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Young boys at play?
Gender relations and township primary school learners' construction of masculinities in South Africa

by

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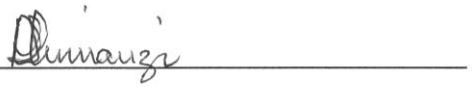
Declaration

I declare that **Young boys at play? Gender relations and township primary school learners' construction of masculinities in South Africa** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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21/10/2020

Date

Ethics statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this dissertation, has obtained, for the research description in this work, the applicable research ethics approval.

The author declares that he has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of ethics for reserachers and the policy guidelines for responsible research.

Abstract

This study explores the social construction of masculinity among young boys and its impact on gender relations at two township primary schools in South Africa. Drawing from the conceptual ideas of Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities this study explores the views and experiences of boys and girls on what it means to be a 'real boy'. The inclusion of girls in the social construction of masculinity and the use of multi-data collection methods sets this study apart from the other studies carried out with young boys.

A purposive sampling method was used in selecting the 37 boys and girls who participated in this qualitative study. Focus group discussions, diaries and detailed individual interviews were used to explore how masculinities are socially and individually constructed amongst Grade 7 peers. Focus group discussions helped in understanding the social face of male gender identity construction while the diaries gave insight into its private face. The fear of being labelled gay resulted in some boys adopting contradictory positions in the production of their public and private selves. During focus group discussions they argued against homosexuality but in diaries they refer to it in affirming ways.

Various themes with violence and sexual objectification perpetrated by the boys being central were identified in this study. Failure to privilege male homosocial relations alongside hierarchical heterosexual relations results in boys being relegated to an inferior status within the gender hierarchy. Some boys in this study verified certain girls as 'beautiful' while feminising those boys who failed to endorse this division as 'permanent cows with blind eyes'. Some boys also adopted bravery bravado to portray themselves as real boys to other boys and to acquire heterosexual partners. Social differences based on the binary of belonging and not belonging were also adopted to create and recreate dominant positions and inferiorise gendered 'others'. Gender-based violence by these boys against girls reflects the violence against women in general in South Africa. However, some boys and girls deviated from the dominant positions on being a real boy by resisting the imposition of unequal and dehumanising gender and sexual designs. The views of some girls, mostly in their diaries, show that they were not passively accepting male domination as they denounced and also acted against certain practices of hegemonic masculinities.

Key terms: masculinity; boyhood; girlwood; township primary schools; South Africa

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Lastly but not least, I would like to acknowledge and express my deepest gratitude to my late mother and brother for laying the foundation to my academic life through funding my early education and giving moral support.

List of Tables

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CSM	Critical Studies on Men
CSMM	Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DSD	Department of Social Development
DWCPD	Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities
GBV	Gender- Based Violence
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
IPV	Intimate partner violence
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LO	Life Orientation
NS	Natural Sciences
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SA	South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBST	School- Based Support Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1. 1 Introduction

Critical studies on men and masculinities (CSMM) is a relatively new and rapidly expanding research field (Connell 1996; Connell 2006; (Shefer, Stevens & Clowes 2010; Beasley 2012; Connell 2012; Morrell, Jewkes, Lindegger & Hamlall 2013; Ratele 2013; Ratele 2016a) which emerged in the early 1980s (Morrell 2007a; Anderson & McCormark 2015; Jewkes, Morrell, Hearn, Lundqvist, Blackbeard, Lindegger, Sikweyiya and Gottzén 2015). Shefer *et al* (2010: 511) point out that "Studies that fall within this emerging field recognise that gender expresses the multifaceted and hierarchical relationships between and amongst groups of men as well as between men and women". Shefer *et al* (2010) proceed to point out that these studies take an intersectional approach to gender and other categories of difference in understanding how masculinities are constructed.

Critical studies on men and masculinities place men, boys and masculinities under an exploratory spotlight (Shefer *et al* 2010). This field shows that the studies are about men, critical and explicitly gendered (Hearn 1997; 2004; 2012). Hearn, however, argues that men instead of masculinities should be the object of analysis. The point of departure in this study is boys' involvement in social relations that constitute the gender order in a township school context. It is thus a critical study on the gender of boys. To understand more deeply, this study examines how both boys and girls reflect upon the construction of boyhood masculinities. The voices and lamentations of the girls, especially in their diaries bring in a unique experience in the construction of young masculinities and gender relations. The inclusion of girls sets this study apart from other studies in this field. Their alternative voices and disruptive practices of rejecting and denouncing certain practices of hegemonic masculinities are put to the fore.

South Africa is regarded as one of the leading countries in the study of masculinities in the developing world (Redpath, Morrell, Jewkes & Peacock 2008) although very little has been done with regard to young masculinities let alone in conjunction with other categories of difference. Masculinity, an inseparable aspect of gender cannot be observed as an entity but in conjunction with other social divisions of power (see Arrighi, 2007, Steyn & Van Zyl

2009; Shefer, Stevens and Clowes 2010; Spade & Valentine 2011). Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity and masculinities or ruling masculinities has been used in understanding gender extensively in the past few decades. However, in as much as it has been used extensively in the critical studies of men it has also been heavily criticised (see Donaldson 1993; Wetherell & Edley 1999; Demetriou 2001; Hearn 2004; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Moller 2007; Ratele 2008; Hearn 2012; Jewkes *et al* 2015). In light of the numerous criticisms the concept has received, despite its usefulness, the researcher's study will dwell on masculinities in its plural form as a way of reflecting boyhood. The researcher will argue that masculinities are created at both the social and individual levels, "something males do and establish in ongoing activity in relation to females, to other males, but also in relation to their own inner lives" (Ratele 2008: 517). In other words as argued by Donaldson on hegemonic masculinity "it is both a personal and collective project"(Donaldson 1993: 645). In this study the researcher thus tries to identify and explore the different forms in which masculinity as a collective social form is expressed in township primary schools in South Africa. The researcher also pays attention to non-collective new ways of being a real boy as gender change reveals that men differ (Morrell 2001a). Along the same line Jewkes *et al* (2015: 113) argue that "Masculinities are multiple, fluid and dynamic and hegemonic positions are not the only masculinities available in a given society",

South Africa's unique and complex historical background centred on apartheid and racism plays a part on much of the work on masculinity in the country (see Morrell 2007b; Bhana 2008; Ratele 2016b). The old racist barriers have disappeared in South Africa but most blacks are still located in the townships and most of their children attend school there due to economic disadvantages, hence gender should be studied in conjunction with other categories of difference. Violence is a common feature in South Africa especially in the townships (see South African Council of Educators (SACE) 2011; Mampane & Bouwer 2011; Development, Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities and UNICEF (DSD, DWCPD & UNICEF); Msibi 2012; Manyike 2014; Mathews & Benvenuti 2014). It is thus one of the objectives of this study to explore and consider repertoires of violence and discipline in schools and the generalised violence that typifies dominant constructions of masculinity.

Since masculinity is actively and continuously defined in our daily interactions with one another, this research will take a social construction framework for analysing gender.

Having introduced the topic under research by giving its overall overview the researcher now moves on to explicitly explain the rationale of the study. The aim, objectives and research questions of the study are also clearly stated below.

1.2 Rationale of the study

Constructions of masculinities by young boys and their impact on gender relations between young boys and girls in South African township primary schools inform the problem of this research. Much attention has been focused on construction of masculinity by boys at secondary level (see Morrell 2001a; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman 2002; Hamlall & Morrell 2012; Bantje & Nieuwoudt 2014;Langa 2010, 2016) and young men who have finished school in the townships (see Wood & Jewkes 2001; Mfecane, Struthers, Gray & McIntyre 2005; Sauls 2005; Lindegaad & Henrisen 2005; Gibson, Dinan & McCall 2005; Eckman, Jain, Kambou, Bartel & Crownover 2007; Ratele 2015) yet very little has been done on the formation of young masculinities (Renold 2007 and Bhana 2013) and the way boys and girls understand and behave in relation to each other (Martin &Muthukrishna 2011). A third of the South African population is made up of children below the age of 15 (Morrell, Jewkes, Lindegger 2012) yet this is the under-researched group in terms of constructions of masculinity.

Much research on young boys and girls in South Africa has been carried out on sexual violence in schools and life in general (see Parkes 2007; Prinsloo & Moletsane 2013; Mathews & Benvenuti 2014) but very little has been done in relation to construction of masculinity and its impact on gender relations. Studies on children should go beyond a discussion of sexual abuse or deviance (see Renold 2007; Bhana & Pattman 2011; Bhana 2013a; Bhana 2015) to focus on the formation of young masculinities in relation to these abusive ways. Sexuality is enshrined in the way boys and girls define, negotiate and consolidate their gender relations yet issues of gender and sexuality remain under researched and under investigated in the early adolescent stages in the township primary schools of South Africa. The poverty stricken contexts bring with them complex intersectionalities of oppressive social relations (see Manyike 2014) which tend to influence constructions of masculinity. Whilst the intersectionality of masculinity and other categories of difference in the workplace and young adult lives has been extensively researched (see Adib & Guerrier 2003), investigation into how masculinity interacts with other factors such as race, ethnicity, class, age and nationality in primary schools in the townships of South Africa has been less explicitly considered.

Many South African men exhibit violent behaviour in their intimate relationships (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrells & Dunkle 2009). Ratele (2008) contends that traumatic acts of violence against women and girls in several African societies are a daily occurrence. Violence is power related and such violence is nurtured from childhood as boys construct masculinity. Connell (2003:19) acknowledges that some gender equality advocates at times "assume that if boys were socialised differently, they would automatically behave better towards women when they are men", but this is a simplistic statement considering how education works. Although violence occurs in the context of conflict it is the construction and displays of masculinity which have the greatest bearing on whether violence erupts or not (Hamlall & Morrell 2012). What is most glaring in the existing literature is a lack of study of this violence and harassment in relation to masculinity construction among senior primary school boys in the townships. The voices of the girls in challenging and rejecting this dominant form of masculinity are also lacking in the existing literature. Mathews & Benvenuti (2014:26) arguing on violence against children in general point out that it is unfortunate that "South Africa lacks both national empirical data on the exact magnitude of the problem, and *a limited research base on the causes and effects of violence against children in the local context*" [researcher's emphasis].

Issues of violence and discipline within the school context and their relationship to the construction of masculinity will be investigated. The use of violence in controlling children can result in children thinking violence is a legitimate way of managing conflicts. The use of corporal punishment undoubtedly influences constructions of masculinity (Morrell 2001d). Bhana (2006:174) points out that "[c]orporal punishment has an impact on the shaping of identities and it reduces positive relations and affects what is considered appropriate behaviour". While corporal punishment has been banned in SA through the South African Schools Act 108 of 1996 some teachers may continue to use some alternative undesirable ways of disciplining learners. In some parts of the world, SA included, some teachers "may use gender as a means of control, for instance, shaming boys by saying they are "acting like a girl" (Connell 1996:217. Internal brackets in original text). In some studies, where nonviolent disciplining methods were used in schools it was observed that it was different between boys and girls and in most cases it advantaged girls (Connell 1996; Martin & Muthukrishna 2011). This can create an impression that boys are stronger and can endure more pain than the girls. In a school where there are no strict disciplinary systems in place "'protest masculinity' may be constructed through defiance of authority" (Connell 1996:217. Internal brackets in original

text). Few studies have explored the gendered dimension of corporal punishment (Morrow & Singh 2015) yet the way schools instill discipline may have an influence in the way boys construct masculinity (Morrell 2001d; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003).

In the researcher's unpublished masters' dissertation, it was observed that girls were forcibly fondled, subjected to aggressive sexual advances and verbally degraded by the boys especially the older ones in their classes (Chimanzi 2016). I think a solution to this problem and others experienced at school can be achieved through an understanding of how masculine identities are formed. This view prompted the researcher to want to explore violence, sexuality and other categories of difference to further understand how boys construct masculinity and its impact on gender relations in the township context so that more policies can be designed to help girls and some boys feel more comfortable and safe in the schools.

Since masculinities are fractured, fluid and dynamic, it appears they are far from settled. Everywhere and every time "a whole lot of people are working very hard to produce what they believe to be appropriate masculinities" (Connell 1996:210).

Renold (2007), in her study of two contrasting primary schools in the United Kingdom (UK), contends that schools have become important social arenas for the production and reproduction of learners' sexual cultures.

This study will thus be conducted to establish the way in which Grade 7 boys in two townships of SA construct masculinity amongst peers in the school environment and how it impacts on gender relations. An understanding of the fragmentation, fluidity and diversity of masculinities in conjunction with other categories of difference in the townships and their impact on gender relations will also help in enriching the study of gender and the designing of gender policies in schools let alone reducing violence in the adult world.

1.3. Aim and research objectives of the study

1.3.1 Overall aim

The aim of this project is to explore how masculinities are individually and socially constructed amongst Grade 7 peers, also through violence, and how these constructions impact on gender relations in South African township primary schools.

1.3.2 Research objectives

To achieve the aim, this project has three objectives:

- To generate new qualitative data on the ways in which masculinities and gender relations are formed among South African primary school boys.
- To contribute knowledge of how research conducted in South African context can enrich our research practices and theoretical developments in critical studies of men and masculinities and in boyhood studies.
- To disseminate theoretical and empirical knowledge not only to academic audiences but also to policy makers and educators so as to more widely inform policy and practice in the areas of gender equality and violence.

1.4. Research questions

As grounded in the overall aim, objectives and theoretical premise, the research questions are as follows:

- What are the masculinities expressed in individual and collective social forms in two township primary schools of Ekurhuleni in South Africa?
- What is the nexus between constructions of masculinity and class, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and nationality?
- How are boys' identities drawn from repertoires of violence and discipline in schools, and the generalised violence that typifies dominant constructions of masculinity?
- How do constructions of masculinity systematically affect girls' and boys' schooling and life in general?

1.5 Theoretical framework of the study

A number of theories have been used to explain issues pertaining to gender relations, but the notable ones are the sex role theory and social constructionist theory. While Connell argues in support of the social constructionist theory she points out that the sex role theory is still considered one of the most popular theories of learning gender (Connell 2009). Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity also informs this study although it has been heavily criticised. Hegemonic masculinity, as part of Connell's gender order theory, is a formation that legitimises men's dominance over women and some men. These are configurations of

gender practices which serve to legitimate patriarchy (Connell .1995). This theory is explained in detail when discussing the theorists informing this study in section 2.3.1 in Chapter Two.

Intersectionality, a concept developed by Crenshaw (Crenshaw 1991; Yuval-Davis 2006; Weldon 2008), is also important in understanding the oppressive social relations in the context of the school. In this study the researcher uses this theory to explore the construction of masculinities in relation to class, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality and nationality among young boys and girls in a school context.

Another theory prudent in understanding boys behavior is performativity. To Butler gender is a "stylised repetition of acts" (Butler 1999: 519). Boys' behaviour in public life could be different in their private life thus the use of focus group interviews and diaries in this study.

Hegemonic masculinity, intersectionality and performativity are important concepts in the social construction of masculinities. The central theory informing this study is thus the social constructionist theory. In this study the researcher will critically study the social construction of masculinities in which the centrality of power is of utmost importance. To clearly explain the social construction theory, the researcher will compare it to the sex role theory as argued and supported by Kimmel.

1.5.1 A critical discussion of the sex role theory in comparison to the theory of the social construction of gender

Citing Mills, Kimmel (2008: 98) points out that "the goal of a sociological perspective would be to locate an individual in both time and space, to provide the social and historical contexts in which a person constructs his or her identity". From a sociological point of view individuals thus create their identity within both historical and social contexts. Robinson (2008:56) supports these views by pointing out that "social constructionist theories are best suited to explain men's behaviour in a contemporary, historical and cross-cultural context".

In this research gender is argued from a sociological perspective following Kimmel's social constructionist perspective. In his effort to locate gender as a social construct Kimmel (2008: 100) says, "When we say that gender identity is socially constructed, what we do mean is that our identities are fluid assemblages of the meanings and behaviours that we construct from the values, images, and prescriptions we find in the world around us". As boys and girls

interact with each other, they do so actively as they construct meanings and behaviours from the clues around them.

While the sex role theory is arguably still considered the most popular view of gender learning (Connell 2009) some sociologists feel it is inadequate when it comes to understanding the complexities of gender as a social institution (Kimmel 2004). Sociological understandings of gender begin, historically, with a critique of the sex role theory because of its inadequacy (Kimmel 2008).

Boys and girls do not learn roles by rote as they are not passive recipients of the socialisation process. In the sex role theory people seem to learn roles through socialisation and then perform them for others. Individuals seem to be locked into stereotypes. This makes it more theoretical (Kimmel 2008) as boys and girls play engaging actively with their surroundings and describing things in their own terms (Connell 2002). The boys and girls thus actively construct their identities, and do not learn them by rote.

According to Kimmel, the sex role theory portrays a singular normative definition of masculinity. A more satisfying definition of masculinity must accommodate different forms of masculinity as constructed and expressed by different groups of men (Kimmel 2004). More importantly sociologists see the difference between masculinities or femininities as expressing the opposite relationship than do the sex role theorists. The sex role theorists, if they ever talk of differences at all, they see the differences as failure to conform to the normal sex role while sociologists argue that one cannot see or understand differences in masculinity or femininity without first looking at the ways in which institutional and interpersonal engagements structure the ways in which members of those groups actively construct their identities (Kimmel 2008).

Kimmel also argues that gender is not only plural but also relational. Masculinity has meaning in relation to femininity (Kimmel 1987). Sex role theory herds boys into a masculine corral and girls into a feminine one. However, "men construct their ideas of what it means to be men in *constant* reference to definitions of femininity" (Kimmel 2008:103. emphasis in original text).

Kimmel also argues that because gender is plural and relational it is also situational. What it means to be a man varies with the context. Gender is thus "a specific set of behaviors that is produced in specific social situations. And thus gender changes as the situation changes"

(Kimmel 2008: 103). The sex role theory cannot adequately account for the difference between men and women or their definitions of masculinity and femininity in different situations without clearly assuming some theory of deviance (Kimmel 2008). It can be argued that "perhaps [the] most significant problem in sex role theory is that it *depoliticizes* gender, making gender a set of individual attributes and not an aspect of social structure" (Kimmel 2008: 103 emphasis in original text).

The sex role theory seems to imply that the female role and male role are complementary, thus neglecting the question of power and conflict which is central in the study of gender (Kimmel 2004; 2008). It can be argued that "a pluralistic and relational theory of gender cannot pretend that all masculinities and femininities are created equal" (Kimmel 2008: 103).

Power is not the property of an individual but a property of a social group. Power is intertwined with our social lives to the extent that it is invisible to those who are privileged to possess it (Kimmel 2008). It can thus be argued that "the invisibility of masculinity as the unexamined norm turns out to reproduce the power differences between women and men" (Kimmel 2008:114). Through the way men and boys have been socialised, possessing power appears normal to them. Only people who are constrained by it such as women and effeminate men can feel the power being exerted on them.

In the researcher's conclusion on the work of Kimmel, he reiterates that gender is not a component of fixed or static identity but the product of those interactions. West and Zimmerman argue that "a person's gender is not simply an aspect of what one is, but, fundamentally, it is something that one does, and does recurrently, in interaction with others" (Kimmel 2008:116). In this study the constant and continuous interaction of boys with other boys and girls within the school context is important in understanding how they construct masculinities.

The social constructionist theory like the CSMM perspective emphasises the centrality of power in gender relations. In this study the researcher thus critically studies boys and masculinities being informed by the social constructionist theory. The researcher uses the phrase real boy to show the active performance of young masculinities by some boys. This activeness refers to boys who resort to certain rhetoric and practices to try to dominate those around them, rather than just 'actively performing' masculinity. It is the most normative and dominant form of boyhood. This phrase real boy is also understood by young boys and girls

rather than a term like masculinity. In this study being a real boy is therefore inextricably linked to actively constructed male identities. The use of this phrase is also in line with other research on the social construction of young masculinities (see Epstein, Kehily & Mac an Ghaill 2001; Swain 2006; Renold 2007; Bhana 2008, 2013; Bowley 2013; Bhana & Mayeza 2016). However, some boys seem passive yet actively performing an identity.

1.6 Definition of key terms

Key terms which make up the core of this study are **masculinities and gender relations.** Masculinity and gender relations are concepts intertwined so that you cannot talk of one without bringing in the other. Brittan (1989: 1) argues "that any account of masculinity must begin with its place in the general discussion of gender". These terms may have different meanings in different contexts. In this study the summary of the meanings is as follows:

Masculinities are incomplete configurations of gender and sexual practices that boys learn, habituate to over time and employ to navigate their given worlds and to identify themselves as boys to themselves and others. This definition relates to the views of Ratele on both boys and men on the social construction of masculinities (see Ratele 2007; 2016b). Masculinities are ways of male self-presentations (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill 2003). These are 'male signs' which can be shown through being tough, rough, dangerous or to be a 'ladies' man' (Brittan 1989).

Gender relations are power- related social interactions between boys and girls as groups or individuals (Connell 2002) characterised by the boys' desire to construct or reconstruct masculinities and the girls' desire to construct or reconstruct femininities. Masculinity is thus constructed in relation to femininity. The emphasis in this definition is on the connectedness of boys' and girls' lives, "and to the imbalances of power embedded in male-female relations" (Reeves & Baden 2000:18). The emphasis on the relationship is on how the boys and girls are connected or divided as social groups and as individuals and how meaning is constructed during these interactions.

1.7 Overview of chapters

This study is divided into seven chapters. This chapter as outlined above provides the background to the study. It starts by giving an overview of the study and continues to detail the background of the problem. This is followed by the aim and the objectives of the study. The theoretical framework also guiding this study is discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter Two gives a detailed review of literature on the social construction of masculinities at international level and South Africa in particular. The critical theorists on men and masculinities informing this study are discussed in detail. Different ways in which boys and girls construct masculinities within school contexts are also discussed.

Chapter Three focuses on the methodology guiding this study. The way the data was collected and analysed is discussed in detail. The three methods of collecting data which are focus group discussions, individual diaries and detailed individual interviews are discussed in detail. A general outline of the schools studied is also provided together with the background information of the participants. Issues of confidentiality, consent, debriefing and counselling are also discussed in this chapter which also include the reflections of the researcher on the research process.

Chapter Four starts by giving an overall view of the collected data. All themes and their sub themes identified in this study are outlined. This chapter also presents and discusses the theme of homosocial and heterosexual desire in the discourse of young masculinities.

The central theme in the social construction of masculinities in this study is violence. While this theme is highlighted throughout the research, it is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Chapter Six looks at the theme of categories of difference that intersect with masculinities namely age, ethnicity, race, class and nationality.

Lastly, Chapter Seven looks at the summary and conclusions of the research findings. As the researcher does this, objectives are briefly restated and findings related to them directly. Limitations of the study are also highlighted in this chapter. Policy and research recommendations are also suggested in this closing chapter.

