tsoaledi & Thobejane, 2013). The educational field in South Africa has,

therefore, been a site of contestation, with the legacy of race-based apartheid policies one of the key deciding factors in what experiences people are entitled to (Msila, 2007). According to David, Soudien and Donald (1999), under apartheid the aspects of class, race, and locality were closely related. People were separated into different groups according to their race, and each race group was exposed to different educational experiences. Schools were segregated along racial lines, and it was an offence for a learner to attend a school not designated for his or her race (David et al., 1999). Schools for particular race groups were subject to specific regulations and funding (Smith, 2011), thus affecting the teachers and learners at the school. The amount of money spent on education for the different race groups varied; with schools for White learners receiving the lion's share of the available government spending. Although the educational funding gap between the different race groups had narrowed by 1989, the ratio was still 4 to 1 in favour of the White child (Thomas, 1996).

While funding was a significant obstacle to educational equality in the way that it impacted teaching and learning, other barriers to equality were the curriculum, infrastructure and quality of teachers, which were also different for the different race groups (Smith, 2011). Schools for White learners emphasised the importance of academic subjects, while schools for Black learners emphasised more practical subjects that prepared them for manual labour (Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Rakometsi, 2008). The conditions within the schools also varied for the different race groups. Black schools were more overcrowded than White schools, and their school infrastructure was also significantly worse (Spaull, 2013). Educational qualifications for the teachers were also different, with teachers at Black schools tending to be less qualified than those found at White schools (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). According to McConnachie (2014), there was blatant discrimination between the four educational systems in South Africa. Schools for White learners were far better than those for Indian and Coloured learners, and the Black child received the worst quality of education of all. This discrimination extended to aspects such as the qualifications of the teachers employed at these schools, the per capita funding, the infrastructure, equipment and facilities, and so on (David et al., 1999). In essence, Black people, especially those in rural areas, experienced hardship and poverty. White people were typically shielded from extreme economic conditions (Jacklin, 2001; Msila, 2007). Despite the abolition of apartheid and the promise of equality, these are the

contextual realities that the teachers who were part of this study have been required to navigate daily.

2.5.3.1 School diversification and racial integration as a dilemma

Since the formal abolition of apartheid in 1994, and the subsequent integration of learners and diversification of schools, there has been a need for a mental shift in the way teachers, especially, see themselves and also in the way they view others (Tsoaledi & Thobejane, 2013). This mental shift has been especially pertinent with respect to race, which has been at the centre of the South African landscape for a very long time, and which, despite; the abolition of apartheid still influences every aspect of people's lives (Tsoaledi & Thobejane, 2013). According to Vandeyar (2010), the educational reforms implemented in post-apartheid South Africa presented new challenges for teachers. One such challenge was the changes associated with the desegregation of schools and the integration of learners of all races. The dilemma for teachers was that most of them were socio-culturally, physically, and emotionally removed from the community and the children they were required to teach (Hargreaves, 2001), and they therefore felt ill-equipped to handle those changes (Vandeyar, 2010). Thus, integration created a dilemma for some teachers, as their personal-professional life experienced a state of conflict. Furthermore, while teachers experienced these difficulties, so too did learners who had been separated from other race groups during apartheid, and who had thus also been restricted in terms of their opportunities to interact with teachers from different race groups (Hofmeyr, 2000).

Thus, the employment of teachers within schools previously reserved for a particular race group has required the unlearning of ingrained views and modifications to their ways of being and doing. There has been a need for a relearning of tolerance and acceptance, irrespective of race, class, gender, culture or language. According to Pöllmann (2016, p. 6), intercultural experiences can offer particularly "context-intensive" opportunities for intercultural learning. This intercultural experience is especially possible when there is a movement across cultures. Such movement can result in insight into what it feels to be (perceived as) the "other". The respective alterations in attitude and perceptions "can 'interrupt' both long-accustomed practical sense and taken-for-granted ways of being

reflexive, possibly stimulating new forms of reflexive intercultural awareness and a renewed feel for the intercultural game" (Pöllmann, 2016, p. 6). Teachers in post-apartheid South African classrooms can also engage in teaching that will change the way people are viewed, and in the process modify entrenched ways of thinking. People need to be seen not as Black, Coloured, Indian or White, but as equal South African citizens (Cappy, 2016). Issues that arise from the complexities of racial integration within schools have become a reality as learners access schools previously closed off to them. The critical question for teachers is whether they want to be seen as racially tolerant or intolerant, and if they are confronted with situations involving issues of racial tolerance, how they choose to negotiate them (Cappy, 2016).

2.5.4   Contextual forces within schools that lead to teacher dilemmas

2.5.4.1 Community factors

Contexts describe the external aspects of identity formation. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) use the term "professional landscapes" when referring to contexts and school location. Research has shown that the life stories or identities of teachers are influenced by the context in which they are situated (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). This view is supported by Rodgers and Scott (2008, p. 733), who find that teacher identity is dependent upon and formed within multiple contexts that bring social, cultural, political, and historical forces to bear upon that formation.

The teaching environment can either strengthen or weaken teachers' self-esteem, their time and motivation to learn, and their effectiveness as teachers. Scenarios that weaken a teacher's identity can reduce a teacher's impetus and commitment to teaching (Stadler-Altmann, 2015). According to Day and Gu (2010, p. 39), "many teachers come into the profession with a passion and a calling to be teachers. They desire to give of their best to the holistic development of the child. However, over time this passion may wane as a result of internal and external forces, and challenging working contexts. These challenges result in a loss of their sense of purpose, which is an integral component of their professional identity." This view was supported by Fransson and Grannäs's (2013, p. 7) finding that at some time in our daily lives we all find ourselves in situations where we have to deal with problems or dilemmas, which are sometimes small and sometimes more

significant. In keeping with this sentiment, Lampert (1985) situated dilemmas at the core of teaching, positioning the teacher as a dilemma manager "balancing a variety of interests that need to be satisfied in classrooms" (Lampert, 1985, p. 190). If dilemmas are at the core of teaching, then difficulties within schools are a reality for many teachers, and have the potential to shape their work. These dilemmas may require teachers to take a step back from their routine and address the situations that they are presented with (Adendorff et al., 2010).

Contextual forces at the level of the school that produce dilemmas for the teachers have the potential to shape their work (Morrow, 2007; Samuel, 2009). According to Saldana (2013), the school and its teachers are considered to be the most formal socialisation agent, as they are instrumental in the transmission of culture. However, this task was once the domain of the family or religious organisations (Morrow, 2007). This added responsibility now has to be borne by the school and its teachers. Saldana's (2013) observations are therefore appropriate:

> Today's society expects the school system to teach students life skills, such as drug awareness, conflict resolution, and sex education, all within the confines of set parameters imposed by today's society's conflicting values, diverse morals, and emerging mores. The other traditional agents of socialisation, the church and the family, have changed, and in the absence of a consistently strong and homogeneous church and family the school has emerged slowly as society's binding agent. (p. 229)

With such diverse responsibilities, teachers are being forced to reconstruct their professional identities in relation to the situations and the environment within which they find themselves (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011). Teachers may therefore experience deep feelings of unhappiness and frustration as a result of having to address the effects of other problems in their classrooms (Vassallo, 2014). Bloch (2009) observed that in the South African context, a teacher, in addition to teaching, has to be a social worker and a police officer. This view was supported by Bergh and Theron (2009), who indicated that teachers also have to nurture, provide counselling to, and provide food for their learners. A qualitative study undertaken by Collett, Chisulo and Buchler (2012) showed that the welfare and security of teachers at four primary schools were adversely affected by poor infrastructure. They also found that lack of finances for the school, poor parental support,

high levels of poverty, vandalism, and being responsible for learners' biological, psychological and social well-being also affected teacher welfare (Collett et al., 2012). Døssing, Mokeki and Weideman (2011) also cited safety and security issues, a lack of resources, and a lack of water and electricity as hampering teachers' performance. The roots of certain problems, such as hunger (Grimmett et al., 2008; Morrow, 2007), poverty (Chisholm, 2004; Giese et al., 2009), and crime (Chisholm, 2004), lie in the difficulties experienced by individual communities during the apartheid era. Such regular stresses were found to escalate the likelihood for teacher demotivation, exhaustion and fatigue, and were responsible for the poor retention of teachers in the profession (Collett et al., 2012). Overall, it has been found that these additional tasks have resulted in teachers becoming tired and distressed as a result of the multiple roles that they have to fulfil (Bergh & Theron, 2009). Hence, contextual realities present in schools can create dilemmas for teachers.

2.5.5 Political and social transitions as a source of teacher dilemmas

The shifting and changing educational milieu forces teachers to "balance different options and positions" (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013, p. 9) in order to choose how best to negotiate situations in a particular context, a specific school, and a particular classroom. The "best" way will vary amongst teachers, and will depend on various aspects, and what may be a dilemma for one teacher may not be so for another (Scager, Akkerman, Pilot, & Wubbels, 2017). One crucial change that teachers have to negotiate at present is the aspect of learner migration. The migration of learners that many schools experience creates multiple problems (Dieltiens & Motala, 2012). The movement of fee-paying learners, who generally come from more affluent families in the neighbourhood, to other so-called elite schools is a reality (Bell & McKay, 2011). According to Bell and McKay (2011), children of "wealthy" parents can gain entry to well-resourced schools as they can afford the fees needed for admittance. However, the management of schools may find the migration of poor learners from townships to suburban schools to be problematic (Nkomo, McKinney & Chisholm, 2004).

According to Dieltiens and Motala (2012), very little thought is given by the DoE to the issue of urban migration. The problem with the movement of some poor learners from

one area into another is that if the child qualified for a subsidy, then that subsidy may be lost if the receiving school is not ranked Q1, Q2 or Q3 (Dieltiens & Motala, 2012). This movement by learners may result in the receiving school losing out financially and being underfunded (Hall & Giese, 2010). Such practices have resulted in the quintile ranking of a school no longer reflecting the socio-economic status of the area. Added to this is that the government only subsidises those learners who cannot pay fees at all. But the subsidy received is much lower than the subsidy for fee-paying learners (Dieltiens & Motala, 2012).

Furthermore, a large portion of the learners that do remain at the school cannot afford to pay the school fees (Dieltiens & Motala, 2012). As a consequence, being ranked Q4 or Q5 can be a disadvantage to some schools, and can place an additional burden on teachers because of the circumstances that they are faced with (Grant, 2013). According to Biesta (2004), teachers at fee-paying schools that receive reduced funding from the department may have to raise funds if the learner population are unable to pay their school fees. Hence, teachers at wealthy schools welcome fee-paying learners and may not regard learner migration as a dilemma. However, teachers who are forced to find creative means to supplement their schools' income, while at the same time engaging in the technical work of curriculum delivery, may feel differently. Such teachers are forced to become accountable for their school's financial upkeep (Biesta, 2004), adding another layer to their dilemmas at school. The aspect of economic capital is, therefore, essential for the South African educational context at the school level, as the experiences a teacher has at a school are linked to the financial status of the school (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014). Schools ranked Q4 and Q5 are considered wealthy schools and therefore are required to charge school fees to maintain themselves. Teachers' experiences at such a school can be negatively influenced if the schools are unable to maintain themselves financially.

SECTION C

2.6   THE ETHICAL DILEMMA DECISION-MAKING MODEL AS THE THIRD TOOL

In Section A, I outlined teachers' personal-professional lives and the possible experiences that they may encounter during practice through the SIT lens. In Section B, I looked at

teachers' experiences concerning context. However, in the absence of research on teachers' personal-professional experiences in the context of school quintiling, I unpacked the dilemmas that teachers may experience and the forces responsible for these dilemmas within schools, as provided by scholarship around teachers' work. Nonetheless, while teachers work within these contexts, there is also the care aspect that is involved in negotiating their dilemmas — both care of the learners and care of themselves.

In this section, I acknowledge that dilemmas exist. However, I intend to see how teachers negotiate the dilemmas that they are confronted with by drawing from their biography and their past and present experiences. Furthermore, while teachers are called upon to negotiate their challenges, they are required to consider the aspect of care that is involved in negotiating their dilemmas and engage in practice that can be deemed beneficial to the child (Magwa, 2015). This is important because given all the complexities that the system of school quintiling presents, teachers are called to make choices on how to address their challenges. These choices are underpinned by a certain ethics of care. In an attempt to position teachers as engaging in ethical caring behaviour, I draw on Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model to provide an outline of how these dilemmas can be negotiated in the context of school quintiling. This model has been divided into five main components or parts, as shown in Figure 2.1. At the centre, I have added the main element of dilemmatic space from Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space framework. The five steps, as outlined in this model, will be used during the analysis of critical question three in Chapter Six, which looks at how teachers' personal-professional identities are negotiated in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles.
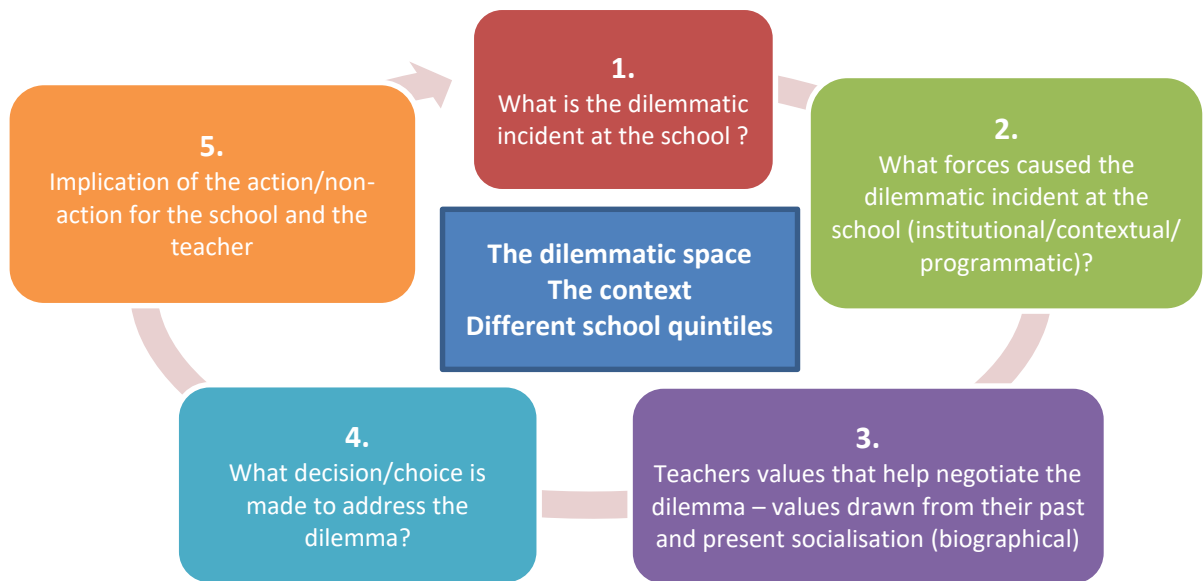
Figure 2.2 The ethical dilemma decision-making model to understand teacher practice

According to Ehrich et al.'s (2011, p. 13) ethical dilemma decision-making model, the first step is to identify the critical incident (step 1 in Figure 2.1). The significant event is the genesis of the ethical dilemma. Step two identifies the set of opposing forces, each of which explains the critical incident from its individual bias. These forces may be professional ethics, legal issues or policies, organisational culture, the institutional context, the public interest, society and community, the global context, the political framework, or economic and financial contexts (Ehrich et al., 2011, p. 13). The critical incident can arise from these forces. Step three focuses on the teacher, who brings his or her morals, principles, values and ethical preferences to the dilemma. According to Edwards (2001), these values have been shaped by several sources, such as the teacher's past, his/her socialisation, and so on. Step four comprises the decision-making process — the choice that the teacher makes in addressing the dilemma from the competing options available to him or her. It is through reflecting on the possibilities and choices that the ethical dilemma occurs. The individual may choose to either disregard the dilemma or note the dilemma and act in one or more ways. These acts can be official or unofficial, internal or external. Finally, in step five the action or inaction can produce certain consequences, not only for the teacher but for the school, the learners and the community (Ehrich et al., 2011, p. 13).

2.6.1 Ethics of care in addressing ethical dilemmas

How these complexities are addressed, the choices that teachers make, and the strategies that they implement to resolve their dilemmas, are shaped by their knowledge, concerns, priorities, values, and their propensity to contemplate alternatives (Kelchtermans, 2009). Also, teachers tasked with seeing to the needs of their learners are required to maintain a duty of care. They are required to see to the best interests of their learners (Mahony, 2009). This view is supported by Noddings (2002, p. 24), who stated that "caring about pupils in the context of schools is empty if it does not culminate in caring relations". Goodlad, Soder and Sirotnik (1990), Lyons (1990) and Sockett (1993) maintain that moral decision making is a daily requirement of teachers. Since teaching is a moral endeavour, it involves being in a relationship with others. However, being in a relationship with other teachers, learners and parents allows for the possibility that tensions will arise in a teacher's practice (Shapiro & Gross, 2008).

While teachers are called to address these tensions, it is possible that "many of the dilemmas of teaching are not solvable and must simply be managed rather than resolved" (Lyons, 1990, p. 168). It is when a dilemma cannot be solved but only managed that the suggestion offered by of Honig "to act for the best" is applicable (Honig, 1996, as cited in Fransson & Grannäs, 2013, p. 5), which involves a conscious reflection on which solution would suit which dilemma. Teachers' relations with other teachers and learners invoke their consciousness and awareness, and this knowledge and awareness, in turn, contributes to teachers' decisions. Such consciousness and awareness is also developed during a person's primary socialisation (Bonnewitz, 2005). It is transmitted within the home and the family, and is embedded in family upbringing (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014) or acquired through socialisation within social groups (Nash, 1990). This view is also supported by van Wyk and le Grange (2016), who found that the school as an educational space is recognised as an intricate system rooted within a more extensive socio-cultural network. Also, teachers within a school bring with them their lived experiences and socio-cultural histories that shape what happens in the school space (van Wyk & le Grange, 2016).

Therefore, in the case of teachers, an understanding of their work and how they execute their tasks is dependent on understanding their personal and professional biographies. It also involves a reflection on the way they were socialised into their careers as teachers

(Nash, 1990). This was critically important for the teachers in this study, as they come from diverse socio-cultural, economic and political backgrounds. Some spent their lives in poor rural or poor township contexts. Their experiences as learners at schools, the training that they underwent to become teachers, and their skills as teachers within different school contexts all converge to influence their perceptions and attitudes (Bonnewitz, 2005). Therefore, if teachers are faced with dilemmas they can draw from their reservoir of past and present experiences in an attempt to negotiate the challenges they are faced with by drawing on previous experiences within their families and communities to enact their practice within their schools (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014; Fataar & Feldman, 2016).

SECTION D

2.7   A SUMMARY OF THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

My study comprises teachers from diverse backgrounds who were all impacted by the apartheid system. Each of these teachers entered and exited different educational spaces, each set aside for a particular race of people. Each educational space offered a very different educational experience for each of the participants, depending on their race and economic and social class background (Bourdieu, 1984). They were reminded from an early age that their identities in respect of race, gender and class determined whether they were part of the in-group or out-group. Being classified as Black, Indian and Coloured had negative implications, as the most substantial power in society, the state, excluded people of colour, positioning them as outsiders or part of the out-group. Teachers who had been educated within a divided apartheid educational system came to internalise what had been preached to them. Such ingrained and divisive views and opinions need to be unlearned (Weldon, 2009).

For the teachers in this study, this has been of importance. The dismantling of apartheid and the diversification of schools has required teachers to navigate these racial and economic divisions, and to integrate themselves into the social network at the macro level of society and the micro level of schools (Vandeyar, 2010). Teachers who may have spent

their formative years in the unjust apartheid system can introduce the principles of cultural diversity and social justice into their classrooms, which after years of separation now experience diversity and multiculturalism (Vandeyar, 2010).

This introspection requires teacher agency and the application of an ethics of care when dealing with learners (Ehrich et al., 2011). The ethics of care is a necessary construct that has the potential to give hope to learners in challenging school spaces and desperate situations. This view is supported by Nguyen (2016), who observed that teaching is frequently labelled as a caring profession since it encompasses work in which the person is both the object and the subject — physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually. As a result, it is recommended that teachers should be caring (Nguyen, 2016, p. 1). According to Priestley, Biesta and Robinson (2015, p. 3), understanding teacher agency is essential for understanding how teachers within trying school contexts "are able to be reflexive and creative, acting counter to societal constraints, but also how individuals are enabled and constrained by their social and material environments" (Priestley et al., 2015, p. 3). This agency offers a sense of hope to their learners, as teachers at schools are described as ideally situated for "nurturing and fostering children's hopes, and the teaching profession as rooted in hopefulness" (Cherrington, 2017, p. 72).

However, this process has certain limitations. If teachers feel that their school environment does not foster and facilitate teacher job satisfaction, then they are likely to be unhappy and unproductive, and this can present dilemmas in respect of their personal and professional lives (Watt & Richardson, 2008). Evidence of teachers experiencing such dilemmatic situations has been documented. Some of the dilemmas are related to the lack of recognition, respect and support from society for the job they do (Hargreaves, 1994; Vassallo, 2014). There is also a lack of time for collaboration to share information (Brown, 2004), and to offer each other emotional and social support (Vassallo, 2014). Emotional stress can also lead to teacher vulnerability (Lasky, 2005), resulting in teacher breakdown and attrition (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013). Such negative feelings can move teachers to the margins of the school community; pushing them into isolation and making them part of the out-group.

Finally, the issues associated with teaching at public schools in South Africa, which experience numerous challenges as a result of the quintile system of categorisation (Collett et al., 2012; Naong, 2013; Nzuza, 2015), need to be highlighted and addressed.

Addressing teachers' challenges is essential so that they do not feel forgotten and abandoned by the powers that be, and so that the stories of their dilemmas are heard and hopefully addressed.

2.8   CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This study is aimed at understanding teachers' personal-professional identities and their negotiation of their lived dilemmatic experiences within challenging spaces produced by the system of school quintiling. In Section A I foregrounded teachers' personal and professional experiences and practices. To help better understand this concept, I used Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory supported by Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory. In Section B I looked at the contextual challenges that emerge from teaching in public schools. Due to limited scholarship around teachers' work in relation to the problems created by the system of school quintiling, I offered insight into teachers' work in the context of various problematic school spaces, and into the many forces that present dilemmas for teachers in their work (Baruth, 2009; Chisholm, 2012; Collinson, 2004; Heard, 2011; Loewenberg Ball & Forzani, 2009). To assist with understanding teachers' work in challenging school contexts, I used Fransson and Grannäs (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework. While Section B provided a window into the various possible scenarios that can present teachers with dilemmas in their work, I also wanted to see how teachers employ an ethics of care in negotiating their difficulties. To explain the ethics of care involved in teaching, I offered Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model in Section C. This model provided the tools necessary to help negotiate the dilemmas that teachers may face by outlining five critical steps in the negotiating process. These five steps will be implemented in Chapter Six to answer critical question three once the teachers' dilemmatic experiences are uncovered. The following chapter explains the methodology employed in understanding teachers' experiences through the stories they tell of those experiences.

CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPING THE TOOLS AS A MASTER CARVER: PRODUCING AND COLLECTING THE MATERIAL TO CREATIVELY UNDERSTAND TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I presented eclectic theories to frame my research study titled *Personal-professional identities: Stories of teachers lived dilemmatic experiences in the context of school quintiles*. To understand the multiple layers of teachers' personal-professional experiences, lives, social interactions and enacted practices, I drew on Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory supported by Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory. I also looked at the contextual challenges that teachers may encounter within their educational spaces produced as a consequence of their school's particular quintile classification. To assist the analysis, I drew on Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space framework. I then presented Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model which outlined five critical steps in the negotiating process which teachers may draw on to negotiate their dilemmatic spaces produced by school quintiling in an ethical manner.

In this chapter, I move my research lens to present the research design and methodology of my study. The chapter commences by positioning the study in relation to its research paradigms. I then discuss the research design employed to explore the qualitative experiences of the five teachers, before moving on to discuss narrative inquiry as the chosen methodology that has guided this research. Thereafter, the research methods employed in this study are discussed. After discussing the difference between narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives, I conclude by presenting how the study ensured that the necessary degree of trustworthiness and ethical research behaviour was adhered to.

3.2   PARADIGMS: POSITIONING MY STUDY

According to Creswell (2007, p. 19), paradigms are a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which give rise to a particular world view. Paradigms express underlying assumptions taken on faith, such as beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between the knower and known (epistemology) and assumptions about methodologies. Paradigms function as lenses or organising principles through which reality is interpreted. They offer us the means to tell a coherent story by depicting a world that is meaningful and functional, but culturally subjective (Schwartz & Ogilvy, 1979).

As a researcher, my ontological (way of being) assumption was, therefore, based on my experiences as a teacher, which have taught me a few things about the role of the teacher and myself as a teacher. In Chapter One, I offered a brief rundown of my experience as a teacher at a Q4 school in the heart of the impoverished township of Chatsworth. My narrative recount highlighted what I have learned about myself as a teacher and the challenges — both personal and professional — that I grappled with. I now wanted to turn my gaze to other teachers. I wanted as a researcher to understand other teachers and their personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of different school quintiles.

I was troubled as a researcher about how I was going to present teachers' lived experiences within the context of different school quintiles in a manner that captivated the attention of my intended audience. I needed to explore, understand and make sense of the social world of other teachers, and how their past histories and background influenced the choices they made in life. I had to focus on their meanings and interpretations of their subjective experiences within particular school quintiles. I also needed to understand my initial fixed mentality as a teacher, and how my evolving thinking as a scholar and researcher had opened up my ways of being and doing. I was able to achieve my aims through examining the stories that the teachers told about their lived experiences. The teachers' stories helped me expand my scholarly understanding and possibilities for thinking about teachers' personal-professional experiences within school quintiling.

I also needed to understand how apartheid, racial segregation, inequality, gender discrimination, class differences, and language differences had structured the life

experiences of the participants. In addition, I knew that I wanted to explore the individual actions and experiences of my participants within their socio-cultural, economic and historical backgrounds. These aspects could not be ignored since it was these spaces that had been instrumental in shaping the teachers' experiences. These multiple experiences had to be considered to understand better what it means to be a teacher within the South African context, and especially within the particular school quintile that defines the teachers' environment. One way to accomplish this was through the stories they told of their lived experiences. My aim was, therefore, to utilise multiple data-generation approaches to bring to the teachers' lived experiences to the fore within their unique individual contexts. I knew that the research design that I chose had to allow me to bring to the fore the unique multiple, multi-layered experiences of my participants, and needed to allow for a conversational space to be created within this research. I therefore chose to conduct my research within a qualitative research paradigm. I adopted a narrative inquiry approach using in-depth interviews, collage inquiry, photovoice, and poetic inquiry.

3.2.1 The qualitative research design

Qualitative research design refers to "research that elicits participants' accounts of meaning, experience or perception" (De Vos, 2002, p. 79). This understanding is corroborated by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), who indicated that a qualitative approach allows for a deeper, richer understanding of the event or occurrence being explored, and the meanings and construction of reality attached by participants to situations. Mohajan (2018) also found that qualitative methods are in the main more successful at providing a framework and background for identity construction, allowing the participant to narrate themes of self in relation to the historical and social events from which these themes stem and are played out. The rationale for my research was that the self is not an isolated being but mediates itself in relation to the broader social and cultural context. Teachers as social beings draw from the experiences gleaned from their interaction and socialisation within their families and communities to negotiate the various challenges they confront in the context of school quintiling.

To accomplish my aim of investigating and understanding the multi-layered, complex intertwined personal-professional lives of my participants, I once again took on the role of the master carver of this research, leaning on the *Jadeite Cabbage* metaphor for inspiration and insight. I now shift my attention to the steps or stages a master carver engages in before a masterpiece can be created (Oriental Jade Jewelry, n.d.). As the master carver of this research, I had to follow several steps to create my masterpiece. These included finding the "right" piece of jade to carve, which translated into finding the most "appropriate" participants for my study. In addition to the theoretical framework I had created, I also needed other tools to assist with my carving. These needed to be the appropriate tools for the task, as, for example, devices used to carve wood cannot be used to cut a piece of precious jade. This translated into selecting the "tools" that would be required, and the methodology and methods that would be employed to bring the carving (this research) to life. For example, decisions had to be made on the space in which the sculpture would be created, which translated into ensuring that the venue selected for my interviews was conducive to getting the best possible results. What was also important is that carving a piece of jade is considered to be an intensely painstaking and exacting art form. Carvers must value the rarity and worth of the jade (Mountain Jade, n.d.), and must take care not to waste any part of it. Those carvers who act in haste and without extreme care run the risk of misusing the precious jade. This care and caution spoke to my relationship with my participants, and the steps I had to take as a researcher to ensure that their integrity and value were appreciated (Sax, Michaelson & Meeks, 2004). The cabbage metaphor also provided a visual reminder of the multiple layers that constitute teachers' lives, and that reflect the influence of personal, social, political and economic structures. It offered an understanding of how these structures, like the leaves of the cabbage, not only envelop the heart (the teacher) but also overlap and embrace it.

3.2.2   The interpretivist approach

According to Lather (1986), research paradigms fundamentally mirror our beliefs about the world we live in and want to live in. After thoughtful deliberation, and after a close look at my topic, my critical questions, my research problem and the aims of this research, I decided that an interpretivist approach would be most appropriate. The interpretivist perspective is based on the assumption that social life is a distinctively human product. It

also acknowledges that the human mind is the purposive source of origin and meaning (Nieuwenhuis, 2010), the habitus of the person (Bourdieu, 1986). The interpretive paradigm is focused on understanding the world as it is from the subjective experiences of individuals (Reeves & Hedberg, 2003).

My aim for this study was to obtain an in-depth understanding (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) of the inner lives of my participants. Interpretivism suggests that "reality is socially constructed" (Mertens, 2005, p. 12), and adopting an interpretivist approach therefore allowed me to understand the multiple fluid lives of my participants, both in the context of the different school quintiles and also in the various settings that reflected their socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Interpretivism also focuses on understanding complex human behaviour (De Villiers, 2005), and the researcher does not stand above or outside but is an observer who attempts to understand the meanings of actions as they are communicated within specific social contexts (Mutch, 2005). As a researcher, I wanted an insider view of the phenomenon, and therefore deemed the interpretivist approach to be appropriate.

3.3   NARRATIVE INQUIRY: THE WHY? WHAT? AND HOW?

I embark on this section by reflecting on a writing retreat that I was fortunate to attend at the Assagay Hotel on 5 December 2015. As a cohort of PhD students, we commenced by undertaking a written exercise on what narrative inquiry meant to us as researchers who would be engaging with this methodology. We were divided into two groups. Each student within the group had to write a short statement of not more than 140 characters on what we understood about narrative inquiry. These statements were then selected and rewritten in a poetic form. This particular method of poetry writing was called unfolding poetry — the poem unfolded as we created a new poem. This exercise was done through eliciting, filtering and selecting lines that aptly captured what each student was best trying to convey about what narrative inquiry meant to them through the lines they wrote. The following poem was the outcome of that exercise for the group I belonged to:

A journey of listening

Stories lived and told

Experience of place, space and time

An Investigation into Life's Experiences

An entanglement between

Written by participants and researchers

Stories used as data

Stories and re-stories

The highlighted lines from the poem now informed my understanding of narrative inquiry as a research methodology. Also, my understanding of narrative inquiry was supported by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) definition of narrative inquiry as a term that encapsulates personal and human aspects of experience over time and takes cognisance of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context. Furthermore, Clandinin and Caine (2008) view narrative inquiry as both a phenomenon and a methodology. As a methodology, narrative inquiry is a study of individuals over time and context, and also involves narratively inquiring into their experience. As a phenomenon, narrative inquiry is a means of understanding people's experiences (Clandinin & Caine, 2008).

3.3.1   Experience of place, space and time

To understand the aspects of place, space and time, I lean on Connelly and Clandinin's (2006) commonplaces of narrative inquiry to clarify the distinct qualities that encompass this methodology. Connelly and Clandinin (2006, p. 479) identified "three commonplaces of narrative inquiry. These are temporality, sociality, and place which specify dimensions of an inquiry space". Embarking on narrative inquiry requires the "simultaneous exploration of all three commonplaces" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 479). Firstly, according to Connelly and Clandinin (2006, p. 479), "events under study are in temporal transition"; temporality, therefore, refers to taking heed of the past, present and future of people, contexts and places, things and events as in process, as always in transition.

Secondly, the sociality commonplace takes heed of the person's personal and social conditions. A researcher and narrative inquirer has to consider both the individual and social conditions of his or her participants. The personal conditions include the hopes, needs, and moral character and nature of the participants. In contrast, the social conditions draw on external conditions (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006), which may incorporate the social-cultural, economic and historical contexts. And finally, the place commonplace refers to "the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequence of places where the inquiry and events take place" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). As a researcher, it was therefore also essential for me to understand the environment and circumstances within which the participants' stories unfolded (Creswell, 2007), as the teachers were drawn from diverse contexts. While as a researcher I was able to identify with those teachers who teach within the township of Chatsworth, I also had to understand the teachers who had been born in, and had lived and worked in different contexts.

3.3.2   An investigation into life's experiences

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) indicated that narrative inquiry is a term that considers the personal and human aspects of experience over time. Accordingly, understanding who the teachers were required a holistic knowledge of the participants — both their present and past experiences, and their primary and secondary socialisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), as these experiences had been instrumental in shaping their habitus (Bourdieu, 1978) and outlook on life. It is this reservoir of expertise that teachers can draw on to help them negotiate their dilemmas and dilemmatic spaces within schools. These experiences can be brought to the fore through the stories that teachers recount of themselves. Hence, narrative inquiry is ideally suited to understand the essence of an experience, as it places the participants centre stage and gives voice to their individual stories (Creswell, 2007). In addition, because the collective voice of teachers has been restricted within educational spaces (De Clercq & Phiri, 2013), resulting in frustrated demotivated teachers, narrative inquiry offers a voice to those who have been previously unheard in educational research — like some teachers within particular school quintiles. Narrative inquiry also allows researchers to explore the significance of the participants' experiences as told through stories (Creswell, 2008). It was through the stories that the teachers told about their experiences within school quintiling that I as the researcher was able to investigate how

teachers are enabled or constrained, and how they, in turn, interpret their individual experiences (Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, I wore the caps of both teacher and researcher, and narrative inquiry allowed for my story as a teacher-researcher to also be told. Through the stories I told of my life as a teacher I could ascertain how my own subjective experiences or stories reflected, and also resisted, the broader social or cultural patterns or understandings (Ellis, 2004).

3.3.3   Written by participants and researchers

When considering the researcher-participant relationship that needed to be established, I considered the words of Connelly and Clandinin (1990), who suggested that before any formal data can be obtained, a trusting relationship needs to be established between the researcher and the participant. Narrative inquiry allows for this relationship to be developed, as according to Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 20), narrative inquiry is a way of understanding and inquiring into an experience through "collaboration between researcher and participants". Collaboration between researcher and participant allows for a relationship to be established and offers a lens for coming to a better understanding of the participants' similar, yet unique, experiences (Wiebe, 2008). Thus, negotiating entry into the field of research is essential. A healthy relationship requires a relationship of equality.

This relationship brings the issue of voice to the fore (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). However, as researcher and teacher, I also understand that as practitioners in the classroom we have been silenced and without a voice for so long that attempting to establish a caring, open relationship may prove difficult (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I therefore endeavoured to tell my participants about my life as a teacher within my particular school quintile. As a teacher myself, I understood the dynamics involved in school education. For years as an Indian teacher at a predominantly Indian school, I had been exposed mostly to other Indian teachers. My interactions with Black teachers had been mainly restricted to meetings and workshops. But now, as a researcher, I appreciated that there may be social-cultural differences which I was not aware of. As a researcher, I had to consider all these factors as they could have created a problem. I had to emphasise the need for an empowering relationship based on equality, care, shared purpose and

intention (Råheim et al., 2016), and I had to reflect on this relationship continually. I had to emphasise the shared nature of the research process as encompassing researcher and participant in the community, which has importance for researcher and participant, theory and practice (Noddings, 1986).

3.3.4 Stories and re-stories

The teachers in this study had emerged from a period of apartheid history that fashioned a narrative of neglect, want, deprivation and scarcity. Allowing participants time and space to reflect on their lived experiences requires them to go back in time and recall those lived experiences. In this process, they bring forth their experiences through the stories they tell. However, the kind of story they tell speaks volume of their character, personality and agency as teachers. Stories and re-stories are, therefore, fundamental to the narrative inquiry process. Downey and Clandinin (2010, p. 387) highlighted that "stories are not just about experience but experience itself; we live and learn in, and through, the living, telling, retelling, and reliving of our stories". Hence, in order to make sense of and uncover the meaning between our prior and current experiences, and using these understandings to develop, advance and progress, we need to engage in not only telling our stories but also in retelling them. The process of rewriting and retelling our stories and experiences provides a platform for understandings to be revealed and new theoretical understandings to develop, and we begin to change ourselves and realise new possibilities for practice (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994).

3.4   SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Interpretivism aims to understand lived experiences from the perspective of those who live them (Bush, Singh & Kooienga, 2019). In light of that, I selected one teacher to represent each of the school quintiles from Q1 to Q5. I say I "selected" my participants, but for me the more suitable term would be "finding" participants who were willing to participate in my research study. These teachers were chosen because they would be able to provide the relevant data. My initial foray into this exercise was first to ask people who I knew at the UKZN Edgewood Campus. Our PhD cohort group was made up of Level 1

teachers, deputy principals, principals, and supervisors. I appealed to this cohort group. They then gave me a list of potential participants with whom I needed to link up, to ascertain their willingness to participate. From the list I was given, I purposively selected my participants. The demographic breakdown of these participants is presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Demographic breakdown of research participants

Participants (Pseudonyms)	Solomon	Happy	Bernell	Shamilla	Bianca
Previous historical racial classification	Black	Black	Indian	Indian	Indian
School quintile	1	2	3	4	5
Context	Rural	Rural	Semi-rural	Township	Suburban
Age	45	42	27	45	55
Years of service	13	10	3	15	27
Highest qualification	Honours	Honours	Honours	Teaching Degree	Master's
Marital status	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married

In qualitative research, the selection of participants refers to the selection of a portion of the population for investigation (Cohen et al., 2011). Purposive selection of participants means that my participants were chosen because of some defining characteristics that made them ideal participants in this study. My participant selection was, therefore, made for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

I attempted to use maximum variation as a method to select my participants, as I wanted to capitalise on variances to reflect differences or different perspectives, which is considered ideal in qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). My sample sites were different, since each participant taught at a different school classified as a different quintile. I also sought maximum variation amongst the participants in terms of age, gender and years of

service. However, while my aim was for the varied sample to display a diversity of experience, I was in no way intending to generalise my findings, but to expand the range of feedback that could be drawn to make conclusions or develop insights (Benson, 2004). My final selection consisted of two Black teachers (one male and one female) and three Indian teachers (who were all female). My choice took cognisance of the fact that I needed teachers to represent different school quintiles. As a qualitative researcher, it is "appropriate to select the research sample on the basis of the researcher's own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of the research aims" (Mouton, 2001, p. 166). My selection was also restricted to just five participants. This selection was a deliberate choice. For a qualitative study I did not need a large sample size to provide statistically significant results. The use of narrative inquiry as a research methodology had the potential to yield a generous amount of data, and therefore negated the need for a large sample size (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003). Moreover, in qualitative research, value is placed on the worth and depth of information, and not on scope or breadth, as is required in a quantitative study (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

3.5 ENTERING THE FIELD: GENERATION OF FIELD TEXTS ON TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

Entering the field refers to the research activity of selecting a research setting and gaining access to the site (Cowie, 2009). I entered the field not only as a researcher but as a teacher at a Q4 school, with the knowledge that the interview process was not merely a data-generating event but would involve a social, interpersonal encounter with my participants, who were teachers themselves (Andersen & Ivarsson, 2016). The entry into the field required me to keep in mind the interpersonal, interactional, communicative and emotional aspects of the interview (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2008, p. 362).

According to Berger (2008), interpersonal communication involves the in-person exchange of information between two or more people through verbal and non-verbal means. This in-person exchange is essential for both the researcher and the participant, as body language can indicate if either is bored, angry or agitated. Having open communication is also vital, as the researcher has to convey the purpose, duration, and

nature of the interview (Cohen et al., 2008). Rigorous data-generation methods using multiple data sources were used. During these sessions, my participants were requested to communicate their stories in a variety of ways. These various data sources allowed for a rich, deep understanding of their life experiences (Clandinin, 2013). During my fieldwork, I engaged with the participants as we dialogued using life-history interviews, photovoice, collage inquiry, and poetic inquiry. The use of interviews as a method of data generation allowed for the articulation of remembered thoughts (Creswell, 2014).

The use of creative visual art-based methods further stretched the boundaries of remembered thoughts to delve into the evaded spaces of the mind that can be illuminated through photographs, collage inquiry, and poetic inquiry (Van der Vaart, van Hoven & Huigen, 2018). What was fascinating was how the teachers got involved in the methods used to elicit the data required on their particular school quintiles. Their excitement at engaging in the compilation of the collage was evident as they cut out pictures and words. These pictures and words were then moved around to explain best what they were trying to say about their personal and professional experiences. Fieldwork also involved my participants taking photos of areas in their school that captured their attention, whether positively or negatively. These sources provided large volumes of rich data. Their pain and excitement at looking at and explaining the photographs they had taken were also evident as they verbalised the challenges or possibilities they encountered with teaching within certain school quintiles.

