Masculinity and care: Narratives of male foundation phase teachers in Mpumalanga province

By

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Declaration

I, VUSI MSIZA, declare that:

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to myself. The doctoral process tested my resilience and patience. I grew up knowing that to an extent I am impatient, but in the doctoral journey this was tested. The journey was filled with all the emotions one can imagine. While mostly It was exciting and fun, there were also moments of frustration, prolonged imposter syndrome and an urge to quit. But, through it all I have grown; intellectually, I am a better academic and a better human being.

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Abstract

Teaching in the foundation phase (Grade R to 3), particularly of children who are at the ages of 5 to 9 years, is still dominated by female teachers. Male teachers both globally and in South Africa are still under-represented in the early years of teaching. Literature has shown that the reluctance of men to join the phase is driven by the assumption that foundation phase (FP) teaching is care work and care is constructed as a responsibility of women. Patriarchy and toxic masculinities have been the main contributors in exempting men from caring activities in households, workplaces (schools) or society. For instance, studies show that existing male foundation phase teachers in the field are often ridiculed, and their masculinity is questioned for taking work that is not associated with men. Others negotiate being male foundation phase teachers by distancing themselves from caring activities. The study sought to explore male foundation phase teachers' understanding of care and how they relate their understandings to their masculinities and teacher identities. The study was guided by a narrative inquiry methodology, and I used two methods of generating data. The first was letter-writing and the second was interview-conversations. I conducted the study in the province of Mpumalanga in South Africa. Through a snowball sampling technique, I recruited 13 male teachers who are placed in different grades within the phase. The theoretical framework of the study consists of three theories, the first being the theory of masculinities, followed by intersectionality theory and the four phases of care, as espoused by Joan Tronto. The theories assisted with understanding how masculinities were constructed, contested and negotiated in the experiences that result from the intersection of different identities as well as the types and degrees of care. Fatherhood emerged as a central theme in the study. I found that the prevailing discourse of protection is embedded in the performative act of being fathers to the fatherless children. This finding emerged in a context where fatherhood has often not been aligned with emotional care but more with material provision. The participants' historical experiences of care as young children were found to be central to the ways in which they understood and provided care. The participants who in their childhood had not experienced love and emotional care, and whose fathers had been absent, foregrounded these aspects in their provision of care. Furthermore, the findings show that the participants had a willingness to participate in caring activities, however the historical privileges that men benefit from resulted in gendered performances of care. The participants assisted boys and requested female teachers or staff members to assist with the girls due to the fear of being suspected of child molestation. The study concludes by calling on

more policy work on care to address what care is and its provision in the context of FP teaching. Also, teacher education institutions, especially early childhood education departments, should enhance their training on issues of gender, care, and sexuality. While the study is contributing new insights into the field of foundation phase teaching both in South Africa and globally, there is still a need for further research, for instance studying the experiences of male foundation phase teachers who engage in same-sex relationships.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

"I am a man. I am a human being. I have moments of joy; I also have moments of despair. I appear strong, but I am soft as any other human being inside. I laugh most of the time; I cry sometimes" (Mahala, 2007, p. 157)

1.1 Introduction

I begin the chapter and the doctoral project by using the above citation from a fictional novel by Siphiwo Mahala (2007), titled *When a man cries*. Reading the citation, I assume at this point as a reader the following question comes to mind, how is this related to education and in particular to foundation phase teaching? The study focusses on men who are teaching in the foundation phase (children aged 5 to 9 years); the citation unpacks the complexities of expressions as far as men and masculinities are concerned. Mahala (2007) confirms that men are not immune to emotions such as pain, joy and an ability to receive as well as provide care – a reality that is often denied. This study offers an opportunity to re-imagine care, caring practices and the benefits of such practices to the wider society (Warin, 2018). What I also seek to do with the citation is to present a wider understanding of manhood, one which is divorced from notions of machismo, superiority, hegemony and dominance. A study that seeks to present understandings, beliefs and narratives of men as related to care is an important attempt towards a journey of liberating men from toxic and injurious forms of masculinities (Ratele, 2016). As an introductory chapter to my doctoral study, this chapter discusses, amongst other things, the background, focus and key research questions driving the study. I do this with the aim of providing an account of the context and need for this doctoral study in a national state that is besieged by a culture of misogyny and femicide.

1.2 Background, problem statement and focus of the study

This doctoral research study arises out of my master's project, which was also on men teaching in the foundation phase in the rural areas of Mpumalanga province. The study focussed on male teachers' constructions of their professional and gender identities. In the study, I found that men distanced themselves from activities perceived as caring or requiring care work. For instance, men preferred teaching higher grades like grade 2 and 3, as opposed to grade R and 1, due to the assumption that grade 1 teaching requires a strong caring role(Msiza, 2016).

Foundation phase teaching has long been perceived as women's terrain, to an extent that others have regarded this area of work as a "female occupation" (Carrington, 2002). Travis Wright's (2018) work – which looks at the lived experiences of white gay male foundation phase teachers, using an auto-ethnographic methodology, is pertinent in illustrating the teaching environment in which men in the early years find themselves in. Wright (2018) remarks:

> *While attempting to change Goddess's diaper, my first ever, I was clumsily removing her baby blue jeans when Rosita, an assistant teacher from the room next door, raced into the changing area, scolding me: "Don't you touch that child." Incredulously, I asked why not, and she responded: "This is woman's work. It's not a man's place to change a baby's diaper"* (Wright, 2018, p. 6).

Wright's expression above suggests that work on men in relation to care may be impeded by two obstacles working concurrently. First is the intrinsic fear of men to change diapers or provide care because of the paedophilic suspicion and questions around their intent (Moosa & Bhana, 2020a). Second are the extrinsic factors, such as the structural organisation and the current gender order, that ostracises men who engage in caring activities. The unequal power distribution, which has historically benefitted men, has made it possible for men in power to relegate care work to women (Ratele, 2014). Care is often devalued by men in power, and this can be seen through ways in which men relegate caring responsibilities to women. Scholars such as Skelton (2009), Van Laere et al. (2014) and Warin (2018) note that delegating care work to women is in fact a problem in that young children end up not having access to a complete education, which essentially needs to be facilitated by both men and women. Furthermore, it has the potential of supporting a masculine project premised on machismo, anti-emotion and violence. Kimmel (2004) notes that male violence emanates from gender differentiation between them (men) and women. A research project conducted by Bhana et al. (2009) explored cultural expressions of masculinity and found that violence was used by men to culturally claim respect. The scholars are critiquing this position from a cultural perspective, i.e., the idea that African men deserve to be respected is deeply problematised.

A key driver also for this study in the context of South Africa is the issue of violence. The scourge of violence in South Africa especially gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide are, in most cases, led and perpetrated by men and violent masculinities. Before I unpack forms of

violence that are related to gender and femicide, it is worth noting that violence is not foreign to South Africa; it dates to the historical colonial and apartheid periods, where different forms of violence were used to marginalise and stereotype black Africans. For years there was a racially fuelled discourse around black men, promoted predominantly by white men, constructing them as dangerous, captured in the Afrikaans term 'Swaartgevaar'. Black women, on the other side, were seen and presented by the same regime of government as hypersexual and deserving of rape (Gqola, 2015).

In the post-apartheid South Africa, violence has continued, in particular gender-based violence and femicide. Post-apartheid South Africa has been formed on a dispensation of democracy and marked the end of racial oppression and marginalisation. The democratic ideals included equality, which meant women were now emancipated and empowered to take over spaces and positions that they were previously prevented from. The equality ideals went beyond ideals of gender equality and women's emancipation and included the recognition of individuals who engage in same-sex relations (Msibi, 2011). However, men felt threatened post-1994, asserting their masculinities through violence with an aim to maintain their dominance over women, children and individuals who engage in same sex relations (Ratele, 2016). There has been homophobic violence in South Africa which appears to be driven by violent masculinities. Amongst the dominant forms of homophobic related violence is "corrective rapes" – the raping of lesbian women by men fuelled by an assumption to correct their sexuality to heterosexuality (Gqola, 2015; Msibi, 2011). One of the cases involves the raping of a 25-year-old lesbian woman from Cape Town by teenage gang boys with the intention to correct her sexuality (Duval, 2020, March 03). South Africa is also seeing an increase in sexual assault cases, In the 2019-2020 financial year, there were 53 293 reported cases of sexual offences in the entire country as opposed to the 52 420 of 2018-2019 financial year (South African Police Services, 2020).

There are many cases of violence specifically femicide cases that are perpetrated as a result of violent masculinities in South Africa, I will select and highlight a few in this chapter and elaborate on others later in the study. The first case is that of the former international 100 meters' athlete, Oscar Pistorius, who shot and killed his girlfriend in cold blood, allegedly assuming it was a burglar who is supposedly a black man (Langa et al., 2018). Pistorius' defence strategy was premised on the apartheid racial stereotyping of constructing a black man as a suspect of crime (Langa et al., 2018; Morrell, 1998).

Another case that I wish to highlight, which is an example of the rise of violent masculinities in South Africa, is the killing of a young woman, Karabo Mokoena. The young lady was murdered by her ex-boyfriend, Sandile Mantsoe, who bought petrol and burnt Karabo's body with a car tyre in an attempt to conceal the crime (Chabalala, 2018, April 25). The investigators in the case stated that there were missing organs in the deceased body and described the murder of Karabo as a 'ritual murder', meaning she was sacrificed. While the country thought the killing of Karabo was gruesome and very shocking, there were other number of cases which also felt devastating and suggested an epidemic of femicide. For instance, the gruesome killing of Tshegofatso Pule, who was eight months pregnant and was found hanging in a tree with stab wounds (Mahamba, 2020, June 25). It is alleged that Pule, who was in a relationship with Ntuthuko Shoba, impregnated her and in fear of his wife finding out, he hired Muzikayise Malephane to kill Pule. The case is still on trial.

The episodes of violence have not been isolated to the broader national community in South Africa. They also have been seen in places of work and study, for example there also been violence in the schooling context. First, corporal punishment still continues to be used in schools by teachers after years of its banning (Hunter & Morrell, 2021). Corporal punishment is often performed and constructed in masculine ways it is wedded to power and authority such that some of the learners fear male teachers more than female teachers as a result of corporal punishment (Morrell, 2001a). There is also evidence that indicates the use of corporal punishment more on boys than girls is indicative of the contribution that corporal punishment makes to violent masculinities (ibid). Historically, when corporal punishment was administered on young men, they were expected to be strong (Morrell, 2001a). The image of strength is most observable at the single sex Parktown Boys High School in Johannesburg, where young boys, in particular the grade 8s, were initiated into the school through different forms of violence (Sam, 2020). Equally the arrest of an assistant water polo coach Collan Rex who "was charged with 110 counts of attempted murder, 199 of sexual assault, one of rape, two of sexual grooming and eight of assault [...] seven additional charges of exposure of pornography to a minor" (Sam, 2020, p. 9) indicates the nature of violence that exists in schools. While this example may reflect one schooling context it is equally true that many schools in South Africa remain sites of violence—often at the hands of men (Bhana, 2013; Bhana & Mayeza, 2016). The discourse of strong/tough/fearless is the main driver of violence and violent masculinities in schools (Ratele, 2016). Young men in schools are seeking to front 'fearless' masculinities even outside the school premises (ibid).

In South Africa, violence is normative and is associated deeply with one's position as a man. Kimmel (2004) argues that the sense of entitlement that men have over other men, women and children is another contributing factor to male violence. Gqola (2007) argues that in South Africa we "know what is responsible for the scourge of gender-based violence, and we need to confront violent masculinities" (p. 117). The manifestation of "violence, first of colonisation and then apartheid, has created a particular context in which violence has been made a major element in the management of social relations and conflict in South Africa" (Vetten & Ratele, 2013, p. 4). For example, there is violence in service delivery protests, when students express dissatisfaction in institutions of higher learning. In the context of South Africa, this projection has in many ways, one can argue, been seen in the type of violence yoked together with masculinities and projected by men (Morrell, 2001b). For instance, the work done by Bhana et al. (2009); Clowes et al. (2010); Morrell and Jewkes (2014); Morrell et al. (2012) and Ratele et al. (2010) shows that the masculinity project is heavily constructed on cultural constructs of machismo and a deliberate lack of emotionality and care. Masculinities, the scourge of gender-based violence and gender inequalities have, over two decades of the post-apartheid dispensation, occupied the public domain.

Amongst other things shown by research, is the fact that men are implicated in the gendered factors related to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (hereafter HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (hereafter AIDS) in South Africa. Women have occupied the primary role of care due to a high number of orphans being recorded as a result of the scourge of HIV/AIDS (Morrell & Jewkes, 2014). The issue of care in the context of HIV/AIDS is not only limited to the care involved in looking after the children who are orphaned by the disease. It is also about the very essence that men are transmitters and actually do not show care through spreading the virus to their partners, younger women and even children (Richter, 2003). 20 years ago in South Africa there was a circulating myth that HIV/AIDS can be cured by having sex with a virgin, and this resulted in a high number of infant/baby rapes of men seeking to cure themselves (Richter, 2003). For example, "In late October 2001, six men, aged between 24 and 66, were arrested on charges of gang raping a 9 month-old baby girl, in Louisvale, a small and impoverished community in the Northern Cape" (Posel, 2005, p. 246). In essence, the increased incidence of infant rapes resulting from such myths confirmed Gqola's (2015) argument that rape myths do dangerous work, particular in increasing incidents rape as well as promoting rape culture. Young girls are often raped or coerced by men to engage in sexual

activities without protection, exposing them to HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies due to unfounded myths (Mayeza et al., 2021). There is also high prevalence of HIV infections and intimate partner violence of young women aged 15-24 and HIV infections and death rates of young women are six times higher than those of their male peers (Karim & Baxter, 2016). This is also clear evidence of little or no care in the intentions of men.

The history on fatherhood in South Africa indicates that, for more than a century, black African men were separated from their children to do migrant labour in the gold mines for months and sometimes years (Moodie, 2001; Morrell, 1998). This was not the case with other racial groups, for instance, the apartheid spatial planning and its policies privileged white men as they were living with their families, while black African men were living in single sex hostels (Moodie, 2001). Black African men during apartheid did not benefit the same privileges as white men (Ratele, 2020b), and they did not get to spend time with their families due to apartheid policies on movement in thecountry. Despite the patriarchal notions that the men could have benefitted from, they were primarily prevented from enjoying family time by the systemic apartheid policies. Therefore in the absence of fathers, who were migrant labourers in other provinces or cities (Morrell, 1998), mothers and other members of the extended family in the homesteads had to provide care (Mkhize, 2006). For men, providing for and managing their rural homesteads meant *ubudoda* (being a man) (Moodie, 2001) and of course those who were unemployed without homesteads were regarded as fathers without *amandla* (financial strength) (Hunter, 2006). To date, black men and black fathers in South Africa continue to be projected by society as irresponsible and uncaring (Bhana, 2016; Richter & Morrell, 2006). This indicates that being a man is continuously shaped by various factors, for instance the intersection of class, race, socioeconomic status, sexuality and religion (Vetten & Ratele, 2013).

In this section I have provided a background of masculinities in South Africa and paid significant attention to previous studies that focussed on male foundation phase (hereafter FP). Studies have showed that in the society FP teaching has been associated with women, while men who enter are treated with suspicion (Moosa & Bhana, 2020a). I have also provided a background of different forms of violence in South Africa that have manifested in the wider society, households, intimate partnerships and schools. I suggest that forms of violence are primarily driven by violent and uncaring men. This is most evident through the following: some men for example have purposefully distanced themselves from caring activities and some have

committed violent acts—acts that are of horrific nature, often geared to undermine women and other men. Others have abdicated their responsibilities as fathers – demonstrating the lack of care. This is not to suggest that the performance of masculinity in South Africa has been exclusively hegemonic. Rather it suggests that hegemony and patriarchy have tended to have a powerful role in shaping identity construction and performance in amongst men. Against this background in this study, I am seeking to explore how male FP teachers in the province of Mpumalanga understand care. I am also seeking to explore how they relate their understandings of care to their teacher identities and masculinities in rural contexts of Mpumalanga province.

1.3 Rationale of the study

This study is motivated by two primary reasons: a scholarly one and a personal one. The scholarly reasons respond to a dearth of literature exploring this topic within a South African perspective. There is plenty of literature in the Northern hemisphere including Europe (see Brody et al., 2021; Brownhill, 2016; Hellman et al., 2016; Warin, 2018), USA and Canada (see Mallozzi & Campbell Galman, 2014, 2016; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2012a, 2012b; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010; Martino, 2015). The international scholarship, inclusive of both European and North American studies, have been dominated by a debate around the recruitment of male teachers in the FP teaching an issue I will elaborate on in greater detail in chapter two. Studies by scholars such as Brownhill (2014, 2016); Martino (2009) and Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2012a) have challenged the construction of male FP teachers as role models to young boys, who are also assumed to be feminised by female teachers since they are a majority in the teaching profession. These scholars argue that attempts of recruiting men on the basis of this notion are largely about re-masculinising the FP (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015; Martino, 2008). Other studies have also challenged the stereotypes that construct and present male FP teachers as wanting to be women or as likely to be gay (Sargent, 2000). Early scholarly work in this area of feminist scholarship on masculinities and FP teaching was about challenging the existing stereotypes that were seen as breeding inequalities in the profession and in society. Recruiting male FP teachers for the purposes of doing manual labour such as lifting objects or providing disciplinarians is another aspect which is currently challenged by scholars such as Xu (2020).

Internationally the scholarship has also moved towards studying caring masculinities in the FP, with specific studies looking into the emergence of this form of masculinities and the possibilities of nurturing masculinities emerging in the field (Elliott, 2016; Scambor et al., 2014; Scambor et al., 2013). The emerging themes in the studies suggest that caring masculinities have the potential to drive change in schools through the campaign for gender equality and transformation in gender relations (Jordan, 2020). Another important work is that which critiques the concept of care in the teaching profession, arguing for ways in which men can participate as well as enact caring practices as FP teachers (Børve, 2017; Warin, 2014). Although caring masculinities are advocated by different scholars internationally, there are also scholars who have issued cautions and argued that the campaign for caring masculinities in the FP teaching should not be conceptualised/premised on a parental discourse of mothering and fathering (Hunter et al., 2017; Vogt, 2002).

The work for caring men and masculinities comes with challenges of its own; there appear to be two narratives circulating both in the society and in scholarship, the first being linked to the project of caring masculinities and its work to transform gender relations. The second concerns a paedophilic suspicion, suggesting that men cannot be trusted around children, thus their decision to work in FP is always questioned (Murray, 1996). The suspicion transgresses sexuality, heterosexual men are suspected of wanting to molest young girls while queer men are suspected of molesting young boys (King, 2009). Scholars are presently looking into ways in which men can perform their duties as teachers while navigating the stereotypes that are associated with teaching in the FP (Brody & Gor Ziv, 2020). Others are moving towards understanding reasons for the recruitment and retention of men in the phase, in a nutshell what makes them stay, given the stereotypes of gender and sexuality (Brody et al., 2021; Plaisir et al., 2021).

There is also emerging work in some southern spaces such as South Africa where currently there growing body of scholarship in studying male FP teachers (see Bhana & Moosa, 2016; Mashiya, 2015; Moosa & Bhana, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020a; Msiza, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; May 26; Petersen, 2014). Considering the wealth of literature internationally, South Africa still significantly lags behind in this area of scholarship. The South African literature has covered the following topics: first is the literature that focuses on pre-service male teachers, their experiences and the perceptions of them by others (Mashiya, 2015; Mashiya et al., 2015; Petersen, 2014). This was followed by studies focusing on the attraction and recruitment of

men into the FP (Bhana & Moosa, 2016). In addition, the scholars in South Africa have also studied teacher and gender construction in the FP (Moosa & Bhana, 2017, 2018; Msiza, 2020b). More recent work is beginning to explore the phenomenon of sexuality in the FP teaching, i.e. how male teachers distance themselves from homosexuality and how they engage with the concept of same-sex attraction in schools (Msiza, 2020a, 2021, May 26). The work indicates that sexuality is intertwined with the discourse of paedophilia, for instance, Moosa and Bhana (2020b) found that male FP teachers who disclosed their same-sex orientation were more trusted by society than those who are assumed to be heterosexual. Although the perception appears to be accepting of individuals who engage in same-sex relations, the trust seems to be premised on the binary of masculinity and femininity. The South African scholarship is also showing growth in terms of more diverse research interests. Scholars Kagola and Khau (2020) in the Eastern Cape studied the perceptions of school governing bodies (SGBs) on the recruitment of male FP teachers, using creative visual methodologies. They found that majority of the SGBs members have accepted bias in their previous recommendations for appointment, in particular for assuming that men are not able to provide care and that women are better suited for the FP.

The key debates in both the international and South African literature have contributed to taking research and practice forward. Within the emergent scholarly field on gender and FP teaching in South Africa, I see this study as an important one, one that will significantly contribute to the body of knowledge on masculinities and foundation phase teaching both local and international. Internationally my doctoral study contributes to ongoing work on caring masculinities, male teachers' understandings of their identities in relation to care as well as their contribution towards achieving gender equality. What sets apart this doctoral study from the existing studies in South Africa and its contribution to the field, is the nature of the participants, I work with men who are 1) trained as early childhood educators including foundation phase 2) men who are currently in the field teaching young children in Grade R-3. The study explores men who are in the field of FP teaching and who have the day-to-day experiences of providing care. 3) As indicated earlier in the chapter, I work with men who are in a context of violent masculinities, where men have over the years been caught up in violent acts against women, children, and other men (Langa, 2020; Morrell & Jewkes, 2014). Therefore, exploring male FP teachers' understandings of care amongst men who are located in a context of violent masculinities and employed in black rural communities is a significant contribution to scholarship of masculinities. This is more significant because Ratele (2016,

2020a) a South African masculinity scholar has been arguing for the liberation of black men from the toxic notions of masculinities from the economic oppression of black men and from colonial constructs of black men. Therefore, the contribution is not limited to the scholarship of FP teaching, but also informs the scholarship of masculinities in South Africa.

The motivation for doing this study also relates to the context of Mpumalanga province. The province remains one of the most understudied contexts when it comes to educational research, and especially so for work focusing on gender and education. Most studies in South Africa generally tend to be undertaken in the relatively more developed provinces. For example, the recent publication on related work focusing on masculinities and FP teaching by Moosa and Bhana (2019, 2020a) was based in the Northern part of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal and there has been plenty of work focusing on masculinities that has emerged from the province of KwaZulu-Natal (see Bhana & Mayeza, 2019; Hunter, 2006; Morrell, 1998, 2001b, 2006) amongst others. Yet, Mpumalanga remains a critical province in understanding notions of masculinity and manhood, particularly given the diverse and often complex existence of multiple South African cultural groups. Fixed notions of manhood continue to inform masculine performance amongst the various linguistic groups in the province.

For instance, rites of passage involving the compulsory circumcision of young men still continue to inform the reality for many men in the province. In 2017, four young initiates lost their lives during an initiation training in Mpumalanga, a trend that has been ongoing for several years now (Mabena & Shange, 2017, June 26). The dominant literature on South African rites of passage for men focuses on the Xhosa ethnic groups based in the Eastern and Western cape provinces of South Africa, often incorrectly projecting these cultural rites of passage as exclusively linked to the AmaXhosa cultural grouping (Mfecane, 2016). The existing literature on cultural circumcision offers an entry into the ways in which such rites of passage come to aid the project of patriarchy. For instance, Thando Mgqolozana notes that "as a man, you don't give up, you don't break down. You do what you are supposed to do to see it through, without the dependency of others" (Mgqolozana, 2018, p. 103). This is similar to some of the practices in Mpumalanga. The intention of the rites of passage is to initiate young boys into the realm of manhood and this is often taking place under difficult circumstances and hardships associated with manhood. According to Mgqolozana (2018, p. 77) the rite of passage and circumcision process is constituted as "a physical and tangible manifestation of what manhood is really about. It teaches you to endure." Once the young men (usually aged 16 years and above) have

transitioned they are re-introduced to the society and are entitled to adult privileges such as starting a family and the privileges to make decisions in their families (Maputle et al., 2019; Vincent, 2008). I once again draw from Mahala's book (2007) to illuminate the deep relationship between men and these cultural rites of passage. In the book the main character makes the following expression: "I was circumcised and made a man according to the customs of my people. There is no pain that I cannot endure" (Mahala, 2007, p. 38). Similarly Mandela (1995, p. 34) stated that "circumcision is a trial of bravery and stoicism; no anaesthetic is used; a man must suffer in silence". The above shows both the sentimental and material value that men attach to the rites of passage in these contexts. The screening of the movie titled *Inxeba* (the wound) based on the Xhosa cultural rites of passage was largely challenged, with many Xhosa men called for its ban in South Africa as it had dared to associate homosexuality with this cultural practice and had also revealed some of the cultural practices meant to be hidden and totally sacred (Siswana & Kiguwa, 2018; Vincent, 2008).

The studies above have shown the construction of masculinities and the characteristics that are associated with manhood. Although the rites of passage are dominant in the black rural communities especially in Mpumalanga, this is not an exhaustive and inclusive definition of manhood. Masculinities are multiple and constructed according to people's histories as well contexts (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Care in the contexts of rites of passage is often relegated outside the realm of manhood, men are meant to endure pain, to show strength and to be tough with no attention given to medical treatments. In this study I am concerned with how men are able to navigate the construction of machismo, where one dimension requires them to endure pain and show strength. Another contrasting dimension is that they have entered an occupation that is deemed to be for women i.e., defying patriarchal prescripts. I am also concerned with understanding how they can undertake the work and the performances that are deemed to be outside the ontological understanding of manhood, such as giving care. What this study seeks to offer is not only an understanding of care in relation to FP teaching, but also how this intersects and finds meaning at a local and cultural level informed by patriarchy, religion, and violence.

Another important reason for pursuing this study concerns recent developments in Education within the province. The Mpumalanga Department of Education has made concerted efforts to train more men for the foundation phase teaching as a way of diversifying its teaching cohort. For instance, in 2010, the Department undertook to train 41 men through a number of higher

education institutions in South Africa. Training more FP teachers generally was an effort driven by the need to increase the number of quality early childhood educators in the province (SAnews, 2015, February 26). This action, together with the fact that the newly formed University of Mpumalanga has prioritised foundation phase teaching as an area of development, make Mpumalanga a province fertile for scholarly exploration in the FP. Considering the focus of my study on male FP teachers and care, there was a potential in Mpumalanga province to have access to a diverse cohort of participants, who also trained in different teacher education institutions country wide.

Finally, I am also from Mpumalanga, and I am a trained FP male teacher. When I chose this specialisation, I received a lot of criticism from my community as FP work was not seen as work geared for men. Earlier I presented brief literature on teaching and care, I indicated that FP teaching is continuously seen as doing care work. Therefore, the community was not seeing me (particularly because of my sex) as someone who can potentially teach and provide care to the young learners, Others questioned me and asked why I would choose the FP specialisation, as men are not supposed to look after children and 'wipe bums'. The subject of criticism was mainly about wiping snotty noses and bums, the criticisms contained sexist undertones which suggested that care work is a responsibility of women and should be relegated to them. My interpretation of these events was indicating that care and caring practices are problematized, when performed by men. I am therefore in many ways responding to this reaction, while also seeking to expand knowledge in contexts that are often forgotten in literature.

1.4 Objectives and the research questions

1.4.1 Objectives

In undertaking this study, like any other research studies, I had come up with objectives that I was seeking to achieve relative to the research problem that I presented earlier in this chapter. My study is mainly about two things, care and masculinities, in the context of FP teaching. Thus, I was exploring how male teachers understand the concept of care in the foundation phase teaching. Upon establishing their understandings, I then sought to unpack how the selected male foundation phase teachers relate their conceptions and understanding of care to their masculinities and identities as teachers. This was important because care is classed, gendered

and raced (Tronto, 2010). For the ease of reading, I also present the objectives below in bullet form:

- To explore how male teachers understand the concept of care in the Foundation Phase teaching.
- To unpack the nature of the relationship between the ways in which the selected male Foundation Phase teachers understand their masculinities and their identities as teachers.

1.4.2 Research questions

- How do male teachers understand the concept of care in the foundation phase teaching?
- What is the nature of the relationship between the ways in which the selected male Foundation Phase teachers understand their masculinities and their identities as teachers?

1.5 The significance of the study

In this introductory chapter I have discussed and provided a discussion on the background, problem statement, rational of the study, objectives, and research questions relative to the phenomenon of this doctoral study. Herein, I seek to outline the significance of the study. I argue that this study has significance not only for understanding the shifting nature of the construction and constitution of masculinities in South Africa. It is also critical given the space in which such work is undertaken (foundation phase teaching). It is important to understand how the cultural, socio-political, and structural notions of manhood inform the type of teaching that is undertaken by men who are seen as entering spaces that are deemed to be for women. Understanding such complex intersections has the potential to enable a broader understanding of how care and care work is undertaken in the context of schooling, particularly FP teaching. As noted earlier, I conducted the study at a time of rising violent masculinities in South Africa (Gqola, 2007; Langa, 2020) and in a rural context where there is a dominant and fixed definition of manhood. Often masculinities in a violent context like South Africa are divorced from care work, an attitude fuelled by cultural and patriarchal notions. This study has significance in contributing to knowledge in the following ways: first it contributes to the dearth of scholarship on male teachers in the FP, secondly it has significance for understanding men's participation on care work such as FP teaching and doing such work in a broader context that is predominantly patriarchal.

Ensuring that the study produces sufficient data with coherence on men's conceptions of care in relation to their masculinities and teacher identities, I selected narrative inquiry, as espoused by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), to study the participants, a methodology that is within the qualitative approach of conducting research. The intention was to understand more in-depth the storied lives of my participants. Since the study is mainly about care and masculinities, I became creative in my data generation with the 13 participants I recruited. I used an expressive method of data generation, which was letter-writing, and this was accompanied by the second method; interview-conversations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). I unpack and elaborate on the methodology and my methodological decisions in chapter 4 of this doctoral project.

1.6 Brief overview of the chapters

Chapter 1: This current chapter, which is an introduction to the doctoral study, has provided a discussion on the background, problem statement and the focus of the study. I discussed the three together, as the problem statement is linked in one way or the other with the background of the study. I further proceeded to discuss the rationale of conducting the study; therein I showcased the scholarly dearth of work in this area and highlighted the ways in which masculinities are constructed and constructed in South Africa, particularly in the Mpumalanga province. I provided the key research objectives, the key research questions as well as argued for the significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Following chapter one is the literature review chapter, which contains an extensive discussion of the existing work in relation to the phenomenon. The exhaustive nature of the review demonstrates amongst other things that, in England, early childhood education centres (crèche) were the first to offer early years education facilitated by men. I also provided a clearly mapped out discussion showing the debates and the development of the field to date – for example, teaching and care, history of FP teaching in South Africa, the role modelling, paedophilia and the parental discourses in the early childhood and foundation phase teaching context.

Chapter 3: It is in this chapter that I discuss the two theoretical frameworks informing the study that is, masculinities and intersectionality theory, by Raewyn Connell and Kimberle Crenshaw respectively. I also unpacked the work of masculinities in South Africa and how the key scholars such as Kopano Ratele and Robert Morrell on masculinities have shifted the debates and contributed towards the goal of gender justice in the country. Given that this was

a study about the conceptualisation of care, I also used a conceptual framework of care by Joan Tronto who has written extensively on the topic. While the theories were useful to understand the phenomenon, I also provided their limitations and critiques.

Chapter 4: The chapter details the processes of selecting the approach, paradigm, methodology and its relevance to the purpose as well as the objectives of the study. I used narrative inquiry as the research methodology, located within the qualitative approach to research. The chapter also discusses the two methods of data generation used in the study i.e., interview-conversations and letter writing. Of particular importance in the chapter is the reflexive section, where I discuss my positionality as a researcher. After chapter two, this is another extensively written chapter to establish rigour of the data generated.

Chapter 5, 6 and 7: The three are the analysis chapters of the study. In each chapter, I presented findings thematically, showing the major themes that emerged and the subthemes. The first chapter of analysis focuses on the narratives of the participants, sharing their understandings of care and in care in relation to FP teaching and elaborating on the type of caring activities that they do in the FP and, further, whether care is natural or socially constructed. The second chapter of analysis – chapter six – focuses on the narratives around masculinities and care. For instance, to highlight some of the themes in the chapter; care and fatherhood, role modelling and the male teachers' perceptions on the recruitment of more men in the FP. Chapter seven is the third analysis chapter where I present and discuss data on providing care in extra-mural activities, male teachers' perceptions of teacher retention and movement as well as their teaching and leadership responsibilities.

Chapter 8: In Chapter 8 I reflect on the theory and the methodology used in the study, I present a review of the entire doctoral project as well as the personal and professional reflections. The second part of the chapter demonstrates how the findings responded to each of the two research questions. I further discuss the contribution made by the study to theory, methodology and praxis. I also provide the implications of the study to praxis, future research, and policy in South Africa. Lastly it is the conclusion for both the entire research project and the chapter.

1.7 Conclusion

In this introductory chapter to my doctoral thesis, I have detailed the study's background and layered out the problem statement which I sought to address. For instance, I have discussed the ways in which violence has been normalised and how masculinities are always at the centre of

violence and prejudice. I have also briefly highlighted the scholarly trends, debates, and discourses on this phenomenon, outlining the literature trends internationally and locally. Studying men in a diverse context like South Africa requires that I also discuss the intersection of race and masculinities in South Africa. It was also necessary that I provide reasons that have motivated me to conduct a study of this nature. I have unpacked different reasons for the need and significance of this research.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one provided a discussion on the background, rationale, and the significance of the study as well as the objectives. In this chapter, I review the existing literature concerning masculinity, care, and foundation phase. Globally, there have been a considerable number of studies conducted in this area of work and, when compared to the local context of South Africa, the local literature is relatively low. A literature review seeks to position the study and provide a context in relation to the work conducted previously within a particular phenomenon. In essence, a literature review should synthesise the significant debates that are emerging from the field, and how the study fits with those debates (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Cohen et al., 2011; Paltridge & Starfield, 2007). The review consists of the following sections, amongst others; I begin the review with a discussion on the history of early childhood and foundation phase (FP) teaching, I then proceed to a discussion on FP teaching in South Africa. Since the study focuses on men's conceptions of care, I have sections where I discuss studies on care, teaching and care work as well as caring masculinities. The last part of the review consists of studies focusing on the existing work on male teacher recruitment, role modelling, sexuality, privilege, the suspicion of paedophilia, as men have generally not been trusted with children, and lastly, I present studies showing reasons for the low uptake of male teachers in the FP. In the discussion of the review, I seek to showcase studies conducted elsewhere in the world while simultaneously providing debates within the context of South Africa. The purpose of organising the review of the literature in this way is to show debates, contestations, similarities across local and international literature in order to present a clear picture of the scholarly gap this study aims to fill, in essence the key area of the study's contribution.

2.2 History of early childhood and foundation phase teaching

Currently, in the world, as, for example, in member countries of the OECD, research shows that teachers in the early childhood and FP teaching are overwhelmingly female (OECD, 2019). The dominant number of female teachers in the phase has created assumptions that the phase is a reserve for women only. In this section, I present a historical account of teaching in this phase, as early as in the 18th century, highlighting research from the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The aim is to debunk the myth of FP teaching as an exclusive reserve for women teachers.

Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) reveal that in the United Kingdom (UK) it is men who started the first infant schools. Robert Owen opened his school in 1817 while Samuel Wilderspin's school was opened in 1825. Issues of patriarchy and essentialist thinking have been in existence since 1800. For instance, Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) state that on running the school, Wilderspin drew mainly on an essentialist notion that men are better suited to teach in the schools because they are better disciplinarians. Such schools, as the authors argue, were used to maintain male superiority in public by using the idea that men are better, more suitable disciplinarians in schools.

In the mid and late 1800s and up to the early 20th century, a set of curricula in the schools began to be gendered and classed. This was the beginning of gender politics that viewed teaching as women's work (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015; Martino, 2008). Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) reveal that, early in the 19th century, there were assumptions that men and women in the teaching profession should teach different ages. Historical events such as wars, particularly World War 1 and 2, also contributed to the 'feminised' state of teaching. Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) state that at the beginning of each war, a large number of men were recruited to the serve in the army. Such recruitment resulted in male teacher shortages and there was a need to recruit female teachers to fill up the vacant positions (Oram, 1989). Several governments, in particular that of England, had thought after the wars that teaching would remain the responsibility of females and mothers (Lewis, 2003; Rohrmann, 2020). The work of Oram (1989) reveals that female teachers who displayed or performed typical male traits were rewarded and allocated more resources. What this suggests are the covert practices that subordinated anything associated with femininity and rewarded patriarchal and assumed masculine traits such as being a disciplinarian, dominant and lacking in emotions.

Moving to the context of the United States of America (US), before the 19th century, teaching was dominated by men, mainly white missionary men. This began to change around 1846 when Catharine Beecher, who was a missionary teacher, argued for the involvement of women in the teaching profession (Goldstein, 2014). In the same year (1846), Beecher delivered a speech where she ignited a moral panic around male teachers, insinuating that they cannot be entrusted with the lives and the care of children (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). Rury (1989) argues that in the US, teaching began to be feminised in the 1850s when the labour market was changing, especially considering that at the time all other professions in the US were dominated by men. According to Rury (1989), this was a move to ensure that teaching is not accorded the same status as other professions, for instance, medicine, engineering and law. In her advocacy to

include females Beecher argued that hiring female teachers would cost less (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). On the basis of understanding the historical arguments from the above scholars, Martino (2008) argues that when studying teaching, we need to understand its economic and socio-cultural historical contexts. This is because teaching like all other professions was conceptualised at a particular period and on the basis of specific socio-cultural norms that have gone through multiple changes as time passes. According to Drudy (2008, p. 312), "Feminisation of teaching is a cumulative historical and social process". Therefore, this indicates that the gendering of the teaching profession has a long history, and it is significant to understand it for comprehensive interventions. Hence to date, the early childhood and FP sector employs "the most gender-segregated professions worldwide" (Rohrmann, 2020, p. 5).

2.3 Locating foundation phase teaching in South Africa

To locate the foundation phase teaching in South Africa, I begin with presenting statistics on the status on the teaching profession. I draw the statistical data from a report published online in 2018 (Department of Basic Education, 2018). Gender representation in the teaching profession is predominantly female; the total number of teachers inclusive of primary and secondary schools in South Africa for both public and independent schools is 418 613, and ,of this total amount, female teachers are 294 675 which is 70%. In the Mpumalanga province, the subject of my doctoral study, both the primary and secondary school teachers in the province add up to a total of 34 404. Of this total, 23 311 are female, which is 68% (ibid., 2018). Also in Mpumalanga province, there are 21 582 FP teachers and 16 440 (76%) are females (ibid). From the data presented above, it is clear that two-thirds of the teaching staff in South African schools are female. In the case of management of schools there remain stark gender inequalities, for instance while the majority in the teaching profession is female, men have an upper hand when it comes to management. Women principals in South Africa for both primary and secondary schools account for about 36% (Tyatya, 2020, Auguest 25).

The gender representation in the teaching profession for South Africa is reflective of the previous apartheid system that segregated people based on their skin colour and in the main was oppressive (Atmore, 2013). The apartheid education system was further underpinned by the ideals of gender inequality and the deliberate attempts to 'feminise' the teaching profession (Chisholm, 2012). Post-1994, in the new democratic dispensation, the South African government created programmes to redress the past injustices and redirected resources to fund

those who were previously marginalised (Chisholm, 1999). The reception year class (grade R), which is now integrated into schools, was formally introduced in 2001 with its teaching staff comprising of 99% female teachers and only 1% being male (Atmore, 2013).

As part of the efforts to redress the past imbalances, the Department of Basic Education developed the following policy framework titled; *The national policy framework for teacher education and development in South Africa* (Department of Basic Education, 2006). In this section, I provide a discussion that seeks to summarise the contents of the policy. The discussion will highlight the following key aspects: scope and purpose, objectives and goals, teacher shortages and recruitment campaigns. The purpose of discussing the policy is to showcase ways in which the teaching profession and its advancement is regulated in South Africa.