In conclusion, Chapter One gives the general background to the study. It lays the foundation of the thesis by describing the rationale of the study. It also describes how the critical studies on men and masculinities can best be understood through the social constructionist theoretical framework. Thus the aim and the objectives of the study are clearly stated in this chapter.

Key terms of the study are defined and explained in detail in this chapter. Lastly a general overview of the whole thesis is explicitly outlined to prepare the reader on what to expect in the unfolding chapters. The following chapter on the literature review details the unfolding

arguments made by different scholars globally and in South Africa on the construction of masculinities.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Masculinities and hegemonic masculinity are concepts that have dominated contemporary research on male identity in South Africa and the world over (see Connell 1987, 1995, 2012, 2016, Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Morrell 2001c, Swain 2005 and Renold 2007, Bhana 2008, Hearn 2004, 2012; Kimmel 2004; Ratele 2008, 2016b; Martin & Muthukrishna 2011, Bowley 2013, Vetten & Ratele 2013,). While the theory of hegemonic masculinity and masculinities has been used by many scholars over the years its origin is associated with Connell.

In CSMM the issue of the centrality of power is recognised. CSMM recognises that masculinities are socially constructed and are historically and contextually specific (see Connell 2000; Shefer *et al* 2010; Everitte-Penhale & Ratele 2015). In addition, these studies also take an intersectional approach that emphasises the social constructions of masculinities in relation to other social divisions of power (Connell 2000; Shefer *et al* 2010; Spade & Valentine 2011; Mncube & Harber 2013; Moolman 2013). While Hearn agrees with these views he advocates for adopting men as the object of study (Hearn 2004, 2012). His views will be analysed in detail below in section 2.2.3.

Some of the international pioneers in CSMM are Connell, Hearn and Kimmel from the global north (Connell 1987, 1995,2000b, 2012, 2016; Hearn 1997, 1998, 2004, 2012; Kimmel 2008) and Ratele from the global south who has written extensively on masculinities in the South African context (see Ratele 2001; 2008; 2013; 2016b). In all their contributions and discussions masculinity is located in a structure of gender relations (Connell 2000). Their contributions and how they shape this study will be discussed in detail in section 2.3 below.

South Africa's social identities, masculinities included must be best "understood and examined in relation to historical discourses of race and apartheid" (Moolman 2013:94). During the apartheid era black men were racially as well as economically subjugated and their masculinities were sets of dominated configurations and positionings (Ratele 2016b). The remnants of that era still impact on young boys in schools and men in general in various ways in SA. For example, there is a vast difference between township schools and in

formerly white schools in terms of infrastructure and the general space for play and co-curriculum activities (see Bhana 2008).

The concept of masculinity is used in education studies to understand the dynamics of school life (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005). It has been observed in South Africa that as levels of violence increase in our societies so have levels of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) (Wilson 2011; SACE 2011; Manyike 2014). It is therefore important to examine the social background against which masculinities emerge and transform in South African schools.

2.2 Men and masculinities as a field of study

Empirical and theoretical work informed by the social constructionist perspective and the critical studies on men have been conducted in most parts of the world in the humanities and social sciences (Ratele 2016a). The study of men and masculinities as observed above is also a rapidly expanding field which has drawn theories from a wide range of disciplines (Morrell, 2007; Shefer *et al* 2010). Notable ones are in psychoanalytic thought, the anthropology of kinship and in sociological and psychological works about sex roles (Connell 2012). The studies on masculinity crystallized in the 1980s as a research field (Connell 2011; 2012). However, it is important to note that "the most sustained research and documentation program on men and masculinities anywhere in the world was launched in the mid-1990s … in Chile" (Connell 2012:6).

The 1990s also saw a growing focus on men and masculinities on the African continent (Morrell 2007a; Shefer *et al* 2010; Morrell 2001a; Potgieter; Slen-Ziya & Shefer 2017). However, the volume *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa* published in 2003 could be "the first contemporary volume on Africa that theorises and problematizes masculinity as gender rather than merely describing or valorising the experiences of men" (Ampofo & Boateng: 2007: 52). This indicates a move into critically studying masculinities on the African continent. Barker & Ricardo (2005) in their study on Young Men and the Construction of Masculinity in Sub-Saharan Africa point out the plurality of masculinity in Africa and that it is socially constructed and fluid over time and takes place in different settings. In sub-Sahara in Africa the forms of masculinity seem to be linked to poverty and marginalized masculinities, sexuality and violence (see Groes-Green 2009; Izugbara 2015). While there is a growth in the field of masculinities in this part of Africa, Groes-Green argues that more still needs to be done in relating male power to different social and economic

contexts. Different social and economic contexts carry with them different forms of masculinity.

The growth in the field of masculinities on the African continent can also be seen in the work of Morrell who in 1997 organised a Colloquium on Masculinities in Southern Africa which was attended by some of the international leading theorists on masculinity such as Bob Connell, Jeff Hearn and Michael Kimmel. The objective of the "Colloquium was to develop a more conscious and theoretically informed understanding of masculinity in South African history and society" (Morrell 2001a: xi). Following this historic meeting The Journal of Southern African Studies produced a special edition on masculinities in 1998 and Agenda followed in the same year with volume 37 on men and masculinities. In the past decade and a half the continent has also seen a growing collection of edited collections (see (Morrell 2001a; Lindsay & Mierscher 2003; Gibson and & Hardson, 2005; Steyn & Van Zyl 2009).

Masculinity, an inseparable aspect of gender cannot be observed as an entity but in conjunction with other social divisions such as class, race, ethnicity, age and nationality (see Connell 1995; Arrighi 2007; Steyn & Van Zyl 2009; Shefer, Stevens and Clowes 2010; Spade & Valentine 2011; Ratele 2014). These social categories are socially constructed and oppressive as they are power related (Adib & Guerrier 2003; Yuval-Davis 2006). Weldon (2008:193) points out that "[i]ntersectionality is a concept that describes interaction between systems of oppression". Intersectionality is a concept developed by Crenshaw to analyse the disempowerment of marginalized women (Yuval-Davis 2006; Nash 2008; Weldon 2008; Rahman & Jackson 2010; Moolman 2013; Single-Rushton & Lindstron 2013; Collins & Bilge 2016; Garneau 2017). In studying the violence against women it is imperative to note that "the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class" (Crenshaw 1991: 1242).

Much of the work on men and masculinity in South Africa has been a reaction to the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS (see Gibson and & Hardson, 2005; Pattman, 2007; Lindegger & Maxwell 2007; Bhana, 2009b; Sathiparsad *et al*, 2010) and very little has been done on forms and impact of young masculinities in the last years at primary schools in the townships.

Male identity in the South African townships is centred on heterosexuality (Mfecane *et al* 2005; Sauls 2005). Heterosexuality constitutes the single structural fact that guarantees "the global domination of men over women" (Brittan 1989:140) and other men. This attests to the concept of heteronormativity which has its roots in the feminist theories of the relationship

between gender, sexuality and heterosexuality in the 1970s and 1980s, and to its coining by Michael Warmer (Williams 2013). Heteronormativity suggests that being heterosexual is the only sexual orientation or norm for doing gender. It privileges heterosexuality as normal and natural (Martin 2009). Heteronormativity structures constrain homosexuals by enforcing their invisibility. Society's attitudes and behaviours on heterosexuality could be attributed to cultural and societal prescriptions on heterosexuality and proscriptions on homosexuality (see Ratele 2008; 2011). Homosexuals have, however, not accepted the *status quo* but challenged it. As women started challenging patriarchy and other oppressive gender relations "gay men and women started to contest another aspect of patriarchy – the perception of heterosexuality as the only legitimate and appropriate form of sexuality" (Berkovitch & Helman 2009:270).

Being heterosexual among South African men comes with a status and identity. To be a real man one must thus have sex with a woman (Shefer 2005). This points out that this heterosexual intimacy is not about pleasure only but also to show manhood. It is also believed that a real man must have multiple women sexual partners (Sauls 2005; Sathiparsad *et al* 2010).

The centrality of the issues of representation in the reproduction of racial and gender hierarchy cannot be overlooked especially in a country like South Africa. Poor black women are poorly represented as a result their voices are subdued in the racial, economic, nationality and gender debates. Their concerns are being handled by the middle class black women who may not fully understand their experiences. In August 2018 there was a march named "#Totalshutdown" across SA by women and 'gender non-conforming' people against gender-based violence (GBV) and the high femicide rates in the country. In Durban the marchers handed their memorandum to the MEC for Education as they said some of the violence took place within educational institutions. In the same way these women experience violence, can also young girls within the school context (see Bhana 2009; Mncube & Harber 2013).

Nkealah (2010) drawing clues from the township of Alexandra xenophobic attacks of 2008, argues that some of these xenophobic attacks on foreigners are linked to class and gender. Foreigners and locals in townships compete for the scarce resources such as jobs. Hearn (in Msibi 2009:52) points out that "men may resort to violence when men's power and privilege are challenged or under threat." Having some money to buy women what they desire and protect them has a social status aspired to by men as it indicates masculine power (see Mfecane *et al* 2005; Morrell 2007; Groes-Green 2009). Poverty and marginalization of a

social group tend to increase the use of violence and force (Connell 1995; Morrell 2001d; Parkes 2007; Groes-Green 2009; Nkealah; 2011) "to gain, maintain, or avoid losing status and power" (Fleming *et al* 2015:3). Marginalised boys within the school context may thus resort to violence to maintain their status, power or masculine dividend. Marginalised girls may also be affected more than the marginalised boys. These inhospitable social divisions do not only intersect but also shape and constitute each other (Steyn & Van Zyl 2009).

2.3 Theorists shaping recent studies on men and masculinities

There are many theorists who have contributed to the study of men and masculinities in recent years but the salient ones in shaping this research are Connell, Kimmel, Hearn and Ratele.

2.3.1 Raewyn Connell and the theory of hegemonic masculinity

Raewyn Connell is an Australian sociologist who has written extensively on the critical studies on men and masculinities (see Connell 1987, 1995; 2000, 2001; 2002b, 2003, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016). She has also written about gender and the social construction of masculinity within the school context (see Connell 2002, 2002b). Her notable work in the field of men and masculinities is on hegemonic masculinity and masculinities. In as much as her work has been used extensively in the critical studies of men and gender it has also been heavily criticised (see Donaldson 1993; Wetherell & Edley 1999; Demetriou 2001; Hearn 2004; Connell & Messerschmidt 2005; Moller 2007; Ratele 2008, 2011; Hearn 2012; Jewkes, *et al* 2015). Ratele (2011) argues that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is not indigenous to Africa and employing it requires careful consideration.

In the concept of hegemonic masculinity, the term hegemony was borrowed from the work of the cultural Marxist Antonio Gramsci (Christensen & Jensen 2014) on the analyses of class relations in Italy. Gramsci (in Miller 2009:116) states that "hegemony is a contest of meanings in which the ruling class consent to the social order by making its power appear normal and natural". Connell unlike Gramsci applies the concept of hegemony to the study of gender particularly masculinity. Connell points out that the term hegemony can be defined as "a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organisation of private life and cultural processes" (Connell 1987:184). According to Connell the ascendency to a dominant position of one social group over another through the use of violence cannot be considered hegemonic, although violence is one of the methods of domination. Connell continues to argue that "though hegemony does not refer to

ascendency based on force, it is not incompatible with ascendency based on force" (Connell 1987:184). Violence can thus work in conjunction with or support dominant cultural patterns or other social inequalities. She argues that social groups which are not in a hegemonic position are subordinated rather than eliminated.

Hegemonic masculinity in Connell's theory is "defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 1995, p. 77). Hegemonic masculinity in this definition is considered a gender practice which tends to legitimise the domination of women by men. However, it becomes problematic to call the dominance hegemonic since the women may not endorse and accept the domination of men at their face value. In the definition of hegemony there must be consent from the dominated part. In this view Guha argues whether hegemony is an illusion and coercion of the reality (Connell 2016). Guha thus argues for the notion of domination without hegemony. In the researcher's analysis of different groups and individuals, he will use the term domination instead of hegemony in analysing some masculinities. Connell, however, argues that the notions of hegemony and domination "are easily blurred when the reproduction of a hierarchical system is assumed" (Connell 2016:305).

In this study the researcher will not dwell much on the hierarchical relations of masculinity but on how different forms of masculinities come about and their impact on gender relations. Although Guha did not concern himself much with gender, his views seem to have moved Connell a bit since she questions whether the issue of hegemony applies in the colonial world at all (Connell 2016). Guha's work is on colonialism whereby the colonised (the poor, weak and dominated) refused to read history through the eyes of the powerful colonisers in India (see Guha 1998). The same applies in gender relations; the less powerful which are the girls and some boys in this study may fail to consent to their domination by a certain powerful group of boys. This results in the construction of different types of masculinities. Connell of late seems to be criticising the global gender discourse as being centred on the views of the global north neglecting the global south and thus calls for ideas and data from the global south (see Connell 2016). Along the same line Ratele (2016b) argues that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is not indigenous to Africa, and it is not likely to work in analysing African masculinities.

Connell argues that "Different masculinities do not sit side-by-side like dishes in a smorgasbord; there are different relations between them" (Connell 1996; 209). Some masculinities are more honoured than others while others are dishonoured. According to Connell relationships among men can thus be distinguished through hegemonic, subordinated, marginalised or complicit relationships (Connell 1995). Connell & Messerschmidt (2005:831) argue that the issue of hierarchy of masculinities emerged directly from "homosexual men's experience with violence and prejudice from straight men". However, it is difficult to identify what is hegemonic masculinity because there is little that is counter-hegemonic. (Donaldson 1993; Hearn 2004).

Probably the most common and contested criticism on the work of Connell is the definition of hegemonic masculinity. It can further be argued that "configurations of practice, aspirations and cultural ideals are all different again from masculinity as ways, styles, of being a man, or types of men" (Hearn 2012:594). Hearn (2012) concurs with Donaldson that this definition sees hegemonic masculinity as a culturally idealised form of masculinity. The views of Connell speak of hegemonic masculinity as expected ways of being a man in a particular culture whereas masculinities go beyond being ways and styles of being a man. These ways and styles are actively constructed as boys and girls adopt, reject and construct what they consider appropriate gender identities. To consider masculinity as configurations of practice which are culturally ideal reduces learners to passive recipients of the socialisation process. Hearn also feels this definition of hegemonic masculinity reduces it to a set of fixed positions and practices. However, Connell argues that hegemonic masculinity is dynamic and context specific (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005).

Violence is an important concept in the social construction of a male identity. Hearn seems to challenge the view of Connell which states that '[h]egemony did not mean violence although it could be supported by force' (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005: 832). This view to him is ambiguous and leaves a gap. This slipperiness in the concept of hegemonic masculinity is a weakness in addressing the problem of men's violence against women (Hearn 2012) and boys' violence against girls within the school context. In this research to avoid this ambiguity the researcher looks at violence as a central component in the formation of masculinities in its plural form and not hegemonic masculinity. Kimmel notes that violence can be the most evident marker of manhood (Msibi 2009). Hearn (2012:590) points out that "'violence' is not a fixed set of behaviours; rather the very construction of violence is related to historical

intersections of gender power, social divisions, ideology and indeed hegemony". This position thus argues that violence is not only a go-to method when gender relations are under pressure but constitutive of manhood.

The subordination of some men and women seem to suggest two forms of hegemonic masculinities although not clearly stated in Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity. Demetriou (2001) suggests two forms of hegemonic masculinity namely internal and external. Internal hegemony entails the relationships between one dominant group of men and the other groups of men and external hegemony the institutionalisation of men's domination over women. Hearn (2007) refers to these two forms of ruling masculinities as homosocial power relations and heterosexual power relations. To avoid further complications in having double or multiple hegemonic masculinities in this study the researcher looks at how masculinities are constructed amongst the boys between the boys and girls in their social interactions.

The interplay of gender with other categories of difference results in the formation of various versions of masculinity (Connell 2009). However, masculinities of disempowered social categories are marginalised and thus looked down upon. It can be argued that "In Connell's typology, marginal masculinities are those which are not directly persecuted but which are not held up as ideal either" (Wetherell 1996: 323). Marginalised masculinities do not enjoy the privileges of hegemonic masculinity. For example, marginalised men may need to rework their male superiority in a context of poverty (see Groes-Green 2009).

Marginalised men may thus resort to violence to maintain their dominance over women. Connell seems to argue that "men's use of violence against women is a sign that hierarchy and hegemony are no longer stable and that the gender order is in a process of crisis and transformation" (Groes-Green 2009:289). The views of Connell may explain the high rate of gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa. This indicates that not only the hegemonic masculinity is oppressive. Connell (1987) argues that women may feel even more oppressed by non-hegemonic masculinities than with hegemonic ones which they may be used to and thus can manage. It is thus prudent to critically study masculinity in its plurality form to understand masculinities which are dominant and not dominant.

Connell acknowledges that there are some masculinities which exist alongside hegemonic masculinity. This she refers to as complicit masculinities. Wetherell (1996: 323-324) says

> Complicit forms of masculinity are those which may reject the excess of the macho men, and which may not even come close to fulfilling the hegemonic ideal, but which do not challenge the hegemonic version either, and thus feed off dominant forms of masculinity.

Complicit masculinities seem to reject the dominance of the hegemonic masculinity but at the same time do not challenge it. Complicit masculinities thus seem to be in a positive relationship with hegemonic masculinity while subordinate masculinities are in the negative relationship with both the hegemonic and complicit masculinities (Lusher & Robins 2007). These men continue to benefit from the patriarchal dividend as observed by Connell (See Connell 2013). There could be some boys within the school context benefiting from this type of masculinity.

Connell points out that different "masculinities exist in different cultures and historical epochs" (Connell 1996: 210). The fact that different masculinities exist in different cultures and historical epochs shows that masculinities are fractured and susceptible to change.

In the global South "where cultural discontinuity and disruption is the condition of life" (Connell 2012: 14) forms of masculinity may also be dynamic. Connell also argues that since masculinities are composed historically, they may also be decomposed, contested and replaced.

Besides masculinities being cultural and historically oriented they are also fluid and contextually based. For example, to a beer drinker it could be manly to sleep with a prostitute while to a church goer talking about spiritual things shows manhood (Pattman 2001). More than one form of masculinity may also be found within one cultural setting at the same time. Connell (2002b: 208) argues, "Within any workplace, neighbourhood, or peer group, there are likely to be different understandings of masculinity and different ways of "doing" masculinity" (internal quotes in original text).

Masculinities are socially constructed. They "come into existence as people act. They are accomplished in everyday conduct or organisational life, as configurations of social practice" (Connell 1996: 210). As boys and girls interact at school, different forms of masculinities are constructed.

Children are not passively socialised into a sex role but they are active participants in shaping, constructing and reconstructing their own identities. As they do so they use culture and their social environment as the guiding stick (See Kimmel 2008). Masculinities involve making sense of "the relationships between individual males and groups of males as well as between males and females" (Ampofo & Boateng 2011: 421). In this study as the researcher embraces the concept of the multiplicity of masculinity, he wishes to argue from a social constructionist perspective informed by Kimmel's views.

2.3.2 M. S. Kimmel and the social constructionist theory

Michael Scott Kimmel is an American sociologist who specialises in gender studies. He is one of the pioneers in the field of CSMM (Morrell 2007a; Ratele 2013). He argues that men's studies take masculinity as its problem and thus seek to explore men's experiences as social constructs not in some sex roles (Kimmel 1987, 2004, 2008; 2014). His notable work in this study is on the distinction between sex and gender and the social construction of gender relations.

The distinction between sex and gender is becoming increasingly blurred in our everyday usage of the terms. The term gender is often used to refer to sex. For the purpose of this study the researcher will draw the difference from the work of Kimmel which views sex to be biological and gender as social.

> "Sex" refers to biological apparatus, the male and the female - our chromosomal, chemical, anatomical organisation. "Gender" refers to the meanings that are attached to those differences within a culture. "Sex" is male and female, "gender" is masculinity and femininity- what it means to be a man or a woman (Kimmel (2008: 3. internal quotes in original text).

Males and females are not born socially different but they become different through the way they are socialised. However, sex and gender are interrelated. Kimmel (2008:100) points out that "Biology provides the raw materials, whereas society and history provide the context, the instruction manual, that we follow to construct our identities".

From a sociological and gender perspective it should be understood that "It is that interaction, not our bodies, that makes us who we are" (Kimmel 2004:94). Individuals and groups of people interact actively and not as passive recipients of the socialisation process. Masculinity is actively and continuously defined and redefined in our daily interactions with one another

(Sathiparsad, Tailor & De Vries 2010) and therefore this research applies a social constructionist framework as a departure point for analysing gender. The social constructionist framework is mostly concerned with the way people understand the world together (Burr 2003; Galliano 2003). The social interaction of the boys within the school context with other learners both boys and girls and their teachers is thus crucial in the social construction of young masculinities.

2.3.3. J. Hearn and the hegemony of men

Jeffrey Richard Hearn is a British sociologist who has an interest in critical studies on men (CSM), in which the centrality of power is recognised (Hearn 2004). His work over the years proposes a shift from masculinity/ masculinities to men (Hearn 1997; 2004; 2010; 2012). He also looks at the concept of violence and its place in hegemonic masculinity construction.

In critical studies on men (CSM) the salient issue to consider is "the persistent presence of accumulations of power and powerful resources by certain men, the doing of power and dominance in men's practices, and the pervasive association of the: social category of men with power" (Hearn 2004:51). To show the depth of the critical aspect he argues that, "The 'criticalness' within CSM comes particularly from concern with power, that is, gendered, predominantly men's power" (Hearn 2004:51). The centrality of power in the study of gender is also acknowledged by Connell, Kimmel and Ratele. In this study it is predominantly the boys' power. Since the boys' power is gendered, not consented, dynamic and fractured the researcher looks at the social construction of masculinities by the boys and not the hegemony of boys. In as much as the researcher agrees on the issue of men's power by Hearn, he argues that "masculinities are constructed out of boys' and men's relationships with girls and women, as well as with other males in the context of time and space" (Ratele, 2016b:102) thus they should be the object of study rather than mere boys' practices which are more about role playing.

To Hearn the concept of hegemonic masculinity is ambiguous. He proposes the phrase hegemony of men instead of hegemonic masculinity. By talking of hegemony of men we will also be "addressing the double complexity that men are both a social category formed by the gender system, and dominant collective and individual agents of social practices" (Hearn 2012: 596).

Hearn talks about the practices of men to avoid the double and ambiguous meaning of the concept of hegemonic masculinity and not formations of masculinity. He feels "the focus on

masculinity is too narrow" (Hearn 2004:59). To him men must thus be the object of study since they are a product of the gender system and are agents of social practices. Although he has a problem with the use of the term masculinity he seems to amicably embrace the idea of gender being a social construct. However according to Kimmel masculinity is a socially constructed gender for men, a view with which the researcher also associates himself. In this study masculinities are not just practices but socially recognisable and socially constructed practices within a specific social context represented as befitting boyhood. Hearn's views are, however, of paramount importance in understanding boys as agents of masculinity construction.