The teachers' positive, negative and dilemmatic moments were therefore expressed through their oral and visual representations. Their verbal and visual presentations served as a moment to exhale — a purgative, emotionally liberating moment. It was a moment to vent their frustrations at a job that demands so much from them physically, mentally and emotionally. However, through the use of art-based methods like collage inquiry and photovoice, teachers were able also to open up and talk about their lives at a deeper level, and this allowed for a more in-depth nuanced story to emerge. These visual representations opened avenues for a life remembered to be brought to the fore. Their stories helped bring to light that teachers are at times disregarded, mistreated, exploited and manipulated by the system which they try to uphold. Trapped by the title of a teacher with the various roles they are expected to undertake, these teachers feel obliged to

undertake these roles sometimes at the expense of their personal, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

3.5.1 In-depth life story interviews

Interviews can be described as a "conversation with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984, p. 102). It is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. An interview is question-driven. That means it is constructed rather than a naturally occurring situation (Cohen et al., 2008). In-depth interviews are generally conducted face-to-face (Boyce & Neale, 2006). It is "a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 29). Furthermore, an in-depth interview enables the researcher to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's take on the research topic (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

I conducted one-on-one in-depth interviews with each of the participants. I had four meetings in total with each one with each session lasting for +/- an hour. However, the collage inquiry session where my participants had to construct their collage varied in length from 2 hours to 3 hours. Each session entailed face-to-face interaction with my participants. All communications were audiotaped recorded. Data produced was in the form of pictures and words pasted on chart paper which was later expounded upon to ascertain what meanings those pictures and words had for the participants. I aimed to explore in as much depth as possible my participants' understandings and feelings of their life experiences and in particular on teaching within a specific school quintile. This was the first step in generating data for my research. Such interviews were unstructured. These encounters allowed the participants to express their feelings freely and completely can on their diverse subjective socio-cultural, economic and political experiences and also their experiences in different school quintiles (Cohen et al., 2011).

This exploration enabled me to obtain a deep understanding of each participant's viewpoint on what it means to be a teacher within the present educational context of school quintiles. Places where the interviews were held varied. All my participants were interviewed in spaces that they were comfortable with. These sites were the everyday worlds of my participants. Creswell (2007, p. 40) stated "we conduct qualitative research

because we want to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue. We cannot separate what people say from the context in which they say it — whether this context is their home, family, or work." My participants chose where the interviews were to be held. Solomon and Happy who teach in the rural context chose the library as this was where they spent their "free" time studying for their Master's degree. Bernell and Bianca chose their homes as they had the privacy they needed to engage in their interviews undisturbed. Shamilla chose the school as a convenient space.

3.5.2 Photovoice

The concept of photovoice was developed by Wang and Burris (1997), and relies on photographic depictions of the daily life of the group under study. Various forms of photography can be employed for data collection and for consolidating, construing, understanding, and authenticating qualitative inquiry (Marshall, 2006). It is a technique that permits participants to be actively involved in data production where a camera is entrusted to the participants (Wang & Burris, 1994).

For the photovoice sessions, I opted to think of my participants as my co-researchers (Reason & Bradbury, 2008), since they were responsible for planning and carrying out the task of taking the photographs, and this falls within the research process. I allowed my participants to use cameras as a means to get them to play an active role in the research process (Wang & Burris, 1994). In this way, my participants were allowed to take ownership in this research (Wang, Burris, & Ping, 1996) and were provided with an avenue for their active voice to come through (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). I also considered them to be knowledgeable participants, since they were the ones with the knowledge of their actual lived experiences and contexts. As knowledgeable and experienced participants, they were given an opportunity to communicate their stories and have their voice heard through the photos they took. By becoming active participants, they offered a lens for others to see the world through their eyes (Palibroda, Krieg, Murdock & Havelock, 2009). This involvement was essential because the process of generating data is not restricted to the written and spoken word only (Harper, 2002). The images accompanied by the stories that my participants provided acted as a means for dialogue and sharing of expertise (Wang & Burris, 1997). This is corroborated by Freire

(2005) and Tikly and Barrett (2013), who found that teachers in many communities are regarded as people who can be looked upon to give direction and advice, and to assist in instituting positive change in the lives of the people.

3.5.2.1 Commencing the photovoice process

Before the actual process of taking photographs began, I needed to inform my participants of the advantages of the method. One of the most significant benefits for my participants was the opportunity to make known their experiences from behind the lens. Through photographs, they would be able to capture what may not have been revealed through other means. I had to also inform them of the ethics that are involved in photovoice. I emphasised the importance of the need for all activities undertaken by my participants to be done fairly and respectfully. They were expected to do no harm through their research activity. They were also expected to conform to the ethical guidelines of research (Palibroda et al., 2009). My participants were requested to use photographs to capture momentous events, places, or items from their everyday life which reflected their subjective experience of their socio-economic, cultural, political, and historical realities. These photographs functioned as a catalyst for additional probing through interviews and time spent together.

According to Wang and Burris (1997), photovoice is viewed as a means to give voice to the people whose lived experiences are different from those who are in control of that world. It foregrounds what the community deems important, as opposed to what an outsider may consider relevant. Most importantly, the images created and the matters deliberated and outlined by people may inspire policy and social change (Wang & Burris, 1997). By allowing my participants a camera to capture what they deemed important, I was allowing them to prioritise their concerns and discuss their problems. However, many processes were to follow this exercise. Firstly, I requested that my participants list what they considered to be noteworthy and in need of further discussion. I then asked that they engage with their surroundings by taking photos of places that grabbed their attention. I once again reminded them about the importance of other people's privacy and the risks involved in taking pictures of people's faces without their consent.

After the photographs had been taken, I met with my participants and discussed their significance. The process of codifying commenced after that (Elliot, 2018). However, not all the pictures were selected for discussion. We selected the images that spoke to specific themes or issues that they considered worth discussing and which aptly reflected their concerns. My participants were asked to choose the photographs, as I believed that in this way the photos selected would have some meaning for them. Through this process, various themes and issues emerged. The photos had a story to tell. My participants were now required to contextualise the pictures and the significance of the selected images for them (Wang & Burris, 1997). Thus began the process of data analysis (Elliot, 2018). During this process we looked at the photos selected and discussed the reasons for their selection, opening the door for further dialogue between my participants and me. It was engaging to talk with the participants, as the discussion allowed a clearer understanding of the stories that accompanied the photograph (McIntyre, 2003).

3.5.3   Collage inquiry

Collage has been defined as the method of cutting and pasting found pictures and image fragments, either natural or from print/magazines, onto flat surfaces (Butler-Kisber, 2008). Collage, according to Robertson (2002) "reflects the very way we experience the world with objects given meaning not from something within themselves, but rather through the way we perceive they stand in relationship to one another" (Robertson, 2002, p. 2). Using collage helps to push the boundaries of understanding, tapping into memories that lie hidden (Butler-Kisber, 2008). By merging collage making with written and/or oral methods of expression, the participant is engaged in vivid perceptions and memories. It also entails giving rich descriptions concerning the multiple voices of the social and the private self that continuously dialogue below the level of awareness (Van Schalkwyk, 2010).

In this study, consideration of the participants' identities and reflections on their personal and professional experiences as teachers required a journey into their childhood. They were called upon to reflect on early life experiences within their homes, families and communities; their school education and university experiences; and their journey to becoming teachers. Some experiences recede and are forgotten, and collage can bring

those memories to the fore by retrieving, discovering and making various precise facets of the unconscious, embodied knowledge known (Leitch, 2006). Additionally, using collage as a creative arts method can help teachers to understand themselves better and stimulate their teaching (Newton & Plummer, 2009).

The participants in this study taught in varying contexts and also had diverse subjective experiences that had been influenced by their past and their present circumstances and relationships. Collage assisted in making visible these "hidden" experiences, and helped with gleaning the participants' deeper hidden motives in the pictures, words, and photos they selected to compile the collage. Through interviews and collage inquiry I was able to get an insider account of my participants' experiences. The experiences that were being narrated were those incidents that the participants could remember. Collage was thereafter used to trigger memories.

The words of Creswell (2003), therefore, need to be considered — that there are manifold realities, and different ways of understanding these realities. Collage inquiry afforded me as a researcher the opportunity to work in a non-linear and insightful manner by placing image fragments that disclose unconscious connections and new understandings (Davis, 2008). In reflecting on the quintile ranking of schools and the teachers' experiences, the collage assisted in providing an opportunity for the teachers to engage in answering the critical questions in a radically different way as compared with the face-to-face interviews. The collage compiled offered the teachers a powerful means of examining and expressing the political, economic, socio-cultural and historical complexities associated with teaching within specific school quintiles (Greenwood, 2012).

I employed the following steps in compiling the collage with all my participants. My participants were provided with magazines, scissors, glue, pens and chart paper. Participants also brought in photographs that they wanted to use in their collage. I also requested that if they were going to use any personal items in the collage, they needed to make copies, as the completed collage would be kept by me as evidence. The following instruction was given to all my participants: "Make a collage that represents experiences and happenings in your life. These experiences can be both past and present". The reason for this instruction was that all my participants were shaped by their past and present experiences. The space allotted to them by their race, class and gender shaped their experiences in life and society. Their experiences as Black and Indian South Africans

were markedly different from those of White South Africans. The schools they attended as learners, and the particular school quintile that they serve in as teachers, also determined their experiences as teachers.

After the collage was completed, I allowed my participants some time to reflect on the finished collage. I then asked them to tell me the story behind the pictures, words, and photographs. During these moments my participants shared their stories, but it was also a time for an emotional recollection of the life they had lived. Most of them recounted that the process of creating the collage had helped them to remember incidents that they had forgotten about. At times the conversation became emotional as they reflected on their personal and professional lives. Each of my participant's stories also brought to the fore the joys and pain of being a teacher. Their pain at times felt like salt on an open wound. They reflected on their personal and professional lives as people who had experienced apartheid at its worst. These teachers experienced deprivation as children and some as adults. They were schooled to believe that they were second-class citizens in the land of their birth. Some had come to see their lot in life, and the fact that they were marginalised merely because of their race, class or gender, as normal. These experiences were not easy, and many were scarred by the belief that they were inferior and therefore did not deserve the best. Recalling such memories could not have been easy. It could not have been easy to understand why the schools that they taught at were significantly worse off than schools located in other well-off areas. It could not have been easy to understand why they felt overwhelmed as teachers at their particular schools in the present South African context, where equality had been promised to all after the dismantling of apartheid.

Their pain and despondency around teaching within such trying contexts was evident. They verbalised their frustration about the lack of necessary infrastructure, about having to engage in constant fundraising, and about dealing with the demands that the CAPS curriculum place on teachers, amongst other issues. These dilemmas at times drowned out their joy. Words such as "escape from this blocked up feeling" (Bianca), "when will you start saving" (Shamilla), "making hard choices" (Bernell), "mad about CAPS" (Happy) and "justice" (Solomon) spoke to their turbulent lives as teachers in the ever-changing educational landscape. Despite these moments of feeling low, the entire exercise was nonetheless a liberating experience for my participants. The collage pictures

acted as a supportive structure for them to draw out more detailed stories, and added to the data obtained from the in-depth interviews. The collages became a vehicle to deepen their understanding of their contexts and subjective experiences (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2009), and provided an opportunity to create an "internalised portrait" of the world, centred on their experience (Davis & Butler-Kisber, 1999).

3.5.4 Poetic inquiry

According to Prendergast (2004), poetic inquiry is the practice of writing research poems that assist in developing new insights. Key early proponents of poetic inquiry were L. Richardson (1993, 1994), and Glesne (1997). Poetic inquiry as an art-based approach intends to make research more alive by evoking intellectual, visual, artistic, and emotional responses (Butler-Kisber, 2002). Poetic inquiry is referred to by a range of terms in social science. However, its aim is centred on expressing human experience, whether that of oneself or others (Prendergast, Leggo & Sameshima, 2009). It can be referred to as "found poetry" (Butler-Kisber, 2002), "poetic transcription" (Glesne, 1997), "research poetry" (Cannon Poindexter, 2002), or "data poetry" (Ely, Vinz, Anzul & Downing, 1997), amongst others (Prendergast et al., 2009).

For this research, I engaged with poems created from qualitative interview data, and also from my journal entries on the sessions conducted during the PhD meeting. In creating poems from the qualitative interview data, I only used the words in consultation with the participant(s) to create a poetic rendition of a story or phenomenon as a viable way of portraying my findings (Butler-Kisber, 2002). For this reason, according to Furman (2004), poetry as a narrative tool is valuable for presenting people's lived experiences and giving voice to those subjective experiences. I decided to use found poetry, which takes the words of others and transforms them into poetic form "to re-create lived experience and evoke emotional responses" (Richardson, 1994, p. 521). As confirmed by Mazza (1999), I found such poetry to be beneficial for exploring emotions. The exploration of emotion was an essential aspect of this research, because teaching in a particular school quintile can produce pain and pleasure. For some teachers it is painful when they are called upon to teach under challenging conditions and have to contend with

the legacy of deprivation inflicted by apartheid and the unjust allocation of resources to schools.

From my perspective as a researcher, I found that poetry not only facilitated different kinds of understanding but also augmented the interpersonal dimensions of the research (Butler-Kisber & Stewart, 1999). During this process, data from the interview scripts and collage inquiry was taken and sifted. This exercise was undertaken in conjunction with my participants, with whom the poems were co-created. This engagement was a rewarding exercise because it allowed me to once more reconnect with my data and my participant (Ely et al., 1997). The participant-researcher relationship in this exercise endorsed reciprocity. It allowed for a balance of power and encouraged researcher reflexivity (Sparkes, Nilges, Swan & Downing, 2003). Creative juices were allowed free rein as my participant and I played around with words, word sequences and line breaks to get to the soul of what was being communicated about the teachers' experiences within particular school quintiles. The process allowed the world to be seen and heard in a new dimension (Richardson, 1993).

The poems, after that, became a powerful form of analysis, as they offered a different lens to view the same scenery and allowed for important stories to materialise. It was a "diamond-cutting activity of carving away all but the phrases and stanzas that seemed most evocative in emotion and clarity" (Cannon Poindexter, 2002, p. 709). According to Butler-Kisber (2002, p. 235), "whether found poetry is used as a public form of representation or as an analytic tool within the inquiry process, it assists to bring the researcher closer to the data in different and sometimes unusual ways that can yield new and vital insights".

3.6   ANALYSIS OF FIELD TEXTS ON TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

The method of analysing field texts in this research was undertaken at two levels. The initial level was narrative analysis, and the subsequent level was analysis of narratives. Narrative analysis is a process of organising events and happenings using various kinds of plots. Analysis of narratives, in contrast, uses paradigmatic processes to analyse field

texts produced through narrative recounts of events (Polkinghorne, 2002). This analysis results in descriptions of themes that can be replicated across the stories (Mara, 2009).

3.6.1 Narrative analysis of teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

According to Earthy and Cronin (2008), narrative analysis can be defined as a method of attending to interview data that is involved with understanding how and why people dialogue about their lives in story form. This exercise inevitably includes issues of identity and the interaction between the narrator and audience(s) (Earthy & Cronin, 2008). Engaging in narrative analysis was the first level of analysis, and involved a variety of techniques for interpreting the narratives generated in the research (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). It is where the field text events of my participants were organised into a story format. The intention of this exercise was to re-story the stories of the participants (Clandinin, 2013). It looks at how the story is structured and organised, how it is developed, and it begins and ends (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

My role as a researcher was to now make sense of the data that had been generated in the field. The stories that the teachers had recounted expressed their subjective experiences within their homes, families and communities. The stories included their experiences within their particular school quintiles, the challenges that they faced, and also how those challenges were negotiated. As the sculptor of this research, I looked at the sculpture of *The Jadeite Cabbage* to help me to understand the task that I was about to undertake. The sculpture of the cabbage provided a visual tool of the different facets that make up the life of the teacher. The white part of the cabbage depicted the personal life of the teacher. The green depicted the professional life of the teacher. The base represented the school quintile. However, while the sculpture was neatly compartmentalised to show the different parts that made up the whole, how the story was recounted was not. How the teachers recalled their life experiences was related to me as they remembered it at that time. It was now my duty to take the data from the interviews, collage inquiry, photovoice and poetic inquiry, and organise it into a story with a beginning, middle and end, taking into consideration all the different facets and experiences of my participants (Polkinghorne, 2002).

Narrative analysis was, therefore, undertaken in three phases (Polkinghorne, 2002). Firstly, the events of the field texts were organised in a chronological order. An example is shown in Figure 3.1, which shows the chronological organisation of the transcribed field text from Solomon's story.

Figure 3.1 Transcribed field text of Solomon's story organised chronologically

In the second phase, plots were developed to structure the stories using mind maps. In this study, I used mind mapping as a tool to construct the narratives of the teachers. The mind map was a visual tool used to capture the different stages of the participants' lives, reflecting both past and to the present time as outlined in their stories. An example is

provided in Figure 3.2, which shows the development of plots using mind maps to structure the story in Shamilla's narrative.
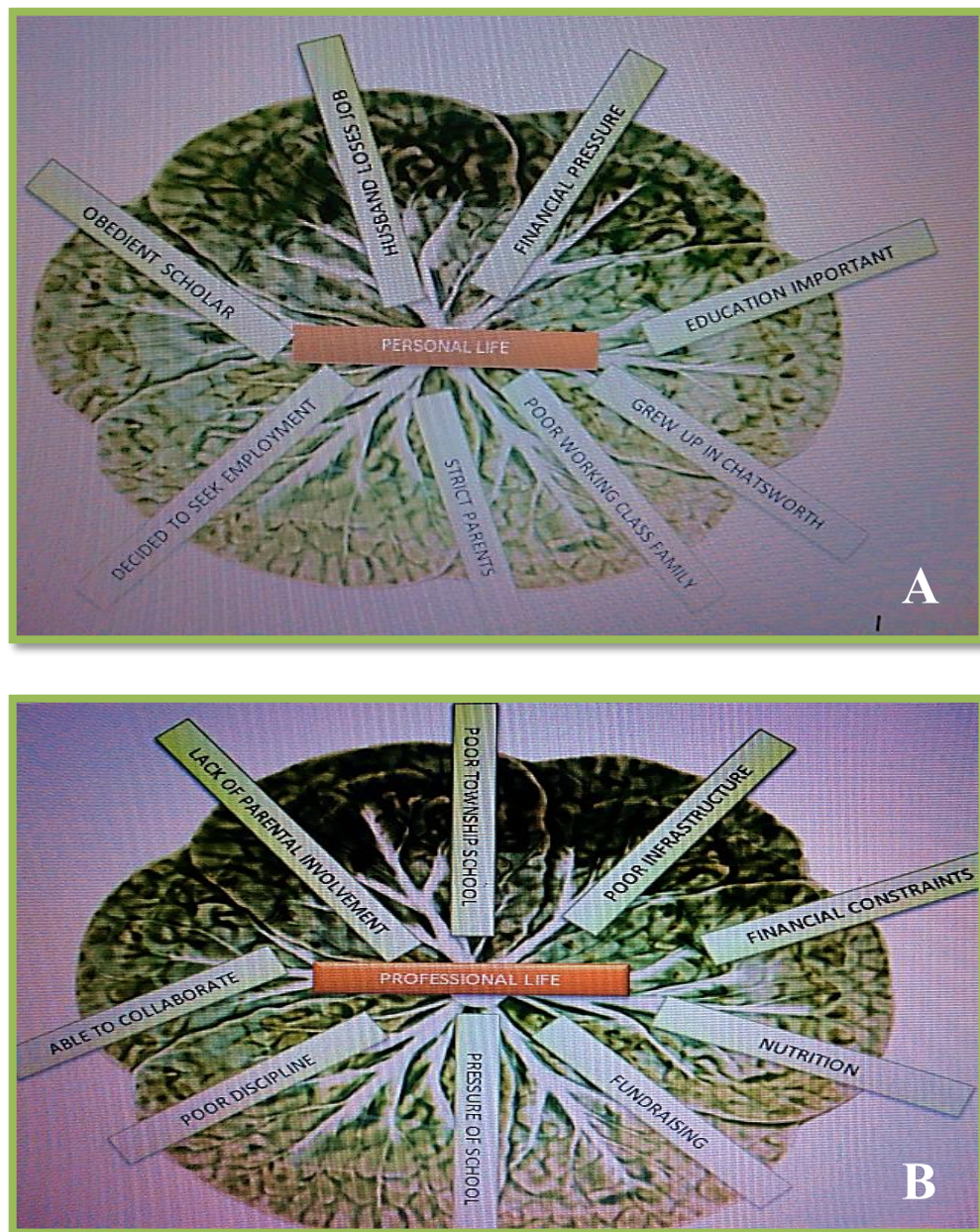
Figure 3.2 Developing plots using mind maps to structure the story in Shamilla's narrative

Themes that spoke to particular periods and events of the participants' lives were then developed from the transcribed field texts, as shown in Figure 3.3.

	Bianca	Shamilla	Bernell	Happy	Solomon
Biographical	experienced teacher came from middle class family Hindu background grew up in semi urban area difference in educational experiences	Experienced teacher married working class background Hindu lived in township looking for security	experienced novice teacher Indian female Christian background middle class background lived in a township mixed school experiences (poor township school and affluent high school	experienced teacher rural background poor family polygamous language difference go getter	experienced teacher rural life poor family but supportive suffered a disability valued education supports polygamy
Contextual	beautiful well maintained school limited fundraising large numbers in class poor discipline poor pupils/community lack of parental involvement pupils lack of interest in school work reduced school fees social responsibilities nutrition programme-self funded increase in drug abuse	poorly maintained /poor school/ infrastructure depilated high fundraising large class sizes poor discipline poor pupils/ community lack of parental/community involvement lack of interest in school low school fees social responsibilities/environmental nutrition programme-self funded poverty/unemployment drugs/HIV/pregnancy/TB poverty/unemployment drugs/HIV/pregnancy/TB single parents	new school funded by department no fundraising brand new facilities large class sizes pupils disciplined towards black teachers but disrespectful towards the Indian poor pupils/ community nutrition –dept funded lacks some facilities like toilet and staffroom community steals from the school school seems neglected no cleaners- pupils clean	poor infrastructure at first now school renovated no fundraising average class sizes rural context poor school/pupils/ poverty within community lack of parental involvement nutrition programme- dept funded community steals from school	small school/old depilated no fundraising small class sizes/m graded classroom poor pupils/comm lack of interest fr pupils social problems/ pregnancy no facilities/no nutrition progr dept funded

Figure 3.3 Defining and naming themes for the five teachers

After completing this process for all five participants, I then attempted the "last" phase, which involved integrating the events to construct coherent explanations or narratives for each of the five participants.

3.6.2 Analysis of narratives of teachers' personal-professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiling

The data that was generated in the field encompassed the diverse experiences of the participants. This diversity presented a challenge during the analysis phase of this research. To address this challenge, I selected a number of theories that offered a lens through which the data could be analysed. For research question one, I leaned on Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory (1979). For research questions two and three, I used Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory. For research question three, I also employed Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space framework and Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model. These theories were discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

3.7 COLLAGE PORTRAITURE AS A METHOD OF ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

The analysis of narratives or paradigmatic analysis was used as a second level of analysis. During this phase, I examined the re-storied narratives, which were the first level of analysis. As an analytical tool to respond to critical question two (*What personal beliefs and meanings inform the teachers' professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles?*), I decided to create a collage portrait of each participant's narrative. This process assisted in gaining a holistic view of the participants' narratives and meanings. I decided that creating a collage portrait would help me to understand better, analyse, and also represent the stories of my participants.

Portraiture is a method of documentation, analysis, and narrative development that uses a variety of mediums (Phillips & Bellinger, 2011 as cited in Gerstenblatt, 2013, p. 295), including photography (Phillips & Bellinger, 2011), poetry (Witkin, 2007) and visual art (Butler-Kisber, 2008). As a researcher using art-based methods, I not only became the observer of my participants' collage-making process, but also took on the role of the artist when I decided to create my collage portrait of each participant's lived experience as a form of analysis (Gerstenblatt, 2013). Although I had some experience with creating a collage portrait that depicted my personal feelings and experiences, my role now as the researcher was to create collage portraits that would attempt to represent the lives of my participants. Undertaking this exercise required me to rely on my creative awareness and insight, and my understanding of collage compilation, to create my interpretation of my participants' lived experiences as gleaned from the stories they told (Gerstenblatt, 2013).

To achieve this understanding, I once again listened to the interview recordings. I also re-read the transcribed notes for themes and visual clues that spoke to the participants' experiences. I focused on words, stories and ideas that the participants had stressed during their interviews and used these to construct the collage. I also looked at other visual materials provided by the participants, such as photographs (Gerstenblatt, 2013). These materials then became a source of data generation and a form of analysis (Higgs, 2008). In this way, I managed to establish a comprehensive overview of each of my participants' narratives and the meanings they carried, and this became my response to my participants' stories as recounted (Gerstenblatt, 2013). The process of creating collage portraits

therefore provided "another layer of vision"; the collage portraits conveyed stories by weaving together words and images, and allowed me as the researcher to depict the stories of my participants "in a new form" (Gerstenblatt, 2013, p. 304). Once the first collage had been created, I replicated the process to develop the rest. In all, I created five collage portraits to respond to the second critical question.

Once the collage portraits were completed, I began to see themes that were common to all five participants. I then took the five collage portraits and re-constructed them according to the themes that had emerged. I then presented the collages I had compiled at our cohort meeting (shown in Figure 3.4), where I offered my interpretation of the collage. This exchange was a liberating session, as the questions asked at the cohort meeting allowed me to think more deeply about the pictures I had chosen to include for the different participants. This was in accordance with Gerstenblatt's (2013, p. 296) observation that "collage portraiture has the potential to support and enliven the analysis of otherwise dry and detached interview data, thus producing new knowledge and interpretation". I need to clarify that the collage portraits that I created were my interpretation and understanding of my participants' narratives.

Figure 3.4 Collage presentation at a cohort meeting at UKZN Edgewood campus

Figure 3.5 below is an example of the collage portrait that I compiled for Bernell.

Figure 3.5 My interpretation of Bernell's narrative constructed as a collage portrait

3.8 VIGNETTES AS A METHOD OF ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILES

For the analysis I also decided to employ vignettes as a way of analysing the information contained in the field texts. The vignettes took the form of short depictions of concrete stories as related by my participants (Azman & Mahadhir, 2020). The intention of using the vignettes was in order to understand the personal and professional experiences of my participants. They provided a useful mechanism for discussing and analysing important issues in both the personal and professional lives of the teacher participants, as narrated by them. Employing vignettes as a tool for analysis assisted me in reducing the field texts into small, manageable summaries that emphasised the unique features of each participant's personal-professional experiences. The meanings of the teacher-participants are presented individually and incorporate both the personal and professional aspects of their subjective selves. These vignettes revealed values, perceptions, impressions,

situations, and people and their behaviour that had had an impact on the lives of the participants (Azman & Mahadhir, 2020).

3.9 VISUAL PORTRAITS AS A METHOD OF ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DILEMMATIC EXPERIENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

In Chapter Six, section C, I describe how I constructed visual portraits for each teacher that highlighted the dilemmatic experience within their school quintile. Creating the visual portraits of teacher allowed for an alternate way of knowing, and allowed for meanings embedded in their experience to be brought to light. Creating these six visual portraits was an important analytical tool for interpretation and representation, and was also a process of inquiry and a process of constructing meaningful descriptions of each teacher. It allowed me as the researcher to explore and analyse the different forces at play within the respective school quintiles, and how the teachers were able to negotiate those forces (Jongeward, 1997). Each portrait was accompanied by a narrative that highlighted and expanded upon key experiences encountered by the teacher (MacDonald, 2014). In this way, visual and verbal representations overlapped, offering different perspectives and a more comprehensive and inclusive picture. I was able to make connections and create relationships amongst the diverse elements and experiences, and in this way create a better understanding of each teacher within the context of their school quintiling. These visual portraits encapsulated the teachers' unique experiences of working within a particular school quintile. Some of the images expressed their emotions, such as sadness, joy, anger, etc.

3.10 RIGOUR AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

As a narrative researcher, I have to bear in mind that the stories that the participants tell may be true or partly true. All the research methods that I employed will yield the subjective experiences and narrative recount of what the participants wish to divulge. As such, it is not easy to ascertain which stories are partially correct. It is for this reason that Lincoln and Guba (1985) addressed four measures for assessing rigour and

trustworthiness that researchers are required to take heed of, irrespective of their research paradigm: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility is described as the trust that can be placed in the veracity of the research findings (Macnee & McCabe, 2008). Credibility is the set of standards that need to demonstrate that the research has been undertaken ethically and with proficiency (Rallis & Rossman, 2009). To ensure credibility, I used member checks, an exercise that entailed my participants verifying the data that had been collected. Here themes were identified and discussed with each participant. This exercise was to ensure that all the information that had been presented was accurate. Raw data that had been collected was verified by submitting it to the participants for correction. This process was conducted at the end of the interview process after all the data had been collected. This was important, as my interpretation had to be in sync with what my participants intended to say. I also attempted to remove researcher bias by continually reflecting on the research process. In implementing the process, I ensured that my interpretation of the data was in keeping with my participants and also that the data was reflected as intended (Merriam, 1998).

3.10.2 Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which the results of a qualitative study can be transferred to another setting or context with other research participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). However, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability takes into consideration the aspect of applicability. As a researcher, I provided thick descriptions of the participants and the research process. Not only did I describe their experiences and behaviour, but I also provided a rich account of the descriptive data, which included the context within which the teachers lived and worked. I offered an account of their experiences within their families and their family background, their school education and university experiences, their experiences within the different school quintiles, and so on. In this way, their behaviour and experiences could become meaningful to the reader. I also outlined in detail the research methods that had been used to generate data. In this qualitative study, there was no intention to generalise, because according to Shenton

(2004), people's experiences take place in diverse contexts. The responsibility is on the reader to decide whether the findings of this study are transferable to their research settings. The reader will have to make that judgement call (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

3.10.3 Dependability

Dependability, according to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010), refers to the possibility of tracking the procedures and methods undertaken by a researcher to generate field texts. A dependable study clearly describes all the research steps taken — from the inception of the research study, to the progress made along the way, to the final reporting of the findings (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Detailed reporting, according to Shenton (2004), offers future researchers the possibility of replicating the study, if not necessarily to obtain similar results.

To ensure dependability in my research, I engaged in peer examination of my research study (Bitsch, 2005). Peer examination was achieved during our research cohort meetings, where I discussed my research process with other doctoral students who had also engaged with qualitative research themselves. This exchange allowed for openness and honesty about my entire research process, and for areas of weakness to be revealed and gaps to be filled (Bitsch, 2005).

3.10.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is "concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but are clearly derived from the data" (Tobin & Begley, 2004, p. 392). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), confirmability of a qualitative inquiry can be achieved through triangulation. The concept of triangulation is based on the notion of fixed points or objects that can be triangulated (Nieuwenhuis, 2010), and employing more than one research method within a single study is referred to as triangulation (Stake, 2005). Triangulation in this research was achieved using multiple data-generation methods, and by including my participants as co-researchers.

However, this is a qualitative study, and the aim was to probe for deeper comprehension and insight into a phenomenon, and not to investigate causal relationships. Richardson (2000) therefore proposes the term "crystallisation", which refers to the practice of authenticating results by the use of several methods of data generation and analysis. One way to ensure trustworthiness is to employ multiple methods of data generation. For this study, I generated data using unstructured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews, photovoice, collage inquiry and poetic inquiry. Through multiple data collection methods, this research was able to corroborate (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and elaborate on data from these various sources (Rossman & Wilson, 1994).

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

I have to admit as a researcher that when I commenced my data collection an incident transpired with one of my participants that I was not proud of. When I started my research I allowed my personal beliefs and perceptions to cloud my judgement. I recall an incident where Solomon, my male participant, was telling me about his life. He told me that he had two residences and had two wives. He had taken a second wife because his first wife had only had daughters and he needed a son; his second wife had just given birth to a son. What troubled me was that in my mind I knew I needed to be objective as a researcher, but when this information was presented I became condemnatory. I was a mother to three daughters. It angered me that someone would feel a woman had to produce a son, and that if she did not she could be replaced. Instead of trying to understand Solomon's reasons, I silently chastised him in my mind for his actions. Instead of putting on the mantel of objective researcher, in this incident I foregrounded my identity as a woman. I allowed my personal perceptions and belief system to cloud my judgement. I imposed my beliefs as a Christian, Indian female without consideration for the beliefs and cultural practices of my participant. It was only after spending time with Solomon and getting to know him that I realised why he felt he needed a son. I then began to understand that Solomon's actions and his story were located within the wider context of his culture. Having a son to carry the father's surname is considered important in many African communities. He needed a son because a father's surname is important for ancestral

protection and in order to have the right person(s) preside over one's traditional rites (Nduna, 2014, p. 33). This incident spurred me on to become more open minded and tolerant of the cultural practices and beliefs of others. Being a narrative researcher forced me to acknowledge that I would be closely linked to my participants, and that it was my responsibility to ensure that I was open to my participants' stories without being judgemental.

I had to remember that I was also a teacher and had experienced some of the challenges outlined by the participants. I had to also pay attention to the aspect of relational ethics, which Clandinin and Connelly (2000) identify as an integral part of narrative inquiry. Our actions as researchers are vital in our relationships with our participants. Narrative inquiry speaks of narrative inquiry as a relational methodology, which recognises that we as inquirers are also under study in a narrative inquiry. While we endeavour to understand our participants, we also need to turn the gaze on ourselves to understand who we are becoming through our study. We take a reflective gaze as we recall our experiences alongside those of our participants. As researchers we are tasked not only with describing situations but also with being in an active relationship with our participants. As the participants recall their life stories, we also recall our own subjective experiences in relation to the experiences of our participants (Clandinin, 2013).

Thus, because this study involved researching teachers' personal and professional lives, Cavan's (1977) description of ethics governed the research process — that it is "a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others and that while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better" (1977, p. 810). As qualitative researchers, we often are required to have a close working relationship with our participants. In this process of understanding our participants' world, we as researchers can become part of that world. As a narrative inquirer, I understood that I would "intrude" into the lives and spaces of my participants. It was therefore imperative that I showed respect at all times in all my interactions with my participants (Doernberg & Wendler, 2016). In the process of entering the world of "others", I needed to take cognisance of my ethical responsibilities to my participants. As an ethical researcher, I also needed to exercise vigilance and reflect on all aspects of the research process to ensure that they were based on codes of ethics and moral principles (Rallis & Rossman, 2009). As such, every measure was taken to make sure that all concerns concerning voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentially and anonymity were adhered to (Cohen et al., 2008).

In addition, I obtained the necessarily formal permission to conduct research from the DoE and from the school principals as gatekeepers of their institutions. I also provided consent forms to all the teachers who participated in this research. I endeavoured to ensure that the principle of "non-maleficence" (no harm to the participant) was foremost. No teacher was pressured to participate in this study, and participation was completely voluntary (Croker, 2009). Information about the nature and purpose of the study was fully and openly disclosed to the participants. Furthermore, pseudonyms were used for all teachers to ensure their confidentiality (Cohen et al., 2011).

3.12   CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have unpacked the methodology and research design that mapped out how I explored teachers' personal and professional experiences in the context of different school quintiles. I also offered my reasons for my paradigmatic positioning, and my ontological and epistemological world views. Details of my methodology were also explained and how the narrative inquiry approach facilitated an understanding of the lived experiences of my five participants and assisted in the different layers of analysis. The research methods I employed served as a vehicle to produce the data needed to answer my three critical research questions. I described the selection of my participants and the methods of data analysis used: analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. This chapter highlighted the creative methods that were employed during narrative analysis, which involved drawing on the metaphor of the Jadeite cabbage and utilising mind maps. It also unpacked the creative method of employing collage portraiture and the use of vignettes and visual maps as creative tools during the analysis of narratives. These creative methods allowed for deeper insight by moving beyond rational-cognitive ways of knowing and providing new ways of understanding people's real lived experiences and views (Van der Vaart et al., 2018). Finally, attention was also paid to the rigour and trustworthiness of this research, and to the question of research ethics.

CHAPTER 4

CARVING THE FIRST LAYER OF MY MASTERPIECE AROUND TEACHERS' STORIES OF THEIR PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

"What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches."
Karl Menninger

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter unpacked the methodology and research design of the study. The focus of the chapter was on the qualitative research design, the interpretivist approach the methods of narrative inquiry employed to understand the lived experiences of my five participants. I also presented the methods that were employed to generate the data needed to answer my three critical questions: in-depth life story interviews, photovoice, collage inquiry and poetic inquiry. I explained the two processes of data analysis: narrative analysis, which involved taking the field text and organising it using emplotment to re-story the participants' narratives; and the analysis of narratives, where themes that are common across the stories were established (Polkinghorne, 1995).

This chapter presents the five re-storied narratives of my participants, which form the first level of analysis, and which answer the first research question: *What are the personal-professional stories of teachers teaching in the dilemmatic context of different school quintiles?* Understanding the stories that teachers tell of themselves requires an understanding of who they are as people. Understanding who the teachers are, requires an understanding of their past and present lives — their experiences from childhood to adulthood and also the different agents of socialisation that have been instrumental in their identity formation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). To assist with this task, I once more draw on the metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage*.

Figure 4.1 The cabbage head representing the personal-professional identity of the teacher

I again assume the role of the master carver of this research, where I now take the raw jade — the raw data generated in the field from the interviews, collage inquiry, photovoice and poetic inquiry — and start planning what the sculpture will look like. I decided that the white of the jade would represent the personal life of the teacher while the green would represent the professional life. My task as the researcher and carver is to now assemble the different components of the field texts that spoke to the teachers' personal and professional lives, and blend them into a storyline that could be read by others. Hence, my carving commences by assembling the data into a single but multi-layered story for each participant, where the personal and professional lives of the teacher

share a synergetic relationship, seep into each other, and inform each other. This chapter will also lay bare the challenges and possibilities that the teachers have encountered on this journey called life. My masterpiece will reflect not only the beauty of a life lived but also its flaws and imperfections, which represent the dilemmas and hardships my participants have endured. However, the teachers' stories are also those of success. Their stories revealed their tenacity, grit, proactivity and resilience, amongst their other qualities that position them as overcomers. It was these qualities, the cracks and ripples in their lives, their personal and professional challenges and possibilities, that allowed them to take up their positions as teachers within the context of different school quintiles.

The chapter is organised in order of the school quintiles of the participants. I commence with the story of Solomon, a teacher at a Q1 school. I then proceed to the second portrait, of Happy, a teacher at a Q2 rural school. I then provide the third portrait, which is of Bernell, a teacher at a Q3 school. The penultimate portrait is of Shamilla, a teacher at a Q4 school. I then conclude with the narrative of Bianca, who is a teacher at a Q5 school. This chapter focuses on the stories that the participants tell of themselves. The process of telling their stories offers a glimpse of who these participants are. Understanding who the participants are, offers us a window into their values and principles, their priorities and interests, their relationships and acquaintances, their potential and their weaknesses, and their dreams and desires. All of these determine the choices they make in life and give us insight into how they align themselves to the social world within which they live.

4.2   PORTRAIT ONE: SOLOMON, THE STRONG-CARING TEACHER

Solomon Nkosi Dube is a 43-year-old male teaching at a Q1 school in a rural area. He is presently the acting principal at the school. Solomon comes across as a resilient male who has confronted his difficulties head-on and who has emerged a winner.

Figure 4.2 Solomon's collage portrait

My early life as a poor crippled boy

My name is Nkosi Solomon Dube. However, most people call me Solomon. I am the youngest child of my parents. I come from a very big family from a rural area in Tongaat on the North Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. I was born in Indwedwe and schooled here. I had ten siblings. There are two girls and eight boys.

I would regard my family as being poor. My father was not working. Living in a rural area, I was not exposed to beautiful houses and cars. I remember that from Class One to Standard One I went to school without shoes. We did, however, have a herd of cattle. As children, we had to take the cows to the fields. We had to go to the river and fetch water in the mornings and afternoons. As boys, this was our work. My sisters were expected to do the cooking. We accepted this. It's how things are done around here.

My father, who was a pastor in the area, was a very humble person. I am just like him. My dad was my inspiration. He inspired me to study and achieve. So the values I learned from my father are the values I live by now. My love for education was instilled in me by my father. He told us that we cannot live a better life without education. This is what drove me. I took that advice. I knew for me to move forward I had to study.

However, my father was also very strict. I was scared of telling him any of my problems. We were not allowed to speak to my father. He was not approachable and never liked to socialise with us. If we had a problem, we went to my mother. My mother knew how to show love. I also learned the importance of fairness and justice from my mother.

I also experienced pain and heartache in my childhood. As a child, I was crippled. I had a clubfoot. I loved sport, but I could not play because of my disability. I experienced a lot of discrimination as a result of this. Children used to tease me because of my limp. This made me unhappy, and I used to cry. My mother used to tell me that I was only disabled in my legs but I was not mentally disabled. So I could hit the children with intelligence. This was a motivating factor and made me want to learn more and achieve more than the other children.

Our rural schools were not good but I went to school every day

I started my primary school education in the area. I remember the schools were not very good. However, we were expected to go to school every day. I did not know English, as we were taught in isiZulu. My teachers used to say if we wanted to learn English, we must listen to the radio and read the newspapers. From a very early age, I started reading. My father was my role model. My father used to buy the paper. When he was finished reading, I used to take it and read it. I wanted to learn so that I did not have to be poor when I grew up. However, apart from my parents, I also had another role model. At our primary school there were no male teachers. So in Standard Five, I was writing my exams, and a male teacher from another school came to our school to invigilate the exams. So I saw this male teacher wearing a tie and a nice coat. I said to myself, "One day I want to become a teacher. I want to be like this man".