Part of the scope in which the policy was designed for, was to develop a teaching profession that will be able to address the needs of the 21st century and democratic South Africa. The main objective was to provide "an overall strategy for the successful recruitment, retention and professional development of teachers to meet the social and economic needs of the country" (Department of Basic Education, 2006, p. 5). Also, their primary goal was to maintain a balance between teachers who are leaving the field with those who are entering each year. Provincial departments of education were tasked to determine, in advance, for instance a year prior, the required number of teachers either by qualification, language, district or subject (Department of Basic Education, 2006). Considering the gender inequalities that exist in South Africa and particularly in the teaching profession, the policy is silent on issues of gender; it does not stipulate whether recruitment should be driven by gender, particularly in the FP.

The policy highlights that the foundation phase was already identified as an area that lacks teachers, especially those who are competent to teach mother-tongue (African) languages (Department of Basic Education, 2006). There were several strategies that were introduced to significantly increase the number of qualified FP teachers (Green et al., 2011). Some of the strategies were linked to the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme which stated priorities and provided funding to students (FP was one of the priority specialisations) (Green et al., 2014). The provincial department of education in Mpumalanga, where this study is located, made an effort to train a significant group of young people to qualify as early childhood and FP teachers. The main argument of the province, as reported in the media, was to strengthen the quality of education in the ECD and FP (SAnews, 2015, February 26). Although there is a significant

number of men in the cohorts that are trained by the Mpumalanga Department of Education, it remains unknown whether their campaigns are driven by gender-equitable ideals. These are significant for a context like South Africa that has a deeply divided past and existing inequalities in the teaching profession. Turning to the national policy framework for teacher education and development in South Africa, the campaign strategy that was recommended in the policy was to raise the visibility of teaching as a profession. The campaign targeted learners in high school between grade 10-12, men and women who are mature and ready to enter the profession and, lastly, the students who are enrolled in relevant degree programmes and are willing to complete a postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE).

The policy framework for teacher education and development in South Africa has provided guidelines to address the shortage of teachers, transform the profession and recruit qualified teachers. The policy has been driven by an urgent need to redress the evils of the apartheid system in the education sector and the society at large. Thus far, especially when considering the education statistics, the profession is still dominated by female teachers, with men who enter the field are typically portrayed in the society as weak. There appears to be little progress in redressing the historical apartheid agenda to 'feminise' education and advance the patriarchal order (Chisholm, 2012).

Part of what I attempt to do in this doctoral project is to explore how male teachers understand the concept of care in relation to the FP. In the next section, I present studies on care and unpack what care is.

2.4 Defining care

There are various definitions of what care is, and Tronto (2013) acknowledges that care has multiple connotations and meanings. For this review, I have selected a few scholars in the area of care. Tronto (1993) states that care is about reaching out to something/someone apart from the self with the hope that it will yield some action. In a situation where it does not generate some action, there is usually a problem impeding the completion of the caring process emanating between a carer and the cared for (Noddings, 1992). Engaging in the said process is participating in care work. In addition, there are complexities around care and care work, as the concept of care may include emotional, social, personal and economic aspects (Anttonen & Zechner, 2011; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011; Noddings, 1984). In addition to these aspects, care has an ethical and political value that is attached to it (Reddy et al., 2014). This means that we are informed by certain social, cultural, and religious principles in our understanding and

provision of care. Also, the provision of care is premised on the notion of the greater good of the society.

The meaning and value of care from each society or group differs, but, commonly, all human beings require a certain degree of care in their lives (Tronto, 1993). Care should therefore not be understood as a uniform concept that carries the same meaning in any country, region or local context (Reddy et al., 2014). Such notions are problematic because, in any given space or country, the meanings of care are understood differently when taking into account the cultural context, time and place (Moosa & Bhana, 2020; Reddy et al., 2014). Recently, African scholars have sought to contextualise the concept of care within African philosophical beliefs. Reddy et al. (2014) note that in Southern Africa, care is commonly associated with the concept of *Ubuntu*. Waghid and Smeyers (2012, p. 11) state that "*Ubuntu* is generally considered by Africans as a kind of human interconnectedness and dignity one has towards others". This suggests that care in Africa, through *Ubuntu,* considers the communal and individual wellbeing of others.

Apart from the context being the determinant on the type and nature of care that is provided, care is classed, raced and gendered (Tronto, 1993). I unpack this briefly in the review and expand more on the next chapter, which has a dedicated section for a conceptual framework on care.

2.4.1 Teaching and care work

There are contestations on care and teaching in the FP, with most arguments centred on gender. This is so as women generally tend to be dominant in the FP, as seen in the statistics provided earlier. The OECD (2019) notes that women are primarily involved in providing care, either paid or unpaid. Some scholars advocate for the involvement of men in professions perceived to be caring, like teaching in the foundation phase (see Børve, 2017; Mistry & Sood, 2015; Warin, 2014). Here, teaching in the FP is seen as being involved in care work (Nguyen, 2016; Nias, 1999; Vogt, 2002). Universally the image of FP teaching has been that of a female, associated with nurturing and caring characteristics that are socially constructed as feminine (Gill, 2020; Heikkilä & Hellman, 2017). As discussed earlier, associating care work with femininity is linked to a specific history, context and culture (Jordan, 2020; Yang & McNair, 2019) and is part of a sexist project of advancing a patriarchal social order.

Historically, in both local and international contexts, Bhana (2016a) and Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) state that the feminine image in the FP is reinforced by the maternal discourses that construct women as innately equipped to provide care. There female teachers are often constructed as mothers, i.e., female teachers are positioned as carers who have natural 'mothering' instincts to offer such care. It has a homogenising tendency of treating women as one and assumes that all women can provide care and nurturing to the FP learners (Bhana, 2016a). In the latest work of Moosa and Bhana (2020), the authors argue that the positioning on women and care are premised on biological binaries. On the one hand women are perceived as natural carers due to the assumed biological trait of nurturing, while on the other men are seen as biologically unable to offer care as they are assumed lack the biological traits of nurturing (Buschmeyer, 2013). Reducing care work to parental discourses positions FP negatively; essentially, it assumes that there is little or no education required to undertake roles such as being a FP teacher (Moss, 2006). The parental discourse (i.e. the thought of FP being a place for mothering and fathering) overshadows and undermines the professional identities of FP teachers (Murray, 1996; Vogt, 2002).

Another key issue that emerges from the literature is professional performativity, i.e. there is gender expectation around men and women who are teaching in the FP to perform their professional roles in a particular way or exhibit certain characteristics. For example, the gendered nature of teaching and care positions women as unnatural if they do not exhibit characteristics associated with nurturing (Noddings, 2001). Contrary to what is expected from women, men who exhibit nurturing and caring traits are perceived as 'unnatural' occupiers of care (Cameron, 2001; Plank, 2019). This is due to the social construction of masculinities in society, i.e. macho, strong and dominant versions of masculinities that are divorced from care and emotions (Connell, 2011a; hooks, 2004b). Such forms of masculinities that are detached from care are "carefully learned, delicately transmitted and deliberately propagandised" (Plank, 2019, p. 271), through different generations of men. These constructions of masculinities have been critiqued by other scholars who have called for a transformation in how teaching and care work are perceived. Sargent (2005) and Warin and Adriany (2017) all suggest a need to change the existing images that portray foundation phase work as mothering, a reserve for women, by adopting more inclusive approaches that advance the participation of men in FP teaching.

Acker (1995a) notes that cultural scripts that are both gendered and classed position caring as an arena for women only, and this positions women as suitable to be primary school teachers. These gendered scripts are indeed problematic. As Yang and McNair (2019) point out, there is

a need to 'loosen the ties' between females and care: to create possibilities of understanding care and care work as being inclusive of men. Furthermore, these gendered scripts are deeply sexist. For example, "women's work" in the discourse of FP teaching is pejoratively used to deride the profession and to undermine women (McGrath et al., 2020). There is thus a need to challenge the existing gender stereotypes that associate care within the exclusive space of femininity, by ensuring that care and its practices are redistributed equally between men and women both in the professional spaces and in households (Esquivel, 2014). The call for this reconfiguration of care and care work has already been made by scholars such as Børve (2017); Mistry and Sood (2015); Moosa and Bhana (2018) and Warin (2014). These scholars for instance, argue for gender equality, and suggest that the presence of men in the foundation phase has the potential of dismantling deeply entrenched and dominant notions around gender relations in the society. In order to deconstruct the perceptions of teaching as care work and as a concern for women only, Warin and Adriany (2017) have recommended a gender flexible approach, which is in line with the thinking of gender as a performance, an argument made by Butler (1990). Butler (1990) notes that gender is an enactment that people perform regardless of sex; it is the social norms and acts that regulate the performance of gender. For FP teaching, there is a need to disrupt the prescriptions intended to regulate women to model femininities and men to model masculinities because such is an essentialised thinking of gender (Warin, 2018; Warin & Adriany, 2017).

A key area that emerges in the literature also concerns the benefits of having male teachers in the FP. For instance, Cushman (2005) and Mistry and Sood (2015) trouble the idea that teaching in the foundation phase is care work that men should not be involved in; they argue that the involvement of more men in the FP strengthens the phase and advances care work. Therefore, introducing men in the FP is an action to advance equal gender representation, to challenge and to deconstruct gender stereotypes that expect women to take full responsibility of caring activities (Fine-Davis et al., 2005). The absence of men in roles such as teaching young children creates a stereotypical impression to children that men are unable to be involved in care work (Farquhar, 1997). The above studies indicate that it is important for learners in schools to witness men being involved in roles with young children and this becomes a first step for children to see both male and female teachers in the early years (Rohrmann, 2020). Although the literature has argued for the benefits of both male and female teachers in the FP, there are still traces of sex division of labour in the teaching profession (Acker, 1995a; Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015). The extent of the sex division of labour in teaching includes putting men

in positions of superiority to supervise female teachers (Acker, 1995b; Martino, 2008; Skelton, 2003). The efforts to address the sex division of labour, including inequalities, have not materialised as envisaged by various governments and organisations. Skelton (2003) in her study, found that participants viewed FP as failing in providing equal promotion opportunities for both men and women.

The recent efforts relating to recruiting men to do care work appears to be receiving some particular attention from several governments internationally. Scambor et al. (2013) and Scambor et al. (2014) argue that countries like Iceland, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have initiated policies on recruiting men to teach in the foundation phase. These governments have for instance started offering paternity leave for the period of up to three months to address inequalities that exists and to introduce men to the practices of care (Brandth & Kvande, 2016).

The same cannot be said about the context of South Africa, where the basic conditions for employment amendment act no 11 of 2002 stipulates that women should be given four months maternity leave and men three days for paternity leave (Moosa & Bhana, 2018). This suggests an unequal allocation of leave to men in South Africa, thus limiting time to spend with their newly born child. Seeing men performing caring activities is very rare and often seen as impossible in certain contexts. For example, a study focusing on male pre-service teachers in Johannesburg found that her participants associated care and nurturing with women (Petersen, 2014). This was not only a matter of pre-service teachers. In my masters' dissertation on in-service male FP teachers in Mpumalanga, I found that men distanced themselves from activities that could be associated with care (Msiza, 2016).

The literature on men and care in South Africa suggests that the ways in which men construct their masculinities does not alter their the desire to be real men (Morrell & Jewkes, 2014). Apart from cultural issues contributing to men and care in South Africa and elsewhere in the world, men who do undertake care work are often shamed and ridiculed (Elliott, 2016; Lesser, 2016). Also, the apartheid migrant labour system, which required men from different parts of the country to work in the mining sector in cities, mainly Johannesburg, contributed to the lack of men's participation in care work (Morrell, 1998b). The policy cited earlier is inconsistent with the global call for the involvement of men in care work and the policymakers' understanding of men in relation to care seem problematic and un-progressive. Although this

may be the case, the literature indicates an emerging body of research in South Africa that suggests men do care and can offer care.

2.4.2 Caring masculinities

While gender-based violence and femicides have been cited as a major concern and crisis in South Africa, largely due to violent masculinities, literature on gender and masculinities is already starting to demonstrate that some South African men do care and can offer care, typically known as caring masculinities. These caring masculinities have been shown as being central in addressing gender inequality, especially around workplaces (Moosa & Bhana, 2018). Caring masculinities have also been shown to exist in other international contexts (Scambor et al., 2013; Scambor et al., 2014; Suwada, 2017; Xu, 2020). For example, in Europe, where the involvement of men in the FP teaching has gained much attention compared to 20 years ago (Scambor et al., 2014; Scambor et al., 2013), scholars have noted that caring masculinities play a vital role in advancing gender equality. Scambor et al. (2014) and Van Laere et al. (2014) note that addressing inequality begins with creating a caring culture amongst men. Elliott (2016) argues that caring masculinities have emerged as a new type of masculinity; an identity that rejects dominance, violence and power.

Considering that caring masculinities are perceived to be a vehicle for addressing gender inequality, Bhana (2016a) and Morrell and Jewkes (2014) suggest that care work should be accepted as men's work. They argue that men should be encouraged to participate in care work, and such an approach should integrate how men construct their gender identities. This is due to the potential that men carry in transforming masculinities (Jordan, 2020). Men are able to enact a 'positive' version of masculinity that is called 'critical positive masculinity' or alternative masculinity (see Buschmeyer, 2013). All these types of masculinities are conceptually similar to caring masculinities. The approach of critical positive masculinities is deliberately looking for what is best in men, which will enable them to lead a positive life that is healthier, happier and be the opposite of the violent image of manhood (Lomas, 2013). Such a view advances an approach that advocates for men to begin to change and transform what it means to be a man; this can be achieved if they are disloyal to patriarchy, since patriarchy denies them access to emotionality and their freedom of will (hooks, 2004b). Such transformation of masculinities has encouraged men to become non-violent, caring and nurturing (Buschmeyer, 2013; Lomas, 2013).

Studies conducted in South Africa on the phenomenon of masculinity and care are consistent with the findings of the existing research on caring masculinities internationally. For instance, Moosa and Bhana (2017), suggest an emergence of a new, alternative form of masculinity that is caring and non-violent. According to Morrell and Jewkes (2011), caring masculinities contribute to the efforts of achieving gender equality as this shifts care work (whether paid or unpaid) from 'women' to men. It unlocks the inclination to love and care for children. The debate on caring masculinities extends to the work of Ratele (2016) on liberated masculinities. Ratele notes that liberated masculinities are those that are non-violent, egalitarian and advocate for healthy relations between women and other men. What is common with all the above scholars is the view that the emerging type of masculinity is non-violent and caring. In addition, these are masculinities that are not loyal to patriarchy and male domination over other men as well as women (hooks, 2004b). The work of Moosa and Bhana (2017) suggests that recruiting and involving men in care work has an ability to assist in moving away from assumptions about foundation phase work as being that of women only, as well as eliminating the thinking of male superiority.

The emergence of caring masculinities is also conceptualised around paternal discourses as I have already indicated earlier in the chapter. In Norway, men are given opportunities first to care for their own children (Brandth & Kvande, 2016). Men in the United Kingdom, especially those who are teachers in the FP and those who have children of their own, are beginning to be involved in the day to day activities of caring for children (Boyer et al., 2017; Tarrant, 2017). This is similar to the finding from my masters study (Msiza, 2016), where one participant indicated that he enjoys working with children because of his identity as a father. According to Suwada (2017), fathering should be seen as an opportunity for fathers to engage with care work. Jones and Aubrey's (2019) study reveals that the experience of being a father contributes to the decisions for male teachers to participate in caring activities in schools. However, financial power and privilege are implicated in how men are receptive towards caring practices. For instance, men who are employed are open and able to incorporate caring practices in Norway (Brandth & Kvande, 2016). Drawing from the reviewed studies in this section, it is evident that, while being a father has the potential to introduce men to caring practices, a major challenge relates to men who are involved in caring practices but maintain their dominant and breadwinner identities (Brandth & Kvande, 2016; Hanlon, 2012).

While the work on caring masculinities has demonstrated the potential for the unshackling of patriarchy, these masculinities are not without problems. For example, Scambor et al. (2014,

p. 570), caution us that, "some caring men are not particularly gender equal, and vice versa, some gender-equal men are not particularly caring". This means there are complexities that exist in understanding care and gender equality. While this view on caring masculinities is important, it still fails in acknowledging critical studies like Burkstrand-Reid (2012) and Hunter et al. (2017) who argue that, even though caring masculinities are seen to be emerging, gendered expectations in the society are still the same, i.e. men are expected to be men by performing traditional expectations of masculinity both in the school setting and in their social spaces. Burkstrand-Reid (2012) highlight that men who are involved in childcare, for example, changing diapers, face social pressure to prove that they are indeed real men. This is consistent with Morrell and Jewkes' (2014) findings in South Africa that men who are already doing care work do not displace their desire of being a 'real man' in the society. According to Hunter et al. (2017), ideas around caring masculinity are broadening hegemonic masculinity by including traits that are considered feminine. The theoretical developments on caring masculinities are critiqued to be ambiguous on the complexities and social contexts in which caring masculinities can be supported or can flourish (Tarrant, 2017). It is therefore important to be careful on how we theorise and understand care, fatherhood and masculinities (Hunter et al., 2017). The literature suggests that "there is much more work to be done to ensure that care giving by men is valued and extended to the broader political and social context" (Tarrant, 2017, p. 13). Also, while it is important to encourage men to be involved in caring practices, we should not take away the efforts and contributions that are made by female teachers in the FP; what remains important is to expand, create opportunities for both teachers and prioritise learners (Warin, 2018).

2.5 Recruitment and role modelling

As alluded to in the sections above, the recruitment of men to teach in the foundation phase has emerged from the literature as the dominant theme, in comparison with other debates around men and FP teaching. The contemporary pre-occupation in relation to men in the FP highlights that a patriarchal perception has fuelled the recruitment drives for male teachers; this perception is that female teachers are feminising the boys (Cushman, 2008; Mallozzi & Campbell Galman, 2014; Martino, 2008; Martino & Kehler, 2006; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010; Mills et al., 2004; Skelton, 2002; Wright & Callender, 2012). The literature also suggests that men are recruited to be role models to young boys who underperform academically because they are perceived to lack male role models (Griffiths, 2006). Some governments also hold the similar

assumption that matching the teacher with the children by gender or race has an educational benefit (Carrington & Skelton, 2003; Francis et al., 2008; Martino, 2009b; Rezai-Rashti & Martino, 2010). The work of Martino (2009a) critiques the notion of role modelling. Martino argues that the concept of role modelling in the FP is based on a moral panic and there is no clear definition or understanding of what a male role model is in the context of FP teaching (ibid). In addition, the false recruitment arguments are driven by an expectation for men to perform uniformly, as a homogeneous group and in a predictable way. It appears that in some of the countries the campaigns seem to be failing, for instance, in Australia, the UK and the US (Mills et al., 2004). In Sweden men have been missing from FP teaching although they have had affirmative action since 1970. This included various mechanisms such as recruitment teams, guidance, monetary funds and media visibility (Wernersson, 2016). Some scholars have also questioned the meaning and image of an ideal role model. There is a concern regarding the type of a male role model that is needed in the FP. For instance, as noted earlier by Martino there is ambiguity on what role modelling is. Those calling for role models are not articulate enough on what it means and what men bring in the classroom as role models (Cameron, 2001; Sevier & Ashcraft, 2009) that would be different to what women bring. In cases where men are brought into FP teaching, the literature highlights that what is expected to be modelled by male teachers is often not a desirable image or characteristic required by all boys in various classrooms (Knight & Moore, 2012; Xu, 2020). Masculinities are not rigid and fixated, they are fluid (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

Role modelling has also been part of the recruitment strategies advocated for globally. One reason given is the idea that children are coming from fatherless families and therefore require positive male influence or a father figure (Jones, 2003; Pepperell & Smedley, 1998). A study by Lesser (2016) in the US indicates that men in the FP are positioning themselves as role models to children who do not have a 'father in the picture'. In short, they become and some act as father figures to the FP learners. Similarly, a South African study found that FP pre-service teachers positioned themselves as father figures to learners without fathers (Mashiya, 2015). In addition, if the biological father is absent, it does not suggest that the child does not have a role model (Honig, 2008). The call for men is seen by Martino (2008, 2009b) as a way to masculinise the teaching profession and a political agenda used by governments to address the perceived moral panic (Carrington & Skelton, 2003).

Scholars have also critiqued the thinking that the physical presence of men in schools will 'repair' absent fathers (Sargent, 2000). A number of scholars ask pertinent questions as to the

implications of this 'repairing'. For example, Sumsion (2000) asks what type of a role model we might seek to involve in the FP. Jones (2003) asks what an effective role model is or the 'right kind of man' should be like. Martino (2009b) asks what it means to be and to model being a man while one is employed to do work that is perceived as a female occupation. Brownhill (2016); McCormack and Brownhill (2014) and Brownhill (2016) ask which kind of a role model men are expected to model to young children in the FP. These are critical questions problematising a conservative view that seeks men's bodies in the FP as being reparative to the absence of fathers. Another critique comes from Brownhill (2016), who questions the ways in which we describe and interpret a role-model. For instance, do role models wear fashionable clothing, shirts and ties? For classes such as physical education (PE) what would be an appearance of a male role model? Essentiality role models are constructed as tall, firm and strong (Brownhill, 2016). According to the studies by Cameron (2001) and Sevier and Ashcraft (2009), male teachers who construct themselves as role models define role modelling through the traditional lens of gender.

Another reason that is often cited for the recruitment of more male teachers is the idea that men are better disciplinarians and good in sports, when compared to women (Brown, 2012; Francis & Skelton, 2001). Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) point out that the male disciplinarian script is similar to the role modelling and sportsman scripts, as these are an attempt that is also concerned with promoting hegemonic masculinities. Men are recruited to address the challenges of discipline and sports in schools. They are seen by schools and parents as natural disciplinarians. Assuming male teachers will be better disciplinarians in schools is essentially associating men with violence (Bhana, 2016a). According to a study by Skelton (2002), focusing on a national survey on primary school teacher's views on gender roles and schooling, some of the female teachers in the FP hold a similar view that men should be allocated discipline matters in school. This view has been critiqued extensively in the field of masculinity and FP. For example, Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl (2014, p. 289) note that "The positioning through a discourse of men as superior disciplinarians implies that female teachers are not as skilled at controlling pupils as men are, which in turn functions as a reproduction of masculine coded ideals". As noted above, the assumption that men will bring power and authority in the classrooms is a project that can be closely associated with the practices of hegemonic masculinities (Brownhill, 2016; Mills et al., 2004).

Although there exist patriarchal and traditional views supporting recruitment, there also exist progressive recruitment views. Such views are arguing for equality and offering a

comprehensive educational experience to children. Scholars like Drudy (2008, p. 319) argue that the recruitment campaigns should be driven by "attracting high-quality people into the profession irrespective of whether they are male or female". When recruiting male teachers we should aim to have a representative of all sexes, genders and various ethnicities, the attitude should be driven by creating opportunities for all (Skelton, 2003; Yang & McNair, 2019). Brownhill (2016) makes it clear that role modelling and recruitment should not be reduced to gender and appearance, rather, what is important about individual teachers is, who they are. And as teachers, what is it that they emulate? Less emphasis should be placed on performances of masculinity and more on the professional pedagogical practice and interpersonal skills in a context of working with children (Brownhill, 2016; Carrington et al., 2008; Wood & Brownhill, 2018). In a nutshell, Griffiths (2006) state that learners want teachers to have good abilities in teaching and to maintain order.

2.5.1 Sexuality and role modelling

A key issue that emerges in the literature concerns the role that sexuality plays in the construction of FP teaching. Minority groups, such as gay male teachers, are often not regarded as role models because of how they are positioned in the hierarchy of masculinities (Connell, 2005; Skelton et al., 2009). Gay male teachers are socially emasculated and considered to be feminised men (Moosa & Bhana, 2018). A study by Sargent (2000, p. 420) shows that parents are "saying their sons are not being exposed to real men behaving in real male ways". A study in New Zealand focusing on principals' definitions of a role model, found that "a man is not a 'male role model' unless he 'looks like a man', 'dresses like a man', 'enjoys being a male', 'undertake male tasks', 'walks the talk of a male' and displays the indefinable essence of maleness as opposed to femininity" (Cushman, 2008, p. 131; King, 2009). It is taken for granted that everyone would know what being 'a man' means. Cushman and King's findings, although on role modelling, are similar to studies conducted by Msibi (2009, 2012a) on masculinity and queer male teachers in South Africa, respectively. Msibi found that queer male teachers are heavily policed, particularly in terms of how they dress, walk and speak. Such policing is an act to maintain dominant and traditional forms of masculinities. As Moosa and Bhana (2018, p. 11) state, "masculinity is policed according to dominant cultural norms". Since men are policed, especially those who are teaching in the FP within the South African context, they distance themselves from homosexuality and activities that are regarded as 'feminine'

(Msiza, 2020). Another study, focusing on principals, that was conducted in Australia found that role models should possess qualities of a real man, subscribe to dominant masculinities and be nurturing towards young children (McGrath & Sinclair, 2013). This practice concurs with an argument made earlier by Martino (2008); Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) and Sevier and Ashcraft (2009) that role-modelling is an attempt to masculinise and promote a hegemonic masculinity that is premised on militarism in the teaching profession.

2.6 Privilege

The number of men in the FP is relatively low globally, as demonstrated earlier in the review above. This has not halted men from benefiting from the male privilege or what Connell (1995) terms a patriarchal dividend. Male privilege continues when men enter FP. The work of Connell (2005) and Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) demonstrates clearly how men benefit from what is called a patriarchal dividend. Even though the dominant masculinity oppresses other masculinities and femininities, Connell (2005) argues that all men receive a share from patriarchy. Essentially, all men are privileged in society, especially noting how historically both men and women have been constructing their identities. Heikkilä and Hellman (2017) found in Sweden that men use their privilege when seeking employment for FP posts. They highlight that 'everyone wants to have them' and they are better positioned for employment opportunities. Similarly, a study that I conducted found that some of the teachers were prioritised for employment due to their maleness (Msiza, 2016). Paternal discourses in relation to teaching young children have earned male teachers employment opportunities, promotion advantages, power and status (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015). The status is maintained by engaging and constructing discursive gender configurations such as 'sportsman' and seeing themselves as pioneers (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015; Warin, 2006).

The privilege that men are benefiting from in the context of FP is exacerbated by the gendered division of labour. The work of Xu (2020) and Yang and McNair (2019) reveal that male teachers are expected to perform manual labour, lift heavy objects and solve technology related problems. As already alluded to above, teaching in the FP is divided along essentialist and stereotypical gender lines, often the expectations extend to coordinating sports, engaging in activities that involve young boys and to administer discipline (Børve, 2017; Brownhill & Oates, 2017; Warin, 2018). According to Bhana (2016a), sport is regarded as a key signifier of masculinity where the majority of men use it to construct and maintain hegemonic forms of masculinities. The following phrase: 'we are lucky to have a man in the workplace' is a

universally used phrase that seeks to reinforce the gendered division of labour between male and female teachers. For example, teaching reading and music are considered to be non-masculine activities and therefore suitable for female teachers (Msiza, 2016; Yang & McNair, 2019). Børve (2017, p. 2) points out that the "gendered expectations on FP teachers on both women and men illustrate how gender divisions underpin professional practice and the predominant thinking about gender". In the same study by Børve (2017), the participants stated that, when both men and women were given tasks which were previously classified along gender lines, men were allocated outdoor activities and this was underpinned by the thinking that masculinities require space and should be managed. On the other side men refused to participate in activities such as baking because baking is perceived as a task for women (Børve, 2017). As observed by Ratele et al. (2010), there is an assumption that real men do not cook, they only assist in the kitchen. I have discussed studies looking at ways in which men are recruited into the FP and the reasons thereof. In addition, I have further discussed studies on sexuality and the privilege that men benefit from.

2.7 The suspicion of paedophilia and surveillance

A key theme that emerges in the literature concerns the suspicion of paedophilia that often stigmatises men teaching in the FP. Several studies on male teachers teaching in the Foundation Phase have shown that men who are employed as FP teachers are viewed as potential child molesters, with their intention of working with children often questioned (Cruickshank, 2020; Murray, 1996). Heikkilä and Hellman (2017); Mills et al. (2004); Sargent (2004) and Yang and McNair (2019) report that men who want to teach in the FP should contend with the risk and the negative perception of being a potential child molester. In a nutshell, they require significant levels of the agency to protect themselves against a society that reminds them that they do not belong in the phase (Brody & Gor Ziv, 2020). In-service male FP teachers are constantly in a state of negotiating their positionality and identities, due to the gendered nature of FP and the 'moral panic' (Warin, 2018) around paedophilia. The suspicions of paedophilia are not drawn from their competence to do their teaching duties but on perceptions about their sexual orientation and the idea that it is unnatural for men to teach young children (Cameron, 2001). In Israel, men who are choosing to teach in the FP are seen as challenging the assumptions of what manhood ought to be (Brody & Gor Ziv, 2020). Men are both seen as dangerous and desirable by society when working with children (Heikkilä & Hellman, 2017), meaning that, although men are required for redressing gender inequalities within FP teaching,

the society is concerned with men's involvement in violent acts. Several scholars have arrived at similar findings on the notion of the dichotomy. For instance, Robinson (2002) argues that men are positioned in a complex and contradictory discourse, at one end, they are seen as role-models and at the other they are perceived as potential child molesters. In addition to the dichotomy, men are continually negotiating their otherness in an environment that exhausts and rewards them simultaneously. In such spaces, these men are constructed as demons and superheroes, valuable and suspicious, both vulnerable and valuable and are seen to be struggling with this positioning (Brody & Gor Ziv, 2020; Cruickshank, 2018; Jones, 2003, 2007, 2008; Sumsion, 2000; Yang & McNair, 2019). For instance, Sargent (2000) notes that male teachers have to negotiate between being a 'real man' and a 'real teacher'. According to Sargent's findings, real men are not supposed to do feminine activities, such as teaching in the FP, but they are expected to teach higher grades. Therefore male teachers are expected to "balance acceptable and publicly recognisable ways of performing masculinities alongside specific preschool-focused, professional identities" (Warin, 2018, p. 55). According to Brody and Gor Ziv (2020) men in the FP are treading at the borderland of the male teachers' expectations while doing work perceived as that of women.

According to Cameron (2001) and Moosa and Bhana (2018), individual teachers who are transgressing from the traditional gender boundaries to do work associated with women are subjected to doubt, especially on their gender and sexual identities. Their integrity as teachers is also questioned. Men who choose to join FP are explicitly discouraged by family, friends, and other colleagues either male or female, although they do resist such pressure (Børve, 2017; Coulter & McNay, 1993; Dworzanowski-Venter, 2017; Geerdink et al., 2011). The main reason why men are discouraged is part of gender surveillance/policing that is targeted to ensure that men do not take up teaching in the FP. Men who are resilient and remain in the phase regardless of the comments and suspicions are perceived to be soft, gay and not real men (Carrington & Skelton, 2003; Skelton, 2003). For example Travis Wright, a white, gay University professor who is also a therapist for schools, in his autobiographical account, cites an incident where a learner he was working with at an early childhood centre was told 'it is okay to be with Dr Wright but only where everyone can see them' (Wright, 2018, p. 124). This indicates a level of suspicion which could be linked to his sex and sexuality. In essence, the suspicion of paedophilia keeps men who are honest and have good intentions away from the teaching profession, particularly in the early years (Wernersson, 2016). Men in the FP are marginalised along the lines of perceived difference in a sense that they are entering an occupation which

has been historically perceived as terrain for women (King, 2009). Findings from a study by Cruickshank (2018) shows that some male teachers teaching in the FP are frustrated by the fact that society sees them first as men and teachers second.

Robinson (2002) argues that the surveillance of male teachers intensifies, especially when, for instance, a teacher openly identifies as gay. Taking into account the prevalence of homophobia globally, gay male teachers are targeted (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015). This suggests that aligning homosexuality or men who engage in same-sex relations with paedophilia is an attempt to affirm hegemonic heterosexuality (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015). Often, men are called by nicknames that are homophobic and have a derogatory tone. For example, the names are 'cupcake' or 'twinky' are often directed at 'gay' male teachers in the FP (Lesser, 2016). Men who identify as gay are also assumed to be driven by sexual thoughts and practices to pursue FP teaching. For instance, King (2009) reveals that these teachers are seen as wanting to have sex with their learners, primarily because of their sexual orientation. 'Gay' as an identity is sexualised, and choosing to teach children triggers further suspicion; gay male teachers in the FP are thus vulnerable to extreme homophobic reactions (Murray, 1996). The policing of gender and sexuality appears to be a project of patriarchy. The project is intended to maintain a gender division of labour and keep a distance between men and practices regarded as feminine (Cushman, 2008). Evidence in a study by Msiza (2020) shows that men in the FP become vulnerable when non-normative identities and expressions are suggested. At the heart of teaching young children, male teachers have been found to experience a fear of being labelled as child molesters and gay (Martino & Kehler, 2006). A study conducted in the UK reveals that male teachers live with fear regarding sexual allegations and this is something that they are warned about when they start studying for their teaching qualifications (Warin, 2018). The literature suggests that the suspicion of paedophilia exists in both ways, i.e., both for teachers who engage in same sex relations and those who identify as heterosexual.

The suspicion of paedophilia varies from context to context. For example, physical contact with the children is often misconstrued as paedophilia by the society (Sargent, 2004). In the US, according to Sargent (2000), the society finds it suspicious for a male teacher to either hug or put a child on his lap. Another example from the US, is that men are restricted from touching, cuddling and changing diapers of children (Murray, 1996; Wright, 2018). The suspicion is first underpinned by an idea that care is outside the realm of manhood, i.e. men are not seriously seen as care providers meaning care and emotions are still not considered the prerogative of men (Plank, 2019). Secondly, men have been shown to be the perpetrators in the majority of

the sexual assault cases including both women and children as victims (Sam, 2020; Sifile, 2017, October 11). This appears to have created discomfort when it comes to men being around children. In addition, Cruickshank (2018, 2020) and Murray (1996) reveal further that parents, on several occasions, have been hesitant to accept men who are employed in pre-schools and others have laid out strict instructions that men should not do activities such as giving a child a rub/tap at the back during naptime. Male teachers, as a result, are forced at times to adopt strategies that are counter stereotypical in order not to be seen as paedophiles. For example, one male teacher in the US came up with an idea of side hugs, which is grabbing learner's shoulder from side (Lesser, 2016). Another strategy found in a study by Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) is for male teachers never to be alone with female pupils; Teachers either leave the door open or have the learner and her friend or another colleague present during interactions. The recent work of Warin (2018) indicates that some male teachers have developed strategies that not only clears them from paedophilia suspicions, but also build resilience in learners. For instance, when learners are crying and upset, the male teachers kneel to their level, maintain eye contact and engage the child to communicate verbally instead of physical touch. This is another strategy that teachers in the UK use to calm learners and also not be accused of paedophilia. While acknowledging these creative strategic mechanisms, Buschmeyer (2013, p. 300) argues that "touching children and being touched by them is part of the daily professional practice of educators". Therefore, the suspicion of paedophilia robs male FP teachers an opportunity to fully exercise their professional obligations.

The literature shows that suspicions of paedophilia and surveillance of male teachers in the FP commence early in the employment processes. Msiza (2016) found that a principal sought permission from the school governing body and the school management team prior employing a male teacher as he was afraid that the teacher could be a paedophile. The principal went to the extent of even verifying the authenticity of the foundation phase degree with the university where the male teacher graduated. From the literature surveyed, it seems that, while there are employment procedures that should be followed in the appointment of teachers, for male teachers these are intensified. For example, a study in the US by Siefert (2011) found that school principals are faced with a task of constantly assuring the parents and community members that men in the FP can be trusted with their children. Cruickshank et al. (2018) suggest that principals in schools should increase their awareness on how societal constructions on the gender of teachers play out and how they affect teachers. While school principals cannot change the societal perceptions, they are significant in promoting an inclusive and supportive

culture in schools, one that is not premised on traditional gender roles. Male teachers have also voiced out their dissatisfaction on how the society perceives and treats them, particularly on issues that include touching children. For instance, a study by Cruickshank (2018) reveals that men found it unfair and felt unsupported in schools. The fact that they have to be more careful when it came to touching (to comfort) an upset child in their classrooms was highlighted as one of the key concerns from teachers. Cruickshank notes further that uncertainty and fear are less about the physical contact with the child but more about the thoughts and reactions of other adults who walk past and see them reassuring a child with a hug. Cultural discourses are affecting how male FP teachers are discursively constructed in society, as cross-cultural studies are beginning to show (Moosa & Bhana, 2019; Xu, 2020). For instance, most cultural discourses exempt men from caring responsibilities and have suggested that those who participate on care are not men enough or have ulterior motives.

2.8 Other reasons for low uptake and a way forward

The emerging literature suggest that male FP teachers have opted to use different strategies to avert suspicions and to remain in FP teaching. Heikkilä and Hellman (2017) found that men are creating strategies to negotiate their identities in order to survive the pressures created by the society, particularly around the issues of heteronormativity. For example, despite the comments, rumours, gossip and allegations made to men who had chosen FP as a career path, men feel that they were expected to 'take them like a man', as conceding to such is a way to demonstrate being a pioneer and a man within a female dominant space (Warin, 2006). Scholars have sought to explore various ways in which the schools can be made accommodating for men. For example, Cruickshank (2018), an Australian scholar, for instance, provides a suggestion that governing bodies for each school should work on clear and comprehensive guidelines on physical contact, especially on situations pertaining to physical contact with the learners, such as directions on how to deal with upset children and cases involving using first aid. In addition, the guidelines, as suggested by Cruickshank (2018), should be gender-neutral and be inclusive of all the teachers. Although there is a moral panic and suspicions of paedophilia, more work is required to ensure that there are systems in place to protect young children who may be vulnerable. Martino and Frank (2006) suggest that governments and policy designers who are concerned about the declining number of men entering FP must establish a line of inquiry to investigate the impact of normative constructions of masculinity on the lives of teachers as professionals, men and the curriculum. A

collaborative study between South African and Australian scholars on this subject suggest that political interventions and support for both countries are essential towards increasing men's participation in the FP (McGrath et al., 2020)

2.9 Conclusion

Work relating to the male teachers in the FP and care is relatively thin. However, rather promisingly ,as has been observed in the discussion above, the field continues to grow. While the field is largely well developed internationally, at a local level there remains serious gaps in relation to understanding male teachers, care and teaching in the Foundation Phase. There equally remains serious gaps in relation to the role of context and culture in shaping both individual and professional care practices. Scholars such as Moosa and Bhana (2020) have largely centred their scholarship on masculinities and foundation phase teaching in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, while elsewhere in the country little is known. This doctoral project contributes towards an understanding of how FP male teachers in contexts such as Mpumalanga, contexts that are characterised by deeply embedded cultural practices on masculinity such as circumcision, conceptualise care and how these male teachers understand their masculine and professional identities. The study hopes to contribute to both local and international debates on masculinities and care. Following this section is chapter 3, where I present a discussion on the two theoretical frameworks and one conceptual framework that are informing this study.

Chapter 3: Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a review of the existing literature, relating to the phenomenon of the study. I have discussed various themes and debates that emerged from the review. This includes key debates around masculinity and care in the context of FP. This chapter presents both the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that I have adopted for the study; the three frameworks are located within the broad area of feminism. I will begin with the theory of masculinities as theorised by Raewyn Connell. This will be followed by a discussion on the intersectionality theory as espoused by Kimberle Crenshaw. I will then present the four phases of care as the conceptual framework by Joan Tronto, a feminist scholar on care. The three theoretical frameworks were adopted in the analysis of the conceptions of care among male FP teachers. For each framework, existing critiques will be presented to illustrate its limitations as well as how other scholars have extended these theories. Importantly, I will also show how these theories were utilised in this study.

3.2 Theory of masculinities

The first theory that was used in this study is Connell's theory of masculinities. Connell (2005) defines her theory of masculinities as a framework that seeks to provide an understanding and a way to distinguish different types of masculinities, as well as the dynamics of change within these categories. For Connell (2005), masculinity should not be understood as a singular reflection of performance; instead, there exist multiple masculinities. According to Connell (2005), masculinity can be defined as a place in gender relations in which men and women engage in practices that have effects in culture, bodily experience and personality. Connell (2005) further asserts that gender is a social practice in which actions and utterances around masculinity and femininity are merely configurations of gender practice. Also "masculinities do not operate or exist within the social and cultural vacuums but rather are constructed within specific institutional settings" (Hearn & Kimmel, 2006, p. 56). Masculinities are therefore constructed according to society, history, culture and politics. This means that there is no one way in which masculinities are constituted or even performed, instead they are liable to be reconstructed, displaced and contested (Connell, 2000). Masculinities are not a representation of a specific type of man, but they represent different ways in which men position themselves (Messerschmidt, 2018). Connell (2005) identifies four ways in which masculinities can

manifest: she notes that masculinities are hegemonic, subordinate, and complicit as well as marginalised.