2.3.4 K. Ratele and the African masculinities

Kopano Ratele is one of the best-known South African scholars on African masculinities. His contributions in this study from a Black African perspective and location sets him apart from the other three scholars discussed above, namely Connell, Kimmel and Hearn who write from a western perspective and affluent background. However, Ratele like Kimmel, Hearn and Connell supports the idea of the plurality of masculinities in any given context and period (see Ratele 2008; 2011; 2016b; Ratele, Shefer, Strebel & Fouten 2010).

Ratele's work looks at constructions of masculinity mostly in adults leaving behind young males entering into their puberty stage and how African masculinities at a tender age intersect with other categories of difference. It is therefore in the interest of this study to close this gap by understanding how boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 14 in the township schools of South Africa relate with each other and how masculinities are constructed.

While the concept of hegemonic masculinity has influenced many theorists and researchers on the African continent, employing it on men in Africa needs careful consideration since it is not indigenous to Africa (Ratele 2011a). Barker & Ricardo (2005) also argue that there is no single version of manhood in Africa. The concept of hegemonic masculinity may not be appropriate and illuminating in studying black masculinities in the context of hegemonic capitalist patriarchal whiteness since the poor black masculinities are already marginalised gender configurations. Some of the constructions of masculinities in post-apartheid SA are a reflection of the economic imbalances of the apartheid period. While political power is no longer associated with being white, the social and economic power still resemble whiteness (Bhana 2008). The infrastructure and sporting activities of some South African schools still

reflect remnants of apartheid (see Bhana 2008) and this may have a bearing on how boys construct masculinities.

Acknowledging the existence of intersectionality of other categories of difference, social relations means that African males are a heterogeneous group and thus African masculinities are plural and inconsistent (Ratele 2008). In other words, it can be argued further that masculinity is 'an incomplete configuration of gender and sexual practices that boys and men get to learn, habituate to over time and employ to navigate their given worlds and to identify themselves as boys and men to themselves and others" (Ratele 2016b: 102).

It can be argued that "males have to engage in certain activities, learn to speak in particular ways, avoid certain topics and occupy a certain station in society to be regarded as successfully masculine" (Ratele 2008: 524). To be a black man depends on how one is accepted among other black males (See Ratele 2001). Homosociality among black boys is of great importance in the formation of heterosexual masculinities (see Chimanzi 2019). Homosociality are the social bonds between people of the same sex (Sedgwick in Buchbinder 2013). These bonds should take priority over male to female relationships (Flood 2008). Homosociality is important in influencing men's heterosexual social relations.

In many parts of post-colonial Africa, the most significant theme of being a real man revolves around sex (Ratele 2011a). A man must have sex with a woman and not with another man and the same applies to women who must have sex with men and not with other women. Female same-sex desire may have a challenging effect on some dominant masculinities (see Ratele 2011a; 2016b). These women are in some societies physically attacked and sexually abused as a way of correcting their sexual orientation. The main aim of all this "is to discipline female sexuality, to drive females into 'servicing' heterosexuality and thus to perpetuate masculine domination" (Ratele 2011a:43). Being a lesbian is considered a threat to the continued existence of patriarchal power and masculinity. Lesbians, gays and bisexuals mess up the powers of ruling heterosexual masculinity. They are a threat to the dominance of African masculinity and hence they need to be suppressed (Ratele 2011a). Many African leaders proscribe it because they believe it undermines the naturalised socio-sexual order (Ratele 2008; 2016b). Heterosexuality can thus be considered a vector of oppression (see Rubin in Cranny-Francis, Waring, Stravropoulos & Kirky 2003). From this perspective the issue of heterosexual masculinity is not a fact of nature but a socially constructed one within a power struggle within a society.

Denigrating gays cannot be attributed to tradition. As tradition engages the past it selects, rejects and invents various practices to legitimate the present. It has been society that has been rejecting the sexual orientation or precisely labelling it non-traditional (Ratele 2013). It is the power within a tradition to exalt one sexual desire and marginalise the other. It is so because "Sexual desire is inherent in accounts of tradition, and accounts of tradition are productive of desire" (Ratele 2013:141). Everitte-Penhale & Ratele (2015) citing Ben-Amos and Macleod argue that society is active in its interaction with tradition.

Ratele (2008) also looks at the categories of difference and the social construction of masculinities. He talks about the importance of age and African manhood. Quoting Miescher he argues that "age and seniority are important to the organisation of gender in Africa" (Ratele 2008: 524). He also talks of occupation and income attainment as key requisites of being a man in most cultures. His work, however, does not show most categories of difference and their link to the construction of masculinity in general and young masculinities in particular.

2.4 Violence and the construction of masculinities

Violence happens in nearly all societies irrespective of race or socio-economic status (Kimmel 2004; Hearn 2012). There have been debates from feminists and non-feminists on the definition of violence (Hearn 2012). While there are different definitions of violence, the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition seem to address some of the grey areas left by most definitions. Violence is thus defined as:

> The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood or resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (WHO 2002:5).

In this study it is important to understand how this violence stems from masculinity and other social relations. Many theorists have argued that violence is gendered (see Connell 1987; Kimmel 2004; Hearn 2012; Ratele 2016b) and constitutive of masculinity. Kimmel and Hearn have argued on the use of gendered violence by men to known women which at times has been normalised.

Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity has been used extensively in understanding the violence of men and masculinities. However, her lack of explicitly making masculinity

constitutive of violence has drawn some criticism in her theory. Connell maintains her point by arguing that "Violence may be a sanction that backs up authority, that reinforces consent by making consent prudent" (Connell 2012:14). In some of her work she also emphasises violent masculinities in sport, war and competitions among men (Connell 1987). While her theory has been used extensively in understanding construction of masculinities its application and impact on the problem of violence on known women has been subdued possibly by considering violence as a way of 'drawing boundaries and making exclusions' rather than it being constitutive in gender relations (Hearn 2012). However, by the late 1990s, some studies on men and masculinities observed the problem of violence in relation to the problem of masculinity (Morrell 2007b). Along the views of Hearn, the play of boys and girls within a school context should not be observed as mere ways of 'drawing boundaries and making exclusions' but constructions of gender identities.

Violence involves domination of both physical and social spaces. Hearn (2006:43) says:

> Men's violence to women involves domination of physical and social space, not only in specific locations, such as bedrooms, kitchens and streets, but also occupying space between people. It takes space, forges gaps and physical connections, and controls the space of the violated.

Ratele like Hearn argues that violence is central in being a real man. United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) argues that "men are central to most acts of violence, and violence is central to being a man in many cultures" (Ratele 2008: 518). Most importantly, there is a need to understand young people's lives and experiences on the African continent from a gender perspective considering that they make up very high percentages of the populations. Forty-two per cent of the children in Africa are reported to be below the age of 15 years (see Ratele 2008).

According to the 2017 Global Peace Index by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) South Africa is still considered one of the most dangerous countries in the world. In this ranking South Africa was ranked the 123rd most peaceful country in the world out of 163 countries and districts measured. South African rates of sexual violence against women are considerably high (see Redpath *et al* 2008; Peacock 2013; Statistics South Africa 2018). Rates of violence seem to be connected to the socio-economic background (Parkes & Unterhalter 2015).

The stimulus for much of the work especially with regard to violent masculinity in South Africa stems from its unique and complex history (see Redpath *et al* 2008; Vetten & Ratele 2013; Hearn, Ratele & Shefer 2015). South Africa's history is not hospitable as it is marred with violence. Vetten & Ratele (2013: 4) point out that "The 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". With the coming into power of the Afrikaner nationalists in 1948 South Africa was plunged into terrible aspects of separate development along racial and ethnic lines. Separate residential places for whites, Indians, coloureds and blacks were put in place through the Group Areas Act of 1960 (Salo 2007). Blacks lived in places mostly known as townships which were characterised by poverty while whites lived in suburbs and were assured of jobs. Morrell (2001a:22) argues that "In the black townships boys were brought up in a socially fractured environment with little prospect of well-paid work". Poverty on the other hand resulted in high crime rates in the townships.

Poverty and violence in the townships today are likely thus ramifications of the apartheid era. Ethnic identification in the townships was reinforced by the apartheid regime's policy of separate development, which allocated black people to so-called homelands. Giddens (1997: 210) defines ethnicity as "the cultural practices and outlooks of a given community of people that set them apart from others". Ethnic markers of identification in the post-apartheid South African context (Langa & Kiguwa 2016) ranges from T-shirts, mugs, stickers, men's clothing and women's clothing written or engraved 100% Zulu or in any other ethnic language of SA (see Langa & Kiguwa 2016; Ratele 2016b). The inhospitable past of South Africa may have contributed to the current emergence of different masculinities such as being aggressive and demonstrating violent behaviour as men try to identify themselves with a particular ethnic group. In the study of young masculinities in the South African townships it is thus imperative to understand the historical background of masculinities in South Africa.

The process of decolonisation was also gendered and violent. With the dawn of democracy in 1994 many laws have been enacted to deal with the racial divide, gender and inequalities of the past. Despite these efforts, South Africa is still structured along racial and class lines (Morrell *et al* 2012) thus culminating in different masculinities. South Africa has a very high rate of violence against women (Gennrich 2013). Silberschmidt (in Connell 2016) in a study

on HIV in East Africa argues that violence is a result of the breakdown of traditional gender orders brought about by pressures of colonialism and post-colonial economic change.

Gender is a central factor driving violence, with violent constructions of masculinity being normalised in South Africa (see Redpath *et al* 2008; Morrell 2007a; Mathews & Benvenuti 2014; Michau, Horn, Bank, Dutt & Zimmerman 2014; Miedema, Yount, Chirwa, Dunkle & Fulu 2017). Violence within the school context cannot be fully understood without linking it to gender relations. It is imperative to note that "Gender violence in education cannot be discussed without attention to the social conditions and processes that produce them, without men and boys and without understanding the effects on women and girls at the same time" (Bhana 2009:4).

There is little doubt that violence and masculinity are linked and that much of the violence is perpetrated by men (Connell 2000; Kimmel 2004; Morrell 2007a; Bhana 2009; Hearn 2012) especially black men in the context of South Africa (De Lannoy & Swartz 2015; Ratele 2016b). Although many men may not be engaged in violent behavior their complicity is widespread (Pease in Hearn 2012). In this study the researcher will argue that violence stems from gender and other social divisions and should be a priority in the critical studies of boys' construction of masculinities.

In the past few years SA has been haunted by another oppressive social relationship namely nationality. Black foreigners in the country in the past few years have been living under fear of being attacked by their mostly fellow local black men. These xenophobic attacks on black foreigners may be observed in conjunction with other categories of difference such as race, class and gender (see Nkealah 2010; Langa & Kiguwa 2016) since most of these attacks are orchestrated by black men living in informal settlements and flats popularly known as 'hostels'. Since schools are a microcosm of the South African broader society boys may be constructing masculinity along these violent ways. Bhana (2005:205) argues that "masculinity identities in school reach back in time into the family and, in turn, the social location of these families plays a major part in the early process by which masculinities are formed." We thus need to pay attention to incoherencies and dynamics in gender relations in the community and the politics of schools as gendered social terrains in thinking about young masculinities.

The continued use of violence by men shows rigid conceptions of manhood and schools are part of these inhospitable settings and contexts. Violence against women reflects prevailing social norms especially that of authority and dominance over women within a community (Lori Heise in Peacock 2013. Violence is normalised as it appears to be considered "a necessary and justified means of resolving conflict" (Mncube & Harber 2013:2). Men who use violence normally live in communities that equate manhood with aggression and dominance (Peacock 2013).

Van der Walt (2013: 80) argues that these "social assumptions about men's superiority and the culture of violence are essential aspects of the hegemonic forms of masculinity that are constructed within a patriarchal tradition". This shows that perceptions of oppressive forms of masculinity are still dominant in some societies.

Many South African men exhibit violent behaviour in their intimate relationships (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrells & Dunkle 2009; Vetten & Ratele 2013). What is disturbing is that most of the violence on women is perpetuated by a male who is known to the family or who is a partner (see Artz 2009; Shefer & Foster 2009). Women seem not to have power even in construction of their sexuality. Female formations of sexuality can be argued as in response to and also servicing male sexuality (Shefer & Foster 2009; Ratele 2011a). Sexuality experiences need to be studied and understood through a gender lens since there is a lacuna in the way boys form and show social identities and sexuality.

There is evidence of substantial research on different forms of violence and on ways to prevent them but little has been done to synergize different forms of violence to masculinities so as to come up with a key root cause of violence (Fleming, Gruskin, Rojo & Dwrkin 2015). Fleming *et al* (2015) argue that prevailing norms of masculinity undergird different forms of violence. It is imperative to note that "socially constructed gender norms that socialize men to value hierarchy, aggression, power, respect and emotional suppression maybe a primary root cause of violence" (Fleming *et al* 2015:3). Although violence occurs in the context of conflict and in different forms and contexts the reearcher argues here that it is the construction and displays of masculinity which carry the most bearing on whether violence erupts or not (Hamlall & Morrell 2012). It is thus "argued here that violence against women is one way of maintaining social control" (Artz 2009: 173).

In research conducted in Manenberg, a township in Cape Town it shows that a real man was supposed to be engaged in some form of 'respectable' employment or alternatively, belong to a gang (Sauls 2005). A real man must know about township life and its survival strategies. Gangs were made up of tough and violent boys and men who seemed to have power within the community (Saul 2005). They also engaged in criminal activities to impress peers and girlfriends. Boys within the school context may also engage in criminal activities to impress peers and girlfriends. Men and boys also compete in using gadgets such as cars, expensive cell phones and clothing to show their eligibility to provide and look after the women (Mfecane *et al* 2005). Boys growing up in these townships may role play what they see in the townships at school. It is thus imperative to understand how boys and girls in the township schools employ survival strategies in the school context.

Masculinity in the townships can also be seen through toughness, being fearless and strong. In a study conducted by Campbell in the mines of South Africa it was revealed that only tough and fearless men would go underground despite the dangers associated with doing so (Mfecane *et al* 2005). Within the school context boys are also associated with disruptive behaviour and physical fighting (Hamlall & Morrel 2012). These are attributes of being fearless and strong.

What is most glaring, however, in the existing literature is lack of study of this violence and harassment and its perpetuation in relation to constructions of masculinity in young boys and girls in the township schools of South Africa. The social and cultural structures and institutions obscure, legitimise, uphold and perpetuate gender inequality contrary to the political rhetoric we listen to everyday (Artz 2009).

2.5 Gender relations and masculinities within the school context

Gender relations in children within the school context like in the adult world is context specific, differ between places and households and periods of time. It can thus be different between schools or within the same school depending on the children's social positioning.

Schools exhibit favourable terrains for the social construction of several versions of masculinity (see Morrell 2001d; Connell 1996; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003; Kimmel 2004; Swain 2005; Bhana 2006; Martin & Muthukrishna 2011). It is imperative to understand the social organisation of the schools since "[g]ender is embedded in the institutional arrangements through which a school functions" (Connell 1996:213).

The totality of the function of the school is what Connell refers to as gender regimes. Learners become gendered and show various versions of masculinity by entering the school and living within its structures (Connell 1996).

Connell identified four types of relationships that show formations of masculinity within a school context. These are power relationship, division of labour, patterns of emotion and symbolization (Connell 1996). Connell, however, argues that these structures of gender relations do not operate in separate components of life. The relationships are interrelated, for example power relations and division of labour.

2.6 International boyhood studies and the relationship between boys and girls

Studies on young masculinities have gained momentum mostly in America, Europe and Australia (see Connell 1996; Martino & Meyen 2001; Mills 2001; Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman 2002; Renold 2003, 2007; Swain 2002, 2003. 2005, 2006; Huuki, Manninen & Sunnari 2011. Huiki & Renold 2016). In all these studies the dominance of boys over girls is found to be evident. Violence and bullying as constitutive of masculinities in different contexts are global phenomena. There has been considerable reseach on boys in relation to schooling. In some of this research, boys' academic performance has been observed as falling behind that of girls. These researches tend to illuminate the effects of social constructions of masculinity on the lives of boys and girls within the school context. They recognise power imbalances in the school sites.

While there has been a growing amount of literature on a global scale on the construction of young masculinities, in South Africa especially in the townships more still needs to be done. However scholars like Bhana and Morrell have done some considerable work though with very young children and pupils of high school age (see Bhana 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2015; Bhana & Pattman 2011; Bhana & Mayeza 2016; Morrell 2001d, 2007b; Morrell & Makhaye 2006). Morrell who is regarded as the father of masculinity studies in South did not write much about the formation of young masculinities. His notable study in young masculities focused at high school boys and centreded on corporal punishment as a driver in creating violent masculinities (See Morrell 2001d).

The available local literature, like the global, mostly dwells on the violent and sexual forms of social constructions of masculinities within the school terrain. The criticalness of boys and

how they construct masculinities has been less explored. Voices of alternative masculinities as constructed by the girls are also quiet in these studies. This research thus intends to close the gap by including surbodinated and marginalised boys and the girls in the social and individual constructions of masculinities and its impact on gender relations. The inclusion of girls and collection of data using focus groups, diaries and in-depth interviews brings with it diverse new knowledge which is lacking in the previous studies.

2.7 Problematising school violence and masculinities in South Africa

School violence is one of the phenomena that has become prevalent in both developed and developing countries (Saltmarsh, Robinson & Davies 2012). Most researchers view violence as either emanating from the school, from the society or from the individual SACE 2011; Casella 2012).

Violence is still part of an experience of social life for many learners in many schools in SA (SACE 2011; Mncube & Harber 2013) although there seems not to be a clear understanding of the concept of violence in education since "violence is slippery and defies easy categorization" (Bhana 2009:4). This leaves a gap for there is lack of systematic research on the extent and range of violence experienced by children in South Africa (SACE 2011; Mathews & Benvenuti 2014). The present research on violence do not also show a direct link with forms of masculinity in the global south (see Leach 2015). Although issues of masculinities have been studied among adults their application to and impact on the boys' violence on girls within the school environment has been given less attention. Bhana (2013b) citing different research on violence argues that there is a glaring gap between violence and the construction of masculinities. Citing the work of Morrell, she proceeds to argue that the focus of research "has been on sexual violence and girls' vulnerability, tending to ignore gender as an analytical construct, leading to sparse work on boys, schooling and masculinities" (Bhana 2013b: 40). The reason could be that childhood in some societies is considered as ideally a period of innocence largely outside sexuality and violence (Prinsloo & Moletsane 2013). Thus the in-depth causes and consequences of school gender-based violence are lacking.

A school is a microcosm of a broader society although it is not a passive recipient of all the bad things happening in that society (Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya 2014). Issues of violence as discussed above may be learnt outside the school but perpetuated within the

school because the schools may be lacking in systems to deal with them effectively (Mncube & Harber 2013).

In a study of formerly segregated schools under apartheid it was found "that the schools had done little to embrace a new culture actively based on non-discrimination and equality but that learners who are not from the dominant group had been expected to assimilate into existing practices and discourses" (Hunt in Mncube & Harber 2013:7). These children from minority groups may be oppressed within the school by learners from the dominant groups.

While violence within the school setting is mostly perpetrated by peers, adults within the school setting also account for some of the violence (Prinsloo 2006) or are victims of the violence. Violence experienced by learners within the school setting include sexual abuse, bullying and the way learners are disciplined (Redpath *et al* 2008; DSD, DWCPD & UNICEF 2012; Mncube & Harber 2013). In this study the researcher wishes to synergise these different forms of violence and constructions of masculinity by young boys since schools are important arenas in which masculinities are shaped and microcosms of a broader society.

Rates of bullying in South African schools are increasing considering the escalation of violence in most communities (Liang, Flisher & Lombard 2007) especially in the townships. Mncube & Harber (2013: 8) point out that "Bullying can take on many forms, such as physical violence, threats, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, exclusion from a group, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, and abusive comments". This bullying like other forms of violence could be gendered within the informal terrains of the school environment.

Violence in schools especially in the developing world, "with only a few exceptions, is generally not framed in gendered and sexual terms" (Saltmarsh *et al* 2012:9). Within the few pieces of research available it is not connected to the critical forms of boy identity or forms of masculinity.

It can be argued that "The main cause of sexual harassment and violence in schools is that traditional gender stereotypes and unequal power relationships within the broader society are not challenged but rather reproduced by the school" (Mncube & Harber 2013:12). In SA sexual violence against girls continues to be a problem (Bhana 2013b; Moma 2015; Chimanzi 2016).

Gender-based violence prevention discourse in schools centres on heterosexual boys against heterosexual girls. This focus overlooks the violence between heterosexual boys and lesbians and between heterosexual boys and gays. This view "precludes the possibility that men's experiences and perpetration of violence may vary based on their sexuality" (Miedema *et al* 2017). Boys are not a homogeneous group so they react and respond differently in different contexts and time, taking into cognisance their sexual orientation.

In conclusion, this chapter looked at the critical studies on men and masculinities from a social constructionist perspective. However, this literature shows a gap in the study of young boys and how masculinities are constructed. The concept of power is critically important in boys' social relations, actions and experiences yet it is not critically problematised in mainstream social science.

The views of Connell, Kimmel, Hearn and Ratele play an important role in showing the criticalness of the study of men and masculinities. Their views lay the foundation for the study of young masculinities. As a point of departure, now and then the researcher has tried to embrace the criticalness in the study of young boys and masculinities. In the process the researcher has also tried to show the lacunae in the study of young masculinities.

In issues of sexuality very little has been done due to the belief that children are innocent when it comes to sexual issues. Sexualities are only talked in the context of abuse yet children unknown to the adults are already active participants in issues of sexuality. Sexuality is an important component in the formation of masculinities which still need investigation in primary schools in the townships.

The definition of hegemonic masculinity is narrow. It lacks the aspect of men's active practices, identity constructions and self-presentations which are crucial in the formation of masculinities. The definition on the other hand seems to suggest it is the answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy. It seems to suggest that both men and women accept the domination of women and other 'effeminate' men by a dominant group of men.

This is an ideological statement since in reality women and 'effeminate' men are challenging their domination everyday. It is thus in this study that the researcher adopts the concept of masculinities in its plural form to understand gender relations among young boys and girls. In the school context boys and girls are not passive recipients of the socialisation process. As they play and engage with each other they fantasise and give meaning to their interactions.

They interpret everyday events by using cultural knowledge and clues from the social context.

Masculinities is a socially constructed concept which is always located in a structure of gender relations. Formations of masculinity are context specific, fluid and historically oriented. Thus each historical epoch has its own male identity.