I wanted to do teaching, but I did not have the funding

After matric, I wanted to do teaching, but I did not have the funding. I did not know there was a bursary for students who wanted to do teaching. I went and did a course in security. I completed it but did not get a job. So I ended up going to Shoprite and working as a trolley porter. Then they employed me as a packer. I worked as a packer for 10 years,

working three days a week. In 2006 I registered at UNISA to do teaching. By now I was 32 years old. But I did not care. I knew my vision. I knew what I wanted to achieve.

During this time, I also had my family. I have two wives. My first wife had two girls. But when I look at myself I said I do not have a son to carry my name. So I decided to try something else to try and get a son. My second wife has a son. However, I did not pay the entire *lobola* as yet. So I am planning to pay for my second wife because she gave me a son that my first wife did not give me. It was very important for me to have a son. My father had eight sons. So it was very important for someone to carry the family name after me. A male is very important to carry the name.

I teach at a poor rural school. We are using a container as an office.

I teach at a poor rural school. We have multi-grade classrooms with learners from Grade R to Grade Seven. We teach and assess as required. However, whether you are at a rural or urban school, the curriculum is the same. But how can we compete with the rest when our infrastructure is not the same?

Figure 4.3 The rural school where Solomon is a teacher

We don't have an admin block. The soccer field is just sand with bumps, potholes and stones. The school is tiny with two buildings only. We don't have water, but we have electricity at times. We are using a container as an office. We don't have facilities. When our school has no electricity, this makes teaching hard, and we cannot make worksheets

for the learners. I then go to the neighbouring schools and ask for help in making worksheets for the learners. I also try to exchange learning materials and worksheets with the neighbouring schools and also use good ones from them. At times I had to pay from my own pocket for the worksheets because the other school is not rich also. We have to do this especially when we have tests that need to be given. As a child, I never let politics become part of my life; however, teaching at a rural school which does not even have a proper soccer ground now makes me think. When we see other schools with so many facilities, I question the government and their sense of justice and fairness. I teach in a poor community. The community cannot help the school with finances. Most of the people in the community have menial jobs. Some parents are also unemployed as a result of some of the companies closing down.

I am a teacher and substitute father

The neighbourhood surrounding the school is poor, so we have a feeding scheme. We cook every day at school for the learners. My learners need to know that as teachers, we are here for them. Most learners' parents work in the city and only come home at month-end. So as a teacher, the idea of family is encouraged as we have learners, and we need to be mothers and fathers to the learners. As a father, I am different from the way my father was towards his children. My father loved us, but he also kept us at arm's length. Learners can come to me. I know how to keep their secrets. I am their father at school.

At school, we try our best with the learners. These are poor children from poor homes. I would hate to see the children end up without a future also. I don't want the learners at school to go through life not knowing that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow if you try hard enough. I have high hopes for them. I have to make them see the potential they have. Although conditions are adverse at rural schools, I still make sure teaching goes on. I try to bring in the newspaper from home every day so that learners can be updated on current news. We read about the success stories of other schools in the community. We read newspaper articles that show rural learners and schools that have achieved a 100% pass rate in the matric exams. I also invite parents from the area who engage in entrepreneurship to motivate our learners through assembly talks. We have to learn to achieve despite the lack.

Teachers collaborate and learn from each other

At school teachers collaborate and learn from each other. Teachers also attend workshops. Teachers know what is expected of them. They have their job description, and they carry it out. So we work together. However, I cannot say that everything is smooth all the time. We have our differences, but we don't let this interfere with our work at school. However, as a manager I want to be trustworthy, like a father who a child can talk to. I am approachable, and the teachers can come and talk to me.

I conclude this story of my life with a poem. This poem captures my life as a rural boy. It highlights the hardship of rurality, like not having the luxury of a beautiful mansion. However, I was able to overcome the limitations that I experienced and excelled academically to position myself as a teacher with expert abilities.

From cripple to whole

Degree, expert ability
Keeping secrets
Pretty talented
Justice, the lives of one

Keeping secrets
Wow!
Justice, the lives of one
Bold, beautiful mansion

Wow!
Pretty talented
Bold, beautiful mansion
Degree, expert ability.

4.3 PORTRAIT TWO: HAPPY, THE RESILIENT-MOTHERLY TEACHER

Happy tells this story you are about to read. She is a Black woman teaching at a Q2, rural school in the Umbumbulu district. She is married. Family is important to her. She loves being a mother to her two sons and has instilled in them the importance of family, sharing and respect. Happy comes across as a spirited go-getter, who confronted her difficulties throughout her life and proved to be an overcomer and a good example to the people around her. She is a Level 1 teacher. At the time of the interview, she was still employed at the rural school.

Figure 4.4 Happy's collage portrait

My early life in a traditional polygamous family

My name is Mpume Happy Mazibuko. Everyone calls me Happy. I grew up in a rural area in Ixopo. My family have lived in the rural area all their lives. We did not have things like clean water, electricity and sanitation. Under apartheid, these things were not provided for us as rural blacks. Not much has changed. However, our village has a strong attachment to the ideals, customs and principles passed down from generation to

generation. We lived under a chief, and my father was the inDuna in the area. As the inDuna, he was the advisor and spokesperson, and acted as a link between the people and the chief.

I come from a family where polygamy was practised. Growing up was very difficult. It was not easy for my dad to raise 21 children. Therefore, I like the saying, "you may not be able to control a situation but you can control how you handle it". My family was poor. My father and mother worked on a farm where they made cheese. When my father got paid then maybe we would eat meat or beans. However, the factory closed down, and life became harder. Despite the hardships that rural life presented, I am thankful for the strong support from my parents. Both my parents were illiterate but had a big influence on my life. My father inspired me to learn. He always said, "Education is the key to a successful career and a rewarding future." I also learnt a lot from my mum. My mother was very hard working.

I grew up in a traditional rural area. I did all the cultural things that the other people used to do also. I am a very traditional person. After getting my chores done, I had to cook for the whole family. Our parents taught us how to make the fire, cook and then dish out for them. These experiences shaped my identity as a rural woman. As a girl growing up in this community and family, I was also expected to herd cattle. My father had many cattle and watching them became the job of the girls. We had many brothers, but they would never take the buckets and fetch the water, let alone watch the cattle. My brothers were bigger, and were looking for jobs in the mines because there were very few jobs in the rural areas for the men. The mines needed labour and many men from the rural areas took up these jobs. This tore families apart and resulted in many households being headed by women, as most men only visited once or twice a year.

Our rural schools were not good but still excelled

Primary school was a distance from where we lived, and so we had to walk 7km to school, and 7km back. We could not afford transport to travel to better schools elsewhere as the company my parents worked at closed down. Our rural schools were not good. We had no chairs and tables. We did not have a proper blackboard or any other facilities. We did not have things like electricity, running water, sports fields or libraries. However, I was a

very good learner and used to compete. I received first position in Standard 4 and 5. At the high school I was also performing well. The teachers used to rely on me. I remember Mr Ndlovu. He started saying, 'When I am not in class you are the teacher. Take my books and start asking questions".

However, in Standard Six, I had to go and rent with my sister as there was no high school in the area. So at the age of fifteen, I met a boy and fell pregnant. This was a very big setback for me. I could not finish my schooling. That year I had to leave school and stay at home. I gave birth to my son and had to raise my son. I messed up so now I must be the one to take charge of my life. However, I was lucky. My teachers wrote a letter to my parents. They said I had so much potential and I must be given permission to return to school as soon as I had delivered the baby. Luckily in the middle of the following year, I went back to school and completed Standard Seven. I tried to do even better at school. At school, we used to have debates. I took part in debates and won. Thereafter, I started my own debating society at school. Also, my performance was based on hard work, commitment and dedication. I eventually completed my Standard Ten with a matric exemption. I was amongst the best learners, and I was known in the area and the community. When I got my exemption, my family, the chief and the community were excited. Everyone came home to visit and I felt like a queen. However, not many learners completed matric. They could not understand the instructions in English and performed badly. We were taught only in isiZulu, but when the exam papers came, they were in English.

The induna's daughter is going to university

I did well in school, and my desire was to go to university.

> **Dad:** "I am proud of you, Happy. Everyone is saying the induna's daughter got an exemption."
>
> **Happy:** "Baba, I want to go to university. You know I am good. I am a competitor. I can do this."

> **Dad**: "Happy, you know the factory closed down. I don't have the money you need for varsity. I did promise you I would slaughter a cow if you pass matric. I will keep my promise."
>
> **Happy**: "Please, baba, make a plan, baba"
>
> **Dad:** "Ok. I will not slaughter a cow. I will give you three cows. You sell them at the dip and go fulfil your dreams."

I used to take the cows every day to the dip. However, initially, nobody could afford to buy the cows and by the time the cows did get sold it was a little late. Sadly, by the time I got to the University of Durban-Westville (UDW) my first choice, which was teaching, was full, so I took my second choice, which was a B.Admin. I still completed my B.Admin in 1999. However, from 2000 to 2001, I had no work but volunteered as a clerk at a school. During this time, I fell pregnant with my second son. While at the hospital giving birth, I saw an advert for trainee nurses. I applied and started working as a nurse from 2005 to 2007. I knew for me to win in this game of life and to provide for my child, I had to make the first move. I had to be an example for my child. However, even as a nurse, I found myself most of the time teaching the other nurses. Most of my colleagues commented that I am not a nurse, I am a teacher. So, in 2007 I told myself that I am born to be a teacher. I resigned as a nurse. I went to Edgewood and did my Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and graduated as a teacher. I was then sent to Endongeni. I was at that school until 2015.

I am a rural girl, but when I came to the school I cried

Sadly, in 2016, I was declared in excess and sent to a Q2 rural school in the Umbumbulu district. This is a no-fee school. Our school community is not rich, and poverty is rampant. We also have families that are headed by children because parents are working away from home, or have died. We therefore have a feeding scheme to cater for them. I am a rural girl, but when I came to this school, I cried.

We have sand roads. We have a truck that delivers water at the school. I make sure that I am there to receive the truck and ensure the JoJo tanks are filled. Not all the teachers will

come, but I make sure I am there. If we don't, then the kids and teachers won't have water and will suffer. Learners are also taught the importance of preserving the water that we have, and also how to harvest the water from our school roofs by making sure that the gutters are free of leaves and weeds. This can then be applied to their homes as well because the area does not have service delivery.

Figure 4.5 The surroundings of the rural school where Happy is a teacher

The school was really bad and was struggling when I arrived. Luckily now the school is being renovated and repaired by the Department of Public Works and is being funded by the government. The old desks have been taken away for repairs. The admin block and reception area are now so beautiful. Everything is new. There are also new toilets for the staff, but we cannot use them because they are flush toilets and our school still does not have running water. Sadly, despite the renovations, we find that both the community and learners do not care much for the school. If there are no burglar guards, the community will steal everything. The community destroy classrooms when they want something. They came in and stole asbestos and electricity cables.

Figure 4.6 The revamped school where Happy is a teacher

Inspiring learners to look beyond their conditions and circumstances

We have about 40 learners per class. As a teacher, I am angry about CAPS. The curriculum does not allow you to explore the different capability groups of learners. With CAPS, everything is determined for you. They decide your pace without considering the different levels in the classroom. Some learners can't even read or write, but we are expected to move on. With big numbers, there is no time to do revision. So there is no fairness in the system. However, despite the difficulties that are experienced as a result of the syllabus and also teaching at the rural school, I still have to show interest in the learners. Our parents don't take an interest in their children. So I have to be a mother to

some of these children. Now that I work in this rural school, I am able to inspire the learners to look beyond their conditions and circumstances, by showing an interest in them and motivating them. I encourage them to see education as a means for a better life. I encourage them to do their schoolwork and assist them even during my break because I know once they go home they have other household duties to perform. I love my learners. I am friendly and approachable. As a teacher, I am a life coach. I give moral support. We work with children with different problems. I also listen to their concerns. My aim is to bring change in the lives of the children through education. I am passionate about this job. I am also a caring person. I worked as a nurse. My training as a nurse has helped me a lot to diagnose some problems that the learners may be facing. I then refer them to the clinic or hospital for treatment. I also used to invite the nurses from Prince Mshiyeni hospital to school to do check-ups because the children cannot afford the cost of transport to travel to the clinic or hospital. The clinics are not near, they are far. I do all this with love because I know what it is to face hardships in life. I shared my story with them. I told them about my life and how poor my family was. But now I am an example of what can be achieved if you work hard.

I am a networking and collaborating teacher

At school I have time to collaborate with some of my colleagues. If you, as a teacher, know how to do something well, you can develop the others through engaging in workshops and team building. We take areas that we struggle with and get outside assistance from teachers in other schools who may have good ideas. I attend workshops to try and give me some direction. I also network with the cluster co-ordinators, who assist me. However, not all teachers are open to assisting others. Not long ago, I asked the senior English teacher for some assistance, and she told me she would be leaving the profession soon and that I should ask someone else. She has no interest in mentoring me. I was, therefore, forced to go back to my previous school and get assistance from my colleagues there. You have to be a teacher who will go out and seek help from others. You have to be motivated and enthusiastic about the job. However, we also have some teachers who are in the last lap of teaching, and they no longer have the zeal to do more. Now when UNISA students come to the school, there is no mentoring. They are just told

to take the books and go teach. So I took it upon myself to help where I can and to help them with their difficulties.

I conclude this story of my life with a poem. This poem encapsulates my life as a rural girl from a polygamous family. It highlights my outlook on education and my desire to excel academically. It also shows my love for others in my desire to be a helping hand. However, it also highlights my frustration at the present CAPS curriculum which I believe robs me of my ability to be the best by being so prescriptive.

A competitor is born

Polygamy Love
Good competitor
Achieve the impossible
CEO of your dreams

Good competitor
Mad about CAPS
CEO of your dreams
Caring helping friend

Good competitor
Achieve the impossible
Mad about CAPS
Polygamy Love

4.4   PORTRAIT THREE: BERNELL, THE TENACIOUS-RESOURCEFUL TEACHER

Bernell is a 27-year-old Indian woman. She belongs to the Christian faith. She is the eldest of three sisters. Her religion, culture and traditions are essential to her. She comes across as a strong woman who knows what she wants. She has been teaching for three years so

she can be regarded as a novice teacher. For the first year after graduation, she worked as an SGB teacher. Her first permanent post was at a school in Chatsworth. She spent a year at the school. However, as a result of a drop in learner numbers and the Rationalisation and Redeployment (R&R) process, she was transferred to a Q3 school. The process of R&R is where a teacher from an overstaffed school is re-deployed to an understaffed school. She is presently teaching at this school.

Figure 4.7 Bernell's collage portrait

My early life: I was allowed to fly, but I had to soar on my own wings

My family are from the township of Chatsworth. My grandparents had their roots in the Cato Manor area and were moved to Chatsworth as a result of the Group Areas Act. I remember sitting at my nana's (grandfather) feet and listening to the stories that captivated my attention of life in Cato Manor before I was born. They lived in wood-and-iron homes. There was a sense of community. Indians, Blacks and Coloureds lived side by side in Cato Manor. What little people had, they shared, and people watched out for each other. People mattered, families mattered. However, because of the forced removals families were also torn apart and communities destroyed.

Despite the heartache of forced removals of people of colour to townships, I admire the tenacity of my family and others like them. Family is important to me. My grandparents, Leela ma, Cynthia ma and Dudu nana, played a huge part in my upbringing. They did not slot into the typical profile of Indian grandparents. When other grandparents were encouraging their children and grandchildren to get married, my grandparents were telling us to not think about marriage but concentrate on our studies. I was allowed to fly, but I had to soar on my own wings. Being a woman did not have any disadvantages for my two sisters and me. We were never restricted because of our gender. However, we were required to undertake household chores and assist the family. This applied to both the male and female children in the family.

From a poor primary school to an affluent high school

When I was six years old, my parents bought land and built a house in Malvern. However, although there were schools in the Malvern area, my mum chose to take us to the school in Chatsworth where she was teaching. The primary school was in one of the poorer parts of Chatsworth bordering the Welbedacht and Naickers Farm area. Most of my friends' parents were either unemployed or had average jobs. They worked in factories or engaged in farming and hawking. In primary school, most learners did not have certain "luxuries" I took for granted like transport to and from school. Nevertheless, I made good friends who I still keep in touch with. I also had Indian and Black friends. Race was never an issue. Our parents encouraged us to be friends with all children.

When I started schooling, I remember my classroom used to be full. Not full because there were too many learners or because there was no space but full of fun and excitement. Teachers were always motivated to work and made do with what they had. Being a school in a poor community, they were forced to either buy or make their resources. The teachers prepared us for high school. I remember my primary school teachers. I remember them as dedicated teachers. I learned a lot about being a proactive teacher from observing my primary school teachers.

From primary school, I moved to high school. I attended a high school in Kharwarstan [an area near Chatsworth]. But it was not a familiar schooling environment. There were a lot of learners from affluent homes. However, being in primary school was easier. At

primary school, it was not about branded clothes and shoes, the luxury cars, or about how much money your parents had. Money was not a criterion for friendship or to even judge others on. In high school, this became the norm. However, I made friends very quickly. I learnt to adapt and move with the times.

My mum inspired me to become a teacher

I started university in 2008. I decided to do teaching. My mum was a teacher. She had a lot to do with my decision. For me, it was a new experience compared to school. At school, we were spoon-fed. At university, I was expected to fend for myself. Here you are on your own. I had to get my game on. I conquered university. I majored in commerce and science. I am hard working. I received many merit awards and also the Gold Key and Dean's commendation. It was in this space, coupled with my years of teaching and mentoring within my family, that I learned how to be a strong woman. I learned that if I wanted to progress in life, I had to rely on myself and make good, reliable decisions.

I started teaching in 2012 at a primary school in Chatsworth. It was an SGB post paying only R5000 per month. I was a self-funded student at university, so there were no automatic jobs on completion. I accepted the offer as a way to get into the system. I spent an entire year at the school, earning this meagre amount, but I appreciated the job. The following year I was lucky to get department posts intermittently. I then by the grace of God got a department offer for a year to teach at a school in Chatsworth. This allowed me to reach twelve full months in a substantive post, after which I was made a permanent teacher. However, the school was under-resourced. The number of learners who attended the school dramatically dropped. Due to the drop in learner enrolment and the R&R process, I was declared in excess in 2015. I was then posted to my present school.

Learning to be a teacher at a rural school situated deep in the valley

My current school is away from Chatsworth. The school is located deep in the valley near a river in the Welbedacht West area. The school is surrounded by RDP houses and shacks. It's an isiZulu-medium school from Grade 1 to 3 and English from Grade 4 to 7. The school has 100% Black learners. The school population is about 1500. Each class has 50

to 60 learners. I was the first Indian teacher to be posted to the school. Another Indian teacher arrived three months later. My friend Benita and I are the only two Indian teachers at the school out of a staff of 45 plus teachers. I must confess that when I came to the school, I was a little apprehensive. While I schooled in Chatsworth and knew learners from the Welbedacht and Naickers Farm area and had knowledge of their living conditions, I was now working at a school which was a lot different to my childhood memories. I knew very little about being a teacher in such a context.
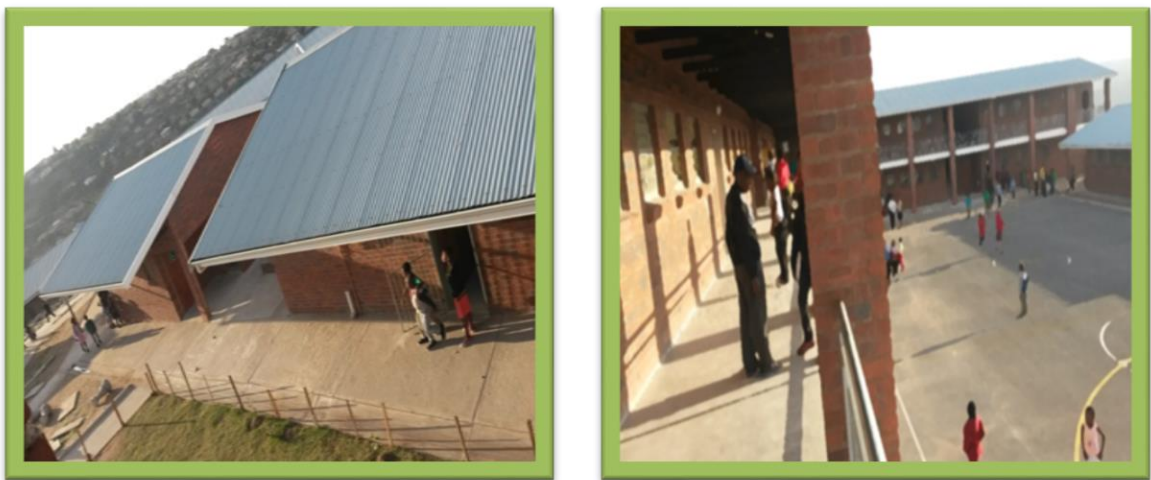
Figure 4.8 The school where Bernell is a teacher

The school is a relatively new school, fully funded by the department. Although the school is new, it looks old. The community comes and takes what they want. Our school has no security guards. The school is easily accessible. We have people who come in at night and sleep in the classrooms. Some even defecate in the classrooms, and this is what we have to contend with the following day. I bought a lock for my classroom door. I made my own key. Now I open and lock my classroom door. I also told my learners to ensure their chairs and tables don't go missing. They are my eyes and ears in school. If desks and chairs go missing, then we have to spend valuable time looking for replacements. I teach English, and I need every moment I can get with the learners. I also have to make sure my classroom is cleaned and swept. Thankfully, my learners are a little bigger, and they help me.

My learners are poor and I know they feel bad wearing torn stuff

The school has a large learner population. Many parents are unemployed, poverty is rampant and life is difficult. The learners are impoverished. Some have torn uniforms or no school uniform. Some come with school shoes that are ripped open. I know they feel bad wearing torn stuff. I have made it my duty to collect the jackets, jerseys and shoes of the children in my family at the end of the year. These are still in good condition. I have also asked family members to sponsor a school child their uniform. I now distribute these to needy children at the school. Although our school has a large learner population, and I know I cannot help everyone, the least I can do is assist the learners in my form class.

Delivering quality education to the learners at the school can also become difficult. If I need resources, I come up with my own. I never sit back and wait. The school has been upgraded but lacks learning and teaching resources. There are no libraries in the area to support learners' learning outside school. So we make our own resources at school like simple charts that the learners could understand. I teach English, so I started a small reading corner in class from the books I had at home. Chart paper is expensive, so I asked family and friends for table calendars and used the reverse side to make charts. My charts have pictures, and I include both isiZulu and English words so that the learners can make the link between the images and words. This is displayed in class for quick reference for the learners. We show interest in the learners' learning.

The teachers at first were not very friendly

Being transferred to the school was most traumatising, but was a new experience. The teachers, at first, were not very friendly. The climate was cold and unwelcoming. They did not want me there. I felt isolated. Teachers would not speak to me and excluded me from the conversations by conversing only in isiZulu. Being at a new school can be a lonely journey if you are thrown into the deep end without a life jacket. I was thrown in. I had to learn to swim very quickly. However, as a result of my making resources to assist our learners, the other teachers began to take notice. We eventually made an impact on the teachers around us. Soon the other teachers would come up to us and ask to borrow our resources. We never refused. We also began to ask for assistance with isiZulu. This allowed us to make friends. We made an effort to fit in, and some of the Black teachers

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made an effort to make us feel comfortable as well. While being at the school was initially very difficult, I have learnt to adapt. I am learning on the job. I am a go-getter. I have always reached for heights beyond. I have always been told by my family that I am talented, and I have the skills to succeed. Mediocrity is not something I subscribe to. I have been afforded the opportunity and encouragement by my family to fly from the time I was a young girl. I am a woman, and I have the power to reach whatever level I aspire to.

I conclude this story of my life with a poem. This poem encapsulates my life as a girl who was allowed to believe that anything is possible in life if you are determined and work for it. It highlights my outlook on life, like the importance of family and community. I also believe that having hope is important, as hope allows one to believe that all things are possible if you believe.

<div align="center">

I have the skills to succeed

Hope

Waves of change

Hard choices to be made

Skills to succeed and reach new heights

Waves of change

A sense of community

Skills to succeed and reach new heights

Sharing is caring

A sense of community

Hard choices to be made

Sharing is caring

Hope

</div>

4.5   PORTRAIT FOUR: SHAMILLA, THE CONSERVATIVE-NURTURING TEACHER

Shamilla told the story you are about to read. She is a forty-five-year-old Indian, married woman with two adult sons. She is an SGB-employed, fully qualified teacher at a Q4 school. She has been teaching for 15 years. At the time of the interview, Shamilla was still an SGB-employed teacher. Her greatest desire is to be employed as a permanent, state-paid educator so that she can start building up a pension for retirement. Shamilla comes across as a determined, strong woman who, despite encountering obstacles in life, still perseveres to become a winner.

Figure 4.9 Shamilla's collage portrait

From Bayside girl to Chatsworth girl

My name is Shamilla. I don't recall my early childhood, but from what my family told me we used to live in Bayside, an informal fishing community in Clairwood. In Bayside, my father earned a living as a fisherman. As a result of the Group Areas Act, we were forced to relocate to the Indian township of Chatsworth in the 1970s. After moving to Chatsworth, my father started "formal" work because travelling to Bayside from

Chatsworth to carry on fishing was too expensive. My siblings and I were required to help with housework, get involved in gardening and see to the upkeep of the yard. Our family was not wealthy so employing help was not possible.

I have three siblings, and all three went to school

It was challenging for my parents financially, but my father made sure we went to school and got an education. That was their priority. I have three siblings, and all three went to school. My parents always encouraged us to do well. Academic performance was very important to my family. I enjoyed my school days. Both the primary and high school which I attended was within walking distance of home. The school was neat and tidy. We had desks and chairs. We took care of our furniture. Our teacher made sure we brought in polish to clean and shine our desks. However, we did not have sporting facilities or big halls. The population of the children at both the primary and high schools at that stage was completely Indian. The teachers were also all Indian. We had so much respect for the teachers. When a teacher entered the classroom we had to stand and wait to be greeted. Whether the teacher was in the classroom or not, we still behaved. If a piece of work was given, it was done. Back then if we were writing an exam, our lunch breaks were used to study. I tried to do my very best at school. I performed well. I was hard working. I knew I could find a good job with a good education. It was difficult being poor. I could not imagine living my whole life struggling.

I got married straight after finishing high school

I did not have the opportunity to go to college or university after matric. I got married straight after finishing high school. I know my husband from my school days. My parents were strict and did not approve of me meeting my husband. So we decided to get married. I became a housewife and had my children. Financially things were difficult. Everything cost more and the money my husband earned did not meet our expenses. I decided to do something to earn extra cash. First, I tried dressmaking, but it was not for me. I then went into hairdressing. I was building a clientele and had quite a few male clients. But my husband was jealous. He did not want me to touch other men's hair. I had to abandon this

choice as I had a good marriage and I didn't want this to come between us. However, not long after that, my husband lost his job. It was back to living on a shoestring budget. I then decided to do the ECD (Early Childhood Development) course at the ABH (Aryan Benevolent Home). I worked there as an assistant teacher and earned about R300. This was a lifesaver because this helped me pay for my lights and water.

However, my life took a turn for the better when in 2002; I came across an advert for an SGB (school governing body) teacher paying R1000 a month. This was almost three times the salary I had been earning. During the first few years, I also began saving some money for a holiday. Sadly, my husband phoned me one day and said: "I think I am going to get retrenched." This was a turning point in my life. I took all the money that was being saved for a holiday and decided to further my studies with the hope of becoming a permanent teacher as soon as possible. So for me it was back to school, back to studying. I then enrolled for the NPDE 3 (National Professional Diploma in Education) course. I completed it in two years with distinctions. It was such an achievement because it was very tough working, being a housewife, a mother and also a student. Fifteen years down the line, I am now a fully qualified teacher. However, it is still an uphill battle getting into the system. I only earn R4500 per month as an SGB teacher.

I am currently teaching at the school where I was once a learner

I am currently teaching at the school where I was once a learner. It's a Q4 school. It's sad to see the way the school has deteriorated over the years. This year alone, we had two threats of water and lights disconnections. Some classes have holes in the ceilings. Gutters are broken. Classrooms have broken windows. The school cannot fix these as there is no money. During winter, teachers have to ensure the learners in their classes are kept warm. During summer it is unbearable.

Figure 4.10 The school where Shamilla is a teacher

We also have learners from the Naickers Farm and the Welbedacht area. These are low-cost RDP homes and the informal wood-and-iron homes. Most people here are unemployed and live in poverty, and therefore don't have money to pay school fees. On the other hand, we have families from the old original Chatsworth houses. Here we have some lower but mostly middle-income earners. I differentiate between the two groups because the challenges are different. Many of the fee-paying parents from around the school have decided to move their children to more affluent schools in the area. Of those that do remain, only a handful pays the school fees. The problem with this is that if the fee-paying learners' move away, what is going to happen to the school? This will force the school into bankruptcy.

Figure 4.11 The community within which Shamilla's school is situated

The school hit a crisis point in April 2019. As a result of the poor maintenance of the infrastructure, the school condition has deteriorated. Years of neglect to the school buildings due to limited funding have had catastrophic consequences. During the recent flooding in April 2019, the school lost an entire block of classrooms. These classrooms, made of asbestos, had been under strain as a result of termite infestation. Numerous appeals to the department for assistance went unanswered. The flooding in KwaZulu-Natal in April 2019 was the straw that broke the camel's back. The school has experienced damage that it has no hope of repairing on its own. Being classified Q4 is a travesty as we are not financially able to remedy the situation. The Department of Public Works has not responded to the school's numerous appeals to make the school safe for the learners and teachers.

Figure 4.12 The conditions at Shamilla's school after the April 2019 floods

Interacting with our learners at school

Many of our learners come from impoverished families. We don't get government funding. We have NGO's that provide sandwiches. We are not a wealthy school, but we have a breakfast club where we provide porridge every day for the learners. We have a porridge room where learners sit and have their porridge. We noticed that the learners would drink their porridge and leave the cups for the volunteers to wash up. There were times that children threw the porridge in the drains. This wastage would have disappointed our sponsors. I also noticed that the learners would drop their porridge on the floor and expect someone else to clean up. Being part of the breakfast club, I decided to get the learners to clean up after themselves and wash their cups. Our volunteers don't get any remuneration from the school or the department.

When I was a learner at the school, the school had predominantly Indian teachers and children. This separation was the result of the apartheid system of separate development and segregation of people according to race. However, over time the school was opened to all race groups. It's good. We also have Indian and Black teachers at our school. I am happy about this because we are not Indian learners and Indian teachers. However, the school and department should have done a workshop to equip us teachers on how to interact with our learners. Not long ago, I scolded a child for not looking at me when I

was addressing him. I did not know making eye contact with elders was not something that learners from the Black culture do. I am, however, learning as I go along. However, despite the efforts of the teachers to make life better for the learners, we have experienced some discipline-related issues with the learners. When the children misbehave, and I discipline the Indian learners, I may get resistance from the learners and some parents, but it is about discipline issues. However, if I have to discipline the Black learners, then it becomes a race issue. I call the Black teachers to address the learners then. Surprisingly, if the Black teachers discipline them, it's okay. This situation is becoming bad because the Black learners feel we are weak teachers, and they know we have to call the Black teachers who are not always available. So at times, the learners get away with whatever they do. We then back off. We don't want to be accused of being racist.

Let me tell you about the hard-working teachers at our school

I can tell you how bad things are at school. But I can also tell you about the hard-working teachers at our school. If a teacher wants something done, the teacher has to take the initiative to do it. The school does not have money, so upkeep of the school has to be done by the teachers. For years we have painted our own classrooms. We have to buy the paint and also pay for the painter. I had to also buy a broom for my class and cleaning supplies. We even dust and clean. We have the choice to either sit back and do nothing, or try to solve the problem, because honestly, the department will not do much. We are a Q4 school, but I feel we are Q2. If it were not for the fundraising our teachers do, the school would have collapsed a long time ago. Our teachers have to be involved in every fundraising effort as our school fees retrieval is also low. This additional duty becomes overwhelming, as fundraising is not a one-off thing but happens throughout the year. We have to raise our funds if we want something, and this becomes overwhelming. No money means that we cannot buy utensils needed for the breakfast room. No money means no school cleaners because the school only qualifies for one cleaner. We only have a handful of people who want to invest in the school.

We have many challenges at school. However, the one thing that keeps me coming to school is the teachers. We help and support each other. The HOD's have regular meetings to mentor the staff and provide guidance. We have an excellent staff. We always have

time to laugh a little. We still consider ourselves to be part of a bigger school family. As teachers, we go out to functions. We can call on each other to mentor and assist us in areas that need upliftment. We can talk over lunch or a cup of tea about our challenges at school and get advice.

I love teaching, but teaching can be a thankless job. There are so many duties we have to complete in a single day that at the end of the day we thank God our chores are sorted. We have too many responsibilities. We have to be a teacher, mother, nurse, policewoman, fireman and counsellor. We have to get involved in the environment and social responsibilities. I think it's a bit too much with fundraising, seeing to social issues, discipline, and completing so many assessments. But at the end of the day, these are our learners, and I have to do everything to see them succeed. I am a tough cookie with a big heart. I may sink, but I can also swim.

I conclude this story of my life with a poem. This poem encapsulates my life as an Indian woman who has faced tremendous hardships in life but has still emerged victorious. It also highlights my need for financial security. However, it also shows my determination to live my life by my design, because ultimately I am a tough cookie.

My life of twists and tales

Life by design
Out with the old in with the new
Twists and tales
Behave!

Out with the old in with the new
Ching ching
Behave!
Tough cookie

Ching
Twists and tales
Tough cookie
Life by design.

4.6 PORTRAIT FIVE: BIANCA, THE OVERWORKED-SELF-SACRIFICING TEACHER

Bianca Maharajh tells this story you are about to read. She is a fifty-five-year-old woman. Bianca was born into an orthodox Hindu family. She has five siblings. The first three are girls. She is a mother of two adult children. She has been teaching for a total of 31 years. At the time of the interview, she was teaching at a Q5 school in Newlands. She is a Level 1 master teacher.

Figure 4.13 Bianca's collage portrait

Living in the lap of luxury as a growing child

My name is Bianca Maharajh. I was born in Sea Cow Lake in the 1960s. My parents lived with my grandparents. My family did not feel the ill effects of the Group Areas Act and forced removals as other Indian communities did. My grandfather was wealthy. He owned a sand business. He also owned a piece of land next to the Umgeni River. From here, he used to harvest sand which he sold to the Whites who were building their homes at that

time. Our family had the biggest house in the Mayville area. It was one of the few brick homes, with over four bedrooms. We were the only family that had a flush toilet system. All other homes had the bucket system.

I come from a religious, orthodox, Hindi-speaking family, where having a male child first was important. So it was a little disappointing for the family that the first three children were girls. I am the third child out of five children. My brother after me is called Roshan. My grandfather from what I heard had the biggest party ever because he was a boy. I, however, did not receive any party. When I was born, my grandfather did not even want to come and see me.

I had caring teachers in school

I attended a primary school in the area called the Narain G. School. It was a state-aided school. The school had only Indian children. We did not have an opportunity to meet learners from the other race groups. The teachers were also Indian. The teachers were very caring. I think the teachers were like mums. The teachers also instilled discipline in us. Once I was punished for talking. This discipline was accepted, as we knew we were wrong. We feared the teachers, and we also respected them. I hardly ever told my parents when I was disciplined. We were never allowed to complain but had to handle our issues on our own. I remember my mum's shoes flying or the wooden spoon coming out if we complained. A few times, we did complain, but it never affected my mum that we had been disciplined by the teacher. My mum would say we must have done something wrong to have been punished by the teacher. My parents' attitude and my school teachers' ways of disciplining the learners rubbed off on me. I remember when I was young, my granny and others used to say that I was going to be a teacher because when we played with the neighbours' children, I would get them to sit and teach them with a ruler in my hand. I was a disciplinarian even then. My sisters used to say that I was the boss despite being the youngest of the sisters.

From primary school, I moved to the only high school in the area, which was Lake Haven High School. The high school to me was like a mansion. It was modern and massive. I was very excited about the facilities. It catered only for Indian children. I had a few very caring teachers. That caring personality rubbed off on me. As a young child growing up,

I used to listen to other children's problems. I felt like I was the counsellor in the school. They knew that they could come and talk to me and that I would listen and keep their secrets.

I wanted to become a counsellor but became a teacher instead

In high school I loved history, but I also loved counselling other people. At university, I wanted to do psychology as I loved being a counsellor. The first year I did this. However, my grandfather lost the sand business, and so it was challenging for my parents financially with three children at university. I then decided to switch to teaching because if you were doing teaching, you could get a bursary. I also loved teaching.

My life as a teacher at a brand new beautiful school

Figure 4.14 The school where Bianca teaches

The first school that I was placed at was in Pinetown. Although I loved being at the school, it was a distance from home. From Pinetown, I applied for a transfer to a school closer to home. The new school was an A-class, brand new, beautiful school. When I came in at that stage, the school had only Indian learners and Indian teachers. However, over the years we saw the springing up of shacks on the vacant land around the school. The government also built over 1000 RDP homes in the area for people who don't earn much. However, it's not easy to handle the contextual challenges that the new scenario presents. Throughout my years of teaching, this was the first time I had had to handle children who lived in shacks.

Nevertheless, a lot of our Indian children are still living in the area but most commute to the neighbouring former Model C School. However, it is not just the Indian learners who choose to go there. There are a lot of wealthy Black learners who also attend the school. I have been at the school for 26 years. Over the years, teaching has changed drastically. When the House of Delegates was dissolved, we were allowed to admit children of all race groups. Sadly, when this happened, we saw an exodus of Indian children from our school. Now our school population is about 1300. In total, we have about 15 Indian children. Our school cannot take the load of learners who want to come to our school. We were also told by the department that we are not allowed to turn children away, despite there being no space in the classrooms to accommodate the large numbers. Without funds, we, therefore, cannot hire teachers to assist us with the large classes. I teach English to over 50 to 60 learners per class. There are four classes. The marking and assessments are too much.

Apart from the workload because of the bloated curriculum, we also have other responsibilities. Our school fee is R900. However, the school does not receive the school fees of R900 that it charges from the majority of the learners. Most of our learners are from impoverished homes. They don't pay their school fees. So as teachers we have to engage in fundraising to keep the school afloat. We have fundraisers during school time. We have to use instruction time. However, we still have to make up for the time lost to complete the school work. We have to complete the work as stipulated by the CAPS document.

We have to also contribute financially to our school feeding scheme as our school does not qualify for the free nutrition programme. However, despite the challenges we face

with discipline and behaviour, these are still our learners. We have children that come to school without lunch. We have teachers; parents, learners and NGO's that try to help by either contributing or helping to make the lunch at school. We get no help in this regard from the department because of our quintile ranking.

The way the school looks fits the Q5 ranking. If someone walks into our school, they will think that we are a wealthy school. But if they look at the learners and where they come from and how they dress, then you cannot equate the learners to the buildings. With the school being ranked so highly (Q5) it becomes difficult to get funding from the department despite the school catering for learners from poverty-stricken homes. We have a hall that is hired out to the community. The hall brings in funds. This money added to the fundraising we do is used to run the school. The buildings are good, but it takes money to maintain the premises. We have learners that do not want to help raise funds, and this is understandable because most are impoverished. At times it becomes overtaxing.

The learners at school can be boisterous at times

We have serious discipline problems now. I hate saying this, but we noticed that when a Black teacher walks into the class or addresses the learners, they get the respect they need. The learners will even stand up, be quiet and greet the teacher. When we spoke to the Black teachers about this, they cannot understand why the learners behave in this way. The learners only like Black teachers. For me, I think that the learners have no respect for the Indian teachers. They will scream and shout and misbehave. I am not happy about being treated this way. And truth be told I don't know how to handle the learners. The sudden change to the school and population was an adjustment for me.

While discipline is one issue, we also experience other challenges. Our school has good furniture. However, it pains me that the learners have so little regard for the furniture. Some learners will write their names and scribble on the tables. I have made it my duty to allocate a table to a child. That child is now responsible for the furniture. If there is any writing, then it has to be cleaned. I have to consider the learners who will use those desks in future. Learners also need to learn to respect their space. We can't be stuck as a school only ordering new furniture from the department. Our LTSM (learner-teacher support material) allocation is not substantial. The school needs other equipment as well. What

the department does not supply we have to buy on our own from school funds. It's not like we have unlimited funds.

School is taxing, and I don't meet my friends anymore

When I look back at my early experience as a teacher it was good. However, now I no longer have that passion. School is absolutely horrible. It is taxing and I am overburdened. Previously as teachers we used to sit in the staffroom. We talked and laughed. Now I don't even go to the staffroom anymore. The staffroom is now deserted. I remember that when I used to sit in the staffroom we had one big table and everyone used to call us Table 10. Now Table 10 has been dissolved. No one goes to the staffroom or sits there. What is the sense of going there when we have so much work to complete? I now sit in my classroom and eat my lunch because I have tons of marking. I don't meet my friends anymore. There is no time for collaboration. We have so many records to keep and so many assessments to complete. This workload leaves very little time for anything else.

I believe a lot of the challenges I face at school can be attributed to the present curriculum. The current curriculum has contributed to the scarcity of time. There is a mountain of work. The paperwork has increased. With CAPS, we are only assessing, with little teaching. The question is then, what takes me to school if this is the way that I feel? For me, it is my upbringing. We were taught by my parents not to stay away from school for no good reason. But sad to say, some days I just don't want to go to school. My motivation level is low to non-existent. There is stress, and at times depression, and it gets to you. There are times when I get home that I unconsciously want to snap at my family. I then have to pull myself together and remind myself that this is not work. This behaviour is something I never used to do.