3.2.1 Hegemonic masculinities

Hegemonic masculinities seek to assume a dominant position in any context; for instance, in a hierarchy, hegemonic masculinities are at the top position. Connell (2005) defines hegemonic masculinities as configurations of gender practices that are dominant and are currently accepted in the society. In the main, expressions of hegemonic masculinities are presented as the only valid form in which manhood can be expressed. Johansson and Ottemo (2015) and Sargent (2005) state that hegemonic practices normalise dominance over other men and women. The dominance over other men and women is normalised and upheld by the definitions of masculinities that we have created in our culture and contexts (Kimmel, 1994). In addition, hegemonic masculinities are defined as "man *in* power, a man *with* power, and a man *of* power" (Kimmel, 1994, p. 6). In many instances, hegemonic masculinities are constructed and sometimes manifest through racism, homophobia and sexism (Kimmel, 1993). Hegemonic masculinities are more complex than usually presented, for instance, men can adopt hegemonic masculinity when they find the circumstances desirable and other men can distance themselves from hegemonic masculinity in certain instances (Messerschmidt, 2018). Hegemonic ideals of masculinities are promoted continuously, mainly by the media, to produce exemplary masculinities, for instance, Sylvester Stallion, Donald Trump and through sports, e.g., individuals like Michael Schumacher.

3.2.2 Subordinate masculinities

Subordinate masculinities relate to masculinities that are devalued and often not considered as real men within a hierarchy of gender (Connell, 2005). Connell notes that gay masculinities are positioned at the bottom of the hierarchy. Gay masculinities are not the only type in the category of subordinate masculinities. There exist other types of subordinate masculinities within the hierarchy of heterosexual men; for example, men and boys who enact undesirable masculinities apart from gay masculinities may be subordinated (Connell, 2005). Such masculinities are then viewed as deviant and sometimes problematic by those who assume a hegemonic position (Kimmel, 1993). In essence, subordinate masculinities are presentations and expressions that are perceived as a threat to the legitimacy of hegemonic masculinities (Sargent, 2005; Swain, 2006). Messerschmidt (2018) reveals that during the US military invasion in Iraq, the native men of Iraqi were expected to fight alongside the US and those who

refused were subordinated and deemed as effeminate as well as inferior. This is an example of hegemonic-subordinate relations of masculinities from a global perspective.

3.2.3 Complicit masculinities

The overall subordination of women by hegemonic and dominant men is beneficial even to those men who do not meet the normative definition of the two categories, and Connell (2005) refers to this as a patriarchal dividend. Though such men are not the frontline troops of patriarchy, they benefit from the patriarchal dividend and are complicit (Connell, 2005). Another view states that complicit men may not reap all the rewards, but they certainly gain enough to ignore the injustices experienced by women (Hanlon, 2012). For example, men who benefit and remain silent from unequal gender relations in the workplace such as benevolent sexism and discriminatory comments are complicit to the act. Complicit masculinities are "an aspirant form of masculinity that lacked a sufficient number of resources to be accepted into the hegemonic form" (Swain, 2006, p. 338).

3.2.4 Marginalised masculinities

The last expression is the marginalised masculinities which involves the interplay of race, class and gender (Connell, 2005). For example, black men may enjoy certain privileges and yet they are simultaneously oppressed in terms of race; a successful black president in a white supremacist, patriarchal context is subjected to racism or subtle forms of racism. In the context of a "capitalist, patriarchal whiteness, black young men are marginalised also because of, among other reasons, skin colour, little or no income, level of education, nationality and language" (Ratele, 2016, p. 48). The case of police brutality on black men and boys in both the context of the United States of America and in South Africa is another example of marginalised masculinities. Men and masculinities are often placed in conflictual relations with each other, for instance, it could be in occupational, racial or class relations (Hearn & Kimmel, 2006; Ratele, 2016). Men within marginalised masculinities may present themselves in various ways; they may appear as over-conforming or resisting the practices and ideals of hegemonic masculinities (Coston & Kimmel, 2012).

Another dimension which is linked to marginalised masculinities is protest masculinities. According to Stanistreet (2005), protest masculinity picks up themes from the hegemonic masculinities and reworks them. In the context of poverty, men may enact risk behaviours like crime and drugs. Messerschmidt (2018) defines it thus:

"A pattern of masculinity constructed in local working-class settings, sometimes among ethnically marginalised men, that embodies the claim to power typical of regional hegemonic masculinities, but that lacks the economic resources and institutional authority that underpins regional and global patterns." (p. 50)

Mostly the most powerful man within the marginalised group dominates and oppresses the less powerful. Masculinities are multiple and vary from context to context; the multiplicity is produced and sustained by individuals, culture and organisation. Various sites/context are connected to multiple masculinities that may be in conflict at times (Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2018). Masculinities, either hegemonic or non-hegemonic, are constructed and understood within the following three different levels; there are local masculinities (including churches, organisations and schools), these are followed by regional masculinities (these are society wide masculinities) and finally the global masculinities (these are transnational masculinities) (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2018). Hegemonic and non-hegemonic forms of masculinities must not be conceptualised as fixed character types but should be thought of as the configuration of practice that is generated in a specific context with changing relationships (Connell, 2005). This is taking into account that people understand and enact gender according to their own localised gender systems (Connell, 2009).

3.3 Southern theory

Connell (2011b, 2012, 2014), suggests a need to have a Southern theory in countries of the global South in order to refrain from assuming that gender order is similar to that of the global North and across all contexts. Connell (2007) points out that the world is over and over again viewed from the perspective of the rich, affluent, men and capitalist. Moreover, Hearn and Kimmel (2006) argue that global research on men and masculinities is uneven; it is still an enterprise of the first world countries. In our attempts as scholars of men and masculinities "it is deeply important, then, to recognise that the colonised and post-colonial world does produce theory – concepts, methods, interpretations – and does so from a social experience different from that of the metropole" (Connell, 2018, p. 340). It is significant to theorise from the global periphery (South) in order to dismantle the notion of dominance by the global metropole (North) in terms of knowledge production and circulation (Connell, 2007). I expand later in the chapter on how South African scholars are comprehensively expanding the scholarly research of men and masculinities.

3.4 The making of masculinities in South Africa

In the context of South Africa (located in the Global South), Connell's framework has been useful in understanding the various ways in which men perform masculinity and has been substantially extended to include multiple constructions of masculinities. For example, Morrell (1998b, 2001a) and Morrell et al. (2012) have added to the theory by exploring how masculinities have operated and evolved through colonial, apartheid, post-apartheid South Africa. Morrell and Ouzgane (2005) state their position regarding African men and masculinities; they argue that they understand "African men from a position of diversity" (p. 7) which could be interpreted in terms of race, class, sexuality and ethnicity. Moolman (2013) also views African masculinities as heterogeneous, as opposed to a fixed, unchanging form.

Masculinities under both colonial and apartheid periods in South Africa were divided and understood along racial, geographical, ethnic and class lines (Morrell, 1998a). Although masculinities were racialised, both black and white men benefitted from the patriarchal dividend as both of them had power over women (Morrell, 1998a). The white ruling masculinity marginalised all the ethnic groups in South Africa, but this was met with resistance from different ethnic groups. I wish to use an example of Zulu masculinities to illustrate this resistance. In the late 18th century, there was a clash between the British military (settlers) with the Zulu regiments, the *amabutho* under the leadership of King Cetshwayo kaMpande. The British military was defeated in what became to be known as the battle of *Isandlwana* (Waetjen & Mare, 2001). Although Zulu men fought this battle, including others during the historic reign of King Shaka kaSenzangakhona, all these battles did not change their status within the hierarchy of masculinities in South Africa (Carton & Morrell, 2012). According to Morrell (1998b), white supremacy and the ruling class, constitutive of both the English and Afrikaner men, remained hegemonic to other racial categories and ethnic groups. Black men were regularly referred to as *boys* by young white boys and white adult men (Langa et al., 2018).

African men under both colonial and apartheid periods were employed in the mining industry wherein the majority were located far from their homesteads – they became migrant labourers (Morrell, 1998b). The segregationist policies of the time compelled black men to travel with their identity documents or permits; through this act black men were not recognised as equal humans and men in relation to their white counterparts (Ratele, 2020b). Consistent with Connell's argument, that masculinities are not fixed or static, being a migrant labourer for black men in the cities and eventually relocating to the townships and hostels marked a change for

black men and masculinities (Morrell, 1998b). Masculinities of these men were reshaped, in a sense that they were no longer attached to homesteads, chiefs and country sides; the migrant labour system affected black men's masculinities, with many men having a feeling of loss (Morrell, 1998b; Olsen, 2001). While the literature details the history of masculinities in South Africa, scholars have provided a different form of theorisation on the changes that happened to the masculine identities of the migrant labourers. There does appear to be a contrasting view, one that suggests disempowerment (marginalised in terms of gender and race), and another that suggests some form of empowerment (acquiring cultural capital). Waetjen and Mare (1999) argue that, although migrant labourers were marginalised, their employment gave them a cultural capital when they visited their homesteads or relatives in the rural areas, as they were employed and living in the cities. This suggest an interplay of hierarchy of masculinities and social class, wherein migrant labourers are at a lower end of the hierarchy in the cities but at the top level in their homesteads due to their class/employment status.

The city and township life resulted in an emergence of tsotsi masculinities – defined as strong fighters with a particular dress code, who are also streetwise (Morrell, 1998b). In addition, Morrell states that these types of masculinities were famously known for stabbing and stealing. Langa (2020) highlights further that tsotsi masculinities are often defined and presented negatively. This is mainly a result of their anti-social behaviour. Tsotsi masculinities were further constructed and to some extent emulated by young boys in the communities and schools. Bhana (2005) investigated tsotsi boys located in schools around KwaDabeka in KwaZulu-Natal and she found that they resorted to violence in order to assert their masculinities. In a study focusing on young men from Lamontville township, south of Durban, who later became lifeguards, a study shows that some were involved in violence and others asserted their masculinities through the 'possession' of women, violence and consumerism (Hemson, 2015). Post-1994, tsotsi masculinities are still manifesting in different parts of the country. Langa (2010) studied young men in a Johannesburg township, Alexandra, and consistent with Bhana's findings, Langa (2010) found that tsotsi masculinities are still enacted and celebrated in townships; they are also at the top of the hierarchy both in schools and in the township. In present-day South African cities and towns, there are young men who have dropped out of school and who live off the cities particularly in the streets. The young men leave their homes and schools for various reasons, amongst others is drug abuse, they go to the cities to hustle (*panta*) in order to buy drugs. Such young men, mainly in Durban are referred

to as 'amaphara' which is seen as a derogatory term (Hunter, 2021). This indicative of how township tsotsi masculinities are evolving in South Africa.

As noted earlier, other racial and ethnic categories, apart from Zulu masculinities, were oppressed in South Africa. There exist studies on what emerged as Xhosa masculinities, particularly on the whole subject of male circumcision *ulwaluko*. According to Mfecane (2016); Ntozini and Ngqangweni (2016) and Vincent (2008), *ulwaluko* is a Xhosa rite of passage wherein a young boy transitions to become a man and undergoes a process of circumcision and receive guidance over a period six weeks. Once the process has completed and the initiate returns home, he earns a status of *ubudoda* (a man). That means that being circumcised and having gone through the process earns him social respect and he is expected to behave like a man (Mfecane, 2016; Mgqolozana, 2018; Moolman, 2013; Ratele, 2018; Vincent, 2008). On the other side, the practice of *ulwaluko* is "assumed to be a heterosexual practice that prepares young boys for manhood through a set of rituals that address endurance of pain, being taught independence and responsibility for self and others" (Siswana & Kiguwa, 2018, p. 56). Scholars note that some individual families within the Xhosa ethnic group have sometimes sent their gay young sons with the hope that the initiation process will convert them to heterosexuality (Mashabane & Henderson, 2020; Ntozini & Ngqangweni, 2016). Movies such as Inxeba (The Wound) showcase the contradictions and assumptions around the initiation process converting gay men into heterosexuals. The movie is about the Xhosa initiation which presents a love triangle wherein two caregivers are closeted and are having a secret sexual relationship that takes place only during the initiation process. The third men is an initiate who is actually undergoing the process and he is not closeted; the initiate encourages one of the caregivers to embrace his sexual orientation (Siswana & Kiguwa, 2018). The movie challenges the heteronormative nature of the initiation schools and the construction of masculinity. Siswana and Kiguwa (2018) argue that in the society there is a confusion of sex, gender and sexuality which has contributed to the notion that gay men who undergo the initiation practice are not deserving of the title *amadoda* (men). The conflation of sex, gender and sexuality appears to be a method intended to enforce heteronormativity.

Other ethnic groups such as the Southern Ndebele, baPedi, vhaVenda and Tsonga men practice *ulwaluko*; these ethnic groups are located in Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces (Maputle et al., 2019). Although the above-mentioned ethnic groups practise *ulwaluko,* their practices have not been explored in the same scholarly way. The Xhosa ethnic group appears to have been the focus in the South African research of men and masculinities. The Xhosa rite

of passage for young boys becoming men has historically been prevalent in the media due to the continued rising number of initiate deaths and the overall projection as well as performance of Xhosa masculinity. While the deaths have been occurring throughout the years, recently in December 2021 it was reported that 34 initiates have died in the Eastern Cape (Isaacs, 2021, December 23). Others such as vhaVenda, Tsonga, baPedi and Southern Ndebele who practise the rite of passage and are located in different geographical regions of the country have not been explored extensively, hence my study is seeking to make this contribution from a diverse province of Mpumalanga.

The scholarship of masculinities in South Africa has also covered the area of HIV/AIDS as the virus has had an impact in the country (Morrell, 2005), with men and masculinities being argued to be at the centre of violence and transmission of the virus through having multiple sexual partners. According to Hunter (2006), having multiple partners regardless of the dangers accompanying this behaviour, accords men in different parts of the country status and, in KwaZulu-Natal, such a practice is seen as *ubusoka (being a charmer and good at attracting women)*. The rate of HIV/AIDS transmission emerging from the normative practice of multiple partners in KwaZulu-Natal invited critique and utmost scrutiny of Zulu masculinities (Bhana et al., 2009). Mfecane (2011) reveals that men engaged in risky behaviours such as alcohol abuse and having unprotected sex and when they discovered that their status was positive, others were reluctant to disclose their statuses – fearing to lose their status as men (Mfecane, 2012). Amongst some circles of men, both those who undergo a traditional circumcision and those of medical circumcision, men sometimes engage in risky sexual practices on the belief that healing young men should have unprotected sex to 'test drive' their penises. No doubt this practice has also contributed to an increase of HIV transmissions (Hodes & Gittings, 2019). The work of Bhana and Pattman (2011) has mainly focused on young masculinities and evidence from their research suggests that young teenage boys are not keen on condom use. Young teenage boys are grounding their practice of multiple partners in cultural beliefs (Bhana, 2016b). Young boys also emulate what happens in the society, particularly coercing young women to sleep with them on their terms, and this includes non-condom use (Langa, 2020). The studies herein indicate the men's involvement in risky behaviours and having been central in initiating some of the risky and violent acts against women and children. Drawing from the above studies, it appears that men have been involved in activities that were not informed by the principles of care, but more focussed on their identities as men.

Morrell (2001c) notes that masculinities in their variety either support or challenge gender inequality and violence. In keeping with Connell's idea of multiplicity, South African scholars have also argued that masculinities are socially constructed and in the context of South Africa, race, class, history and culture constitute how masculinities are performed (Morrell, 1998b). This can be seen clearly within the ruling party, the ANC. Since 1994, South Africa has experienced multiple types of masculinities, also structured along with class, ethnicity and race (Morrell et al., 2012). For instance, the present socio-political landscape is the product of the South African past, particularly of colonialism and apartheid (Morrell et al., 2012). The historical past of apartheid and colonialism are seen by scholars such as Moosa and Bhana (2018) as having contributed to how masculinities are constructed –for example the toxic patterns of masculinities that are violent, tough and adopt heterosexual exaggeration. Of course, these patterns also existed prior to the collapse of apartheid. The point being communicated here is that masculinity isn't constant; it is constantly being changed by processes of history, culture, and institutions.

The literature on men and masculinities in South Africa has also shown men as perpetrators of violence. As alluded to above, the issue of violence is embedded in the history of the country. For instance, during colonial and apartheid periods, counter-violence was beginning to be used by predominantly black men to fight and eradicate the system of oppression. Part of these acts was for men to defend their masculinities (Morrell, 1998b, 2005). In post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in the context of schooling, corporal punishment is still administered predominantly by men and when women administer it, it is founded on the idea of male power (Bhana & Mayeza, 2019; Morrell, 2001b). This indicates that the construction of gender in South Africa has placed and continues to place men and masculinities at the centre of violence and male superiority. hooks (2000) notes that care cannot co-exist with domination and superiority, meaning the continued positioning of men as powerful and superior has negative implications for care.

Violent masculinities are fluid and context-dependent; how they are performed is mostly dependent on location (Bhana, 2005). Recent acts of violence are, amongst others, gender-based, domestic and intimate partner violence. Some of the violent acts by South African men are found to be linked to their childhood history and others emanate from the ideals of hegemonic masculinities (Jewkes & Morrell, 2018).

South African feminist scholar Pumla Gqola (2015) has theorised rape as the expression of patriarchal power that is seeking to enforce submission. Incidents of rape amongst the gender and sexually diverse communities are also theorised by Kaighobadi et al. (2020). The patterns of masculinities exercised by men on women are seen to manifest differently in terms of sex, race and gender (Kaighobadi et al., 2020). Violence and particularly violent masculinities traverse different racial categories, for instance, the world award-winning athlete, Oscar Pistorius, shot and murdered his girlfriend. When he was on trial, he stated that he thought the person he fired at was an intruder. In South Africa, crime is racialised as *black* and presumably, the intruder could be black, a man (Langa et al., 2018). This is an interplay between black and white masculinities with the latter being seen as superior and pure while the former is seen as a criminal and dangerous (Langa et al., 2018).

South African scholars, Epstein and Morrell (2012) argue that there exist traces of imperialism within the sphere of knowledge production, particularly on gender and masculinities studies. Indeed, this is linked to Connell's (2018, p. 339) argument that "knowledge about gender not only has a politics, it also has a geopolitics; and this geopolitics has a history". South African feminist scholars in their varied contexts are contributing differently to the ongoing development of the Southern scholarship on masculinities. According to Morrell (2016), the variedness of scholarship in South Africa is a result of feminist research work in the country being heterogeneous, i.e. it differs in the locational preference and racial categories. Through this doctoral project, I am also seeking to expand the use and understanding of masculinities within the context of FP teaching.

While scholarship on masculinity in South Africa has mostly emerged using Western tools of analysis, there has been a recent troubling of such scholarship through the use of a decolonial lens. Ratele (2013), whose theoretical contributions have sought to reshape and remake the body of masculinities scholarship from an African perspective, has centred on the re-conceptualisation on 'traditional masculinities'. Responding to the theorisation of 'traditional masculinities' as problematic and backward by other scholars in the world, Ratele argues that traditional masculinities have been conceptualised through an uncritical lens that sees these masculinities as homogenous and without history (Ratele, 2013). In an attempt to address the misconceptions of 'traditional masculinities', Ratele argues that, like other forms of masculinities in the world, traditional masculinities are socially constructed, multiple and not fixed (Ratele, 2018). In addition, the use of 'traditional masculinity' in a singular form is certainly incongruent with the notion of masculinities as being dynamic, multiple and context-

specific (Everitt-Penhale & Ratele, 2015; Ratele, 2013, 2016). Jewkes et al. (2015, p. 122) remind scholars that "masculinities should not be presented as inherently problematic or oppressive".

Ratele (2016) adds to Connell's work by exploring how black African masculinities are constructed, contested, and constituted. Ratele explores how masculinities can be liberated in the contexts that they are located in, thus putting more pressure on the need to reconsider how masculinities are understood in South Africa. An emphasis is made by Ratele that studying masculinities in the country requires borrowing from an intersectional approach, mainly exploring subjects from their real full context in order to liberate men (Ratele, 2016). For Ratele, masculinities matter in as much as race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality matter (ibid). The liberation referred to here relates to liberation from the capitalist, white-supremacist, patriarchal ideologies (hooks, 2004a), experienced by poor black men. It is for these reasons that Mfecane (2018) has called for scholars to develop African-centred theories of masculinities to study men in their context. This includes theories that would consider the impact of colonial severity and disruption on men and masculinities.

Ratele (2020a) states that during the colonial and apartheid periods in particular, when black people were declared properties under slavery, they were stripped of their humanity. He argues further that the system and the gender order of the time did not allow them to be universal men, instead, black men were localised and were always seen as black. As Ratele points out, "The struggle to be seen as a man is imbricated with the struggle to be admitted as fully human" (2020b, p. 7).

As can be clearly observed, studies conducted in South Africa on men and masculinities largely have sought to expand Connell's work with a view of unpacking the mechanics of South African masculinity in-depth. While Connell's work has been used in South Africa, this work has not been accepted as the 'gospel truth', both in South Africa and other parts of the world. Such critiques have sought to contextualise, in deliberate ways, the study of masculinity. Below, I engage with some of Connell's critiques.

3.5 Critiques on the theory of masculinities

The critiques on the theory of masculinities have been largely centred on the concept of hegemony. For instance, Moller (2007) shows that hegemonic masculinity is often conceptualised on problematic notions; a performance that is exercising power and violence is

quickly associated with hegemonic masculinity. This is not to dispute evidence showing that men have been caught up as perpetrators of violence in most cases within South Africa and globally (Vetten & Ratele, 2013). Violence appears to be a common denominator amongst men of a different class, gender and race (Morrell et al., 2013). There are various types of violence in which men express their masculinities. For instance, in the schooling context it could be corporal punishment and young men expressing themselves through tsotsi masculinities (Bhana, 2005; Morrell, 2001b), gender-based violence (Msibi, 2012b) and rape (Gqola, 2015). According to Plank (2019), and as alluded to earlier, men not only commit rape, but they also find ways to excuse it. Some of the excuses are in themselves violent and are seeking to widen the dominance of men over women (Morrell et al., 2013). Returning to Moller's (2007) argument that hegemonic masculinity is often associated with violence, Gibbs et al. (2020) provide an alternative critique, arguing that hegemonic masculinity may not necessarily use violence at the first attempt to obtain dominance.

Jefferson (2002) asks why the hegemony of masculinities is often used in a singular format as 'hegemonic masculinity', despite Connell's statement that there are multiple masculinities. This suggests that hegemonic masculinity is perceived to be static, rigid and unchanging. Johansson and Ottemo (2015) and Moller (2007) reveal that masculinity studies are not keeping pace with feminist thinking, especially on sexuality, power, gender and subjectivity. They argue that Connell's theory is located firmly within structuralism, which relies on a distinct and legible hierarchy of masculinities. According to Moller (2007), hegemonic forms of masculinities are presented as fixed character types; they are unified and do not accommodate otherness. The theory is further critiqued that it lacks tools to conceptualise and measure ideology on an extent to which male dominance and superiority is a personal endorsement or a cultural norm (Lusher & Robins, 2009). The possibility of whether hegemonic masculinities can transform to a state not oppressive to women and what will happen to the hierarchy of masculinities remains unknown (Jewkes et al., 2015).

Another critique relates to the four expressions of masculinities. Moller (2007) argues that the four expressions of masculinities are not in themselves comprehensive, as many scholars have shown. The idea that subordinate and marginalised masculinities have no bearing in the construction of hegemonic masculinity is seen as an elitist idea by Demetriou (2001). For Demetriou (2001), individuals can appropriate characteristics of hegemonic masculinities and reconfigure themselves to fit into a particular context or be associated with subordinate and marginalised masculinities. Bridges and Pascoe (2014) refer to this reconfiguration and

appropriation as hybrid masculinities. This suggests that hybrid masculinities operate in a manner in which existing systems of gender inequalities continue and are reproduced (Bridges & Pascoe, 2018). Seeing hegemonic masculinity from the perspective of hybridity is to acknowledge that having men who pledge solidarity with women and men who wear earrings and other women's clothing does not suggest that patriarchy has ended (Bridges & Pascoe, 2018; Demetriou, 2001; Messerschmidt, 2018). Such men may very well produce unequal gender relations while claiming to resist it (Messerschmidt, 2018). The emergence of hybrid masculinities reinforces the notion that our understanding of masculinities cannot be canned in the four expressions.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have responded to some of the critiques presented by scholars on both the theory and the concept of hegemonic masculinities. They argue that hegemony should not only be understood with violence and power, although power can be used to support it. Manhood is premised on power; men therefore are expected to obtain and use power to maintain the hegemonic status (Kimmel, 1994). Connell and Messerschmidt critique the idea of fixed character masculinity types (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). They argue that their reformulated model of masculinity acknowledges the agency of both the marginalised and subordinate expressions of masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2018).

While it is obvious from the above that Connell's work isn't perfect, it is also clear that she is deeply reflective about its imperfections. I therefore opted to use this work with a view of unpacking the evolution of masculinity theories globally, but also of analysing the contextual relevance of such work. I undertook my doctoral study with a view of understanding of how male foundation phase teachers understand care both in relation to their masculinities and to their identities as teachers. The different concepts of the theory as presented above assisted me in understanding ways in which the male teachers positioned themselves within the broader patterns of gender relations and gender order as well as masculinity performance. Hearn and Kimmel (2006) contend that differences such as age, sexuality, ethnicity, race, and class play a significant role in shaping how masculinities are constructed and contested. Essentially, Hearn and Kimmel (2006) point out that the gender status of men intersects with other identity markers to produce particular forms of experience. It is through the study of the intersection of such identities that I was able to understand the lived experiences and challenges of male FP teachers who do 'care work' (Dworzanowski-Venter, 2017). As masculinity occurs within a social world that is raced, classed, sexualised and gendered, it was important for me to match my theoretical framework with another that would assist in unpacking the complexities

presented by identity and identification. The feminist theory of intersectionality proved to be an adequate theory to enable this type of analysis. I present the framework below.

3.6 Intersectionality theory

The theory of intersectionality was coined by an American civil rights advocate Crenshaw (1989, 1991). Intersectionality theory was developed in the United States of America in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Crenshaw used the theory to explore and understand how courts interpreted the experiences of black women (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Crenshaw, 1989). For Crenshaw, black women in the US experience discrimination on multiple folds. For example, through race, class and gender, women's experiences can be shaped very differently. Between white and black women, Crenshaw states that their experiences of sex discrimination are not the same. White women often have better experiences due to privilege. Levine-Rasky (2011) expands on this idea by noting that, within a racial group, there are social class differences. Also, within a particular social class group, there are racial differences.

According to Chadwick (2017) and Crenshaw (1991) there are three forms of intersectionality: the first one is structural, which is about how black women are located at an intersection of gender, race and class as well as the experiences that are shaped by the intersection. The second form is the political intersectionality which refers to the political discourses that rendered black women as invisible; this positioning looks at how attention is not paid into the struggle faced by black women as opposed to black men. Crenshaw (1991) argues that the political discourses of feminism and anti-racism are limited in understanding the complexities between race and gender. These discourses, when looking at individuals, primarily focus on mono-categories such as gender or race. This, therefore, creates limitations in seeing complexities of gender struggles within a racial category. Collins and Bilge (2016, p. 26) explain that "people's lives and identities are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways". The last one is representational intersectionality, which is about the construction of a black woman. Essentially, this looks at the various ways in which black women are marginalised and excluded even by the contemporary critics of oppression, i.e. racism and sexism (Chadwick, 2017; Crenshaw, 1991). Apart from the three forms, the theory has also been developed for other purposes such as the ability to identity injustices, their origin and sources as well as suggesting directions for change (May, 2015). Through the use of intersectionality, I was able

to acknowledge the differences in society and how they contribute to the construction of group politics (Crenshaw, 1991).

In addition to the above, scholars of intersectionality note the importance of acknowledging that individuals in a society, simultaneously acknowledge the oppression and the privilege in order to address multiple forms of inequality (May, 2015). They argue that multiple identities such as race, class, ethnicity and sexuality need to form a critical analytical tool when looking at issues of experience and identity. In essence, intersectionality theory seeks to showcase the various ways in which race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, and gender intersect to shape the multiple dimensions of individual experiences (Crenshaw, 1991; Nash & Warin, 2017; Symington, 2004). Intersectionality draws from the metaphor of a crossroadsc, suggesting that when different identities meet at a crossroads, there are experiences that are produced which could show differences or sameness (Collins, 2019; González & Collins, 2019). In addition, intersectionality theory "highlights how lived identities, structural systems, sites of marginalisation, forms of power and modes of resistance 'intersect' in dynamic and shifting ways" (May, 2015, p. 21).

Intersectionality alerts us to the complexities and contradictory nature of the world around us; for instance, it acknowledges difference within difference (Crenshaw, 1991; Davis, 2008). According to Valentine (2007, p. 15), an intersectional approach is pivotal in understanding "how one category is used to differentiate another in specific contexts and how particular identities become salient or foregrounded at particular moments." May (2015) and Shields (2008) have extended the theory by arguing that intersectionality theory should not be restricted to race-gender-class, but intersectionality includes ableness, age and sexual orientation as these are highly salient identity markers. I am aware of the possible contradictions that may exist in this theorising, for instance I am using intersectionality framework, was initially conceptualised to explain women's experiences of oppression in society, to understand men. My position on using the theory in manner in which I have is informed by González and Collins' (2019) argument that our approach to intersectionality theory is varied and it should be seen as substantive tool to understand social inequalities and problems.

3.7 Critiques of intersectionality theory

While intersectionality theory has been useful in unpacking social experience, the theory has not been without criticism. The main criticisms concern the complexity and endlessness of differences that exist in the social world; the theory has therefore been critiqued as continuously raising problems (Ludvig, 2006). Anthias (2013) asserts that scholars do not necessarily have to look at how the categories are intersecting but first consider the categories themselves and look at a broader landscape of hierarchy and power. In addition, Nash and Warin (2017) caution that Crenshaw was not the first scholar to study black women's multiple oppressions, although she was the first to coin the term 'intersectionality theory'. Collins (2019) and Collins and Bilge (2016) reveal that Crenshaw coined intersectionality (the word), however, the theory can be traced back to the early 1960s movements against the oppression of women.

I am using the theory while noting its critiques. The theory is suitable as it "amplifies and thus contributes significantly to our understanding of the omnipresence of hegemonic masculinities […] and how they are simultaneously hidden in plain sight" (Messerschmidt, 2018, p. 101). Through the intersectional lens, I am seeking to understand how the various forms of identities, such as race, sex, location and masculinity intersect to produce particular and varied types of experiences and actions. I wish to understand how men who are black and teaching in a rural context conceptualise and make meaning of care, and how they perform their masculinities and professional identities (Butler, 1990). I am also seeking to unpack the role that masculinity plays in shaping ideas around care as well as the role of teacher identity in shaping performances. Intersectionality theory is, therefore, an appropriate lens that will enable me to unpack and understand the complexities.

3.8 Four phases of care: Conceptual Framework

A study that looks into issues of care cannot be void of a theory that looks at conceptions of care. I have therefore selected a conceptual framework that does this but also relates to the two theories selected. What makes the previous intersectionality framework particularly useful in this study is that it can speak directly to the study's conceptual framework on care. Several scholars, such as Nguyen (2016); Reddy et al. (2014) and Vogt (2002), have theorised the meaning and performance of care, including care work. Noddings (1992) defines care as a connection between the carer and the cared for. In addition, she states that there is no single recipe for providing care. Caring for others enables one to learn how to provide care, either for human beings, objects, plants or animals (Noddings, 1992, 2001). According to Noddings

(2001), all human being are capable of caring and everyone in the universe desires to be cared for.

In this study I have adopted the work of a recent and influential feminist scholar on care, Tronto (1993, 2010) who has theorised much about care. Tronto (2010, p. 142) argues that "care may be ubiquitous in human life, but it has remained hidden from the conceptual lenses of social and political thought". Tronto introduces her theory of ethnic care which consist of four ways in which care can be conceptualised. The four phases are: caring about, taking 'care of', care-giving and care-receiving. According to Bozalek (2014) care practices are perceived to be fulfilled when all the four elements are met appropriately.

Caring about as the first phase of care is concerned with the recognition of care as something necessary. Essentially, caring about requires seeing a need and ensuring that it is met. Caring about another person regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, class and race involves an intellectual and emotional awareness to recognise a need to provide care and attention (Nguyen, 2016). According to Tronto (1993), caring about is both individually and culturally constructed and shaped. Individuals can recognise a need to provide care on their own and they can also follow cultural scripts of care. For instance, they can recognise a need for care when a learner looks sad, cries or angry.

The second conception of care is taking 'care of', which is about taking responsibility for the need of care and determining ways on how to respond to it. Also taking 'care of' is about addressing the needs that might have been identified in the previous phase, for example, a teacher addressing learner's question or challenges with learning (Nguyen, 2016). Held (2006) notes that taking 'care of' is about doing the actual work of care or the labour in addressing the needs. What is more critical about taking 'care of' someone or something is the ability to guess/predict an outcome of the intervention made when assuming responsibility (Fisher & Tronto, 1990).

Care-giving, being the third conceptual idea, involves meeting the needs of care that is required. For instance, Fisher and Tronto (1990) refer to this as the actual concrete work. This involves care-givers coming to contact with the objects/subjects of care. For example, this may involve a moment where a teacher or a care-giver (depending on whether it is a pre-school early childhood centre or the actual school) provides care to learner(s). In addition, care-giving could include feeding, providing emotional support and addressing other various needs of the learners. Noting that care is raced, classed and gendered, Tronto (2010) states that care-givers

are constantly concerned with the lack of resources and support in executing their duties of providing care.

On care-receiving, which is the last conception, Tronto (1993) states that this is when the object/subject of care recognises and respond to the care it receives. This is the only way to realise whether care has been received. In the previous stage – care-giving, the care-giver can recognise that care has been received; once there is a response it might either be intentional, conscious and unconscious (Fisher & Tronto, 1990). For example, in the context of child-rearing, a child might seem healthier after being fed. Nguyen (2016) and Noddings (1984) state that the process of care is only complete when the cared for is receptive and responsive to the attempts of the carer. In an instance where they are not responsive, it indicates that the caring needs of the cared for were not met. Care should be understood as a practice and, one way or the other, there will be a conflict between the four phases of care (Tronto, 1993). For instance, individuals might have different ideas in terms of their caring needs. This can also be seen from Amin (2011, p. 278) when she argues that "the demand for care is discursive, multiple and complex". A similar perspective is offered by Anttonen and Zechner (2011). Emphasising the complexity of care, the scholars Anttonen and Zechner (2011) note that caring and providing care work are dependent on context, culture and time. Care work has been theorised and understood as a complex web of various forms of labour that are positioned in emotional relationships and that instil a sense of identity and belonging (Hanlon, 2012).

Hanlon (2012) notes further that caring has a socio-cultural relationship since it attaches values, meanings, and norms. Hanlon also understands caring as having an emotional relationship. For example, caring is often intimate, involves inter-dependency and, as Tronto (1993) notes, caring enables a sense of responsibility. Men have distanced themselves from care and often relegated caring responsibilities to women (Morrell & Jewkes, 2014). Those who participate in care construct it as something they assist women with and not as their primary responsibility (Ratele et al., 2010). Held (2006, p. 9) states that "care is both value and practice". As practice, individuals offering care should respond to the needs and have an understanding of the significance of doing so. As a value, caring attitudes and persons should be commended and valued (Held, 2006).

For this study, it is Tronto's (1993) ideas on the intersectionality of care that are of particular conceptual concern. Tronto emphasises that scholars who are theorising care should pay attention to the subtle "relationship between race, class, gender and care" (Tronto, 1993, p.

114). Bozalek (2014); Gill (2020) and Tronto (1993) note that care is classed, raced, and gendered, often shifting to those who are less privileged in the society: for instance, women, working-class and Africans. Class and ethnicity, alongside gender, are significant starting points towards understanding care work because, within care arrangements, hierarchies have always been part and parcel (Anttonen & Zechner, 2011; Tronto, 2013). As noted earlier, care work is relegated to individuals who belong to a specific class, gender, and ethnicity. In the hierarchy of care, women are perceived in society to be the only providers of care, although middle class women relegate care to other women who are on the periphery of class or racial hierarchy. Care work is not viewed with importance, hence it is relegated mainly to the working class, often black women who are employed as domestic workers or nannies (Tronto, 1993). Men appear to be benefiting in the majority of the settings. I therefore used Tronto's conceptual understanding to explore how black male FP teachers located in rural settings understand care work politics, particular as it relates to power and identity formation and negotiation.

3.9 Conclusion

The three frameworks that I have selected for the study offer different tools for understanding the phenomenon. Connell's theory of masculinities assists with understanding how men construct, negotiate, and constitute their gender identities. Since I sought to establish a broader understanding, looking at one identity category, e.g. gender, was insufficient. Crenshaw's intersectionality theory assists with other multiple intersecting identities to understand the complex experiences of male FP teachers. Primarily in this study, I focused on how male teachers understand the concept of care. Tronto's conceptual framework on care embodies intersectionality and, through the phases. I have established a comprehensive understanding of men's conception of care in the FP.

In the discussions above, I have also presented critiques on the theories and provided justifications for the continued use of the theories despite the critiques. For the theory of masculinities, I have provided scholarly evidence on how the theory has been extended from the time Connell coined it and its extension and use in South Africa. With regards to intersectionality theory, I have indicated its scholarly use and growth. Lastly, for the conceptual framework, I presented a discussion on care and the phases of care. Tronto's framework suggests that more work has to be done towards theorising the concept of care from varying contexts, because, as Tronto stated earlier, care is not ubiquitous in scholarly thought. The three frameworks have offered me a fine-grained analysis of the men's conceptions of care in relation

to their masculinities and teacher identities in the FP teaching. I expand in detail on this in the analysis chapters. Following this theoretical chapter, in the next chapter, I discuss the methodology that was adopted for the study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The theories of masculinities and intersectionality, as well as the conceptual framework of care that framed this study, were discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I discuss the research approach, methodology and methods of the study. I detail the research plan, decisions and the procedures that I followed when generating and analysing data for this work (Creswell, 2013). Here I highlight what is contained in the chapter. In my discussion, I start with the qualitative research approach which encompasses every other section that follows. I then move to discuss the paradigm, ontological and epistemological assumptions within the selected interpretive paradigm. The narrative inquiry methodology and methods that informed ways in which the data was generated, its authenticity, sampling and a discussion on ethics are also presented.

4.2 Research approach, philosophical underpinnings, paradigm, and research context

4.2.1 A qualitative research approach

The study sought to explore how male teachers understand the concept of care in the foundation phase teaching. It also sought to unpack the nature of the relationship between the ways in which the selected male FP teachers understand their masculinities and their identities as teachers. In the study, I was concerned with understanding how experience and context informed constructions of care and foundation phase teaching. Considering the nature of the study, I used the qualitative approach to research, which is regarded as a field of inquiry in its own right and in the world of lived experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). Bertram and Christiansen (2014), as well as Cohen et al. (2011), state that the qualitative approach seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon through generating data that is either textual, verbal or visual. Merriam (2009) notes that often qualitative research is characterised by a focus on a particular context and how people construct, understand, and interpret their experiences. A qualitative approach to research was, therefore, suitable to carry out this work, since we cannot detach individuals from the context in which they are located and what they say from those real-life situations (Creswell, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). According to Flick (2007), the scope of qualitative research is broad in that its purpose is not only to generate knowledge and insights for science, but it also contributes towards addressing societal challenges. Men and masculinities internationally and in South Africa in particular have been

positioned as uncaring and violent. Qualitative research was, therefore, suitable to approach the space of FP teaching and understand how men employed in an occupation that is perceived to be the realm of women understand the concept of care. I was able to obtain in-depth responses from the participants. In qualitative research we do not only study the actions but we significantly focus on the meanings that each individual attaches to their actions and the context (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Studying men and the subject such as care required the use of a qualitative approach, in order to establish an understanding of the meanings that each male FP teacher attaches to care.