While Connell does not consider violence as pivotal in the formation of masculinity to Kimmel, Hearn and Ratele violence is a significant marker of manhood. Violence and formation of masculinities within the school context is an area which still needs investigation as most research on children focuses on abuse.

Whilst masculinity in the workplace and young adult lives has been extensively researched (see Adib & Guerrier 2003), investigation into how masculinity interacts with other social factors such as race, ethnicity, class, age and nationality in primary schools in the townships of South Africa has been less explicitly considered. Can the boys' engagement with the physical and social contexts within the school environment be considered as boys' play or formations of young masculinities?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Methodology can be defined as "procedures for scientific investigation" Babbie (2010:4). It answers the question on how the information is going to be obtained and from whom. This chapter will thus lay down the rules, procedures and steps the researcher followed in conducting a scientific enquiry into the formation of young masculinities and its impact on social relations among Grade 7 learners in a township school setting.

This study is informed by the ethnomethodology paradigm, an approach built on the social constructionist perspective (Neuman 1997). Ethnomethodology and constructivism "are interested in everyday routine and the construction of social reality" (Flick, Kardorff & Steinke 2004: 5). The ethnomethodology paradigm has its roots in the work of Garfinkel (Bergmann 2004). Like in the views of Connell that children are not passive recipients of the socialisation process, Garfinkel advances the idea that members of a society are not passively subject to their socialised need-systems, internalised norms, social pressures and so on, but rather that they are continuously producing and actively developing social reality in interaction with others as a meaningful action-context (Bergmann 2004:73).

Ethnomethodology assumes that social meaning is created and recreated continuously as people interact and make sense of the life they experience (Neuman 1997; Bergmann 2004; Babbie 2010). Social meaning is thus fragile and fluid. People actively construct social meaning by drawing on their cultural knowledge and clues from the social context (Neuman 1997). Culture and social interactions are dynamic and unique in different contexts. Ethnomethodologists can thus examine in detail how boys and girls understand masculinity and put meaning to its construction through their social interactions and experiences.

In the following sections the researcher outlines his research design, explains how he recruited the participants, collected and analysed the information and his rationale for using these methods. At the end the researcher discusses the ethics of the research process and draws his reflections as the researcher.

3.2 Research design

In the empirical world research design "means connecting the research questions to data" (Punch 2006:47). The researcher in this study explored how masculinities are individually and socially constructed amongst Grade 7 peers, also through violence, and how these constructions impact on gender relations in South African township primary schools. The research questions as outlined in Chapter 1 are restated here:

- What are the masculinities expressed in individual and collective social forms in two township primary schools of Ekurhuleni in South Africa?
- What is the nexus between constructions of masculinity and class, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and nationality?
- How are boys' identities drawn from repertoires of violence and discipline in schools, and the generalised violence that typifies dominant constructions of masculinity?
- How do constructions of masculinity systematically affect girls' and boys' schooling and life in general?

Data to answer this question was collected and analysed qualitatively.

Qualitative research takes place in the natural world and focuses on context (Marshall & Rossman 2011; Lichtman 2014). Another central element in qualitative research is that reality is constructed, multiple and diverse (Sarantakos 2005). It also considers questions that involve what and why about human behavior and the data are usually presented in words (Lichtman 2014).

Masculinity as observed in Chapter Two is socially constructed, historical and contextual thus multiple, diverse and fluid. It is also constructed as people interact with one another. The meanings that people make as they interact produce rich qualitative data. It is against this background that the researcher decided to locate the research in a qualitative paradigm. Qualitative researchers thus seek to understand the context or setting of the participants through visiting the context and collecting the information personally (Creswell 2009; Savin-Baden & Major 2013).

Guided by the social constructionist theory of multiple masculinities the researcher therefore explored qualitatively how boys and girls in Grade 7 interacted with each other and how they understood the world around them in the context of gender relations.

3.3 Research instruments

This research as indicated above used three methods of collecting data namely, focus groups, diaries and in-depth interviews. Focus group discussions were tape recorded so that vital information was not missed during discussions. During focus groups there is a danger of going off the topic so the researcher used guiding questions to keep the participants on track. Focus group interview questions which are more guided considering the age of the participants are thus found in Appendix K. Participants were asked to keep diaries in which they outline their experiences, understanding and perceptions on the constructions of masculinity by the boys. Guidelines on how to complete a diary and a sample of a completed diary were pasted on the first page of each diary. These guidelines are found in Appendix L. Each in-depth interview session was guided by questions which needed clarification from the participant's diary or focus group contributions. Since the in-depth interviews depend on focus groups and diaries they cannot be pre-constructed.

3.4 Study setting

The study setting can also be referred to as the research site(s). The setting is important since it "is not simply where knowledge is uncovered; it is an integral part of the knowledge that is uncovered" (Savin-Baden & Major 2013: 307). Kuntz (2013) argues for the space where the research takes place is more than a setting since it is a contributor to social meaning. Within the school context it is where learners come into contact during their formal and informal activities. The school setting is composed of both the physical, social and economic environments. Both help in foregrounding the learners' own accounts and experiences in the social formation of masculinities. The use of the resources and space has an impact on the way young masculinities are constructed.

This study took place at two primary schools in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality situated in Gauteng in South Africa. Ekurhuleni is home to many learners from different socio-economic backgrounds. The learners also belong to different nationalities, races and ethnic groups. The townships of Ekurhuleni provide a large and diverse pool of learners to the schools within the municipality. **Townships** "are defined as formally planned and racially segregated residential areas for non-white residents at the peripheries of South African urban areas" (Xulu-Gama 2017:48). These were the areas reserved and up to now still mostly occupied by black Africans, coloureds and Indians. Township life is generally characterised with poverty and violence Mampane & Bouwer 2011; Manyike 2014). The black African

township children are still found at the former blacks-only township schools as before, and now also at former Indians-only schools and former whites-only schools. The children who attend these schools from the surrounding townships come from families which can afford the fees charged by these institutions. At the township schools children are mostly from poor families who cannot afford the fees charged in former model C schools[1].This is a schooling system introduced by legislation in 1992 (Maile 2004). Although the term remains in use the educations system was restructured after 1994 so that schools can accommodate learners from different social backgrounds (Webb Lafon & Pare 2010). These schools are well resourced because parents of children who go there can afford to pay the high fees required. The well-developed infrastructure is also a reflection of the apartheid education system which through its education expenditure allocated the most per white child and the least per black African child (Veriava 2014). According to this schooling system the white communities had powers on the school activities through school governing bodies (Maile 2004; Webb *et al* 2010).

The social classifications emanating from the social inequality of the apartheid era helped in the purposive selection of the two schools. During colonial times schools in the all-white areas had most of the resources needed while those in the townships had very few resources. To bridge this gap and disparity in post-independent South Africa, the Minister of Basic Education according to Section 35(1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) is required to determine national quintiles for public schools. Quintiles are poverty rankings of schools in South Africa. They are "based on the socio-economic status of the community in which the schools are located" (Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019. 106). The socio-economic status is determined by the "average income, unemployment rates, and general literacy level in the school's geographical area" (Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019. 106). Public schools are thus put into five categories. Quintile 1 schools are regarded as coming from the poorest communities while quintile 5 schools are categorised as coming from affluent communities (Davies 2013; Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019). Schools in quintiles 1,2 and 3 receive more government financial support than schools in quintile 4 and 5. The financial support is on a sliding scale depending on the socio-economic status of the school. Below is a table showing the SA schools' quintile system.

[1] Model C schools refer to former whites-only semi- private schools introduced during the apartheid time in South Africa (Maile 2004).

Table 1: South African schools' quintiles

Quintile	Economic status	Payment of fees status
1	Most poor	Non-fee-paying schools
2		
3		
4		Fee-paying schools
5	Least poor	

In this study Mazitike Primary is categorised under quintile 1 while Multiville Primary is categorised under quintile 5. Below, the researcher discusses in detail the physical environment and social background of the two institutions. These matrixes have a bearing on how boys play thus exhibiting how masculinities are constructed and experienced in gender relations. The structure and the practices of schools are also institutional agents that produce masculinity practices (Swain 2006).

Both schools are co-educational institutions. This means they enrol both boys and girls. Both schools are public schools which cater for learners without disabilities. Public schools are government schools and are thus assisted by the government. The names of the 2 schools are pseudonyms so that the identities of the participants cannot be tracked back to them through their schools. Mazitike Primary had 877 learners while Multiville Primary had 1248 learners.

3.4.1 Vignette of Mazitike Primary

Mazitike Primary is located at the periphery of an all-black African township. The physical and social surroundings suggest a society languishing in poverty. Manyike (2014) argues that South African townships are characterised by poverty since they have a high unemployment rate. Manyike (2014) further argues that people who live in the townships have little resources or mechanisms they can use to take control of their lives thus violence becomes an option since its one of the few options at their disposal. Violence at school relates to violence at home since it is considered a legitimate way of solving disputes by some learners (Mampane & Bouwer 2011; Manyike 2014).

About a kilometre away in the eastern side of the school you can see a sprawling township of only black Africans. The majority of the learners at this school come from this township while a few others come from the surrounding farms. From the western side of the school a

meandering pot-holed dusty road stretching for about a kilometre approaches the school from a passing narrow tarred road. While the school is surrounded by unutilised land it is built on a very small space, the classrooms lying less than five metres from the palisade fence surrounding the classrooms. There is barely space for extra-mural activities and children to play during break time. During the apartheid era sport resources were racially distributed. Township schools were constructed on limited pieces of land meaning they were denied sporting facilities and other recreational amenities (Bhana 2008). Up to now, "Many township schools do not have playing fields, and access to coaching and sporting facilities is limited" (Bhana 2008:4). The small space between the classrooms at this school is where the teachers' cars are parked haphazardly

The school has both permanent and mobile classrooms. The school is run from two very small rooms fused between the classrooms. One room is used by the school administrators and the other by the school principal. A person can barely pass when one is seated waiting to be helped by the administrators. You need to stand up or go outside for someone to pass. Most of the time when the researcher arrived to do the study he would tell the administrators that he was around and move out and stand under a tree while the learners were being organised for him. The room they called their school library was filled up with stationery and other items not in use leaving a small space for people to engage with one another and only while standing. This is the room the researcher was given on his first day to carry out the study with the participants. However, on the second day the researcher was told that the school library was now out of bounds and he should see his participants under a tree since there were no spare classrooms. After engaging further with the School- Based Support Team (SBST) coordinator the reearcher was subsequently allocated a classroom for the focus group discussion and the library for the detailed individual interviews on the last day of study.

An SBST committee is made up of teachers who provide support to teachers by recommending interventions for learners who are struggling academically and behaviourally. The team was asked to help the researcher in case there were some participants affected negatively by the research and who thus needed support.

All staff members at the school are black Africans. The principal is a male while the deputy principal is a female. The school offers isiZulu as its Home Language (HL) and English as its First Additional Language (FAL). After consulting his School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB) the principal handed the researcher to a black female

teacher who was the SBST coordinator to help the researcher. From that day until he finished the study she helped the researcher on where, how and when to see the participants.

Some learners travelled long distances to come to school. When the reseacher started the study many learners had just been given bicycles but by the time the researcher finished not even a single learner could be seen still coming to school on bicycle. The issuing of bicycles under the 'Shova kalula' bicycle programme is aimed at assisting learners walking long distances to access basic education. The partnership between the City of Ekurhuleni, the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport and the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) gave bicycles to most learners at this school to help them travel the long distances to school easily. Some travelled more than five kilometres to school. Most learners at this school were poor and could not afford their own transport to come to school. Due to poverty these bicycles were being used at home again and thus it did not take long before they broke down. Learners started to endure travelling the long distances to school on foot again.The learners are also fed everyday at school under the programme of the DBE called National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). The initiatives by the government show how poverty-stricken this school is.

The children at this school come from diverse black African ethnic groups of South Africa and other Southern African countries. Foreigners at this school mostly came from Mozambique. Most of the participants in this study who lived with both parents had only fathers going to work. Most of the participants whose parents worked indicated that they did not have formal employment.

This school offers very few sporting/recreational activities. These are soccer, netball, athletics and music. Soccer was the most common sport although the school did not have a formal playing field.

3.4.2 Vignette of Multiville Primary

This school is located in an area previously reserved for Indians only. The school's immediate surroundings and its infrastructure suggest a more financially stable community than the other all black African school. However, barely a kilometre to the north, there are some flats popularly known as "Zulu hostels" and to the west and south a sprawling all black township with patches of informal settlements on the periphery. Hostels are mostly

overcrowded areas which are historically associated with political violence (Xulu-Gama 2017). These areas make up part of the school's catchment area.

Multiville Primary is built on a spacious piece of ground as compared to Mazitike School. The school administration block is strategically built so that visitors will not miss it from the main entrance. It is also located near the car park where the teachers' cars are neatly parked. It is comprised of the administration office, the principal's office, the deputy principal's office, the boardroom and the staffroom which are all spacious and well furnished. All the classrooms are spaciously built with some blocks being double storeyed. The school has a well-equipped computer laboratory and a spacious well-decorated and carpeted reading room. The group interviews and the individual interviews took place in this reading room. One session of the group interview was held in the staffroom because the reading room was being used by one of the classes on that particular day.

The school has well developed netball and soccer playing fields. Next to the soccer field there is an open field which is used by the children during break times for playing. There are also some resting benches in this area. The school unlike Mazitike School offers more sporting codes. While Mazitike School offers only soccer, netball, athletics and music Multiville Primary beside these also offers swimming, table tennis, chess, dancing and cricket.

The staff members are a mixture of Indians, coloureds and black Africans being headed by a female Indian principal. The majority of the teachers are Indians. The effect of apartheid is that teachers in predominantly Indian and black township primary schools are still generally Indian or black, respectively- although this profile is slowly changing (see Bhana 2008). The school seems to be dogged by racism since it has gone for years without a deputy principal due to disputes being lodged by the black Africans whenever an Indian deputy principal is recommended for the post by the school. On the front desk of the administration section a female Indian is seated who tried to block the researcher from seeing the principal to finalise issues to start this study. The attempt to block the researcher showed more racial attitude than anything else. She may have been using her gatekeeping position to racially profile the researcher to prevent access to the principal. The researcher only managed to set up an appointment with the principal paving the way to start the study through a direct phone call to the principal reminding her of a prior arrangement.

After consulting her SMT and the SGB the principal gave the researcher permission to do the study. She gave the researcher an Indian Life Orientation (LO) Grade 7 female teacher to help him. Although there were some challenges at one time she was of great help.

The school draws most of its learners from the nearby mostly black township and the formerly Indian location around the school. Some learners commute from distant townships in Ekurhuleni. The school is made up of mainly black learners with a few Indians and coloureds. Post-apartheid South African has seen an increase in the enrolment of learners from different races in the same schools especially in the affluent establishments (Pattman & Bhana 2009). In former Indian establishments more black learners have been enrolled. In many SA township primary schools there are many black learners from different ethnic backgrounds and nationalities.

The black African learners come from different ethnic backgrounds. Some of the black Africans are also from the neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi.

The school is in quintile 5 meaning the children attending there can afford to pay school fees. Unlike at Mazitike School the DBE does not provide food to the children at this school. Since Multiville is a multiracial institution the researcher explains briefly below in section 3.4.3 the general social background and the origins of the Indians and the coloureds and their construction of identities.

3.4.3 Racial and ethnic categories

During apartheid in SA people were classified into races namely black, Indian, coloured and white. These four racial categories are still being widely used in the country (Bhana & Pattman 2011; Hamlall & Morrell; Bhana 2013). Racial categories are still used in legislation aimed at redress, such as the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 as amended by Act No. 47 of 2013 and Broad- based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 as amended by Act 46 of 2013. Along this line Bhana (2008: 13) argues that "race continues to be a significant marker in post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in terms of redress". Even in the education sector statistics on teachers and learners still use these racial classifications. While the researcher uses these racial categories in this study he does not endorse them.

In post-apartheid SA although residential areas are now deracialised they still carry the apartheid identity. Black Africans are still mainly found in previously all black townships although some live in the areas previously reserved for whites, coloureds, or Indians. Whites, coloureds and Indians likewise are also still found in large numbers in areas previously reserved for them. Although learners are found mixed in schools some still come from these racially divided residential areas. The term black African in this study refers to all black people of African origin. Coloureds refers to people of mixed descent or birth (Morrell 2012) while Indians refers to people of Indian origin.

Social background plays a role in the way boys and girls construct masculinities. Gender-based violence and the construction of masculinities discourses in school need an understanding of "the social conditions and processes that produce them" Bhana 2008:4). It is thus imperative to use the racial categories to understand how these social categories of difference shape the construction of masculinities within the school context.

Given that one of the schools in this study still has a predominantly Indian profile, it is worth looking at Indian/black African relations. While both Indians and black Africans were discriminated against under apartheid, violent racial conflict flared between them at times (Freund in Hamlall & Morrell 2012). Indian is a racial category associated with people whose ancestry origin is from India. Although both the Indians and black Africans were relegated to an inferior status by the whites, the Indians enjoyed better treatment than the black Africans. Hamlall & Morrell (2012) argue that in schools dominated by Indians, Indian boys maintained dominance over the black African boys. It is thus sagacious to understand how these boys construct their identity in a context in which they are in the minority and the black African boys in the majority.

The term 'coloured' has a different meaning in Southern Africa than in most parts of the world. In Southern Africa it refers to a person of mixed racial ancestry while in other parts of the world the person is considered black (Adhikari 2013). This mixed racial ancestry in this study includes any combination of African, white and Indian (see Chen, Bhana, Anderson & Buccus 2019). Like the black African and the Indian racial groups this group was also relegated to an inferior status during the apartheid era. However, the coloureds were allocated a higher social status than the black Africans.

It is crucial to understand how young coloured masculinities are constructed in a multicultural school context in which the majority of learners are black Africans. There are general perceptions in SA that coloured men are violent, aggressive and heterosexist (Chen *et al* 2019). However, Ruiters (2013:112) points out that "Coloured identities are multiple, fluid and hybrid".

Ethnicity as another form of social differentiation can also influence and shape masculinities (Christensen & Jensen 2014). During apartheid, through forced removals black African ethnic differentation was reinforced with the so-called homeland policy relegating people thus identified to segregated Bantustans (see Gordon and Spiegel 1993; Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger 2012). These included the Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Tsonga and Venda. Different masculinities were constructed in these traditional settings.

The meaning, experience and power relations of gender and masculinity can vary according to these ethnic identifications although they can also be influenced again by other social divisions. In post-apartheid South Africa these ethnic groups live in the same locality and the children attend the same schools. 'Traditional masculinities' can be seen as competing particularly in multi-ethnic or cultural societies (Ratele 2013). Different masculinities can thus be constructed or compete in the school context based on ethnicity. It is thus imperative to understand the views and experiences of boys of different ethnic backgrounds who share the same school context.

3.5 Delineations/scope of the study

This research was carried out at two chosen township primary schools in Ekurhuleni, a sprawling metropole east of Johannesburg in the economic heartland of South Africa. Thirty-seven Grade 7 learners were part of the research. These research participants took part in focus group interviews, kept diaries and some were interviewed about how young masculinities were being constructed by Grade 7 learners at their schools. They also explained how these constructs affected some boys and girls in general at their schools. Educators and other members of staff of the chosen schools were not part of the investigation. Grade 7 educators at the chosen schools helped with choosing the research participants following the laid-down criteria in section 3.7 below. The schools' support counselling teams were involved before, during and after the investigation with debriefing and counselling. All interviews, transcription of data, presentation and analysis were done by the researcher. The

research assistant helped with tape recording and translation of some isiZulu terms to English.

3.6 Study participants/target population

This study targeted all the Grade 7 learners in the year 2018 at two primary schools in the townships of Ekurhuleni who are within the age range of 12 to 14 years. Grade 7 is the senior year in primary schools in South Africa. Neuman (1997) refers to target population as the specific pool of cases that the researcher wishes to study.

All the participants came from parents or guardians within the townships of Ekurhuleni. Participants are people taking part in a qualitative research study (Farrimond 2013; Lichtman 2014). From Mazitike Primary the participants were black African learners of different ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. From Multiville Primary black African learners, Indians and coloureds were the participants. The participants were both boys and girls. Having participants from different races, social backgrounds, ethnic backgrounds and nationalities gave a good representation of the target population as it also answered the research question without discriminating against any group of learners. The participants were purposefully assembled.

3.7 Description of the sample

In qualitative research there are most commonly two schools of thought on how sampling should be done namely 'theoretical sampling' and 'purposeful sampling' (Savin-Baden & Major 2013). Theoretical sampling is designed to generate theory and is carried out during data collection and is grounded in data while purposive sampling is designed to study in-depth cases so as to understand something (Savin-Baden & Major 2013) and is designed prior to collecting data. Purposive sampling "is a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that cannot be obtained as well from other choices" (Savin-Baden & Major 2013: 314 quoting Maxwell). Focus group interviews, a technique for collecting qualitative data used in this study rely on purposive sampling (Greeff 2005). Purposive sampling is thus suitably used to find detailed information such as the construction of young masculinities. Samples in this technique are small and are studied intensely and produce a large amount of detailed qualitative information.

In selecting participants for this study the researcher used the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is also known as judgemental sampling. This technique uses the

judgement of an expert in selecting the participants since the researcher has a specific purpose in mind. Babbie (2010: 193) thus defines purposive or judgemental sampling as "a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which ones will be the most useful or representative". The aim of purposive sampling is to sample participants who are suited to giving answers to the research questions (Bryman 2012). The participants in this study were selected on the basis that they should be able to narrate and explain how and from what sources Grade 7 boys and girls in their school construct masculinities and how those constructions impact on gender relations in their primary schools.

The participants in this study were selected in such a way that they represented the demographic composition of the school. Thus the criteria focused on sex, race, ethnicity and nationality. Participants were also selected on their eligibility to write since they were to keep diaries and their ability to engage in debates to participate fully in focus groups. This criterion may seem absurd but in the township schools there are many learners who get to Grade 7 unable to read or write their own mother language. The participants were also to have an understanding of gender segregated boundaries between them. In this research the researcher was assisted by the Grade 7 educators to select the participants in their schools since they knew them better. The aforementioned criteria minimised bias by the Grade 7 educators in selecting the participants who could actually provide the answers to the research field.

The study targeted at least 30 research participants in total. Fifteen participants were expected from each school. However, 20 research participants were invited at each school to take part. This was done in case some parents or guardians failed to consent or allow their children to be part of the research or the participants due to other reasons decided at the last minute not to be part of the study. The views on over recruiting are in line with other researchers (Savin-Baden & Major 2013 and Lichtman 2014. Greeff (2005) on focus groups says it is important to over-recruit by 20% to cover up for potential participants who may fail to turn up.