But then I sit back and reflect on my life as a teacher. I decided that I need to come right, to accept things. I need to ask myself what is going to help the children and me in my class? I have decided I will do what I can, and I choose to no longer worry about what is beyond my control. But I am not going to get out or run out because of circumstances, people, the education system and CAPS. I am not going to crack under pressure. I am a dedicated teacher. My passion for teaching may have waned a bit, but I am still a dedicated teacher. No matter what the circumstances are, my work is always completed.

I will continue to teach despite the learners showing such lack of interest. I will help those who want to learn and listen, and want to better their lives. I still value my learners and want to be a mum and offer love to my learners at school.

I conclude this story of my life with a poem. This poem highlights my life as an Indian woman that had the luxuries of life but still felt like I was invisible. It highlights my desire to be "seen" and the only way for me to achieve this is if I shape my own life, find my own solutions, don't crack under pressure, and stand out and be counted.

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Don't crack under pressure

Shape your way
Make the most of your day
Smooth sailing
Stand out

Make the most of your day
Solutions for you
Stand out
Take it easy

Solutions for you
Smooth sailing
Take it easy
Shape your way.

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4.7   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have presented the re-storied narratives of the participating teachers. These re-storied narratives portray who these teachers are, both personally and professionally. The socio-cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity of my five participants in my study foregrounds their individual, subjective experiences within their different contexts. My participants' descriptions of their identity construction and reconstruction

highlighted their specific cultural, social, ethnic, and racial positioning (Etherington, 2013). It also offered a lens into their educational experiences growing up within a racially divided, underprivileged society during apartheid, and the consequences of the discriminatory apartheid laws on their meanings of self.

This chapter also foregrounded the various structural and material agents of socialisation that have been instrumental in shaping the lives of the individual teachers. It offered insight into family and social relationships that were cultivated. Hence, the teachers' narratives highlighted their primary socialisation within their immediate family, and their secondary socialisation within their community and at school with teachers and friends, which were instrumental in their identity formation. Their narratives laid bare how the different experiences that they encountered within their family and community have shaped their outlook on life.

As a researcher, generating knowledge with the teachers through co-creating their stories helped me understand how racial categories have narrated the lives of these individuals in very oppressive ways. This chapter acknowledged their stories of struggles, and how the narrative recounting of their lives under apartheid signalled their challenges, while at the same time positioned them as overcomers, not as victims. While I am aware of the romanticisation of the I as heroine/hero in the telling of the stories, I did exercise authorial power as a narrative inquirer to glean from the range of discourses of self, the sources of their meaning-making — their beliefs and values that shaped the perspectives that they adopted for their negotiation of their professional responsibilities as teachers within the different school contexts.

CHAPTER 5

CARVING UNIQUE PORTRAITS OF TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter presented my response to the first research question: *What are the personal-professional stories of teachers teaching in the dilemmatic context of different school quintiles?* In Chapter Four my role as a master carver of this research was to take the data generated from the interviews, collage inquiry, photovoice and poetic inquiry of each participant and assemble the data into a multi-layered portrayal of each participant's life. The chapter offered a space to view the co-constructed and reconstructed stories of my five participants with a focus on their personal and professional life experiences. Their personal life experiences incorporated their journey from their childhood to adulthood. In contrast, their professional experiences honed in on their teaching experiences within different school contexts comprising different school quintiles. However, an essential component in both their personal and professional lives was the various relationships that either offered them a supportive climate for growth as individuals or constrained them.

In this chapter, I present the second level of analysis. The focus of this chapter is to provide insight into the second research question: *What personal beliefs and meanings inform the teachers' professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles?* In this chapter, my responsibility as the researcher and master carver is to offer an interpretation and give meaning to teachers' personal-professional experiences within the context of school quintiling. While my role in Chapter Four was to restructure the data into a multi-layered storyline, in this chapter I aim to disentangle the importance of critical moments and events. This exercise will be accomplished by unpacking the teachers' experiences within their family and homes, the significant relationships that they cultivated, their educational journeys from childhood to adulthood, and their meanings they adopted which informed their choice to become teachers.

This chapter aims to analyse how the experiences gained through their primary and secondary socialisation within their families and communities shaped the biographical

makeup of the teachers (Samuel, 2008). All this is viewed against the backdrop of race, class and gender within their respective socio-cultural, economic and historical environments. Also, attempting to understand what personal meanings inform teachers' identities has to be seen in relation to the macro-political environment and the history of apartheid within the South African landscape that had impacted every facet of a person's life. This chapter, additionally, forms the basis of the analysis of the third research question, which draws on the participants' personal experiences and meanings to negotiate their professional lives as teachers. In an attempt to understand what personal meanings inform teachers' identities in the context of school quintiling, I draw on the metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* for inspiration and deeper understanding.

Figure 5.1 The jadeite personal-professional identity of the teacher

The one aspect of the metaphor that I can draw on for this chapter is the cracks and ripples found on *The Jadeite Cabbage*. The cracks and ripples — the "imperfections" on the jade — meant that the piece of jade could not be regarded as highly prized. However, while the imperfections reduced the value of the jade, it was the same cracks and ripples that

gave *The Jadeite Cabbage* its unusual character and allowed the carving to look more lifelike. The participants in this study also recounted life as having its cracks and ripples; it's high and low moments. I now compare the cracks and ripples on the jade to the life experiences of my participants. The teachers' dilemmas and difficulties are evident in the stories they told. Also, being treated as inferior because of race, gender and class denied them space at the centre of society and pushed them to the margins. Those experiences also added to the cracks and ripples, the dilemmas in their lives that at times made them feel insignificant. However, while the teachers recounted their difficulties, I began to look at how those problems were negotiated. Did they attempt to overcome their dilemmas, or did they give in to a defeatist mentality? What self was foregrounded in the choices that were made? What would have become of these teachers if they had allowed those cracks and ripples, those "imperfections", to make them bitter about what life has thrown at them? What "beautiful" meanings can I, as a researcher, draw from their dilemmas and their negotiation thereof?

In assisting me to answer these questions, critical moments of the teachers' lives were then extracted from their storied narratives and presented in the form of storied vignettes. Ely et al. (1997, p. 70) has described vignettes as "narrative investigations that carry within them an interpretation of the person, experience or situation that the writer describes". Vignettes have also been described as "compact sketches that can be used to introduce characters, foreshadow events and analyses to come, highlight particular findings or summarise a particular theme or issue in analysis and interpretation" (Ely et al., 1997, p. 70).

I chose to write the storied vignettes in the first person (Coulter & Smith, 2009). These vignettes took the form of a "snapshot scenario or a story that unfolds through a series of stages" (Jenkins, Bloor, Fischer, Berney & Neale, 2010, p. 176). Although the storied vignettes give me power as the researcher to offer my interpretation of the data, it is, however, the theoretical lens that helps me to explain the selection of the data, not only in a reliable way but also in a theoretical way.

In analysing the second research question, I therefore drew on Tajfel and Turner's (1979) SIT and Rodgers and Scott's (2008) TIT. SIT is a general theory of identity that identifies people through group processing (Trepte, 2006). I lean on SIT to understand how norms, group influences, motivations, stereotyping and prejudicial attitudes can be a catalyst to

reinforce the idea that people's social cognitions are socially constructed depending on their group or collective frame of reference (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). SIT helped help me to understand how social categorisations like race, class and gender contributed to my participants' process of identification and identity construction, and how these eventually contributed to their behaviours and dispositions. Rodgers and Scott (2008) allowed me to look at how context as an external force influenced the teachers' identities. This understanding is vital, as the teachers all come from diverse backgrounds. These contexts were instrumental in the construction of their identities as teachers.

Also, to assist with the analysis of this question I created a collage portrait, my jadeite carving, of each teacher's life depicted as a visual work of art. The pictures and texts that I selected in creating the collage portrait of my participants reflected the critical moments of their personal-professional lives and events, and significant people in their lives who had played a part in their identity construction. It must be noted that the collage portrait that I created was my interpretation and understanding of my participants' narratives (Gerstenblatt, 2013). Collage portraits offered me as the master carver of this research "a venue for producing research that is adaptable to diverse populations and conveyed meaning beyond the constraints of language" (Gerstenblatt, 2013, p. 305).

I commence my analysis with Solomon, a teacher at a Q1 school. Solomon's vignette foregrounds the issues of class and race, and shows the impact of poverty on the type of experiences that Solomon encountered. I then unpack my vignette for Happy, a teacher at a Q2 school. This vignette focuses on issues of class, race and gender that were instrumental in shaping Happy's life within a poor rural context. The third vignette highlights Bernell's experience, and focuses on how the issues of gender, race and class affected her life within an unorthodox family. The fourth vignette, for Shamilla, foregrounds essential aspects of gender, class and race that were dominant discourses that were instrumental in shaping her identity as a woman within a poor, working-class family. The fifth and final vignette is for Bianca. This vignette foregrounds the dominant discourses of gender and class that were instrumental in shaping her identity as an Indian South African woman within an orthodox family.

5.2 STORIED VIGNETTE ONE

Solomon: Doing deprived rural boy differently

Figure 5.2 My interpretation of Solomon's narrative constructed as a collage portrait

I created a collage portrait for Solomon based on my interpretation of a life lived within a rural context in KZN. The collage captures the financial difficulties that Solomon experienced, and offers insight into his socio-cultural life within his traditional family and rural community. The collage identifies people in his life, such as his parents, who enabled him to reach his potential as a young, disabled, poor boy. It also offers a perspective on his outlook on life and the value of education, which he considered to have been key to his success as a man.

5.2.1   Scenario one: From poor rural boy to adept learner

Solomon was born and raised in a very big family in a rural area in Tongaat, on the North Coast of KZN. Solomon's storied vignette of him as a rural boy offers us a glimpse into his personal history:

> *I would regard my family as being poor. My father was not working. Living in a rural area, I was not exposed to beautiful houses and cars. I remember that from Class One to Standard One I went to school without shoes.*

Solomon's narrative reveals life within a rural context, within a particular time and place in South African history. Living in a rural area had its hardships, and this context, as an external force, was an important influence on his identity as a poor rural boy (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Living a life of difficulty in a rural area was not by choice (Pateman, 2011). The apartheid government's Land Act had, since June 1913, dispossessed many people of colour of their land and their means of livelihood (Modise & Mtshiselwa, 2013). Hence the socio-economic injustice experienced by many Black South Africans like Solomon can be traced back to the colonial and apartheid land dispossessions and mistreatment of Black people (Helliker, 2011). Solomon's experiences were also indicative of life in a rural context, where children had to carry out chores that were rooted in the larger system of community values, social customs and traditions, and were a vital foundation for developing tenacity, strength, and agency for children in their later lives (HSRC, 2005). Solomon also learned very early in life that he had to earn his keep within the family:

> *As children, we had to take the cows to the fields. We had to go to the river and fetch water in the mornings and afternoons. As boys, this was our work.*

According to Idang (2015), the economic principles of traditional African society are characterised by collaboration and teamwork, with children considered to be an important source of labour supply for the family. Solomon's account of his experiences, therefore, provides a lens through which we can examine life within his family.

Solomon considered his family and his parents to be an essential part of his life. The benefits of parental influence on the lives of their children are well documented (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Didier, 2014; Gurbuzturk & Sad, 2013). This is further supported by Bornstein (2015), who finds that families, who display warmth, love, and care, and who

provide emotional support, helps to promote resilience within the family (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014). Solomon grew up within such a family structure:

> *If we had a problem, we went to my mother. My mother knew how to show love. I also learned the importance of fairness and justice from my mother.*

Solomon's mother's actions are supported by Li and Meier (2017), who found that maternal acknowledgement, adds to the socio-emotional advancement of the child.

Solomon's life was also shaped as a result of his relationship with his father:

> *My father was also very strict. I was scared of telling him any of my problems. We were not allowed to speak to my father. He was not approachable and never liked to socialise with us.*

In this scene, we get a glimpse of a stern father figure who kept his children at arm's length emotionally. Thankfully for Solomon, the love and support that he got from his mother was a buffer against the behaviour of the other parent (Li & Meier, 2017). While Solomon was kept at arm's length by his father emotionally, he also considered his father as a reason for his success:

> *So the values I learned from my father are the values I live by now. My love for education was instilled in me by my father. He told us that we cannot live a better life without education. This is what drove me. I took that advice. I knew for me to move forward I had to study.*

Solomon's father provided him with the cultural and social capital necessary to help him succeed as an educated male. Solomon's experiences resonate with Fataar and Fillies' (2016) findings on rural, working-class learners in South Africa. They challenged the notions that such learners are at a deficit when it comes to having the crucial cultural capital for educational success, and showed that learners capitalise on their family and community resources in their pursuit of educational achievement. Solomon's security did not stem from his financial background but from his parents' support and love. Thus, for Solomon, his parents' help was important and made a unique contribution to the development of his worth as a child (Goncy & van Dulmen, 2010). This is also supported by Rodgers and Scott (2008), who saw identity as being relational and emotional, and formed through interaction within relationships.

Solomon, as a learner, also displayed resilience. Resilience has been described as when people use mental procedures and behaviours to shield themselves from the potential negative impacts of stressors (Robertson, Cooper, Sarkar & Curran, 2015). For Solomon, one of the most stressful experiences in his life was being born with a disability. He stated: "*As a child, I was crippled. I had a clubfoot.*" This disability was to impact his life:

> *I loved sport, but I could not play because of my disability. I experienced a lot of discrimination as a result of this. Children used to tease me because of my limp. This made me unhappy, and I used to cry.*

Hogg et al. (1995) described the self as being multifaceted and dynamic, but also as being constituted by society. Hence, for Solomon, his meanings of self were also shaped by his secondary socialisation and his experiences in the community within which he lived (Bonnewitz, 2005). According to Agnew and Drummond (2011), participating in sport can offer one a sense of belonging. However, Solomon's disability and his being treated differently created particular meanings for him. He was made to feel like an outsider within this community of people. According to SIT, people's sense of who they are is based on their group membership. One can be part of either the in-group or the out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, Solomon fell into the out-group. His disability opened him up to emotional abuse from other children.

Being treated differently from the rest of the boys was a stressful time in Solomon's life and created in him a desire to succeed by using his intellect. Solomon as a resilient, self-actualised person had a purpose (Sze, 2015), and his ambition was to be seen as more than just a disabled boy:

> *My mother used to tell me that I was only disabled in my legs but I was not mentally disabled. So I could hit the children with intelligence. This was a motivating factor and made me want to learn more and achieve more than the other children.*

Although Solomon was born with a disability, he did not allow this identity to direct his life and define him. He did not allow the meanings people ascribed to him to shape his future (Jacklin, 2001). He attempted to develop a winning mentality to enable him to be the best learner he could be.

5.2.2   Scenario two: From trolley porter to supportive teacher

Solomon's disability was just one of the dilemmas that he had to overcome as he was growing up. Solomon was raised in a rural area, and this rural context, coupled with the poverty that his family experienced, created a barrier to continuing his dream of tertiary education (Westaway, 2010). This state of economic deprivation was aptly described by Meiring et al. (2018):

> Particular to the South African context are certain structural legacies and socioeconomic inequalities inherited from decades of colonial and apartheid rule, as a result of the purposeful marginalisation of the majority black population in terms of access to financial resources, economic opportunity, quality education, political participation, etc. (p. 5).

Thus, according to Hickey (2013), families with a lack of financial capital are at a disadvantage when it comes to offering their children the prospect of a better education. Coming from a poor background meant that Solomon could not afford the economic capital required to go to university:

> *I did not know there was a bursary for students who wanted to do teaching. I went and did a course in security. I completed it but did not get a job.*

According to Bourdieu (1998), families who have economic capital are more likely to invest in the education of their children. Unfortunately, Solomon could not count himself as part of a privileged class that could afford to provide their children with certain advantages simply because of their being rich (Bourdieu, 1986). Solomon, however, refused to concede. His habitus and resilient spirit that saw him tackle his disability head-on were once more called into play, and he rose to the challenge:

> *So I ended up going to Shoprite and working as a trolley porter. Then they employed me as a packer. I worked as a packer for 10 years, working three days a week. In 2006 I registered at UNISA to do teaching. By now I was 32 years old. But I did not care. I knew my vision. I knew what I wanted to achieve.*

Solomon's experiences demonstrate grit. According to Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007), grit alludes to the persistence and energy for long-term objectives. They also demonstrated courage, as he worked tirelessly towards his goals in the face of

challenges, and kept up his effort and interest over many years, regardless of the dilemmas, negative feedback, afflictions or disappointments. This grit and resilience were as a result of Solomon's habitus. His economic and social-class background shaped his disposition as a person of vision and strength, and resulted in his taking the initiative to improve his life through hard work. Hence, his habitus allowed him to find solutions to his predicament (Bourdieu, 1977).

The questions that beg for an answer are: What was the motivating factor for a person who had to wait ten years before he could realise his dream of becoming a teacher? What was it that drove Solomon to hold on to his vision of a better life beyond being a trolley porter? What was his source of inspiration (Heikkilä, Uusiautti, Määttä, 2012)? Solomon's initial incentive to pursue his education was his parents' motivation and his desire to be seen as more than a disabled, poor, rural boy. However, Solomon also recalls an experience that had a significant impact on his life:

> *I also had another role model. At our primary school there were no male teachers. So in Standard Five, I was writing my exams, and a male teacher from another school came to our school to invigilate the exams. So I saw this male teacher wearing a tie and a nice coat. I said to myself, "One day I want to become a teacher. I want to be like this man".*

Solomon saw this male teacher as a source of inspiration and a worthy educator. He deduced this from noticing and observing this particular educator who was instrumental in also shaping Solomon's desire to be somebody (Heikkilä et al., 2012). According to Penton (n.d.), a suit and tie demand respect from friends, foes and strangers. If a person can wear this ensemble with confidence, then respect will be established. Solomon, as a child, was relegated to the background because of his disability. However, he believed that the status of a teacher, outfitted with a suit and tie, would earn him the acknowledgement he so craved.

5.2.3   Synthesis of storied vignette one

An analysis of Solomon's life highlights the pain and desperation he felt as a young man growing up with a disability in a rural community. The contextual realities of rurality,

coupled with his racial subjugation as a poor Black male, were a catalyst for the lack of resources in his life. However, these realities were also the motivation Solomon needed to spur him on to make a difference to his life. Solomon was no ordinary rural boy. Solomon had a desire to become a teacher. To realise his dream of becoming a teacher, Solomon was forced to redefine and reposition himself from a disabled outsider to a determined and resolute scholar.

Solomon is also foregrounded as a tenacious person. Despite the challenges that learners within the rural context had to face to educate themselves (Kallaway, 2002) Solomon did not allow his background, or his physical disability, to be an indication of his mental capability. Negotiating his childhood disability differently in a challenging rural context, he refused to remain at the margins. Still, he used his intellectual capacity as a tool to educate himself, and it offered him added leverage in his quest to construct another identity for himself — that of an overcomer.

Solomon became an overcomer as a young boy who used his disability as a motivating factor to move beyond the disability identity that, for many years, had robbed him of a fulfilling life. As an adult, he became an overcomer when he spent many years working at a menial job. He did this so that the financial security that he was able to accumulate during this time could be used to eventually secure him a place at an institution of higher learning so that he could accomplish his dream of becoming a teacher.

5.3   STORIED VIGNETTE TWO

Happy: Dare to be a different kind of traditional Black rural woman

Figure 5.3 My interpretation of Happy's narrative constructed as a collage portrait

I created a collage portrait for Happy based on my interpretation of her as a poor but strong traditional, rural girl. It highlights her ideas about education and her tenacity to push herself as a learner to realise her full potential despite the inequalities that rurality has presented. The collage foregrounds the people in her life whom she considers important, such as her parents and school teachers, and her desire to emulate these important figures in her life.

5.3.1 Scenario one: From traditional girl to competitive learner

Happy is a traditional Zulu woman from Ixopo (in the KZN Midlands), who was raised in a low-income family: *Growing up was very difficult. It was not easy for my dad to raise 21 children.* The hardships experienced her parents provided the necessary grounding that she needed:

> *Both my parents were illiterate but had a big influence on my life. My father inspired me to learn. He always said, "Education is the key to a successful career and a rewarding future." I also learnt a lot from my mum. My mother was very hard working.*

According to Ceka and Murati (2016), if parents are involved in the educational development of their children, then usually the outcome of that interaction can be seen as positive and encouraging. As a child Happy learned essential lessons from her parents. She learned the value of hard work from her mum and the importance of education from her dad. These lessons were necessary for her identity formation. Through socialisation within the family, Happy learned what was required of her as a girl in a traditional Zulu family. As a girl, Happy also took on the role of a mother. In Africa, all women are regarded as being mothers, irrespective of whether they have any biological children or not (Nortjé-Meyer, 2017). As a daughter, Happy was taught how to take on the role of mutual mothering within the family (Hardy, 2009). Mutual mothering speaks of the non-maternal care afforded to a person or a group by a person other than the mother. Mutual mothering can cover aspects such as nursing, being a provider or general extended care of the group (Hardy, 2009). Happy engaged in mutual mothering within her family when she states: "*After getting my chores done, I had to cook for the whole family.*" This rural context, therefore, became an external force that, in Happy's own words, "*shaped my identity as a rural woman*" (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

Thus Happy took on the role of caregiver and nurturer from a very young age and did not shy away from these duties, which were challenging. Undertaking the tasks considered to be "women's work" carried some form of gendered meaning for her (Carter, 2014). Additionally, in later life, the roles she subscribed to as a child played a large part in shaping her self-concept and also influenced how she executed her duties as a teacher (Beal, 1994). However, while Happy took on the role of a mutual mother, she also went

beyond that to take on duties generally considered to be boys' chores. Happy's actions are contrary to Hadebe's (2010) finding that Zulu culture encourages the gendered division of labour, as in the Zulu tradition it was generally the boys who were expected to look after the family herd:

> *As a girl growing up in this community and family, I was also expected to herd cattle. My father had many cattle and watching them became the job of the girls. We had many brothers, but they would never take the buckets and fetch the water, let alone watch the cattle. My brothers were bigger, and were looking for jobs in the mines.*

Happy's actions here were a consequence of the "progressive destabilisation of rural livelihoods", which included, amongst other things, the migration of rural labour to the mines (Balfour, de Lange & Khau, 2012, p. 1). This view is supported by Rabe (2006), whose study focused on the effects of mining on Black mineworkers in the South African mining industry. She indicated that Black males were generally drawn away from their homes for lengthy periods. This separation resulted in the women in the family assuming duties generally considered to be men's work within the homestead. Happy nevertheless undertook those duties for the betterment of the entire family. Besides, undertaking these various activities assisted Happy in acquiring a range of experiences (Ceka & Murati, 2016), which also contributed to her drive and agency as a teacher in later life (Leibowitz, 2017). In addition, while Happy experienced challenges within her family, she also recounted that life at a rural school was not easy:

> *Our rural schools were not good. We had no chairs and tables. We did not have a proper blackboard or any other facilities. We did not have things like electricity, running water, sports fields or libraries.*

Happy's circumstances might appear to resonate with the reality of rural life, and the discourse of disadvantage around rurality (Roberts & Green, 2013). However, this deficit-based approach to rurality denies people within this context of their agency (Moletsane, 2012). Happy is an example of a rural girl who survived irrespective of the lack. She displayed resilience in the face of adversity when she said, "*You may not be able to control a situation but you can control how you handle it*". This statement confirms Randall, Clews and Furlong's (2015) finding that people living in rural areas are strong and

resolute, regardless of their constraints, about working at making a better life for themselves.

Despite the lack, Happy knew her capabilities as a learner. In a study on rural women, Sandys (2008) found that in several countries gender-based stereotypes and discrimination deny rural women access to education. However, Happy was a learner who believed in her abilities and had high self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979):

> *I was a very good learner and used to compete. I received first position in Standard 4 and 5. At the high school I was also performing well.*

According to Lent, Brown and Gore (1997), academic self-concept is the attitudes, opinions, and views that learners have about their academic performance and skills. It was a positive academic self-concept that stimulated Happy's agency for educational self-improvement and growth.

However, Happy's excellence as a learner and her dream of breaking the shackles of poverty through education (World Development Report, 2018) had to be put on hold when, in her words, "*at the age of fifteen, I met a boy and fell pregnant. This was a very big setback for me. I could not finish my schooling*". Happy's circumstances lend credence to Ramulumo and Pitsoe's (2013) finding that teenage pregnancies are a crucial obstacle to social development and academic success in South Africa. Despite this dilemma, Happy did not shy away from the responsibility of being a teenage mother: "*That year I had to leave school and stay at home. I gave birth to my son and had to raise my son.*" Happy's circumstances and actions echo Mhele and Ayiga (2014) finding that the high dropout rate amongst school girls can be attributed to pregnancy and birth. Happy, nevertheless, was able to reflect on her life rationally. Through this reflection, she was able to further shape her identity (Urzua & Vasquez, 2008) into one of a responsible adult: "*I messed up so now I must be the one to take charge of my life.*" This ability highlights her inner strength and provides a canvas to reveal the self, which in turn reveals aspects of her identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) as a strong, reflective woman.

For some learners, pregnancy can mean the end of their educational journey at school (Bhana, Clowes, Morrell & Shefer, 2008). Luckily for Happy, she was assisted by teachers who saw the capabilities that she possessed:

My teachers wrote a letter to my parents. They said I had so much potential and I must be given permission to return to school as soon as I had delivered the baby. Luckily in the middle of the following year, I went back to school and completed Standard Seven.

Many female learners who leave school to have their babies do not return after delivery, but Happy was able to defy the odds (Fihlani & Masombuka, 2007). She was able to do this because she had supportive parents and teachers in her life. Because she was intelligent and a go-getter, Happy made her mark on people that she had contact with and worked to bridge the two worlds of being a mother and being a learner (Bhana et al., 2008). On returning to school, Happy pushed herself to excel. Happy's perseverance, tenacity, agency and will to succeed saw her constructing herself as one of the best in the community, and as a person of influence:

At school, we used to have debates. I took part in debates and won. Thereafter, I started my own debating society at school. Also, my performance was based on hard work, commitment and dedication. I eventually completed my Standard Ten with a matric exemption. I was amongst the best learners, and I was known in the area and the community.

In this space Happy was able to juggle her identities of dedicated learner and responsible teenage mother. This easy slide from mother at home to learner at school and vice-versa illustrates the fluid sense of identity that Happy negotiates (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). This episode in Happy's life was a defining point that allowed her to see education as a stepping stone to her future success in life and allowed her to feel like a queen. In the setbacks that she experienced, Happy was able to recognise her priorities in life. She was able to shift her perspective of herself from just being a mother to establishing herself as a student of excellence.

5.3.2   Scenario two: From teenage mother to caregiving teacher

Being intelligent offered Happy added status and positive self-esteem:

When I got my exemption, my family, the chief and the community were excited. Everyone came home to visit and I felt like a queen.

Obtaining an exemption meant that Happy could register at university. Happy completed her schooling in South Africa at a time when learners completing the final year of school were awarded a Senior Certificate pass. The type of pass a learner received depended on which level the learner had selected to write the final exams. There were three levels: Higher Grade, Standard Grade and Lower Grade. The type of pass was also determined by an overall aggregate. Thus, to register at a university, a learner had to write the final matric examination and pass with a school-leaving certificate with a high aggregate to provide access to university. Entry into university was dependent on a learner obtaining the highest pass at that stage, which was a matric exemption (Wedekind, 2013).

However, Happy, had bigger dreams for herself after obtaining her exemption. She wanted to use her intellectual capabilities to serve as a stepping stone to a better life: "*I knew for me to win in this game of life and to provide for my child, I had to make the first move. I had to be an example for my child.*" Her decision to attend university marked a powerful moment in her life as an independent woman and a mother, for which she can claim personal agency. She knew that obtaining a higher education qualification could help to keep herself and her child out of poverty (Pandey & Kim, 2008). However, Happy's determination to study teaching as her first choice at a higher education institution was dealt a blow when her father could not raise the finances needed for her to enrol, and said to her:

> *Happy, you know the factory closed down. I don't have the money you need for varsity… I will give you three cows. You sell them at the dip and go fulfil your dreams.*

As a result of her financial difficulties, she was unable to register for teaching:

> *I used to take the cows every day to the dip. However, initially, nobody could afford to buy the cows and by the time the cows did get sold it was a little late… Sadly by the time I got to the University of Durban-Westville (UDW) my first choice, which was teaching, was full, so I took my second choice, which was a B.Admin. I still completed my B.Admin in 1999. However, from 2000 to 2001, I had no work but volunteered as a clerk at a school. During this time, I fell pregnant with my second son. While at the hospital giving*

birth, I saw an advert for trainee nurses. I applied and started working as a
nurse from 2005 to 2007

However, as Happy extended her account of the dilemma she faced financially; her resilient spirit and her desire to succeed at all costs were foregrounded. Despite working as a nurse, Happy still desired to become a teacher. It was a job she had performed from the time she was a learner in the classroom: "*The teachers used to rely on me. I remember Mr Ndlovu. He started saying, 'When I am not in class you are the teacher. Take my books and start asking questions*". The seed of being a prospective and a worthy teacher was planted in Happy and was reinforced by the actions of her own teachers at school (Heikkilä et al., 2012). Happy's schooling encounters formed an integral part of her teacher identity, and her experiences as a learner in the classroom carrying out the role of a teacher were embedded in her memories. They compelled her to become a teacher (Vuorikoski, 2003).

5.3.3   Synthesis of storied vignette two

Happy's vignette offers insight into a strong, rural woman who refused to allow her poverty and circumstances to dictate the kind of person she wanted to be, or to place limitations on what she could achieve. Happy dared to be different. Happy's narrative illustrates her views in relation to how women are located within rural society. Her culture dictated acceptable behaviour for men and women. Gender identity and culture have a symbiotic relationship, as they affect daily life, not only in the home and family but also in the community and one's place of work. The attitudes that Happy encountered during her life were based on internalised beliefs of the role of rural woman and also on appropriate gendered behaviour.

However, Happy's way of thinking about her role as a rural woman was transformed within this rural group setting. Within this group, her identity as a traditional rural woman who undertook chores gave way to a definition of herself as a competitor and a capable learner (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to SIT, the influence of the group and pressure to conform to the group often reinforce the notion that people's social reasoning, understandings and awareness are socially constructed (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). Happy, therefore, came across as a strong woman who overcame the difficulties of life to position

herself as a woman of worth. Happy proved that challenging circumstances could be overcome with a positive mind-set and with help from the people around you. These people were her family and school teachers.

5.4   STORIED VIGNETTE THREE

Bernell: Tenacious Indian girl
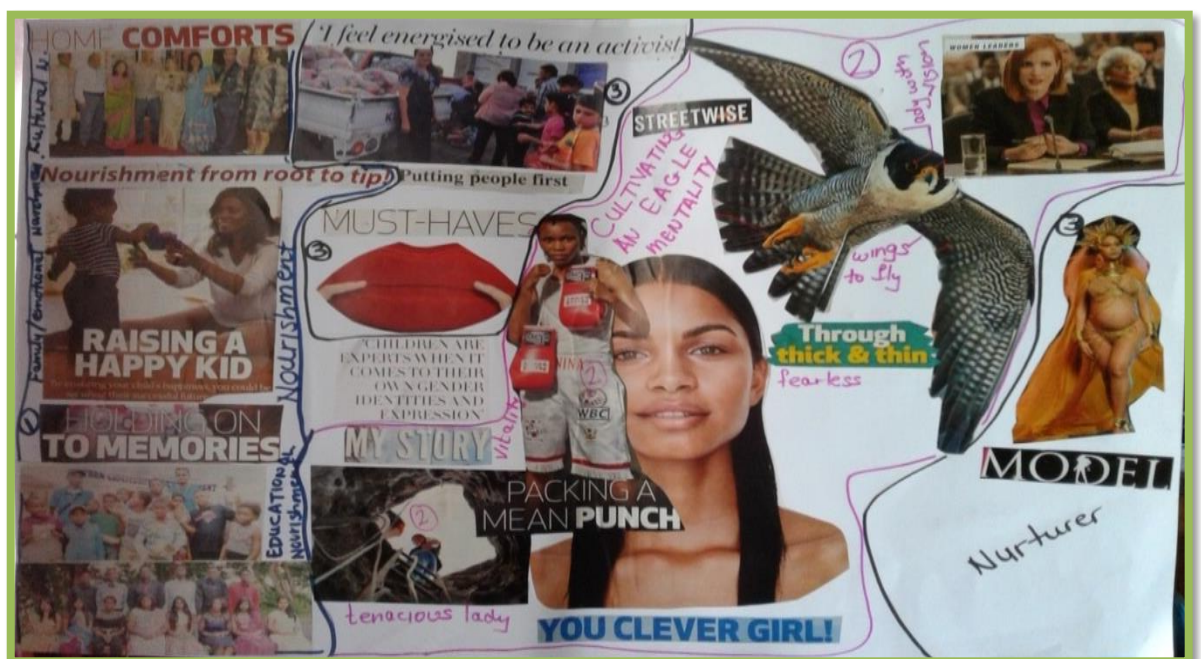
Figure 5.4 My interpretation of Bernell's narrative constructed as a collage portrait

I created a collage portrait for Bernell that represented her life as a girl in the township of Chatsworth. It foregrounds the various relationships she considered to crucial, from her family to her friends at school. It also offers insight into the strong person that she is. The collage offers my interpretation of Bernell as a tenacious, intelligent, young go-getter who is willing to fight for what she considers to be essential in her life.

5.4.1   Scenario one: From progressive girl to well-adjusted learner

Bernell is a 28-year-old woman. Her narrative account allowed us into the inner workings of her family and community. Like most Indian families, Bernell's family also experienced the pain of the Group Areas Act, forced removal, and relocation to the Indian township of Chatsworth during apartheid (Vahed, 2013). Chatsworth lies to the south of the Durban city centre and was the dumping ground for people of Indian origin who were forcefully removed from places such as Magazine Barracks, Clairwood, and Cato Manor, where they had resided for generations (Vahed & Desai, 2012). Bernell stated:

> *My family are from the township of Chatsworth. My grandparents had their roots in the Cato Manor area and were moved to Chatsworth as a result of the Group Areas Act.*

Although Bernell did not experience the ills of apartheid first-hand, the generational knowledge that was passed on through stories told by her grandparents was to play an important part in moulding her into a compassionate and caring young woman. The importance of telling stories is supported by Rodgers and Scott's (2008) finding that identity is both interpreted and constructed through the stories that someone tells of them and of others. Bernell recounts what was told to her:

> *I remember sitting at my nana's (grandfather) feet and listening to the stories that captivated my attention of life in Cato Manor before I was born. They lived in wood-and-iron homes. There was a sense of community. Indians, Blacks and Coloureds lived side by side in Cato Manor. What little people had they shared and watched out for each other. People mattered, families mattered. However, because of the forced removals, families were also torn apart and communities destroyed.*

This forced movement of people concurs with Vahed's (2013) observation that the uprooting of Indians under apartheid, often without compensation, from the once racially mixed area of Cato Manor, and their subsequent relocation to the township of Chatsworth, created physical, financial and social despair. However, listening to the stories her grandfather told provided Bernell with cultural capital and emotional nourishment which was to influence her identity (Rodgers & Scott, 2008) as a caring, nurturing teacher. She learned the importance of sharing and caring for people, irrespective of colour or creed.

Becoming emotionally aware was essential for Bernell's identity formation, because emotional awareness is imperative to serving and having a life of meaningful purpose (Deutschendorf, 2009).

However, Bernell's socialisation did not follow the normal course of most Indian families. According to Kulanjiyil (2012), Indian parenting can, at times, be authoritarian and can limit individual autonomy, which can be disadvantageous to the development of personal self-identity. The overprotective tendencies of many Indian parents can have the potential to inhibit personal agency, confidence and assertiveness. On the contrary for Bernell, she was allowed to discover life for herself. This journey was supported by her proactive parents and grandparents, who refused to limit her because of her gender. Instead, they imparted to her the spirit and fortitude to push against the dominant and repressive powers of patriarchy (Sultana, 2011), sexism (Charles, Guryan, & Pan, 2018), and race- and gender-based discrimination (Hutson, 2007), all of which can constrain women from appreciating their optimal possibilities. Bernell describes her grandparents' attitudes as follows:

> *Family is important to me. My grandparents, Leela ma, Cynthia ma and Dudu nana, played a huge part in my upbringing. They did not slot into the typical profile of Indian grandparents. When other grandparents were encouraging their children and grandchildren to get married, my grandparents were telling us to not think about marriage but concentrate on our studies.*

Bernell's family did not subscribe to specific socio-cultural trends that defined what an Indian girl should be and behave like. During the apartheid era, the period within which Bernell was born, patriarchy and sexism held sway in the South African macro-environment and within the home environment and communities at large. Women of all races were relegated to an inferior status to men. Women were also deprived of power and were not allowed to make decisions or take up leadership positions (Charles et al., 2018). As a result of patriarchal customs, it was uncommon for Indian women to enter the workforce (Hiralal, 2010). However, Bernell's family became a space where problematic notions of gender were transformed (Helman & Ratele, 2016), and which offered her a platform and context to practise her identity of being an independent, strong, capable woman (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). While other girls were restricted, Bernell "*was*

allowed to fly, but I had to soar on my own wings." As a result, Bernell's resistance to gendered behaviour and socialisation within this unorthodox Indian family were carried forward into her adult life (Carter, 2014), when she was forced to make sound decisions as a teacher within a deprived school context.

Bernell also grew up in a middle-class community that offered her economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1996a), and the luxury of a good home and social status. However, her secondary socialisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) was not restricted to her middle-class community. Bernell spent her primary school years attending a township school, despite her family living in a middle-class, formerly white neighbourhood with well-resourced ex-model C schools on their doorstep. Attending school in a more impoverished area of Chatsworth, along with the values instilled in her by her family, offered Bernell another perspective on life. They shielded her from being caught up in a money-oriented world (Chaplin & John, 2007):

> *The primary school was in one of the poorer parts of Chatsworth bordering the Welbedacht and Naickers Farm area. Most of my friends' parents were either unemployed or had average jobs. They worked in factories or engaged in farming and hawking. In primary school, most learners did not have certain "luxuries" I took for granted like transport to and from school.*

Bernell's grounding by her parents was instrumental in raising a well-balanced child. Such parental intervention concurs with Poraj-Weder's (2014) finding that materialism in young people is linked to parental attitude towards their upbringing. Despite coming from a middle-class family, Bernell still maintained her friendship with learners she regarded as "less financially fortunate" than her. This behaviour was important for her identity formation, because her location as a product of a middle-class family could have led to ideas, beliefs, and opinions that had the potential to create a barrier to her socialisation with people deemed less fortunate. By not giving in to class distinction, she was able to develop friendship bonds that transcended class and race.

In addition, Bernell was also able to reach out to Black learners: "*I also had Indian and Black friends. Race was never an issue.*" Bernell was able to respect the diversity that existed amongst the learners at her school in respect of race and social status (Lickona, 2016). Bernell's attitude, whether conscious or unconscious, had the potential to affect

her relationships with those around her. Thankfully, her approach was empowering and enabled her involvement with all her fellow learners (Lickona, 2016). Bernell's transition into high school, however, was met with a little apprehension. In high school Bernell became more aware of social class differences (Kraus & Park, 2014):

> *I attended a high school in Kharwarstan* [an area near Chatsworth]. *But it was not a familiar schooling environment. There were a lot of learners from affluent homes. However, being in primary school was easier. At primary school, it was not about branded clothes and shoes, the luxury cars, or about how much money your parents had. Money was not a criterion for friendship or to even judge others on. In high school, this became the norm. However, I made friends very quickly. I learnt to adapt and move with the times.*

Chaplin and John (2007), states that children begin to show signs of materialistic orientation from about the age of 8 to 12 years. According to Lindström & Seybold (2003), children become brand conscious during this phase and resort to demanding and displaying their branded items amongst their peers. Thankfully, Bernell's socialisation and habitus (Bourdieu, 1989) created a buffer for her, and this phase of her life was not allowed to become a source of identification and a means of acceptance for her at school. Bernell's experience in this new environmental context increased her awareness of and her reaction to "others" (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Bernell learnt to embrace change rather than to fear it. Her economic capital and the luxuries she enjoyed did not change her as a person. She was able to accept and relate to all she came into contact with, both those she regarded as "less fortunate" and those from affluent homes. Her ability to balance the issue of class and status was because of the firm grounding and socialisation she received as a child within her family.

5.4.2 Scenario two: From well-adjusted scholar to independent teacher

An eagle is said to be able to soar to great heights during a storm, but also land swiftly on the ground. Bernell, like an eagle, took the challenges when the storms came (Nairaland Forum, 2012). This characteristic of a high flyer is evident in Bernell:

> *I started university in 2008. I decided to do teaching. My mum was a teacher. She had a lot to do with my decision. For me, it was a new experience*

compared to school. At school, we were spoon-fed. At university, I was
expected to fend for myself. Here you are on your own. I had to get my game
on. I conquered university. I majored in commerce and science. I am hard
working. I received many merit awards and also the Gold Key and Dean's
commendation. It was in this space, coupled with my years of teaching and
mentoring within my family, that I learned how to be a strong woman. I
learned that if I wanted to progress in life, I had to rely on myself and make
good, reliable decisions.

Bernell's educational aspirations were related to her parents own level of education (Antze, 2011). Life at university was also a learning curve for Bernell. She had to adapt to a life of independence. This lesson too, she handled with finesse from experiences gleaned learned during her young life. Bernell regards herself as a capable person, and this perception was reinforced at university. This view of self-points to a strong concept of self. Bernell chose to study teaching at university, and her desire to do so can be traced back to the influence her mum had over her life. Nevertheless, Bernell also acknowledged other teachers who had played a part in her socialisation as a learner:

When I started schooling, I remember my classroom used to be full. Not full
because there were too many learners or because there was no space but full
of fun and excitement. Teachers were always motivated to work and made
do with what they had. Being a school in a poor community, they were forced
to either buy or make their resources. The teachers prepared us for high
school. I remember my primary school teachers. I remember them as
dedicated teachers. I learned a lot about being a proactive teacher from
observing my primary school teachers.