4.2.2 Paradigm and philosophical underpinnings

I chose the interpretive paradigm for the study, which links well with the research approach mentioned in the previous section. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2013), the nature of qualitative research is mostly creative and interpretive. In addition, an interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding people's subjective constructions, interpretations and meanings of their experiences (Mason, 2002). Ontologically, with ontology being defined by Creswell (2013) and De Vos et al. (2011) as the nature of reality, the study was premised on the view that participants' reality ought to be interpreted through their lived experiences which they attach to their world. This type of ontological positioning assumes that there are multiple realities that are constructed through experience. According to Clandinin (2016), experiences are continuous; therefore, in narrative inquiry, continuity is understood as an ontological matter. Also, scholars in narrative inquiry are not objective inquirers but relational ones. There thus is a connection between the paradigm and its philosophical underpinnings with the theoretical frameworks chosen for the study. For example, May (2015, p. 39) notes that "Intersectionality understands people as ontologically plural, not only in terms of multiple identities, but also in terms of locational and relational power". The paradigm further aligns well with the methodology of the study (which I will discuss later in the chapter). In narrative inquiry, people tell and re-tell their own stories which is indicative that narrative inquiry embodies multiple realities. In terms of epistemology, defined by Creswell (2013) as the nature of knowledge, this study was based on people's experiences, how they construct and interpret meanings and symbols in the context in which they are located (De Vos et al., 2011). This epistemological positioning assumes that knowledge is subjectively constructed and interpreted (Creswell, 2013). Stories can express a type of knowledge that is distinct from that promoted by science, and through stories, we can describe human experience (Polkinghorne,

1995). The link I made earlier between the theoretical lens and the paradigm is also relevant here. Intersectionality scholars such as May (2015) suggest that individuals are located in multiple interpretive locations. Therefore, the male teachers' knowledge of the concept of care and how it relates to their masculinities is individually and subjectively constructed.

Axiology is the third philosophical underpinning I discuss. Guba and Lincoln (2005) define axiology as the role or nature of values. For instance, how do values feed into the research process such as; (1) the choice of the research problem, (2) the paradigm and methodology guiding the research, (3) the theoretical framework amongst others. Therefore, as stipulated in chapter one, the research problem, and the rationale for conducting this kind of research emanated from a personal interest. Especially considering that I am also a qualified male foundation phase teacher from Mpumalanga. In conducting the research, I prioritised and foregrounded the values of the participants. I allowed the participants to be themselves and enact their own values in terms of their teacher identities and masculinities especially noting the paradigm (interpretivist). The theoretical framework of the study provided theories that are comprehensive to understand the possibilities of values brought by the participants. The choice of the methodology (Narrative Inquiry), methods (interview-conversations and letter-writing) and the analytical methods (narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives) enabled me to foreground the voices the participants including what is valuable to them (Chase, 2008). Part of axiology is acknowledging the presence of possible biases (Creswell, 2007). In addressing biases, I engaged in a rigorous researcher reflexivity exercise, and I discuss this in detail in my conclusion chapter. Overall, I ensured that while the participants were free to express their own values, such values did not supersede those of the research office.

4.2.3 Research field (context)

The study was carried out in Mpumalanga province, which is located in the eastern part of South Africa. I selected the province based on several reasons, amongst others the province is under-researched on areas of gender and masculinities, secondly the provincial government embarked on an effort to train more male foundation phase teachers (I have provided an extensive discussion in the introduction chapter pages 8-9). Administratively the province was previously part of the Transvaal. Mpumalanga is one of the nine provinces that make up South Africa; the province borders Mozambique and Eswatini. According to Statistics South Africa (2011), the population of Mpumalanga province is approximately 4 039 939. The province has

three districts namely, Nkangala, Ehlanzeni and Gert Sibande. The schools and the participants in this study are located in the top two largest districts; that is Nkangala and Ehlanzeni. From Ehlanzeni, I had seven participants while Nkangala had six participants. The province consists of great diversity, with almost all the eleven official languages spoken in the province. The population by race in the province, as extracted from Statistics South Africa (2011) is as follows:

Racial category	Percentage
Black Africans	90.65%
Whites	7.51%
Coloureds	0.91%
Indian	0.69%
Other	0.24%

Table 4.1 Population by racial group

Mpumalanga province has extensive mining and agricultural industries that are visible when travelling in the province. It is also home to the famous Kruger National Park, which is located closer to the border of Mozambique. The participants are located in rural schools across the two major districts presented earlier. Below I have provided two maps; the first is the map of the country, South Africa, and the shaded area indicates where Mpumalanga is located. The following figure after the map of South Africa is the map of the province which also indicates the three districts in colour and the various municipalities in each district. Later in the chapter, in section 4.3.1, I present short introductions of the participants, and they have provided the names of their districts as well as municipalities. The following section presents a narrative inquiry, the methodology that I selected for the study.
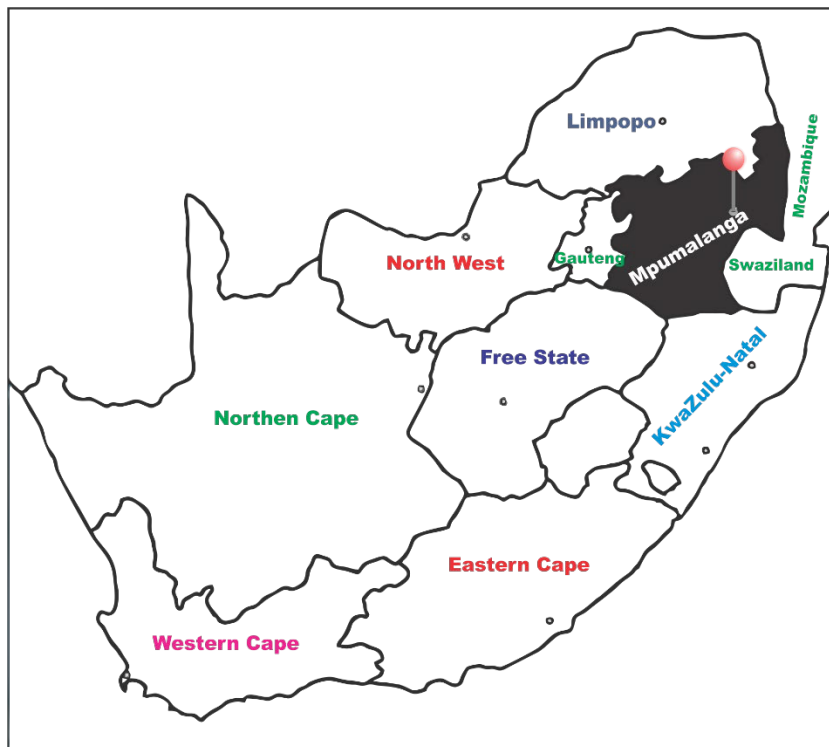
Figure 4.1 Map of South Africa (Luventicus, 2013)
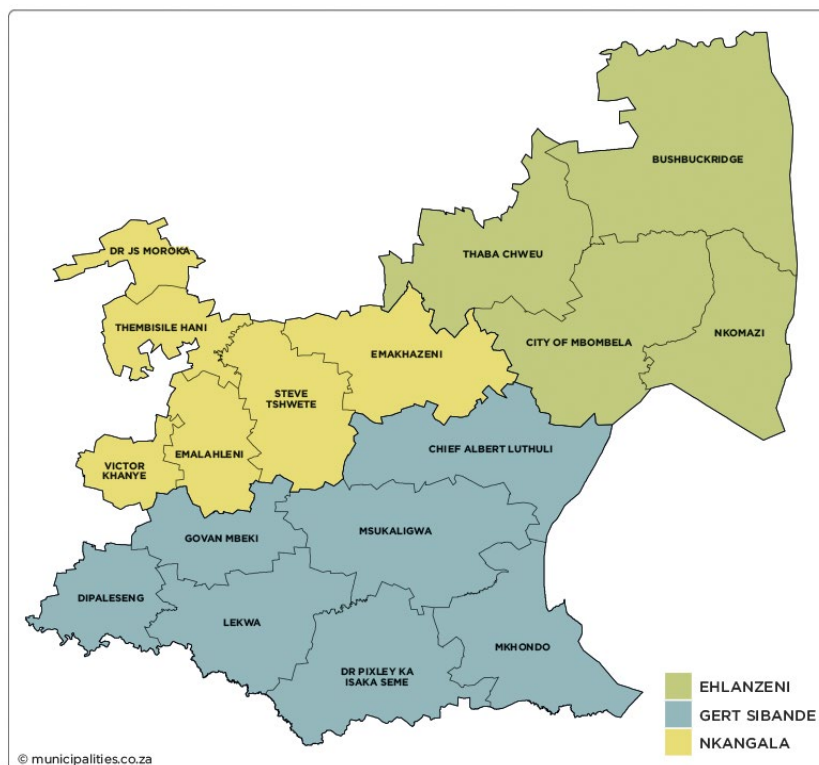
Figure 4.2 District/municipal map of Mpumalanga (Mpumalanga Municipalities n.d.)

4.3 Research methodology

Methodologically, the study was informed by narrative inquiry, which is categorised under the umbrella of qualitative approaches (Polkinghorne, 1995). Also, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state that narrative inquiry is situated in a matrix of qualitative research, because of its focus on experience, education and the qualities of life. Within narrative inquiry, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) state that people cannot be understood as individuals only; they must always be understood with the social context they are located in. Narrative inquiry can be both a phenomenon under study, for instance, the narrative of illness, as well as a method of study, for example using stories to understand peoples' experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell, 2013). Creswell (2013, p. 70) adds that "as a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals". Narratives can be both descriptive and explanatory. Explanatory narratives present an account for connections in a causal manner. For instance, they account for the reasons why certain things happened (Hollingsworth & Mary, 2007). Descriptive narratives are defined by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 16) as an "accurate description of the interpretive narrative accounts of either groups or individuals in order to establish sequence of events in their lives or organisations". In the study I used a descriptive narrative inquiry.

Hollingsworth and Mary (2007) state that descriptive narrative inquiry is about the expressions of self, individuals and collective identity through telling lived stories. How narrative inquiry is both conceptualised and used has changed; the recent work of Clandinin (2016) reveals tha, when Connelly and Clandinin started, they wrote narrative inquiry as both phenomenon and method, but Clandinin (2016) argues that this has changed since they began to understand that it was a research methodology. The change was taken because it was apparent "how interwoven narrative ways of thinking about phenomena are with narrative inquiry as research methodology" (Clandinin, 2016, p. 11). I selected narrative inquiry for the study because I intended to explore how context shapes the experiences, understanding and construction of care among the male teachers studied. I engaged the participants in a conversation and letter writing, to understand how men are leading their storied lives concerning care, masculinity and foundation phase teaching (Clandinin, 2006; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990), narratives represent the world and serve as the best tool to understand and inquire into experience, because they enable researchers and participants to collaborate over a place, time and social interactions. In a

nutshell, for Clandinin and Connelly (2000), narrative inquiry concerns stories lived (experiences) and told. Chase (2003) and Johnson and Golombek (2002) note that narrative inquiry offers participants an opportunity to look at themselves, including their activities, as socially and historically located. Within narrative inquiry, there are three key dimensional places. These are temporality (relating to inquiring towards the past, present and future of individuals), sociality (interaction) and place (the place where the inquiry is taking place, as experiences are linked to certain places) (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). There have been debates from various disciplines on what narrative inquiry is and how it should be conducted (Riley & Hawe, 2004). While there have been debates, narrative researchers have moved from the social science practices of conducting and reporting research to generating lived experiences and re-storying them. For instance, Chase (2008) states that narrative researchers are often likely to use the first person when writing and presenting their work, which emphasises the narrative action in the study as evident in this work. Narrative inquiry as a methodology is relational and open to where the stories of each participants take the researcher (Clandinin, 2016).

Narrative inquiry has also been used in the South African context (the site of investigation); its use stems from different disciplines in the academy, with Education being dominant. Narrative inquiry in Africa and South Africa gained popularity and resonance amongst scholars because of its main feature, that is, stories and storytelling (Stephens & Trahar, 2012). Stories and storytelling have a rich history in Africa. They have been used for educational purposes and entertainment (ibid). At the time, the stories were shared orally in the evenings and were mainly narrated by an elderly person in a household. For educational purposes, storytelling is still used in the FP classrooms where the teacher shares the story orally to the children.

In the academy, various scholars have used narrative inquiry in South Africa. For instance, Savin-Baden and Niekerk (2007), located at the University of Cape Town, used narrative inquiry in the discipline of Geography; they state that narrative inquiry is a useful yet challenging method that can be used in different disciplines and contexts. The ability to write in the first person – embedded in narrative inquiry – was the most appreciated feature as, according to them, interpretations become transparent and clear (ibid). Chadwick (2017) has explored the connections between narrative inquiry and intersectionality theory and some of the argument she makes I presented earlier. Chadwick's (2017) attempt to undertake this work

and write about the connections was to advance the conceptual understanding of narrative inquiry, particularly in South Africa and the academy.

In education, various scholars have used and extended the work of narrative inquiry. Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan and Daisy Pillay use narrative methods to understand their professional selves. In their projects, narrative methods are part of their bigger project titled self-reflexive methodologies. Pithouse-Morgan et al. (2019) in their research created a mosaic and used storytelling to share their experiences of engaging with oral storytelling. They found that as teacher-educators they can learn from their past as well as reimagine future stories. In a paper focusing on the schooling stories of child inmates, narrative inquiry was found to be a suitable methodology to elicit rich data about the inmates lived and schooling experiences (Pillay & Ngubane, 2018). Some Education scholars also found the methodology suitable for their gender-based research focused on experience as lived and told (Simmonds et al., 2015). Sader (2014) used narrative inquiry and became innovative in the analysis by adopting collective narratives to present the findings. Collective narratives, as espoused by Chase (2008), are privileging the participants' voices in the presentation of the findings. From the above, it is clear that the methodology has found clear prominence within Education scholarship.

4.4 Selecting the participants (Sampling)

According to Merriam (2009), there are two types of sampling, that is: probability and non-probability. De Vos et al. (2011) as well as (Merriam, 2009) note that non-probability sampling is commonly used in qualitative research. In probability sampling, the chances of including the wider population are known and everyone has an equal chance. In non-probability, the chances of inclusion are unknown; not everyone has an equal chance as researchers work on a specific criterion (Cohen et al., 2011). Participants in this study were purposefully selected using criteria that they are men, teaching in the foundation phase and employed as teachers in the province of Mpumalanga.

Snowball sampling was used as a selection strategy. According to Cohen et al. (2011), as well as Merriam (2009), a small group of individuals are identified, regardless that they do not represent the entire population. Snowball sampling is often used in a sensitive topic or when dealing with a group that is hard to reach (Penrod et al., 2003). These individuals are then used to identify other participants that match the criteria established (already detailed earlier in this

paragraph) until the target number of participants is reached. After I was granted ethical clearance, I started recruiting participants in the following way; first, I worked with men matching the criteria in my master's project. I contacted and used some of them as an entry to get more participants for this doctoral study and I extended to other areas in the province, through referrals. I was fortunate that while I was recruiting participants, I found male teachers who studied in various institutions in South Africa. The male teachers linked me with their previous university mates who were located in different parts of the province and whose their lived experiences varied.

This study does not subscribe fully to the traditional approach of using narrative inquiry, i.e. small numbers and longer interview sessions. The decision was deliberate. Scholars in gender and sexuality are increasingly using more participants (see Bhana & Moosa, 2016; Moosa & Bhana, 2018) with a view of strengthening 'evidence', especially when studies may have some policy implications. The intention of this study was to gain the opinions of more people, particularly given the evolution of the field – masculinity and foundation phase teaching. Depth was ensured through the recruitment of a significant number of participants, using two methods of data generation and conducted multiple sessions of interview-conversations (I unpack this in detail later in the chapter). According to Webster and Mertova (2007), narrative inquiry methodology has grown significantly over the years and in various disciplines. They argue that there is no single universal method of conducting narrative inquiry. Scholars from different disciplines employ the methodology according to the needs in their research and discipline (ibid). This suggests that there are variations of this methodology across disciplines, as indicated earlier; this is also the case for my study. In the study, I did not use narrative inquiry to present a deep historical overview of individual participants on their experiences. Although this is still the case for other studies elsewhere, Chase (2018, p. 947) states that the "shift from a focus on the narration of past events to the narration of experience allowed for accounts about feelings and thoughts as well as about present, future and hypothetical experiences". In this study, I focused on my participant's storied experiences in the present day in relation to the phenomenon of the study. Stories in narrative inquiry are a distinctive feature. Therefore when the participants told their stories to me as a researcher, they were comprehensive and representative of their multiple identities as well as experiences (Savin-Baden & Niekerk, 2007). Fundamentally in this study, I was concerned with how the participants make meaning of their various lived experiences, as experience occurs from the everyday interaction with various aspects of the environment (Butler-Kisber, 2018; Kitchen, 2009). I recruited 13

participants (I elaborate on their selection later) and in the next section I present the participants' information that is written narratively. Later in the chapter I also present a table with demographics and data generation details.

4.4.1 Knowing the participants

In this section, I present brief introductions to the participants of the study that I generated from the conversations I had with the participants and wrote them into a uniform format. As a narrative inquirer I was interested in the participants' lived experiences (Caine et al., 2013) and it is important to introduce who they are: their age, years of experience and the grades that they teach. All the participants share the same racial category and sex. They are all black Africans who are male.

Andile Tlou

I am Andile Tlou, 27 years of age, I work and reside in Steve Tshwete municipality within the Nkangala district of Mpumalanga province. I have been a teacher since 2014 and hold a Bachelor of Education degree (BEd). I first taught grade 2 for a year and grade 3 for four years till to date. I was moved to grade 3 because one of the teachers was retiring and the principal commended my performance in grade 3 and therefore requested that I teach an exit grade in the FP.

Thando Mbatha

My name is Thando Mbatha, 29 years of age. I stay and work in Thembisile Hani municipality under Nkangala district. I also completed my schooling, from grade 1 to matric in this area. I hold a diploma specialising in Grade R and an advanced certificate in Mathematics and Social Sciences. I have seven years of teaching experience since I started working. I have only taught grade R.

Gift Shezi

My name is Gift Shezi, I am 36 years old, within the province of Mpumalanga I stay and teach in the Steve Tshwete Municipality under Nkangala district, although I was born in Gert Sibande district. I am a HOD for the FP, a sports coordinator, and a housefather in the boarding facilities of the school. I hold a Bachelor of Education degree specialising in Early Childhood Development and I teach grade 3 learners.

Nathi Khoza

I am Nathi Khoza, 23 years old, and I grew up in the outer rural areas of Gauteng which are closer to Mpumalanga and moved to Thembisile Hani municipality, in Nkangala district where I currently reside and employed. I completed my Bachelor of Education degree in 2017 specialising in FP, and this is my first year of teaching, I do not have much experience since I have spent seven months in the field. I teach grade 1 learners.

Mandla Maseko

My name is Mandla Maseko, 29 years of age, I was born in rural areas of Gert Sibande district. When I was looking for employment, I only got to be employed in Emalahleni municipality under Nkangala district. Previously I was teaching grade 2, but since 2015 I was moved to grade 3. I have a Bachelor of Education specialising in Early Childhood Development and I have five years teaching experience.

Elias Kwena

My name is Elias Kwena, 28 years old, I work and grew up in the deep rural areas of Ehlanzeni district, under the Nkomazi municipality, recently the area is starting to develop in terms of infrastructure, lifestyle, and access to education, it now has a look of a village. For qualification, I hold a Bachelor of Education degree specialising in Early Childhood Development and I have five years teaching experience in grade 3.

Sonke Magubane

I am Sonke Magubane, 28 years of age, I am a grade 1 teacher and I have been teaching grade 1 for 5 years. I grew up in the very same community where I am currently teaching at. I am from Ehlanzeni district in the Nkomazi municipality. Educationally, I hold a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Development and currently doing my honours degree.

Tshepo Shenge

My name is Tshepo Shenge, I am 30 years of age, I grew up in the rural areas of Ehlanzeni district in the Nkomazi municipality, completed my schooling here and currently working in my community. My area is closely located near one of the Swaziland border posts. In the school, I teach grade 2 learners and it has been five years since I started working. I hold the following qualifications: Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education, Honours in Curriculum Studies and currently registered for Masters also in Curriculum Studies.

Fana Nonyane

I am Fana Nonyane, 33 years of age. I grew up and work around a rural place located in Nkomazi municipality, in Ehlanzeni district, I am working as an educator in the FP, teaching grade 3 learners, with 4 years' teaching experience. I hold three qualifications; I have a Bachelor of Education specialising in Early Childhood Development , both honours and masters in curriculum studies, currently working towards completing my PhD.

Cyril Sibiya

My name is Cyril Sibiya I am a FP teacher, I have been in the field for 7 years, teaching grade 3 learners since I started working. I am 32 years of age and was born in 1986 at a place in Nkomazi municipality, located in Ehlanzeni district. First when I started working, it was in KwaNdebele under Nkangala district and later moved to where I grew up. I hold a Bachelor of Education specialising in the FP and I am a HOD in the phase.

Musa Ramphele

Afternoon Mr Msiza (researcher), my name is Musa Ramphele, I was born in 1975 and I grew up in a place located in Nkomazi municipality under the Ehlanzeni district. I moved to this place where I currently stay in 1996, which is 30km from the previous one. I have five years of teaching experience and have learnt a lot about children, their parents and the community at large. I have been teaching Grade 3 since I started working.

Lethabo Tladi

I am Lethabo Tladi and I am 52 years of age, I have taught for 26 years. For many years I taught in the intermediate phase, but some years back, I was moved to the Foundation phase grade 1 class as a private teacher for 1 year. After obtaining my teaching diploma from a local college, I then went back to the intermediate phase and taught standard 2 (grade 4) this was similar to FP because we were doing class teaching. For now, I have been teaching in the FP for 3 years, teaching grade 3 learners. I grew up in this area where I teach, which is located in the Bushbuckridge municipality under the Ehlanzeni district.

Zola Mbuduma

My name is Zola Mbuduma, I am 25 years old and I grew up in a place located in Thembisile Hani municipality under Nkangala district. I have 1 year and 7 months of teaching experience.

Since I was employed, I have been teaching grade 3. I hold a Bachelor of Education degree specialising in IsiNdebele in the FP.

4.5 Generating data (field text)

In terms of methods, Cohen et al. (2011) state that methods are concerned with the ways in which data is generated/collected. In addition, deciding on the type of methods for the study is dependent on the phenomenon and the methodology selected (Cohen et al., 2011).

Earlier I discussed narrative inquiry as the selected methodology. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state that, in narrative research, data can be generated in multiple forms for instance; conversations, field notes, journal records, storytelling, letter-writing and autobiographical writing, these are amongst other methods. In my study, I chose two methods that are within narrative inquiry research methodology that is; letter-writing and interview-conversations (Clandinin, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through the two methods, participants shared their stories. Johnson and Golombek (2002, p. 7) argue that the narrative accounts (stories) often "reveal the knowledge, ideas, perspectives, understandings, and the experiences that guide their work".

4.5.1 Letter writing

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) point out that letters, especially those authored by participants, are meant to give an account of participants' experiences, and establish relationships. In addition, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) outline that the important quality of letters is the personal tone and their conversational nature. Letter-writing in this study was used and each participants authored one letter. Participants were given a template of a blank letter, and they were required to complete it. I made the template to be informal and flexible for the participants' use. I requested that they write one letter to their younger selves or alternatively write to a young child, explaining what they think offering care is for foundation phase teachers. The template contained a section for each participant to write his name and there was a question, prompting the participants to share what it means to offer care in the foundation phase. Writing to a young child, either someone else or to their selves meant that participants needed to use simple and accessible language.

Letter-writing as a method of generating data gave them sufficient time to think about their experiences and to reflect on the teaching profession in relation to care. I requested the participants to think about how their personal, social interactions, their past, present and where they are located, assist in understanding what it means to offer care (Clandinin, 2006). Letter-writing is often used in qualitative research for reflective practice and self-introspection, which captures participant's experiences and their negotiation with the self (Channa, 2017; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2012). In addition, according to Riessman (2008), letters, when they are used for data generation purposes, are able to produce rich and fertile data. In this study, to reiterate, only one letter was required to be written per participant. The participants sent the letter to me prior to their first interview session. In this way, I managed to understand their thoughts and meanings of what it means to offer care in the foundation phase and prepared sufficiently for the next interview after reading the letter that was provided to me in the first interview session.

Letter-writing, like all other methods of generating data, has its limitations. For instance, studies conducted by O'Connell and Dyment (2004) and O'Connell and Dyment (2011) on students using letter-writing and journal writing as a reflective practice found a difference between men and women in the way they reflect. O'Connell and Dyment (2011) note that men reflected on facts and events, while women reflected on thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Nonetheless, both facts and emotions are essential for narrative inquiry, as narratives in their multiplicity can express emotions, feelings and interpretations (Chase, 2008). The view that presents differences in how men and woman respond to letter writing is problematic because it suggests that men are emotion-free and in my study, FP men write every day in their classrooms. Be that as it may, as a researcher, I was also concerned with how South African men might respond to the method as masculinities are primarily constructed on macho and hegemonic ideals. The recent work of Langa (2020), who studied young men for 12 years in a Johannesburg township Alexandra, found that one participant of the 32 he studied was imprisoned. While spending time in prison, he wrote letters to the author. One of the letters was titled "conversation with self". According to Langa (2020, p. 154), the participant "letter gave us the opportunity to delve into a number of issues including his coping mechanisms…he continues to write letters about his feelings and emotions". Langa's book reveals that the stereotypical assumptions about men and masculinities are beginning to change and this is consistent with the emerging scholarship on caring masculinities (Elliott, 2016).

As mentioned earlier in this section, letter-writing was used as an entry point to conversations with men and getting to know their initial thoughts about the phenomenon. Therefore, the content of each letter became an important component of generating data. Although I challenged the view on letter-writing on the basis of sex and gender as problematic, I addressed the limitations in the following ways: on the first visit/communication with the participants, I explained to each of them what was expected of them in writing the letter. I gave them the liberty to decide on their preferred language to write the letter. This was deliberate because I wanted the participants to be comfortable and express themselves. Researchers should provide options and a conducive environment in which participants can decide on the language that they wish to use (Vanner, 2015). The challenge I encountered with the letters was that some letters were handwritten. In instances where the writing was not clear, I enquired with the participants to clarify the handwriting. The participants were open and willing to assist. The length of the letters was between one full page to three pages. The difference in length was caused by the nature of the letter; that is typed and some handwritten.

4.5.2 Interview-conversations

The second method of data generation was the interview-conversation. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Hollingsworth and Mary (2007), conversations are face to face interactions between the researcher and the participants. During the one-to-one sessions, participants shared their stories differently, others preferred using artefacts while others were able to dialogue. In this study, our interviews were mainly through open dialogue with the participants. In this study I decided to use conversations (Clandinin, 2016) as the second method of data generation.

Conversations are distinguished by their ability to enable equality between the researcher and participants; they are flexible and entail listening. Consistent with the argument of providing equality between the researcher and participant, Goodson and Sikes (2001) maintain that conversations are important in addressing power relations that might exist between the researcher and the participants. Due to the sensitivity of power as a construct, and the societal perception around it, Merriam et al. (2001) suggest that "power is something to not only be aware of, but to negotiate in the research process" (413). I had three interviews with each participant. Before my visit, I had a few pre-determined topics that I wished to explore with the participants. I unpack this in the next paragraph. I also respected how participants structured

and framed their responses (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The interview-conversations were primarily shaped by the three-dimensional narrative inquiry, meaning the conversations were shaped by temporality (participant's past, present and future experiences). This was followed by the dimension of sociality (their personal and social conditions, surrounding factors that contribute to their context). The last dimension is about place (where events took place, for example, where did they observe the best caring practice and where the conversation took place). While having a conversation with the participants, we went through all three-dimensional spaces (Caine et al., 2017; Clandinin et al., 2007).

The first interview was about introducing myself to the participants, to establish rapport, and to explain the study and the letter writing process to the participants. The participants were located across three districts that make up the Mpumalanga province. For the first interview, which was an introduction session with the aim of generating in-depth data, I physically visited three participants to introduce myself and the study. The remaining ten participants were interviewed telephonically. The template for the letter was sent electronically to the participants. This was useful because we ended up communicating on WhatsApp prior to the official day of data generation. It also gave me a chance to interact and know the participants more. Telephonic/electronic communication was important for me as the early introductory conversations were beginning to provide in-depth data, build on rapport and assisted me in understanding the participants' conversation styles. Of the ten participants that I conducted a first telephonic interview with, six are those that I used previously in my masters' project; meaning I had already established rapport with them, and I was fortunate that they were still in the same area as before. As noted earlier, these are some of the participants who offered an initial entry into getting others.

The first interview for ten participants was not recorded in an audio recording device, as these were telephonic introduction sessions. The purpose was mainly to introduce myself and the study and to collect background information. I only wrote notes on important points that I wanted to discuss in the next visit. Some of the participants were kind and offered me a tour around the area, especially those who are located closer to the Kruger National Park; such interactions assisted me in negotiating entry, building and deepening rapport. I had three interviews with the participants one of which was an introduction section, where I collected field notes and not recordings. Therefore, after the introduction interview session, I contacted the participants to request and negotiate for a second visit and after the second visit I also

negotiated for the last interview with the participants. In addition I carried a data generation schedule which assisted in capturing the dates for my upcoming visits. Merriam et al. (2001) highlights that power is negotiated subtly with the participants through agreeing on dates and place for the interviews to be conducted.

The second interview focused on understanding the men's background, and we engaged in their historical upbringing and personal lives. Some of the things that we spoke about in this interview are how participants have observed care while growing up (either receiving or providing it), the challenges of offering care, their professional identity and masculinity. The interview generally yielded rich data and lasted approximately one hour per participant, with others lasting even longer through social interaction. During data generation, I took breaks, for instance, after interviewing all the participants for the second time, I took two weeks break and started with transcribing the interviews. Conducting interviews in this fashion gave me an opportunity to follow up on issues that needed clarity. I also realised that participants appreciated this approach because it showed I am following on their stories and the meaning-making process of their experiences.

The third interview focused on how the participants understand care work as FP teachers, caring activities in the FP, how they see their future, their views on the call for more men to teach in the foundation phase and how they imagine gender equality in teaching. Our conversation started with the themes/points that emerged from the letter and in the previous session. This session, like the previous one, was approximately an hour for each participant. The pre-determined topics that I initially planned to discuss with the participants were extended through probing. In my probing I exercised caution, as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggest that in-depth probing should be carried out in the context of mutual trust, openness and care. For the second and mostly third interview sessions, there were changes in how I conducted the interviews. I visited some of the participants on the same day, especially those whose schools were close to each other, such as 10 kilometres apart. In such an arrangement, I had a lunch appointment with one and an afternoon appointment with the other. Another issue that emerged during data generation relates to the visits. Of the 13 participants I had, two requested that we have two interview sessions within one day. The participants had pressing personal matters and they gave me a longer time for them to be interviewed. I interviewed one at a restaurant and another at his school. Some of the reasons were the multiple service delivery protests in the area, so it was not safe to enter the site, and

others had pressing family matters. These are some of the complex matters researchers in the context of South Africa have to negotiate on a daily basis. In the interest of the participants, I agreed to the suggestions. I proposed that in our conversations, we take breaks in order to allow both our minds to refresh and allow me as a researcher to probe and prepare for the next session. I also agreed to the requests, to ensure participants' comfort. Following next is a table with participants' demographic and data collection details.

No	Participants (pseudonyms)	Age	Grade	Years in Service	Interview dates
1	Andile Tlou	27	3	5 years	*Telephonic*
					01/08/2018
					12/10/2018
2	Thando Mbatha	29	R	7 years	*Telephonic*
					19/07/2018
					11/10/2018
3	Gift Shezi	36	3	5 years	*Telephonic*
					31/07/2018
					12/10/2018
4	Nathi Khoza	23	1	07 Months	20/07/2018
					24/07/2018
					27/11/2018
5	Mandla Maseko	29	3	5 years	*Telephonic*
					22/07/2018
					21/10/2018
6	Elias Kwena	28	3	5 years	*Telephonic*
					13/08/2018
					19/09/2018
7	Sonke Magubane	28	1	5 Years	*Telephonic*
					14/08/2018
					18/09/2018
8	Tshepo Shenge	30	2	5 Years	*Telephonic*
					15/08/2018
9	Fana Nonyane	33	3	4 Years	22/06/2018
					13/08/2018

					19/09/2018
10	Cyril Sibiya	32	3	7 years	14/08/2018
					16/08/2018
11	Musa Ramphele	43	3	5 years	*Telephonic*
					17/08/2018
					20/09/2018
12	Lethabo Tladi	52	3	26 years	*Telephonic*
					04/10/2018
13	Zola Mbuduma	25	3	1 year, 7 months	18/07/2018
					15/10/2018

Table 4.2 Participants' demographic and data collection information

4.6 Ethical considerations

In conducting the study, I adhered to all the ethical requirements. First, the proposal of the study was approved by the University's Higher Degrees' Committee. I then wrote to the Mpumalanga Department of Education as custodian of research site and the main gatekeeper for the study. The study was granted permission. When this was granted (see appendix 4), I wrote to various schools where the potential participants were located, using a special letter in order to obtain the approval of the principals (as second gatekeepers: see appendix 3). I collated all the documents and applied for ethical clearance through the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee. The study was given full approval by the Committee (see appendix 5). I then proceeded to recruit participants as discussed in section 4.3 (selection of participants). The central ethical concerns for narrative inquirers, according to Caine et al. (2017), is to negotiate entry and exit, into the field and into the participants' experiences. Below I discuss how I adhered to other ethical concerns.

Prior to the interview-conversations, the participants indicated their availability, as discussed earlier in the chapter. I then met with the participants in a place of their choice, although I met the majority in their schools. The data generation methods were flexible in a way that we did not require a formal place to meet. For instance, some of the participants suggested that I meet

them over the weekend, a suggestion that I welcomed. In such instances, the interview was conducted in a restaurant, and we chose a space that was comfortable, far from the noise and interruptions. Voluntary participation in the study was emphasised and we discussed that should they wish to withdraw from the study they could do so at any time (Flick, 2007). In the study, there was one teacher who did not withdraw formally, but he did not respond to my communication. I interviewed him twice and he was not available for the third interview. After several attempts to meet with him, I did not succeed. Therefore, I have decided to use the first two interviews that he consented for and exclude the one that never took place. I ensured anonymity and confidentiality of my participants. I therefore do not use any of their names in presenting the data; there is no text or any feature that might expose their identities (Cohen et al., 2011). The names of the participants and schools are not disclosed; I used pseudonyms (see table 1) and I removed the actual name of their townships/villages of the participants. I used only the municipal and district names in order to protect their identity. I first discussed with the participants what the study was about and proceeded to provide the participants with an informed consent form to sign before an interview began. Researchers have an ethical responsibility to seek consent from the participants (Cohen et al., 2011). The study was conducted for my doctoral degree and the interviews were audio-recorded. The informed consent form contained a section where the participants were required to consent on audio recording. I took the opportunity to explain in detail the purpose and reasons for recording the interview, as this was informed by a need to represent their views accurately and the recorded audio clips were helpful during the analysis stage. All the participants consented to be recorded. Nonetheless, I did not take this lightly. For each session, I requested permission because, between the researcher and the participants, consent should be negotiated continuously (Vanner, 2015). A similar view is also held by Clandinin (2006), who notes that, when engaging in narrative inquiry research, we need to think about ethics as a continuous process of negotiation, openness and respect. In addition, Flick (2007) notes that the research we conduct should not do any harm. This doctoral project adhered to this principle.

4.7 Trustworthiness

Issues of validity and trustworthiness are important for research, especially to demonstrate how rigorous the research process and the findings are. Although this is important, Webster and Mertova (2007) state that narrative inquiry research should not be judged using the same criteria as if they were universally accepted in both qualitative and quantitative research. In

qualitative research, generally, the understanding is that instead of validity we use trustworthiness. Trustworthiness consists of four concepts that form part of the criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Transferability is excluded, as the findings of the study cannot be generalised and cannot be transferred to any other context – people's lived and told stories are subjective and context-based, and as such they cannot be transferred.

4.7.1 Credibility

Credibility is concerned with how congruent the findings are with the participants' responses (Merriam, 2009). The credibility of the study was strengthened by the use of multiple methods of data generation, specifically, the study used two data generation methods that is letter writing and interview-conversations. Taking this approach was not informed by an intention of triangulating, as it is not a requirement for qualitative studies – each method of generating data had a specific purpose that is linked to the key research questions. Using two methods of data generation was helpful, as I was able to generate rich and detailed data for this research (Shenton, 2004). The interview-conversations were audio-recorded, and I later transcribed them to text. The transcription started while I was generating data in the field. I found this to be useful because I was able to share with the participants what we discussed before and allow them to correct, add or revise the version of the previous story (member checks). All the participant confirmed that the transcribed interviews were a true reflection of what they said.

4.7.2 Dependability

Dependability focusses on whether the research processes are transparent or not. In enhancing dependability of the study and carrying out this process, I have provided a clear and detailed research process for transparency purposes (Merriam, 2009). According to Shenton (2004), researchers need to provide a detailed process in order to enable future researchers to repeat the study or arrive at the same results. Although this study is not generalizable, I have nonetheless detailed the research process. When I was in the field generating data, I kept an A5 reflexive journal, that I used to capture all the steps and decisions made. Two methods of generating data were used in the study, letter writing and interview-conversations. I have also provided full account of operational details of the research process and those that I altered through negotiating with the participants.

4.7.3 Confirmability

Confirmability deals with researcher objectivity and that findings reflect lived and real-life experiences of the participants (Shenton, 2004). Subjectivity in qualitative research is not avoidable. As I have discussed this earlier in the sections of the paradigm and the philosophical assumptions of the study, subjectivity and multiple interpretations in narrative inquiry are acknowledged; narrative inquiry does not aim to produce generalizable truths (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Arguing for objectivity in research is heavily critiqued by Stanley and Wise (2002). They argue that emphasising objectivity is misleading as it assumes that the researcher can be there (simply present) without being involved in various ways.

In this study, I have provided a detailed methodological description – –to allow the audience of this work to understand how the study was carried. I established a strong rapport with my participants and did not impose my views on the location, time and venue for the interview to take place. In addition, the participants used languages that were comfortable with. I have presented the findings in both English and the language of their choice in order to maintain the original meaning.

4.8 Data analysis

Before one can carry out data analysis in narrative inquiry, Kim (2015) suggests that the first step for researchers is to know and understand qualitative data analysis, since we are first qualitative researchers before narrative researchers. In narrative inquiry, when researchers move from field text (interview-transcripts) to research text (narratives), there are various ways in which data can be analysed (Caine et al., 2013). Traditionally, in narrative inquiry, scholars often use the following approaches, narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives. Narrative analysis, according to Polkinghorne (1995), moves from the elements of the interview to plots that make up a story; on the other side, analysis of narratives moves from stories to common categories (often called themes). Data analysis commences as early as in the process of data generation, for instance, through a narrator-listener relationship that was established between myself and the participants. I listened to their stories, analysed and probed further on topics that required deepening and clarity (Chase, 2013). The manner in which I analysed and presented the data could be perceived as diverting from the traditional and rigid ways that some

scholars may judge as necessary. Nonetheless, Riessman (1993) states that there are no fixed or rigid set of procedures for data analysis. In this study, I therefore use the three phases of data analysis and presentation as espoused by Riessman (1993). She notes that the analysis process begins with the telling (interview-conversations and letters), followed by transcribing and then analysis. The three phases of data analysis are comprehensive in detailing the analysis process from a stage where it started until where the data is presented.