Out of the expected 30 participants a total of 37 participants comprising of boys and girls took part in the study, 18 participants were boys while 19 were girls. All the participants were between the ages of 12 and 14. Below are two tables indicating the demography of the participants from the two schools. This background information was collected from the participants soon after signing the consent forms and before the commencement of the study.

All names of research participants used in this study are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the research participants.

Table 2: Background information on Mazitike Primary research participants

Names	Sex	Nationality	Race	Ethnic group	Lives with parent/guardian	Status of parent/guardian	Age
Sid	Male	South African	African	Pedi	Both parents	Father working	12
Sizwe	Male	South African	African	Sotho	Grandmother	Working	14
Gxabhashe	Male	South African	African	Xhosa	Father	Working	14
Rigby	Male	Mozambican	African	Tsonga	Both parents	Father working	14
Modecai	Male	South African	African	Tsonga	Both parents	Father working	13
Suarez	Male	Mozambican	African	Tsonga	Both parents	Father working	13
Zweli	Male	South African	African	Ndebele	Both parents	Mother working	13
TK	Male	Mozambican	African	Tsonga	Mother	Not working	13
Bianca	Female	South African	African	Zulu	Grandmother	Working	13
Dineo	Female	South African	African	Tswana	Mother	Working	12
Nosipho	Female	South African	African	Venda	Both parents	Father working	14
Elisa	Female	South African	Coloured		Mother	Working	14
Thembi	Female	South African	African	Tsonga	Both parents	Mother working	13
Precious	Female	South African	African	Zulu	Mother	Working	13
Patience	Female	Mozambican	African	Tsonga	Mother	Working	14
Lebogang	Female	South	African	Tsonga	Both parents	Father working	12

		African					
Goodness	Female	Zulu	African	Zulu	Both parents	Both working	12

Of the 17 participants that took part in the study from Mazitike School, it can be observed from the above table that eight were boys while nine were girls. One boy was 12 years, four boys were 13 years old and three others were 14 years old. Of the nine female participants from this school, three were 12 years old, three were 13 years old and the other three were 14 years old. Four of the 17 participants were foreigners from Mozambique. These foreign nationals were not at liberty to reveal to the researcher that they were foreigners. They did not want their school mates to know they were foreigners. Of the 17 participants who took part in this study from Mazitike Primary one was coloured while the rest were blacks.

Below is the demographic representation of participants of Multiville Primary.

Table 3: Background information on Multiville Primary research participants

Names	**Sex**	**Nationality**	**Race**	**Ethnic group**	**Lives with parent/guardian**	**Status of parent/guardian**	**Age**
Lesedi	Male	South African	African	Pedi	Both parents	Both working	14
Siyabonga	Male	South African	Coloured		Both parents	Both	12
Neo	Male	South African	African	Zulu	Both parents	Both	14
Sipho	Male	South African	African	Xhosa	Mother	Not working	14
Big Junior	Male	South African	African	Zulu	Mother & Step father	Both	13
Zamokuhle	Male	South Africa	African	Tswana	Mother	Working	13
Mxolisi	Male	South African	African	Tswana	Mother	Working	13
Chris	Male	Zimbabwean	African	Shona	Both parents	Both	13
Zamani	Male	South	African	Zulu	Both parents	Both	14

		African					
Kelly	Female	Zimbwean	African	Shona	Both parents	Father working	12
Thandi	Female	South African	Coloured		Mother	Working	13
Perl	Female	South African	Indian		Uncle & Aunt	Uncle working	12
Mbali	Female	South African	African	Sotho	Father	Working	13
Noluthando	Female	South African	African	Zulu	Mother	Working	13
Twinkle	Female	South African	Coloured		Both parents	Both working	13
Zergo	Male	South Africa	Coloured		Both parents	Father working	14
Ntokozo	Female	South African	African	Xhosa	Both parents	Both working	12
Keabetswe	Female	Mozambican	African	Tsonga	Both parents	Both working	13
Amonelang	Female	South African	African	Pedi	Father & grandparents	Father not working	12
Thando	Female	South African	Coloured		Grandparents	Not working	14

From Multiville Primary, 10 boys and 10 girls took part in the study. From this school one participant was Indian, five coloureds and the rest blacks. Of the 10 boys one was 12 years old, four were 13 years old and the remaining five were 14 years old. Of the 10 girl participants, four were 12 years, five were 13 years and one was 14 years of age. three participants out of the 20 from this school were foreigners.

3.8 Data collection techniques

Data collection entails the generation of information. Three approaches were used to collect data in this study. Focus group interviews were used to solicit and observe gender relations in boys and girls in the construction of masculinity. All research participants were also asked to keep individual diaries to explore gender relations in masculinity constructions at school. Data was also collected through in-depth interviews. These in-depth interviews were carried out at the end with few chosen participants to clarify issues they raised during focus group interviews and those raised in diaries.

Individual in-depth interviews can be used in conjunction with other methods of collecting data rather than as the central or sole method. Individual in-depth interviews help the researcher "to probe deeply into a participant's experiences, and are ideal when the researcher wishes to *follow up initial responses by probing for additional information that can help clarify or illuminate*" (Savin- Baden & Major 2013: 358. researcher's emphasis). Savin-Baden & Major (2013) further point out that interviews are particularly important in obtaining information which is sensitive and confidential.

Cronin (2008) points out that focus groups can either be used on their own or in conjunction with other methods. While focus groups explored the social face of gender identity construction; diaries give insight into its private face. It can be argued that the use of multiple methods of data collection will increase the trustworthiness and credibility of the research (Nieuwenhuis & Smit 2012). The use of three data gathering strategies thus also helps to crystallise findings.

3.8.1 Focus group interviews

A total of 11 focus group interview sessions took place over a period of five months. A focus group interview is a qualitative data collection method which has both group interview and focus group characteristics (Savin-Baden & Major 2013).

From Mazitike Primary a total of five focus group interview sessions took place. Three sessions were done with boys and two sessions with girls. The fewer sessions with girls was necessitated by lack of time due to the school's tight schedule. This, however, did not compromise the research as all the scheduled questions were treated with them. From Multiville Primary a total of six focus group interview sessions took place. Both boys and girls had three sessions each. Each session in both schools lasted for about two hours.

A focus group interview is a combination of aspects of focus group and group interview. A focus group is a limited number of people who come together mostly in a private environment to engage in a discussion of a specific topic, theme or issue. The focus group can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Sarantakos 2005; Babbie 2010).

A group interview involves an interviewer asking questions to a group of people at the same time. The individuals in the group answer the questions concerned in turn (Kitzinger in Savin- Baden & Major 2013).

Focus group interviews are different to group interviews in that interactions of the group members are encouraged since it is a focus group and can also allow the researcher to view social interactions in action (Savin- Baden & Major 2013). The group is focused because it involves some form of collective activity. A focus group interview is thus a group of participants interviewed collectively, necessitating a discussion on a specific set of issues. A focus group interview can thus give a range and depth of opinion, attitudes and beliefs on the construction of young masculinities at school in the South African townships' context.

Focus group interviews are used as a self-contained method in studies or as supplementary sources of data or in multi-method studies that combine two or more means of gathering data (Greeff 2005). In self-contained studies the focus group interviews are the main source of data. When used as a supplementary source of data it means it is used to augment the main data source. In the multi-method, no single method determines the use of another. In this study it is used as one of the key research methods of gathering data. It is also used as a primary source of data to the individual in-depth interviews. The in-depth study hinges on the focus group interviews and the diaries. The focus group interview discussion is thus used in a complementary position in the way boys form masculinities with the diaries. As pointed out above it shows the social face of masculinity formation.

The purpose of the focus group interview is to explore how people think and feel (Krueger & Casey in Greeff 2005). The purpose of the focus group interview is therefore to explore rather than to describe or explain phenomena (Babbie 2010). The method is important in giving multiple viewpoints in the construction of masculinities and their impact since "it offers information about group processes, spontaneous feelings, reasons and explanations for attitudes and behaviour" adequately (Sarantakos 2005: 195). The debates and discussions that accompany it will also show how constructions of masculinity unfold in groups and also how

groups strategise in solving problems that come with these formations.This method, however, does not aim to analyse the group but to "provide a forum that facilitates group discussion, to brainstorm a variety of solutions and to establish a mechanism of opinion formation" (Sarantakos 2005:195-196). It is in the discussions that members of the group are stimulated by others to comment which does not occur in individual interviews (Lichtman 2014). It is through focus group interviews and its stimulation that boys and girls can reveal how constructions of masculinity happen within the township schools. Focus group interviews give them an opportunity to engage with each other and provoke their thinking regarding the social construction of masculinities. It is within a qualitative research model that "group discussion offers access to the construction of meanings while participants interact with each other within the group, the breadth and variation of those meanings, and the way in which the group negotiates them" (Sarantakos 2005:196).

Focus group discussions provide an understanding of the range and depth of opinion, attitudes and beliefs, rather than a measure of the number of people who hold a particular view or opinion (Gomm 2008). It is thus the information that results from the discussion and the interaction that is of paramount importance. It is through focus group discussions that participants can be stimulated and motivated to speak more. In real life participants spend most of their time interacting with others thus their views are continually modified in line with the social situations prevailing. It can thus be argued that "group interviews can provide a valuable insight into both social relations in general and the examination of process and social dynamics in particular" (May 2011:139). It can thus generate new perspectives not previously considered by the researcher (Lichtman 2014). It was thus through focus group interviews that boys and girls in this study got as close as possible to real life situations where they discussed, formulated and modified their views and made sense of their experiences.

For focus group interviews to run smoothly certain criteria have to be in place. There is a need to have a reasonable size of the group with an appropriate composition. The venue where the research will take place needs to be arranged well in advance and how the recording thereof is going to take place. The duties of the moderator or interviewer must be explicitly explained. The interviewer must have a thorough understanding of running a focus group interview session otherwise the whole preparation will be in vain.

The size of the focus group interview "depends largely upon the length of time available for discussion, the number of questions that should be asked, and the depth of the responses

desired" (Savin-Baden & Major 2013:388). With this in mind most researchers put the size within the range of five to15 (see Babbie 2010 talks of five to 15; Sarantakos 2005 talks of five to 10; May 2011 talks of eight to 12; Hoyle *et al* 2002; Greeff 2005; David and Sutton 2011 talk of six to 10; Neuman 1997; Savin-Baden & Major 2013; Lichtman 2014 talk of six to 12). If the group becomes too big it will mean group interaction will be difficult to achieve and if it is too small there may be less interaction.

Most research projects using the focus group interview technique have been carried out with adults leaving out children. When conducting a study with children "groups should be small, with no more than eight children at maximum" (Scott 2008: 100). This enables the children to interact and engage with each other freely.

Of the 11 focus group interview sessions that took place seven were made up of five participants each. Two groups had four participants each, one had six participants and one had seven participants. The size of the groups helped in making all the participants take part, and also avoided dominance by a few individuals. The differences in the composition of groups were caused by different activities being run by the schools which kept away some participants from attending and absenteeism from school. The sessions that had four participants resulted in some sessions having six and seven participants in a group as participants compensated for the days when they were absent.

Each individual within the groups was given an opportunity to meet in a focus group interview twice. This is sufficient time considering the detail and the depth of the responses obtained in this study. Of equal importance to the size of the group is its composition.

The focus group interview members are usually selected based on something which is common to them and is relevant to the topic under research (Hoyle *et al* 2002; Babbie 2010). It can be based on the categories of difference such as sex, age or race. If the groups are mixed up it might stifle or restrict the discussions. Although there is little scientific research on group composition (Lichtman 2014), the group should be homogenous enough to reduce conflict (Neuman 1997). David and Sutton (2011) suggest that if young males spend most of their time interacting with other young males then a homogenous group is appropriate and if they spend most of their time in mixed company with females then a heterogeneous group will be more appropriate. While this is appropriate the issue of age should also be taken into consideration. Grade 7 learners are still too young to engage in some sensitive topics while in

mixed company. Combining them may also restrict the girls when they discuss issues of sexuality or male domination and female subordination issues. In other words, separating them is more about preventing gender-based abuse and creating a safe space for girls. In this study the focus group interviews were thus gender-segregated (see Scott 2008).

Age is an important factor when deciding the composition of focus groups for children. Scott (2008:100) points out that "children should be interviewed in restricted age groups as otherwise older children will dominate". Bearing this in mind the researcher's study was based on learners who are between the ages of 12 and 14. Most learners doing Grade 7 are in this age range so it was a good representation of the study population.

In this study at Multiville Primary when the researcher told them that they were going to be involved in focus group interviews they started grouping themselves along racial lines irrespective of their sex. Black African boys and girls started putting themselves in friendship groups. The Indian girl and the coloured boys and girls also started forming their own group. Throughout the study the Indian girl pointed out that she enjoyed the company of coloured boys rather than that of black African boys. The situation was tense. The researcher had to step in and explain to them that our groupings were along sex lines and not racial lines.

The venue where the focus group interview sessions are held is very important. Cronin (2008) points out that participants should sit in such a way that they can see and hear each other properly, be in a room with few possible interruptions and where recording could be carried out without any hindrance. In this study the researcher asked the schools to provide him with a quiet and private space where the participants would sit comfortably and air their contributions for one hour.

Recording of the focus group interviews was done by a female assistant researcher. Her duty was to record and clarify questions in local languages.

Before a study begins participants need to be put at ease. As an ice-breaker the researcher started by throwing sweets in the air and then asking the one with more sweets to start to say anything about themselves about their experiences in Grade 7. After this ground rules guiding the running of the focus group interviews were written down together on a flip chart by the researcher working in conjunction with the participants. The ground rules were displayed throughout the focus group interview discussions so that they acted as a reminder to everyone.

The ground rules agreed upon ran as follows:

- Only one participant talks at a time;
- All contributions are confidential;
- All conversations must be done as a group. Side conversations can disturb the conversation flow;
- Everyone is encouraged to participate since all contributions are important;
- There are no right or wrong answers.
  (Savin-Baden & Major 2013).

As focus group interviews are made up of different individuals, problems may arise during a session. Some participants may try to dominate the discussion while others may take a back seat. Body language was used to discourage the ones who wanted to talk a lot or tell them to give others a chance. After asking a question more time was given to the quiet ones to formulate their responses. It was the responsibility of the researcher to see that all participants were given equal opportunities to talk and that dominancy was curtailed.

If there was no response to an asked question the researcher made an effort to establish the reason or rephrased it so as to get some information about the asked question. If participants were not comfortable to speak in public they were given an importunity to say something in a detailed individual interview or record their contributions in their diaries.

Whenever the participants veered off the topic the researcher brought them back to the subject under discussion.

Despite ground rules having been laid down there were some side conversations. The researcher checked this tendency every time and brought it under control since important information could be lost or not heard and also it would be distracting for other group members. Those participants were asked to share their side discussions with the whole group. Some participants brought in answers to questions that were to be asked later in the discussion. This was welcome since most questions were interrelated.

In this study the researcher decided on the questions to be asked and their order. It was the researcher's role to facilitate all the focus group discussions. The researcher worked with a female research assistant whose duty was to tape record the discussions and clarify words in the local African languages since the researcher was not fluent in these languages. This was a conscious decision. The research assistant was a woman and the researcher being a man, the

researcher wanted the participants to identify with them as equal to them and to create a safe space for them to talk about topical issues relating to sexuality.

Focus group interviews offer a number of advantages to qualitative researchers. It is a socially oriented technique which captures real-life data in a social environment (Krueger in Babbie 2010). Rich information is obtained as participants joke, tease and argue with each other. More information is obtained in a shorter period of time as many participants are interviewed at the same time. This will also reduce costs as movement time is kept to a minimum and limited resources used. This method is also flexible (Babbie 2010) and has high face validity (Savin- Baden & Major 2013).

Focus group interviews are unsuitable in uncovering information about sensitive topics. In this study participants were, however, given an opportunity to speak out about sensitive information during detailed individual interviews or to write it down in their diaries. Krueger in Babbie (2010) notes that differences between group members can be troublesome. This is the reason the researcher grouped the participants along sex lines and in a small age range. Children are more comfortable answering and debating questions if they are the same sex and of the same age.

3.8.2. Diaries

All research participants in this study were asked to keep individual diaries to explore gender relations in masculinity constructions at school. Before starting recording in the diaries the researcher had a meeting with all participants to outline how they would complete and manage the diaries. There were guidelines on how to complete diaries(see Appendix L).

A diary is a record of first-person observation of experiences over a period of time (Yi 2008). Bernard (2011:294) points out that "a diary chronicles how you feel and how you perceive your relations with others around you". Diaries are confidential thus the educators, parents or guardians were not allowed to help participants to complete them or keep them for them in this study. This is highlighted in the letter to the parents (see Appendix D). While focus groups explored the social face of gender identity construction; diaries gave insight into its private face. The use of diaries simultaneously with the focus group interviews gave credible and authentic results.

Thompson and Holland (in Braun & Clark 2013) identify different types of diaries namely handwritten diaries, typed online or e-mailed electronic diaries and audio-recorded diaries

among others. In this study participants used handwritten diaries. Due to the age of the participants the researcher asked them to keep handwritten records of events within the school which show forms of masculinity and their impact on gender relations.

Scott (2008:94) points out that "One relatively novel method of collecting sensitive information from children is the diary method". Diaries also collect detailed information. Diaries give first-person descriptions of social events, written by an individual who is involved in or who witnessed those happenings. In this study participants were asked to record what they experienced each day which included gender talk, work, play and relations of any kind among the boys and between the boys and the girls.

Diaries are used in answering a wide range of qualitative questions. These are "about experiences, understandings and perceptions, accounts of practice, influencing factors and construction" (Braun & Clark 2013:147).

3.8.2.1 Challenges in the use of diaries

The use of diaries can be expensive and cumbersome. The researcher needed to buy diaries and travel to the research site to make sure the diaries were completed timeously. To cut costs in this study the researcher used A5 exercise books and visited the research site once a week while carrying out focus group discussions to also check the completion.

Of the 37 participants who took part in the focus group interview discussions 30 returned their diaries. The participants kept the diaries and completed them over a period of five months. Of the seven participants who did not return the diaries most were boys from Mazitike. The members of staff who were helping the researcher in organising the participants at Mazitike wanted to collect the diaries from the learners at one time despite the researcher having told them that no one was supposed to have access to the diaries other than their owner and the researcher so as to maintain confidentiality. This move by these teachers could have compromised the confidentiality aspect and left the participants vulnerable. However, the teachers never had access to the diaries. The researcher talked again with the teachers on the confidentiality of the diaries. The fear to give their teachers the diaries could also have contributed to some diaries not being handed in or handed back without entries despite having told them that the diaries were only supposed to be given to the researcher. Failure to make entries in diaries by some boys may also reflect what was observed in the study that most boys did not do their homework or engaged in what Connell refers to as

'protest masculinity'. Defiance of authority was seen as a way of constructing masculinity in this study.

Due to lack of time and the schools' programmes the researcher did not manage to check all diaries every week as anticipated as the researcher at times went for two weeks without even having time for focus group discussions with them. This resulted in getting some vital information on abuse late.

Bryman (2012:243) points out that "diaries can suffer from a process of attrition, as people decide they have had enough of the task of completing a diary". Participants may fail to record some details timeously and end up forgetting some important information. The researcher tried to reduce this by making sure he checked each diary whenever given the opportunity to see the learners for group discussions. Checking the diaries regularly "can help maintain motivation and provide participants with an opportunity to ask questions and clarify any areas of confusion" (Braun & Clark 2013:149).

Despite some disadvantages of this method some researchers who use the diary method such as Coxon and Sullivan argue that diaries are more accurate than interviews and questionnaires (Bryman 2012).

3.8.3 In-depth individual interviews

Focus group interviews and diaries were followed by detailed individual interviews to clarify some concepts from selected research participants.

In this study a total of 13 individual in-depth interviews were held. Of these seven were girls while six were boys. Five participants were interviewed from Mazitike Primary while eight were interviewed from Multiville Primary. From Mazitike Primary two were foreigners while three were locals coming from different ethnic backgrounds. From Multiville Primary, three were foreigners and five were locals. Among these locals there was one Indian and one coloured and the other three coming from the different black ethnic groups of South Africa. All individual in-depth interviews were carried out in private rooms. The researcher's assistant who was a woman was present in all the individual interviews. This helped the female participants to feel at ease and answer questions with less fear from the researcher as a male.

In-depth individual interviews as observed above helped the researcher to do follow-ups on focus group interviews and diary recordings to illuminate some concepts. In this research the

researcher argues that the use of multiple methods of data collection increased the trustworthiness and credibility of the research (see Nieuwenhuis & Smit 2012).

The sentiment of observing children as passive recipients of the socialisation system is coming to an end since children are 'social actors' who can shape their own worlds (Farrimond 2013). Scott (2008: 87) points out that "there is a growing demand for research that involves interviewing children". Previously, when investigating children, adults respondents such as parents, guardians and teachers were interviewed.

Some issues are sensitive and children may not be comfortable to discuss them in focus group discussions. Those who are unable to express themselves properly through writing in their diaries can express themselves verbally in confidence in individual interviews. The purpose of this style of interviewing "is to hear what the participant has to say in his or her own words, in his or her voice, with his or her language and narrative" (Lichtman 2014:261). Interviews are participatory as the participant interacts with the researcher to answer the questions (Sarantakos 2005). The researcher can also have the capacity to control misunderstandings by the participants.

The interview will try to shed more light on the four types of questions namely; knowledge, opinion, feeling and experience (Lichtman 2014) that would not have been clarified in the focus group interviews. It is through interviewing children directly that we can have an understanding of their social world (Scott 2008). The social construction of masculinity can be understood more through interviews. Individual interviews will also help the researcher to prompt for further information if inadequate answers are given during the focus group interviews.

3.9 Data analysis

The collected data was analysed and interpreted qualitatively in Chapters Four, Five and Six. A sociological approach was used in giving meaning to the collected data. Thematic analysis was employed, as a form of qualitative content analysis which gives strong emphasis "to the need to spend considerable time with the data, working out what themes actually emerge from the data rather than can be imposed upon it from the researcher's own beliefs" (David & Sutton 2011:365). Considerable time was taken making sense of the data that emerged from the focus group interviews, diaries and in-depth interviews. More on the use of the thematic approach comes in section 3.12 below.

After each focus group discussion session recordings were transcribed verbatim in the original language so that a written text was produced. The transcriptions, where they used one of the African languages were then translated into English with the help of a person who understands the home languages of the participants. In this study, the researcher (Luckmore Chimanzi) as the interviewer is denoted by LC. Short pauses are indicated by a hyphen (-), while pauses of more than a second are given numerically, for example (4) means a four-second pause. An equal sign (=) is used to show two or more people talking over each other. Elongated words which seem to show some emotional significance are shown by putting two colons in between, for example bo::ssy. Certain occurrences during focus group discussion such as coughing; laughing and so on are signified in parentheses, for example (coughing). Laughing in brackets indicates one person laughing and laughter several people laughing (see Frosh *et al* 2002; Renold 2007; Chimazi 2016). Where participants put more emphasis words are written in capital letters. Where research participants used actual names of other participants or places these were removed and pseudonyms written in italics in square brackets ([ ]). Quotes carrying these transcriptions are found in the collected and analysed data to show emotions, deeper meaning and trustworthiness of the information. Bless *et al* (2013:237) point out that "when a researcher describes exactly how data was collected, recorded, coded and analysed, and can present good examples to illustrate this process, one starts to trust that the results are in fact dependable". Dependability is a concept that shows the trustworthiness of a research study.