This concurs with Arikoski's (1999) study on teachers in Finland which finds that the teacher has a special significance in a learner's life at school, and assumes a noteworthy part in the life of the child outside of the child's home and family. For Bernell, her school memories, her mum and her teachers were a source of inspiration that had an impact on her desire to become a teacher (Heikkilä et al., 2012).

5.4.3 Synthesis of storied vignette three

Nourishment is described as the food necessary for development, health and good condition, and to help one grow stronger (Collins English Dictionary, 2014). The theme of nourishment is apt for describing Bernell's life. Bernell comes across as a well-grounded person who was nourished from root to tip by the different social, cultural, economic, political, historical and educational agencies that were instrumental in shaping her life as a young girl. Inferring from the above, SIT puts forward the idea that the social part of a person's identity derives from the group to which they are aligned and belong. For Bernell, it was the various contexts (Rodgers & Scott, 2008) of her family, community and school education. Bernell also identified with these groups of people, and synchronised her behaviour and thoughts to align with those of her family and the community within which she lived as a child (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Bernell displays vision, tenacity, strength, fearlessness and vitality; she is a go-getter (Nairaland Forum, 2012). These are characteristics that epitomise her as a person. Bernell's childhood discourses and meanings were reinforced through the family relationships that she was part of. Her parents and family were instrumental in her resistance to a gendered formation as a daughter (Hussain, Naz, Khan, Daraz & Khan, 2015). Thus, for Bernell, her socialisation influenced the scope of meanings which formed the foundation for her "person" identity (Carter, 2014). Her childhood grounding became the bedrock for her strong personality as an adult.

5.5   STORIED VIGNETTE FOUR

Shamilla: Doing obedient Indian wife differently

Figure 5.5 My interpretation of Shamilla's narrative constructed as a collage portrait

I created a collage portrait for Shamilla to represent my understanding of her life as a girl from a poor working-class background who grew up during the apartheid period. The collage highlights the various people in her life, like her parents and her husband, who influenced the decisions she took with respect to her early marriage to her decision to become a teacher. The collage highlights the financial difficulties she experienced that were to have an impact on her life. However, there are also depictions of the hope, courage, resilience and love that epitomise Shamilla's life.

5.5.1 Scenario one: From traditional girl to conservative housewife

Shamilla's narrative highlights a life that has been influenced by her family circumstances. Like most Indian families, Shamilla's family also felt the ills of apartheid (Scott, 2013). Shamilla spent her formative years in the Indian township of Chatsworth:

> *My name is Shamilla. I don't recall my early childhood, but from what my family told me we used to live in Bayside, an informal fishing community in Clairwood. In Bayside, my father earned a living as a fisherman. As a result of the Group Areas Act, we were forced to relocate to the Indian township of Chatsworth in the 1970s. After moving to Chatsworth, my father started "formal" work because travelling to Bayside from Chatsworth to carry on fishing was too expensive.*

The Bayside community was a fishing community. Between 1963 and 1975, about 25 000 people, mostly Indian people, were moved from Bayside to Chatsworth or Merebank (Scott, 2013). For Shamilla being the child of a working-class parent in Chatsworth was not easy (Vahed, 2013). However, while the family experienced difficulties, they saw education as a means out of poverty:

> *It was challenging for my parents financially, but my father made sure we went to school and got an education. That was their priority. I have three siblings, and all three went to school.*

According to Carrim (2015), Indian parents may feel that granting their daughters permission to continue with their education may result in their daughters not being committed to their marriage, home and family. On the contrary, Shamilla's parents urged her to continue with her education. This was to provide the foundation for her future educational endeavours. While Shamilla's parents provided her with the initial grounding, she took the baton and reached further to take advantage of this opportunity to establish herself as a student of excellence:

> *I tried to do my very best at school. I performed well. I was hard working. I knew I could find a good job with a good education. It was difficult being poor. I could not imagine living my whole life struggling.*

Shamilla's viewpoint contradicts Van Rensburg's (2013) finding that poverty appears to keep individuals in a state of mental servitude from which they cannot escape. Shamilla

refused to fit this description. She was willing to do something about this predicament, and this can be gauged from her attitude to education. Shamilla came across as a motivated learner when she said: "*Back then if we were writing an exam, our lunch breaks were used to study.*" This internal drive to succeed was intrinsically motivated. Shamilla wanted to get out of the grip of being poor, and education was one way to do that (Kilty, 2015). However, Shamilla's road to further educational attainment post-matric took many sharp bends and turns. On completing her matric, she made a decision that moved her away from the world of work and also her dreams of becoming financially independent:

> *I got married straight after finishing high school. I know my husband from my school days. My parents were strict and did not approve of me meeting my husband. So we decided to get married. I became a housewife and had my children.*

Finding a spouse and getting married is held in high esteem in Indian culture, and is believed to be blessed when the parents choose or approve of the spouse for their child (Aguiar, 2018). Shamilla elected to make this decision on her own. However, her family, through their socialisation, encouraged her to adhere to cultural expectations of what it means to be a woman within an Indian household (Carrim, 2015). She therefore put her educational aspirations on hold, since conforming to social norms and obtaining social approval was of greater importance to her (Banerjee, 2008). Shamilla gave prominence to her identity of a conservative girl, and in this way gained the support of her parents (Terry & Hogg, 2001). Hickey's (2006) study on Indian family socialisation patterns and implications for American school education, found that Indian daughters were taught obedience and respect from a young age. Additionally, they were required to respect their elders and their parents' authority. If a daughter acted autonomously of parental authority, then she could be considered disobedient by other family members and the community (Ahmed & Carrim, 2016).

However, being married with children comes with its own set of challenges. According to Ahmed and Carrim (2016), Indian tradition and culture are patriarchal, and they prescribe that the husband must be the financial provider for the family. Women are required to see to the running of the family unit, take on supportive roles as family caretakers, and perform the function of child nurturing (Sharma, Chakrabarti & Grover, 2016). However, the rising cost of living is regarded as a critical driver for women

entering the labour market (Tengimfene, 2009). Shamilla and her family did not go unscathed:

> *Financially things were difficult. Everything cost more and the money my husband earned did not meet our expenses. I decided to do something to earn extra cash. First, I tried dressmaking, but it was not for me. I then went into hairdressing. I was building a clientele and had quite a few male clients.*

Embarking on this phase of her journey initially proved successful, but this success was short-lived. As a woman, Shamilla decided to place limits on her career ambitions and personal attainments in favour of her family (Carrim, 2015). Additionally, traditional Indian culture requires wives to be dedicated and compliant in relation to their husbands (Rastogi & Bansal, 2012). The pressure of what it means to be a married woman played out as a result of her husband's behaviour:

> *My husband was jealous. He did not want me to touch other men's hair. I had to abandon this choice as I had a good marriage and I didn't want this to come between us.*

Shamilla's marital status and her husband's expectations can be seen as a barrier to her career advancement (Carrim, 2015). Mavin (2000) identified marital status as an essential factor that has a bearing on a woman's career advancement. This is bolstered by research that found that conflict between a woman's job and her companion is an obstacle to women's professional success (Namayandeh, Yaacob & Juhari, 2010). Shamilla, in this simple act, also prioritised her identity as a housewife above her identity as a working mother, and complied with the prescribed notion of what it means to be an Indian wife (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). She gave in to the traditional Indian cultural idea that women are to be devoted and subservient to their husbands (Rastogi & Bansal, 2012).

5.5.2   Scenario two: From proactive wife to qualified school governing body teacher

Unsworth and Parker (2003) describe proactivity as self-instigated future learning that people may engage in to improve their situation or themselves. Shamilla's life seemed to be on a roller-coaster ride from the time she married. She experienced seasons of bliss

and hardship. As a wife, she experienced difficulty when her husband lost his job on two occasions. It was during these times that she took the initiative to find a solution to the problem. On the first occasion, Shamilla became proactive and "*decided to do the ECD (Early Childhood Development) course at the ABH (Aryan Benevolent Home). I worked there as an assistant teacher and earned about R300*". Shamilla's progression from housewife to working woman was fluid (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Her identity was not fixed on being a housewife and mother only, but was negotiated and changed as a result of her life experiences (Flores & Day, 2006). The second opportunity for Shamilla to be proactive presented itself in 2002 while she was working as an assistant teacher. She "*came across an advert for an SGB* (school governing body) *teacher paying R1000 a month*". Shamilla was fortunate to get this job, as "*this was almost three times the salary I had been earning.*" It was within this space that Shamilla saw the means for a better life and the possibility for change, not only for herself as a woman but also for her family. It was within this space as an unqualified teacher that Shamilla took the next big leap:

> *I took all the money that was being saved for a holiday and decided to further my studies with the hope of becoming a permanent teacher as soon as possible. So for me it was back to school, back to studying. I then enrolled for the NPDE 3 (National Professional Diploma in Education) course. I completed it in two years with distinctions.*

It was within the working space called school that Shamilla found the agency for her future educational enhancement. Her position had changed from just sole financial provider to fully qualified teacher. In identity theory, salience has been recognised as the possibility that identity will be set in motion in a situation (Stryker, 1980). For Shamilla, that situation — being known as a capable learner and teacher — presented itself when her husband lost his job. Shamilla realised that her identity was not fixed on being a housewife and mother only, but was multiple and shifting, and was shaped by external forces (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

5.5.3 Synthesis of storied vignette four

This vignette foregrounds the dominant gender, class and race identities that emerged from the process of working with my participant. Shamilla grew up in an Indian family.

The family as the primary social institution is considered an essential component for the progress of the individual, as well as for society and humanity. Of all the factors that influence Indian family life, gender plays a vital role in making the family a place of paradise or pain (Chowdhury & Patnaik, 2013, p. 58–59).

Accordingly, Freund (1995) found that traditional Indian parents did not allow daughters out of their homes to engage in employment, and that the Indian family adhered to a patriarchal approach that encouraged women to become efficient wives and mothers. Being part of the in-group within her family, conforming to the expectations of the social context within which she lived, doing what was proper, and following the expected norms showed Shamilla's willingness to align herself to the way she was expected to behave (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Through self-categorisation, Shamilla depersonalised herself as an independent woman to conform to an in-group prototype of a conservative Indian woman (Carrim, 2015). Hence, for Shamilla, adhering to group norms had an impact on her behaviour by denying her agency for individuality (Turner, 1991) and a sense of justice.

As an Indian daughter, Shamilla fulfilled what Rao, Vidya and Sriramya (2015) describe as women's roles. These were the roles of obedient daughter (initially) and then faithful wife and nurturing mother (later). Hence, Shamilla's narrative foregrounds the ideas and principles she considers essential. It speaks to her primary socialisation within her family (Chowdhury & Patnaik, 2013), who valued education. Her social world and her relationship within her family were instrumental in shaping her disposition and outlook on life (Bourdieu, 1996a). Her experiences also highlight a vulnerable but resilient woman. Lasky (2000) defines vulnerability as a fluid sense of being that may be set in motion as a result of a critical incident and may lead to a feeling of anxiety and distress, leading to the person feeling powerless over their situation. Her vulnerability was brought on in different contexts, and was influenced by her different trying experiences. Although Shamilla experienced vulnerability, she also displayed resilience in the face of adversity and stress. This resilience was manifested in the manner in which she adapted to the demanding situations that she found herself in, and her ability to bounce back from her painful experiences.

5.6   STORIED VIGNETTE FIVE

Bianca: The rich, relegated Indian daughter

Figure 5.6 My interpretation of Bianca's narrative constructed as a collage portrait

I created a collage portrait of Bianca to represent her life as an Indian woman within a conservative family. I attempted to represent those incidents that had brought her pain and also those that had offered her a sense of hope and purpose. For Bianca, the areas that seemed to cause her emotional distress, a feeling of invisibility, and a lack of voice, were her female status and having being born into a patriarchal family system. Her family became a space where she was not afforded the recognition and acknowledgement she so craved. The areas that offered some comfort were her middle-class status, which enabled her to afford certain luxuries in life, and her ability to mingle with the neighbourhood children.

5.6.1 Scenario one: From invisible rich child to visible learner

Bianca was born into a middle-class family that did not experience the full impact of apartheid. This privilege placed her in a different class in the community. Class, according to Denmark and Paludi (2008), speaks of one's level of success in securing a certain quality of life and lifestyle, and standard of living. Bianca's lifestyle and quality of life were evident when she stated:

> *My family did not feel the ill effects of the Group Areas Act and forced removals as other Indian communities did. My grandfather was wealthy. He owned a sand business. He also owned a piece of land next to the Umgeni River. From here, he used to harvest sand which he sold to the Whites who were building their homes at that time. Our family had the biggest house in the Mayville area. It was one of the few brick homes with over four bedrooms. We were the only family that had the flush toilet system. All other homes had the bucket system.*

According to Seekings and Nattrass (2005), Black South Africans under apartheid were prevented from upward occupational mobility and were dispossessed of property. Conversely, for Bianca, her middle-class status and the associated economic capital played a vital role in her family's upward mobility (Ferrante, 2011). Their financial standing ensured that they were not condemned to the inhumane sanitation method that the majority of Black, Indian and Coloured people in her community were forced to use. It also shows that her experiences as a middle-class child were contrary to what most people of colour experienced during apartheid (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005).

While Bianca's family's class status provided her with certain frills in life, she also recollected that the very same family contributed to her feelings of invisibility as a girl child. Bianca was born into a "*religious, orthodox, Hindi-speaking family, where having a male child first was important*" for the transmission of social and religious traditions to the next generation (Chowdhury & Patnaik, 2013). For Bianca, her family was her first socialisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) into the gender transmission of what it means to be a woman. It was embedded in her upbringing (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014):

> *My brother after me is called Roshan. My grandfather from what I heard had the biggest party ever because he was a boy. I, however, did not receive any party. When I was born, my grandfather did not even want to come and see me.*

Within Indian families, male children are favoured over female children. This practice was also prevalent within Bianca's family, who saw a male child as a blessing whose birth should be celebrated, as opposed to a female child who is considered more of a burden (Sekher & Hatti, 2004). Thus, for Bianca, her family was a vital space in which the concept of gender was developed. Bianca's identity formation emerged from the meanings that were ascribed to her in relation to her gender (Jacklin, 2001), and fostered in Bianca the notion that men are socially dominant. Additionally, as a girl child Bianca's voice was suppressed, preventing her from voicing her concerns within the family:

> *We were never allowed to complain but had to handle our issues on our own. I remember my mum's shoes flying or the wooden spoon coming out if we complained. A few times, we did complain, but it never affected my mum that we had been disciplined by the teacher.*

According to Couldry (2010), it is not only important to have a voice but to have a voice that matters. Despite having the trappings of luxury, Bianca saw herself as an invisible, voiceless soul and an emotional pauper: "*I hardly ever told my parents when I was disciplined.*" Bianca's circumstances at home prevented her from voicing her concerns, and she was not allowed the opportunity to represent herself or give an account of her experiences. According to Tacchi (2012), being denied the potential for voice is being denied a fundamental aspect of human life. To have a voice, according to Couldry (2010), requires recognition. Bianca did not have this. She was made to feel a sense of guilt when she longed for a moment of personal attention when her mum "*would say we must have done something wrong to have been punished by the teacher*". The lack of parental understanding concerning the use of corporal punishment was demoralising for her as a growing child, but was instrumental in shaping her identity as a disciplinarian.

While Bianca felt the pain of invisibility within her family circle, she created an ingenious way to seek out the recognition, attention and position of power that she craved. Bianca formed an emotional bond with the neighbourhood children (Rodgers & Scott, 2008) through the medium of make-believe play. This parallel make-believe space possibly allowed her freedom of expression, with the hope that high-level dramatic play would result in intellectual, social, and emotional benefits for her as a child (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009):

I remember when I was young, my granny and others used to say that I was going to be a teacher because when we played with the neighbours' children, I would get them to sit and teach them with a ruler in my hand. I was a disciplinarian even then. My sisters used to say that I was the boss despite being the youngest of the sisters.

Bianca, in her acts of play, adopted the identity of disciplinarian (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The ruler became her magic wand and provided her with power over the other children. Her make-believe classroom became the space where she became the boss. Within this make-believe space, she claimed her voice as a person of "value" and power. However, a negative component of this act was Bianca's use of power and the image of dominance she exerted over her friends with a ruler in her hand. Instead of being a shared space of equality between her as a make-believe teacher and her learners, her make-believe space became a space of dominance and control. Hence, Bianca's perception about education and her attitude to school education was formed early in her life as a young girl. Furthermore, Bianca also became aware very early in her life about the issue of race. Bianca learned about her racial and ethnic identity from her family and her experiences in society:

I was born in Sea Cow Lake in the 1960s… I attended a primary school in the area called the Narain G. School. It was a state-aided school. The school had only Indian children. We did not have an opportunity to meet learners from the other race groups. The teachers were also Indian.

Bianca lived in a community where interacting and associating with people of other race groups was restricted (Jacklin, 2001). Her personal experiences therefore closed her off to racial integration. This act of separating people according to their race resulted in a loss of varied and rich interaction between children of different race groups. Bianca's early childhood experiences were to have a profound impact on her as an adult and, more importantly, as a teacher. Her knowledge and experience around race reflected the stereotypes and belief system dominant in society (Deaux, 2001) — that people should be separated along racial lines (Vahed, 2013). These personal dispositions (Bourdieu, 1996b) were to play a key role in her later life as a teacher, as her perceptions were located in her psyche, such as the beliefs, values, attitudes, biases and prejudices (Evans, 2007) that were instilled in her by her family and the context within which she lived.

5.6.2   Scenario two: From visible disciplined learner to self-sacrificing teacher

Bianca admitted that although in her make-believe world she had wanted to be a teacher, in reality she "*loved being a counsellor*" and at university she had "*wanted to do psychology*". But the loss of her family's financial capital when her grandfather lost the sand business resulted in changes to their economic status. This monetary loss created innumerable difficulties within the family, forcing her mum and dad to go out and seek employment. Bianca's family's financial crisis, and how it affected her educational choices, was not a unique situation. According to the Council on Higher Education (2016), the majority of South African families are unable to fund a dependant at university with just their income. They need assistance. Bianca's family was no exception, and she then made an intelligent decision at this crucial point in her life. As Bianca recalls:

> *It was challenging for my parents financially with three children at university. I then decided to switch to teaching because if you were doing teaching, you could get a bursary. I also loved teaching.*

Letseka and Maile (2008) cite lack of student funding as the chief cause for student academic failure and progression challenges. However, Bianca refused to allow this setback to define her life. She used her agency and determination to make the switch to teaching, with the knowledge that the switch would keep her at university, address the financial difficulties she was experiencing, and ultimately ensure her academic success. Although Bianca's financial difficulties were a factor in her choice to study teaching, a question that is worth asking is, "what is it that makes a person choose teaching as a profession after they have devoted a considerable part of their lives to school as learners" (Heikkilä et al., 2012). The answer for Bianca was her life spent at school as a learner, as it was a part of her life she remembered fondly. According to Määttä & Uusiautti (2011), individuals tend to recall the best and the most experiential circumstances, uncommon conditions, and individual or unconventional educators. Bianca had an idea of what a worthy educator should be like. Although she admitted to fearing these educators and being physically disciplined by them, her overall lasting impression was that "*the teachers were very caring*". The impression she gained from noticing and observing her educators during her years at school allowed her to see teaching as a profession that was worth pursuing, as she too felt that she wanted "*to be a mum and offer love to my learners at school*". Hence, Bianca's professional identity as a teacher was established through

dynamic and holistic interaction between the different aspects that governed her life as a child, her life as a learner, and eventually her choice to become a teacher (Olsen, 2008).

5.6.3 Synthesis of storied vignette five

Race, class, and gender were intricately intertwined to inform Bianca's everyday experiences. These dominant social identities were important, because these were critical what constituted Bianca's construction of self, and how it was constructed. As a child, Bianca's middle-class status under apartheid offered her certain privileges that were denied to other Indian, Black and Coloured people. However, the economic advantage she experienced as a member of a middle-class family became secondary to the marginalisation she felt as a woman. The pain her gender created for her outweighed the benefits she obtained from her class background. Her gender played a vital role, as it denied her the recognition she craved within a patriarchal family where men were favoured over women.

Bianca's narrative, therefore, foregrounded the important theme of invisibility within the family. It was within this family space that she longed for recognition. In relation to race, Bianca's identity as a middle-class Indian girl at an all-Indian school was vital in shaping her identity as a teacher. It also informed her ability as a teacher to cope with the social and racial integration of learners at her school, and the difficulties she experienced as a result. However, we also see the potential that Bianca had as a strong, determined, motivated learner at school, and also as an adult. She used her internal motivation to open up spaces for success when she decided to enter the field of education and pursue teaching as a means to authenticate her belief that she could be a good teacher.

5.7 META SYNTHESIS OF CHAPTER FIVE

The analysis has revealed specific characteristics that were instrumental in constituting the teachers' constructions of self in relation to their social context. These were the dominant class, gender and race identities that were intricately woven into the lives and experiences of my participants. While I have explained race, class and gender and the impact thereof on my participants, it must be noted that these constructs have not been

represented as compartmentalised constructs, but have been shown to be interwoven, and have intersected and transversed the lives of my participants.

For the participants, class influenced the kinds of experiences they had. Two of the five participants were from middle-class families, and they were fortunate to have the "good" things in life. In contrast, the remaining three had to navigate their financial constraints, at times resulting in negative consequences for their progress. Gender socialisation was also crucial for my participants' meanings of self. Their gender socialisation foregrounded the idea of what it means for one to be a man or a woman within certain contexts. The gendered constructs of womanhood were especially evident for the female participants, and it was clear how women were perceived to be homemakers and mothers as opposed to working women. Some of the female participants, at times, gave in to the gender expectations of what a woman should do and how a woman should behave. This decision was based on their internalised beliefs about appropriate behaviour for one's gender in relation to societal expectations. However, they nonetheless also transgressed the limitations placed on them to emerge as victorious adults and competent teachers.

All five participants were also affected directly or indirectly by race. During apartheid, the Group Areas Act (Ndimande, 2016) prohibited the intermingling of people based on race, and also determined where one was allowed to reside. For two of my participants, rurality was a reality that helped shape their identities. The contextual realities of rurality, coupled with their racial subjugation as poor Black people, were a catalyst for their lack of the necessary financial resources to pursue higher education. It was also the motivation they needed to spur them on to make a difference to others. The issue of insufficient resources to pursue higher education was also applicable to those teachers who were raised in the township of Chatsworth. Despite the challenges that all the participants had faced as learners in the rural or township context, they refused to remain at the margins of society. Using their intellectual capabilities, they persevered in the face of such adversity to educate themselves.

This chapter has presented the personal meanings informing each teacher's sense of self. As the master carver of the research, I endeavoured to unearth the various aspects that helped the teachers to shape their meanings and understandings. My analysis revealed that the teachers' primary socialisation within their families, and their secondary socialisation, which included their educational space at school and the social-cultural,

economic and political spaces within the community, was instrumental in their identity formation. The influence of their families on their social, emotional and financial lives and meanings that they fashioned was important for their construction of self. Critical in both spaces, however, were the relationships that the participants cultivated from childhood to adulthood with their parents, siblings, teachers and community members, which further aided in their meaning making and identity construction. The analysis also allowed me to appreciate each participant as a strong individual who knew what they wanted in life, who embraced their possibilities, and who also confronted their cracks and ripples, their challenges, head-on.

As the master carver of this research, I believe it is those very cracks and ripples, the real hardships and dilemmas that they experienced throughout their lives, the lessons that they learned along life's journey, coupled with the support from their families and communities, that allowed them to forge their characters as teachers. It is these same lessons learned through life that enabled them to enact their teaching role within their different school quintiles and diverse contexts. It is the wounds, challenges and possibilities that they experienced that have given meaning to their lives that have been the foundation of their legacy. Without them, they would have had a significantly reduced legacy. Their cracks and ripples, the challenges from their past, have uniquely qualified them to serve in the present as teachers. It is also true that as teachers we all have our cracks and ripples. It is these personal meanings, as told through their stories, that inform their identities as teachers within the present South African educational climate (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

5.8   CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided insight into the second research question: *What personal beliefs and meanings inform the teachers' professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles?* Critical moments of the teachers' lives were extracted from their storied narratives, which were presented in Chapter Four, and these moments were presented in the form of storied vignettes. These vignettes revealed specific characteristics that were instrumental in constituting the teachers' constructions of self in relation to their social context. These were the dominant class, gender and race identities that were intricately woven into the lives and experiences of my participants. Through the analysis conducted

in this chapter, I realised that the teachers' personal meanings and understandings that influenced their perspectives as professional teachers, were also shaped by their daily practices as a result of their experiences at schools classified according to different school quintiles. The following chapter therefore explores how teachers located at schools within these different school quintiles negotiate their personal-professional identities and meanings of self within those dilemmatic contexts, and how school quintiling shapes their daily practices.

CHAPTER 6

CARVING THE THIRD LAYER OF MY MASTERPIECE ON TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented a response to the second critical question: *What personal beliefs and meanings inform the teachers' professional identities in the dilemmatic context of school quintiles?* The analysis of this question provided insight into the teachers' personal-professional meanings of self within their broader socio-cultural, economic, historical and political contexts. It also provided insight into the various agencies of socialisation, such as the family and the social context, which were instrumental in their constructions of self. Chapter Five also foregrounded the dominant meanings of class, gender and race that were instrumental in shaping the identities of the teachers in my study. This chapter builds on the preceding chapter, because it offers a continuation of the second level of analysis. It seeks to address the third research question: *How are teachers' personal-professional identities negotiated in everyday dilemmatic situations of school quintiles?*

Since the inception of democracy in 1994, the government has attempted to bring about parity within the education system by using the quintile categorisation of public schools. One method to achieve this was through providing state funding based on the socio-economic status of the community in which the schools are located (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019). Schools based in the most impoverished areas are categorised as Q1 to Q3 schools and are no-fee schools. Those schools in wealthier neighbourhoods are categorised as Q4 and Q5, and are required to charge school fees on the assumption that the parents can afford to pay (Hall & Giese, 2010).

This chapter aims to explore how teachers located within these different school quintiles negotiate their personal-professional identities and meanings of self within their school contexts. It looks at how school quintiling shapes their daily practices, and also it focuses on how their personal lives influence the choices made in their professional lives, and vice versa. This is in accordance with Saayman and Crafford's (2011, p. 7) view that

"there is a feedback loop between social identity and personal identity as social identity becomes an expression of one's identity and vice versa". They further indicated that "people are continually redefining themselves and renegotiating their identities by engaging in identity work" (Saayman & Crafford, 2011, p. 5–6). As such, this chapter examines how the teachers draw on particular personal meanings, beliefs and values to negotiate their role as teachers within the context of specific school quintiling. To assist with this task, I once again draw on the metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* for inspiration and deeper understanding. I want to present teachers' work as more than just a technical exercise. I also wish to show the organic nature of their work, and how they draw from their personal lives to enact their professional roles as teachers in a way that exceeds their role as curriculum deliverer.

To achieve this, I have divided my analysis into three sections that metaphorically reflect the structure of *The Jadeite Cabbage*. Section A, which is the cabbage head, represents the personal-professional identity of the teachers, and the wooden backrest represents teachers' work. This section will address the teachers' selected personal-professional everyday work experiences within their school contexts. To assist in analysing this section, I once again draw from Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory (SIT) and Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory (TIT). These theories will be used to understand the teachers as personal and social beings interacting with others — parents, learners and teachers — within the social milieu of the school context as they carry out their teaching work.

Section B, which is the wooden clawed foot at the front, represents the particular school quintile from Q1–Q5 and teachers' experiences that are produced by that quintile context. In analysing this section, I draw from Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework to explain the different types of dilemmas that teachers may be confronted with.

Section C represents the space between the cabbage head (teachers' personal-professional identities), the wooden backrest (teachers' work) and the wooden clawed foot at the front (school quintiling), and critical incidents and dilemmas that arise for which teachers are required to find "solutions" by drawing on their biography and socialisation. However, in negotiating their dilemmas within the context of their school quintiling, teachers are called upon to consider the aspect of care — both care of their learners and also care of

self. To address this aspect, I draw on Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model. This model asks specific pertinent questions, such as, "What is the critical incident?" It also looks at what forces are at play that influence the types of experiences the teachers have. These forces can be linked to various aspects that teachers need to consider when negotiating the dilemma, such as professional ethics, legal issues or policies, organisational culture, the institutional context, public interest, society and community, the global context, the political framework, and economic and financial contexts (Ehrich et al., 2011, p. 13). The ethical dilemma decision-making model unpacks the values that underpin the decisions teachers take to negotiate their dilemmas. The model also focuses on the choices made, and the implications of those choices on the teachers themselves, as well as their learners, other teachers, and the community at large (Ehrich et al., 2011). I also created a diagrammatic representation for each participant explaining their subjective dilemmatic space, illustrating the choice that was made to negotiate the dilemma in an ethical way.

SECTION A

6.2 TEACHERS' EVERYDAY LIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR SCHOOL QUINTILES

In section A I have selected from the teachers' narratives one pertinent incident per participant that speaks to his or her personal-professional lives and work as teachers. This section illustrates both positive and negative responses to the challenging situations emanating from their work as teachers. Teachers have as their primary task the delivery of the curriculum. The first three scenarios offer positive portraits of teachers who engage in more than just the technical work of curriculum delivery, and who step up and act as compassionate caregivers and role models to the learners under their care. The last two scenarios, on the other hand, present some of the adverse responses from teachers to individual experiences, especially in relation to the issue of racial integration at their schools.

Figure 6.1 *The Jadeite Cabbage* **representing teachers' personal-professional identity and work**

6.2.1 Teachers' positive responses to their professional role as teachers

6.2.1.1 The confidant father-teacher: I am their father at school. I know how to keep their secrets

According to Seepamore (2016), distance parenting has implications. One of the common causes of distance parenting in South Africa is the level of poverty and unemployment found in rural areas, which forces the primary breadwinners in families — usually fathers — to become economic migrants (Russell, 2008). As a consequence, many households are headed by mothers (Bhana et al., 2008), and the absence of fathers from their children's lives can have serious implications for children (Nduna & Jewkes, 2011).

In this study, Solomon realised that absent fathers are unable to offer guidance and become emotionally involved in the lives of their children (Contreras & Griffith, 2012). Solomon also understood that parental separation can have detrimental consequences for

learners, such as increased behaviour problems (Millman, 2013), absenteeism from school, teenage pregnancy, and involvement in criminal activities in the absence of parents as authority figures (Pantea, 2011). As a compassionate, concerned teacher, Solomon desired to be a good role model to his learners. This attitude was developed as a consequence of the care and support that he received within his own family. Solomon appreciated that his in loco parentis role required him to create a warm, loving, supportive environment at school (Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Moolla & Sylvester, 2014) to compensate for the absence of the father figure within the home environment of many of his learners:

> *Most learners' parents work in the city and only come home at month-end. So as a teacher, the idea of family is encouraged as we have learners, and we need to be mothers and fathers to the learners. As a father, I am different from the way my father was towards his children. My father loved us, but he also kept us at arm's length. Learners can come to me. I know how to keep their secrets. I am their father at school.*

Teachers, in general, have as their primary task the education of the child, which focuses chiefly on curriculum delivery and not on being surrogate parents (Billing, 2016). However, in his position as a teacher, Solomon was able to act as a trusting and caring father-figure to his learners and offer them support. For Solomon, the identity of substitute father played a pivotal role in his life and called for a re-negotiation of his role as a teacher (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). According to Dermott (2008) and Morman and Floyd (2006), fathering entails engaging in caregiving and nurturing activities, providing warmth, and encouraging cognitive activities, amongst others. While stereotypical images from the media and government of male primary school teachers would suggest that men should distance themselves from the nurturing and caring side of teaching (Billing, 2016, p. 10), Solomon refused to be pigeonholed into this narrative. He involved himself with the nurturing and caring aspects of teaching, and did not only function as a deliverer of the curriculum (Ehrich et al., 2011). In his caring, connected approach to his learners, Solomon transgressed those barriers that represented his relationship with his father to create new meanings of what an approachable, involved father should be like. Solomon became a different kind of "teacher-father" to his learners, and in the process created his narrative of care.

6.2.1.2 The inspirational teacher: I am an example of what can be achieved

According to the Collins English Dictionary (2014), if a person is described as being an inspiration, it means that the person can make other people want to do or achieve something. Happy can be described as an inspirational teacher who strives to motivate the learners at her school:

> *Now that I work in this rural school, I am able to inspire the learners to look beyond their conditions and circumstances, by showing an interest in them and motivating them. I encourage them to see education as a means for a better life. I encourage them to do their schoolwork and assist them even during my break because I know once they go home they have other household duties to perform.*

Happy understood that the home context can shape the learning experiences of the learners. She took measures to provide an environment for her learners that were conducive to learning. Happy's practice and response as a teacher was shaped by the context within which she teaches (Bredeson, Klar & Johansson, 2011). She understood that rural learners are considered to be one of the most marginalised groups of learners (Mgqwashu, 2016) and are also classified as disadvantaged (Czerniewicz & Brown, 2014). She therefore felt compelled to provide help to her learners because she had lived through some of the challenges they faced (Smit & Scherman, 2016). However, despite the difficulties she experienced, she managed to write a new narrative for herself. She stated: "*Now I am an example of what can be achieved if you work hard*". Happy has a positive self-concept. She proved her resilience as a learner, and was now doing the same as a teacher, and she positioned herself as a role model to be emulated. She desired to inspire that same determination to succeed in her learners (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

However, while Happy aimed to inspire her learners, she also endeavoured to be a compassionate teacher. The importance of compassion has been highlighted by Alrubail (2015) and Conklin and Hughes (2016). Happy also chose to undertake her role as a teacher with compassion and care (Ehrich et al., 2011):

> *I am friendly and approachable. As a teacher, I am a life coach. I give moral support. We work with children with different problems. I also listen to their concerns. My aim is to bring change in the lives of the children through education.*

I am passionate about this job. I am also a caring person. I worked as a nurse. My training as a nurse has helped me a lot to diagnose some problems that the learners may be facing. I then refer them to the clinic or hospital for treatment. I also used to invite the nurses from Prince Mshiyeni hospital to school to do check-ups because the children cannot afford the cost of transport to travel to the clinic or hospital. The clinics are not near, they are far. I do all this with love because I know what it is to face hardships in life. I shared my story with them. I told them about my life and how poor my family was.

The multiple positions of role model, caregiver, nurse and coach that Happy took up in her role as a teacher have their roots in her upbringing. Happy drew from the well of her past experiences as a learner, a mother and a daughter in a rural area to enact her role of teacher at the school. Her compassionate spirit compelled her to reach out to her learners and embrace them, not just in her role as teacher but as a person who has walked the road that they presently journey on. Happy opened up her life to her learners as an example of how hardships and difficulties are part of the complexities of everyday situations. Still, a compassionate, loving hand can help to make the problems bearable. This approach is supported by Dryden-Peterson and Sieborger's (2006, p. 401) finding that a person's narrative has particular power in reaching an audience on a "human level" in South Africa. Happy drew on her habitus and biography (Bourdieu, 1986) to position herself as someone who had triumphed over the difficulties that life had thrown at her. Her caring spirit, which was fostered through socialisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), was called into play as a compassionate teacher at school. Happy had the opportunity to foreground her nurse identity within the educational space. In doing so, Happy created a space for being a different kind of teacher to her learners. She showed her learners that she was concerned not only about their educational attainment, but also about their health and emotional welfare (Ehrich et al., 2011).

6.2.1.3 The compassionate teacher: I know they feel bad wearing torn stuff

Compassion is defined as a feeling of empathy and respect for those one considers less fortunate. It also involves understanding the suffering that others are experiencing and experiencing a deep desire to do something to alleviate their plight (Wolpow et al.,

2011). Bernell can be described as a teacher who cares for her learners' welfare and who is willing to offer love and assistance to her learners beyond her call of duty (Mart, 2013). Bernell is a teacher at a Q3 school located in a semi-rural context where poverty is prevalent. She states that "*many parents are unemployed, poverty is rampant and life is difficult*". This difficulty is acknowledged by Statistics South Africa (2014), who report that 58.6% of poor people live in rural areas in South Africa. This statistic indicates that rurality and poverty generally intersect in the South African context, and the consequence for education is that rural schools still continue to suffer (Maringe, Masinire, & Nkambule, 2015). These schools are not only marginalised but are also capital-poor (Paxton, 2015).

As a result, Bernell showed herself to be willing to engage with the school community because she believed that her professional responsibility was not confined to the four walls of the classroom but extended beyond them (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004). As a teacher at a rural school, Bernell realised that while rural societies may lack economic capital, learners at schools still require their social and emotional needs to be met (Ehrich et al., 2011; Toch & Headden, 2014). Bernell, who was once a learner herself, also knew that learners need inspiration, hope, optimism and care (Jensen, 2009). She also knew that teachers are also called upon to develop learners' self-esteem (Bruno & Joyce, 2014). Bernell attempted to be such a teacher:

> *The learners are impoverished. Some have torn uniforms or no school uniform. Some come with school shoes that are ripped open. I know they feel bad wearing torn stuff. I have made it my duty to collect the jackets, jerseys and shoes of the children in my family at the end of the year. These are still in good condition. I have also asked family members to sponsor a school child their uniform. I now distribute these to needy children at the school. Although our school has a large learner population, and I know I cannot help everyone, the least I can do is assist the learners in my form class.*

Being an empathetic teacher, Bernell realised that poor self-esteem can have an impact on a child's sense of worth (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). However, having good self-esteem means you do not feel inferior, but feel that you are as good as everyone else (Bauman, 2012). Bernell learned the importance of care and compassion for others from her family, and as a young person she displayed the same

empathetic and nurturing qualities as a teacher. This emotional awareness was essential for her identity formation, since emotional awareness is vital to serving and having a life of meaningful purpose (Deutschendorf, 2009). Bernell, by observing the despondency of her learners, was listening to the needs they communicated non-verbally (Noddings, 2006). Therefore, for Bernell, her actions were not just about torn uniforms, but went deeper to address how the children felt emotionally. Her actions demonstrate how, according to Miller and Moran (2012), a teacher is instrumental in influencing a child's self-esteem, which can affect the child's behaviour and achievement. In this act of providing clothes, Bernell showed her love and concern for the learners in a tangible way. As a teacher at a deprived school, she understood that she had a moral responsibility to contribute to the children's welfare (Weissbourd, 2003).

6.2.2   Teachers' adverse responses to their professional role as teachers

The above three scenarios positioned the teachers as compassionate and nurturing role models. However, I want to highlight the teachers' struggles with fixed notions of race and how it shaped their relations within the classroom.

Ramsamy (2007) discusses how South Africa has often been described as a rainbow nation that encompasses a diverse population of people with socio-cultural, language, gender, race, class, and historical and political differences. These differences therefore necessitate that teachers, especially those in racially integrated schools, value the diversity that exists within school institutions and also learn to appreciate the differences that might exist within the walls of the classroom (Vandeyar, 2010). However, some teachers may experience a dilemma, a personal crisis, if they are uncertain about how to negotiate their positioning on racial integration at schools, or if they are unwilling to acknowledge that racial integration is a fundamental human right of every citizen in South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 2019). I also believe people's beliefs, biases and prejudices ultimately influence their actions (Tajfel et al., 1971). It is therefore crucial to look at the emotional baggage that shapes teachers' understanding of racial integration and diversity in schools, which ultimately influences their work as teachers.

6.2.2.1 The indecisive teacher: The Black learners feel we are weak teachers

Shamilla, a teacher at a Q4 school, had to confront the issue of race at her school when she was required to lead within the classroom. In this instance, the question of race presented a challenge to her as an Indian teacher. Shamilla expressed the problem that she experienced when it came to discipline-related issues, especially if she had to discipline the Black learners. Shamilla felt disappointed that when she had to discipline Black learners, it became more than an issue of discipline, and began to take on a racial dimension:

> *When the children misbehave, and I discipline the Indian learners, I may get resistance from the learners and some parents, but it is about discipline issues. However, if I have to discipline the Black learners, then it becomes a race issue. I call the Black teachers to address the learners then. Surprisingly, if the Black teachers discipline them, it's okay. This situation is becoming bad because the Black learners feel we are weak teachers, and they know we have to call the Black teachers who are not always available.*

Shamilla experienced the diversification of the school and the inclusion of learners who may be ethnically, economically and socially different, as a challenging process (Heystek, 2009). This challenge was evident in her uncertainty about where to stand on the issue of disciplining the Black learners. She seemed to battle with her inability to actively intervene and bring about a significant modification of the learners' unacceptable behaviour. When experiencing such behaviour, Shamilla chose to be non-confrontational: "*We then back off. We don't want to be accused of being racist.*"

The teachers were confronted with many challenges as a result of issues that arose from the diversification of their schools. Shamilla struggled to handle the discipline-related issues she was confronted with. By categorising the learners as Black learners and Indian learners, she has already used race as a means to group her learners (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The mere fact that she talks about learners of different race groups creates a separation, and situates one group as insiders (those she can control) and the others as outsiders (those she cannot control) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In this racially integrated space of her classroom, Shamilla could have used her position as the teacher to act as an agent to implement social equality instead of being an agent of conflict (Sayed & Novelli,

2016). By calling in the Black teachers to control the Black learners, she is not promoting inclusiveness amongst her learners, but is instead encouraging racial division. Moreover, subjecting her Indian learners and Black learners to different treatment could have replicating effects, as the Indian learners of her race group could begin to identify with her and emulate her actions, which could result in the perpetuation of divisive, exclusive tendencies (Makoelle, 2014). Instead, Shamilla could have used her classroom as a space in which to set and achieve the long-term goal of encouraging the Black learners to see her as a teacher for all races, rather than being fixated on her short-term goal of achieving and preserving a "normal" classroom state of "disciplined" learners (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2013). As a product herself of an unequal society, where apartheid denied her equality, Shamilla could have used critical pedagogy to address the issue of discipline and race in her classroom through the teaching of social justice (Davis & Steyn, 2012). She could have used pedagogies that draw on collaboration, critical reflection and problem solving to foster a more just classroom where all her learners could be treated equally (Balwanz & Hlatshwayo, 2015).