4.8.1 Telling phase

Riessman (1993) begins by highlighting the need for storytelling, enabling people to speak and share their lived experiences. As discussed earlier (see section 4.4.2) I engaged my participants through an interview-conversation that was open and flexible – my participants shared their stories through multiple visits I had with them. For Riessman (1993) the analysis begins at this phase, thus establishing a strong rapport was central towards the type of conversations I had with the participants. The participants were very comfortable during the interview-conversations. At the end of each session they would ask if I needed to discuss more. The engagements with the participants were never final but ongoing as argued by Caine et al. (2013). During the process of data generation, I kept my recorder on, especially after they have consented. I also kept my notebook to capture some of the points that needed deepening and those that needed clarity. My probes were informed by the need to understand their stories and elicit more information about their lived experiences. During an interview-conversation, the researcher and participants are able to create meaning together (Riessman, 1993). Essentially through probing and listening to stories, we become part of our participants' lives and, as researchers, we are involved in their methods of seeking narrative coherence (Caine et al., 2013). Transcribing as a second phase is another step in which, as a researcher, I attempted to achieve narrative coherence.

4.8.2 Transcribing phase

Transcribing is a process where I converted audio files into text and the narrative accounts of participants were generated through longer interview-conversations. Riessman (1993) highlight that audio recording the conversations is essential for analysis. Riessman (2008) highlights that researchers should make decisions when transcribing data as there is no universal global way of doing it. In her earlier work (Riessman, 1993), she recommended that,

when constructing transcripts of the interviews, researchers need to start with rough transcripts (drafts), then go back for re-transcription in portions where the audio might not be clearer (Riessman, 1993). In my study I discussed the gaps and issues needing clarity with my participants during my successive visits. The transcription started on the week of the interviews. I transcribed the audio recordings during this period in order to capture all the responses as they were still fresh in my mind and to return to the participants for member checking (Webster & Mertova, 2007). In essence, data transcription involves the selection and reduction of the research text. In addition, there is no uniform way to do it – the method of transcribing vary across the qualitative approach (Riessman, 1993). A common practice in big research projects is that they outsource their transcriptions either to fieldworkers or other employees working for the project. In my study, I decided to do the transcriptions on my own, although it was challenging transcribing narrative interviews. This decision comes with the benefit of familiarising myself and getting immersed with the data. As a narrative researcher transcribing (composing research texts), I have to look for narrative threads, patterns, tensions and themes across as well as within participants' lived experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Transcription in narrative inquiry is not recommended to be delegated to someone else, since it forms part of the analysis and interpretation of the data; for instance, researchers decide while transcribing which information to discard and retain. As researchers, we are implicated in every step of the process of constructing narratives that we will later analyse and report (Riessman, 2008).

4.8.3 Analysing phase

In the previous phase, I indicated that the analysis begins in the telling phase and move to the transcription phase. The decisions that pertain to data analysis are important because they shape how the data is interpreted and reported (Kim, 2015; Riessman, 2008). Upon completing the transcription of the interviews and after having discussed with the participants, I printed out all the transcripts and took the first transcript for reading. Initially, when the process started, I wanted to make meaning of what I was reading. I made side notes on the analysis notebook that I reserved specifically for this process as well as on the actual transcript. I had planned to adopt both ways of data analysis compatible with narrative inquiry, that is, narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives. When I was on fifth transcript, I decided to return to the first one and begin with narrative analysis and write the narratives for each participant. At the time when I was constructing the second narrative, I paused and thought to myself how I would present

these data for all my 13 participants. In narrative inquiry, researchers have historically used a small number of participants. I then decided to share my challenges with my supervisor and the mentors that are allocated to me in the doctoral programme that I am part of in the School of Education (the programme has seasoned mentors who are both national and international leaders). I also then presented my work to the doctoral cohort. Amongst the feedback I received were concerns on presenting 13 narratives in my thesis, the feedback was constructive such that I decided to use the analysis of narratives (themes). Stanley and Wise (2002) who are feminist scholars have argued strongly against conceptualising research process as "hygienic", as if there are no problems, emotions and experiences. Such research is viewed as research as described and not as experienced (ibid). The authors argue further that those who emphasise that new research should be written and presented in ways similar to previous existing work promote the idea of hygienic research. In this study, I have followed all the methodological procedures and research processes, but for data presentation I noted connections on how participants have responded.

Thus, the strategy of data analysis that I decided to use for my study is analysis of narratives (themes) (Polkinghorne, 1995). Of course, this decision was taken consciously as mentioned earlier. My research consisted of a relatively large number of participants, which is something rare in the narrative inquiry research. Nonetheless, if we were to describe all the events as they happened or use strategies that seeks to achieve this, what we describe will be extremely lengthy, chaotic and boring (Stanley & Wise, 2002). As researchers, we present data that has been reconstructed; this is inevitable and necessary to construct narrative coherence as well as meaning-making (ibid.). In this strategy, I analysed all the individual transcripts and noted overlaps, silences and all similarities; this strategy assisted me to formulate themes. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that researchers should find a way to maintain participants' storied lives in a storied form, therefore in each short narrative I privileged participants' voices as the narrator of their own stories. I also foregrounded their voices by writing the vignettes from the first-person voice (Butler-Kisber, 2018). As a researcher, I positioned myself as "a supportive voice that pushes the narrator's voice into the limelight" (Chase, 2008, p. 665). In addition, a supportive voice does not seek to establish authenticity but the purpose is rather "to create a self-reflective and respectful distance between the researcher and the participants' voices" (p. 665). Since the study had two methods of data generation, conversations and letter writing, the second method of data generation, i.e. letters, provided fertile primary data as they illustrated how individuals negotiate with their selves (Riessman, 2008). Working with the letters as data

(field text), I printed all the soft copy versions of the letters (sent by participants who preferred to type) and made copies of the handwritten ones. I then read each letter and followed the similar procedure to that of the interviews. I made notes on the letters and developed codes on what I was reading. In my analysis book, I dedicated a section where I captured all the notes, questions and concerns arising from the letters. On completion, I attached all the letters to participants in order to maintain coherence in the report and making it easy to identify them. Polkinghorne (1995) reminds us that researchers who choose to analyse the data through themes and those who produce knowledge of situations are both important and make a contribution to knowledge. The data was interpreted both deductively and inductively; the intention was to maintain a balance between drawing from new concepts and those that are emerging from the data – largely represented by participants' voices, including those that are informed by the theories used in the study. Having completed the rigorous process of data analysis as detailed above in the next chapters I present my data thematically. Themes in the context of this study are helpful in that they categorise the data in a manner that broadens the understanding of the participants lived experiences.

4.9 Conclusion

I have provided a detailed methodological trajectory of how the research was planned and carried out. Writing this chapter gave me an opportunity to realise what I have learned from narrative methodology and how it has synchronised well with my second framework, intersectionality theory. Using narrative inquiry through stories, linked with intersectionality, I was able to frame my understanding on the multiplicity of identities and the experiences of individuals within a three-dimensional space. I have also discussed the analysis processes of the study.

Chapter 5: On being a caring teacher

5.1 Introduction

The analysis process that I discussed and unpacked in-depth in the previous chapter – chapter four – resulted in the findings presented here and in the next two chapters. To reiterate the

analysis process of the data, I followed the narrative inquiry analysis guidelines offered by Polkinghorne (1995). In the process, I considered both the inductive and deductive approaches to analysis. First was the narrative analysis, where I moved from transcripts to long narratives with different plots. The second step in the process was the analysis of narratives that assisted in formulating the themes and subthemes (Polkinghorne, 1995). In the analysis of narratives, I read the narratives for each participant and made notes on the side. I then re-read the transcripts and formulated codes and categories, which assisted in the process of identifying emerging themes and subthemes. As I indicated in the previous chapter – i.e., the methodology chapter – I used two data generation methods (interview-conversations and letter-writing). Certain portions of the data in the chapters consist of vignettes from both the interview-conversations and the letters. The vignettes from the letters are coded with L-for letter followed by the participant's name, e.g. **(L-Andile),** and those from the interview data will have the participant's name only. This chapter serves as the first of the three analysis chapters in this doctoral project. In this chapter, I present data that focuses on male teachers' understandings of care in the context of FP teaching. The chapter covers the following major themes; (5.1) Male teachers' understandings of care; (5.2) Teaching and care work; (5.3) The perceived paedophilia and child molestation in the FP – a challenge for caring practices. The themes are then followed by a conclusion.

5.2 Male FP teachers' understandings of care

I found that the participants' understandings of care, particularly of what care consists of or is related to, differed across all the participants. The first understanding of care for the participants appeared to be premised on love. Most of the vignettes show that the participants intertwined care with love, they believe that care cannot exist solely without love. For instance, in Elias' vignette below, he notes that *love gives him an opportunity to care*. This means that if he does not have love for someone/object, he will not provide care. Even with Musa, the importance of offering care in the FP is fundamentally driven by the desire to teach love. A similar pattern was also observable for Andile and Thando, who noted that offering care in the FP means sharing and showing love. This suggests that overall, the participants foreground love in the provision of care. The participants note:

> **Elias:** *Care is developed on love, if you do not love anything or anyone, you*
> *wouldn't care. Love gives one an opportunity to care. Even in my class, for me*
> *to care I need to love the learners and understand their needs. If I don't love*

them, I wouldn't care if they participate or not, I would not care if they are given another chance to re-write.

L-Musa: *Offering care in the FP entails teaching love, develop learners' skills, praise, encourage and respect their well-being. All these build their self-esteem and humanity from a young age since parents entrusted us, teachers, with the care of their children*

L-Andile: *A FP teacher should love, understand and support the learners to explore their worlds and the changes around them. Smile, laugh and show that you care (call all of them by their names).*

L-Thando: *I provide care by showing the learners love, support and sympathy. I have a responsibility to promote the child's social, physical, intellectual and emotional development in the Grade R classroom.*

The male FP teachers' understanding of care as love in the vignettes above is interestingly a deviation from the way in which masculinity is often conceptualised or thought of in different societies. The intention herein is not to suggest that male FP teachers are not patriarchal because they understand care as love. Instead, I am highlighting that historically and to date, some forms of masculinities are conceptualised as uncaring, violent and aloof, and any caring or love practices are associated with weakness (Plank, 2019). hooks (2000) argues that "care is a dimension of love, but simply giving care does not mean we are loving." (p.8). There appears to be both a convergence and a divergence in the ideas between hooks and the vignettes above. Both the views of the participants and that of hooks converge on the notion of care being the dimension of love, but they diverge, particularly Elias, on the notion that care cannot exist without love. bell hooks leaves open the possibility that care can be offered without love, because providing care is driven by different ways, for instance it could be driven by religion, or it could be driven by moral principles that one has. Therefore, in certain instances, care becomes something that one feels is the right thing to do, rather than basing it on love, as the worlds of providing care and conceptions of care vary across culture, context and time (Anttonen & Zechner, 2011).

Another key theme that emerged in the data analysis process concerns the interests of the male teachers interviewed in providing holistically for the needs of learners. The participants' interpretations of learners' needs varied across all the participants with, on the one side; L-Musa and Thando emphasising care through child development domains (physical, intellectual,

social and emotional), including learners' skills., and on the other side, L-Andile emphasising and paying attention to connecting with learners (through smiling and laughing with the learners). Andile states that a teacher has to support the learners to understand their worlds. Tronto (2010) suggests that in the provision of any type of care, attention should be paid to the purpose of care, the power dynamics in caring relationships and the particularity of the type of care. The three participants' understandings of care suggests that men are able to comprehend the significance of providing care holistically and that the provision of care also relies on spending significant time with the cared for. This is contrary to patriarchal prescriptions that men are socialised into, especially the idea that men cannot be expressive or demonstrate emotions attached to care; it is patriarchy that has taught young boys and men to avoid care, thinking about care and avoiding acts of expressing their true feelings (hooks, 2000; Tronto, 2013).

Another aspect that emerged as critical in how the male teachers projected care and love concerned the linking of such care to questions of justice, fairness and equity. The participants argued that they needed to demonstrate care and love in their classes by treating all learners fairly and equitably, regardless of background. For instance, Gift, one of the participants in the study argued that the provision of care should not be biased, and that all the learners deserve equal treatment. He argues:

> **L-Gift:** *Providing care means you need to share your love equally with all the learners without showing any favouritism. All the learners should be given the same treatment without any bias that may be from religion, culture, language and socio-economic status.*

> **Gift:** *Care for me by definition is being able to look after another person regardless of age, sex or religion. If a person is in need either of food or clothes, I think if you feel that this is the right thing to do, one must do it. Care should be provided in many ways, even spiritually, because some are not in a right space either spiritually or emotionally. In most cases some people were rejected growing up and they have made it in life. They now believe that even other people will make it on their own and are not willing to assist. Care is being able to do something for somebody else without expecting anything in return…[It]is something that you are born with but reinforced by society; and observing from*

others, although we are born with it, it is not attached to gender, anyone can have care.

Gift's understanding and approach to care is similar to that of the other participants. What is notable with this is that he spelt out that the provision of care should not be biased towards others based on their identities, e.g., age, socio-economic status, religious and cultural affiliations. Gift, in his provision of care, looks beyond difference whatever its configuration. The views of the participants, particularly those of Gift in the vignettes above, are powerfully linked with the arguments already advanced in the literature relating to the complexities of care. For instance, the conception of care varies depending on the geography, culture and religion in specific societies – care and care work are dynamic (Moosa & Bhana, 2020a; Tronto, 1993). Gift's vignettes suggest that he needs to create an egalitarian environment in his classroom to eliminate any possible and minor biases towards his learners. This will ensure that the provision of care in the FP and in the society is premised on social justice and fairness.

Care as providing safety and protection emerged as another conception of care by male teachers. The notion of safety and protection was present in most of the participants. I argue here that this is linked to the historical construction of men as protectors in their homes, places of work and society. It is evident in the vignettes of Musa, Fana and Nathi, when they state:

> **Musa:** *Care is about nurturing and ensuring that the learners are protected.*

> **L-Fana:** *To offer care in the FP you need first to understand the FP learners... Understand their needs, show love and compassion. The learners should feel safe under your guidance as a caring teacher and listen to their stories.*

> **Nathi:** *To offer care in the FP is to protect and provide all that the learners need. FP learners being as young as they are, have so many needs which the educator must fulfil as the care giver while they are at school […] children are like sponges, they absorb almost everything that happens around them which is a level where they get to learn different types of behaviours.*

The view of men's caring practices as "protection", which is dominant in all the vignettes, is consistent with the existing studies on masculinities. For instance, Morrell and Jewkes' (2011) findings, , show that care as protection particularly in South Africa and its association to men is a not a comprehensive but a narrow understanding of care. The view of care as protection legitimises the conception of men as being firm and superior. While Nathi shares the same

sentiments on care as protection, he also shares a metaphor about children. He compares children with sponges and states that they absorb everything around their environment. His understanding of care appears to be about paying attention to what young learners consume in their environment and its effect on their behaviour. Nathi's assertion suggests that he is conscious about his behaviour and conduct around the learners, so that generally his learners do not learn bad or negative behaviours from him.

The last meaning of care emerging from the data relates to the participant's expression in his mother tongue, "*ukunakelel*a". The translation of *"ukunakelela"* means caring/looking after something/someone. For him providing care is about putting himself in the shoes of those he is taking care of (learners in this case). He notes:

> **Mandla:** *Care is about ukunakelela [looking after something/someone], looking at something from my perspective on how I wish to be taken care of. Before I provide care I always use this perspective and think about how it would make me feel. Is this care worthy of being received by another person?*

Mandla's understanding of care indicates he is aware that we are all receivers and givers of care, also consistent with the arguments that are advanced in the literature, the type of care one provides should be of value and worthy to those receiving care (Warin, 2014). Although this may be true and beneficial in specific contexts or situations, Mandla's understanding of care is not without problems because care is subjective, complex, and specific to each person. Tronto (1993) reminds us that in the process of caregiving, "care-receivers may have more intimate knowledge of their needs simply because they experience them" (p. 45). Mandla's approach is also notable, especially considering that patriarchy has taught and normalised several selfish behaviours enacted by men that are mainly uncaring, toxic, and to an extent, violent to others. Also, care relations are, in essence, about receiving and providing care in different and complex ways (Gill, 2020).

In this theme, I have presented data and a discussion on the participants' different understandings of care as FP male teachers. I highlighted their emphasis of care as love, providing care holistically to attend to the learners' different needs, be it; social, emotional, and physical. Participants also understand care as justice, fairness and equity. I then moved to present a discursive analysis of the participants' understanding of care in relation to safety and protection, as well as offering care from the perspective of those that the care is intended for. Here I argued that each participant's understanding of care varied from the others' and I

demonstrated that their understanding of care it is based on a number of things such as care-as-love and care-as-protection, amongst others. In the next theme, I present and discuss the data that emerged in relation to teaching and care work. The section is specifically concerned with the question of whether the foundation phase male participants in this study perceived teaching as doing care work. Mainly, I argue that the participants linked teaching particularly teaching in the FP to care work.

5.3 Teaching and care work

The previous theme addressed the participants' different understandings of care as male FP teachers. A key emergent theme that emerged during the analysis process concerned the way in which the participants linked teaching to care work. The participants argued that teaching is doing care work. This is aligned to prioritisation of connecting with the learners at an emotional level and teaching as offering care, as can be seen in Gift's vignette below:

> **Gift:** *I think teaching is about care, because if you have a learner that you going to teach and he/she has lost a parent and you coming to class and you want to teach, you will fail as a teacher because the learner is not okay. Therefore, you have to take the learner to a secluded place and speak to the learner. By the time you go back to class, the learner knows that regardless of the passing of his/her mother, there is someone who cares. Since we do not have adequate access to counselling in our African communities, as a teacher, you then intervene and speak to the learner.*

Gift presents a case of a bereaved child. He states that as a teacher, one is expected to offer counselling to assist the child in accepting the passing of a parent and being reintegrated into his/her studies. There are insufficient counselling psychologists in African communities, as noted by Gift and the expectation for teachers to carry this duty, i.e., responding to social problems through providing care for instance; assisting learners in child-headed families and those that are living in poverty (I will elaborate on this in another section). It is evident that Gift intricately links care work to his identity as a teacher. For example, he emphasises that teaching is about care and that a teacher will undoubtedly fail to undertake the academic programme without attending to learners' psychological and emotional needs. As noted earlier this indicates that Gift prioritises connecting with the learners at an emotional level prior to teaching and learning and sees teaching as pastoral care. Vogt (2002) states that care should be understood as a commitment to the teaching profession. Participants in their expressions were

not so much focused on whether the care is provided by a male or female teacher. Their concerns addressed the various roles that teachers have to undertake, particularly in the absence of other stakeholders such as district-based psycho-social support teams.

Although the study focuses on FP teaching, the participants responded to teaching and care in its broad sense. As noted earlier, the participants saw their professional responsibilities as being intricately tied to the desire and need to offer care, and saw teaching and care as a responsibility for all the teachers in the school. They suggested that being a caring teacher entails enacting different roles, with some being external to the teaching profession. Tshepo, for example, noted that:

> **Tshepo:** *Teaching is care work, for example when a learner is not feeling well. As a teacher you cannot sit and do nothing, there should be an intervention to assist the child. It is unavoidable for being a teacher and not care. A teacher consists of many roles, such as caring, being a nurse and a parent. But I must say that often it is not easier to play all these roles because I was not trained for nursing or counselling [...] I think what is expected for a teacher is to give care immediately when you get to school. Care in schools should be provided across and in all grades. You cannot walk past a child who is crying, a child who is still waiting for transport late in the afternoon, you cannot say these are not my learners as a teacher you ought to take action and see how they can be assisted.*

Tshepo affirms that teaching is care work in the above vignette. He suggests that he plays a pastoral role and cares for all the learners within the school premises as a teacher, not only those in his classroom or grade. He makes an example that late in the afternoon when leaving for home, as a FP teacher, you cannot ignore learners who are alone and waiting for their transport because they do not belong in your classroom or the phase. Meaning he understands that teaching comes with multiple roles and in this case, he enacts a pastoral role in ensuring the safety of the learners. Performing multiple roles and pastoral care is often included in teacher training in South Africa and it is referred to as seven roles of educators in the norms and standards for educators' policy document (Department of Basic Education, 1996). For Tshepo, caring teachers provide care beyond groups or categories of learners so long as there is a need to care, indicating that male teachers see themselves as carers whose care levels are not defined by their gender or masculinity but are driven by the pastoral role. As it is consistent with the norms and standards of an educator as envisaged by the policy.

A key theme that emerged from the data concerns the role of class and care. The participants insisted that a caring teacher in the FP ought to do or be aware of the socio-economic backgrounds and well-being of the learners. Participants noted that teaching cannot proceed if a learner has not eaten and is affected by their poor socio-economic background. Fana and Musa note the importance of knowing and understanding the learners' individual socio-economic backgrounds. Fana suggests that he does not use a blanket approach when offering care and argues that children must be viewed as individuals and not just as a group. Fana and Musa's approach seems to enable them to see beyond the professional obligation of teaching and learning. It appears that they can see the inequalities, deprivation and needs in their classrooms. Fana and Musa state:

Fana: *If I say I am a teacher for the sake of teaching, I will not be a good teacher. For instance, if a child is coming from a poor background, I see that the child requires assistance and care. If I use a blanket approach on caring for them, I will not reach all of them. I think teaching goes with care.*

Musa: *You cannot teach a child that you are not sure if he or she has eaten, healthy and emotionally well. As a teacher, I know how many learners are orphans and those raised by single parents. I think this helps me to understand what I need to expect.*

The overall expression of the participants suggests that the profession itself requires one to care, and that you see beyond the professional expectation of delivering the curriculum. The participants are arguing for an education that humanises, an education that seeks to be emancipatory and recognises the vast inequalities that exist for children. In addition, the participants are also arguing for emotional connection with children, a transcendent positionality that is almost disruptive to the male social order that has scripted men as detached and uninvolved in the emotional, physical, and psychological needs of their children. It appears that the participants cannot divorce themselves from care work and this could be related to their own experiences while growing up, particularly noting that all the participants grew up in rural villages of Mpumalanga with deprivation. The participants attachment to care work in the context of schools leaves so much to be desired about their caring practices outside the profession. Cyril, in the vignette below, emphasises the point:

Cyril: *There is no way that you can be a teacher without care. A teacher must take care of various situations. In the FP, we know what is expected of young*

children, and those who have not done FP might not understand the day-to-day experiences.

Consistent with other participants Cyril too sees teaching as doing care work and he suggests that teaching in the FP has enabled him to have a nuanced understanding of young children and the ability to provide care under various situations. The participants' responses link to the subtheme that emerged and is discussed next. In the subtheme that follows, I show that the participants respond to social problems by providing multiple forms of care, either in their classrooms or within the school premises, which they still see as a teacher's responsibility.

5.3.1 Responding to social problems through multiple forms of care

The oppressive systems of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa created inequalities that have continued in the post-apartheid period. Male teachers in this study are employed in deprived contexts, where they are aware of socio-economic differences compared to other contexts. Secondly, they teach children from various backgrounds and family settings, with others coming from single-parent and child-headed families. A challenge that the participants experience is that they have to intervene in family matters to ensure that the child is taken care of. A key emergent issue across all participants concerned how they identified their roles as teachers to be intricately connected with social responsibility. The data in this section shows that male teachers provide care to address social challenges encountered by young children that are mainly a product of an unequal society (a point I introduced in earlier themes). The participants note:

> **Andile:** *There are roles of the teacher and one of them is pastoral care, as a teacher you cannot avoid a problem in your classroom. I always follow up on why a learner is dressed in a particular way, and with my colleagues we go to parents to discuss this and ask for intervention. There are also sponsors who are offering food parcels in the schools, as a teacher I identify learners who are matching the criteria.*

> **Lethabo:** *Teachers in schools, especially in the FP, we find ourselves having to perform all the roles, being a police, social worker and a teacher. Other learners are not afraid to share their stories with us, they share a lot and it is in these stories where I have to intervene to assist with addressing their challenges. In major cases learners appreciate when we visit their families to interact with their*

parents regarding challenges that they experience because it shows care. We even tell the parents that we will refer certain issues to social workers when the parent contributes to the learner's challenges.

Tshepo: *Sometimes I see a learner is not performing well and I notice that his environment is not conducive, for example, the mother is not around, sleep without having eaten or comes from a child-headed family. The child is traumatised and carries this to the school, it is not easy to help them emotionally because I am just a teacher and I do not have the powers to assist the child. I also prioritise them during lunch or when we issue out food parcels and give them an attention. I usually assume that, since I am unable to provide care emotionally, then the attention that I give to students contributes positively.*

Andile, Lethabo and Tshepo's understandings of care as social responsibility are centred on the typical manhood conception of being a provider. For instance, Andile stated that teaching cannot proceed in the classroom if a learner faces challenges related to dress (perhaps the lack of full school uniform or shoes) and poverty. Another example is that of Tshepo, who reflects a positionality on emotional care that is caught up in patriarchy, it seems Tshepo sees his maleness as a natural barrier to offering emotional support. Instead Tshepo noted that he focuses on giving the learners attention, prioritising those who are from poor backgrounds during lunch and when the school issues food parcels. The rest of the participants noted that they contribute or feel can contribute emotional care which leaves only Tshepo as someone who cannot contribute to emotional care. Overall, the interviewed teachers position care alongside the notion of provision and protection, which is a typical positioning of men in the society premised on power and superiority. It is clear that the participants wish to respond to a context of significant deprivation, poverty and, at times, abuse. They thus view their roles as those of protecting young children. I argue here that the male FP teachers positioning is an attempt to push back on the abuse narrative to offer alternative masculinities that still project a 'masculine' discursive position while also offering care and protection to young children. For instance, while they position themselves as protectors, they also provide multiple other forms of care to address social problems, which is an uncommon practice within the hegemonic and dominant forms of masculinities. As Lethabo noted, learners were comfortable with him, especially in sharing their stories. In the vignettes, they even threaten to report negligent parents, for example, Tshepo mentions this in his vignette above. The participants appear to have internalised a professional identity linked to teaching as something beyond the curriculum

and see themselves as pastoral carers for young children, as mentioned by Andile, Lethabo and Tshepo above.

Interestingly, the participants also position care, in the form of child-rearing, as being the reserve for mothers. Although the data shows the provision of care directed towards the social responsibility, a significant majority of the participants focused their attention more on provision. This is consistent with existing research that has shown men are often constructed as providers (Hunter et al., 2017). It is also the case for male FP teachers in South Africa, Moosa and Bhana (2018) found that they are also constructed as providers rather than emotional caregivers. Therefore this suggest that provision is the common positionality that men are often constructed as. Tronto (1993) concurs that those who provide care should be versatile, and those who receive it have multiple needs that are known and experienced by themselves only. What is common across all the participants is identifying a social problem and finding ways to address it, amongst other things, to reach out to the parents or guardians of the specific learners.

Schools use a class teaching approach in the FP, where one teacher is placed in one class and teaches all the subjects. The participants spend significant time with the learners, they get to notice the learners' emotions, school uniform needs (clothes) and their health and well-being. I argue that because of the time that teachers spend with the children they also get to observe the learners' emotional needs and offer emotional support where necessary. In the vignette below, Musa shares his experiences of providing emotional care after observing one emotionally troubled learner. He notes:

> **Musa:** *For emotional care especially in class I am interested to know what troubles my learners. For example, I noticed one learner who was staying with his mother and grandmother who were relatively young, apparently, they would leave the child alone over weekends and visit their boyfriends. What I first noticed was that on different Mondays he would come clean and on other days he would be untidy. When I approached the learner he told me the entire story, I spoke to the school and we intervened for the well-being of the child.*

Musa's experiences as stated in the vignette above, particularly on providing emotional care, suggest that emotions and the physical appearance of the child (tidiness) were the first indication of bigger social problem that the learner had. The learner, who is in grade 3, was often left alone on weekends by his mother and grandmother; the material and

emotional neglect of the child warranted an intervention from Musa and the school. It suggests that Musa sees his role more than just being offering professional services of teaching. Rather, he sees himself as also having the responsibility of protecting and supporting the child, even offering emotional support, e.g., Musa approaches the child and speaks to him with a view of establishing their needs. This builds on the idea that the masculinities portrayed by the participants are counter normative.

Across the data from the participants, the narrative that I present below is similar to that of Musa. Across the data, I noticed a prevailing theme of the participants seeking to offer care and support to their learners. The prevailing theme was around provision, and uniforms played a major role in this regard. School uniforms in South Africa are still predominantly used with the intention to create uniformity across all the learners regardless of their socio-economic background and for learners to participate in all school activities with comfort and decorum (Department of Basic Education, 2005). For instance, Mandla noticed he needed to provide care after seeing the state of the child's uniform (clothing items of the child). Mandla noted:

> **Mandla:** *In one of the days I was speaking to a father of one of the learners in class, I asked him to buy the child new leggings as it is extremely cold in this area, and the ones she has, were torn. The father did not have a problem, he went and bought new leggings for her. The father then made a compliment to me and said thank you for noticing the child, when her mother couldn't.*

As can be observed above, Mandla uses an example of a learner who wore torn leggings during an extreme winter season. As a teacher seeing the winter season, Mandla intervened and provided care in a manner that was intended to address a social problem. He notes that the father of the grade 3 learner complimented him for noticing the child. While this is commendable it is not clear whether he received a compliment because of his gender (being a man) or because he is a caring teacher, particularly as he made a comparison with the mother of the child. It seems that the father of the child sees the responsibility of looking after the child and offering care being in the hands of women and not his responsibility. The relevance herein is that care is understood and constructed on the logic of binary which constantly compares the two genders. Masculinities are in most cases constructed against any acts of femininity (Bourdieu, 2001; Connell, 2005).

A study by Rohrmann (2020) suggests that within the patriarchal masculinity in the world, male FP teachers can become "role models for fathers, showing them how to care for and interact with young children" (p. 33). For instance, it seems the father of the child in Mandla's case might have learnt something about caring for the child, I say this because he compliments Mandla for noticing the child while the mother couldn't. His statement can be interpreted in two ways, firstly, mentioning the mother suggest that he sees looking after the child as women's responsibility. Secondly, complimenting Mandla suggests that he could be aware that looking after children is also men's responsibility and therefore learning from Mandla who a male teacher is as argued by (Rohrmann, 2020). Musa and Mandla's vignettes emphasise the view that FP teachers do not only teach the learners, but they also observe their well-being and, in that process, identify social problems needing a different type of care. Providing care as a way to respond to social problems is not the only way in which participants enact caring practices. In the next section I provide data on male FP teachers' daily caring activities in order to note both apparent and nuanced caring activities that they enact.

5.3.2 *Pee and poo: Doing 'dirty' work in the FP teaching*

When I was having conversations with the participants, I posed different types of probing questions on the different types of caring activities that they do in the FP. Overwhelmingly, all the participants mentioned dealing with learners who accidentally pee or poo. Apart from the data that I am presenting herein and other published scholarly works, anecdotal evidence indicate that FP seems to be stereotyped as a place in which teachers are primarily tasked to respond to pee/poo. The fact that the participants were men made the matters worse. For instance, Thando in the vignettes below states that a number of people usually ask him about how he responds to pee/poo incidents. Many of the participants cited the same social intrigue from individuals outside the FP. It seemed, from the participants' responses, that the intention was to shame them as men given the fact that historically, patriarchal masculinity has distanced itself from intimate caring activities, including the changing of diapers in the household and nursery contexts (Wright, 2018). This is despite the fact that all human beings need care and that care is a natural expression of individual humanity (Hansen & Mulholland, 2005). Responding to the question of what are some of the activities that male FP teachers are expected to do which relate to care? the participants state:

Thando: *People tend to ask me how I cope when the learners pee or poo. Fortunately, in our school we have bathrooms where there are bath tubs. I usually take the child there and assist him/her to bath, then call a parent to bring clothes. I do not really wash the clothes I only rinse the poo off and wait for the parent [...] I also dish up food for the learners, making sure that the learners are always clean. During the health check session in my classroom, I also check if the clothes are clean. In terms of their snotty nose, I give them a tissue and teach them to wipe their noses. I also advise the parents of those who have severe nasal mucus problems to seek medical attention.*

Elias: *In my classroom one child was scared to come and ask for a bathroom, the child eventually peed on himself. I gave other learners work to do and I took the child outside and asked the cleaners to clean the space and I attended the boy. I then had to find strategies to handle such situations so that they are all free.*

Sonke: *In 2014 there was a child who pooed and fortunately there is a bucket, I took it, asked for a bar soap, prepared water for the child and guided him to bath and clean up [...] I also give them a tissue for the toilet and to wipe their snotty noses, during lunch I dish up and stay with them and observe if all have eaten and I guide them on dish washing.*

Tshepo: *One child peed and I took a mop cleaned the floor, requested the child to go to the toilet. When they poo, you have to assist the child, give him/her a tissue, bar soap, water to bath and water to wash their clothes. While the clothes are drying, look for something that the child can wear.*

Cyril: *In class I have to know if all my learners are well, if there is a problem, I need to contact the parents. These days we have learners who are suffering from various diseases and as a FP teacher I pay attention to all the learners. Some of the learners have bladder problems and would pee at any point if not given a chance to go to the bathroom. In my experience of teaching I have encountered learners who pee and poo on themselves. I usually ask the learner to go to the toilet and guide the learner on what to do. In case of a female learner I usually ask the general worker in our school or EPWP (Extended Public Works Programme) employees to assist me so that I am not accused of anything.*

Usually when the parents come, they find the child clean and if they do not come the learner goes back to class clean. We have clothes that were donated and in situations like this I take an item and give it to the child.

Participants' responses to such incidents show that they get involved and assist the FP learner to clean up and ensure that the dignity of the child is protected. What came through in all the participants is that with the fear of being accused of child molestation the participants do not physically bath the learners but they "guide" them to do so. It appears that the majority of the schools kept donated clothing items and when there are incidents of this nature, they are able to provide for each learner to have dry and clean clothes. I suggest here that this another act of offering care to young children. The approaches to pee/poo incidents seem to be different and determined by the gender of the child. Cyril, in the vignette above, states that when it is a female learner, he requests the school female general worker or the EPWP employees to assist. In his words he does this to prevent being "accused of anything". As has been shown by many FP scholars such as Cruickshank (2020), Moosa and Bhana (2020c) and Wright (2018), male teachers teaching in the Foundation Phase have to contend with the idea that they pose a threat to young children and are potential child molesters. This makes the position of male FP teachers to be rather precarious and paradoxical. On the one hand they are expected to offer care and support to young children due to the vulnerability of these children cause by age, and on the other hand they have to contend with potential accusations of child molestation (I deal with this extensively in another section). I have dedicated a section later on where I discuss the theme of suspicion of paedophilia and child molesting in greater detail.

Another issue that emerged from the participants is the issue of dealing with snotty noses. Most participants mentioned the issue of addressing snotty noses as their second caring activity in the FP. Most of the participants indicated that they guide the learners on how to do it and in their respective classrooms they keep a tissue that the learners are expected to use. For Thando in the vignette above, he notes that he communicates with the parents and, where needed, suggests that they seek medical attention in severe cases of snotty noses. Similar to the incidents of pee/poo, all the participants indicated that they inform the parents when an incident occurs. Attending to the earlier mentioned incidents of pee/poo as well as snotty noses shows that the male teachers are willing to engage in intimate caring activities that are often seen as 'dirty work' (Moosa & Bhana, 2020a). Male teachers demonstrate a willingness to do caring activities that might be understood as 'dirty' because, as noted earlier in the previous theme, they see caring activities as intricately linked to their professional identities. Elias' vignette

shows that he is aware of the stereotypical construction of men (for instance, men are feared and this has led some male teachers to demand respect to assert themselves, see Bhana et al. (2009), when they feel their presence is not noted. Elias states that he had to find strategies to make himself more approachable so that learners could be free around him to an extent that they can request to be excused to go to the bathroom. It is worth noting that Elias' introspection on the incident made him realise that the child was driven by fear hence the child ended up peeing. The child's reaction based on fear is not surprising, especially in the context like South Africa, where masculinities are commonly known for violence, uncaring and absent fathers (Moosa & Bhana, 2020a).

The study also found that care was demonstrated by the participants in other ways beyond the 'dirty' work outlined above. One other way in which the participants demonstrated their care was through dishing up and feeding learners. The schools in which the participants are located have a feeding scheme that provides lunch, with some schools also providing breakfast. The feeding programme is funded by the government of South Africa. The vignettes presented on doing the 'dirty' work of pee and poo, presented insights by participants Thando and Sonke who mentioned the dishing up food for the learners as an expression of care. Thando stated: *"I also dish up food for the learners, making sure that the learners are always clean."* Sonke on the other hand noted that *"I dish up and stay with them and observe if all have eaten and I guide them on dish washing."* Lethabo and Cyril also shared similar sentiments around the dishing up food for the learners as demonstration of care. They note:

> **Lethabo:** *During lunch I dish up for them and when there is a lot to do I ask some of the learners to assist me. I think in this way I am teaching them how to share responsibilities.*

> **Cyril:** *I ensure that all the learners are present during lunch, I dish up for them and the only thing that I allow them to do is to wash the dishes because it enhances their fine motor skills.*

The significance of the repeated mention of dishing out food for children needs to be foregrounded here. In many African ethnic groupings of South Africa, cooking and the dishing food for the family are seen exclusively as women's responsibilities. The fact that the male participants in the study made repeated mentions of dishing up for children signals a clear intention by the participants to associate themselves with those responsibilities traditionally seen as being for women. I suggest this to be another way for the male teachers to position

themselves as different men, men who are more transformed. The male teachers gave a range of reasons for dishing food for learners. These included teaching learners about sharing responsibilities and enhancing their fine motor skills. The male teachers positioning in relation to dishing up food suggest a type of masculinity that is counter-normative. For instance, Lethabo mentioned sharing responsibilities and this historically has not been the case. Ratele et al. (2010) found that boys and men felt they were responsible for chores such as cooking but they can only assist girls and women.

The data revealed most of the caring activities that the participants felt they were expected to do as FP teachers. However, there are other unconventional caring activities that are unique to each teacher; in this case I present data from Gift's letter about other small activities that he felt were significant but other participants did not note. Recognising birthdays and missing teeth, and listening to learners' stories are examples of some of the key caring activities that Gift identified as being important in demonstrating care in the FP. Gift notes:

> **L-Gift:** *As a caring educator you have to recognise their birthdays, missing tooth and any other event that has happened in their life and show interest. Let the child share the story with you or the class and if it is his/her birthday sing for the child, provide a small gift on behalf of the whole class. By so doing you make the learners feel as if their life and not just their homework, class work, project, grades and attendance are valuable.*

The type of caring activities presented by gift shows that the some of the male teachers interviewed are traversing existing expectations as men. Gift's vignettes demonstrate that he rejected the notion of a masculinity that is uncaring. For example, the activities cited by Gift are of a caring teacher who goes beyond the curriculum but wants to make each and every learner feel special, valued and recognised. He asserts a particular presence in the life of the children, not just as a teacher but also as someone who could be a parent. As identified elsewhere in this thesis, fathers in South Africa are often absent in the lives of children. Contrary to this positioning of men, Gift seeks to be present for his children, offering a different version of what it means to be man. In many ways he plays a remodelling role for all the children in his class. In his time with the learners, he sought to understand the little things that appeal to the learners' hearts for them to feel a sense of belonging and of being cared for.

It is clear from the discussion above that male teachers are willing to engage in caring activities and have sought different and creative ways to offer care. Their experiences of providing care

appeared to be linked to their teacher identities and offering a counter narrative to the dominant positioning of masculinity in South Africa. For instance, the male FP teachers engage in activities that wouldn't traditionally be associated with men. They make deliberate mentions of assuming responsibilities that are often deemed to be those for women. They seek to offer a sense of credibility to a male nation that has been bruised by links to violence and absence. Dealing with pee, poo, and snot is an indication that they want to be seen as being involved in doing "dirty work", dishing up, cleaning children, and helping them to wash dishes addresses stereotypical constructions associated with the historical binary construction of work and responsibilities. They offer something more alternative and a positive male role modelling accessible for all children. The participants' vignettes on pee, poo and snot, showed that they guided learners of the same sex but felt uncomfortable with learners of the opposite sex, this was largely due to the fear of being accused of child molestation. The next theme presents and discuss data on paedophilia as well as the strategies that were adopted by the male teachers.