A comparative analysis across and within the individual research participant's focus group interviews, diary and individual in-depth interview was undertaken to find themes and patterns in the data. Considerable excerpts and quotes from the group discussions, diaries and individual interviews are used to provide evidence for the analysis, interpretations and conclusions of the researcher's study. Verbatim quotations are tools for increasing research trustworthiness.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues are important in any research to ensure the protection of all members involved in the research process. This research underwent an ethical clearance review by the University of Pretoria ethics committee (see attached clearance letter in Appendix J) before collection of data started. Children or minors are a vulnerable group. In this study the researcher had the participants' welfare at heart and thus ensured that no harm befell any

participant. Issues of confidentiality, informed consent, debriefing and counselling will thus follow. In research which involves children as participants the researcher needs to know who to contact if there is a problem. A researcher of children needs to "identify the 'ethical chain of command'" Farrimond (2013: 169).

In the past consent was sought on behalf of the children but currently there is emphasis that assent should be from the child as well (Farrimond 2013). Assent can be defined as "a child's affirmative agreement to take part in research" (Farrimond 2013:174). The children need to understand how they are protected in a study. The participants in this study were thus assured that they would remain anonymous by the use of pseudonyms (Neuman 1997) and whatever they said would not be traced back to them. Babbie (2010:67) points out that "[a] research project guarantees confidentiality when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but promises not to do so publicly". In this study this was clearly outlined in the letter inviting them to participate in the study and the assent form they signed (see the assent letter and the assent form in Appendix B and C). Participants were also asked to sign assent forms prior to the start of the study (see the assent letter and the assent form in Appendix B and C). Participants also assented that they would not discuss their group discussions outside the discussion sessions.

The children's assent also rests on the prior consent of key gate keepers. In this study permission was sought from the Gauteng Department of Education (see Appendix H) and from the school principal (see Appendix G). Since all the research participants were below the age of 18 permission from their parents and guardians was sought before the commencement of the research (see Pillay 2014). Parents and guardians were thus given letters asking for their children to participate and consent forms (see the assent letter and the assent form in Appendix D and E). Berg (in David & Sutton 2011:43) alludes to the fact that "[i]nformed consent means the knowing consent of individuals to participate as an exercise of their choice, free from an element of fraud, deceit, duress, or similar unfair inducement or manipulation". Both letters to parents/guardians and research participants were in English because at these schools the language of communication or instruction is English.

Participants in this research participated voluntarily and they were not offered any compensation for their participation. Sweets were given on the first day as an ice-breaker and not compensation as children can be tense when faced by strangers. The researcher made them aware that there would be no obligation of any nature on them to participate and that

there would be no reward or punishment for either participation or non-participation. They were thus given the leeway to withdraw during the course of the research if they decided to do so. This is clearly outlined in the consent letter in Appendix B.

Participants can be unknowingly harmed psychologically during research so a debriefing process is advisable. Babbie (2010:70) says "[d]ebriefing entails to discover any problems generated by the research experience so that those problems can be corrected". During and after the research the researcher asked the school counsellors at each school of study to help him with the debriefing and counselling. The school counsellors worked in conjunction with some social workers seconded to the schools.

3.11 Reflections on the research process

A researcher's direct involvement in a study may have a bearing on its shape and outcome (Madhok 2013). The researcher is part of the social world under study, thus can bring with him his social and cultural values and particular experiences to the study. Savin- Baden & Major (2013:76) quoting England point out that reflexivity is "self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher". A researcher can also be affected by the participants' problems, crises or over performing and end up responding to the participants showing particular emotions (Frosh *et al* 2002). It is therefore imperative that there must be a self-examination or introspection on the part of the researcher and how the whole research unfolded.

The researcher's interest in studying young masculinities is informed by nearly three decades of working with young boys and girls as a teacher in both primary and high schools in different contexts. In the researcher's daily encounter with them he has heard and experienced first hand information on the contestations of young power which is a reflection of what is happening in the adult world. This prompted the researcher at one time to be a school patron for Padare/Enkundleni-The Men's Forum on Gender, Zimbabwe responsible for the boys' chapter at high school level. However, the researcher has realised that contestations of power and masculinity constructions start before high school thus his interest to study it with learners of primary school-going age to have a detailed understanding of the roots of the abusive gender relations that characterise South Africa as a violent nation.

The researcher's experience as a Grade 7 educator for more than twenty years and as a school counsellor helped in doing the interviews in a sensitive manner protective of each participant's interest. The researcher was throughout the interviews sensitive to research

participants' views and did not allow his assumptions to interfere with the participants. The researcher approached the discussions in a relaxed, encouraging and non-judgmental atmosphere. The researcher also notified the research participants that he was not coming with any preconceived ideas on their experiences. Thus there would be no right and wrong answers in the discussions.

In this study the researcher was aware of his sex and age and how it could affect both male and female research participants' responses especially issues relating to sexuality. To counteract this possibility, the researcher worked with a young female research assistant in her twenties with whom the female research participants could associate. Before and after the focus group interviews you could see these female participants talking to the research assistant freely, showing a bond which made them at ease during focus group interviews. Before starting the focus group interviews the researcher was fully aware that young boys could try to 'perform' in contradictory ways in front of the researcher as an older male. Boys and girls were put into sex-homogenous focus group interview sessions to avoid boys 'over performing' (see Pattman 2007). The researcher's experiences as an educator and a boy child counsellor at both primary and secondary levels for more than 20 years helped him to understand this and how to handle it. In this study the views of different male and female participants from both schools show similar trends indicating there could be no 'performance in front of me' on the way boys construct masculinities. Their views are also backed by other research as the reearcher indicates in the analysis chapters. However, regarding the high number of girlfriends the boys purported to have had at a time could have been masculine performances to the researcher as an adult male .

As a foreign national in SA the researcher anticipated that some research participants could have negative attitudes towards the reearcher and thus give inappropriate information. The impact to this scenario was minimised by the fact that the researcher understands isiZulu, a language that was spoken by all the black African participants in this research. It was also minimised by the fact that the assistant researcher I worked with is a Zulu-speaker fluent in most of the SA official languages effectively and also understands the broad social-cultural background of life in the townships like someone who was born and grew up in one of the townships of Ekurhuleni. The research assistant is also a primary school educator who has wide experience of dealing with learners mostly from disadvantaged backgrounds. The researcher as an educator who has taught learners of different social, cultural and racial

backgrounds and also a school boy-child counsellor for many years did not have any problems in making research participants speak their minds and work with the school counsellors during debriefing.

The study unearthed boys' verbal and physical violence against girls and other boys. This involved descriptions of some boys touching girls in sexually abusive ways and denigrating some boys as gays. Some reported that some learners were beaten by some boys, and some had their money or food taken away from them. However, the researcher did not have any specific participant who complained that he or she was under abuse. The abuse was of a general nature, that is, it was not emanating or levelled against the researcher's specific participants only. When the researcher asked his participants if these abuses were reported to the school authorities some pointed out it was at times reported but at times they did not because they were afraid the perpetrators would wait for them after school by the gate and beat them up. However, one girl pointed out that they do not always report because they at times regard it as a small problem and they cannot just report everything to the teachers. As an adult the researcher felt some of the abuses could have been exaggerated or it was a once-off thing which the school could have solved. Like someone who has worked with children for many years knowing how they complain about trivial and huge things the researcher did not take chances. He reported the violence to the school authorities for further investigation. He thus approached the school counselling committees to do thorough investigations, debriefings and counselling if needs be with his participants and other learners within the school in general.

Bearing in mind the violence indicated by some participants after completing collecting data within the two schools the researcher compiled reports with summaries and recommendations based on his findings. The principals stamped and signed the reports then the researcher e-mailed copies to the district and the provincial offices of the Department of Education. Copies of these letters are attached as appendices M and N. However, in appendices actual names of the schools have been removed and pseudonyms attached to ensure continued anonymity and confidentiality.

Both principals told the researcher that they were taking his recommendations seriously. Both schools were working closely with the police and some social workers to help all their learners in cases of abuse by the time the researcher concluded his studies with them.

3.12 Common themes

The data collected gave more meaning to the relations that take place within the school context. It shows how young boys play, interact with girls, other boys and their social school environment in the construction of masculinities. Interestingly, a number of predominant themes relate to the social construction of young masculinities. The common themes were arrived at through coding of the transcribed focus group discussions, diary entries and detailed individual interview data. The researcher took considerable time working with the data to establish the themes that actually emerged from the data without imposing his own beliefs (see David & Sutton, 2011).

The coding process was used to generate themes for analysis (see Creswell & Creswell 2018). The themes are the major findings in this study and are used to organise chapters and headings in the findings and analysis sections of this study. A comparative analysis across and within the individual research participant's focus group interviews, diary and individual in-depth interviews were undertaken to find common themes. These themes show the plurality of masculinities (see Connell 1996, Kimmel 2008, Ratele 2008; 2011; 2016b) and a certain type of being a real boy. Real boys in this study are following a script of attempted domination with little variation.

These themes include homosociality, heterosexuality, abusive behaviour and disrespect. Masculinity intersects with other social categories of difference. Below is a Table showing these themes and their subthemes as they will be treated in Chapters 4,5 and 6.

Table 4: Predominant themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Homosociality	Gender boundaries and play time Hard and soft binary Gender-based tasks Problem sharing
Heterosexuality	Sex talk Having girlfriends
Violence	Homophobia Bullying Bravery bravado Fighting prowess Gang-related violence Defying school authoriry
'Cool' and the other	Age Ethnicity Race Class Nationality

In Chapter Four the researcher looks at the discourse of homosociality and heterosexuality in the formation of young masculinities. Abusive behaviour and disrespect of authority by learners and its violence will be addressed in Chapter Five. These social formations of masculinity are juxtaposed with other categories of social relations namely age, ethnicity, social class, race and nationality. These categories of difference that intersect with masculinity will be attended to in Chapter Six. In these three chapters the researcher argues and shows how young boys in the two schools he studied socially and individually construct masculinities.

In conclusion, this chapter looked at the rules and procedures guiding this study on how boys construct masculinity. This study took a qualitative approach in understanding how boys and girls relate to each other within a school context. Qualitative research helps in understanding

how social meaning is constructed and thus how imperative it is for critically understanding the construction of male gender identities.

The two schools at which this study took place have been discussed by giving their physical and social backgrounds. Data at these two settings was collected by means of focus group discussions, individual diaries and detailed individual interviews. A purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the 37 research participants who took part in this study.

In dealing with the selected research participants' issues of ethical considerations, confidentiality, consent and debriefing were discussed. The chapter concluded with a thorough reflection on the research process.

CHAPTER 4

HOMOSOCIAL VERSUS HETEROSEXUAL DESIRE: 'PERMANENT COWS WITH BLIND EYES'

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher explores the normative identity of being a boy or real boy. Homosociality and heterosexuality are central elements in the way in which young boys in this study construct masculinities. Homosociality in the social construction of hegemonic masculinity is of paramount importance in this study. It centres mostly on boys' social bonds, as reflected by both boys and girls. It is through these social bonds that boys within the two schools created ruling masculinities. These bonds took priority over male to female bonds. Homosociality in this study plays a central role in influencing heterosexual relationships. Heterosexuality is a central mode to express masculinity and femininity in this study.

Boys in their social groups helped each other acquire heterosexual relationships. Girls should have certain features to be considered beautiful. Girls not possessing these features are chastised by some boys. Boys who have girlfriends without having these features are relegated to an inferior status of "permanent cows with blind eyes". By using derogatory phrases the dominant group of boys is creating a prestigious position for itself while other boys and girls are relegated to an inferior status. This points to the fact that being heterosexual as indicated in much research qualifies one being labelled a man or boy (see Mfecane 2005; Saul 2005; Berkovitch & Helman 2009; Ratele 2011a, 2016b). This leaves out the aspect of the quality of the heterosexual partner which results in other boys being relegated to an inferior status and girls who do not possess the 'beauty' being relegated to objects of ridicule.

In this study at both schools boys liked playing with other boys as a way of showing that they were boys and not girls. In line with this action, boys were thus supposed to be in constant social association with other boys to be considered ''real boys'. In this study boys repeatedly pointed out that "real boys" associate more with other boys than with girls. However, while boys at times engage with girls, too much association with girls is considered as inappropriate. Homosociality in this study can be observed predominantly through gender boundaries in informal play and work and problem sharing narratives by the boys.

Heterosexuality as an enactment of homosociality experienced through 'sex talk' and having a girlfriend is also discussed in this chapter.

4.2. 'We won't play with a girl, what will people say?' Homosociality and young masculinity formation

Plummer (2001) argues that boys at primary school must socially associate with other boys. He refers to this as "compulsory homosociality". Homosociality can be defined as the social bonds between people of the same sex (Flood 2008). Homosocial obligations in this study are positioned as primary in the formation of young masculinities. The boys as a social group maintain a social boundary between them and the girls. Many participants both male and female from both schools indicated that boys enjoyed being in their homosocial groups. Boys' homosociality was not compromised and it carried a penalty with it to transgressors. Associating much with girls was forbidden by groups of boys. While many girls were willing to play with the boys, they repeatedly pointed out that boys did not want to play with them. Below is an excerpt which forms a summary from a female participant from Mazitike School during a focus group discussion.

LC: How do boys behave at school to show that they are boys and not girls?

Patience: They want to sit as a group so that they can show that they are boys.

LC: What about if the girls want to join them?

Patience: They are going to chase you or call you names.

Nosipho a female participant in her diary also pointed out that one of the boys indicated that they don't play with baboons. Boys used derogatory terms to inferiorise girls. The term 'baboons' was thus used to symbolise a group of people of a lower status. Precious, one of the female participants from the same school wrote the following in her diary:

> *Today they were six boys playing soccer. I watched them playing and saw it interesting. I drag one of the boys out of the ground and I asked to play with them. He said he is not the game starter; he is going to inform others. He stopped them and told them that I want to play but all the boys said, "No!* ***we won't play with a girl what will people say"****. I felt so bad because they don't want to play with girls.*

The views of the girls here show how the boys negotiate homosocial discourses in their everyday informal games with the girls. The views of Precious show that in this society boys are not supposed to be playing with girls. The boys fear what others will say if they play with girls. The views of how boys construct masculinity are in line with the dominant views of the

Ekurhuleni townships where the children hail from which place boys within a privileged social location in their relationship with girls. Boys were thus privileged and had more playing space to themselves.

The decision to play with girls was located in a group not an individual. In the diary entry by Precious above the boy approached by Precious had to ask for permission from the other boys. Although the boy concerned did not see a problem in playing with the girls there was a unanimous decision not to play with the girls based on their fear of what other people will think and say about them. Although the approached boy was not happy about the decision not to play with girls he had no power because the power lies in the group. During focus group interviews most boys pointed out that real boys played with boys only. Diary entries describing some boys as having no problem with playing with girls shows the contradictory private lives of these boys when compared to the public performance in focus group interviews. The view that some boys were prepared to play with the girls indicates the performativity of masculinity (Butler 1993). Butler's theory of performativity helps in understanding these boys' self-presentations in public life. These boys are imitating and therefore reproducing the dominant conventions of masculinity. However, the boys who were vocal about maintaining these social bounderies did not record contradictory feelings in their diaries or in-depth interviews.

Some alternative voices came from some groups of boys and girls in their diaries. By being quiet during focus group interviews some of these boys were complicit with the dominat versions of masculinity construction. A few boys came out supporting playing with both boys and girls in focus group discussions and in their diaries. This creates two groups of boys who created masculinities through different ways.

The aforementioned group of boys used their homosocial power to maintain boundaries and keep resources to themselves. At Mazitike as the researcher pointed out in Chapter Three there was shortage of playing space.

4.2.1. 'Boys play soccer and girls don't know soccer': Gender boundaries and play time

Social bonds among the young boys during informal play time are important in the formation of young masculinities. Boys in this study created gender boundaries during play time. By creating gender boundaries, the boys tend to acquire resources for themselves such as the playground space, social prestige and power (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003; McGuffey &

Rich 2011). In this study girls were barred from joining boys during their informal play or soccer games.

Informal games at both schools in this study were predominantly divided along gender lines. Most participants when asked whether they liked to play with boys or girls or both they indicated that they liked playing with people of the same gender group. The social grouping of boys and girls during play time had more to do with the formation of masculinities. In a focus group discussion from Mazitike Primary a boy called Rigby points out that "to be a real boy is to play with boys only", a view shared by most boys and girls.

Male participants in this study pointed out that boys tried to exclude girls from their games by using different strategies such as teasing and being rough in their play. While most boys did not welcome girls in their play some girls mostly from Mazitike School indicated in their diaries how they had tried to join boys in their informal games of soccer and how they were turned down. A girl called Nosipho from Mazitike School recorded many instances in her diary in which her friends and she had asked boys to join them in their informal games. While a few boys would be willing to play with them the majority would be against it. To emphasise the position of boys in one of her diary entries she quotes the boys' talk: "*We don't play with girls, we play with boys only*".

The boys' homosociality is strengthened through the game of soccer. Male participants from both schools when I asked them why they cannot play soccer with girls they said girls did not know how to play soccer.

Sizwe: I like to play with boys because boys play soccer and girls don't know soccer.

LC: What about if you teach them.

Sizwe: E-e-e when we are playing I am going to touch her part by mistake then umm... (throwing hands in the air).

LC: What will happen if you touch her by mistake?

Sizwe: Maybe go to the teacher and say I forced her.

The view that most girls did not know how to play soccer is a far-fetched one, as most girls argued against it. The views of Sizwe going round giving reasons of not wanting to play soccer with girls show how the boys wanted to maintain their social grouping. To them it was a game for the boys so they were gate keeping the girls away so as to maintain their homosocial grouping and social status. In a study of eight and nine-year-old boys in South Africa it was observed that the boys "were united in their enjoyment of sport and used it to

establish status" (Bhana 2008:4). In this study boys were generally united in chasing girls away from their games so as to maintain their homosocial group. One of the boys had this to say in a focus group discussion:

Modecai: Girls like to play with us but the boys chase them all the time.

According to the boys the girls were supposed to play netball and skipping. The game of soccer was thus being homosocialised as a way of indicating a real boy identity. Sport, especially playing soccer is considered one way of identifying one as a real boy (Clark and Paechter 2007; Bhana 2008; Bowely 2013; Bhana and Mayeza 2016). Boys who played netball and not soccer were likened to girls, thus relegated to an inferior status within the male hierarchy. The following was recorded in a diary by a male participant from Multiville Primary.

John was playing netball with the girls and the boys called him a homosexual because he couldn't play soccer. I felt good because John likes to impress the girls by swearing at us.

By playing with girls John as an individual may have been exhibiting alternative forms of masculinity based on egalitarian notions but boys as a social unity did not consider that behaviour as masculine. Boys like John were thus challenging homosociality as a dominant form of masculinity. Some of the boys used deregatory terms against those who played with girls to perpetuate their homosocial dominance over the girls. Playing with girls would put hegemonic masculinity based on homosociality under threat.

The boys' desire to maintain their social boundaries bordered on sexuality. Sizwe in the above excerpt pointed out that the boys did not like to play with girls because they may touch their sexual parts by mistake and the girl reports them to the teachers. Some girls during a focus group discussion from the same school argued that the boys liked touching them during play. The boys thus during play wanted access to the girls' bodies without the girls complaining to the teachers. The boundary put up by the boys in this case was a way of forcing the girls to the submission of their bodies which was sexual violence. Sexuality was thus employed by the boys to police gender boundaries.

Boys also tried to maintain their gender boundaries by sexually labelling girls who liked to play with boys. One boy from Mazitike School pointed out that only boys play rough games like soccer and chasing each other games. If a girl played these games her femininity was

questioned. Another boy from the same school during a different focus group discussion had this to say:

> Modecai: Yes, e-e-um when (2) when girls want to hang up with boys, the boys say the girl is a prostitute.

Calling girls prostitutes is stigmatisation meant to inferiorise and perpetuate dominance over them. This is the stigmatisation counterpart to calling a boy gay. The boys in this study were using it to create homosocial groupings. The exclusion of girls from 'boys' activities' tends to cement the social bonds among boys and maintain their social power over the girls. The boys were thus using sexuality as a tactic to draw gender boundaries to maintain their homosocial groups and thus their power over the girls.

The homosocial activity of playing soccer also indicated heterosexual desires. Instead of playing with girls most boys indicated that they preferred the girls to watch them play. The game of soccer thus portrays masculinity as performance. This is important in the formation of masculinities as it is constructed in the view of others and most importantly in this study to draw the attention of the girls. A boy from Multiville primary had this to say during a focus group discussion:

> Zamani: I prefer girls to watch us so that they can boost us to play.

Along the same line another boy from a different group from Multiville primary says:

> Chris: It is not good [to play with girls] because you want the girls to sit and watch us so that they can see that we are men (Someone shouts Enough!). IF YOU CAN DRIBBLE THE WHOLE FIELD THE GIRLS WILL LOVE YOU.

The views of these two boys indicate that the female role is to support the male. This creates a gender hierarchy whereby the boys are considered superior to the girls.

Boys play soccer in order to draw attention to themselves and be loved by the girls. The views of Chris explicitly shows that if you play soccer very well the girls will love you. The game of soccer thus not only serves as unifying boys but also as a game to position girls as mere onlookers available to fulfil heteronormative desires. So the purpose of soccer is to attract a passive girl who watches and admires. As observed later in this chapter a real boy must have a girlfriend. Homosociality is thus at the root of heterosexual masculinity formation.

Having an 'ideal' body which is an element of being a real boy differs according to the situation. Some boys in this study pointed out that they played soccer so that they can have a strong body. This group of boys associated being a boy with strength. Some boys besides

playing soccer to keep strong or maintain social bonds played soccer to have an ideal body liked by the girls. A male participant from Multiville primary had this to say during a focus group discussion.

LC: Which games do you play?

Mxolisi: Soccer, cricket and I like to play cards.

LC: So in soccer which number do you play?

Mxolisi: Number 1.

LC: Oh, so you are a keeper?

Mxolisi: Yes! (showing pride).

LC: So what do most girls say to you as a keeper?

Mxolisi: A-ah (facing downwards as if he's shy) they say I am SEXY!

LC: Oh ok. Do most girls like boys who play so…?