6.2.2.2 The blindsided teacher: The Black learners have no respect for me

Bianca entered the teaching profession before racial integration at schools had been implemented and spent her initial years of teaching under the previous apartheid dispensation. At that time, she taught exclusively Indian learners: "*At that stage, the school had only Indian learners and Indian teachers*". With the dawn of democracy, the demographics of learners at her school were radically transformed, and for the first time she experienced a scenario where the learners were different in terms of race, class, cultural groups, language and socio-economic status. Bianca, a teacher at a Q5 school, also had to address the issue of race at her school. She recalls:

> *Over the years, teaching has changed drastically. When the House of Delegates was dissolved, we were allowed to admit children of all race groups. Sadly, when this happened, we saw an exodus of Indian children from our school. Now our school population is about 1300. In total, we have about 15 Indian children.*

The above excerpt foregrounds Bianca's challenges in relation to racial integration at her school. Words such as "drastically", "sadly" and "exodus" are strong words that offer us

a window into her frame of mind. These words highlight her feelings as a result of the diversification of the school. These feelings could have been the result of her habitus and personal experiences that were at odds with those of the learners, who were different to her in respect of class, race, and culture (Rios, 1996).

In addition, her preference for only teaching Indian learners were inferred when she considered the exodus of Indian learners to have been a sad event. However, Bianca needs to understand that such feelings are dangerous in post-apartheid South Africa, where equal access to education for all learners is advocated (Msila, 2007). While apartheid education practised racial exclusion, the new democratic government has used education as a vehicle to transform teaching and to promote the values of a new democracy (Msila, 2007). Because Bianca teaches at a school that is racially diverse, she is expected to foster unity above all, and to embrace the transformative potential of education, as the aim of education is to uphold equality and non-racism (Cappy, 2016). There should be nothing that should prevent Bianca as a seasoned teacher from behaving in a considerate, compassionate and democratic way. While racial integration is one concern, her greatest struggle is that:

> *The learners only like Black teachers. For me, I think that the learners have no respect for the Indian teachers. They will scream and shout and misbehave.*

According to Segalo and Rambuda (2018), in South Africa the common law principle of in loco parentis permits teachers, as the caregivers in the school environment, to discipline learners. They also indicated that the ill-discipline of learners is widely prevalent, and that many teachers bemoan the discipline-related problems that they face. Bianca feels that the ill-discipline of the learners at her school is directed towards her simply because of her race. This creates in her a level of discomfort when she says: "*I am not happy about being treated this way.*" Her feelings are in accordance with Zembylas's (2010) finding that teachers experience significant discomfort when they have to address increasing diversity and multiculturalism within their educative spaces. However, Zembylas (2010) states that discomfort has proactive and transformative potential. Drawing on Foucault's (1994) ethic of discomfort, Boler and Zembylas (2003) assert that an ethic of discomfort should invite teachers to review their deeply ingrained ideas and beliefs about themselves and others. This introspection was necessary for Bianca, who believed that she deserved respect simply because of her race.

Bianca needed to understand why the learners reacted to her in the way they did. She needed to understand her learners realise that she has to listen to the learners and read their actions. She had to understand what in her actions was pushing the Black learners away from her. In this way, Bianca can create a space to foster good relationships and endeavour to appreciate differences and eliminate gender, race and class stereotypes (Kanpol, 1994). As a seasoned teacher, Bianca could have implemented some remedial measures to address the disrespect she felt was being directed at her, rather than taking the victim approach. She could have used the classroom as a space to offer a lesson on racial tolerance. As a teacher, Bianca needed to be literate and sensitive to other cultures, and to find ways to cope with teaching learners from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Lingam, 2012). Bianca's view on racial integration was limiting rather than enabling.

6.2.3   Synthesis of Section A

Being role models and compassionate teachers are important requirements for all teachers from all quintiles. However, my analysis revealed that the teachers in the lower quintile schools, which were located in rural contexts, expressed being role models and compassionate teachers as being of greater importance to them as teachers. A likely reason for this could be that that people in deprived settings still endure the ills of apartheid, where lack of care and compassion for them still exist (Blose & Naicker, 2018). This lack, therefore, requires teachers to step up and be a source of assistance to the learners under their care. This echoes Bullock's (2015) finding that "a good teacher is more than just an educator; the characteristics that make a good teacher are complex and extensive" (Bullock, 2015, p. 1). This sentiment is further supported by Vlad and Ciascai (2014), who stated that the relationship between a teacher and learner is not confined to the role of teaching but encompasses the teacher's ability to take on social responsibilities.

The analysis foregrounds the roles that the teachers in the lower quintile schools embraced. They positioned themselves as confidants, as compassionate teachers, as a source of inspiration, and as empathetic and nurturing teachers. Both teachers from the Q1 and Q2 schools had received their school education in a rural context, and now taught in the same context. They knew first-hand the difficulties that such a context can present.

They had experienced the ills of apartheid education and were in the best position to offer a ray of hope to learners within the rural context who still experience the legacy of apartheid. These teachers leaned on their past experiences as a motivating factor for their desire to be role models and a source of encouragement to their learners. The teachers presented themselves to their learners as someone worthy of emulation, especially at a time when teachers were coming under the spotlight for misconduct (Magwa, 2015).

What also became apparent was that these teachers were evolving and developing within the context of their respective school quintiles. Their teacher identity was shaped and re-shaped in their interactions with their pupils and with other teachers, and was negotiated through the experiences that they had. As teachers they took on other sub-identities such as role model, compassionate teacher, and so on (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) when negotiating their school context.

The section also highlighted the question of the racial integration of learners at schools. An analysis of the data revealed that the issue of racial integration of learners was highlighted by two of the Indian teachers in this study. The two Black teachers who taught at Q1 and Q2 schools did not describe any issues related to racial integration at their schools because racial integration was not relevant to their context. The rationale behind this could be that the lower quintile schools primarily cater to a single race — the previously underprivileged and deprived Black population (Timaeus, Simelane & Letsoalo, 2013). This view was supported by a study undertaken by Naidoo, Pillay and Conley (2018), who looked at the management and governance of racial integration in public secondary schools in Gauteng. They found that White, Coloured and Indian teachers were required to tutor racially diverse learners. "however, township (Black) schools remain largely excluded from the process of integration (Naidoo, Pillay & Conley, 2018, p.13). In this sense, the evidence pointed to the teachers occupying tentative positions concerning racial adaptation and integration. My analysis revealed that the two Indian teachers in the upper quintile schools experienced anxiety and distress as teachers when having to confront the growing racial diversity and multiculturalism within the context of their schools (Zembylas, 2010).

SECTION B

6.3   TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF SITUATIONS AT SCHOOLS AS A DILEMMA

This section will look at particular school quintiles and at the teachers' experiences and responses to the difficulties and possibilities that particular school quintiling presents. In Figure 6.2 the clawed foot represents the different school quintiles from Q1-Q5. Each school quintile presents particular challenges which the teacher has to address.

B: DILEMMATIC SPACE FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXTUAL DIMENSION OF TEACHERS' WORK WITHIN Q1-Q5 SCHOOLS

Figure 6.2 The cabbage base representing school quintiling

6.3.1 The optimistic teacher: We have to learn to achieve academically despite the lack of resources and infrastructure

Optimism is described as a feeling of being hopeful about the future or the success of something in particular (Collins English Dictionary, 2014). According to Cherrington (2017, p. 72), "schools are described as ideal settings for nurturing and fostering children's hopes and the teaching profession as rooted in hopefulness". Solomon, a teacher at a Q1 rural school, could be described as an optimistic teacher who was hopeful for a bright, prosperous future for his learners, despite literature pointing to conditions in rural areas being tough (Bryant, 2010). Solomon was no stranger to the difficulty and scarcities that the school and its immediate surroundings experienced. As agreed by Fransson and Grannäs (2013), teachers' work is complex work and Solomon's task within this dilemmatic space was evident:

> *We don't have an admin block. The soccer field is just sand with bumps, potholes and stones… I teach in a poor community. The community cannot help the school with finances. Most of the people in the community have menial jobs. Some parents are also unemployed as a result of some of the companies closing down.*

The above scenario is supported by Lindeque and Vandeyar's (2004) finding that the rural environment experiences a lack not only of human resources but also of learning and livelihood resources. Hlalele (2012) and the HSRC (2005) also indicated that people living in rural areas face substantial economic and social challenges. Solomon now seeks to disrupt this narrative and inspire a sense of hope for his learners at this deprived Q1 school. Solomon believed that if he could offer his learners hope within this desperate situation, they would have something to strive for. They would have a desire to move beyond that narrative of lack and want. Solomon tried to revive and build hope in the learners by offering the school space as a place where the learners could get assistance, and feel safe and cared for (Cherrington, 2018b).

> *I don't want the learners at school to go through life not knowing that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow if you try hard enough. I have high hopes for them… I have to make them see the potential they have. Although conditions are adverse at rural schools, I still make sure teaching goes on… We have to learn to achieve despite the lack.*

According to Cherrington (2018a, p. 1), "hope is contagious: once ignited it gains momentum, and is self-sustaining". Solomon understood that hopeful educators create energy that produces ripples of hope for others (Lopez, 2010). While he had a desire to ignite hope in his learners, he went one step further by giving feet to hope:

> *I try to bring in the newspaper from home every day so that learners can be updated on current news. We read about the success stories of other schools in the community. We read newspaper articles that show rural learners and schools that have achieved a 100% pass rate in the matric exams. I also invite parents from the area who engage in entrepreneurship to motivate our learners through assembly talks.*

According to Kaufman (2011), characteristics such as determination, grit and passion are more often than not given prominence, while hope is undervalued. Solomon, however, drawing from his childhood experience of being a disabled boy, understood that hope is the vehicle that allows people to approach a problem and develop a mind-set that assists them in realising their goals. The person who has hope has will and determination, and Solomon proved to be a teacher with determination (Kaufman, 2011). He wanted to instil in his learners the notion that success would come if you were prepared to work for it. However, he did not simply point the way to success but took the journey with his learners, as he was actively involved in facilitating the learning that he advocated. Solomon, attempting this, understood that despite being at a poor Q1 school, the learners' success was his success also (Coe, Aloisi, Higgins & Major, 2014).

6.3.2 The committed teacher: Our school does not have piped water so I make sure that the JoJo tanks are filled

Happy was a teacher at a Q2 rural school that had been upgraded. Despite the renovations, not all the facilities could be utilised and enjoyed as there was still no plumbing at the school. According to the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) (2011) report, 2 327 schools have to rely on the municipality to deliver water to them. Happy's school was one such school. The lack of service delivery and the deprivation experienced within this dilemmatic space evoked strong emotions in Happy, who commented, "*I am a rural girl, but when I came to this school, I cried*". Happy, who

was also a qualified, trained nurse, knew the consequences of sickness and disease on the health of the learners at school. She understood that insufficient water and poor sanitation can result in disease (World Health Organization [WHO], 2009). Happy understood that being at a Q2 school with limited access to water, poor hygiene conditions, and intense levels of person-to-person contact, creates a high-risk environment for children and staff, which can exacerbate children's particular susceptibility to environmental health hazards (WHO, 2009, p. iii). While such a dilemmatic situation could lead to frustration and despair amongst teachers, Happy attempted to make a difference in the lives of the people in the school community:

> *We have a truck that delivers water at the school. I make sure that I am there to receive the truck and ensure the JoJo tanks are filled. Not all the teachers will come, but I make sure I am there. If we don't, then the kids and teachers won't have water and will suffer. Learners are also taught the importance of preserving the water that we have and also how to harvest the water from our school roofs by making sure that the gutters are free of leaves and weeds. This can then be applied to their homes as well because the area does not have service delivery.*

Happy's actions demonstrated the traits of a proactive person, as she took control and aimed to bring about change (Parker & Collins, 2010). Happy felt that taking the initiative was vital, because as a child she had shared the same experiences as her learners. As a child, she had also to fetch water from the river. Her ongoing experiences reinforced these early home and school experiences as a teacher within a similar educational context. Now, as teacher, Happy again experienced the marginalised position of rural schools within the broader field of rural society. Paxton (2015) described rurality as life on the periphery. As such, it is away from the seat of power and is therefore often neglected. However, Happy took a challenging trying experience and turned it into a positive outcome for the betterment of all at the school. As a motivated, proactive teacher, she attempted to be a solution to the problems (Dobre, 2013).

6.3.3 The resourceful teacher: Our school lacks teaching and learning resources so we make our own resources

Bernell was a teacher at a Q3 rural school that had been upgraded but still lacked some essential resources. This scenario is supported by the Wits School of Governance (WSG) and Bridge (2016), who found that the marginalisation of Black schools during apartheid resulted in a lack of resources, and that "in South Africa, the combination of resources and ability to use them, is strongly mediated by the physical, social and political context" (WSG and Bridge, 2016, p. 20). According to Bernell:

> *The school has been upgraded but lacks learning and teaching resources. There are no libraries in the area to support learners' learning outside school. So we make our own resources at school like simple charts that the learners could understand. I teach English, so I started a small reading corner in class from the books I had at home. Chart paper is expensive, so I asked family and friends for table calendars and used the reverse side to make charts. My charts have pictures, and I include both isiZulu and English words so that the learners can make the link between the images and words. This is displayed in class for quick reference for the learners. We show interest in the learners learning.*

Bernell displayed through her actions that the learners were her primary focus. Despite the school having limited resources, she did not allow these limitations to become a hindrance to her delivery in the classroom as a teacher. Bernell equipped herself with the tools necessary for creating a positive learning environment, as she realised that her classroom should display resources that engage the learners (Sithole, 2017). She understood that if the classroom climate was not carefully considered, it could result in harm and be disadvantageous to learners who come from poor backgrounds. As a teacher who was once a learner herself, she appreciated that "there is nobody who wants to learn in a dull environment that disadvantages the achievements of learning goals" (Henson, 2012, p. 81).

6.3.4 The contributing teacher: Our school does not have finances so for years we have painted our own classrooms

Shamilla was a teacher at a Q4 school that was considered wealthy despite poverty being rampant amongst its learners. The resulting lack of finances due to a low retrieval of school fees meant that the school was unable to maintain itself as its expenses were high. This forced Shamilla and the other teachers to engage in fundraising to help maintain the school:

> *If it were not for the fundraising our teachers do the school would have collapsed a long time ago. Our teachers have to be involved in every fundraising effort as our school fees retrieval is also low… For years we have painted our own classrooms… We have to buy the paint and also pay for the painter. I had to also buy a broom for my class and cleaning supplies. We even dust and clean.*

The HSRC Annual Report (2010) that looked at experiences at different school quintiles supported Shamilla's experiences at her school. The report established that

> when we focused on Q2–Q4, we found that while the quintile system was able to identify schools at the absolute ends of the spectrum, the schools in the middle often looked similar and appeared better or worse in unexpected ways. (HSRC, 2010, p. 49)

The report further stated that "data about school resources and school composition revealed that those in the higher quintiles (Q2–Q4) might have resource needs as high as, or even higher than, in Q1" (HSRC, 2010, p. 49). Shamilla, despite these dilemmas, became a proactive, generous teacher at school. Proactivity can be divided into proactivity to build up one's vocation (i.e. profession-arranged proactive conduct) and proactivity to enhance one's work unit (i.e. work-unit situated). Proactivity to strengthen one's work unit can result in the introduction of positive changes that can benefit the whole workspace (Wu, Parker, Wu & Lee, 2017). Shamilla took the initiative to make a difference to the personal learning space at this Q4 school. This action included using individual effort (Frese & Fay, 2001) to buy the paint and taking charge of her classroom (Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Her actions were also self-initiated, and were not as a result of an instruction given to her (Parker & Collins, 2010).

Shamilla was an SGB teacher who earned a meagre salary compared to full-time teachers. Despite her meagre earnings, Shamilla's generous nature birthed a desire to assist using the little she has. She yearned to make a difference to the personal space of her classroom. Shamilla's sense of agency became a powerful tool for bringing about meaningful changes to the school (Parkison, 2008), as she knew that the ageing school building could create obstacles to effective teaching and learning (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008).

Shamilla's action is supported by Bahman and Maffini (2008), who find that establishing and maintaining an encouraging, positive, safe and healthy learning environment must be a top priority for educators. Shamilla realised that if, as teachers, they did not make an effort to create a positive environment, then a great deal of educator effort would be wasted. In this sense, instead of placing restrictions upon herself as a teacher and limiting herself because of her school's contextual conditions, she recognised her ability to bring about change. She, therefore, acted to transform the dilemmatic space situation into a positive one. In this process, Shamilla took responsibility to construct her own professional life at school and her professional identity as a proactive teacher (Rodgers & Scott, 2008).

6.3.5 The concerned teacher: Our school has limited funding so learners need to cultivate a sense of ownership of their school space

Bianca was a teacher at a Q5 school. However, maintaining the school was becoming problematic because of the reduced funding to Q5 schools and because the parents of learners at the school were reluctant to pay school fees:

> *Most of our learners are from impoverished homes. They don't pay their school fees. So as teachers we have to engage in fundraising to keep the school afloat… We have to also contribute financially to our school feeding scheme as our school does not qualify for the free nutrition programme. However, despite the challenges we face with discipline and behaviour, these are still our learners. We have children that come to school without lunch. We have teachers, parents, learners and NGO's that try to help by either contributing or helping to make the lunch at school. We get no help in this regard from the department because of our quintile ranking.*

Bianca felt that the school ranking did not match the reality at the school:

The way the school looks fits the Q5 ranking. If someone walks into our school, they will think that we are a wealthy school. But if they look at the learners and where they come from and how they dress then you cannot equate the learners to the buildings. With the school being ranked so highly (Q5) it becomes difficult to get funding from the department despite the school catering for learners from poverty-stricken homes.

Bianca's experience resonates with Collett's (2013) findings in a Q5 school where teachers felt that the incorrect classification of their school had increased their workload. The staff felt that being ranked Q5 did not take into consideration the poverty levels of the surrounding community. This view was supported by Dass and Rinquest's (2017) finding that schools ranked Q4 and Q5 have to not only cater to needy and underprivileged children, but also find ways and means to maintain themselves. This view was also supported by Basil Manuel, president of the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA), who explained the dilemma as follows:

Even at the lower amount of R965 a learner, the subsidies paid to no-fee schools were substantial […] If a no-fee school has 1 000 learners, that comes to nearly R1 million. But think about your school in Chatsworth or Phoenix, which is categorized as quintile five, but serves a community with a very low income base. With the subsidy they are receiving (R179), they cannot pay the water and lights and owe hundreds of thousands of rands to the municipality. (Jansen, 2015, p. 1)

At Bianca's school, the refurbishment or replacement of furniture was necessary as a result of vandalism:

Our school has good furniture. However, it pains me that the learners have so little regard for the furniture. Some learners will write their names and scribble on the tables. I have made it my duty to allocate a table to a child. That child is now responsible for the furniture. If there is any writing, then it has to be cleaned. I have to consider the learners who will use those desks in future. Learners also need to learn to respect their space. We can't be stuck as a school only ordering new furniture from the department. Our LTSM (learner-teacher support material) allocation is not substantial. The school needs other equipment as well. What the

department does not supply, we have to buy on our own from school funds. It's not like we have unlimited funds.

Bianca appreciated that if learners damaged their school facilities through graffiti, then it showed a lack of respect for their education as they were more interested in senseless acts of destruction than seeing the school as a venue to better themselves (Hazelton, 2018). Bianca, as a concerned teacher, understood that the school should be a haven for her learners to acquire knowledge, and she therefore addressed this dilemma head-on. Bianca realised that a child who lacks respect for school property will lower the quality of life at the school (Hazelton, 2018). Bianca was not only interested in the learners in her class but in all future learners who may need to use the furniture. In this act, Bianca was teaching learners the importance of responsibility. Bianca did not let this destructive sort of behaviour slide, but took the opportunity to teach and instil in the learners a sense of ownership for the school property. She knew that being a Q5 school meant that funding from the department would be limited and the burden would fall on the teachers to see to the upkeep and running of the school. Bianca therefore presented herself as a concerned teacher who was committed to seeing to the welfare of the schools and the learners, and was trying to bring about awareness in her learners about the importance of school property.

6.3.6 Synthesis of Section B

An analysis of Section B reveals that the teachers in this study acted decisively by engaging in activities to bring about meaningful change in the school context within which they were positioned. What my analysis points to is that the teachers did not blame the government, district or schools, but used their initiative to bring about positive and meaningful changes to their school context, sometimes at personal cost to themselves. These teachers need to be commended for their proactive behaviour at a time when schools should have been upgraded so that teachers can get down to their core function of teaching. The teachers recognised that school education is experiencing a crisis on many fronts. They, therefore, decided not to wallow in their misery but to make changes for the better. What was also highlighted was that context can influence identity. The identity that emerged for each teacher was dependent on the context within which he or

she was located. The teachers were able to reconstruct their identities from being just technical implementers of the curriculum to resourceful, concerned, compassionate teachers who displayed an emotional connection to the pupils under their care. These identities were foregrounded because as reflective teachers they were able to acknowledge that the schooling context that they found themselves in demanded a reshaping of their identities.

This section has also highlighted the importance of imparting values to learners and of encouraging learners to take ownership of and responsibility for the school and its resources. This action is essential, as learning to take responsibility as a person is not confined to the classroom and the school context, but is also part of life as well.

SECTION C

6.4 TEACHERS' SELECTED ENCOUNTERS WITHIN CHALLENGING SCHOOL SPACES AND THEIR NEGOTIATION OF THAT DILEMMA DRAWING ON THE ETHICS OF CARE

This section examines specific selected encounters that the teachers identified as presenting a dilemma. These experiences within the dilemmatic spaces at their schools arose out of their professional work as teachers and out of the context of school quintiling. The teachers within these dilemmatic situations drew from their personal lives and biography, and past and present experiences, to surmount the challenges that they faced by drawing on the ethics of care. Addressing the critical dilemmatic incident required the teacher to engage in several steps, as outlined by Ehrich et al. (2011). To assist with this section, I created a diagrammatic representation for each teacher, unpacking their personal-professional dilemmas and the choice that was made to negotiate the dilemma in an ethical way. These portraits were created to offer a visual representation, a picture of the teacher's dilemma as pertaining to their school quintile. Each portrait has also been captioned to highlight how the teachers addressed their dilemmas.

Figure 6.3 The space between the cabbage head and base representing the point of ethical reasoning

6.4.1 The networking teacher: I go to the neighbouring schools and ask for help when there is no electricity supply

I titled the visual portrait of Solomon in Figure 6.4 "Solomon: The networking teacher", as he took it upon himself to network with the neighbouring schools when he was faced with the challenge of an unreliable electricity supply at his Q1 school.

SOLOMON: THE NETWORKING TEACHER

THE DILEMMA
Poor infrastructure

THE DILEMMA
Unreliable electricity supply

ULTIMATE CHOICE
Went to the neighbouring school for help
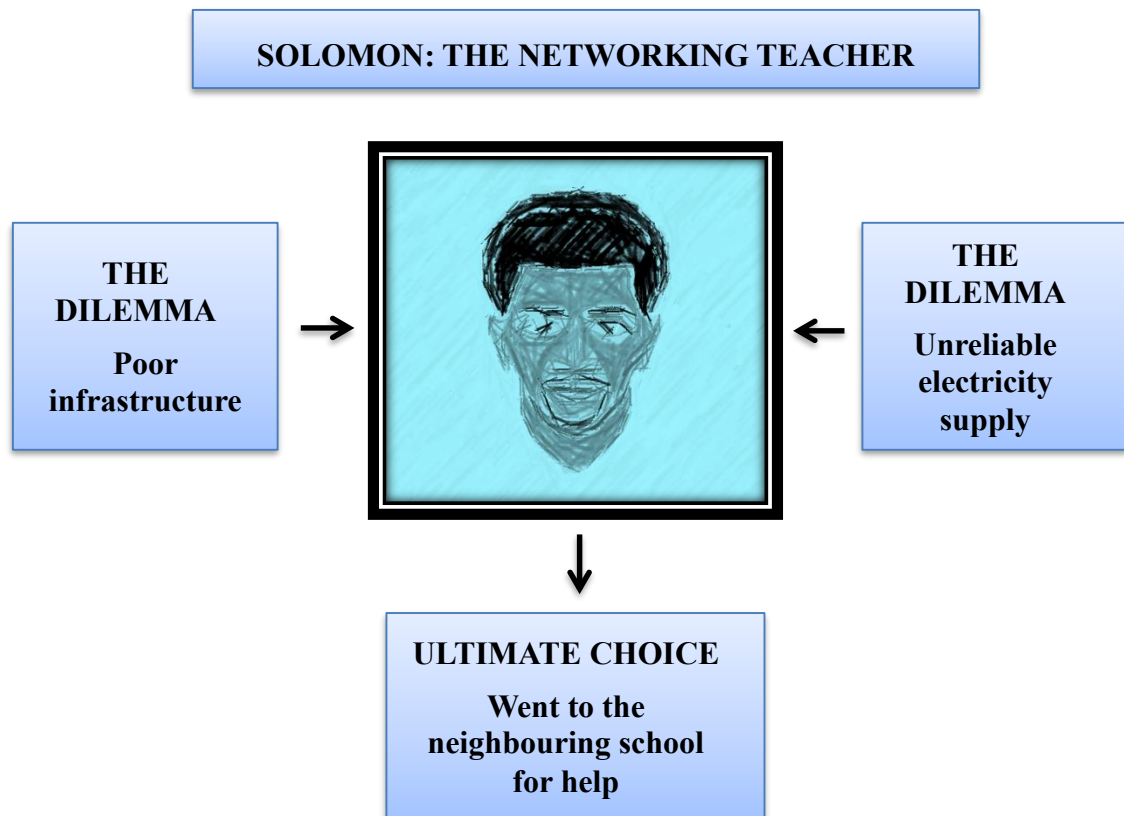
Figure 6.4 Solomon's challenging Q1 school space

According to Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model, it is essential to locate the dilemma or critical incident that the teacher is faced with. For Solomon, a teacher at a Q1 rural school, that dilemma was an unreliable electricity supply that negatively impacted teaching and learning. Their difficulty as a rural school was corroborated in the NEIMS (2011) report on the infrastructure backlog at schools, which found that 1 580 schools in KZN had no electricity, while 410 had unreliable electricity supply. In addition, Solomon's school was immersed in an environment of overwhelming poverty and deep disadvantage, which means that the socio-economic and social issues

made upgrading the school an almost impossible task (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Easton, & Luppescu, 2010). Solomon stated:

> *The school is tiny with two buildings only. We don't have water, but we have electricity at times. We are using a container as an office. We don't have facilities. When our school has no electricity, this makes teaching hard, and we cannot make worksheets for the learners.*

The above scenario resonates with Pennefather's (2011) finding that rural schools are associated with scarcity and challenges that adversely impact effective teaching and learning. The conditions of rural schools speak to the lack that was experienced during apartheid, when schooling and infrastructure provided for the African child was inferior to that of the white child. In addressing this dilemma, Solomon had to decide what forces he as a teacher had to contend with. Solomon, as a trained educator, was aware that the programmatic force informed by legislation regarding syllabus coverage required that he complete the prescribed syllabus (Ehrich et al., 2011). Without electricity, the optimal delivery of the syllabus became problematic, especially when he needed worksheets. He also had a responsibility to society and the community to ensure that the children received the best education possible (Ehrich et al., 2011). Solomon, as a contractually liable teacher, was obligated to implement the policies handed down from the DoE (Ehrich, 2000). Solomon in this instance experienced a tension between whether to do without the worksheets, which would have disrupted the educational programme of the school and deprived the learners of the best chances of educational upliftment, or to sacrifice his time and money and ensure the learners' benefit.

Solomon recognised that the contextual forces of the educational environment and lack of infrastructure and essential services could influence the school's programmatic force and negatively influence his learners' achievement (Earthman & Lemasters, 2013). Solomon made the choice to place the best interests of the learners first, as he valued quality education for the learners. Solomon did not wallow in the challenges experienced at the rural school, but took the opportunity to move education to the next level. As a concerned teacher, he found ways of negotiating his dilemmas, and his choices had positive consequences for his learners and for the entire school:

I then go to the neighbouring schools and ask for help in making worksheets for the learners. I also try to exchange learning materials and worksheets with the neighbouring schools and also use good ones from them. At times I had to pay from my own pocket for the worksheets because the other school is not rich also. We have to do this especially when we have tests that need to be given.

Solomon understood that if he wanted to offer his learners a chance for success he had to find alternative methods of solving his dilemmas. Solomon also realised that he could not count on the community to meet the educational needs of their children, as most homes in the school's rural catchment area lacked facilities like electricity (du Plessis, 2014). As a product of a poor rural community himself, Solomon became a mediator of learning (DoE, 2000) and a caring teacher. He knew first-hand that the lower social classes in the rural community lacked the resources to provide their children with educational opportunities that wealthier parents had (Hill, 2014). Solomon therefore also became a proactive teacher at his school, as he knew that having access to electricity at school could increase the educational achievement of his learners (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). Solomon's actions are supported by Frese and Fay's (2001) finding that proactivity involves the use of personal resourcefulness to improve situations, and also by Morrison and Phelps's (1999) finding that proactivity also entails taking charge.

Handling such difficulties also requires resilience (Pennefather, 2011). Solomon's resilience afforded him the strength and grit to remain at a school where others would refuse to. Solomon's encounter points to a negative experience as an educator; however, he negotiated his position as a teacher within a poor deprived context and used his initiative to turn a problematic situation into a positive outcome. The result of the positive ethical choice for Solomon was that he was giving his learners a fighting chance to better their lives. He stated: "*These are poor children from poor homes. I would hate to see the children end up without a future also*". Solomon's proactive actions ensured that learning and teaching continue. In so doing, Solomon acknowledged the difficulties that a Q1 school presents, but found ways to overcome the challenges.

6.4.2 The collaborating mentoring teacher: I took it upon myself to help where I can

I titled the visual portrait of Happy in Figure 6.5 "Happy: The collaborating teacher", as she took the initiative to collaborate with teachers from other schools when she needed assistance. She also collaborated with student teachers and mentored them when other teachers refused to assist.

HAPPY: THE COLLABORATING TEACHER

THE DILEMMA

Refusal by some teachers at her school to collaborate and assist other teachers

THE DILEMMA

Lack of mentoring

ULTIMATE CHOICE

- **Assumed responsibility for mentoring**
- **Sought assistance from other schools and**
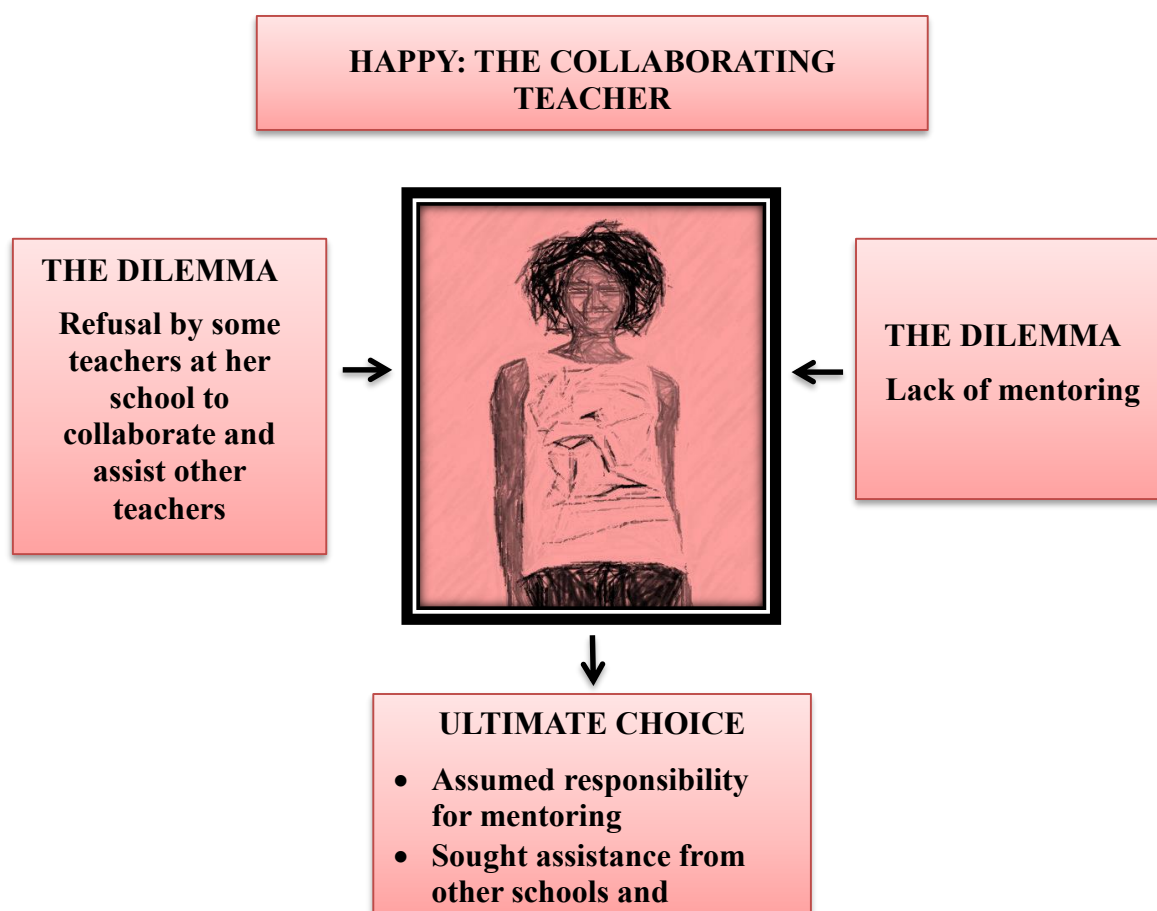
Figure 6.5 Happy's challenging Q2 school space

Heeralal (2014) indicated that "teacher training institutions have, to date, paid little or no attention to train teachers to teach in rural schools" (Heeralal, 2014, p. 1795), where most schools ranked Q1–Q3 are situated. Coupled with that is the difficulty of getting teachers to teach within the rural context, as schools in low-resourced environments face contextual and material realities that propagated the idea that they do not matter (Kline,

White & Lock, 2013). The atrocious practice of apartheid further embedded into the minds of people of colour the idea that they were not as important as White people (Engelbrecht, 2006). Such ideas negatively impacted the education of the Black child. It is for this reason that what "coaching and mentoring interventions need to contradict most of all [is] the imposed bedrock assumption that they do not matter, can't do it, and don't deserve any better" (Makhurane, 2017, p. 13).

Happy, a teacher at a Q2 rural school, understood that despite teaching in a context of high poverty, she could help to improve learners' performance if time were set aside for collaboration. As a child, Happy was a competitive learner who valued education. She also collaborated with her family in undertaking household chores. She therefore knew the benefits of collaboration, and as a teacher attempted to foster a collaborative spirit amongst the teachers at her school. Happy knew that one way to enhance one's knowledge is through cooperative learning (Chenoweth, 2009). However, Happy was confronted with a critical incident that triggered her dilemma (Ehrich et al., 2011). Her difficulty manifested when she attempted to rope in the assistance of a teacher to assist in a very important activity. Happy indicated that:

> *Not long ago, I asked the senior English teacher for some assistance, and she told me she would be leaving the profession soon and that I should ask someone else… We also have some teachers who are in the last lap of teaching, and they no longer have the zeal to do more.*

Happy then had to decide what forces she as a teacher had to contend with in that instance (Ehrich et al., 2011). For Happy, there were a number of forces at play in that situation. Firstly, the issue of professional ethics needed to be addressed. It is vital for schools that teachers have a sense of professionalism, and that they act professionally (Ehrich et al., 2011). The teacher who refused to assist Happy had failed to work professionally in helping a colleague in need, and that teacher's ethics of care towards Happy was therefore lacking (Tirri & Husu, 2002). In addition, the organisational culture of the school did not appear to be positive, as teachers were not willing to collaborate on issues of importance (Ehrich et al., 2011). Happy could have shelved the idea to seek assistance, but if she had made this choice her learners would have been the losers, as the educational programme (the programmatic force), which requires optimal delivery in the classroom, would have suffered. However, Happy chose to negotiate this unhealthy teaching space by turning it

into an area where collaboration could take place. She encouraged other teachers to engage in mutual learning, as she valued her role of "teacher as lifelong learner" (DoE, 2000). Happy explained this as follows:

If you, as a teacher, know how to do something well, you can develop the others through engaging in workshops and team building. We take areas that we struggle with and get outside assistance from teachers in other schools who may have good ideas. I attend workshops to try and give me some direction. I also network with the cluster co-ordinators, who assist me.

Happy's choice had positive consequences. She realised that her ability to form connections that are capable of reproducing social relationships could be used for her development and allow for her growth. It could also be used to encourage and produce mutual knowledge (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 22). Happy also extended herself to assist the student teachers who chose to come to their school, as other teachers did not want to mentor them. This created another dilemma for Happy. She was a product of the rural context, and knew that it was not a context where teachers want to teach. Research has shown when students undergo teaching practice; they generally choose urban or township schools. Very few will select a rural school, which means that students receive very little training in such schools (Heeralal, 2014). If a prospective student teacher does not have the necessary knowledge to teach within this context, then they are in all probability likely to negatively impact the education of rural children, who are already at risk (Heeralal, 2014). This view was supported by Lingam (2012), who found that teachers in rural contexts experience challenges owing to the lack of professional preparation during teacher training. Hence, such teachers need continuing education and training, even while they are in service (Heeralal, 2014). Happy began to assist in guiding the student teachers and became a mediator of learning (DoE, 2000). She stated:

Now when UNISA students come to the school, there is no mentoring. They are just told to take the books and go teach. So I took it upon myself to help where I can and to help them with their difficulties.

Rural schools already have a problem with filling vacant posts with good quality teachers (Heeralal, 2014). Happy understood that if she wanted to improve the lives of rural learners, she had to engage in teacher mentoring, as mentoring is a useful tool to assist

teachers to more clearly deliver school outcomes (Makhurane, 2017). Happy understood that the UNISA students were the future teachers, and that any knowledge they could obtain during teaching practice would be beneficial to the students when they were employed as teachers, as well as to their future learners (Singh & Mahomed, 2013). Happy understood that as a school mentor, she could help to shape, nurture and empower the students (Dungy, 2010).

6.4.3 The proactive teacher: I bought a lock for my class door to prevent the theft of school furniture

I titled the visual portrait of Bernell in Figure 6.6 "Bernell: The proactive teacher", as she took the initiative to be proactive in order to safeguard her classroom furniture in light of the school not having a safety officer to safeguard school property.

BERNELL: THE PROACTIVE TEACHER

THE DILEMMA

Lack of school security to safeguard school assets

THE DILEMMA

Theft of school property by the community

ULTIMATE CHOICE

• Purchased a lock for her classroom door
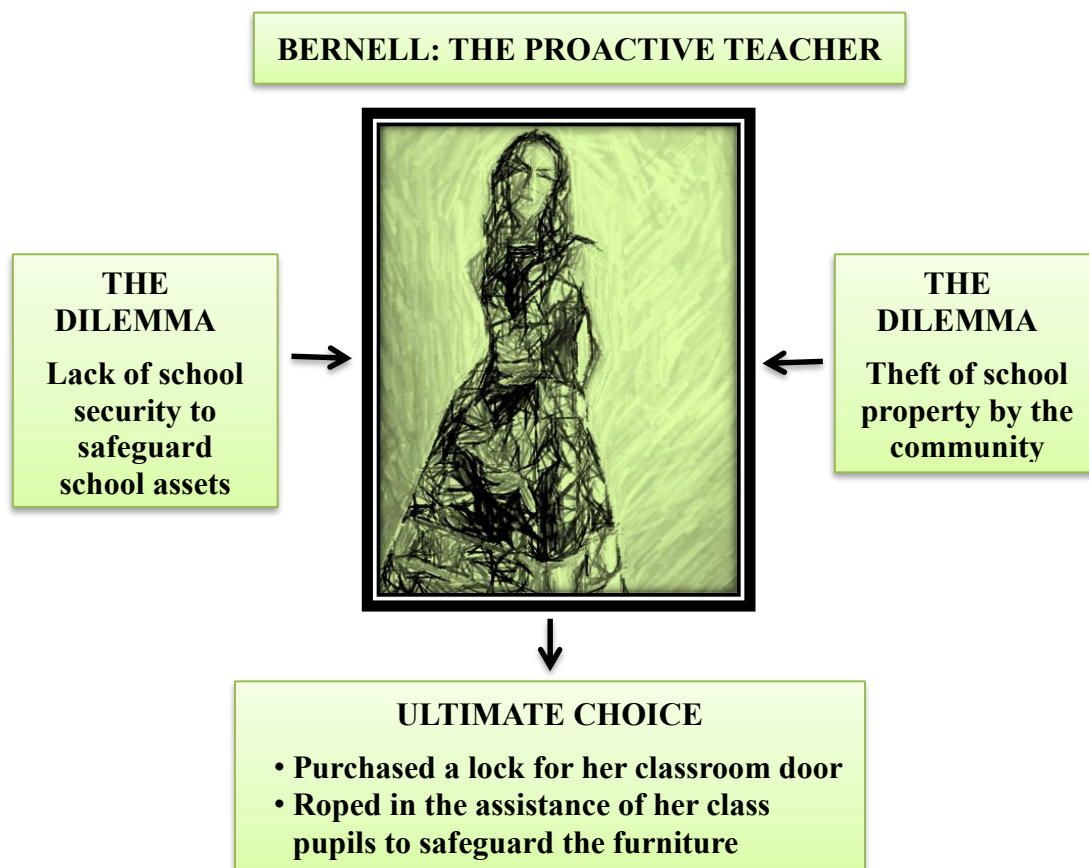• Roped in the assistance of her class pupils to safeguard the furniture

Figure 6.6 Bernell's challenging Q3 school space

Bernell was a teacher within a rural context that had been the recipient of years of apartheid policies that had denied Black schools the basic necessities. For Bernell, the critical incident that triggered her dilemma (Ehrich et al., 2011) was that the school had been recently renovated but the community did not take an interest in the school, a situation that she lamented:

> *Although the school is new, it looks old. The community comes and takes what they want. Our school has no security guards. The school is easily accessible. We had people who come in at night and sleep in the classrooms.*

The community's actions are corroborated by Gordon (1997), whose research on facilitating education in the rural areas of South Africa found that vandalism and theft of equipment are frequent. The actions of the community are contrary to Earthman and Lemasters' (2013) finding that if parents appreciate the importance of school facilities, and the amount of money that goes into maintaining them, then parents will take care of these facilities. The lack of parental and community responsibility towards her school created a dilemma for Bernell.