5.4 The perceived paedophilia and child molestation in the FP – a challenge for caring practices

Recent research in the field of masculinities and early childhood education and care (ECEC) has encouraged the recruitment of men to join the FP with the hope to increase men's involvement in caring practices (Warin, 2018). The journey of making caring masculinities in the FP has been identified as having many hurdles, for instance, suspicions of men being paedophilic or child molesters (Moosa & Bhana, 2020b; Warin, 2016). The suspicions are in most cases accompanied by gender and sexuality policing.

Consistent with other studies, this study found that there was sustained fear amongst male FP teachers of the accusations of paedophilia. The male teachers adopted self-protective strategies when addressing physical caring needs. Sonke and Musa stated that they were more comfortable with assisting young boys than girls when there are physical caring needs. For instance, the participants noted:

> **Sonke:** *I am also involved in sports activities and I also sit in an arts and culture committee. I have also been providing care during the activities, when learners are injured or need help, I do not react the same way between a boy and girl, towards girls I often think twice and request a female teacher to assist me because I do not want to be accused of paedophilia.*

Musa: *The learners I assisted in my classroom were fortunately boys, but I do not have fear. I respect a female person. So if it were to be females, I wouldn't touch them but I would provide them with guidelines.*

Gift: *Well it is different here, because it is a boarding school and I am house father, normally I am responsible for the young boys and they even take a bath in my presence. I am also the FP head of department (HOD). As an HOD I have to go to all the hostels especially the young ones from Grade R to grade 3. But according to the post establishment I am a house father to the boys only, although I go across [to the girls hostel] because of the HOD position. Parents are comfortable and to date haven't complained, instead they are raising compliments.*

According to Martino and Kehler (2006) and Skelton (2003) the fear of being accused of child molesting or paedophilia resides in the hearts of several male FP teachers. The implication of the continued viewing of men as child molesters/paedophiles has a potential to discourage them from participating in caring activities or getting to FP teaching (Heikkilä & Hellman, 2017; King, 2009). Musa, for instance, is more comfortable with assisting boys than girls. His expression of the word *fortunately* is open to multiple interpretations: it seems as if he is relieved that thus far it has been boys and with boys there are no suspicions. Gift's vignettes shows that both he and the young boys he taught are comfortable with each other. Gift visits the hostels as he is a teacher and a house father. In the case of Sonke and Musa, when a learner of the opposite sex pees/poos, a female teacher is requested to assist. Overall, the participants, especially Sonke and Musa, are doing this out of fear of being accused of child molestation and paedophilia. In the context of South Africa as mentioned earlier men are caught up in violent crimes including sexual assault of young children and women. Therefore, men are generally not trusted around young children as opposed to women which is the reason why Sonke and Musa request a female teacher to assist with opposite sex learners. There are also elements of male chivalry that can be seen from Musa's vignettes. Musa draws on chivalry to justify why he wouldn't molest or touch the girl child – he respects a female person/body, he argues. It appears Musa is seeing himself as different from other men who do not respect female bodies. His utterances are chivalrous in that he positions himself as some gentlemen when compared to other male teachers who will either touch or request a female teacher to assist (Day, 2001).

Another key observation I noted in the study concerned the way in which the fear played itself out. Unlike in many international contexts such as the United stated of America, United Kingdom, Norway and Australia, where male foundation phase teachers are assumed to be gay, hence the fear that they would be harmful to young boys, local FP teachers are assumed to be straight, and are thus seen as potentially harmful to young girls. The reason for this is caught in the country's patriarchy and violence, which is perpetrated by men towards women and children. South African local research by Moosa and Bhana (2020c) found that male FP teachers who engage in same-sex relations were positioned as better carers and therefore trusted more than heterosexual men.

The teachers in the study appealed to professionalism in order to avoid accusations of paedophilia. As noted earlier, Gift works in a boarding school and his sentiments are similar to the rest of the participants in that he is comfortable with providing care for boys. He is not allocated to care for young girls as a house father, but he quickly associates his visits to the girl's hostel to his professional identity of being a teacher and a leader, head of department in the FP (HOD). Mentioning the HOD position works as a protection for him against any questions that might arise, questions relating to his gender and the thought of the perceived paedophilia. This is consistent with Tennhoff et al. (2015), who argue that claiming a subject position of a professional is indeed a protective mechanism. In addition, for Gift to provide or enact caring activities he has to negotiate being a house father and being an HOD. In a nutshell what emerges from the vignette suggest that he becomes a house father for the boys and an HOD for the girls.

5.4.1 Managing the risks of accusations

The study further found that the participants adopted strategies in order to avoid unfair accusations of paedophilia in the context of sporting events. The sentiments are shared both by Mandla and Lethabo in the vignettes below. A common strategy used by the participants was to delegate the caring activity for a learner of the opposite sex to a female teacher, but this was not without challenges. The participants note:

> **Mandla:** *I am a coach; I always have a female teacher in our games. A child that I do not know the parent and how the parent would react. I often call the female teacher to assist. The committee on sports has discussed this topic and we decided on involving one female teacher for safety reason.*

> **Lethabo:** *I have been a sports organiser for many years, I also do coaching in male soccer and I have supported male soccer. When there are challenges of female learners who get injured in sports or physical education, I usually call female teachers to assist me in order to avoid being accused of paedophilia. But I have realised that learners expect me to assist them as their class teacher, when I call a female teacher some of the learners change.*

The captions above suggest that male teachers address their fear and risks of being accused of child molestation through the involvement of female teachers. This strategy is clearly steeped in a heteronormative social order that is built on a binary understanding of gender. The data indicates that the gender binary around assisting learners of the opposite sex appears to be accepted by schools, for instance, the sports committees in Mandla's case. It is not entirely the case for Lethabo, as the data reveals that the gender binary is accepted by adults, even if they had been socialised into it, but some of Lethabo's learners preferred him over female teachers. This indicates that gender and the binary are socially constructed and performed by individual men and women (Butler, 1990). The reaction of Lethabo's learners indicates further that the idea/strategy of asking female teachers to attend to girls was not altogether successful, as it limited children and sometimes placed Lethabo in a difficult position.

The analysed data suggest that the strategy of including female teachers was carefully utilised by the participants as a form of self-protection. However, in cases where there were serious risks to the child that would result in harm, the strategies were divorced, with the health and well-being of the child taking precedence. This presents the male teachers as serious carers who are willing to risk their professional careers to safeguard the wellbeing of their learners. The participants said:

> **Gift:** *I am comfortable to assist a learner because at that level I take myself as a house father and as a coach. Essentially, I am driven by the fact that I need to relieve the child from pain and there are no additional interests. Also, I become comfortable because I will be doing this in front of everyone but I know my limit that I can go to a certain extent.*

> **Zola:** *I believe that when you come across in a situation like this, you need to assist the child. I cannot leave the child to bleed while waiting for a female teacher. For me I will assist the child first, that's my main goal. I think even his/her peers will be there to witness how I am assisting the child. For the grade*

3 classrooms I think they are able to state if they would want me to assist them
or prefers a female teacher.

The men's caring approach in the vignettes above appears to be driven by humanity, but this does not mean the fear is non-existent. For example, Gift shares his strategy that when he provides care to the learners, he does it in front of everyone so that he is not accused of anything and ensuring that he provides good care. Gift's strategy is consistent with Wright's (2018) experiences in the US, Wright had to change a child's diaper in front of another teacher. As noted earlier the data suggest that the participants in their decision making are prioritising the well-being of their learners which demonstrate a good caring practice. For example, Gift notes that he cannot let the child experience pain while waiting for a female teacher to assist.

Gender and sexuality policing are rife in schools, and some are enacted in nuanced ways. Even with the strategies that the participants adopted in trying to avoid being accused of child molestation, they were still under surveillance and policed. Here I share different ways in which the participants were policed within the premises of their respective schools. The participants noted:

Cyril: *On another day I was teaching in a classroom, the deputy principal was on his way to the bathroom and he listened and watched me teaching. When he got to the staff room he shared what he observed and was impressed.*

Musa: *The year in which I assumed my first permanent post, a teacher jumped and said he was there to check my handwriting, another one came and said he wanted to check how I handle children when nature calls.*

The above vignettes of both Cyril and Musa indicate that initially when they arrived in their schools as FP teachers, they were constantly put under surveillance. Cyril was scrutinised by the school deputy principal who is a member of the school management team. He did not fully trust that Cyril was capable of teaching young learners and then decided to monitor him. This is most visible in the fact that he decided to share his observations with other teachers in the staffroom. What makes the visit and observation problematic is that it was not extended to Cyril's female colleagues; Cyril was thus being policed. The finding is similar to my masters study where male FP teachers were consistently visited by parents who were also responding to a shock of seeing a man in the early years (Msiza, 2020). Another form of gender policing relates to Musa's vignette, where one teacher was curious about Musa's handwriting. The surveillance appears to be gendered, especially taking into account the historical stereotypical

idea that women have a better handwriting than men. As a qualified FP teacher myself, questions about my handwriting in the FP were amongst the few that were asked. In addition, the teacher in Musa's vignette was also concerned with how Musa handles learners who might have peed/pooed accidentally. The concern by the teacher suggests that he did not believe that the care expectations for FP teachers could be successfully fulfilled by men. I suggest that he was policing Musa with the intention to unmask his sexuality or question his maleness due the type of work he is doing (Kimmel, 1994).

The gender policing is not only confined to the perimeters of the school, and is also not fixed to a certain expression, conduct or statement. Sometimes gender policing is benevolent and may appear as a genuine concern. It appears that the education regime in South Africa is not prepared for FP men as some of the Department of Education officials do not see men as able to care. In a vignette below, Gift shares his experience with one provincial official who visited his school and was amazed by seeing him in the FP:

> **Gift:** *I remember when we were visited by provincial officials, one approached me and said, 'I saw that you teach in the FP and she asked with shock, are you qualified to teach here?' I said I think out of all the teachers here I am the most qualified, because I did ECD and FP. Her response was that, normally when she sees a male teacher they are qualified as intermediate teachers but are appointed as HOD's in the FP.*

The questions asked by the official suggests that she does not see FP teaching as an occupation that can be selected by men as a career. Therefore, such questions are premised on the logic of a gender binary, where schools have been appointing men who are qualified in other phases to serve as head of departments for FP. This is consistent with Moosa and Bhana (2017) who found that some of the teachers in schools and the communities believed that men in the FP should be in leadership. This also indicates the rarity of male FP teachers in schools and the common practice that the official is used to, i.e., appointing teachers who are qualified elsewhere to lead the FP demand.

5.5 Conclusion

The chapter has presented and discussed data relating to men's conceptions of care in the foundation phase teaching, drawing from both methods of data generation that is interview-conversations and letter-writing. In the chapter I discussed different aspects of care in the FP

classroom. I started off the chapter with presenting data on men's understandings of care and it was important to do so in order to map out and establish links/connections in the succeeding themes as well as subthemes. The data showed that male teachers view their caring practices as intricately linked to their professional teacher identities. The data has also shown that gender policing and the suspicion of paedophilia create fear amongst some of the male teachers. The caring needs of female learners are often relegated to various female colleagues, which could create discomfort on the side of the learners. The participants have instead responded with strategies when dealing with matters relating to intimate care and when assisting learners of the opposite sex. The chapter that follows, chapter six, presents data on ways in which male FP teachers understand their masculinities and their identities as teachers.

Chapter 6: Masculinities and care

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and discussed data on FP male teachers' understandings of the concept of care. This chapter is the second analysis chapter, and it follows chapter five, which is titled, *On being a caring teacher*. Here I present data on the nature of the relationship by which male FP teachers understand their masculinities and their teacher identities. The chapter is made up of several themes and subthemes. The data is also drawn from the interview conversations and the letters. I have used a coding approach that is similar to that of chapter five, the intention is to distinguish vignettes from the two data sets, for letters is **L-Andile** and for the interview conversation is **Andile**. I have organised the themes of the chapter in the following way: (6.1) Childhood narratives of receiving care; (6.2) Caring as a project towards father identity development; (6.3) Caring as a response to failing masculinity in South Africa – a counter narrative discourse; (6.4) Role modelling as a form of care; (6.5) Troubled by the prevailing perceptions about male teachers in the foundation phase. The themes are followed by a conclusion for the chapter.

6.2 Childhood narratives of receiving care

In the realm of manhood, some of the men do not often speak or acknowledge the degree of care they receive from others. This begins at an early age where young boys are taught not to express pain, cry or show vulnerability (hooks, 2000). Hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy construct as well as present men as self-reliant (Gough, 2018). Here, I present the participants' childhood narratives of receiving care. This is significant as the participants are working with children, and in the broader society, men do not often speak about receiving care. In the data, I found two subthemes; some grew up in a nuclear family and others were raised by single parents in an extended family setting.

I begin with those who were raised in a nuclear family. The data shows that in most cases, the participants received care from their mothers. Fathers who were present did not exhibit signs of caring beyond finance. Their mothers provided all forms of care such as bathing, feeding, emotional and spiritual care. Andile's father in the vignette below was employed in a different city far from home (Pretoria). He spent time with family occasionally, and this had implications

for his provision of care. On the other side, Thando and Gift did not receive emotional care from their fathers, as they were not approachable and were strict. The participants note:

Andile: *When we were still young, we spent most of the time with our mother. She made sure that we are clothed in clean school uniforms and were always well fed. We did not have pocket money at school as other kids did, but my mother is a person who loves the garden, and after school, we found hot pap and veggies. Our father worked in Soshanguve, Pretoria; he only came back on weekends and sometimes month-end, he brought nice things such as biscuits. When we went to church, he took care of us because our mother sang in a church choir. I remember we travelled in a bus, and he (father) would step in to bath, feed and look after us.*

Thando: *When I was growing up, I think I received both love and financial care. I stay with both parents, there is a difference between how each of them provides care. One is providing emotionally and the other financially. My mother always ensures that we are fed and monitors our wellbeing. She gives us that sense of feeling;* **umama uyangikhathalela** *(mom cares). On providing emotional care, my father is absent and provides financially, it is difficult to approach him to ask for anything.*

Gift: *I was raised by both parents, they had two children, my sister and myself. I did receive care from both of them but my father was strict. My mother was very concerned with our education, for example, she made sure that we focus on our studies from afternoon and in the evening, we do not do house chores, she was consistent with this until we completed matric. She also washed our clothes, took care of our spiritual growth and took us to church on Sunday. She showed a lot of care and was able to provide food and everything, although some of the things were left over from her employers* **"o baas"** *(white employers) since she was a domestic worker.*

In analysing the data further, it is clear that there is a gendered pattern in how the participants received care, with mothers more involved than fathers. Thando notes that he felt a sense of care from his mother, similarly Gift makes an example that his mother brought leftover food from work which shows the degree of care and concern. Interpreting the data, I noted that there are different aspects affecting each participant.

For example, Andile's father appears to have been willing to provide physical care, often seen as a reserve for mothers. But this is done based on two possible notions; first, he provides physical care when the mother is not around; this is problematic because it suggests that men are not carers but assist when mothers are not around (Ratele et al., 2010). Secondly, he is affected by the migrant labour system, resulting from apartheid's geographical and economic planning. Men (including fathers) needed to find employment in other cities, predominantly working in the mines and the agricultural sector (Moodie, 2001; Morrell, 1998b, 2001a). Men migrated to the cities, leaving their homesteads in the remote rural areas they visited intermittently (Rabe, 2018; Ramphele & Richter, 2006). For other participants, their fathers were physically present but emotionally absent, which is typical of most fathers and arguably men. While growing up, they indicated that they received care that was divided along gender lines, where other forms of care were relegated to women (including mothers) due to their supposed inherent caring abilities (Jordan, 2020).

The second subtheme relates to the participants who received care from their mothers and extended family members. These participants did not grow up in a nuclear families and fathers were absent in most of the participants' lives. Sonke and Musa both received care from mothers and grandmothers in an extended family setting. They note:

> **Sonke:** *I was raised by both my mother and grandmother. Both of them showed me love and when I was sick, they took me to the clinic and ensure that I am fed and well. On my father's side, unfortunately, he worked far, so I did not see him as much as I desired. Mainly my father would pass by our house and give us money. I did not spend enough time with him, I felt he was caring but it was not enough. I think as a man I needed my father to teach me things that my mother couldn't. Bringing money only I think it was not enough for me, instead he had to be there physically to witness for himself that I am well taken care of.*

> **Musa:** *I grew up having one parent. I was told that my father died when I was 1 year 6 months old. My mother and grandmother raised me they played a big role and I never felt the void of not having a father. They taught me a lot, including the challenges that comes with life, values, and equality. I think the care I received from my grandmother was similar to that I received from my mother. When I grew up it was during apartheid, black parents feared their employers.*

> *But my mother never went to work when I was ill or when there were problems at school. She provided support in terms of our schoolwork and made sure that our health was good.*

On receiving care there appears to be a gendered pattern including in single parent and extended families. For instance, Sonke and Musa received care from their mothers and grandmothers. Musa notes the sacrifices and efforts his mother made to care for him and, according to Musa, he did not feel the void of not having a father who passed on when he was still young. In such cases in South Africa, extended family members and grandparents have historically stepped in and provided care from a communal perspective to maintain an image of stable and happy families (Mkhize, 2006; Ramphele & Richter, 2006), which is evident in Musa's vignette.

Contrary to Musa, Sonke feels the void. First, he highlights that his father worked far away due to the migrant labour system as noted earlier (Moodie, 2001), meaning he was disadvantaged from receiving his father's care. Secondly, he notes that his father provided financially but was never around. Sonke's void is about missing out on learning about manhood from his father (identifying with his father), which suggests that his understanding of receiving care is gendered. Research has shown the possibility that "male and female adult roles in childrearing can be interchangeable" (Warin, 2018, p. 64), meaning there are no rigid forms of care that are attached to the sex or gender of each parent. What seems to influence Sonke's void is the social construct of care and gender, where men are seen as having specific forms of care that are appropriate to boys.

The cultural context of South Africa contributes to absent fathers and eventually children missing out on receiving care from their fathers. For example, cultural acknowledgements such as *inhlawulo* in Nguni, *hlahollo* in Sesotho, of impregnating a girl outside marriage which is paid through money or cows (Hunter, 2006; Ratele & Nduna, 2018), impact on children being able to access their fathers. When the payment is made, it shows that the paternal family acknowledges paternity, and the maternal family provides access to the child. Depending on the family, some allow the paternal family to see the child before *inhlawulo* and others restrict access (Ratele & Nduna, 2018). Although this was not explicit in Sonke's vignette, it is one of the dynamics that are at play in the cultural context of South Africa, where men cannot have access to their children if they haven't paid.

In the data, I also found participants who grew up in single parent families but who received care more from their siblings than from their parents. Fana's father was absent, and his mother spent more time with friends which required his older siblings to take over. Zola's father passed on, which pushed his mother to go and look for employment, leaving Zola under the care of his brother. The participants note:

> **Fana:** *Well, I grew up in a family where we did not receive care from our father and, mind you, there were more male siblings than females. My older siblings ended up taking care of themselves as they grew older. My mom was always with her friends but tried to provide care before leaving for friends. To date my father is still alive but does not reach out to us.*

> **Zola:** *When I was 12 years old in 2005, I lost my dad and I was raised by a single parent, my mother. The only care I received is that of my mother. After my father died, my mother had to go and look for employment and, in the meantime, my older brother assumed the responsibility of providing care at home. I felt the way he cared was manly (more of a father), for example, he was constantly giving out instructions than having a conversation. He cared differently from my mother, and I think my mother considered my interest and feelings. My mother asked while my brother instructed.*

Consistent with what I found earlier in the vignettes, there appears to be a gendered pattern on Fana's and Zola's narratives of receiving care. Primarily they both received care from their mothers and in Fana's case his father was absent. Zola, who was left under the care of his brother, finds his brother's care strict and without emotions when compared to his mother. The fact that he feels power and authority from his brother indicates the gender order that emanates from the gendered patterns I mentioned earlier, and that masculinities are caught up in expressions of power and authority (Morrell, 2006), resulting in fathers being presented as aggressive and women as peacemakers (Rabe, 2018).

The data shows that the participants received care in their families, with others from mothers, fathers, siblings, and extended families. In addition, the data indicates that an overarching experience across all the participants was receiving gendered care. Women as mothers consistently appeared to be providing care more than fathers. For example, fathers were either exempted by patriarchy from caring practices in nuclear families or totally missing from single and extended family settings. The data indicates two things; 1) In the data particularly in this

theme there is nothing to suggest that the participants' own care in childhood had any specific influence on their decisions to pursue FP teaching. However, 2) in the following themes: Caring as a project towards father identity development, caring as a response to failing masculinity in South Africa – a counter narrative discourse – and Role modelling as a form of care, the childhood narratives of receiving care appears to have influenced the participants' understanding of care as men, their identity as fathers and role modellers.

6.3 Caring as a project towards father identity development

In the previous chapter, one of the significant findings was that the male teachers who were studied conceptualise care as intricately linked to their teacher identities. Therefore, having taught in the FP for a significant period, they see the type of care that they are involved with in the FP as an essential contributor to the development of their father identities. For example, the vignettes of Thando, Elias and Fana attest to the idea that they view teaching in the FP as a form of preparation for the role of fathering at home. It also improves the roles of those who are playing the role of being a father figure to their nieces and nephews. The participants note:

> **Thando:** *Yes, some of the people with no children usually say they do not like young kids because bayahlupha [they are naughty] and you do not have time for yourself. I feel that opportunities to work with kids prepare us a lot for the fatherhood role.*

> **Elias:** *I think FP allows us to know about children, including those who do not have younger siblings. I got to know how children think and how do they see the world. This has contributed to my own identity as a father. I now have a better knowledge of what type of care or needs my children will have.*

> **Fana:** *I think if men are exposed to children, learning their backgrounds and understanding their differences, it can teach men a lot that can change the world, particularly violence at home.*

Seeing that fathers are usually absent in the lives of their children, for numerous reasons, society has associated the lack of fathers with social ills. Clowes et al. (2013) state that the notion of absent fathers has been largely associated with such social ills as several forms of violence perpetrated by boys and men. The participants (Thando, Elias and Fana) argued that through teaching young children, they are able to learn about how children think and how they behave. The participants see the opportunity as aiding them to become better fathers. The

interest in working with children and understanding their worlds is something that fathers have been historically divorced from, since some of the fathers in South Africa are absent and others are constructed as protectors and financial providers (Clowes et al., 2013; Morrell, 2006). Also, the men's involvement in caring activities as fathers in their households can address the historical challenges of gender equality in the households, where mothers will no longer be the primary caregivers for children – activities will be shared (Moosa & Bhana, 2018; Shefer, 2014). Essentially, the data shows that care work in the form of FP teaching has enabled men to note that they can enact roles that were traditionally done by mothers/women, where care work is not based on the gender binary and competition (Morrell et al., 2016; Warin, 2018). The exposure and the opportunity for male teachers to work in the FP with children and its contribution to their identities as fathers is a positive contribution to the image of fatherhood in South Africa, which has been negative. Research on men's participation in households has shown that men who participate in the "pregnancy, birth and early years of their children's lives are often transformed by their experience, with deep and enduring emotional attachment to their children" (Richter & Morrell, 2018, p. 3).

The participants herein are also sharing their experiences and views on ways in which working with young children prepares them for the role of fathering. What is slightly different in the vignettes below is that the participants, especially Zola, Musa and Elias are comparing themselves with their fathers and the fathers in the society in general. The participant note:

> **Zola:** *I do not want to be a father that does not cook or change nappies. I prefer to practice and do much while I am still young. I think this will prepare me well for marriage later in life.*

> **Musa:** *I grew up without a father, as a father now I try to make sure that I do it first to myself (thinking about it first, whether they will be happy) and give it to my children. For me, I have observed on TV and in the community how other fathers raise their children, I then thought I was lucky that a father did not raise me. Back then, fathers were monsters and they used to beat up their children and were mostly feared. I also think the ECD/FP (Early Childhood Development and Foundation Phase) training assisted me a lot and made me be the father I am today.*

Elias: *I grew up hating most of the things that fathers did. For example, I was scared of my father. When he came to the lounge, we would leave and sit in our bedrooms. I do not want my daughter to fear me.*

The participants above imply that the opportunity to work with children has shown them the extent to which they do not want to be like their fathers or to adopt the existing image of fathers in society. The current image of fathers in South Africa is plagued with the discourse of fathers as irresponsible and absent. This is evident in Musa's vignette; based on his observation of fathers in the society he appreciates the fact that he grew up without a father, as fathers, when he grew up in the 1970s, were 'monsters'. Studies in South Africa revealed that fathers in 1970s were mainly absent from their households, with the majority being migrant labourers and the nature of patriarchy was extreme and it coupled with violence (Morrell, 1998b; Vetten & Ratele, 2013). Violence on children was mainly administered through corporal punishment (Morrell, 2001b), and it was "rationalised as necessary and meaningful, as in the best interest of children whose actions had overstepped the boundaries" (Clowes et al., 2013, p. 262). For Elias, his father was present but he was feared in the family, as men were seen as heads of families and superior. Globally, there appears to be male fear fuelled by patriarchal norms, wherein men are feared just by being men and in certain instances by how they enact their masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Elias notes that he and his siblings could not sit in the lounge with their father; they had to leave the room each time he came in. The concept of male fear could be held and perpetuated by men who do not hold gender equitable ideals and do not attempt to play with young children to establish care relations (Morrell et al., 2016).

In addition, studies have shown that some of the fathers are physically present in their varied family settings, but emotionally, they are absent; young children do not enjoy their support (Morrell, 2006). The experience of Elias becomes a typical example. As result of the participants' childhood experiences, they are seeking to offer a counter-image of what fatherhood should be. Elias strives to be a better caring man, in that his daughter should not be scared of him. On the other side, the positive approach towards intimate caring from Zola, such as cooking and changing diapers, suggests that men can be disloyal to patriarchy that is fuelled by cultural norms (hooks, 2004b). Also, we could begin to see an image of caring masculinities, present and loving fathers as well as husbands in South Africa. Providing care to young children is an opportunity to redefine how hegemonic masculinity is understood and enacted within the local expressions of masculinities (Wright, 2018). It appears that Musa is using a different strategy to that presented in the previous chapter, wherein male teachers imagined

care from their perspective before providing it to their learners. Musa imagines care before providing it to his children. There are two interpretations to his approach; first, he could be imagining the type of care that he yearned to have while still young and he attempts to recover it by providing it to his children. Second, it could be a genuine consideration for the needs of his children that is not informed by his past. For Musa it is not only the experience of being a FP teacher that enabled him to think differently about care, but he also highlights his initial teacher education training as having contributed to his perspective of care and fatherhood. Thus, the caring opportunity offered by FP teaching and its teacher training seems to be contributing positively to the father identities of the participants.

Emerging from the data was also the participants who did not have biological children but were playing a significant role as what is often referred as a social father or a father figure. In the vignette below Tshepo shares his views on being a social father and he notes:

> **Tshepo:** *I am the head of the family and I take care of everything. I am making sure that everyone is catered well. I provide shelter and comfort every time. I am also an uncle to my sisters' kids, I change diapers, bathe and feed their children. I think I am playing a father figure to my nieces and nephews.*

Tshepo does not have children of his own, but the data shows that caring has enabled him to play the role of a social father or father figure to his nieces and nephews. A social father could be a male figure and this definition has been extended to include anyone who assumes the role of a father in a case where one is absent or deceased (Morrell et al., 2016; Van den Berg & Makusha, 2018). Also, Tshepo appears to be a breadwinner in his mother's house, taking care of several aspects of the household. In the context of absent fathers in South Africa, it is not clear where the biological fathers of his nieces and nephews are. The data shows that Tshepo has taken over that role and provides intimate, caring practices such as changing diapers and feeding the children. In South Africa, it often occurs that extended members of the family take over the role of being a social father (Clowes et al., 2013; Mkhize, 2006). Despite the different roles of fathering, for instance, those who have biological children and those without, such as Tshepo, who are social fathers, all participants appear to be developing a father identity through caring opportunities. The next theme focuses on the contribution of caring towards a failing masculinity in South Africa.

6.4 Caring as a response to failing masculinity in South Africa – a counter narrative discourse

The data in this theme shows how male teachers are challenging the narrative of fathers as absent and abusive. For instance, men and masculinities in South Africa have been caught up in negative and violent activities that have impacted on the lives of children, women and other men. The different forms of violence and narratives of absent fathers in South Africa have painted the nation as having a crisis of masculinities (Bhana, 2016a). It is reported that in South Africa about 61-64% of children do not live with their biological fathers due to migrant labour, death and those who generally flee the responsibilities (Makou, 2018, July 3). This is despite the interventions made by the government and non-governmental organisations such as Sonke Gender justice to promote caring fathers (Morrell et al., 2016). The data in the vignettes below presents the participants' different experiences of receiving care while growing up and how this has impacted their masculinities as fathers or adult men. The participants state:

> **Mandla:** *I think if my mother managed to raise me alone although I was a boy, this has given me the courage to raise my own children, especially since I have two daughters. I am involved in feeding, bathing, playing and being there for my children.*

> **Fana:** *I grew up without love from my family and I realised the consequences of that and I had to develop that love in order to understand people who need care. I have also learnt that I should not be like my father and as a new father, I am doing things differently, also I do look after my siblings who look up to me. I make sure that my family has everything they need to carry on with their lives.*

The data shows that the majority of the participants grew up without fathers and those who were exposed to them experience no close emotional relationship with their fathers. Growing up without fathers has motivated men like Mandla to offer care differently and to be present in his daughters' lives. In other cases, the challenge of absent fathers resulted from migrant labour, where fathers in South Africa were employed in distant cities/towns. The migrant labour system was intersectional and affected fathers and families, particularly black families who experienced the brunt of the system and their settings were disrupted (Moosa & Bhana, 2018; Ramphele & Richter, 2006). Fana offers care to his siblings and child; in a way he seems to be trying to rectify the damage caused by the failed masculinity of his father. Also, the data suggests that, although the participants are drawing from their childhood experiences to offer

care, they also provide care as a result of failing masculinity in the country. It is clear that the caring ideals held by the participants sought to change the concept of men from individuals who are not accessible, grumpy and authoritative to men who are caring, loving, egalitarian and accessible.

In line with the male teachers' attempts to perform their masculinities differently and provide a counter-narrative to the failing masculinity in the country in their personal lives, and as shown elsewhere in this thesis, the findings indicate that in their classrooms they provide care and step into a role of a father figure for those learners who are without fathers. The participants such as Andile in the vignette below argue that one need not be a biological father to provide care for the learners, those without can also provide it. The participants state:

> **Andile:** *When I am at school, I consider myself as a father and as a friend. This enables learners to be free and be open. Also, it is not about having a child of your own, even those who do not have children can provide care.*

> **Gift:** *There is a gap in schools and at home, learners need a father figure. Especially in Mpumalanga, with the recently built state boarding schools which are about six now, the learners are without their parents. If we have more male teachers, the learners can relate to a father figure in the form of a teacher.*

> **Lethabo:** *Some of the learners do not have father figures, so I ensure that they are free and open to speak. When I interact with them, I get to identify those who see me as a role model and as their father.*

> **L-Thando:** *I try to be a father to the fatherless learners, make them feel at ease to share their personal stories freely.*

> **L-Tshepo**: *Learners in the FP are young and need a father figure. Most families do not have a father, so as a male teacher, I play the role of a father figure to my learners.*

What is dominant in the vignettes above is that the male teachers identify themselves as father figures because this enables the learners to be free around them. Desiring that learners could open up and speak to them, as can be seen from Lethabo's vignette, is a positive step for masculinities, if one compares it to what was reported in the previous theme, where some of the male teachers had feared their fathers and would not share the lounge with them. Findings in Moosa and Bhana's (2020a) study show that the idea of having men as father figures in the

FP could also assist learners who live with abusive fathers, to get an opportunity to see men from a positive image and converse with them. This is evident in L-Thando and L-Tshepo's vignettes above. The data in this doctoral project shows that male teachers in the FP, besides seeing themselves as fathers to the fatherless, are also conceptualising teaching in the FP generally around parenting, especially in Gift's assertion that learners are without parents. Gift contextualises his experiences as both a FP HOD (Foundation phase head of department) and the only participant who is a housefather in the boarding hostels of the school. It seems for Gift there is more resonance with merging the identity of being a teacher/HOD during the day and being a house father after school hours. Being in the teaching profession and FP teaching in particular, which is often seen as a doing care work has enabled the male teachers in the study to view their masculine identities as contributing positively to the lives of FP learners. They can enact what Mkhize (2006) refers to as social fathers. In essence, according to all the participants herein, being a father figure is another way of showing and providing care to the learners. Although male teachers in this study embrace the idea of playing a father figure role, Hansen and Mulholland (2005) found that male teachers distance themselves when the phase is constructed around motherhood, which suggests that there is a struggle to uphold the conservative sex-role idea of fatherhood.

6.5 Role modelling as a form of care

The desire to use care in an attempt to address failed masculinity in the country was not only limited to participants' households. The participants perceive themselves as being role models to the learners. Also, the idea of male role models and surrogate fathers in the FP teaching is often premised on patriarchal ideals as evidenced in the literature (Martino, 2009a, 2009b; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2012a; Rezai-Rashti & Martino, 2010). In this study, I found that some of the participants perceived themselves as taking up the role of a father to their FP learners, which is line with the previous notion of offering a counter-narrative discourse towards failing masculinities. The findings in this theme on role modelling and surrogate fathers is not altogether new and it is the reason that the participants have located themselves in this manner. The participants note:

> **Sonke:** *As a teacher, I am a role model to my learners. For instance, when I provide tissue to a child to wipe him/herself, others learn from me and apply it to others.*

Elias: *As male FP teacher you become a role model to all the learners in the FP, they look up to you, even those in the intermediate phase they get to be interested and ask how are you doing it? [...] A parent thought since there is not a father figure at home and the child is troublesome, then he needed to have one. Other female teachers requested to move learners who were troublesome to my classroom, it took one term and the child was fine. Having a male teacher plays a big role.*

Zola: *As male teachers, we end up having to play the role of the father, something that the child doesn't get from his father. They want to discuss soccer and social issues that affect them [...] if the father is absent at home, the child should see one when he/she gets to school.*

In the above selected vignettes, Sonke, Zola and Elias spoke about being role models to learners. What is different about their views when compared to the existing literature, they do not mention or associate role modelling to a particular gender of the learners. For example, previous studies indicated a moral panic where male teachers were recruited to serve as role models to the young boys (Griffiths, 2006; Martino, 2009a, 2009b). Sonke mentions modelling an ethic of care that learners should be able to emulate to others and he uses the example of giving a child a tissue to wipe their snotty noses. For Sonke, it is not about modelling gender related characteristics, the focus of previous studies. It is modelling the ethic of care, which is significant for every human being (Warin, 2018). Zola's vignettes show that being a role model in the FP means that learners become free to share their personal stories, social issues and soccer for those who follow football. The literature indicates that role modelling and conversations about sports to some extent promote notions of hegemonic masculinities (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015). While a cursory analysis in the current study found that the participants did not explicitly relate role modelling to boys only and that they instead saw it as being a role model to all the learners, deeper, more granular analysis showed that role modelling is linked to that of boys, especially the example presented by Elias in his vignette above. The example presents the male teachers as role models but more so also as disciplinarians. For instance, in the latter part of his vignette he mentions that other female colleagues and parents have moved troublesome learners or learners with behavioural issues to his classroom and they have since changed. Parents often do this when they note a masculine characteristic(s) that they like in a male teacher and deem them as acceptable to teach their children (Plaisir et al., 2021). The expression that a male teacher plays a big role made by Elias, suggests that, for him, gender is

central in the decision for role modelling and further suggests that female teachers may lack the same capability of addressing matters relating to the behaviour of the learners (Hjalmarsson & Löfdahl, 2014; Martino & Kehler, 2006; Skelton, 2003). The specific finding of moving a child to a male teacher's classroom due to discipline-related assumptions is consistent with a previous study (Msiza, 2016), in which I found that parents often request for their children to be moved to male class teachers. In one instance, the parent went as far as observing the teacher in the classroom. I argue here that the concept of role-modelling continues to be ambiguous, used uncritically and is a concern to some of the men who are expected to become role models (Carrington & Skelton, 2003; Lesser, 2016; Sargent, 2005).

6.6 Troubled by the prevailing perceptions about male teachers in the foundation phase

The field of FP teaching remains contested globally and locally in South Africa, with male and female teachers having different experiences relating to issues of gender, sexuality and care. As already alluded to elsewhere, the number of male teachers in the FP globally is relatively low; the phase is still predominantly female (OECD, 2019). In this theme, I found that male teachers were troubled by the prevailing perceptions about male FP teachers in relation to issues of gender equality, the call/recruitment for more male teachers and the image of the phase. The participants stated, when asked to comment on the low number of male FP teachers:

> **Elias:** *Well, that possibility is currently vivid. It is the DOE (Department of Education) that encourages students to take FP, also the image of FP impacts on this.*

> **Zola:** *I do not think so, going back to the experiences we had with my varsity mates and were men. I think out of 100 students and men were about 43, I think those who took up FP as teachers are less than 20. Others chose different phases.*

> **Sonke:** *I think we will not achieve that easily; the majority of the people undermine FP, including female teachers who are working in other phases and I realised that men prefer teaching in high schools. Also, primary school is dominated by females, in my school, the principal, deputy and the HOD are females.*

> **Tshepo:** *I do not think so, because our society is stereotypical in that they strongly believe that in the FP there should be women. Also, our students in*

> *universities do not choose FP; they prefer other phases which they think offer*
> *them a better status.*

The data shows that the participants were concerned with the low number of male teachers taking the phase either for studying or when taking employment for the first time. Elias suggests that the Department of Education should create programmes that would encourage men to take up FP teaching opportunities. He also raised an important point that is similar to that of Sonke; both are arguing that the image of the FP has an impact on how the society undermines or appreciates the field. Essentially the image, as argued by the two participants, could be related to the phase being perceived as low status and the possibility that it is women's work, as evident in Tshepo's vignette above. According to Tshepo, the pejorative sentiments, such as seeing the phase as a reserve for women and as a low status, suggest that this is not solely a masculinities issue but also about class. Zola's vignette below indicates that, upon completing their studies in their initial teacher education programmes, male teachers are not considering employment opportunities in the FP. The high number of female teachers is also observed and flagged by Sonke, even in leadership positions. Sonke, in the vignette below, states that females currently dominate the leadership positions in the school. However, on the other side there exist a challenge in this statement which relates to equity issues; for instance, outside the environment of FP teaching, men are dominating in leadership positions as shown in the earlier chapter, in similar patterns as in corporates (Hearn, 2001, March; Scambor et al., 2014). Sonke's statement seems to present the dominance of female teachers as a problem in leadership positions, suggesting that men are disadvantaged. In contrast, an important question we need to ask is whether the minority of men in the FP want to have the same male privilege in gaining leadership positions as applies elsewhere in the society, even if they are a minority? The question is more pertinent since, in my previous work (Msiza, 2020b), I have shown how men have been prioritised and privileged for positions on the basis of their sex. Another South African study has found that male teachers in the field often encourage male FP student teachers who are in schools for teaching practicum to pursue leadership and managerial positions, based on an assumption that they are easily attainable for men (Bhana & Moosa, 2016). This is also consistent with an international study by Heikkilä and Hellman (2017), who found that male teachers felt everyone wanted to have them in their schools. The implications of men sticking out in the FP is argued by Sumsion (2000) as tokenism, which continues to privilege men in contexts where they are a minority. Men who acknowledge and thrive on the benefits of tokenism are complicit in reproducing hegemonic masculinities (Bhana et al., 2021)

The concern to diversify the FP teaching force as espoused by OECD (2019); Skelton (2012); and Warin (2018) is at the heart of recruiting and retaining male FP teachers. Van Laere et al. (2014) caution that the campaign to diversify the field should be based on fairness and provide opportunities for all. Earlier in this doctoral project, I indicated that the number of male FP teachers is relatively low and Mpumalanga, the site of investigation for this study, appears to have a significant number of men in the early years. Here I present data on their troubled perceptions regarding recruiting more men to consider FP teaching. They note:

> **Andile:** *I think we should not recruit them, for instance, others will come just to get qualified only and they will work for two years and eventually leave the field or the education sector. We need to have a campaign that highlight the importance of having men in the FP and let people come willingly if they are genuinely interested.*

> **Tshepo:** *Some are not in for the calling of teaching, it is more of a socio-economic issue because they either do not have money to go to University and even take FP because there is no employment in other areas.*

> **Musa:** *Maybe the day we get advisors; most teachers are not in teaching because they love it. They are teaching because there is no employment. I think advisers (career counselling) will be able to explain clearly and succinctly to those who are wanting to take teaching as a profession. [...] we need more men in the FP, we should not force/compel them. We need a strategy to recruit teachers.*

> **Nathi:** *I think people make their own decisions. Some men voluntarily want to go to ECD/FP I think they should be given that opportunity. Some are not interested, and we cannot force people to take what they are not interested in. I think you will recruit more male teachers and get people like me who are not interested and some would even fail at their job. I think that would be a waste of resources.*

What emerged herein is that the majority of the participants feel that men should not be recruited, compelled or lured. They are instead arguing that teaching is actually a calling that should come naturally to those who are interested. Tshepo makes a different argument, he notes that potential recruits could accept teaching for economic reasons i.e., avoiding being unemployed by accepting the invitation to study and work as a teacher. The South African

unemployment rate was at 34.4% in the second quarter of 2021 (Statistics South Africa, 2021), therefore Tshepo's statement could be a reflection of the high unemployment in the country. The participants noted that there is a possibility that the prospective male FP teachers might on completion, consider other phases. Andile and Musa propose that there should be efforts to launch a campaign targeted at recruiting more men, highlighting the importance of FP teaching and having career counsellors to speak to the potential recruits before they study towards FP. The suggestions are essential but in reality, they are administrative. They do not address the elephant in the room, being the nature of patriarchy, which deters and shames men who take up FP teaching. Nathi advocates for voluntary participation in the FP and uses himself as an example that he did not want to become a FP teacher, so recruiting men like him or those who possess similar beliefs would be wasting resources. This suggests that participants like Nathi were largely placed in the FP due to economic circumstances, wherein he did not have financial means to pursue his preferred studies. Although his argument is noted, it remains a challenging task to establish and distinguish between those who are taking the phase because they are genuine and those who are in for socio-economic reasons.