Mxolisi: Most of them! (Shouting cutting off LC)

Zamohuhle: Yes, because soccer you can train, most girls like boys who have six pack and stuff like that…

LC: Zamokuhle you talked about a six pack. What is a six pack?

Zamokuhle: Ups (showing a bulging muscular body).

These views show that the game of soccer besides promoting male social bonds also helps in the boys' minds developing a sexy body as indicated by Mxolisi and Zamokuhle in the above discussion. According to Zamokuhle, girls love boys who are muscular or with bulging biceps. Some boys thus play soccer and other tough demanding games to develop bodies that are loved by girls. Having a girlfriend as will be seen in the section below shows that you are a real boy. In a related study with eight- and nine-year- old boys in SA it was observed that boys fantasised about having 'six packs and big muscles' (Bhana 2008). Bhana continues to argue that a muscular body signifies power and domination. Boys in this study thus while attempting to attract the girls may also have been trying to create and maintain their patriarchal domination over the girls.

Boys also try to produce gender boundaries through talking of the game of soccer knowledgeably. These boys attempted to draw boundaries actively between themselves and others, whom they were positioning as girls and lesser boys. Boys pointed out that when on their own, they like talking about soccer as a game they don't like to discuss it with the girls. Many boys pointed out that they cannot talk about issues of soccer with the girls because the girls were not interested in the game and also did not know how to play it. However, some

girls argued that they knew the game and could play it better than the boys. This shows the boys were fabricating justifications for the exclusion of girls. By excluding the girls the boys are creating a superior patriarchal group to maintain their dominance over the girls as a social group.

The male participants in this study were united in playing the game of soccer and used it to establish a gender identity and (re)create and maintain partriarchal dominance. In this study the playing of soccer has more to do with the formation of masculinities and (re)creating heteropatriarchal dominance than enjoying the game. In the researcher's unpublished masters' dissertation one boy pointed out that even if he did not want to play soccer he would play to please other boys. (Chimanzi 2016). Bhana (2008) argues that an early interest in sport is important for boys since it is one way of being a real boy. In fact, the boys are using soccer to create an exclusive gender identity, and they are creating a male privilege because girls are excluded from something that is valued (soccer playing). Playing soccer in this study comes with a dominating prestige which the boys deny the girls. Through playing soccer as a homosocial unity the boys also utilise the scarce resource which is the playing space for themselves. Soccer playing boundaries are used to perpetuate power relation inequalities.

Boys and girls were not always exclusively in separate playing spheres. While most boys and girls in both schools in this study played in their homosocial groups some were ready to accommodate cross-gender play. While most boys especially from Mazitike School argued that they did not like girls to participate in their play most boys from Multiville Primary although they did not play with girls pointed out that they had no problem in playing with girls. This points to class differences which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six. Some of these boys also pointed out that playing with girls would keep them out of doing bad things such as smoking normally done by most boys. Some boys also argued during focus group discussions that only girls who knew their games could be accommodated. Zamokuhle, a boy from Multiville Primary during a focus group discussion argues that:

> Zamokuhle: If a girl is friendly she can come and play and only girls that can understand the game because some other girls can be confused and frustrating.

The views of Zamokuhle were also echoed by some boys from Mazitike School. TK from Mazitike Primary is one of them and he made numerous entries in his diary. In one of his entries he pointed out that they were playing a game of marbles and a certain girl begged to

play with them but all the boys refused. He ended up quitting the game because he did not feel happy with the denial of the other boys to play with the girl. In another entry he pointed out that at their school there was a dancing competition and some girls wanted to participate playing 'isipantsula' but the boys did not want pointing out that they did not know how to dance. Pantsula is a dance historically more associated with men although nowadays more women are starting to do it. The desire by the girls to join the boys in the dance indicates a shift in gender relations although some boys continue to resist it. The refusal by some boys indicates the desire to maintain the superiority of their homosocial group.

Many research participants from one focus group of girls from Multiville Primary repeatedly pointed out that they enjoyed playing with boys because boys were not judging and gossiping like girls. They pointed out that some boys liked to play with girls and even to teach girls some of the games. This suggests a different form of masculinity on the part of TK and many boys from Multiville Primary. They did not believe maintaining homosocial groups during play was the only way of being a boy. This heterosocial relationship especially at Multiville indicates the intersection of class in understanding gender relations among learners. Multiville Primary unlike Mazitike which is ravaged by poverty is considered a middle class school. Shifting forms of masculinity or positive alternative masculinities based on egalitarian play are thus influenced by one's social class.

At times the normative gender boundaries are dismantled. Thorne & Luria (2002) in their study with elementary school children in the United States of America (USA) also observed that children normally played together in activities organised by the adults. One of the male participants at Multiville primary during a focus group discussion argued that at times they played with girls.

> Mxolisi: I don't agree [with other boys] because sometimes when we play PE (Physical Education) we gather as a class and we play together.

Mxolisi goes further, however. to point out that they mostly play together when the teacher is there.

Along similar lines, Swain (2005) in her research on learners in their final year in primary school in United Kingdom (UK) argues that while boys and girls separate into their own spaces at times they engage in similar sets of activities. Although boys and girls in this study at times played together when given the opportunity they tried to maintain their homosocial groupings.

Girls' homosocial play was mostly in response to the boys' homosocial masculinity formations. Some female participants at Mazitike Primary repeatedly pointed out that boys played rough thus it was prudent to play on their own. Rough play among some boys within the two schools was considered being a real boy as will be observed in the next chapter on violence. The play is thus privileged male power. Boys use it to create social boundaries during play.

Dominance and power informs the way the boys want to play. At times some boys use their power to modify the gender boundaries to suit them. As a social dominant group, boys at times invade the playing space of the girls. Boys themselves maintain their social boundaries but disturb that of girls when they wish, constructing male privilege and male entitlement. The following excerpt from Mazitike Primary shows gender relations during informal play.

LC: When you play do you allow the boys to join you?

Girls: Yes (in unison).

LC: But the boys do not allow you …

Girls: Yes (cutting LC midway).

Precious: But at times we become more cheeky.

LC: Why do you become cheeky?

Precious: Like when the game becomes more funny and they just come.

Promise: They play in a bad way. Sometimes when they play they just want the stuff you are playing with. They do not want to play.

Precious and Promise show how boys cross gender boundaries to acquire resources for themselves. By invading the playing space of the girls the boys are constructing their social status and maintaining patriarchal power. By taking the 'stuff' the girls will be using the boys are constructing the hierarchical relations of power in which they are in the dominant and superior position.

However, the views of Precious in the excerpt shows that girls do not always accept boys' domination. They fight back thus rejecting and denouncing certain practices of hegemonic masculinities.

The way boys play indicates the hierarchical relations of power. The boys are using their physical power to dominate the playing space. The relationship between the bonding of boys and gendered power is visible in the way boys engage in the informal games.

4.2.2. The violent body: Hard and soft binary discourse

Boys constructed hard and soft bodies to regulate, violate and perpetuate patriarchal dominance over the girls. Boys considered themselves as hard while girls were regarded as soft and less tough. This speaks to the embodiment of the female body as a social construct susceptible to abuse.

Games in both schools as argued above were gendered. There were specific games for boys and girls although girls claimed at times they joined the boys, a move that was strongly rejected by the boys. Boys rejected joining girls in their games of netball and skipping. One of the male research participants from Multiville Primary had this to say during a focus group discussion:

LC: How do boys behave at school to show that they are boys and not girls?

Big Junior: They don't play netball and those soft touchy things and we play soccer, rugby and those things.

LC: Ok you don't play the soft games? (Encouraging him to go on).

Big Junior: Yes, to show that you are a man from KZN (KwaZulu-Natal).

Another male participant from the same school pointed out that he liked to play with boys only. When the researcher pressed him for reasons why he wanted this boy to boy bonding the following discussion unfolded.

Zergo: Because girls can't play soccer and boys can play soccer.

LC: Ok, girls can't play soccer? (Probing)

Zergo: Some of them can play but we are afraid we can hurt them on their faces.

Neo: Girls are soft we will hurt them when we are playing hard.

Zergo: I don't like girls to play with us because if you make one mistake they will run away and tell their parents that we hurt them… Now if you are a boy you don't run away to your parents, you talk to each other [you solve the problem amongst yourselves by discussing it].

The male participants considered girls as soft and unable to withstand pain. The boys were thus constructing hierarchies of soft and hard. Girls were considered soft as they were unable to withstand pain thus were being relegated to an inferior status of people who cannot play soccer. According to Big Junior netball is a game for girls because they are soft. Boys regarded girls as soft because they said they were injured easily during play. In a similar study in the UK with boys and girls in their final year at primary school boys considered girls

along with subordinated boys as 'incompetent' and physically weak (Swain 2005). In this study boys pointed out that they were afraid to injure them and draw retribution from the teachers and parents. The intervention by the teachers and parents legitimates homosociality, gender binary and gender hierarchy as boys would play alone afraid of these adults. The intervention by teachers and parents suggests the impact of gender regulation by the older people towards the younger ones. Children thus construct their own interactions within the structure of an adult-controlled world.

From Big Junior's perspectives real men from KZN do not play girlish games. KZN is a province which historically has accommodated mostly people who identify with the Zulu ethnic group. Men of this ethnic group living in hostels and townships in Gauteng province are stereotyped as violent,. Big Junior identifies as a Zulu and believes to be a real boy one must be strong and play games like rugby and soccer. His views seem to conform with prevalent stereotypes about Zulu masculinity. The issue of intersection of ethnicity and masculinity formation will be discussed in Chapter Six.

The views by these boys show homosociality among the boys with regard to roughness at play. The boys in this case construct and maintain homosocial boundaries through rough play. Roughness and being able to handle pain during play by the boys is a sign of being 'man enough'. Boys consider themselves to be man enough to withstand the violence of the game. The ability of the boys to endure pain during play "produces a particularly hard, macho version of masculinity" (Epstein, 2001:115). Some sociologists although commenting on older men also argue that dominant expectations of heterosexual masculinity indicate that 'real men' should be tough and be able to withstand pain (Connell 1995). This suggests that the boys' formation of masculinity in this study through being tough and withstanding pain could be through socialisation from the elders within their communities. When the researcher asked some boys during a focus group who told them that girls were soft one of them shouted:

Big Junior: Its known, everyone knows it! Girls are weak. They cry easily.

Crying is associated with femininity and weakness by the boys. The girls are considered physically and emotionally weak. They cannot withstand the boys' demands. They are thus relegated to the status of being soft while boys are elevated to the status of being hard thus strong.

The boys associated the ability to handle pain with strength to protect the girls. One male participant from Multiville Primary pointed out that girls liked to date boys who were able to handle pain. During a focus group discussion, he had this to say:

> Big Junior: They [Girls] are not man enough to handle the pain. If they see a boy being able to handle the pain they say you are man enough and gonna date you. They know that when someone wants to beat them you gonna stand and protect them.

Being soft results in girls being dependant on boys and hardness of the boys being independent. A heteronormative order is thus also produced through these distinctions in sport and play.

The hierarchy of soft and hard, ability to handle pain and inability to handle pain could have been actively constructed by the boys to maintain their male identity through the game of soccer. Bhana (2008) in her study of eight- and nine-year-old boys argues that young boys association with sport is about identity. Having an interest in soccer and other tough and endurance requiring games has more to do with being a real boy than merely enjoying the games. Girls from both schools pointed out that boys liked to play chasing one another and beating one another while girls liked playing netball and skipping rope. The play of girls could be a result of soccer playing being guarded by the boys as their own game, thereby constructing it as a 'masculine' game. These games also tend to build strong bodies which are considered ideal for one to be a real man. Thus boys were involved in these games to acquire status.

The boys distinguished themselves from the girls through the binary of hard versus soft and strong versus weak. The construction of the girls' bodies as less tough and less resistant to pain made girls' bodies more exposed to violence. This creates the idea of boys' bodies as able to violate – i.e., 'the violating' -- while girls' bodies are 'the violatable'.

4.2.3. 'Domestic work is for girls not for boys': Gendered tasks and practices

In the two schools in this study division of labour was gendered. The gendering of tasks in this study emerged mostly with regard to cleaning classrooms. In this study some boys considered some activities as feminine. Some teachers also seemed to perpetuate and endorse the binary gender task allocation system.

Although at both schools learners rarely cleaned their classrooms since there were cleaners, when they cleaned the activities were normally along gender lines especially at Mazitike Primary. Boys were normally asked to carry furniture creating space for cleaning and to wash the windows while girls swept and mopped the floor. Some teachers in the two schools thus seemed to be constructing and endorsing a certain masculinity among the boys. This is in line with the available literature describing the role of schools in helping construct, shape and reinforce dominant gender roles or tasks (see Bantje & Nieuwoudt 2014).

A male participant called Zamani at Multiville primary indicated in his diary that one of their male teachers asked a certain boy to carry a bag for him. The boy failed to carry it and the teacher remarked that he was not a real boy. The views of the teacher suggested that 'real boys' must be strong and have power to lift heavy objects. Some male participants when asked what it meant to be a real boy pointed out that boys were supposed to be strong. The teachers were thus helping in the social construction of masculinity through advocating for strong boys who could lift heavy objects such as desks. This seems to contribute to dominant ideas of boys having to be physically strong. Along the same line a female participant called Precious from Mazitike School made numerous entries indicating the unfair distribution of work they were being given by their teachers. In one of her entries she pointed out that one of their male teachers asked boys to clean the windows while girls cleaned the floor. By making the boys move furniture and clean windows they are implying boys are stronger than girls to move the furniture and also to climb on desks and windowsills to clean the windows. The allocation of tasks by some of these teachers contributes to the binary of boys being hard and girls being soft by some of the boys as they constructed the male identity. This speaks to the importance of the school as a socialising agent.

While some teachers gave perceived gender-related tasks others gave the same tasks to both boys and girls. Some boys were not passive recipients of this socialisation process by the teachers as they refused to clean pointing out that it was girls' work. In one of her entries in the diary, Precious pointed out that some boys did not clean because they considered cleaning as girls' work. When the researcher asked the participants during focus group interviews whether cleaning the classrooms was girls' work, most of them indicated that it was the responsibility of both boys and girls to clean. Even if many boys pointed out that it was the responsibility of both boys and girls to clean the classrooms when asked by the teachers most

boys especially from Mazitike Primary did not clean. One male participant from Mazitike School had this to say when the researcher asked him why he did not clean the classroom:

Cabashe: Because I am a boy.

Another boy from Multiville primary had this to say:

Zamokuhle: They run away because domestic work is for girls not for boys.

One of the male participants pointed out that there are some boys who do not run away but do half the job.

Chris: The boys some of them they don't run away they do half the job. They sweep the dirt under the tables then they go.

By sweeping the dirt under the table the boys are trying to convey a message that the given work is not for the boys. By refusing to clean the boys resisted the country's constitutional gender equality regime as it is advanced by schools. These boys were still locked in the traditional patriarchal practices of allocating domestic work to females. On the other hand, the teachers did not take proper disciplinary action on the boys who defied their authority. By not taking a firm stand the teachers were endorsing the traditional forms of masculinities.

Some of these boys were taking cues from their families. During focus group interviews most participants pointed out cleaning was done by women at their homes. One female participant from Multiville primary pointed out that her brothers refused to wash plates at home saying they could not do it because there was a girl in the house. This shows that the construction of gender is done in a dichotomous way and also through a differentiation of activities along the binary system. This is presumably why the boys expect the girls to do domestic duties: because women are required to provide free domestic labour in the private sphere. Gender perceived tasks exist to support male dominance and perpetuate patriarchy within the school context. Gender aligned tasks are the foundation of sexism. Sexism is a system being socially designed by the boys to subordinate girls to boys. Pharr (1997) argues that gender roles are maintained by the weapons of sexism namely violence and homophobia among others. Violence and homophobia are central in the formation of young masculinities as will be observed in Chapter Five. There was always solidarity among the boys who did not clean most of the time. They would always tell the teacher that they had cleaned and the other boys would support them.

However, a few male participants from Mazitike Primary pointed out that they always cleaned the classroom whenever they were asked to do so by the teachers. These boys were

not ridiculed or considered not 'real boys' by those boys who considered cleaning as girls' work. These boys were forming masculinity by conforming to authority. This indicates a gender change that reveals that boys differ and that they do not have the same masculinity (see Morrell 2001a). This points to the issue of the multiplicity of masculinities not only based on hierarchies. Masculinity in the young boys is thus not a fixed identity that all boys have. One of these boys argued that if you are a boy you must work at home so as to gain experience so that when you are old you can always work for your family. Real men in adult life are considered providers for their partners and families (see Lindegger & Maxwell 2007; Izugbara 2015).

Some participants pointed out that they can only clean if they are paid. During a focus group discussion with boys from Multiville primary some boys indicated that they cleaned the classrooms only if the teachers paid them. The desire for money neutralised the boys' manliness. They ended up doing the job they considered feminine.

4.2.4. 'Having wet dreams and stuff like that': Problem sharing

Homosocial bonds help boys share their problems with other boys. Some male participants pointed out that there is some information they cannot share with girls.

Some boys find it easy to share their social problems with other boys rather than with girls. Some male participants pointed out that at times they were having problems at home and can share this with other boys. This defeats the popular view that men are unemotional, inexpressive, and impersonal (Kiesling 2005) as they connect as friends and groups emotionally.

Physical changes taking place at puberty help boys to be closer to each other. One male participant pointed out that at times he needed to talk with other boys about the physical changes taking place within his body, a thing which he could not discuss with the girls. Sidi, a male participant from Mazitike Primary had this to say during a focus group discussion when l asked what stuff they cannot share with girls:

> Sidi: Some boys feel shy when they are in the puberty stage. Because they have pimples and have wet dreams and stuff like that.

Male to male social bonds will thus help boys to share information about their bodily changes. Sidi was considered gay by some participants as he was always playing with girls. Despite always playing with girls Sidi believes in sharing sexual changes taking place in his

body with other boys. Sharing information on sexual characteristics their bodies are undergoing leads some boys to talk about sexuality and girls.

4.2.5 The beautiful girl with curves: Heterosexuality in the context of homosociality

Homosociality shapes the social and sexual relations the boys engage in and the development of their narratives. A significant theme of being a real boy revolves around sex. The boys' homosocial play and talk as observed in the preceding theme influenced the boys' sexuality. The boys' social bonds policed boys into heterosexual relationships while chastising homosexuality. Heterosexual masculinity in this study was expressed by the boys' rejection of homosexuality while engaging in heterosexual relationships. Social bonds among the boys helped them to develop 'sex talk' language and also have girlfriends.

4.2.5.1 Homosociality and 'sex talk'

While some male participants in this study pointed out that in their social groups they talked about cars, soccer and watched pornographic material on their cell phones the most common talk was their 'sex talk'. In this study 'sex talk' refers to how the boys in the two schools used sexual words to draw sexual meanings in constructing their social worlds and identity. Donovan (1998:830) points out that "Putting sex into language creates new ways to manage, regulate, and discipline bodies". Nearly all the participants in both schools highlighted that most boys liked talking about girls in their social bonding. Homosocial boundaries in this study were maintained through "sex talk". Some researchers argue that sex talk helps males in policing boundaries and producing heterosexual hierarchies (Kehily 2001). Boy-to-boy social bonds in this study seemed to help in developing heterosexual "sex talk" narratives. The way Grade 7 boys talked in these schools indicate heterosexual masculinity.

The way boys get involved in heterosexual relations and develop narratives about them is influenced by their social bonds. Some male participants indicated that they learn how to relate with their girlfriends through talking to other boys. Real boys were observed to have specific ways of engaging with girls. These sex narratives only take place when boys are on their own. A boy called Rigby from Mazitike School wrote this in his diary:

"We were sitting in a group of three and we were talking about how 'real boys' react when they are with their girlfriends. I felt emotional and brave to talk because we were only boys".

Rigby shows that he is comfortable talking about issues of girlfriends only when he is with other boys. The talking brings certain emotions which cannot be expressed when there are

girls present. Engaging as boys only evokes some emotions and tends to boost confidence in boys when they are with girls. Social bonds among boys thus prepare them for specific kinds of relationships, clearly, which are based on inequality. His bravery emanating from his social bonds is shown when he is with his girlfriend. In one of his diary entries he records:

I was with my girlfriend at school, sitting in the classroom. She was on top of my legs. We enjoyed to spend time together. I felt very brave because I was showing that I am a real boy.

Boys spent a significant amount of time talking about girls when not in class. This points to the importance of language discourse in producing gender inequality for these boys. Participants from both schools repeatedly pointed out that real boys enjoyed describing girls sexually. One male participant from Mazitike School during a focus group discussion had this to say:

LC: What do boys spend most of their time talking about when not in class?

Zweli: We are talking about girls that this one is HOT this one is not, this one is like a mama, this one is like a granny, all sort of stuff, this one is boring, this one is e-e making me happy I feel I can date her.

The following was said by some boys from Multiville primary during a focus group discussion:

Siyabonga: They usually talk about girls how cute they are and want to bed them.

LC: So Grade 7 boys also talk about nice girls?

Siyabonga: Yes

Sipho: We usually talk about who is the most beautiful girl in the class.

Big Junior: We talk about girls we see going past us.

LC: What actually will you be saying about them?

Big Junior: We will be talking about look at that beautiful girl she has some CURVES.

Zweli is defining gender through a binary system. He is differentiating between a 'hot' girl and a 'not-hot' girl, a boring girl and one who makes them happy. Girls are being socially put into categories based on the desires of the boys. Boys are giving themselves power through their social groups to categorise girls as though they are objects. According to Big Junior beautiful girls should have curves. Beauty is thus a socially constructed category of girls which is appealing to the boys based on their laid-down criteria.

Ratele (2011) argues that nearly throughout the world manliness is closely associated with the sexual appeal of the partner. Particular styles of sex talk among the boys invoke and valorise heterosexuality (see Kehily 2001). A non-appealing group of girls is likened to mothers and grandmothers. Mothers and grandmothers are older females which are no longer attractive to the young boys. The use of 'sexy words' in the narratives by these boys tend to assist boys in identifying 'beautiful' and attractive girls. These are the girls they feel like dating. As indicated by Siyabonga these are the girls they want to sleep with. This is in line with what has been observed in other studies of children in this age range engaging in sexual acts (see Flisher, Reddy, Muller & Lombard 2003). These views of Siyabonga show that some boys in Grade 7 are already sexually active defying the issue of child sexual innocence (Thorne & Luria 2002; Bhana 2013a; Prinsloo & Moletsane 2013).