Bernell had to decide what forces were at play in the situation that created this dilemma. For Bernell, the culture of the organisation and the institutional context needed to be considered (Ehrich et al., 2011). There seemed to be no clear policy on the part of the school, whether formal or informal (Preston, Samford & Connors, 2002), to deal with the theft of school property. The political forces also needed to be considered, because it is the responsibility of the state to ensure the safety of school property. As a teacher, Bernell also needed to consider the social context and community — not only those who took school property but also those who sent their children to school expecting them to be taught in an environment conducive to teaching and learning (Ehrich et al., 2011). If Bernell had chosen to ignore the problem, then the learners would have been the losers, as a classroom with insufficient furniture and resources has a negative impact on teaching and learning. Bernell, therefore, had to decide what she valued most. She could have expected the school to find solutions to the problem of securing school furniture and resources, which so far were lacking, or she could address the problem herself. Bernell had been a go-getter since she was a learner at school. Being a strong progressive woman, she did not allow the lack of interest from the school or the community to dampen her spirit. She took the initiative to change the situation through creative means.

Bernell's choice had implications for teaching and learning, and therefore for the education of the learners in her class. She recognised that she taught within a challenging school context (Bloch, 2009), which had the potential to shape her capacity and performance as a teacher. Bernell therefore became a pre-emptive teacher; she became what Pillay (2017) calls an agent of change. She had a vision of what she wanted, not only for herself but for her learners (Pillay, 2017). She chose to have a classroom conducive to teaching and learning, and realised that if her learners had the necessary classroom furniture, then their chances of performing better at school would improve (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). The value Bernell placed on education stemmed from her family's positive influence on her life, which provided her with the opportunities to pursue her dreams. Bernell realised that the contextual force of the school's educational environment and infrastructure could affect the school's programmatic force, and adversely affect her learners' achievement (Earthman & Lemasters, 2013). As a result, she took proactive steps:

> *I bought a lock for my classroom door. I made my own key. Now I open and lock my classroom door. I also told my learners to ensure their chairs and tables don't go missing. They are my eyes and ears in school. If desks and chairs go missing, then we have to spend valuable time looking for replacements. I teach English, and I need every moment I can get with the learners. I also have to make sure my classroom is cleaned and swept. Thankfully, my learners are a little bigger, and they help me.*

Although education, according to Freire (1970), was used to uphold oppressive social systems such as the system experienced during apartheid, it can also be used to liberate people and change society (Cappy, 2016). Bernell used school education as a means to teach more than just the curriculum. She used the educational space to foster a transformation (Cappy, 2016) in the way her learners viewed their educational setting. According to Hazelton (2018), there is a strong relationship between school property and personal consequences, and very often learners do not link the two. Through her actions, Bernell allowed her learners to see that once school property was damaged or stolen, it would not magically be replaced. The theft of furniture places a school in a dilemma, as getting new furniture requires using funding that should be used for other purposes; theft and damage to resources therefore has an economic and financial impact on a school and

the department (Ehrich et al., 2011). Learners therefore need to take ownership of the school and learn to safeguard resources.

Thus, from the data presented, Bernell attempted to support critical conscientisation through education. She fought to get her learners to reflect on their educational space by engaging in collective action, so that their efforts to prevent the theft of furniture and resources could improve the lives of all within the classroom and the school. Bernell's actions are supported by Paxton (2015), who found that there is a need for a certain amount of action and assertiveness from personnel in rural schools if they want to achieve the objectives of the school. For Bernell, preserving the school's capital resources and facilities, and ensuring that the learners did not have to suffer the loss of a quality education, were what motivated her.

6.4.4 The benevolent teacher: We provide porridge every day for the learners

I titled the visual portrait of Shamilla in Figure 6.7 "Shamilla: The benevolent teacher", as she was at a Q4 school that did not have a state-sponsored nutrition programme, and therefore took the initiative to assist with the school-run nutrition programme in order to the benefit the pupils in that context.
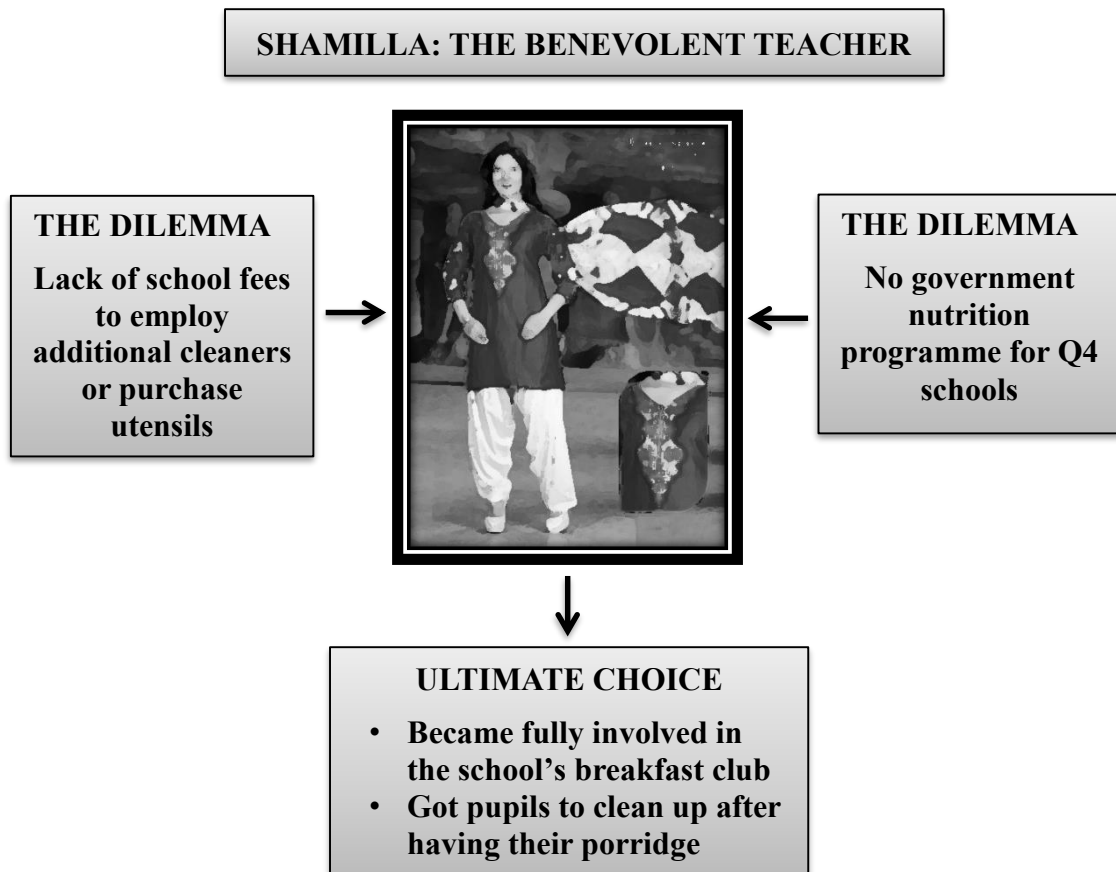
Figure 6.7 Shamilla's challenging Q4 school space

Shamilla was a teacher at a Q4 fee-paying township school. The school was disadvantaged, as it did not qualify for the nutrition programme offered to no-fee schools (Monson et al., 2006) even though the school catered for learners from poor households. No-fee schools also qualify for a helper to come in and cook for the learners. For this, the helper gets an allowance from the DoE (Langsford, 2012). Unfortunately, Shamilla's school did not qualify for such help, and also could not afford to pay for help, and so was required to raise its own funds. This critical incident triggered the dilemma for Shamilla, which she explained as follows:

> *We have to raise our funds if we want something, and this becomes overwhelming. No money means that we cannot buy utensils needed for the breakfast room. No money means no school cleaners because the school only qualifies for one cleaner. We only have a handful of people who want to invest in the school.*

Shamilla had to decide what forces she as a teacher had to contend with in this instance. Firstly, political forces needed to be considered (Ehrich et al., 2011), as it was the government's decision to reduce funding to Q4 and Q5 schools. Economic and financial forces also needed to be considered, as the school was located within a poor neighbourhood where parents could not afford to pay school fees. However, upper quintile schools do not qualify for the free nutrition programme, which means poor learners within these contexts are not catered for (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2009). This financial dilemma resulted in the teachers at Shamilla's school having to raise the necessary funds themselves. Programmatic forces also needed to be considered, as a hungry child is not able to concentrate on the curriculum content (Sanousi, 2019).

Confronted with so many forces to consider, Shamilla described her experiences within this dilemmatic space as overwhelming. This feeling of being overwhelmed could have erected itself as a barrier to her voluntary engagement in other aspects of school life. However, despite the feeling of being swamped with fundraising, and having to navigate the associated financial dilemmas and difficulties, Shamilla acknowledged that the learners still needed to be catered for. She did not allow the school circumstances to hamper her humanitarian efforts, as she understood that a hungry child would not be able to fully experience the educational benefits of being at school, as hunger would have a negative impact on their attendance and their performance (Dei, 2014):

> *We are not a wealthy school, but we have a breakfast club where we provide porridge every day for the learners. We have a porridge room where learners sit and have their porridge.*

Shamilla was confronted with another dilemma that created tension. She realised that securing outside assistance was difficult and that preserving what the school had was important. However, she was confronted with the situation where some of the breakfast club learners appeared to be careless and ungrateful:

> *We noticed that the learners would drink their porridge and leave the cups for the volunteers to wash up. There were times that children threw the porridge in the drains. This wastage would have disappointed our sponsors. I also noticed that the learners would drop their porridge on the floor and expect someone else to clean up.*

Shamilla had to make a choice in this space. She could choose to ban the children who were throwing the porridge away and possibly dissolve the breakfast club, or she could find another creative way to address the dilemma she faced. Because Shamilla valued a clean classroom and did not want to lose her sponsors, she made a choice based on emotional and psychological factors (her care for the learners) and on the physical needs of the learners — if the breakfast club were suspended, the learners would go hungry and would not be able to focus in class on an empty stomach (Sanousi, 2019). Shamilla understood the importance of nurturing and providing for her learners. Coming from a life of hardship where she had to do without, and knowing the pain of lack, she opted not to put her learners through the same suffering but chose to use this incident as a teachable moment to instil responsible behaviour in the learners:

> *Being part of the breakfast club, I decided to get the learners to clean up after themselves and wash their cups. Our volunteers don't get any remuneration from the school or the department.*

According to Lynch and Simpson (2010), learners need to learn social skills as these skills promote positive interaction with others and the environment. One way for Shamilla to ensure this was to get learners engaged in sharing the work of cleaning up. She noticed that learners did not respect or take ownership of the space where they were fed, and as a concerned teacher, she used this problem behaviour to facilitate social growth (Lynch & Simpson, 2010). Shamilla put in place a rule that learners had to wash their cups after having their porridge, as children learn from doing chores (Lewis, 2016). Hence, for Shamilla, it was not just about washing a cup but about teaching responsibility. It was about learners knowing the necessary skills to take care of their surroundings and belongings, and about teaching the value of relationships, skills and teamwork (Atmodiwirjo, 2013). It was about teaching learners to show appreciation for the volunteers and all that they did to ensure the porridge was ready on time. It was about people not establishing an entitlement mentality but learning to be grateful (Nkomo, 2017). These traits are not instinctual. The learners needed to be taught and, as a teacher, Shamilla was in her small way attempting to teach them to take ownership of the porridge room at a school that did not qualify for department assistance regarding school nutrition, and in the process building their characters.

6.4.5 The self-denying teacher: I don't have time to meet my friends anymore

I titled Bianca's visual portrait in Figure 6.8 "Bianca: The self-denying teacher", as she chose to forgo socialising with her colleagues so that she could complete her administrative tasks.

BIANCA: THE SELF-DENYING TEACHER

THE DILEMMA

Increase in non-curriculum related activities like fundraising

Increase in student numbers

THE DILEMMA

Lack of time for collaboration as a result of the CAPS curriculum

ULTIMATE CHOICE

Chose to forego interaction with staff by electing to complete her curriculum and non-curriculum-related tasks
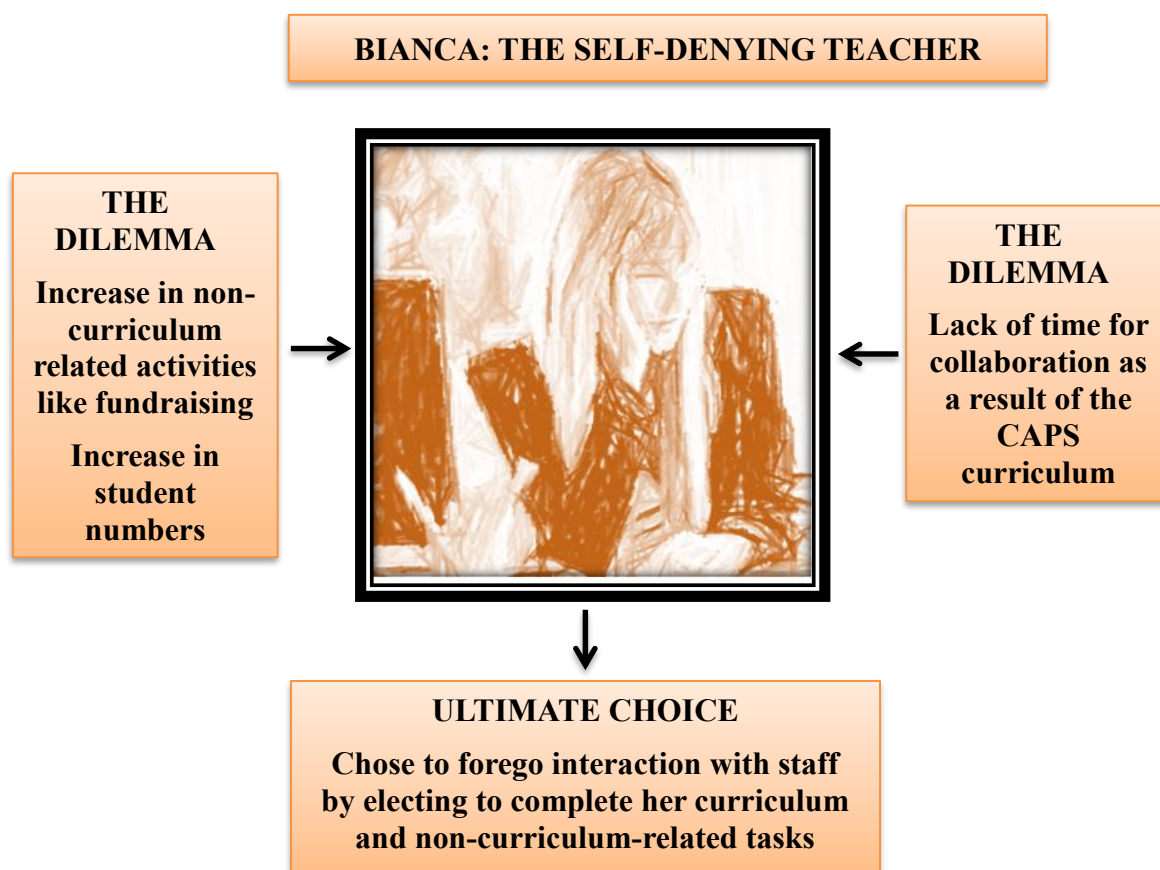
Figure 6.8 Bianca's dilemmatic Q5 school space

According to Ostovar-Nameghi and Sheikhahmadi (2016), teacher isolation prevents interaction between teachers, and a way to avoid teacher isolation is through teacher collaboration. Collaboration has particular benefits, such as the sharing of ideas and resources, and the opportunity to offer each other feedback and support (Woodland, Lee & Randall, 2013). It has also been identified as one of the core aspects of a teacher's daily activities (Ostovar-Nameghi & Sheikhahmadi, 2016). However, Bianca, a teacher at a Q5 school, was confronted with a critical dilemma. She indicated that "*there is no time for collaboration*". Bianca's predicament was corroborated by Collinson and Cook (2001),

who identified certain obstacles to teacher collaboration linked to a lack of time: not enough discretionary time to learn and to share with colleagues; and the feeling of being overwhelmed. Bianca's dilemma regarding the lack of time and the feeling of being overwhelmed needs to be viewed against the backdrop of school quintiling. Being declared a Q5 school meant that her school was considered to be wealthy (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014). However, Bianca indicated that the school did not have the finances it needed to stay operational: "*Our school fee is R900. However, the school does not receive the school fees of R900 that it charges from the majority of the learners*". This lack of schools fees placed additional pressure on Bianca as a teacher, as the teachers at her school had to spend time raising funds. Engaging in such fundraising activities takes time away from teaching (Mpolokeng, 2017). Bianca stated:

> *We have fundraisers during school time. We have to use instruction time. However, we still have to make up for the time lost to complete the school work. We have to complete the work as stipulated by the CAPS document.*

Bianca had to decide what forces she as a teacher needed to contend with in this instance. She had to contend with the social context — a community that failed to meet its obligations regarding payment of school fees (Ehrich et al., 2011). As a teacher contracted by the DoE, Bianca was required to implement policies handed down by her employer (Ehrich et al., 2011). This meant she was required to implement the CAPS curriculum, which has been described as highly prescriptive (Msibi & Mchunu, 2013). Bianca also had to consider the society and the community who hold teachers accountable for how children are taught and assessed (Ehrich et al., 2011).

Bianca's plight is corroborated by Bush and Heystek's finding (2003) that while it is essential to address the historical inequalities perpetrated by apartheid, it is also important to consider the pressure on schools ranked Q4 and Q5, who have to engage in fundraising to replace lost income (Grant, 2013). Engaging in fundraising robbed Bianca of valuable time in the classroom and added to her workload (Bush & Heystek, 2003). This problem was highlighted by Mestry (2016), who described how SGBs, school management teams (SMTs) and teachers devote a lot of time and effort to add to state funding through numerous fundraising ventures. These actions are contrary to what a productive school culture should look like, as they consume time that teachers require to do their work well (Ashley, 2017).

Bianca further attributed her lack of time to overcrowded classrooms:

> *Our school cannot take the load of learners who want to come to our school. We were also told by the department that we are not allowed to turn children away despite there being no space in the classrooms to accommodate the large numbers. Without funds, we, therefore, cannot hire teachers to assist us with the large classes. I teach English to over 50 to 60 learners per class. There are four classes. The marking and assessments are too much.*

As a result of the additional workload, fundraising, large class sizes, and lack of assistance, Bianca was unable to meet with her colleagues. The lack of time had created a dilemma for Bianca, and she had to negotiate the tension between her increased workload and her need to meet and collaborate with the staff. Bianca's decision to withdraw from the staffroom, a site for collegial relationships, as a result of her extra workload, was one shared by other teachers in the school. Bianca described how she and her colleagues used to share a table in the staffroom, and how the group was affectionately called Table 10. However, Table 10 no longer meets: "*Now Table 10 has been dissolved. No one goes to the staffroom or sits there*". The staffroom as a physical space was an ideal place for Bianca to meet with her colleagues and de-stress. However, this space is no longer a communal space: "*I now sit in my classroom and eat my lunch because I have tons of marking. I don't meet my friends anymore*". While the lack of collaboration is an area of concern, Bianca's choice also had a positive aspect. Bianca chose to make a personal sacrifice. She remained in her classroom during her break to ensure that her school work was completed. She found a creative way to manage her time and this was admirable. She was not instructed by the school to sacrifice her break but she took the decision to address her dilemma. In this way she wanted to be a prepared teacher to ensure that teaching and learning continued and that her learners would not bear the brunt of her increased workload. She placed the educational needs of her learners above her own needs. Bianca, in this instance, used time as a resource.

6.4.6   Synthesis of Section C

This section highlighted the different dilemmas that teachers encountered in the context of their specific school quintile. While dilemmas can make a person feel dysfunctional,

the analysis revealed that the teachers in this study often took their dilemmas and turned them on their heads, and in the process created new scenarios. While many teachers are happy to leave the profession because of the dilemmas they face, the participants showed that there are still teachers out there who are finding more creative ways to negotiate their difficulties rather than opting to quit the profession. The analysis showed that dilemmas can be negotiated in more creative ways by teachers whose personal-professional interconnections equip them with innovative ways of dealing with their daily dilemmas at school, because they bring the person into the profession.

In analysing this section, I considered biographical forces, which represent the internal force or the personal life of the teacher, in conjunction with external forces, such as the schools' contextual factors and educational reforms, amongst others, which incorporate the professional life of the teacher (Adendorff et al., 2010). This section showed how the biographical force — the personal life of the teacher — influenced the professional choices of the teachers within their school contexts. Using Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model as an analytical tool, I showed how the teachers negotiated their dilemmas associated with the different forces within the context of school quintiling, in very innovative and creative ways. The analysis revealed that the teachers were benevolent and self-sacrificing.

The analysis also revealed the importance of collaboration in assisting in negotiating difficult situations. The two teachers in the lower quintile schools actively sought out the assistance of other teachers. These teachers refused to give in to the negativity and obstacles that they experienced in their challenging contexts, but surmounted the limitations to actively seek out collaborative collegial connections and relationships, and networked with each other to support their endeavours. This strategy is corroborated by Leonard and Leonard's (2003) finding that an organisation that allows its members to interact encourages teamwork and the sharing of ideas, which, in turn, contribute to the success of the organisation. Collaboration and collegiality also contribute to teachers' professional growth and development (Retallick & Butt, 2004). However, while some were able to address their challenges, others felt overwhelmed and withdrew from collaboration, resulting in teachers working in isolation. While some teachers were able to seek out collaborative connections, the section also highlighted the difficulties in finding time to form social relationships that a teacher at an upper quintile school

experienced as a result of a lack of time due to the implementation of the prescriptive CAPS curriculum and to fundraising activities.

This section also highlighted the proactive nature of some teachers, despite teaching in challenging contexts that have the potential to rob teachers of agency. According to Farrington et al. (2012), the purpose of a school is teaching and learning. Included in this description is the call on educators to aid in the development of skills that go beyond specific content or curricula, and which are imperative for a learner's lifelong learning (Carpenter & Pease, 2013). One of the roles of a teacher as a facilitator is to empower learners to assume personal responsibility for their learning (Klopfenstein, 2003). This point was supported by Brialey (2017), who stated that encouraging learners to take ownership in the classroom would motivate them to capitalise on their education. The section highlighted the lengths the teacher at a Q3 school had to go to in order to ensure her classroom was conducive to learning, by harnessing the assistance of the learners in the class to secure school furniture and facilities in the absence of school security. While this is admirable, what is disconcerting it that after twenty-five years of democracy teachers still have to undertake such activities to make teaching and learning at schools possible and "bearable". This additional task is necessary because the promise of educational upliftment and infrastructural improvement post-democracy has not materialised for many (Vally, 2018).

This section also showed how the teachers displayed compassion and a sympathetic awareness of their learners' distress, and how they attempted to ease that distress (Conklin & Hughes, 2016). This was evident in how the teacher from the Q4 school ensured that the indigent learners that attended the school were at least fed a nutritious bowl of porridge in the morning. Hence, the teacher displayed her compassionate spirit through her actions.
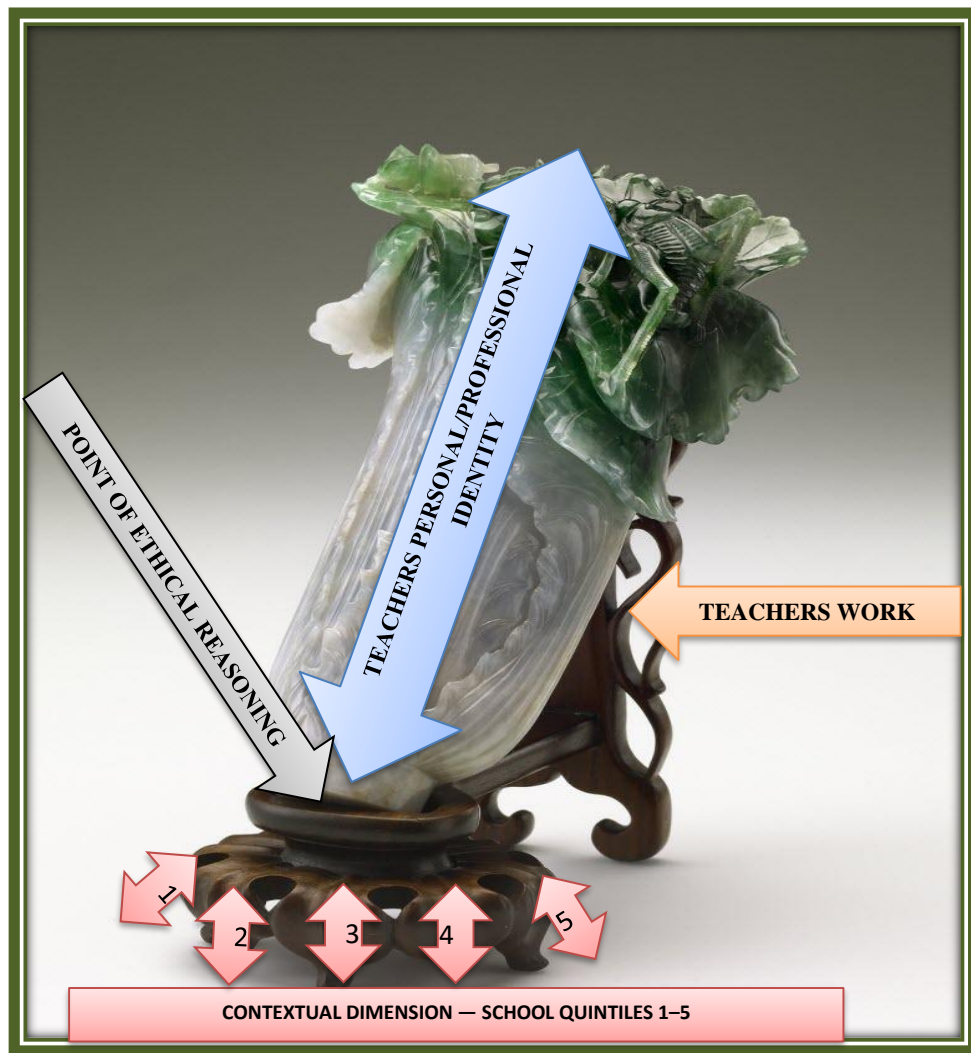
Figure 6.9 The composite Jadeite Cabbage, representing the personal-professional identity and work of teachers, the contextual dimension as the dilemmatic space, and the point of ethical reasoning

6.4.7 Meta synthesis

This chapter addressed the third research question: *How are teachers' personal-professional identities negotiated in everyday dilemmatic situations of school quintiles?* The analysis revealed that the five teachers were subject to diverse experiences and realities in relation to their school's quintile ranking. Using Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic spaces framework enabled me to take heed to the subjective voice and agency of the teachers in the context of school quintiling, where they are required to negotiate their everyday situations and make choices.

These choices highlighted for me the values that were in tension and the ethical stance each teacher chose to take. Drawing on the dilemmatic spaces perspective (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013; Honig, 1996) allowed me to make sense of the teachers' negotiation of self, in relation to other structural and individual forces. The dilemmatic spaces framework enabled me to understand and identify the many forces (contextual, programmatic and institutional) that were at play in the lives of the teachers in relation to school quintiling, as well as how the self was negotiated and how they committed to particular choices. It was clear that dilemmas at school may arise where there is "no right way of acting" (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013) but only the possibility of "acting for the best" (Honig, 1996). This action for the best is in response to the overwhelming array of challenges that are experienced by teachers. However, teachers drawing on the ethics of care (Ehrich et al., 2011), for self and other, can negotiate their dilemmas in a more compassionate and considerate way.

The analysis revealed that the teachers did not simply address their dilemmas without thought. The teachers firstly acknowledged that a dilemma existed within their specific teaching context. They were able to identify with their educational spaces and then act in an ethical manner to address those challenging situations. As teachers, they were guided by their personal values (such as love, care and the need to nurture) and attitudes (such as compassion, resilience, proactivity, co-operation, obedience and commitment). These values and attitudes had been acquired over their lives through socialisation, within their families and within their immediate communities. The analysis highlighted that the teachers appreciated the value of co-operation when they networked with other schools and teachers to seek help to address their individual and school challenges. The teachers also valued continuous self-learning. Some of them demonstrated the importance of fostering a learning community by engaging in collaboration and mentoring as a way to improve their lives and the lives of other colleagues within the teaching context.

As teachers they became role models and assumed responsibility for teaching values and ethical behaviour. They valued the importance of moral development and the teaching of obedience towards self and towards the institution of the school. The analysis also revealed that as a result of their commitment, both to their context and to their learners, teachers took on various other roles and responsibilities. As teachers, they valued the building and fostering of compassion. They offered a sense of hope to their learners. For

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example, it emerged that learners in the lower quintile schools required care and nurturing from their teachers, while teachers in upper quintile schools took on the challenge of securing nutrition for their learners. The teachers undertook these tasks because of their compassionate nature, in spite of their already heavy workload. As teachers, they acknowledged that if they neglected these crucial tasks, not only would the learners suffer but the school community at large would face the consequences of their inaction. They maintained a duty of care (Mahony, 2009) when addressing the needs of their learners by becoming pastoral givers. They showed, in an organic way, their concern for the learners in the decisions that they took (Ehrich et al., 2011).

However, while some of the teachers presented themselves as caring individuals, they needed to alter their behaviour and revise their values when it came to their perceptions of social transformation. For some, racial integration posed a challenge. My analysis revealed that two of the Indian teachers in the upper quintile schools experienced anxiety and distress when having to confront the growing racial diversity in their schools (Zembylas, 2010). They struggled with their fixed understandings and notions of race and race relations. It was this fixed understanding that resulted in personal and professional dilemmas for them as teachers, and affected their relationships with their learners in the classroom. However, it was vital for these teachers to realise that the responsibility rested with them to modify their mind-sets and attitude about racial integration in schools (Boler & Zembylas, 2003). The analysis revealed that these teachers did not harness the opportunity to implement social equity and foster racial harmony within their classrooms (Sayed & Novelli, 2016). What surfaced was that these teachers expected respect from their learners without offering the learners the courtesy of reciprocated respect (Hammett & Staeheli, 2011). When this "respect" was not forthcoming, the teachers perceived the ill-discipline to be racially motivated simply because they were Indian teachers.

Overall, the analysis revealed that these teachers operating within the challenging spaces created by the consequences of the school quintiling system experienced challenges and opportunities. However, through their caring nature, they were able to draw on their past experiences to navigate their dilemmatic situations in a considerate and compassionate manner.

CHAPTER 7

FROM FLAWED TEACHER TO A JADEITE UNDERSTANDING OF TEACHERS' PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

7.1   INTRODUCTION

It took almost five years to complete the journey of uncovering and developing a scholarly understanding of the socially constructed meanings of self in relation to the challenges that teachers face in public rural and township schools in South Africa. The entanglement between the individual teachers' lives, values and beliefs, and their daily experiences in the context of different school quintiles, highlighted the fluidity of their identity. It highlighted how, as teachers, they were able to draw on experiences from their personal lives and their biography to navigate the obstacles that they were confronted with, in the context of school quintiling. In this chapter I aim to present the contributions of this study. I commence by reflecting on all the chapters, with the intention of highlighting my learning and also to reacquaint the reader with the crux of each chapter. I then offer the conclusions around each critical question independently. After presenting the theoretical and methodological contributions of this research study, I conclude by outlining the implications for policy.

7.2   REFLECTION ON THE CHAPTERS: MY LEARNING

In Chapter One I unpacked the study phenomenon by deliberating on my personal, practical and social rationale for undertaking this study. Reflecting on my experiences as an Indian female teacher, who had worked at a public Q4 school for over 30 years in Chatsworth township during apartheid and post-apartheid, forced me to acknowledge that the school was, and still is, a challenging space impeded by its quintile ranking. Additionally, reflecting on my life brought to light my shortcomings and allowed me to acknowledge my disembodied experiences in my fixed and formulaic role as a detached teacher — represented as a dead cabbage.

As teacher-researcher, I was able to explore the nuanced constructions of self and reflect on the alternative possibilities for learning. Listening to the teacher participants and composing the stories of their everyday lives, I began to appreciate and understand that they engaged with the learners differently to the way I did. While my flawed perspective limited and narrowed my understanding, I came to appreciate that there were other ways for a more connected, organic, ethical approach to being a teacher. I came to understand the teachers who connected with their learners with love and care. Thus, while Chapter One highlighted my dilemmas, it also laid the foundation for my desire to engage in this research to try to ascertain the experiences of other teachers within the complexities of school education contexts.

To achieve this scholarly understanding of teachers' work within the context of school quintiling, I leaned on various theories. These were Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory, Rodgers and Scott's (2008) teacher identity theory, Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space conceptual framework, and Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model. These eclectic theories were presented in Chapter Two, and made it possible for a framing of the multifaceted, interpretative and multi-layered entangled lives of the teachers to be presented. They also provided a lens through which to understand how the teachers shared their perspectives and their chosen ways to negotiate their everyday encounters in the context of school quintiling using an ethical approach in the best interest of the child.

In Chapter Three, I presented my research methods and methodology on teachers' experiences within the context of school quintiling. I explained how the qualitative research design and interpretive approach I drew on were used to explain how teachers negotiate their challenging teaching contexts and dilemmatic situations. My use of narrative inquiry, and how it allowed insight into the teachers' intellectual, moral, socio-political, ethical, emotional and mental state of mind, was explained. I found employing unstructured interviews, photovoice, collage inquiry and poetic inquiry to be suitable for my study, as these varied methods allowed for deep understanding and allowed me to address the three research questions that provided the direction for this study. Using narrative methods also helped to offer a more in-depth understanding of the metaphor of the cabbage that I drew on during this research.

Using narrative inquiry as a research methodology generated a large volume of data. Making the links between the personal and professional lives of the teachers therefore became a mammoth task. Using the metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* enabled me to explore the complex organic and interconnected lives of the teachers. I used the cabbage metaphor as a visual representation to make meaning of the personal-professional lives of teachers. During the telling, there was no conscious intention to link their personal life and professional life. Plotting the personal and professional lives as interconnected layers provoked me to explore and analyse the creative, engaging and connected links and connections to be made between the personal and professional stories. While inspecting the leaves of the cabbage, I noticed that they overlapped and seemed to merge into each other. It became difficult to tear the leaves apart, as in the breaking up the leaves would not come out intact but broke up, pulling a part of another leaf with it. However, I also noticed that the leaves would converge to meet and fuse at the heart of the cabbage. Thus the aesthetic qualities of the humble cabbage as a work of art helped to plot the converging of the teachers' personal and professional experiences where they met at the heart of the cabbage, which represents the teachers' connected and caring self-identity.

Figure 7.1 The cabbage depicting the link between personal and professional life in Happy's story

Chapter Four represented the stories of the teachers. This chapter presented the storied data that was elicited from the five teachers in my study through the transcribed interviews, collage inquiry, photovoice and poetic inquiry, and was reconstructed into a multi-layered story for each participant. I gained insight into how the socio-cultural, economic, historical and political contexts had been negotiated, and had informed the teachers' past and present experiences. Through the teachers' stories, I was educated on how the dominant social identities of race, class, gender and ethnicity had intersected in complex ways to shape their experiences and meanings of self as individuals, and as teachers working in the context of school quintiling. I learned that despite being treated as second- or third-class citizens because of their race, class or gender, the value they placed in education and their positive sense of self-worth in their accomplishments allowed them to move from the margins of society, from a place of being "insignificant" and disadvantaged, to being a passionate and compassionate embodied human being.

In Chapter Five I presented the second level of analysis. In this chapter I learned how, as teachers, these selected individuals had drawn on particular biographical experiences derived from their home environment and important relationships to allow them to develop their identities. Additionally, I also understood how the teachers' primary and secondary socialisation had structured their life experiences, both in enabling and disabling ways. It was these personal meanings and understandings gleaned from their years of socialisation that became a source of reference in the space of school life and work.

Chapter Six presented the teachers' negotiation of their professional dilemmas in the context of their school quintiles. This chapter reaffirmed scholarship on teachers' work that states that teachers do experience challenges (Amusa & Toriola, 2013; Deacon, 2010). However, this study offers an interpretation of how the teachers worked through the cracks and ripples of the dominant discourses of their quintile-ranked schools to create alternative perspectives around the issues related to school quintiling (Naong, 2013; Nzuza, 2015; Strassburg, Meny-Gibert & Russell, 2010). I learned that global change, educational reforms, political and social transition, contextual factors, and race and class concerns, amongst other factors (Adendorff et al., 2010), had an influence on the teachers' identities. However, I also learned that the teachers had the capacity and will to draw on

their life experiences, values and beliefs to negotiate their challenging situations in an ethical way.

7.3   UNDERSTANDING THE PERSONAL-PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES OF TEACHERS IN THE DILEMMATIC CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILING

7.3.1   Self-identities of teachers as revealed through their stories of self

Using Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory provided a lens through which to better understand the teachers' identities in relation to the various social categories they affiliated to (Djoub, 2018). In endeavouring to identify who the teachers were in the context of their schools' different quintiles, I realised that they embraced multiple identities. However, I also learned that some identities were given prominence because of influences from internal and external forces (Samuel, 2008). One such force was the family and societal expectations tied to the teachers' role identity of daughter, mother, wife, and so on. What emerged was that the dominant and traditional gender discourses continued to diminish the value of women, who were considered to be subservient to men (Neculaesei, 2015). This was evident with some of the female teachers like Happy, Shamilla and Bianca, who had been subjected to patriarchal dominance and control at some point in their lives. The gender inequality that they experienced meant that the roles of child rearing, cooking, cleaning, or just taking second place to the male in their immediate circle, had affected their sense of self and their worth as women.

However, the study also revealed that while families may place restrictions on their female members, the family can also be a site for transformation. It can also become a potent space where it can be acknowledged that "educating girls is pivotal to the development of society" and that "education is a key driver for their development" (Somani, 2017, p. 125). My study revealed that the female teachers found the inner strength to transgress the limitations imposed on them by family and society. One became a long-distance university student, while another moved away from the comfort of home to take up her space as a live-in student at university away from her family. For one participant, entering the world of work allowed her to raise the economic earning potential for her family, and to therefore be recognised not only as a wife, mother and daughter,

but also as a productive financial contributor to the family (Somani, 2017). While their one hand was forced to rock the cradle, they were able with their other hand to make changes to their families and, eventually, to the world of the learners at their schools (Somani, 2017). The women, through determination, transgressed the limitations imposed on them when they decided to enter the world of work, which offered them an opportunity to develop their working-woman self.

The dominant discourse of race was another force that continued to influence the actions of particular teachers. Reflecting on the experiences of my two Black teachers, Solomon and Happy, it was clear that race had determined the types of experience they endured as young children, and eventually as adults in the rural areas in which they lived and worked (Rakometsi, 2008). Both Solomon and Happy were deprived of good schools and quality education simply because they were Black (Roberts & Green, 2013). The Indian teachers had also been subjected to poor treatment based on their race (Vahed, 2013). Sadly, these teachers had accepted their social context as being "normal", as they had not experienced any better thanks to the infamous Group Areas Act (Ndimande, 2016). This separation resulted in the teachers having had very little interaction as children with different race groups. Solomon and Happy, as teachers within a rural context, had not yet experienced racial integration in their schools. However, two of the Indian teachers, Shamilla and Bianca, were vocal about their interaction with Black learners. By their own admission they indicated that their childhood experiences had not offered them the opportunity to interact with children of other race groups. Hence, when the racial integration of learners became a reality at their schools, they did not know how to address this "crisis". This behaviour showed that childhood socialisation and experiences can help inform one's adult life, and in the case of Shamilla and Bianca, they lacked knowledge and experience in dealing with the "other". This ignorance of the "other" created tension in the Indian teachers when it came to addressing the racial integration of learners in their classrooms.