The gender division of labour, including patriarchal discourses on the recruitment of more male teachers, also emerged from the data. Gift premised his reasons for more male teachers around men being disciplinarians, handling manual labour within the school premises or on the school's excursion and the homogenising assumption that all men are strong and all women are not strong. He states:

> **Gift:** *Men in the FP are a minority, we need more men, and the next person to be acquired by my school should be a man. When we go for excursions, I need an extra hand, last time I struggled because I have to do everything on my own. I have to handle discipline, do the manual work and do the administration work. If there was a male, I think it was going to be better, hence I needed someone stronger and we were in Durban, which is a new place to the learners. Even the female teachers needed a man so that they can guard the children.*

Børve (2017); Yang and McNair (2019) found that men in the context of China and Norway, respectively are also expected to handle manual labour and lift heavy objects. Across all the participants, Gift was the only one who advocated the call for more men based on patriarchal notions. His suggestion that teaching and learning, including the school's excursions, cannot proceed without individuals who are stronger and disciplinarians was particularly problematic.

His statements on needing someone stronger seem to be advocating for the creation of a male social club that seeks to re-masculinise the FP teaching profession and deepens gender division of labour (Martino, 2008; Martino & Kehler, 2006). Gift's assertion is also problematic in that it creates categories and hierarchies, in essence, his assertion is not inclusive of those men who might be interested in joining the phase but do not possess or exhibit the characteristics mentioned.

The findings suggest that there was a concern amongst majority of the participants with the image of the phase (its reputation) in relation to calls/recruitment of more male teachers. The perceptions of the participants suggested that the behaviour and conduct of the existing male FP teachers will determine whether more men should be recruited. The finding is consistent with Warin (2006, 2014, 2016), who found that men in the FP are perceived as pioneers of the field, expected to represent it well and are seen as courageous to take up FP teaching. The findings indicate that, in line with the image of the phase, the participants thought having more men will increase the visibility of male teachers in the phase and therefore develop trust. Mandla and Elias note:

> **Mandla:** *I think that is dependent on how we, as the current teachers in the field, treat the learners and whether the parents are happy. I strongly believe that we need more men to teach, more importantly, it is going to address the issues of people who are getting shocked to see men.*
>
> **Elias:** *I support the view for more men. I think this will also make the society to trust us and avoid the fear of paedophilia.*

Furthermore, Warin (2014) states that the presence of men in the FP is in itself beneficial for destabilising problematic patterns of gender relations. Moreover, the presence of men in the FP will promote nurturing and caring masculinities, it will challenge problematic perceptions of male teachers in the FP (Moosa & Bhana, 2020a; Rohrmann et al., 2021). Consistent with existing studies, Mandla and Elias in the vignettes above are of the view that if more men can be recruited, the society will be familiar and eventually acknowledge the presence of men in the FP. They state further that the presence of more men will build trust such that the fear of paedophilia by the society will lessen, including among those who react with shock when they encounter a male FP teacher in schools. While the suggestions are noted, they are however narrowed to the context of FP teaching and are totally divorced from the general society. In the society in particular, the South African men are not easily trusted around children and women

due to the fear emanating from cases of sexual violence (see Gqola, 2015). In addition, Scambor et al. (2014, p. 563) argue that "one of the most arenas of gender inequality is men's violence against women in the private sphere". This suggests that in addition to an increase in the recruitment of male teachers, in the context of South Africa more work is required to address the fear of paedophilia and sexual violence on the broader society. According to Moosa and Bhana (2020a, 2020b), all the initiatives aimed at recruiting more men should encourage the male teachers to adopt masculinities that are caring and nurturing, to change the dire image of masculinities and social relations in South Africa.

6.7 Conclusion

In the chapter, I have presented data on the nature of the relationship between how participants understand care concerning their masculinities and teacher identities. The data and the discussion provided for each theme and subtheme has presented the male teachers' childhood narratives of receiving care. The data further suggest that working in the FP and offering care have given them opportunities to grow and develop a fatherhood identity whether they have children of their own, are guardians or do not have children. Considering the participants' backgrounds with the majority growing without fathers, they conceptualised themselves as contributing towards the project of addressing failing masculinity in South Africa. The participants contribute through offering care and performing their masculinities in ways that produces a counter-narrative against the dire image of fathers and fatherhood in the country, an image of masculinity that is plagued by multiple forms of violence and mainly uncaring. Seeing care work as an ability to address failing masculinity in the country is framed around the notion of being a role model for learners, regardless of their gender or sex, and being a surrogate father to those without fathers. I also presented and discussed data on the male teachers' troubled perceptions about teaching in the FP, including the recruitment of more male teachers. The data suggest further that the initiatives and campaigns should be more creative, inclusive and flexible. In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how the data has responded to the key research questions and discuss the potential contribution and implications of the study comprehensively.

Chapter 7: Experiences and male FP teachers' perceptions of the phase

7.1 Introduction

In the previous two analysis chapters: *On being a caring teache*r (Chapter 5); *Masculinities and care* (Chapter 6), I presented data and discussed various themes and subthemes for each chapter. This is the third analysis chapter. Herein, I present and discuss data about the general experiences of male FP teachers concerning care and their perceptions of the phase. This chapter – the third chapter of analysis – is pertinent as it shows the different experiences and perceptions of male teachers in the FP, particularly their overall experiences and how these experiences shape their approaches to care. The themes of the chapter emerged through following the same procedure that I considered for the two previous chapters. Also, the vignettes presented herein are drawn from both the interview conversations and the letters. The coding for the vignettes is also similar, **L-Andile** for letters and **Andile** for the interviews. The chapter has three themes, and they are as follows: (7.1) Experiences of care in extra-mural activities, (7.2) Teaching and leadership responsibilities, (7.3) Perceptions of teacher retention and movement. A conclusion then follows the themes.

7.2 Experiences of care in extra-mural activities

The data showed that the male teachers studied were involved in several extra-mural activities, such as sports, across the majority of the participants. The data suggests that while administering extra-mural activities, which are often seen as responsibilities outside the academic programme, the participants also provided care to the learners. The participants' approach to care appeared to be multidimensional and grounded on ethical and moral principles (Reddy et al., 2014). For instance, Andile is not only a soccer coach, but he notices children who are without soccer boots, reaches out to families and provides first aid to the injured. L-Gift below seems to put effort into assisting learners outside the academic programme to demonstrate care. For Mandla, when he facilitates a sporting activity, soccer in his case, he leans towards providing emotional and moral support; he sees himself as providing care by assisting the learners to improve on their previous mistakes and make progress. Gift, on the other side, makes a gendered statement that football in schools appears to be disappearing and thus men are contributing both to football and in the physical education lessons. The participants note:

Andile: *I am involved in soccer, uhm....as a coach I take care of all my players others do not have soccer boots or gear. As a coach, I then interact with the learners on the reason they do not have, for parents who afford to buy, they do so after I have recommended them. I offer basic first aid and write a letter of apology to the parents. So far, we haven't had major injuries that require hospitalisation.*

L-Gift: *I go an extra mile for my learners when they participate in other activities apart from academic work. I assist them with their endeavours that are outside of the curriculum. Because of my knowledge and experience, the learners come to me for advice and motivation. Motivating learners by encouraging, rewarding and getting them to partake in extra or co-curricular will show that you care and vested in their education.*

Mandla: *I am a coach for ladies and male soccer; the form of care I give is about encouraging the child to improve on the mistake they have made, rather than discoursing the child.*

Gift: *South African football is dying and I think if we can have more males in the FP, we will be able to emphasise sports as early as in this phase. Also, in physical education I think male teachers are contributing a lot.*

The participants offer care beyond the academic programme. Andile and Gift for instance, challenge the notion of care as static and uniform, as their offering of care goes beyond their professional expectations. This is consistent with Reddy et al. (2014), who argue that care is contextual, whether local, regional and countrywide, those who offer care should not perceive care as meaning the same thing to everyone. In line with the findings I made in other analysis chapters, the participants' caregiving approach seems to extend to address learners' social challenges; this appeared consistently across all participants. In analysing the data further, I noted that, in terms of masculinities, Andile being a man and coaching soccer at school is typical of what most schools expect of male rather than female teachers. Grahn (2016) state that each sport is associated to gender and it has its own gender regime. In this study, soccer was often associated to the male teachers. Also, Gift's vignette is evidence that men are seen as key contributors to sports and physical education lessons. He seems to imply that female teachers are unsuitable for facilitating sports and physical education in the FP. Gift therefore subscribes to the problematic notion that female teachers cannot model masculinities and male

teachers cannot model femininities, particularly in the context where sport and physical education are seen from the lens of men and masculinities, an idea that has been critiqued by Warin (2018). In addition, Bhana (2016a, p. 58) argues that "sport is a key signifier of masculinity". In allocating responsibilities for administering extra-mural activities, men are commonly allocated to physical sports, especially soccer and rugby. International scholars such as Brown (2012); Brownhill and Oates (2017); Francis and Skelton (2001) as well as Palmer et al. (2019) found that men are perceived as better facilitators in sports than their female counterparts and this put pressure on men who are neither interested nor good at sports to take up the responsibility. This suggests that the heteronormative performance of masculinities is still an expectation for FP male teachers, despite the perception that male teachers in the phase are weak and wanting to be women. The heteronormative discourse is similar to the findings of a study where Xu (2020) found that "men are expected to take responsibility for manual labour" (p.115).

The inconsistencies on the gendered expectations on men, fuelled by a heteronormative discourse, are not without problems and contribute to the construction of men as *wanted and unwanted*; *superheroes and demons* (Jones, 2008). The findings of Brody and Gor Ziv (2020, p. 21), analysing from the frame of hybrid masculinities were that, "men in ECEC are by definition straddling two worlds—the 'female' caring aspects of the profession along with their struggle to maintain their masculine identity". Physical sports and the expectation for male teachers to take over create a fertile ground for heteronormative discourses to manifest and thrive. For instance, a study by Martino (2008) found that male teachers conform to the expectations and take sports responsibilities in order to avoid and counter the suspicions of being labelled gay. On the other side, L-Gift encourages and motivates his learners to partake in extra-mural activities without singling out a specific activity such as soccer, choral music or arts. Mandla is more concerned with the emotional well-being of the learners. He insists that, while he performs his responsibilities as a soccer coach, he also assists the learners to overcome previous challenges/failures and improve on them. The vignettes of the participants presented above suggest that even in extra-mural activities the male participants are concerned with the holistic well-being of the learners and provide different types of care. Although this is the case, when sporting activities involve girls and there are incidents requiring care, the male teachers invite a female teacher/staff member in the school as a precautionary measure to avoid being labelled as paedophiles, a concern addressed in chapter 5.

The pattern with other participants suggests that the majority are also involved in extra-mural activities such as sports. Their involvement ranges from either being coaches for physical sports like soccer or sitting in organising/decision making committees on sports, arts and culture. Considering the data in this theme and in the previous chapters, it is clear that the way in which male FP teachers exercise their work in the classroom or extra-mural activities is driven by a desire to provide care for the FP learners and in certain instances by a heteronormative discourse.

7.3 Teaching and leadership responsibilities

The study recruited a cohort of participants diverse in age, contexts, teaching experience and responsibilities. In the analysis and linked to the intersectionality framework, each of the identity markers intersected and contributed to different experiences. I found that the responsibilities of the teachers within the school environment differed, and this contributed to their understandings of care. In the main, I found that while most of the teachers had teaching responsibilities that were expected of any teacher to undertake, others were, in addition, trusted with leadership responsibilities in the school, for instance leading the FP as heads of department. In this theme I am presenting data on the participants' experiences of undertaking this responsibility and how care work is implicated in their expected workloads. Starting with teaching responsibilities, I share Thando's experiences in the vignette below. Thando shares his experiences as a male teacher in the FP, particularly on his early days of employment. He unpacks concerns from the parents and how he exchanged acts of affection as a form of care with his learners. Thando notes:

> **Thando:** *They are used to me as a foundation phase teacher, even the parents are used to me. At first they were worried about how I was going to handle their kids. I think when kids have spent a long time without seeing you, they are going to be happy when they see you. As a FP teacher you must not dress as if you are going to a corporate workplace, dress in a way that will allow you to move. When the school reopened on Wednesday, the kids were happy and ran to me, gave me a hug and a high five (hand gesture). I conversed with them and asked them about their holidays. Kids at this age love sharing their stories.*

Thando's expression on the fact that they are "used to me" (both the school and the parents) suggests that he might have been received with shock in the school and possibly to an extent, questioned about his suitability to teach in the phase. Nonetheless, he continues to share his

experiences; for instance, he notes that dress is an important factor determining activities and interactions that the teacher should have with the learners. He further notes that the corporate look (formal shoes, pants and a shirt) is not compatible with teaching in the FP. This means that the expectation of male teachers to "dress like a man" (Cushman, 2008, p. 131), which is based on the hegemonic masculine script, appears not to yield a positive caring practice in the FP. Amongst other responsibilities of teachers in the FP, as narrated by Thando, is to converse with the learners, hug them and provide acts of affection as noted earlier. Thando's vignette is an example of a male FP teacher's experiences of working with the learners –providing care and how he thinks his responsibilities are as a teacher.

Still, on this theme, two participants (Gift and Cyril) are both male FP teachers and HODs (head of a department) of the phase and each responsibility, i.e. teaching and leadership, comes with its pressures. Gift and Cyril's vignette suggests that they do not spend significant amount of time providing care in the FP, they are constantly working on their additional leadership responsibilities. Although it may not be explicitly stated, however the notion that Gift is being prepared for other senior positions and seen as a future leader is consistent with existing studies. For instance, studies have shown that being men leads to the assumption within the school that male teachers should take on a leadership role beyond that expected of women. An Australian study found that some of the male FP teachers are recruited with preconceived expectations of leadership roles and management (Palmer et al., 2019). The South African scholars, Moosa and Bhana (2017), also found that it is common amongst schools to allocate leadership responsibilities to men and align them to the existing leadership hierarchies that are mainly gendered. Also, Warin (2018) found that allocating male teachers to leadership positions within the school is considered a method to retain men in the FP workplace. Although men are allocated the leadership positions for the above given reasons, the approach is premised on unfair practice. They note:

> **Gift:** *In terms of the workload that I have to do, I think most HODs in South Africa are struggling. Because one has to teach and deal with the administrative tasks. While I am busy teaching, the principal or deputy will call me for an urgent meeting, which affects the day-to-day running of the teaching programme. Some of the things that they usually call me for are issues of other phases and at the back of their minds, the principal believes that they are preparing me for other senior positions. I think I have an advantage that I am in a boarding school,*

HODs in the normal schools are not coping because they do not have an opportunity to catch up and check teachers' files.

Cyril: *I find this to be a challenge, we do not have teaching assistants I am expected to be in class from morning till afternoon and also have to do my HOD responsibilities. What I normally do is to teach the learners and give them work, while they are doing work I proceed to do class visits. I have seven teachers and I draft a visiting programme.*

Gift notes that apart from being responsible for the FP, he if often called to handle issues of other phases. He is located in a combined school starting from Grade R to Grade 12, which means if he is constantly called to assist with responsibilities of other phases and thus has a sizeable workload. Allocating responsibilities of other phases to Gift at the expense of teaching time, suggests that the school might not be recognising Gift's important work in teaching and providing care for young children. In the vignettes of Gift and Cyril, their leadership responsibilities take priority over caring and teaching activities, which suggest that the two participants might be complicit and could be seeing FP teaching as a "transitory professional experience "that will lead to a senior leadership position" (Yang & McNair, 2019, p. 286). Through analysing the data, I noted that the male FP teachers have different experiences either as teachers or as HODs in leadership roles. It seems the caring practices of those with leadership roles are constantly interrupted.

7.4 Perceptions of teacher retention and movement

The participants as a collective have different years of teaching experience in the FP. Considering the time spent, they made significant observations as they accumulated their teaching experience over the years. The participants showed concern over male FP teachers' retention in the field and how other male FP teachers move within the teaching profession. The data shows that in the main, male teachers are moved by their principals to teach in other phases. Drawing from the participants' vignettes, the reasons for keeping men or moving them in the school's leadership structures is motivated by different arguments. Some of the principals are moving male teachers because they think that men are not suitable to teach young children in the FP. Others are fuelled by the suspicion of child molestation. In contrast Gift notes that his principal supports the idea of having more male teachers in the FP. The participants note:

Musa: *Taking a FP teacher to an intermediate phase, the person will fit and be a **normal** teacher but FP is specifically based on the child's psychology. What is also more problematic is when they move a female teacher who is good in mathematics for the intermediate phase and move her to FP because of gender I think this is not going to work [...] It is better to swap with someone qualified to teach in the intermediate with a FP teacher in intermediate.*

Lethabo: *I have realised that the principals who are old and close to retirement believe that FP is for females only. They believe that men should be in the intermediate phase, others are worried about teachers who might molest young children in the FP classrooms. I think this is more dependent on the character of the teacher and his intentions in working with the learners.*

Gift: *I am privileged to be supported by my principal who believes that there should be more men in the FP. I think it is biased for FP male teachers to be moved to other phases.*

Emerging from Musa and Lethabo's vignettes, male FP are moved or swapped with teachers in other phases on the notion of gender role performance. This finding is connected to the previous findings, wherein men were not seen as suitable to teach young children and were treated as potential suspects of child molestation. This is more emphasised by the principals or the leadership in schools who constantly move teachers from FP to teach in other phases. It is interesting that one of the participants regards teaching in the FP as abnormal, hence the use of 'normal' for other senior grades. Kagola and Khau (2020) argue that school governing bodies and the school leadership have a responsibility to ensure diversity and retention of teachers. The leadership of the school either challenge or normalise the gender regime that exists in the school. In addition, principals have a responsibility to monitor, manage and evaluate how the construction of gender plays out between teachers and how this affects the schools (Cruickshank et al., 2018). It appears further from the participants' perceptions that when teachers are moved or retained, issues of teacher specialisation are less considered as can be seen from Musa's vignette. A heteronormative, patriarchal gender takes priority.

Lethabo raised an aspect of age, noting that principals closer to retirement do not see male teachers as suitable for the FP. It seems that Lethabo believes the notion is held by the older generation and it is changing with younger leaders. This shows a potential yet important shift in gender relations amongst the leadership of the schools. In Lethabo's point, there are several

issues at play which shapes the experiences of male FP teachers. Firstly, it is what has appeared often in the analysis, the suspicion that the male teachers are paedophiles and their intention is to molest young children. Drawing from Lethabo's vignette, it appears that some of the principals are using this as reason to move the male teachers from the FP to other phases. On the other side, Gift has a different experience; according to him his principal supports the call for more men and to retain those who are already in. Gift's principal appears to be inclusive in his leadership approach and trust the contribution that the male teachers make in the classrooms (Ljunggren et al., 2021).

The conduct of the principals as seen in the participants' vignettes—moving the male FP teachers highlights the gender regime of each school. R. Connell (2005, p. 6) defines gender regime of an institution (school in this case) as the "patterning of gender relations in that institution, and especially the continuing pattern, which provides the structural context of particular relationships and individual practices." Moving the male teachers from the FP with an idea that they are not suitable or are suspects of child molestation creates a pattern within gender relations, pattern that worsens the existing gender division of labour in workplaces including schools, wherein men enjoy privilege and are not expected to do certain activities in their occupation. Schools as organisations led by the principals seem to be institutionalising specific definitions of gender-appropriate work. This affirms the notion that organisations are not gender-neutral (R. Connell, 2005). The gender regime of each school that is steered by the principals in the context of this data, contributes to the low number of male FP teachers as often seen in statistical data. Principals or leaders in schools, through their actions, have a potential to alter the gender balance in the FP and the entire schooling sector (Ljunggren et al., 2021). The above data (vignettes) has shown that the low number of male FP teachers is influenced by various complexities (Connell, 2011a), and moving male FP teachers is one of them. This suggests that the gender patterns in schools feed over time to a wider pattern, which Connell (2009b) refers to as the gender order in the society. In this theme, the participants' perceptions have shown concern over the retention or the moving of male FP teachers. However, the data suggest that they have not altogether liberated themselves (Ratele, 2016), from negative notions of masculinities in the FP especially those that are grounded in heteronormativity, gender binary and male superiority. For example, and as noted above, Musa in the vignette above mentions being a *normal teacher*. This type of language suggests that there is a typical image of what a FP teacher should look like or a criteria to perform 'normal' masculinities (Mills et al., 2004).

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented and discussed three themes that emerged from the data. The data shows that male FP teachers provide care that is multidimensional. Their caring repertoire is extended to events and activities such as the extra-mural activities. The data showed further that care is contextual and specific to certain circumstances; it cannot be offered through an umbrella approach. The overall findings in this chapter show that while male teachers are going an extra mile in offering care and gaining more experience, they also desire to maintain their masculine identities and privileges. This can be noted from their comfortable position when allocated to sports because they are men in alignment with the typical masculinity script, which sees female teachers as unsuitable to facilitate sports. They also take on leadership positions that require them to be more outside the classroom than doing work related to care. The data also showed their perceptions, which are based on their experiences of working in the field, of how male teachers are retained or moved by the leadership of the school. Enacting caring practices and negotiating masculinities as indicated earlier in the chapter appears to be driven by the gender regime of each school. In the next chapter I demonstrate how the findings are responding to my key research questions. I also unpack the potential contribution that the study makes as well as the implications.

Chapter 8: Discussion, implications, and conclusion

8.1 Introduction

I started the thesis with a quote from the novel titled *When a man cries* by Siphiwo Mahala. With the quote, I wanted to show the complexities of gender that men negotiate and undergo daily in the context of care. Through the work of Mahala (2007), I sought to illustrate how men are not immune to care, and that like any other human beings, they are receivers and providers of care (Noddings, 1992). The thesis sought to understand male teachers' understanding of the concept of care in Foundation Phase (FP) teaching and its relation to their professional teacher identities and gender identities. In professional spaces and households, care work has primarily been relegated to women (Warin, 2018). Therefore, undertaking this work with male teachers was important, given that the phase is perceived as doing care work and therefore, women's work. Also, men have generally avoided caregiving responsibilities and any notions of care.

In the previous chapter (chapter 7), I presented and discussed the data related partly to my second research question. In this chapter, I discuss the findings, the implications, and the conclusion. At the core of this chapter, I demonstrate how the findings have significantly responded to the two key research questions: 1) How do male teachers understand the concept of care in foundation phase teaching? 2) What is the nature of the relationship between the ways in which the selected male foundation phase teachers understand their masculinities and their identities as teachers? I have organised the chapter in the following way: Reflections on methodology and theoretical framework; Review of the study; Personal-professional reflections on the study; Discussion of key findings; Contribution of the study; Implications and Conclusion.

8.2 Reflections on methodology and theoretical framework

This study used a qualitative narrative inquiry methodology (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I noted that given the discomfort of speaking about care among men and the manner in which they distance themselves from caring practice and notions of care, I needed to use a methodology that would elicit rich data without intimidating the participants. Narrative inquiry became a suitable choice because it is about understanding people's lived experiences and their storied lives. Central to this methodology is to elicit data through stories. For this purpose, in

this study I effectively used letter writing (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and interview-conversations (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Goodson & Sikes, 2001) as methods of data generation and to elicit storied data. Letter writing, which was initially not associated with men and masculinities, was particularly useful and generative. This is despite the fact that in some of the academic spaces where I presented my work, there were concerns on whether men would be willing to write expressive letters. Yet, my methodological choices were generative and both methods were effective in generating rich data. A limitation of this work is that that it did not include male teachers from urban areas, whose experiences no doubt would be vastly different to the participants interviewed.

I framed my thesis using masculinities theory (Connell, 2005); intersectionality theory (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Crenshaw, 1991) and finally, the four phases of care (Tronto, 1993). First, masculinities are a place in gender relations where men and women engage in practices that have effects on culture, personality and bodily experience (Connell, 2005). The theory of masculinities states that they are constructed culturally, historically and based on politics. Masculinities are also hierarchical, multiple and are contested, meaning there is no one uniform way of being a man (Connell, 2000; Connell, 2005). The theory gave me a lens to understand the multiplicity and hierarchy of masculinities. In addition, I was also able to understand how masculinities were constructed, constituted, and negotiated in relation to care. For example, the participants perceived their caregiving as different to that of their female counterparts, they also perceived themselves as different men than their fathers and as father figures to children without fathers.

Secondly, the study needed a lens that would assist me to understand the complexities of identities and the multiple factors that are involved in specific individual experiences. Intersectionality theory was thus effective for this purpose. Intersectionality theory studies the complexities in different categories of identification and experiences. Intersectionality studies how each individual is privileged or marginalised when identities intersect, for instance the class struggles within gender or the gender struggles within race (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Scholars have argued that intersectionality should also consider age, ableness and sexual orientation (May, 2015). From this perspective, the intersection of various multiple identities produced different experiences for the participants in the process of care work. For example, the intersection of being a FP teacher and being a man was evident in these teachers' gendered approach towards care and also their privileged access to promotions. Also, being a man, a FP

teacher and working in the rural areas led these teachers to construct their caring practice as protection.

Finally, the work of Tronto, particularly the four phases of care, were used to understand the type of care that male FP teachers were enacting, and the processes involved in caregiving. Tronto's work on care speaks directly to intersectionality; according to Tronto (1993), care is gendered, classed and raced. For example, in the phase of caregiving I was able to understand that the male FP teachers were enacting a gendered approach of care, particularly in choosing to work with boys and assigning girls to other staff members. I was also able to understand that due to their sex and gender identities they perceived doing care work as offering protection, which is another gendering aspect of care. Overall, the four phases enabled me to see the degrees of care and how masculinities are constructed, constituted, and negotiated in relation to each of the four phases.

8.3 Review of the study

In this section I provide an overview of the study with an intention to highlight what I covered in each of the previous seven chapters. In the first chapter, I introduced the study, provided the problem statement, and focus of the study. I extensively discussed the context of South Africa and the key drivers of certain masculinities and its impact on teaching and care. The second chapter covered the literature review of the thesis; I located the study within the existing body of knowledge. I have shown that the work of male FP teachers is a dominant discourse in an international context, while in South Africa it is emerging. I also covered different themes emanating from the literature such as the history of early childhood and FP teaching, defined care, teaching and care work, role modelling and the suspicion of paedophilia. In the third chapter, I unpacked the theories that were used in the study, and I also mapped the concept of masculinities in South Africa to demonstrate the extent of the existing work on masculinities. The key highlight in the third chapter is that there is much more work required on intersectional studies, to gain an in-depth insight on masculinities, sexuality and care work.

The fourth chapter covered the research approach, methodology and methods that were used in the study. It reviewed the data collected through stories, which challenged the notion that men are somewhat unwilling to write expressively. Letter writing as an innovative method and the use of greater numbers of participants in a narrative study yielded rich data. The study has three analysis chapters (chapter 5-7), and each chapter presents different parts of the data. The three analysis chapters, in a nutshell, show that there are various factors that contribute to how

care is understood and enacted in both professional spaces like FP teaching and in personal spaces. In Chapter 5, I presented data focusing on being a caring teacher, and the male teachers' understandings of care, in line with their teacher identities as FP teachers in schools. I also covered their understanding of care in their day-to-day lived experiences of being in schools. Chapter 6 focuses on masculinities and care. This includes the participants' childhood narratives of receiving care and on caring as a project that assists them to develop a fatherhood identity and to respond to a failing masculinity in the country. For instance, the majority saw themselves as role models and father figures for the young FP learners. The third analysis chapter, Chapter 7, focuses on the male FP teachers' experiences and perceptions of the phase. I have arranged my chapters in this order with the intention to take the reader through a process of what is known in the field and how my thesis fits into the existing work.

8.4 Personal-professional reflections on the study

Reflexivity is theorised as an important part in humanities and social science research, in particular, in feminist work. According to Guba and Lincoln (2005), reflexivity forces us to reflect critically on ourselves as researchers, on the choices we make on a particular type of a research problem, theories and on the type of methodology chosen. As I discuss this section, I also seek to show my positionality in this research. We carry our beliefs, values and cultural background into the research process (Butler-Kisber, 2018; Vanner, 2015). In essence, when collecting data, we carry our multiple selves, such as our race, social class, gender, age, level of education and ethnicity. All these multiple selves have contributed to how I interacted with the participants, people in the research site and the manner in which I conducted the interview-conversations. Through writing this reflexive section I intend to make my research process transparent and open; reflexivity therefore is a journey of learning and unlearning (Palaganas et al., 2017).

8.4.1 As a qualified black African male FP teacher and resident of Mpumalanga

Earlier in the study, I indicated that I am a qualified male FP teacher, and I was born in Mpumalanga province. When I started researching this field from my master's project and now to the PhD, I approached the research with an attitude of knowing the context and the debates concerning the field. Mostly I was driven by the passion for exploring and developing an understanding in the field of men, masculinities, and care. I conducted official research for both my masters and currently the doctoral project, but the interest started when I was still an

undergraduate student. More so, the interest was informed by the prejudice that I and my fellow male student-teachers experienced for being men and doing work historically presumed as a reserve for women. In conducting this study, I also drew a lot from my lived experiences as a male teacher to understand my participants' stories. This was informed by the methodology of the study. For example, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) maintain that within the narrative inquiry we co-construct stories with our participants. Not only do we co-construct, but we are part of the social world that we choose to research on (Merriam et al., 2001). Therefore, I wanted my participants to be comfortable and see me as someone they can trust and share their stories with. Growing up in Mpumalanga, where, amongst other identities, there is a great diversity of ethnicity and languages, I was able to communicate with the participants on their preferred languages, but the majority of the interview-conversations were conducted in English. On the data presentation of this project, I presented the original expression in an indigenous language and the English translation. Doing it this way I did not want my positionality on the view to misrepresent the expressions of the participants (Merriam et al., 2001). Using the indigenous words allows the reader to engage the text in its original format and make meaning from his/her perspective.

Understanding and belonging to the field of FP, participants were very comfortable, and, in their comfort, they shared some statements that essentialised gender ("*care comes naturally to women*") and some were discriminatory. What came through and was startling for me was the facial expression the participants made when they shared stories of learners with absent mothers. They expressed anger and disappointment, although their comments about women remained disconcerting. The participants were comfortable with making these statements because I am a man, and the assumption was that I share with the comments. Negotiating this process took a great deal of emotion, as my aim was to respect the participants' views, but on the other side, I heard the comments. To navigate this, I probed further on the participants' comments, for an example "why do you think it comes naturally to women?", "why do you think men and women are different?" Through the probing, some of the participants were able to note the nature of their comments and immediately change the statement. Researchers often experience both the insider and outsider experience; this is more informed by the norms, values and beliefs of the context in which the study is undertaken (Merriam et al., 2001).

I approached the research site with caution, and this was to acknowledge that, although I am a qualified FP teacher and have read widely in the field, I did not know their day to day lived experiences as FP teachers in schools and in specific contexts. My experience in teaching in

the FP (grade R-3) is limited to the time when I was doing my teaching practice. On my first year of teaching practice, I taught in grade R, followed by Grade 1 and 3 in the subsequent years. The rest of my teaching experience has been in higher education, in the discipline of Early Childhood Education and FP as well as Curriculum Studies. Entering the research site, I acknowledged that I am an outsider in terms of the day-to-day experiences within the schooling context and within their personal stories relating to masculinities and care. Merriam et al. (2001) state that positions shift during the process of research; they are in flux and multiple, particularly when viewed from the intersectional lens. Getting into the research site, I also had to negotiate the power dynamics between myself as the researcher, the school and the participants. Some of the participants in their respective schools are in leadership positions such as head of departments, and I then had to negotiate power. Their positions are multiple because I was not interviewing a participant who is only a male FP teacher, but he is also in leadership (head of department). As a researcher, I negotiated power by respecting the position of the participant in the school and keeping to the time and venue allocated for the interview sessions. In some instances, power came in the form of age where older participants positioned themselves as knowledgeable and experienced. Those who are young showed a dual position of being vulnerable and on the other end asserted their power as the teacher in the field (Merriam et al., 2001). Next, I discuss the academic/PhD identity and how it has affected my research process.

8.4.2 Being an academic and a doctoral candidate

Getting into the research site, the teachers and the leadership of the school knew my academic identity from the time I requested permission. They read from the documents that I am an academic and a doctoral candidate. The impression I received from schools was that they perceived me as a custodian of knowledge. What frequently occurred in the majority of the schools was the following: 1) the principal or head of department would request me to their office and some inquired about furthering their studies. Those teachers whom I got the opportunity to be introduced to, engaged me on various topics relating to the field of FP. 2) Those who have started with their postgraduate studies grabbed the opportunity and asked me questions about their programmes, which I assisted with. 3) Universities that often visit schools in the context of Mpumalanga come as a research team and they interview more than one member of staff. When I arrived in one of the schools, I found a team of all FP teachers waiting for me in the school boardroom. The assumption was that as an academic, I was also coming to do a focus group. When I indicated that I am interviewing two male FP teachers only, I saw

both relief and disappointment from the female teachers. 4) Another experience that I found startling, when I got to the first school, was that I was requested to proceed and see the principal. He welcomed me and the hospitality I received was unexpectedly beyond that was required. The principal said, "How do I address you sir? Are you a professor, a doctor or a lecturer?" I indicated that I was indeed a lecturer but not yet a professor and not yet a doctor. Despite addressing issues relating to my title, the principal projected a positioning of humility and respect. The participant I came to visit was called and I interviewed him. On my way out to the car accompanied by the participant whom I knew and had studied and graduated with, but was teaching in a different phase, came to greet and was happy to see me. The principal asked if I am happy with how my students are doing? His interpretation was that I was coming to examine the teachers since I was from the university where they graduated from. There were also officials from the department of health and the principal introduced me to them.

With the second school, the principal insisted that I join them for lunch with the school governing body committee, after the meeting. I was subsequently introduced to them as well. My academic position enabled entry into the research site, which I believe came from a position of trust. As an educated young man, the school leadership trusted me and made the environment conducive. Although I received this form of hospitality, I ensured that I followed all the ethical research procedures and negotiated consent with the participants as opined by Vanner (2015). When one pays attention to detail, in my fieldwork experiences, there exist multiple shifts of positionality where there is an expectation to negotiate culture and power, all these factors have impacted on the research process (Merriam et al., 2001). The treatment and hospitality from the schools suggest that despite my age (relatively young, below 30) they respected my academic standing, which appears to have had more currency. Anecdotal evidence often portrays South African schools, especially the leadership, in a negative manner and as authoritarian. This indicates that the intersection of culture and professional practice in schools is varied and should never be homogenised.

As alluded to above, during data generation, I kept a journal, where I wrote all the experiences of the day and reflected on areas needing improvement after each visit (Palaganas et al., 2017). Writing in the journal was helpful for me to note and remember the ways in which my identities as an academic and a doctoral candidate assisted in my negotiations for access.

8.5 Discussion of key findings – a response to the key research questions

The purpose of the study was to explore ways in which male teachers in the FP understand the concept of care both as men and teachers in selected schools in Mpumalanga province. I presented and discussed the data in the previous three chapters. In this chapter, I discuss the key findings form the study and demonstrate how the findings respond to the research questions.

8.5.1 Question 1: How do male teachers understand the concept of care in foundation phase teaching?

The findings from the inquiry revealed numerous understandings of care among the male FP teachers in this study. These included: (1) Care-as-Love, (2) Care-as-protection, (3) Care-as-good teaching, (4) Care-as-social justice

8.5.1.1 Care-as-Love

The male FP teachers in this study understood care as something rooted and developed on love. For them, there can never be legitimate care if it is not premised on love. They conceptualise love as giving them an opportunity to care. The perception of love as being equal to care was unexpected, especially given the existence of toxic masculinities in the country. Hanlon (2012) and hooks (2004b) reveal that men who dare to show love and care are ostracised within the patriarchal culture. Therefore, the desire to provide care and love indicates that there is a form of transformation in the realm of manhood as hooks (2000) notes that care and domination cannot coexist. This suggests, if the male FP teachers are seeing care as premised on love as evident in this study, then there are possibilities that they might be beginning to relinquish the desire to enact hegemonic and dominant expressions of masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2018).

The overarching understanding of care by the participants related to looking after someone or something (*ukunakelela*) and providing support (being a pillar of strength) to those in need. The participants noted that looking after someone included imagining themselves in the shoes of those who require care (empathy); in essence, they provided care that they desired. Therefore, the male teachers in this study identified a need for care (caring about) (Tronto, 1993). The participants viewed providing care for someone as something that should not be determined by age, sex, religion, and socioeconomic status. Instead, care should be provided comprehensively and holistically without expecting anything in return. This means that, once the need for care is identified, the care provider should take over the responsibility (taking care of) for comprehensive and inclusive caregiving (Tronto, 1993). In this study, this suggests that

the male FP teachers had a broad understanding of care, inclusive of other forms of care that learners might need. For example, they reported providing physical, emotional, and spiritual care. This comprehensive understanding of care by male FP teachers is significant and worth noting especially considering that in the society, care is usually gendered, classed, raced and devalued (Anttonen & Zechner, 2011; Tronto, 1993).

8.5.1.2 Care-as-Protection

Caring as providing safety and protection is another finding that emerged from the interviews. This has been found as typical of men and masculinities particularly in South Africa. The discourse of care-as-protection is "contingent on power and control" (Wojnicka, 2021, p. 3). The male teachers understood care as offering protection to their learners and ensuring their safety holistically. One participant used a metaphor and stated that young learners in the FP need protection because they are like sponges – they absorb anything. Men are seen as providing protection mostly to children and women; the protection discourse is dependent on those protected recognising power (Wojnicka, 2021). Without the recognition by the cared for, men would not identify with care as protection. Teaching young children in primary schools is often construed as a culture of care that should ensure the safety and security of the learners (Nias, 1999). Although there could be complexity in the meaning of male teachers' understanding of care as protection, it seems it could be based on the socialisation that men receive in the society from a young age.

For men, care as protection is also connected to constructions of local patriarchal masculinity (Elliott, 2016; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). In addition, Morrell and Jewkes (2011, p. 6) state that "for some men caring [is] a duty to protect and [fits] comfortably with conventional masculine ideals". Historically, men in the society were constructed as providers and protectors within families (Clowes et al., 2010; Clowes et al., 2013; Warin, 2006). Thus, the male FP teachers' understanding of care is premised on this notion of care and respectability. For example, the study of Clowes et al. (2010) found that boys will often engage in violent fights under the idea of protecting their girlfriends and expressing their love, care and commitment to them.

8.5.1.3 Care-as-good teaching

The participants linked the concept of care to FP teaching and therefore, saw teaching as care work. The findings suggest that they understand care as being a responsibility of all the teachers in schools. For example, the participants suggested that any teacher should not walk past a learner who is not well or a learner who could be crying. They expressed the view that teachers in schools should not walk past the learners who are in an unsafe environment such as waiting

for transport after school. The findings suggest that the male teachers are able to note the needs of care in the schooling environment and determine the response to each need (Tronto, 1993), for instance, comforting a learner who is crying. Similarly, Nguyen (2016) notes that being a caring teacher is good teaching. A good caring teacher within the context of classrooms, according to the participants can notice learners who are unwell, possibly because of illness or bereavement.

8.5.1.4 Care-as-social justice

The findings in this study further show that the participants understood and used care as being a means to address social problems. The everyday interaction with the learners allows them to understand the learners' socioeconomic statuses and decide on the form of care to provide. The findings reveal that the participants believe social problems should be addressed first before teaching and learning can take place in their classrooms. This indicates they see the social well-being of the learners as a primary and necessary concern of care for a smooth process of teaching. Learners who are without food, clothing and those in child-headed families should be noticed and assisted by the teachers because teaching is care work. The perception of teaching as care work was explained further by the interviewed participants through stating what they called caring activities. The activities were (1) dishing up food for the learners (all the schools I visited, had a nutrition programme); (2) An ability to notice little things that occur in the learners' lives, such as birthdays and a missing tooth; (3) Providing care in the form of first aid and moral support during sports and physical education lessons. For the participants, all the activities are key markers of a caring teacher in the FP. Within Tronto's phases of care, the male FP teachers understood care as seeing the need (caring about), taking responsibility to determine the response (taking care of) and providing the actual care (care giving) (Tronto, 1993). The phases of care are however not a clear linear process, there are contestations and conflict either between the phases or within each of the four phases (Tronto, 1993), I unpack this more in the discussion of my second research question below.

8.5.2 Question 2: What is the nature of the relationship between the ways in which the selected male foundation phase teachers understand their masculinities and their identities as teachers?

In the above section, I note that the participants linked care to FP teaching. The findings suggest that the participants' teacher identities drove their understandings of and participation in caring activities. The findings in relation to the second research question revealed numerous ways in

which the participants understand their masculinities and teacher identities. These included: (1) Gendering of care and doing "dirty work", (2) The perceived child molestation, (3) Chivalry and fatherhood as protection, (4) Professionalism as protection, (5) Male teachers as leaders and (6) Experiences of receiving care and being father figures.

8.5.2.1 Gendering of care and doing "dirty work"

There seemed to be a conflict between the participants' masculinities and their teacher identity. For example, as teachers, they would want to do "dirty work" such as assisting the learners of any sex and gender who might have accidentally peed, pooed, or have snot. However, due to their masculinities, they were unable to assist girls and instead provided help only to boys. The participants argued that this was because in society, men are not trusted with children and are therefore, policed. For instance, in the year 2017 a 57 years-old school security guard was reported to have molested 54 primary school learners, with likely further evidence and testimonies set to raise the number to 87 (Sifile, 2017,). Therefore, men often experience fear of being suspected or accused of paedophilia and child molestation. This has also been observed globally. For example, Cruickshank (2018) reports that male teachers in Australia are constantly uncertain and fear physical contact with the FP learners. Furthermore, given the construction of manhood and the narrative of toxic masculinities, it is possible that the conflict identified above results from fear of being seen as deviating from normative masculinities (Plank, 2019). Toxic masculinities teach men that care is women's work and that men are exempt from caring practices, through patriarchal privilege. Morrell and Jewkes (2014) state that, even though men are gradually being introduced to care work, there is evidence that they still desire to be 'real men' and enact normative masculinities. The reverberating message within toxic masculinities is that men do not cook, change diapers, or provide care (Plank, 2019). In instances where men do get involved, they do not see themselves as primary caregivers instead construct themselves as assistants e.g., assisting women with childrearing (Ratele et al., 2010).

Thus, doing what they regard as "dirty work" of assisting the learners when they pee, poo, or produce snot is another finding which emerged. Apart from the male teachers' intrinsic perception of seeing this as their responsibility, there is an assumption from the society seeking to suggest that FP is about doing "dirty work". In my previous work, I found that male teachers distanced themselves from any notions of care regardless of the gender of the child (Msiza, 2020a). In this thesis the male teachers' understanding of doing "dirty work" was gendered, in

that they were comfortable to assist boys only and hesitant to assist girls. The male teachers negotiated their teacher responsibilities of doing "dirty work", especially with opposite sex learners (girls), by relegating the responsibility to a female teacher or staff member. Care receiving – one of Tronto's (1993) phases of care – entails responses of those receiving care (in this case learners). The gendered approach to providing care among these participants appears not to take into consideration how girls and boys as receivers of care feel about the gendering of care provided to them. According to Tronto (1993), those receiving care might not respond to the gendered care in a uniform manner; the responses could be complex and this is something that requires further research in future both locally in South Africa and internationally.

8.5.2.2 The perception of child molestation

The participants' construction of masculinities around doing "dirty work" signifies the emergence of hybrid masculinities. Messerschmidt and Messner (2018) define hybrid masculinities as the incorporation of subordinated expressions of masculinities or caring practices into men's privileged identities. The participants demonstrated willingness to do "dirty work" which has been historically positioned as women's work (work done by subordinated identities), but they do so by expressing ease in being with boys. This narrative works in ways that reproduces the gender binary and heteronormativity and it does this by obscuring the process (because men are selective in doing "dirty work") (Bridges & Pascoe, 2018). Young girls are thought to be at high risk and vulnerable to sexual assault when young men handle them (Moosa & Bhana, 2020b). Be that as it may, the participants' understanding of doing "dirty work" was premised on gender role theory, stereotypes, and elements of heteronormativity. The main reason for avoiding assisting girls, which is visible in the findings, appears to be the fear of being suspected of child molestation. However, their understanding is oblivious to the fact that, even in assisting learners of the same sex, there could be suspicions of child molesting. Sexual assault appears to be understood by the participants from the perspective of heterosexuality, this is evident in the findings and in other studies. For example, the literature, especially by South African scholars studying men in the FP, shows that male FP teachers who engage in same-sex relations were positioned as caring and not a threat to young children (Moosa & Bhana, 2020c). This indicates the contradictions and gaps around FP teaching and sexual identities. It suggests that the pervasive violence by heterosexual men in South Africa on children, women, and the queer community (Gqola, 2015; Msibi, 2018) could be the reason why homosexual male FP teachers are in general perceived as caring and not

dangerous (Moosa & Bhana, 2020c). However, international scholars have found differing perspectives. For example, Wright (2018), who identified himself as gay in an autobiographical paper, details how he was constantly monitored during his counselling sessions with both boys and girls. This indicate that, internationally, men by virtue of their sex, are not trusted with young children.

8.5.2.3 Chivalry and fatherhood as protection

Kimmel (1994) states that masculinities are socially and culturally created. For the participants in this study, being comfortable with assisting the learners of the same sex (and not with the other) is one way in which the male teachers are possibly entrenching the gender binary. The findings show that to negotiate being caring FP teachers and to do "dirty work", some participants drew on chivalry, particularly on their identities as fathers. This means that they foregrounded their identity as fathers to protect themselves from suspicions of child molestation and the from discourse of toxic masculinities that do not see men as potential carers. Although, the participants drew on chivalry, Plank (2019) argues that chivalry is not necessarily about what men do; it is about what is subtle and often ignored which needs men to ask themselves why they do it. This means there are other reasons for men to be chivalrous and in this case the interviewed participants drew from chivalry to protect themselves from the suspicion of child molestation.

8.5.2.4 Professionalism as protection

In managing the suspicions and to negotiate doing care work, the participants reported foregrounding professionalism in carrying out their work. For instance, the participants foregrounded their teacher identities, arguing that being a male FP teacher who provides all forms of care requires professionalism. Therefore, in this instance, professionalism is enacted simultaneously with their masculinities, meaning professionalism is used to protect the male teachers from the suspicion of child molesting and fears (Msiza, 2016; Tennhoff et al., 2015; Warin, 2018). The way the participants understand and use "professionalism" is without a comprehensive intersectional understanding of identities. For instance, one might be professional by following all the ethical conducts in a working environment such as the FP. However, through the intersection of identities, the male FP teachers will not be immune to suspicions and the societal constructions of who should teach young children due to their sex and gender. Identities and categories position each individual differently in the society, because people's experiences are influenced by various factors taking place in mutual or diverse ways

(Collins & Bilge, 2016). Also, being a professional does not address the intrinsic understandings and personal convictions on class, sex, gender, and sexuality. The findings in this study and that of other scholars suggest that there is an assumption that "professionalism is gender neutral" (Hellman et al., 2016, p. 106). This means that, although the male FP teachers may draw on professionalism, they may still be fully attached to their various notions of manhood and care. Another possible use of "professionalism" is the assumption that it will give male FP teachers status since teaching in the FP is considered a low status profession locally and internationally (Petersen, 2014; Warin, 2018). Intersectionality thus amplifies our understanding (Messerschmidt, 2018) in how the male teachers negotiate their identities in the context of FP teaching and the concept of professionalism.

8.5.2.5 Male teachers as leaders

As noted in the previous section, male FP teachers emphasised professionalism in their work and made an assumption that professionalism will give FP teaching a better status. Therefore, another key point that emerged in the study relates to the embedded ways in which male dominance is entrenched in schools. I suggest here that the gender regimes currently in schools privilege and advance men at the expense of women. This is despite the preponderance of female teachers within the phase. The study found that men were openly accepted as leaders (e.g. heads of departments, sitting and leading sports committees). As discussed above, there was also hesitancy in seeing them as teachers who can provide care (Moosa & Bhana, 2017). Those in leadership positions mentioned above are expected to navigate being FP teachers and being leaders. Similar studies have shown that male teachers are both recruited to FP and actively encouraged to take up leadership positions (Palmer et al., 2019; Warin, 2018; Yang & McNair, 2019). In a female-dominant occupation like teaching in the FP, men are "disproportionately found in leadership roles" (Ljunggren et al., 2021, p. 78). Leadership is associated with power and often located in the realm of manhood; this form of gender hierarchy is a result of cultural historical processes (Messerschmidt, 2018). In addition, resulting from their gender identities, male FP teachers are constantly asked if they want to move to other phases or swap with a female teacher. A study conducted in New Zealand on principals found that the principals expected the male FP teachers to be real men and be nurturing (McGrath & Sinclair, 2013). Meaning, if they cannot enact acceptable expressions of masculinities, male teachers in the FP are not accepted or normalised (Brody & Gor Ziv, 2020). This notion suggests that, although men are entering the phase as teachers, as do women, the gender regime in some of the schools privileges men at the expense of women.

8.5.2.6 Experiences of receiving care and being father figures

Another finding that emerged suggests that, being caring FP teachers, the participants drew on their gender identities, including their historical experiences of care. Most of the participants received care from their mothers or grandmothers, including those who grew up in a nuclear family. Fathers were either physically present but emotionally absent or totally out of sight. Fathers and men in general have been socialised to avoid showing emotions and participating in caregiving (Plank, 2019); instead masculinities are constructed on the notions of machismo and doing hard manual labour. Since masculinities are also constructed on power, money, and materialism (Ratele, 2016), some of the fathers are out of sight because they haven't paid *inhlawulo* (bridal damages and acknowledging paternity), which is required by the bridal family for impregnating the girl. They are thus regarded by others and by themselves as fathers without *amandla* (financial power) (Hunter, 2006). Given these historical experiences and their gender identities, the findings show that the male teachers construct themselves as father figures and role models in the FP classrooms. Fatherhood appears to be a defining feature of their masculinities. Being a FP teacher and drawing from a fatherhood discourse allows them to construct their own father identity, which appears to be positive and caring (Elliott, 2016). The fatherhood discourse also allows the participants to respond to the failing masculinity in South Africa which is plagued by absent and uncaring fathers (Rabe, 2018). For instance, according to the 2019 general household survey by Statistics South Africa approximately 63% of children do not live with their fathers (Statistics South Africa, 2019). Being a father figure and role modelling, as forms of care, entail spending time with the learners and providing emotional support and care to those in need. It also seemed to be about providing care in a way that inspires the young learners to experience a caring father figure that they might not receive at home. The findings are consistent with the UK early childhood scholars such as Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) and Warin (2018). The scholars argue that some of the men improve in their caring relations when they become biological, social fathers or being involved in caring practices. The findings suggest that the men desired to participate fully in care work. The interviewed men are of the view that knowing more about care will enable them to participate in caring activities both at work and at home. This is important because masculinity scholars in South Africa such as Morrell and Jewkes (2014) have argued that, to encourage caring masculinities, we need to find ways to enable men to participate in caring activities. In a context like South Africa, culture and religion have always been used by men as a trope to avoid caring activities or by others to prevent men from participating in care work (Bhana & Moosa, 2016).

In this study, it was not the case. The male teachers were willing to participate in care work, although their participation was driven both by the notion of fatherhood and seeing care work as their professional responsibility in the FP. This shows that the male teachers studied are beginning to think about care and care work differently and are attempting to situate care as a moral concept (Tronto, 1993).

The findings have responded to the two key research questions. In the first question I have discussed the findings and demonstrated how male teachers understand the concept of care in foundation phase teaching. For instance, the findings show that the participants have a comprehensive understanding of care and its types. In question two, I have shown the nature of the relationship between male teachers' masculinities and their teacher identities. In instances where they wished to enact the type of care that they espoused (as demonstrated in the findings related to question 1), their masculinities and elements of toxic masculinities interfere with the caring process. This creates a further dilemma, because they also see caring as linked to their teacher identities. I have drawn both from the literature and the theories to make sense of these findings.

8.6 Contribution of the study

This section aims to demonstrate the original contribution made by the study to existing knowledge. The findings from the study provide new insights into male FP teachers' understanding of care. For instance, the findings suggest that men do care and are willing to be involved in caring activities (I expand on this later in the section). Below, I map out the existing selected debates in the field, starting with international studies, followed by local South African scholarship on men, masculinities, and care in the FP.

8.6.1 Summary of the existing international work

Internationally the area of male teachers in the FP has been extensively studied, particularly in European and North American countries. Scholars have theorised the work through feminist frameworks, with the predominant framework being masculinity theory (Connell, 1995). Existing debates have centred around troubling the role-modelling discourse of recruiting men to teach in the FP which has resulted from a moral panic (Martino, 2008; Martino, 2015; Mills et al., 2004). The call was driven by the fear that female teachers are feminising young boys (Francis & Skelton, 2001; Skelton, 2002, 2012).

The scholarship began with a focus on the construction and negotiation of masculinities amongst male FP teachers in the Global North (Buschmeyer, 2013; Jones, 2008; Trent, 2015). The literature shows that mainly men were constructing and negotiating their identities as pioneers, leaders, and protectors in the phase, identities aligned to the concept of hegemonic masculinity (Warin, 2016). There have also been studies on the perceived suspicion of paedophilia and child molestation on men entering the FP (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015; Cruickshank, 2018; Hellman et al., 2016). The male teachers who are employed in pre-schools are typically not allowed to change diapers due to the fear of paedophilia (Wright, 2018). In the past few years, international literature has been focusing on masculinities and care in the context of FP teaching. Hanlon (2012) and Hanlon and Lynch (2011) have studied how caring masculinities in FP teaching can contribute to gender equality within the phase and in the broader society. Masculinities scholars, such as, Hearn (2001, March); Scambor et al. (2014) and Scambor et al. (2013) have also explored how men and masculinities are sustaining the inequalities in the realm of care. The recent scholarship internationally is focussing on care in the FP and the recruitment and retention of male FP teachers (Brody et al., 2021; Rohrmann et al., 2021; Warin, 2018; Xu, 2020).

8.6.2 Summary of the existing South African work

Locally in South Africa, gender, masculinities and care have been studied by Morrell & Jewkes (2011, 2014). There was also a book published focusing on different types of care within various academic disciplines that was intended to start a scholarly conversation towards formulating a theory of care (Reddy et al., 2014). As with the international work, scholars have studied ways in which care is understood generally in South Africa and how it could be incorporated to the construction of masculinities (Morrell & Jewkes, 2014). Shefer (2014, p. 507) is of the view that "challenging the powerfully gendered nature of care, as well as the larger social devaluation of care practices, is therefore an important component of the large project of gender change".

In the context of FP teaching, the work on male teachers in the FP and care emerged in recent years. In South Africa the scholarship began with a study focusing on the perception of student-teachers located at a university in Gauteng[1] on men teaching in the FP (Petersen, 2014). This work was followed by studies on male student-teachers' perceptions of becoming a FP teacher (Mashiya, 2015; Mashiya et al., 2015). Similarly to international studies, Bhana and Moosa

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[1] Gauteng is one of the provinces in South Africa and is regarded as the economic hub of the country.

(2016) studied the failure to attract male student-teachers into the FP programme and the construction of their masculinities at a university located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal[2]. I have also studied the field previously in my master's thesis and focused on how in-service male FP teachers constructed their gender and teacher identities in the province of Mpumalanga (Msiza, 2016). Amongst the studies, I have also focussed on male FP teaching and homosexuality, particularly how male teachers negotiate their identities around the subject of homosexuality (Msiza, 2020a, 2021, May 26). All my studies were in the geographical context of Mpumalanga. The South African scholarship on male teachers in the FP is largely studied by Shaaista Moosa and Deevia Bhana, focusing on various topics around the theme of male FP teachers. Some of the areas of focus are the paedophilic threat, men managing in the early years, and the perception of primary school teachers on whether men can be carers (Bhana & Moosa, 2016; McGrath et al., 2020; Moosa & Bhana, 2017, 2018, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c). The studies by Moosa and Bhana have been conducted in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and the participants in these studies are both male and female teachers in primary schools.

The growth of research related to the field of male teachers in the FP in South Africa is not only about theorising and the geographical context. It has also been about the methodological approaches to studying the phenomenon. Kagola and Khau (2020) conducted a study in the Eastern Cape province using arts-based methodologies and the collage method to elicit data from the members of the school governing body (SGB) on their perception of employing and recruiting male FP teachers in the selected schools of the Eastern Cape. All South African studies on male teachers in the FP have also used feminist theories, mainly the theory of masculinities and the post-structural lenses, particularly Butler's work (ibid).

8.6.3 Contribution of the current study

In laying out the contribution that the study makes, I discuss the contribution to (1) New insights on the phenomenon; (2) Methodological innovation; (3) The theoretical contribution. In the discussions I make distinctions of the contributions in both the international and local context.

8.6.3.1 Contribution of new insights
Internationally the research on male teachers in the FP has made significant progress, and the international scholarship emanates from what Connell (2018) and Connell et al. (2017) refer to

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[2] KwaZulu-Natal is one of the coastal provinces in South Africa located in the south-east of the country.

as the global metropole/global North. The contribution that my study makes to international scholarship is adding new insights on the phenomenon from a global South context, particularly that of Africa. Connell (2018) argues that we need to recognise that the postcolonial world does produce knowledge, interpretations, and concepts. Consistent with the international studies, the findings revealed that the construction and negotiation of masculinities are caught up in how care is understood and in the caring activities carried out. Despite this, my findings have shown that male FP teachers are willing to do care work, which is a contribution since African men and masculinities are constantly perceived as homogenous and inherently problematic (Jewkes et al., 2015; Ratele, 2013).

Since the South African literature on male FP teaching and care is still emerging, my study in many ways makes a significant contribution towards understanding the phenomenon. The existing studies in South Africa have focused either on student-teachers who are still training or on primary school teachers in general. My study explored in-service male FP teachers who have completed their initial teacher education training and have, over the years, accumulated experience of teaching in the phase. The first insight that the study contributes to the topic of masculinities and FP teaching particularly in South Africa, relates to the male teachers' understandings of care-as-love, a finding that suggests one needs to first love the subject/object before care can be provided. For example, in the context of FP teaching, one needs to first love the learners before they can provide care. This is a significant contribution because historically and currently toxic masculinities in a broader society socialise men to avoid emotions and view love as weakness (Plank, 2019). In addition, men in South Africa are usually seen as dangerous, irresponsible, reckless and uncaring (Bhana, 2016a). The understanding of care-as-love is commendable for men; it is also comprehensive and driven by both empathy and compassion. Care-as-love is important since teaching in the FP is regarded as care work. While care-as-love is commendable in the context of men and masculinities, generally it remains unclear what happens to the responsibility of care when an individual doesn't feel love. This suggest that care-as-love requires further exploration in future research. Linked to this contribution is male teachers' understanding of care-as-social justice, in that, although care is premised on love, it is nonetheless given with an intention to address social problems. It is also important because it creates possibilities for us to deepen our understanding of caring masculinities and the generic caring practices in FP teaching.

Another insight that the study contributes to the topic of masculinities and FP teaching relates to the gendering of care in doing "dirty work". The existing studies specifically in South Africa

as indicated earlier, have shown that male teachers distance themselves from intimate caring practices such as assisting learners who peed, pooed or those with snot. Historically female teachers were perceived as natural carers and more suitable to do all the caring activities in the FP (Bhana, 2016a). In this study I found that they are willing to assist the learners, however they do it on gendered terms with the preference of boys over girls. The willingness to do the work even with boys is a contribution that no other study has made in the South African literature on masculinities and FP teaching, however the gendering of care is typical of gender stereotyping that is still a challenge in societies.

The third contribution that the study makes relates to the discourse of fatherhood and care in South Africa. About 63% of children do not live with their fathers in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2019). The statistics include fathers who are absent due to financial reasons, cultural reasons, those in prison, deceased and those who are migrant labourers, a situation that results from our economic and political past in South Africa (Richter & Morrell, 2018). The participants in this study were raised and received care from their mothers, which is consistent with the existing studies. The contribution that the study makes is about the fact that the male FP teachers are providing care despite their historical upbringing that is dominated by absent fathers or those who are emotionally unavailable. As a result of their upbringing, they see themselves as father figures for the FP learners and provide care holistically. Existing international literature has challenged the notion of father figures, stating that it is often premised on the ideals of hegemonic masculinity (Cushman, 2005). However, in the context of South Africa and FP teaching, the position of a father figure is enacted in response to a failing masculinity in South Africa, where a high percentage of the learners are without their fathers. This is not to deny that even in South Africa it could be fuelled by the notions of hegemonic masculinity, however, the distinction that my study makes is that the contribution is not based on a moral panic that boys will be feminised by female teachers, an issue that surfaces in the existing literature (Burn & Pratt-Adams, 2015; Skelton, 2012). The contribution to understanding fatherhood is consistent with other efforts made within the context of families, where extended members of the family take over as social fathers (Clowes et al., 2013).

The study also contributes with regards to the context. The "knowledge about gender not only has a politics, it has a geopolitics; and this geopolitics has a history." (Connell, 2018, p. 339). The study was conducted in Mpumalanga province, which has been a neglected site for research in South Africa. Looking at the existing studies in South Africa on male FP teachers, more work was conducted in other provinces especially in KwaZulu-Natal. There is not enough

scholarly feminist work focusing on the province of Mpumalanga and this study makes a direct contribution. Employment in Mpumalanga is predominantly understood around doing agricultural and mining work. My study has shown rural black African men's understanding of care in relation to their masculinities and teacher identities. In that, care work is also recognised as work apart from the dominant industries in the province which are driven by hegemonic expressions of masculinities. It is however unclear whether the participation in care work is not driven by the high unemployment rate in South Africa especially amongst the youth (Statistics South Africa, 2020). Although care work appears to be recognised as work in Mpumalanga, the male teachers showed dependence on notions of hegemonic masculinities by assisting boys only when doing "dirty work" and drawing on role modelling discourse which essentialises gender.

8.6.3.2 Methodological innovations

I used innovative methodologies in carrying out the study. In generating data I used a method of letter-writing (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000); the participants wrote letters to me. The participants were writing expressively on what it means to offer care in the FP. The innovative and creative method of letter-writing assisted me to generate rich data that represents the participants' expressions and thoughts of what it means to offer care in the FP. This study contributes as the first to use letter writing in studying male FP teachers in South Africa, despite the existing studies that have argued men as opposed to women are reluctant to write letters or journals (O'Connell & Dyment, 2004; O'Connell & Dyment, 2011). Unlike other methods such as interviews, which would have expected the participants to respond spontaneously to questions, the letter-writing method provided the participants with an opportunity and time to think, recall and refine their thoughts on what it means to offer care in the FP.

8.6.3.3 Theoretical contribution

When I started this study, I took heed of the argument by South African masculinity scholars such as Morrell (2016), who argued that in studying masculinities we need to balance the North-South perspectives, in that we theorise using the Global North tools while considering our signature particularly in Africa. Mfecane (2018) and Ratele (2016) have also argued that we should not other ourselves or our participants when studying men and masculinities and we should look at our participants from their full context.

The contribution that the study makes indicates that when studying masculinities and care we should not view the participants from a single category of identification/factor (e.g., as teachers, as men or as members of racial group), and that we need to employ an intersectional lens and

a comprehensive framework of care. A combination of theories as in my study can assist us to account for the diversity that exists in South Africa. As researchers we need to consider that caring practices for men are determined or shaped by hegemonic masculinities that are socially and culturally constructed (Kimmel, 1994). But most importantly in South Africa they were disrupted by the apartheid policies, which necessitated men to seek employment far from their homesteads and became migrant labourers. Therefore, colonialism and apartheid were not "footnotes in the history of masculinity… they were decisive in the making of modernity and modern gender relations" (Ratele, 2020a, p. 129). Studying rural African black men, especially on topics such as care, is an important scholarly contribution. Ratele (2016, 2020b) argues that given the fact that black men have been excluded in many significant areas in the world, writing about them is to give them a gendered significance and to liberate them from toxic expressions of masculinities.

Another theoretical contribution that the study makes relates to indications of hybrid masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2018). Through hybrid masculinities, men can enact problematic masculinities in spaces where they are a minority; for instance globally, men are a minority in FP teaching. Taking advantage of their minority status, they can enact acceptable expressions depending on a context. When the environment is fit for hegemonic masculinities, they enact them and it is the same when it is fit for caring masculinities. Bridges and Pascoe (2018, p. 269) rightly put it that the performance of "hybrid masculinities helps us to recognise that meaningful changes in or successful challenges to systems of gendered power and inequality are more complex than they may at first appear". While the indications of hybrid masculinities are not explicit in the present study, they warrant studying in future research, particularly within South African FP teaching.

8.7 Implications of the study

The implications of the study are discussed as follows; I begin with implications for policy, followed by implications for practice and the implications of the findings for future research. The implications they are not only for education, but they extend to masculinities, gender and the broader society.

8.7.1 Policy

Informed by the findings, related to care-as-love and professionalism as protection, the implications that the findings have at the level of policy relate to the understanding of care in

the FP contexts. The findings showed willingness by male teachers to do care work, albeit gendered by whether the care is for boys or girls. Therefore, there is a need for a policy to regulate care in FP contexts. The policy could stipulate the parameters and extent to which teachers (both male and female) can perform in certain types of care, for instance doing "dirty work", comforting a bereaved child, or providing care to address social challenges. Overall, the policy should be about protecting both teachers and the learners. The policy will be helpful in eradicating grey areas about the types or degrees of care that each teacher can enact. It will also eradicate grey areas around teachers who are privileged or marginalised by one of their identities. For instance, female teachers are privileged and trusted because of their sex, while male teachers are ostracised for their sex and history of toxic masculinities.

Another area of policy which may be informed by the finding on male teachers as leaders is to develop or update the current teacher recruitment policies in the Department of Basic Education of South Africa. The attempts by principals to move or swap male FP teachers to other phases due to their sex and gender signal the need for a clear policy on teacher recruitment and guidelines to retain both male and female FP teachers. The policy should provide guidelines both at management level (principals) and governance level (school governing bodies) for smooth implementation.

8.7.2 Implications for teacher education and professional development (practice)

South African teachers are guided by the norms and standards of being a professional teacher. One of the norms is pastoral care. At the level of practice and the finding on perceived child molestation, there should be training offered for teachers, principals, and the governance component to learn about the meaning of pastoral care and caring teachers. The training could follow an intersectional approach and address the gendered nature of care, class, race, sexuality and age. The training could also deal with the subtle elements of hegemonic masculinity, such as the notion of care as protection and the implications for the school's gender regime in assisting boys and handing girls to female teachers.

More specific work should also be done at teacher education institutions, and this is informed by the finding on gendering of care. Some institutions offer modules covering gender and sexuality topics, however, these are offered from a generic perspective. Institutions should bring under thoughtful scrutiny the topic of how care is expressed by both male and female teachers. Early childhood education disciplines should integrate the issue of gender and care in their modules, so that it is specific and addressed at a specialisation level. Introducing robust

engagements related to gender, sexuality and care at a teacher education level has the possibility to address male shame, gender stereotypes and notions of toxic masculinities, and to familiarise student-teachers with the FP teaching context. I only mention those related to men and masculinities because of the current study, however the benefits cover all the student-teachers. Also, the engagements could include being a professional teacher in the FP to enable prospective teachers to graduate with a full understanding of what it means to be FP professional teacher instead of using it as a shield when suspected of child molestation. In a nutshell, teacher education institutions should provide a gender sensitive curriculum that prepares teachers who have confidence and agency on issues of gender, sexuality and care.

8.7.3 Implications for future research

Beyond the findings of my study, there are still knowledge gaps on the phenomenon. Drawing from the findings on the gendering of care, there are implications for future research. It could focus on the experiences of FP teachers who engage in same-sex relations and particularly on how they negotiate their identities and how they understand doing care work in the FP contexts. The area of sexual identities, specifically in the FP teaching (Grade R-3) has not been fully studied in South Africa and it requires scholarly attention to eradicate the existing confusions and problematic assumptions about sexual identities. Research in this area will also address the normalised assumptions that seem to suggest that male teachers who engage in same-sex relations will automatically be good with learners and care work (Moosa & Bhana, 2020c).

Another implication for future research relates to studying the leadership and managerial aspirations of male FP teachers in South Africa; this emanates partly from the findings on male teachers as leaders. The male teachers in the FP are a minority internationally, and studying their leadership and managerial aspirations will assist with ensuring that men are not privileged for leadership positions because of their sex or gender in the FP. It appears that the patriarchal notion of assuming that men are better leaders could manifest in those areas where women are currently dominant, thus contributing to the historical and existing gender hierarchy that presents men as superior and women as inferior. If the context of work is not studied thoroughly, we run a risk of re-masculinising schools and reversing existing equity and gender equality gains in other spheres of society.

Another important area for future research that I have identified as a gap both internationally and in South Africa is the FP learners' understanding of receiving care from their teachers, including the meanings that they attach when taught and cared for by a male or female teacher

as well as the reasons thereof. Since they are young children, this could be done using arts-based methods. Research on FP learners in such issues as gender, sexual identities and race is generally very limited and is an important topic to explore, especially since learners are in most cases at the receiving end of teaching and care. The current conversation is driven by adult fears and anxieties on caregiving, and the conversation is missing the important voices of young learners.

8.8 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a discussion and conclusion of the study. To reiterate, in the study I was concerned with how men conceptualise and understand care. In each of the sections in this chapter I have done the following: I have reflected on the methodology and the theoretical framework that were used in the study, I proceeded to present a review of the previous chapters. In addition, I discussed the main findings, followed by highlighting the potential contribution that the findings make to the scholarly literature. I have also discussed the implications of the findings to policy, practice, and research. In conclusion therefore, men like all human beings have shown that they are able to notice care, determine measures to address it and express willingness to do care, but toxic and hegemonic constructions of masculinities are interfering with practices of care. The work on male teachers in the FP in South Africa remains needed and pivotal for the transformation of day-to-day gender relations in professional spaces and households.

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Appendix 1: Data generation methods

Research interview-conversation

Participants Information

Name & surname: _____ Time: _____
Date of Interview: ____/____/2017   Place: _____

Interview-conversation, Is mainly conversational. Below are prompts to start the conversations and where there is a need I will probe.

First Visit

1. Introduction
2. Explaining more about the study
3. Delivering the letter to the participant
4. Familiarising myself with the context

Second Visit

- Understanding the men's background
- Engaging in their historical upbringing in their life.
    - *Tell me about yourself, where were you born and studied?*
    - *How would you describe the area in which you grew up in?*
    - *What are the reasons for choosing teaching especially FP?*
- Discussing the themes emerging from the letter.

Third visit

- Focus on professional identity and masculinity
    - What would you say is your understanding of care?
    - Share how you do care or observed people doing care.
    - Why do you or they do care in particular ways?
    - Would you say there are challenges in offering care, what are they?
    - Do the challenges relate to you being a man?
- Activities expected to do in the FP related to care.
- School and community reaction towards them doing what is perceived as care work as men in the FP

Fourth Visit

- How they see their future in the FP and teaching profession
- How they imagine gender equality within education
- Their views on the call for more men
- Advice they would give to young matriculants wanting to do FP teaching
- What other caring activities they are engaged in

Appendix 2: Letter writing as a field text

#This is an example of a letter but the participants can write in any form in which they are comfortable with and in their own language should they wish to use it

Participant's Name: _____

<u>Letter on what it means to offer care in the foundation phase.</u>

Dear_____

Appendix 3: Informed consent form

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Edgewood Campus

Private Bag x 03

Ashwood

3605

Date: ___/___/2018

Greetings Sir

REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY

My name is **Vusi Msiza**, I am a **Doctoral (PhD)** student at the **University of KwaZulu Natal, Edgewood Campus** located in Pinetown. You are kindly invited to participate in my study titled; **Masculinity and care: Narratives of male foundation phase teachers in Mpumalanga province**. The purpose of this study is to explore how men understand care in the context of being men and foundation phase teachers.

The plan of data generation is as follows; I will give you a letter template and you write a letter addressing it to anyone or to your younger self, on your views regarding what offering care is for foundation phase. This will be followed by an interview-conversations where you will share your lived experiences relating to teaching in the FP. The duration of data generation will be three to four weeks in the first and second term of 2018. I will come and introduce myself to the school and have a generic conversation with you, then leave the letter template with you to write. The interview-conversations will begin from my second visit.

Should you wish to contact me, my supervisor or UKZN Ethics office see details below:

Supervisor	Researcher	Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration
Name: Thabo Msibi	**Name:** Vusi Msiza	Research Office, Westville Campus Govan Mbeki Building Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za
Qualification: Phd	**Qualification:** MEd	
Telephone No: 031 260 3686	**Telephone No:** 031 260 3755	
Cell: 072 422 7261	**Cell:** 078 300 2709	
Email: msibi@ukzn.ac.za	**Email:** msizav@ukzn.ac.za	

Kindly take note of the following:

1. Your confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed, you will only be identified by a pseudonym (not your real name) and responses kept confidential.
2. Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved when participating in this study.
3. There are no right or wrong answers, try to respond to each question in a manner that will reflect your own personal views.
4. You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalised for taking such an action during data collection.
5. The interview may last for about 90 to 120 minutes and under no circumstances will you be coerced to disclose information you don't wish to disclose.
6. Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the generated data will be used for purposes of this research only.
7. The data will be stored in a safe place and be destroyed after a period of five years.
8. If you consent to be interviewed, please indicate whether or not you allow the interview to be recorded (by ticking as applicable):

   – I hereby consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded

Equipment	Consent	Do not consent
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

Thank you for contributing to this research study

Declaration

I………………………………………………….. (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire

_____   _____

Signature of the Applicant   **Date**

Appendix 4: Letter to the schools

![University of KwaZulu-Natal logo]

<div align="right">

Edgewood Campus

School of Education

Private Bag X03

Ashwood

3605

</div>

Date: 23 January 2018

Dear Principal

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH A MALE FOUNDATION PHASE EDUCATOR

My name is **Vusi Msiza**, Student number **210555110,** I am a **Doctoral (PhD)** student at the **University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus** in Pinetown. The title of my study is: **Masculinity and care: Narratives of male foundation phase teachers in Mpumalanga province**. The purpose of this study is to explore how men understand care in the context of being men and foundation phase teachers.

I intend to conduct the interviews mainly after school, when the teacher is available this is to avoid interrupting teaching and learning in your school. I have planned for four interviews and they will be conducted on different dates. I assure the school and the prospective participant that I will communicate the dates prior coming to the school. The interviews will be conducted during the first and second term of this year 2018.

The information gathered in this research will be kept confidential (including the name of the school and participant) and the research is only used for the purpose of my degree. I kindly request that should the school grant permission for my study, please complete the form which is attached herein.

Should you wish to contact me, my supervisor or UKZN Ethics office see details below:

Supervisor	Researcher	Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration
Name: Thabo Msibi **Qualification:** Phd **Telephone No:** 031 260 3686 **Cell:** 072 422 7261 **Email:** msibi@ukzn.ac.za	**Name:** Vusi Msiza **Qualification:** Med **Telephone No:** 078 300 2709 **Email:** vusimsi@gmail.com	Research Office, Westville Campus Govan Mbeki Building Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Kind Regards
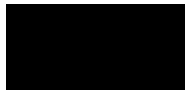
Appendix 5: Access to schools

School's address:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Tell/Cell: _____

Date: ___/___/2018

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration
Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

<u>Letter to grant permission of access to the school</u>

Declaration

I…………………………………… Principal of……………………………… (School name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I grant permission for…………………………….. (Researcher's name) to conduct his Doctoral (PhD) research in my school, by having multiple interview-conversations with a male Foundation phase teacher.

I understand that all the information will be kept confidential and will only be used for the educational purpose of his Doctoral (PhD) degree.

ignature of the Principal _____

STAMP

187
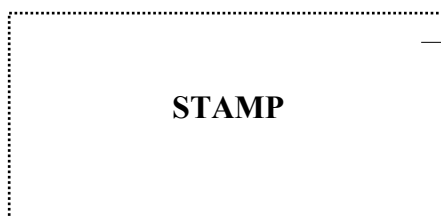
Appendix 6: Mpumalanga Department of Education approval

education
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Building No. 5, Government Boulevard, Riverside Park, Mpumalanga Province
Private Bag X11341, Mbombela, 1200.
Tel: 013 766 5552/5115, Toll Free Line: 0800 203 116

Litiko le Temfundvo, Umnyango we Fundo   Departement van Onderwys   Ndzawulo ya Dyondzo

Vusi Jan Msiza
Edgewood Campus
School of Education
Room S505, MTB
Private Bag x03
ASHWOOD
3605

RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: VUSI JAN MSIZA

Your application to conduct research study was received and is therefore acknowledged. The title of your study is confirmed under the title which reads thus: **"Masculinity and care: Narrative of male foundation phase teachers in Mpumalanga Province."** I trust that the aims and the objectives of the study will benefit the department especially the curriculum division. Your request is approved subject to you observing the provisions of the departmental research policy which is available in the departmental website. You are also requested to adhere to your University's research ethics as spelt out in your research ethics document.

In terms of the research policy, data or any research activity can only be conducted after school hours as per appointment with affected participants. You are also requested to share your findings with the relevant sections of the department so that we may consider implementing your findings if that will be in the best interest of the department. To this effect, your final approved research report (both soft and hard copy) should be submitted to the department so that your recommendations could be implemented. You may be required to prepare a presentation and present at the department's annual research dialogue.

For more information kindly liaise with the department's research unit @ 013 766 5476 or a.baloyi@education.mpu.gov.za.

The department wishes you well in this important project and pledges to give you the necessary support you may

MRS MOC MHLABANE
HEAD: EDUCATION

08/ 5/ 18
DATE

MPUMALANGA
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Appendix 7: Ethical clearance

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

13 June 2018

Mr Vusi Jan Msiza (210555110)
Scool of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Msiza,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0409/018D
Project Title: Masculinity and care: Narratives of male Foundation Phase teachers in Mpumalanga Province

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 03 May 2018, 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

....
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Thabo Msibi
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
Cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

Appendix 8: Turnitin report

Document Viewer

Turnitin Originality Report

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PhD thesis 2022 By Vusi Msiza

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Appendix 9: Proof of language editing

Crispin Hemson
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Glenwood
Durban
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0829265333

This is to confirm that I have undertaken language editing of a doctoral thesis by Vusi Msiza, entitled **Masculinity and care: Narratives of male teachers in Mpumalanga schools.**

6th February 2022