Finally, the teachers' experiences were intersected by discourses of race, class, gender, language, and socio-cultural, historical and economic backgrounds. Their stories highlighted that their subjective experiences had informed the positions they took in relation to their responsibilities in public schools. The teachers, who had grown up historically categorised as Black or Indian, demonstrated that they were competitors, good learners, resolute scholars, resilient overcomers, financial providers, caregivers and

nurturers. Their stories foregrounded the relationships that they had nurtured with their parents, siblings, friends, teachers and colleagues within their schools, families and communities. These relationships provided possibilities for advancement and growth and/or constrained them. However, it must be noted that the lack of effort by certain teachers to appreciate the importance of racial integration and inclusivity hampered the optimal interaction between them and their learners.

7.3.2   Personal beliefs and meanings informing teachers' professional perspectives and identities

In offering an interpretation of the second research question, I once more draw from the artefact of the humble cabbage. I now zero in on the heart of the cabbage, which represents the teachers' connected and caring self-identity. What my study showed was that teachers' past experiences and the traits they produce get woven into the different layers of their lives. These traits and experiences, gleaned from their socialisation within their family and their socio-cultural contexts, come to structure their values and belief systems. However, the teachers' past experiences were also dependant on their race, class and gender. Hence, I now offer an interpretation of this question by delving more deeply into the heart of the cabbage (the teacher). I want to offer an interpretation of the meanings, values and beliefs that are sitting in the personal self and are planted in their hearts, and that allow them to negotiate their school situation in an ethical way and engage in their practice in a loving and caring manner.

I firstly offer an interpretation of my two Black teachers, Solomon and Happy. For these Black teachers from rural areas, coming from a life of financial lack shaped their personal experiences, meanings and values. As poor Black people, rurality was important for their construction of self. The experiences they had as growing children living in, attending school in and eventually going back to the rural area as teachers enabled them to form a personal bond with their learners. As teachers, they had a community connection to the area and to the children. My interpretation of Solomon's and Happy's childhood experiences revealed that their families and their social context allowed them certain experiences that gave rise to qualities such as love, care, understanding, a collaborative spirit, empathy, tenacity and fortitude. They were also competitive and nurturing. These

important traits were instrumental in structuring their interaction with the learners within their schools.

I now offer an interpretation of the three Indian teachers, Shamilla, Bernell and Bianca. Race, class and gender also gave rise to certain experiences that were instrumental in shaping their lives and experiences as teachers, and the different versions of care that they demonstrated. For Shamilla, her poor upbringing shaped her meaning making. Shamilla grew up in a working-class family. The childhood challenges she faced as a girl child developed in her a sense of tenacity, a love for education, the ability to care and nurture, personal fortitude, and a proactive attitude. Shamilla also developed an entrepreneurial spirit when faced with financial difficulties. For Bernell, her middle-class background and having the support of her family as a girl child provided her the economic and cultural capital to realise her dreams. Having the support and backing of her family allowed her to develop qualities like love, empathy and caring. However, she also learned the value of independence and collaboration. Bianca also had the luxury of a middle-class background. However, unlike Bernell, who had enormous family support, Bianca grew up a lonely girl, but was able to negotiate this challenge by seeking friendship bonds outside the family. Bianca also valued education and was a motivated and determined scholar, and she was also able to use ingenuity when faced with challenges in her life. Therefore, when looking at all the teachers, each had special qualities that became embedded in their hearts. Their embodied experiences provided the basis for the enactment of their teacher self in a caring and ethical manner.

7.3.3   School quintiles and teachers' negotiation of their everyday situations

The topic of public education is a massive field in South Africa, and my understanding of teachers' work is set against this very complex educational terrain (Metcalfe, Orkin & Jenny, 2012; Singh, 2015; Tau, 2012). My study revealed that the teachers were troubled and unhappy about the challenges that the system of school quintile ranking presents. However, while they were faced with numerous challenges as teachers, they found other spaces to extend themselves, working in the best interests of their learners in a loving and caring manner.

7.3.3.1 Pastoral and welfare care

When I started my study, my perspective on love and care was directed towards the learners and teachers at school. The importance of providing welfare and pastoral care (Best, 1990; Grove, 2004; Heckman, 2008) has been documented. My study revealed that the teachers offered welfare care and support to the learners. The two teachers in the lower quintile schools, Solomon and Happy, became involved in taking care of the individual needs of their learners. Solomon offered psychological care such as counselling, while Happy also offered medical care, showing how her nurse identity influences her identity as a teacher. Solomon and Happy also became role models and engaged in emotional care when they became substitute father and mother to their learners. Bernell, from a lower quintile school, offered physical care when she sourced clothes for her learners. The two teachers from the upper quintile schools, Shamilla and Bianca, also offered physical care when they sourced nutrition for their learners. These teachers fully engaged with the pastoral and welfare care of their learners. They demonstrated a passion for teaching and their love for their learners in a more connected way. In so doing, they brought love into their teacher life.

7.3.3.2 Collaborative and collegial care

Evidence of teachers engaging with and supporting each other was also evident. Evidence of care towards colleagues in the form of mentoring, collaboration and networking (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Makhurane, 2017; Singh & Mahomed, 2013) was also recognised. Reflecting on the lives of the Black and Indian teachers, I discovered that as children they had to collaborate with members of their family to take on household chores. Their communal lives and their upbringing as children in a particular social context in South Africa cultivated a collaborative spirit and a fertile learning ground for their collaborative relationships as adults with colleagues, learners and other stakeholders in their schools. Collaboration and collegial care were evident in the lower quintile schools, where Solomon networked and collaborated with the neighbouring schools, and where Happy mentored student teachers and collaborated with the teachers and the cluster. Bernell also collaborated by sharing her resources with other teachers. My study revealed that the two teachers from the upper quintile schools,

Shamilla and Bianca, also engaged in collaboration and networking. However, their interactions, while still of benefit to the learners of their schools, was with outside organisations and NGO's to source sponsorships and assistance regarding the school nutritional programme, since upper quintile schools do not qualify for free nutrition (Mestry, 2016).

7.3.3.3 Financial care

The study revealed that the teachers' care did not stop with just the learners or teachers. Other forms of care went beyond the learners and teachers, but nevertheless still benefited the entire school, such as financial care. Shamilla and Bianca, who were teachers in the upper quintile schools, had to engage in fundraising (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019). Fundraising is not the responsibility of the teacher, but of the SGB (Mestry, 2016). However, the two teachers became involved because they identified with the school, and because they cared enough to realise that Q4 and Q5 schools receive reduced funding from the department and need finances to help keep the school operational (Mestry & Ndhlovu, 2014).

7.3.3.4 Micro environmental care

There was also evidence of micro environmental care. My study showed that the teachers from Q3 to Q5 schools took it upon themselves to take care of their classrooms by also seeking the assistance of their learners. Bernell, Shamilla and Bianca engaged in varied tasks to ensure their classrooms were conducive to teaching and learning. Bernell ensured her classroom was clean, and that the classroom furniture and facilities were secure; Shamilla painted and cleaned her classroom; and Bianca ensured that the school furniture and facilities were taken care of and not vandalised. Thus, teachers from the middle to upper quintile schools took it upon themselves to encourage learners to engage in responsible behaviour by promoting accountability and a sense of value of their school buildings and resources. This kind of care was encouraged because maintaining what resources the school had would be of benefit to the school, the learners and the teachers.

7.3.3.5 Care in relation to time management

My study also revealed that there was care for the optimisation of time. Many studies have shown that a lack of time is a concern for many teachers, as it impedes their optimal functioning as teachers (Badugela, 2012; Brown, 2004; Smith & Kovacs, 2011). My study has shown that the teachers decided to use their time wisely. They displayed care in relation to the optimisation of time, and time management was practised by Happy and Bianca. Happy used her breaks to assist learners. Research has shown that teachers are committed to their learners' learning and one way in which teachers show this commitment is by giving up their lunch breaks to assist learners (Tlale, 2016; Zygmunt & Clark, 2016). Bianca, on the other hand, used her break to complete her school work. Time for a lunch interval is a teacher's right (South African Council for Educators, 2020). However, Bianca was able to address her heavy workload by using her break time to ensure that teaching and learning were up to par. In so doing, Bianca ensured that her learners would be the ultimate beneficiaries of her sacrifice. For both Happy and Bianca, their care for the learners and their commitment to their profession went past their subjective interest (Tlale, 2016).

Finally, my study has revealed that the teachers' actions foregrounded a different version of what we know as imparting care and love. As teachers, when we consider care we tend to only think of it in terms of the learners. What my study has shown is that when the teachers engaged in unconventional or alternative care, they did so with the outcome still being of benefit to the learners and other stakeholders within the school educational context. What the study has highlighted is that teachers' work is intellectual work, with emotional and physical connectedness. Furthermore, with emotional connectedness, teachers work can be beautifully complex and open to multiple perspectives, colours and contours that all add to the beauty despite the flaws that school quintiling presents. This added impetus from them to display the different versions of care comes at a time when learners no longer respect teachers, when teachers are physically, emotionally and verbally abused (Chetty, 2019) and when the crisis in education in South Africa is leading to a brain drain of teachers from the South African educational system (Mlambo & Adetiba, 2020).

7.4   THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY

The teachers' personal and professional dilemmas in the context of different school quintiles highlighted three critical layers: the personal layer, the professional layer and the contextual layer (the particular school context/quintile). The personal layer is situated in life outside of school, and is linked to the teachers' families and their interaction within their social context as children. The personal layer is closely linked to a teacher's professional layer, as teachers draw from their past and present knowledge and values to negotiate the everyday dilemmatic experiences within their personal, educational space of school quintiling in an ethical manner. The professional layer incorporates the institutional and "social and policy expectations of what a good teacher is and the educational ideals of the teacher" (Day & Kington, 2008, as cited in Chong, Low & Goh, 2011, p. 51). Teachers, whether in lower or upper quintile schools, are required to complete the curriculum. However, they do so within a context that requires them to be involved in welfare and pastoral care, mentoring and networking with other teachers, fundraising and seeing to the nutritional needs of their learners, amongst other duties (Kruger, 2019). These duties need to be completed while ensuring that the educational programme of the schools is not disadvantaged in any way.

The contextual layer is specific to a particular school quintile. On entering their specific teaching context, teachers bring with them their socio-cultural and political histories and values and beliefs (personal layer) that shape how they negotiate their educational space (Van Wyk & le Grange, 2016). For teachers within the South African context, the locality of the school plays a crucial role in determining the type of experience the teacher is exposed to. This study has established that the contextual layer presents many challenges to the teachers (Kruger, 2019). What the study has shown is that teachers, in turn, respond to the challenges that they are faced with. They attempt to solve them by drawing on their values and acting ethically to the best of their abilities.

7.4.1   Point of ethical reasoning drawing on personal, community and family connections

Drawing on Fransson and Grannäs's (2013) dilemmatic space framework, and Ehrich et al.'s (2011) ethical dilemma decision-making model, I was able to see teachers' personal-

professional experiences within school quintiling as complex and challenging. However, my study was able to zoom in to small moments of beauty for each of the teachers. While all five teachers came from diverse backgrounds, they were able to negotiate their challenges in a beautifully organic way by making ethical choices. The choices they made were based on their intrinsic meanings of care and also from their interactions with their social context or families. I have, therefore, clustered the teachers into three categories: personal connection, NGO connection and family connection.

The first category is the personal connections. My study highlighted how the two rural teachers, Solomon and Happy, who grew up in, were educated in and now work in a rural area, had a personal connection to the area. These teachers worked on an individual basis with their learners and engaged with them in a caring way because of their connectedness to the learners and the community.

The second category is the NGO connection. My study highlighted how two of the Indian teachers, Shamilla and Bianca, who taught at a Q4 and Q5 school respectively, did not have a personal connection to the learners at the school. By their own admission, they indicated that they catered for different race groups. While they may have had a connection to some of their Indian learners, they did not have a personal connection to the Black learners. Their knowledge of the "other" was restricted. At a systemic and policy level, they needed to get the nutritional needs of the learners attended to (DBE, 2015). Their priority was the physiological needs of the children. These teachers adopted a rationalist perspective, rather than a sense of personal connectedness. Therefore, their interaction was based more on ensuring that their learners were fed, that the school facilities were maintained, and that funds were raised. They aimed to make the school educational environment conducive to the tasks of teaching and learning. Shamilla and Bianca networked and collaborated to maintain the systems by relying on NGO's for assistance. They drew on community capital to assist them in negotiating their challenges at school in an ethical manner (Patterson, 2017).

The last category is the family connection. Bernell taught at a Q3 rural school. As a teacher, Bernell had to negotiate the challenges that she was confronted with, and she found a way to negotiate these challenges by leaning on her family connections. Bernell came from a middle-class background. In her role as a teacher, she drew from particular relationships, and the economic and cultural capital that her family could provide, to help

her see to the needs of the children in her class. She linked her family life to her professional life, to ensure that teaching and learning were ongoing in her class (Patterson, 2017).

In Figure 7.2 I now take the teachers personal-professional identity, the work they undertake in the context of school quintiles and add to the point of ethical reasoning the different connections that teachers draw on to undertake their tasks in an ethical manner.

Figure 7.2 Jadeite model of teacher negotiation in dilemmatic spaces

When I combine the five teachers, I now come up with a beautiful work of art. This beautiful artwork is the teacher sitting within a quintiled school education system that has numerous challenges. Despite the challenges that school quintiling presents, this teacher has found a way to work within this system and become a beautiful organic artefact. Despite the jade cabbage (the teacher) sitting precariously on this wooden system, which represents the school quintiling system and the resultant challenges, the teacher has found a way to work and find a balance without falling over (Angus, 2013; Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018; Kruger, 2019). The teacher is able to do this by finding some personally meaningful way — either through personal connections, family connections, or collaboration with the community and NGO's — to connect to the systems, to the policy, and to the school and the community. In leaning on these connections, and by drawing on their values and beliefs, the teacher is able to engage in welfare care, pastoral care, financial care, micro environmental care, collaboration and collegial care, and care in relation to time.

7.4.2 Methodological contribution

When I introduced the cabbage in Chapter One, I recognised it as a way to think about my life as a teacher. I saw myself as the single-layered dead cabbage in the collage. However, there was an artist who saw another version of the cabbage — *The Jadeite Cabbage* — as a multi-layered beautiful work of art with the insects on it (Jensen, 2007). *The Jadeite Cabbage* felt so lifelike. That jade cabbage, which metaphorically resembled the teachers in my study, showed that the teachers' lived experiences are vulnerable to all kinds of insects — all kinds of dilemmas and situations. However, the insects on the head of the cabbage also represent the children within the context of different school quintiles. Teachers take on the in loco parentis role in the context of the school (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). They provide love and care to pupils within their care. The insects denote a relationship between the teacher and child. It is a relationship that is alive, and this aliveness comes about because the teachers' identities are dynamic and open to change. They are able to embrace not just the identity of curriculum deliverer but also the identity of caring compassionate teacher. All the cabbage leaves are also different. Each one has different contours and different thicknesses, but they all connect to the heart of the cabbage. Teachers are the same. Each teacher is unique, with diverse experiences. Each

one is textured and overlapping. And each of their experiences was able to shape their hearts. But it's what is in their heart that allows them to carry out their duties with care.

The metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* allowed me to see teachers' lives as encompassing more than just their technical work. It allowed me to look at teachers' lives as having organic layers that represent their values and beliefs. These values and beliefs infuse their lives and connect to the heart of the teacher, and with a heart connection, teachers can engage in their work in a more organic way. The structure also showed the different points of teachers' connectedness — with the micro layer of the school and the macro level of government policy systems that regulate teachers' work within the school (Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018). *The Jadeite Cabbage* showed in a very beautiful way that the teacher and the system, while they are separate, unique and independent of each other, will only work if the teacher is present. Without the beautiful jade (the teacher), the school system is just another ordinary brown ornamental stand. The school system needs the teacher to carry out its core mandate of curriculum delivery (Kruger, 2019). This view is also supported by Ingersoll (2018, p. 199) that "teachers are often considered the backbone of schools; without them there would be no school."

However, the teacher is only a teacher when he or she is working within the system. The teachers' personal and professional meaning-making is dependent on the system. This relationship of the teacher to the school is in a state of dynamic equilibrium. The cabbage is at an angle, and looks as if it could fall at any time, but it is in a state of balance. The cabbage (the teacher) is kept in balance by the personal values and beliefs about being a teacher, in addition to working with the policies, rules and regulations that govern their work. The teacher keeps the balance by drawing from the personal and professional selves (Angus, 2013; Kimathi & Rusznyak, 2018).

The metaphor of *The Jadeite Cabbage* was a useful tool to analyse my data. Just like the artist turned the humble cabbage, and the flawed jade, into a beautiful work of art, as a researcher I was able to see that there was something of value in what the humble teachers in my study were doing. Each of the teachers has developed the art of managing their lives. Using the metaphor provoked me to go deeper into the lives of the teachers, and to not only examine their lives at face value, but to get into the creases, folds and layers that constitute their lives to get to the heart of the teacher. It allowed me to excavate the

different levels of the teachers' lives, and to reach the deeper levels and the more textured layers.

7.5   IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

As I reviewed the limited literature available on the quintile ranking of schools in South Africa, I came to realise that this study would add to the body of knowledge on teachers' experiences in various school quintiles. While there is literature that outlines what quintiles are and how the classifications have been applied, very little literature exists on teachers' lived experiences within the context of these schools. This study will also be relevant to the DBE, as it reveals that the present system of quintiling is fraught with problems and that there is a need for the system to be re-structured. In addition, while policy foregrounds pastoral and welfare care, what my study points to is that teachers face different kinds of contextual realities in their schools. Hence, policy needs to also recognise other kinds of care that teachers enact.

7.6   CONCLUDING MOMENTS

This thesis focused on teachers' personal-professional identities and the dilemmas that they face in the context of different school quintiles. However, while a great deal of discussion takes place around the challenges teachers face, very little is said about the teachers who, despite the obstacles, attempt to make schools a place where care and love are central. In particular, within the South African context, the findings of this study shed light on the workplace conditions and job demands affecting teachers serving predominantly working-class and historically disadvantaged school communities.

The analysis revealed the tenacity and resilience of the teachers who, despite the difficulties that the system of school quintiling presents, still choose to remain in a profession that has been described as challenging. While initially the participants' stories were about the difficulties that they experienced, the more in-depth analysis revealed the hidden gems that very few get to see, like the counselling, nurturing and caregiving they provide to learners who otherwise would fall through the cracks, forgotten and abandoned.

This study allowed me to shift my perceptions and understandings to consider that there are teachers who practise differently to my ways and practices. It allowed me to see that I had a flawed understanding of what it means to be a teacher who is emotionally connected with my learners. It also allowed me to see that although I loved my job and my learners, my actions at times showed otherwise. This research was also about re-aligning my thoughts and perception as a teacher. I say "re-aligning" because school circumstances at times take us as teachers down a dark and lonely road. However, the teachers in my study, through the stories they told, illuminated the steps rarely taken by teachers. They showed that curriculum delivery is not a teacher's only responsibility, and that being a good human being — who can identify the areas of need in others and set aside the mantel of curriculum delivery to put on the mantel of nurse, mother or father, or compassionate human being — is just as compelling and vital.

Finally, while the positive input from the teachers at their respective schools has been highlighted, it is imperative that parents and the community take a more active role in the lives of their children. Most importantly, the DoE needs to recognise its responsibilities in relation to making the school environment conducive to teaching and learning. The analysis has shown that the participant teachers sacrificed a great deal to overcome their contextual constraints, and expressed their frustrations, anxieties and feelings of being overworked and overwhelmed (Vassallo, 2014). Trying to address their contextual constraints required great sacrifice on their part. South Africa has witnessed an alarming rate of teacher attrition for various reasons, and the country cannot afford to lose more qualified teacher to other countries that offer "better" prospects (Fransson & Grannäs, 2013). The DoE needs to understand that, amongst their other core roles and responsibilities that they are called to fulfil, the ultimate responsibility lies with them to improve school infrastructure, to enhance teaching and learning by providing support materials and qualified teachers, and to provide nutritious meals, not just for no-fee schools but for all schools that serve a disadvantaged community.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FIELD TEXT GENERATION PLAN

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

This in-depth, unstructured face to face interview is directed to the teachers who teach in the context of different school quintiles.

Dear Teachers

The purpose of this interview is to gather information that will shed light on teachers Personal – Professional dilemmas and their lived experiences in the context of school quintiles.

The information you give here is strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose mentioned above.
Thank you
Mrs. R. Ramkelewan

The following questions will be addressed:

1. Who are the teachers working in the context of different school quintiles?
2. What are the day to day experiences of teachers working in the context of different school quintiles?
3. How does school culture (habits, routines, practices) in different school quintiles shape teachers personal and professional lives

PART ONE

1.1 Biographical/ oral narratives of teachers personal and professional live in the context of different school quintiles.
1.2 Unstructured, in- depth face to face interviews will be conducted with the teachers to understand the complexities, challenges and highlights of their teaching experiences in different school quintiles.

The main themes that will inform these in-depth face to face interviews will include:

- Early life (family life, community relationships, experiences as a learner at school)
- College/ university life and related facets of one's personal life.
- Teaching experience- contextual challenges, institutional culture, community relations, and relationship with local students and other stakeholders.

4

PART TWO

2.1 The gathering of data using photo voice.

2.2 Stimulus Recall/ critical conversations using collages produced by the teacher participants of critical incidents, moments and experiences of their personal and professional lives as teachers. The collage will be used to produce a deeper and nuanced understanding of the teacher participant's challenges, possibilities, views and experiences.

2.2 The collage will be used as a scaffold for the poetry inquiry exercise. It will be used as a means of inquiry and analysis.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. R. Ramkelewan

Cell: 0782727421

5

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

20 April 2016

Mrs Reena Ramkelewan 8523462
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Ramkelewan

Protocol reference number: HSS/0329/016D
Project Title: Personal - Professional Dilemmas? Teachers lived experiences in the context of school quintiles

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 4 April 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

....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanitities & Social Scinces Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr Daisy Pillay & Dr Inba Naicker
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo
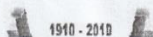
APPENDIX C: PERMISSION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Phindile Duma	Tel: 033 392 1041	Ref.:2/4/8/1215

Mrs R Ramkelewan
14 Corne Place
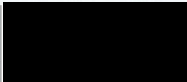Malvern
Queensburgh
4093

Dear Mrs Ramkelewan

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"PERSONAL – PROFESSIONAL DILEMMAS? TEACHERS LIVED EXPERIENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL QUINTILES",** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the Intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 28 April 2017 to 07 October 2019.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.
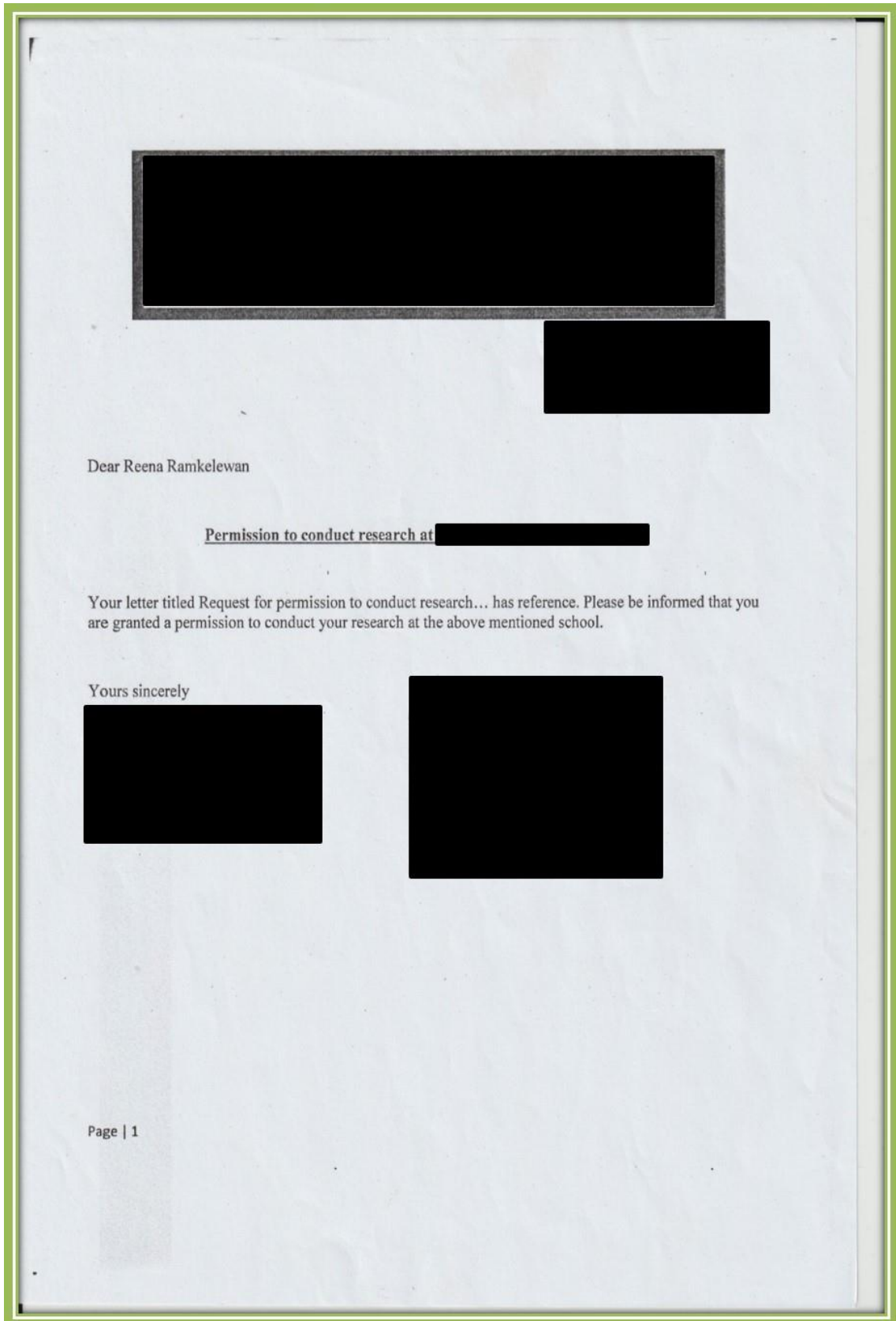
(Please See List of Schools Attached)

Dr. EV Nzama
Head of Department: Education
Date: 12/05/17

...Championing Quality Education - Creating and Securing a Brighter Future

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Postal Address: Private Bag X9137 • Pietermaritzburg • 3200 • Republic of South Africa
Physical Address: 247 Burger Street • Anton Lembede Building • Pietermaritzburg • 3201
Tel.: +27 33 392 1004/41 • Fax.: +27 033 392 1203• Email: Kehologile.Connie@kzndoe.gov.za/Phindile.Duma@kzndoe.gov.za •Web:www.kzneducation.gov.za
Facebook: KZNDOE….Twitter: @DBE_KZN….Instagram: kzn_education….Youtube:kzndoe

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL 1 (GATEKEEPERS)

Dear Reena Ramkelewan

Permission to conduct research at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Your letter titled Request for permission to conduct research... has reference. Please be informed that you are granted a permission to conduct your research at the above mentioned school.

Yours sincerely

Page | 1

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL 2 (GATEKEEPERS)

19 February 2016
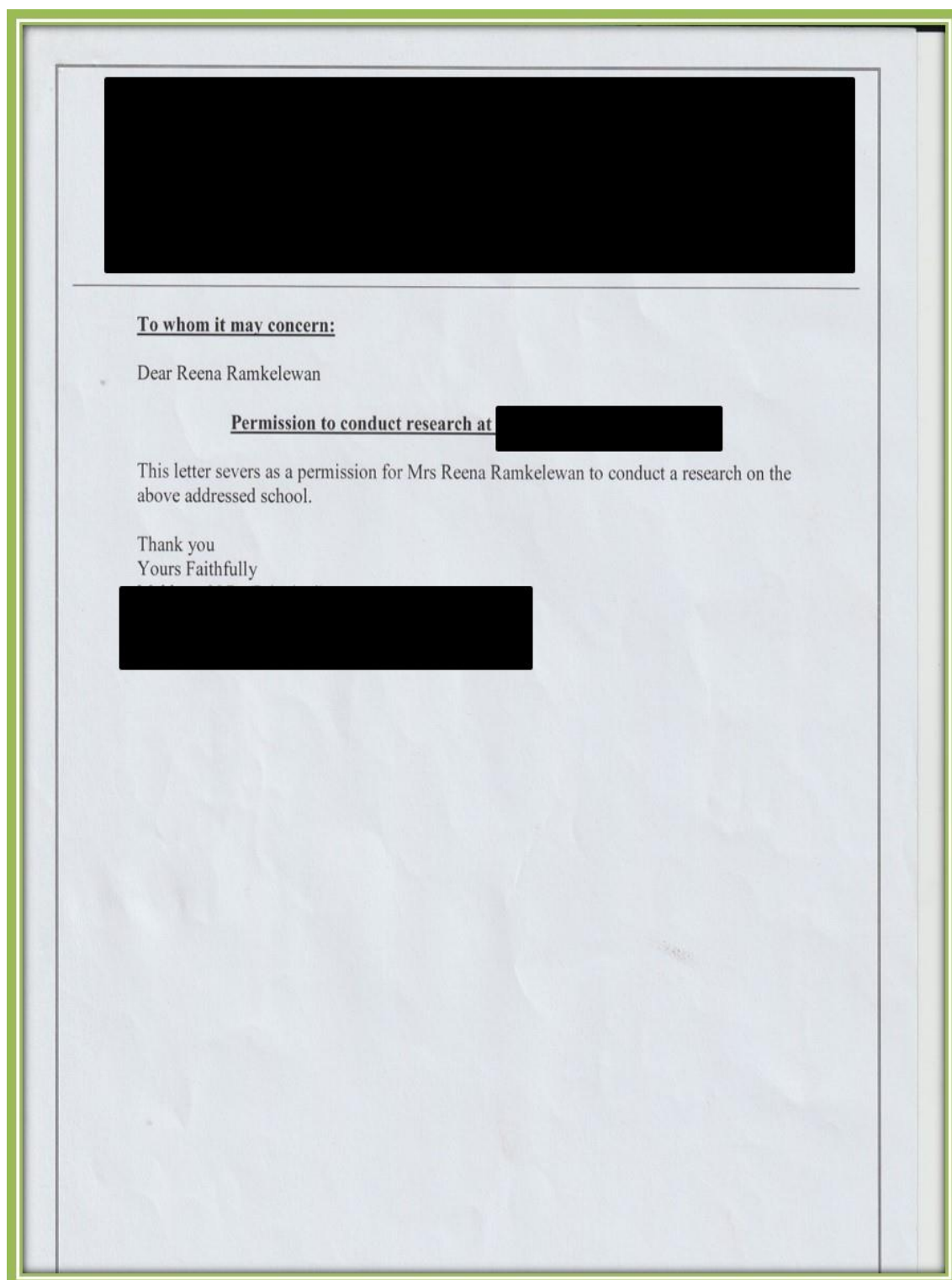
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

DEAR REENA RAMKELEWAN

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT

Your letter titled request for permission to conduct research ████ as reference. Please be informed that you are granted a permission to conduct your research at the above mentioned school.
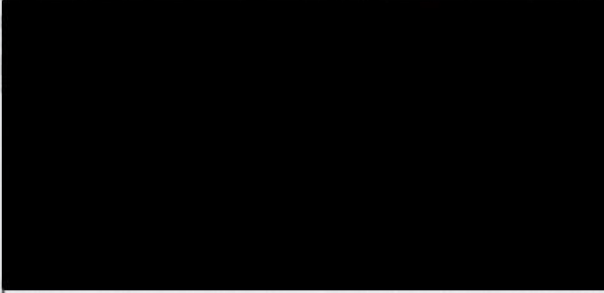
Thank You

SGB Members : Chairperson Mr S. Sikhonde, Dep Chair Mr N.J. Nombela ,Secretary Miss Z.P. Shange, Treasurer Mrs Ngcobo
 Other Members : Mr Khwela N.I., Mrs T.P. Mbatha, Ms B.H. Mhlongo and Miss Z. Majozi.
SMT Members : Principal Mrs Z. Sithole, Dep Principal Mr Khwela N.I.
HOD`s   : Mrs G.P. Masinga, Miss F.Z. Ngcongo and Mr. M.M. Nene

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL 3 (GATEKEEPERS)

To whom it may concern:

Dear Reena Ramkelewan

Permission to conduct research at █████████

This letter severs as a permission for Mrs Reena Ramkelewan to conduct a research on the above addressed school.

Thank you
Yours Faithfully

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL 4 (GATEKEEPERS)

basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

17/02/2016

ATTENTION: MRS REENA RAMKELEWAN

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR PhD STUDIES 2016

Please be informed that permission has been granted to conduct your research at the above mentioned school. Please indicate date/time that you would like to visit the school.

Regards

APPENDIX H: PERMISSION FROM SCHOOL 5 (GATEKEEPERS)

26 JANUARY 2016

DEAR REENA RAMKELEWAN

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT PAUL SYKES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Your letter titled Request for permission to conduct research…….. has reference. Please be informed that you are granted a permission to conduct your research at the above mentioned school.

Yours sincerely
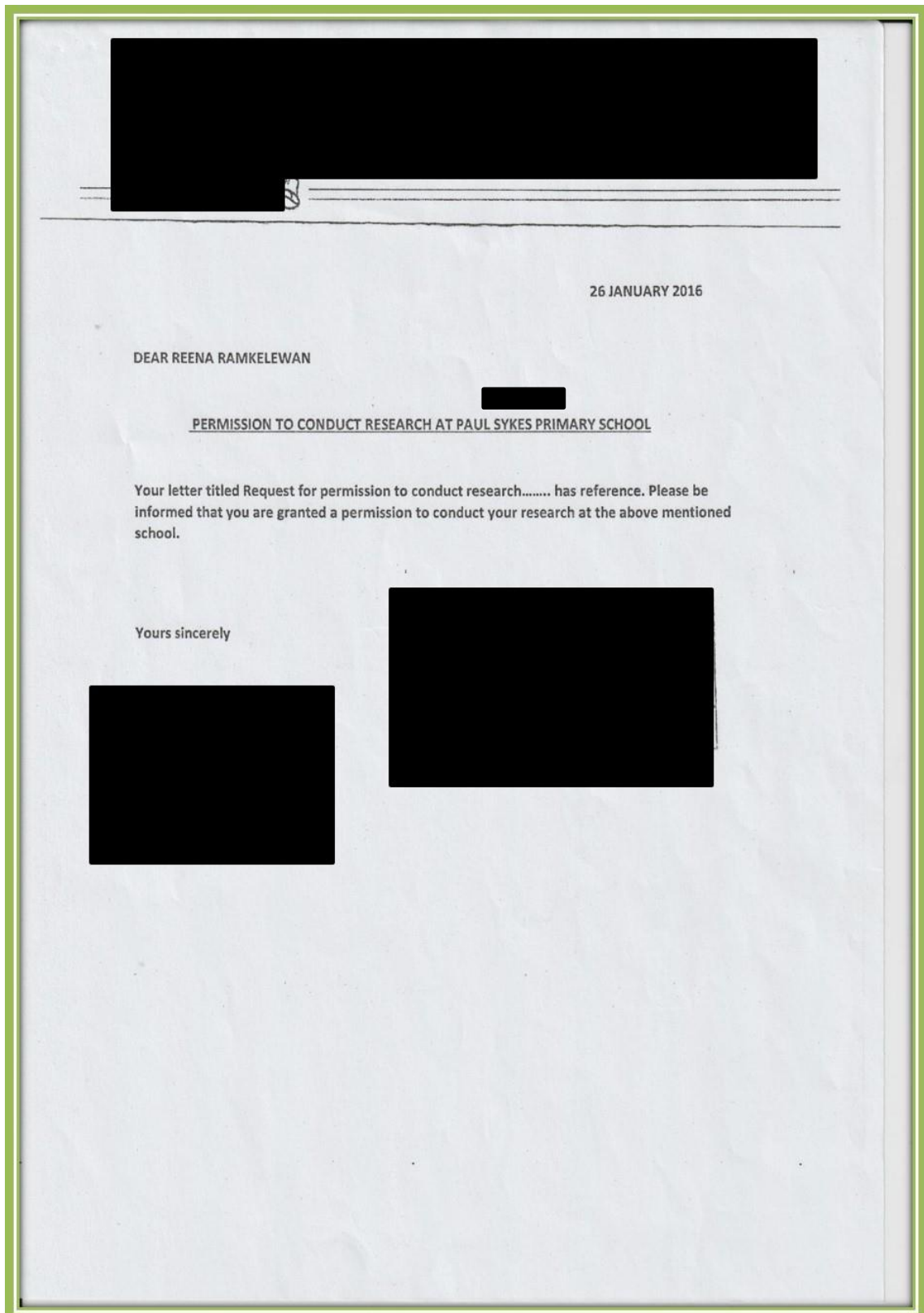
APPENDIX I: CONSENT OF PARTICIPATION LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

Informed Consent- participants

Dear Participant

REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and this research forms part of my PhD study. As part of my PhD research I will be interviewing five teachers. This sample will represent teachers from different school ranging from quintile one to five.

The title of my research is: Personal – Professional dilemmas? Teachers lived experiences in the context of school quintiles.

The aim of this study is to

1. To understand the lived experiences of teachers working in the context of different school quintiles
2. To explore the meanings of personal and professional selves of teachers working in the context of school quintiles.
3. To understand how school culture (habits, routines, practices) in different school quintiles shape teachers personal and professional lives

The findings of this study will be used in my PhD dissertation and any related publications and presentations.

In this study I will use the following methods to generate data from my participants: individual unstructured, in-depth, face to face interviews, photo voice, collage inquiry and poetry inquiry. All discussion will be audio taped recorded.

Each participant will be engaged in:
- One individual unstructured, in-depth, face to face interview
- One photo inquiry session
- One collage inquiry session

1

- One poetic inquiry session
- Each session will be approximately an hour long.

I hereby request permission from you to use your oral narrative descriptions, collages, photographs, and poems as data for my research. I will only use this data if I receive written consent from you.

I will use this data in a way that respects your dignity and privacy. Copies of your contributions will be securely stored and disposed of if no longer required for research purposes. Your name or any information that might identify you will not be used in any presentation or publication that might come out of the study. There are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. However, I hope that this study will make a significant contribution to research on teacher's personal and professional lived experiences in the context of school quintiles.

I also wish to inform you that you have no binding commitment to the study and may withdraw your consent at any time if you feel the need to. If you withdraw your consent, you will not be prejudiced in any way. If you have any questions relating to the rights of research participants, you can contact Ms Phume Ximba in the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Office on 031-260 3587.

This study is supervised by Dr Daisy Pillay and Dr Inba Naicker who are senior lecturers at the School of Education and Development, UKZN. Dr Pillay can be contacted telephonically at 031- 2607598 and Dr Inba at 031- 2603461

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. R. Ramkelewan

Cell: 0782727421

Email address:

reena.ramkelewan@gmail.com

2

APPENDIX J: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

APPENDIX: 2

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

TITLE OF STUDY: Personal – Professional dilemmas? Teachers lived experiences in the context of school quintiles.

I _____

(full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this study, and do consent to participate in the study .

I understand that I am free to leave/withdraw from the study at any time if I want to without any negative or undesirable consequences to myself.

I am consenting to the following data collection activities (please tick)

	YES	NO
In-depth unstructured interviews		
Collages inquiry		
=\Photo voice		
Poetry inquiry		

I also grant/ do not grant permission for the conversations to be audio tape recorded.

....

_____
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

_____
DATE:

_____
SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

_____
DATE

ADDRESS:

_____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

3

APPENDIX K: LIFE STORY RELEASE FORM

APPENDIX: 4

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

Appendix 3: Life Story Release Form

I, _____, have read the life story recorded and written with Reena Ramkelewan. As well as I have read, understand, and agree to the following points.

1) I have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the life story as I see appropriate.

2) I acknowledge that the life story accurately reflects the content of my person interview with Reena Ramkelewan .

3) I authorize the release of the life story to Reena Ramkelewan to publish my story.

4) I have received a copy of the life story for my own records.

_____   _____
Date   Participant

_____   _____
Date   Researcher

6

APPENDIX L: TURNITIN ORIGINALITY REPORT
(CHAPTERS 1 TO 7)

Turnitin Originality Report

Turnitin Originality Report

Ms by R R

From Thesis (PhD Thesis)

Processed on 14-Apr-2020 4:37 PM
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Word Count: 88147

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https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13540602.2013.744195

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https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10413/13708/Nzuza_Zakhele_Dennis_2015.pdf?seq=

6 < 1% match (Internet from 30-Mar-2014)
http://www.forwardpoetry.com/pantoum.php

7 < 1% match ()
http://hdl.handle.net/11394/3238

8 < 1% match (student papers from 07-Feb-2017)
Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2017-02-07

9 < 1% match (student papers from 06-Aug-2013)
Submitted to Higher Education Commission Pakistan on 2013-08-06

10 < 1% match (Internet from 13-Apr-2020)
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/160940691301200114

APPENDIX M: LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

P.O. Box 100715

Scottsville

3209

6 May, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I have edited the following thesis for language errors, and in the process have checked the referencing and layout:

Title: *Personal-professional identities: Stories of teachers' lived dilemmatic experiences in the context of school quintiles.*

Author: Reena Ramkelewan

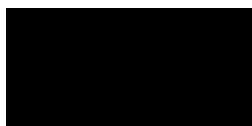**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy (Teacher Development Studies)

Institution: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Supervisor: Professor Daisy Pillay

Co-supervisor: Dr Inbanathan Naicker

Please feel free to contact me should you have any queries.

Kind regards,

Debbie Turrell

totalnightowl@gmail.com

063 891 3870