A girl called Elisa from Mazitike School repeatedly entered into her diary that when they are seated with boys they like talking about sex. This directly relates to the findings with Grade 7 boys in KZN (Martin & Muthukrishna 2011). In one of those entries she complains that some boys in her class want her to date them. These boys send her letters, messages and *"photos that talk about sex*". Engaging in sex talk and the use of pornographic material constitutes a particular version of heterosexuality identified with particular masculinity. Some participants from both schools indicated that some boys wanted to be involved in sexual intimacy with the girls. Some male participants indicated that this shows that one is a real boy. Ratele (2011) commenting on old people from an African perspective points out that being a real man revolves around sex. It can thus be argued that to be a real man one must have sex with a woman (Shefer 2005). The views of the boys in this study show the importance of the African society in the townships where they live in shaping their heterosexual masculinity. To these boys engaging in sex is a sign of being a real boy.

Boys in this study also used gestures as 'sex talk'. Boys related what they learnt in (NS) Natural Sciences and LO about sexual organs to the changes they see in the girls. One female participant from Mazitike School pointed out that when they are learning about body parts and there are some body changes taking place on you as a girl and the teacher asks a question on those body changes the boys expect a girl undergoing those changes to answer. The boys just looked at a girl expecting her to answer. Some female participants in the same group repeatedly pointed out that these things happen because boys are always seeking girls' attention. However, in this context boys are sexually targeting girls to answer personal

questions about themselves. This can be analysed as another way of creating a male/female hierarchy with the assumption that boys should have access to girls' bodies.

Boys as a social unit are involved in gender disciplining. They identify characteristics of girls which are not pleasing to them. These are girls who appear or talk like mothers or grandmothers. They also delve into characteristics of girls they perceive as boring. Some of the despised girls are labelled as having 'poor body shapes'. By so doing, boys are appointing themselves as authorities on girls. One girl called Dineo from Mazitike School made entries in her diary complaining that boys laugh at her saying she has the structure of a men. One of her entries runs:

Today at the playground we were playing a skipping rope with boys. l was wearing a dress and the boys saw my calves then they laughed at me. Bathi ngime njenge ndoda (They say I have the structure of a man) *and that hurts me too much. So boys they abuse girls.*

In another entry in her diary she indicated that boys refer to her as a man. Boys may be seeing her as a threat as they see a girl in the "wrong body". Girls who have a physique like that of Dineo can be considered a threat to the boys' patriarchal power and masculinity (see Ratele 2011a). These views by Dineo show how gender disciplining by the young boys affects the girls. Boys are drawing on gender norms to regulate the girls around them to conform to a certain form of femininity. The actions of the boys regarding themselves as the only ones entitled to muscular bodies, and that girls are 'soft' as discussed above is clear here that they also discipline girls into being 'soft'.

Beauty as a social construct as observed above comes about through boys' homosocial engagements. Precious, another girl from Mazitike School, in her diary indicated that she heard a group of boys talking that they loved girls that are beautiful, have 'big bums and wide hips'. Beauty in this context is being socially constructed by the boys as constituting girls with big buttocks and wide hips. 'Ugly' girls to these boys did not have the body shapes that they construct as desirable. The boys are drawing on dominant heteropatriarchal norms about girls having bodies of a certain shape to discipline the girls and some boys around them.

Boys talk, describe and categorise girls' body shapes. Mostly they like to talk about their buttocks. Most girls in different focus group discussions highlighted that most boys used the word "uneshwaba" referring to girls with flat buttocks. Most girls feel embarrassed and annoyed by this talk. During a focus group discussion with girls at Multiville primary one girl had this to say:

Amogelang: Some boys when seated talk about their girlfriends and when you are passing they say *uneshwaba* (flat buttocks) and all that, myself I don't get it why they talk about it. WHY YOU (3) BECAUSE ITS YOURS -AND WHY DO THEY TALK ABOUT IT.

In her diary Amogelang proceeded to write that:

> *Today when I was passing in the grounds I had boys speaking about some girls that do not have hips and that we are not thick. Sometimes boys think talking about girls is the coolest thing ever. I don't think so. I feel it is the dumbest [silliest] thing to do. If you love the girl go tell her don't talk about her or discuss her with your friends.*

While girls feel embarrassed by the boys talk as a social group the boys think it's being 'cool'. Being 'cool' in this study is associated with being a real boy. Amogelang thinks if a boy loves a girl he must approach her and not discuss her with his friends. However, from the boys' perspective like observed above discussing a girl in homosoial groups builds confidence in approaching them.

Girls also do not feel comfortable when boys discuss other girls in their presence. They feel as though they are describing them. One girl in the same group with Amogelang had this to say in that discussion:

> Keabetswe: Sometimes it is interesting listening to the boys talking like about soccer but when they talk about girls I feel uncomfortable because it is like they are talking about me.

Girls can talk with boys about other things but the moment they engage in their sex talk girls become uncomfortable. While girls find discomfort in this, boys find pleasure and accrue heterosexual power as it is a sign of boyness.

The point of objectification is a primary part of creating hierarchies as observed in this study. Boys' 'sex talk' also involved objectification of girls' bodies. Girls did not like to be compared to objects. One female participant from Multiville Primary, like other girls from the same school discussed above, showed bitterness in being compared like objects.

> Kelly: The way they compare girls it's like they compare a shoe to a shoe and a car to a car. That's they take girls like objects - OBJECTS (2) NOT HUMAN BEINGS LIKE THEM.

Kelly also recorded in her diary her experiences of how boys treated and compared girls. While this talk among the boys in their homosocial group is applauded and it carries

heterosexual status when said in front of other boys, in the presence of the girls it affects the girls. They feel devalued to the status of objects. Kelly is talking back at the boys' discourse of categorising girls' bodies like objects. The bodies of the girls are thus being relegated to an inferior status as compared to those of the boys. Arguing on unequal relations within heterosexual relations Connell (1987:113) points out that "A heterosexual woman is sexualised as an object in a way that a heterosexual man is not".

The boys as a social unit are giving themselves power to sexually objectify and categorise the bodies of girls. The boys in this collective project want to create and maintain a subordinate group of girls. Kelly however, is challenging this objectification and categorisation. She wants boys to consider girls equal to them. The views of the female participants in this study indicate that they are not passively accepting their domination, but challenging it as equal human beings.

Boys as a social unit help each other on approaching prospective girlfriends. One male participant from Multiville Primary contributing in a focus group discussion explains that boys help each other on how to approach girls.

> Chris: We talk about what you see in the street and you say I am gonna get her. Then WE WILL HELP YOU GET THAT GIRL (helping another boy with strategies on how to approach a girl).

The views of Chris show that boys as a homosocial group help each other acquire girlfriends. During 'sex talk' in their homosocial settings boys share information about girls they love and they are helped by others to start negotiating for the affair. Boys' homosocial groups create a dominant group that is able to further their sexual interests. There is more power working as a social group in furthering heterosexual desires than working as individuals.

Boys do not only help each other with approaches but also to choose 'beautiful' girls. Precious a female participant indicated in her diary that some boys salute boys who choose 'beautiful' girls while chastising boys who choose 'ugly' girls as indicated above. Boys who express their love of 'ugly' girls are likened to "permanent cows with blind eyes". These boys are likened to cows which have eyes but the eyes cannot make a nice selection since they are blind. The term cow also denotes femininity. The term is normally used informally to refer to an unpleasant or disliked woman. These boys were thus put in an inferior status within the male hierarchy. By referring them to as 'permanent cows' it suggested that these boys will always be in this inferior status. This suggests a permanent low position in the patriarchal

masculinity hierarchy. Choosing of 'beautiful' girls thus comes with a status in the heterosexual hierarchy among the boys.

Boys also use sex language to draw attention to themselves or force their friends into heterosexual relationships. This intra-boy group coercion fits with the moffie[2]/stabane[3] comments which will be discussed under homophobia in Chapter Five. Bianca a girl at Mazitike School indicated in her diary that she was dancing for her friend who was seated next to some boys. One of the boys started to tell his friend to look at Bianca's bum which he described as very big. When his friend did not look he beat his head in a playful manner and said to him, *"You are stupid' you must be a man and find a woman in your life. That is to be a real boy!!!"*

These same-sex-focused social relations tend to help understand heterosexual masculinity among the young boys. Boys' relations with girls seem to be organised and shaped by the sex utterances of boys amongst themselves. The boy is forcing his friend to be sexually attracted to the girl with a big bum. As discussed above girls with big bums are socially constructed as beautiful. The boy is being referred to as stupid because he seemed not to be attracted to the girl. He is being relegated to an inferior status of boys who cannot find a beautiful girl for themselves. This boy falls in the category of boys likened to cows with blind eyes. The friend is also telling the friend to have a girlfriend in order to be considered a real boy. The boys are creating a form of heterosexuality with their talk about sex and about girls. A boy must be sexually attracted to a girl with a big bum. Heterosexuality is thus also being placed at the root of the boys' social bonding. Commenting on young heterosexual men Flood (2008:339) argues that heterosexuality is "the medium through which male bonding is enacted".

These views tend to help understand the sexual and social relations of young boys. Heterosexual talk enacted by the boys in a homosocial setup is a key path to masculine status. Homosociality helps in shaping boys' narratives, sexual stories and thus how they make sense of their sexual and gendered lives. This sexy talk, however, is constituted through sexual and gender regulation of both girls and boys on the basis of various bodily hierarchies. It is in fact based on male entitlement to access female bodies.

[2] A South African derogatory term driven from Afrikaans meaning an effeminate homosexual boy or man
[3] Is a South African Zulu term used to refer to an intersexual person

While sex talk amongst boys' social bonds is important in shaping heterosexual narratives and masculinity, negative sex talk by the boys tends to affect the girls. While boys are over obsessed by showing that they are real boys they tend to disregard the feelings of the girls. Boys at times talk about girls even in their presence.

Female participants from both schools narrated their encounter with the boys' heterosexual talk. Some of the narratives have been pointed out above by Keabetswe and Amogelang from Multiville Primary. The following excerpt is from Mazitike School.

LC: What do the boys spend most of their time talking about when not in class?

Precious: They are talking about girls. They say the other girls are ugly and the other girls are beautiful.

LC: Why do you think they like to talk about girls these boys?

Thembi: Because they have feelings (laughter).

LC: Ok, so they will be talking about girls they like?

Girls: Yes

Bianca: (With a low voice) And girls they do not like. They just want you to cry.

LC: Why should they want you to cry?

Precious: They want you to have a bad heart.

(Participants talking each other)

Participant: They want you to have low or lose self-esteem.

Participant: They want to show their friends.

LC: Are you saying boys show off?

Participants: Yes

LC: They want to be seen?

Participants: Yes

LC: Why do you think boys want to be seen?

Thembi: It is because they want all the girls to like them.

Precious: Sometimes they do it because they want everybody to know how strong they are and they are boys and show that they are REAL BOYS and they are BO:SSY, yaaa.

The above excerpt shows that boys talked about the girls that they liked and do not like. From the perspectives of the girls the boys did this as a gesture of boyhood. The boys are creating a hierarchy in which they have the right to decide the value of girls on the basis of whether they are 'beautiful' or 'ugly', categories that the boys derive from society or socially constructing

and that they impose on the girls to gather power for themselves. They do this to draw attention to themselves. They are creating gender hierarchies in which they consider themselves superior to girls.

Kimmel (1994) on older men argues that the performance of manhood is done in front of other men and is granted by other men. In this study boys talked in heterosexual tones to get attention from other boys and show heteromasculine power among other boys and girls. The boys were creating a certain status as a homosocial group. They want to be seen by other boys that they have the power to belittle girls and make them cry or lose self-esteem.

Positive comments on the girls boosted their self-esteem and normally the girls laughed when they were passed. Negative comments as observed above are the ones most female participants dwelt on for long periods trying to show their inner feelings. Below are further perceptions and feelings of the female participants resulting from the boys' negative 'sex talk'. One girl from Mazitike School complained about how boys used to tell her that she was ugly and fat. It was hurtful but she never reported it. In her summative narration of what boys say to girls during a focus group discussion she proceeded to say the following:

Precious: Sometimes they say THIS UGLY THING, YOU ARE NOT BEAUTIFUL, YOU ARE NOT BEAUTIFUL, who told you that you are beautiful? He was lying. You are not beautiful, or did you see yourself in the mirror? It's not for real! (Grins and laughs).

The boys' reactions to her might have been retaliation as she reported that she performed better than them in class. They might have seen her as a threat to their domination. However, when the researcher asked her she pointed out that it might be possible since she was not aware of it. By being referred to as a thing she is being relegated to an inferior object below the human hierarchy. It could also have been a strategy to belittle her before proposing. Precious' ordeal was not an isolated incident. She also recorded in her diary what she heard one boy saying to a girl.

"Today Dodo said Dineo is ugly like a monkey. He said SHE IS BOOSTED BY HER BIG BUMS, that's only what boys see in her, because she is ugly. He said she is a stinking bastard. Dineo cried but she didn't report this".

In related research in the UK it shows that some boys use the term 'ugly' on girls when they break relationships with them (see Renold 2007). In this study it was not revealed although some boys said that some boys were rough on girls who dumped them. These boys were

giving themselves power in controlling heterosexual intimacy. The use of terms like ugly by the boys is meant to inferiorise the girls and continue dominance over them.

When the researcher asked her during a detailed individual interview why Dineo herself never reported this to the teachers she said she was afraid of the boys. They always intimidated them by saying; "after school is after school" they would wait for them by the gate when the teachers were not there. This amounts to threat of sexual violence. However, some girls during a focus group discussion at Mazitike School pointed out that at times they told the teachers and the teachers only cautioned them but the boys never stopped. This may have necessitated that some girls never bothered to report to the teachers.

However, Precious during a detailed individual discussion pointed out that at times they don't report because they see the talk of boys as something too small to be worth reporting. This could have been a way of accepting their domination passively. Reporting could in fact make their positions worse since there were no serious actions taken by the teachers. The boys as a social category were thus accumulating power to maintain dominance over the girls. Murnen, Wright & Kaluzny (2002), citing different scholars point out that language might support the patriarchal social structure when it is used to objectify and degrade women. The teachers on the other hand by not taking serious measures against the boys were endorsing the boys' superiority and power over the girls.

4.2.5.2 Having girlfriends

Young boys' negotiation and performance of sexuality occurs in diverse contexts. This study as observed in this and the following chapter, demonstrates that it is impossible to understand gender relations among primary school learners in the townships outside the context of heterosexual masculinity.

To be a real boy revolves around having a girlfriend. When the researcher asked during a focus group discussion how boys showed that they were real boys one male participant from Multiville Primary had this to say:

> Zamokhule: I think boys in our school want to show that that they are real boys when they have girlfriends.

Most research participants from both schools shared the same sentiments. This heterosexual relationship as observed above is influenced by the boy-to-boy social bonds.

Having a girlfriend is important in creating a male identity among township school boys. Most participants from both schools in this study acknowledged that many Grade 7 boys and girls at their schools were in heterosexual relationships. A boy from Mazitike School repeatedly entered in his diary how he enjoyed sitting in the classroom with his girlfriend. One of his entries runs:

I was with my girlfriend at school, sitting in the classroom. She was on top of my legs. We enjoyed to spend time together. … I was showing that I am a real boy.

Having a girlfriend in this case has more to do with identity than just having a girlfriend and enjoy being with each other. The same boy also boasted about having many girlfriends. To him being a real boy revolves around multiple heterosexual relationships. He talked about meeting his girlfriends during break and after school. While most participants from Multiville Primary talked of prospective boyfriends and girlfriends meeting at the school playing fields, behind the classrooms and at the toilet section, Rigby from Mazitike Primary talked of meeting his girlfriend in the classroom. This reflects on the issue of space within the school which is a creation of the apartheid era. The only space Rigby can find for his leisure time during school hours is the classroom. To Rigby and other boys at his school the classroom is thus a sexual space as well as learning space.

The classroom as a gendered space is used for the construction of different masculinities at Mazitike Primary. Rigby is the foreign national boy who talked about performing well in class to show that he was a real boy. While the other boys in his class tried to gain recognition, attention and status through violence he worked hard to pass in his school subjects to prop up his status. He acknowledged his high status by having many girlfriends and performing well in class. He also used his good performance in class to challenge the stereotype and undermining associated with him being a foreign national. To him being a real boy meant to work hard and pass and have many girlfriends. Different approaches were thus used to create different masculinities within the same space. The actions of Rigby and a few other boys from his school indicate the multiplicity of masculinities as argued by different scholars in the literature review chapter (see Connell 1996).

Heterosexual feelings were shown in various ways. Besides sitting and holding one another in in each other's arms real boys expressed their heterosexual feelings by kissing their girlfriends. Female participants from Multiville primary explained extensively the behaviour

of boys at their school when they are with their girlfriends. Below are some of the recordings the researcher made during focus group discussions:

LC: What do the boys do when they are with their girlfriends?

Girls: (Laughter).

Ntokozo: (Clears throat and looks down).

Thandi: Sometimes they want us to be jealous you can see sir. THEY KISS THEIR GIRLFRIENDS NEAR US.

Twinkle: Yes, they want to appear cool, they KISS them then they HUG them then they TALK ABOUT THOSE THINGS IN FRONT OF US.

Masculinity is constructed in front of others. The talk and actions of the girls show that there are so many things done by boys which they are shy to talk about which indicate heterosexual intimacy enacted in full view of other learners. Boys at Thandi and Twinkle's school wanted to be seen as 'cool' by kissing, hugging and talking about their relationships in front of other learners. The term 'cool' was mostly used by participants to show that one was a real boy. The term indicates a certain dominant form of masculinity. Some boys wanted to meet their girlfriends and express their feelings after school on their way home as indicated by one female participant again from Multiville primary in a different group during a focus group discussion:

Thando: Yoo, AFTER SCHOOL! They normally wait for their girlfriends there by the gate then they go straight by the corner shop …and they normally stand there and kiss. So one day one teacher went by and saw them. I also saw them, last term and this term I saw them.

Some male participants also pointed out that they met their girlfriends behind the classrooms.

These boys may have been afraid to be seen by the teachers with their girlfriends but waiting by the gate and kissing by the shops shows they wanted attention from other learners. They were exhibiting their heterosexual masculinity.

Real boys must be caring by looking after and providing for their girlfriends. Some male participants from Multiville primary pointed out that real boys take their girlfriends out for lunch. One of the male participants proceeded to point out that if one takes out his girlfriend for lunch girls will think that he is a gentleman. Boys were thus providing for their girls to acquire status. The caring by these young boys makes a continuum with what happens in the adult world. In a study of boys who have finished school in Soweto, boys were supposed to

know about township life in order to take care of their parents and girlfriends (Mfekane *et al* 2005).

However, most male participants were quick to point out that the girls must not love them because they have money to take them out. Most boys indicated that they wanted relationships which did not depend on money although money could be a contributing factor drawing the girls to the boys as argued by both male and female participants during focus group discussions. While boys at Multiville took pride over taking girls out for lunch to gain status, boys at Mazitike were mostly violent in their intimate relations with the girls. This speaks to the intersection of class and gender in the social construction of masculinity which will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Six.

Many male participants took pride over having multiple girlfriends. In this study in both schools both male and female participants pointed out that some boys had many girlfriends within and outside their schools. When the researcher asked what it meant to be a real boy to some male participants at Mazitike Primary the following discussion unfolded:

LC: How many girlfriends do you need?

Cabashe: As many as you can, maybe six.

LC: 6? From the same school?

Cabashe: From different schools.

LC: Does this show you are a real boy?

Rigby: To show that you are a real boy you must have three girls in the same class and four at least outside.

LC: Is that in Grade 7?

Boys: (In unison) Yes.

This behaviour by the boys tends to affect the girls emotionally as alluded by one female participant at Multiville Primary during a detailed individual interview.

LC: Is there anything else that you feel you have not told us on what it means to be a real boy?

Amogalang: Sir, boys show that they are real boys by dating a girl. So when they date this girl they wanna date many girls at the same time to show that they are real boys but I don't think its ok what they are doing. They are hurting the girls' feelings.

LC: Y-es (Encouraging her to go on).

Amogalang: Yes, by dating five girls at the same time, which is not good.

LC: Are there boys here at your school doing that?

Amogalang: Yes

The views of Amogalang, Cabashe and Rigby show that at the two schools in this study having many girlfriends was a measure of being a real boy as indicated above by Rigby. Having many girlfriends was meant to create a certain male identity rather than to express emotional feelings only. While the actual number of girlfriends may have been inflated, it is evident boys from both schools held the idea of having multiple girlfriends. One female participant from Multiville Primary during a focus group discussion pointed out that many boys in the township where she lived were always having many girlfriends a thing some girls were also adopting. She also pointed out that some girls in her township were involved in serial monogamous relationships because of the boys behaviour. The boys at these two schools were thus likely to have been learning actively such patriarchal discourses from older boys in their communities. While boys think its prestigious and are creating a male identity they are affecting the girls emotionally as well as social relations. Some girls were reportedly fighting about boyfriends at the two schools. Some of the violence among the girls was thus caused by the boys' patriarchal dominance of having many girlfriends. The views of Amogelang show that some boys and girls in this study paradoxically have different perspectives on what it means to be a real boy. Having many girlfriends according to Amogelang and some other female participants was not a sign of being 'cool' contrary to the views and perspectives of most boys.

While these boys boasted about multi-heterosexual relationships as a sign of being a real boy they vilified girls who did the same as indicated by Modecai in section 4.2. 1. These views are in line with a research done in KZN with Grade 7 learners (see Martin & Muthukrishna 2011). These views by Grade 7 boys show that boys at primary school cannot be observed through a lens of sexual innocence. They already know many things that the elders think they are oblivious of. Research carried out somewhere in South Africa and outside Africa also indicate counter-narratives to the discourse of sexuality innocence in childhood (see Bhana 2009; Bhana 2013; Martin 2009; Prinsloo & Moletsane 2013) although they were done with different age groups and children from different socio-economic backgrounds.

While in some studies (Bhana 2013) young boys showed their heterosexual feelings mostly through kissing, writing letters and games, in this study they mostly showed their feelings through kissing, hugging, having multiple partners and engaging in sexual intercourse. These

views are in line with adolescents in township high schools (see Langa 2010). Boys in this study are thus already constructing masculinity through active heterosexual means. Female participants argued in this research that boys always want to impress their friends by claiming to have dated many girlfriends. A female participant from Multiville Primary had this to say during a focus group discussion.

Kelly: I think mostly they want to show their friends, to impress their friends about how many girls have I had …

Masculinity is performed in front of others and for others to gain status. In this study boys at these two schools were thus having multiple partners to gain status and respect from their peers. However, boyhood was not only measured by the number of girlfriends one had. Some of these boys already wanted to engage in sexual intercourse. Some of these boys consider some of the girls at primary school as immature and thus want to be involved in sexual relationships with older girls at high school. The following unfolded during a focus group discussion with male participants from Mzitike Primary.

Sidi: You must have girlfriends in a class; you must have one in Grade 7, in Grade 6 and Grade 5 you must not have. You must start from Grade 7, Grade 8, Grade 9 and Grade 10.

LC: A Grade 7 boy having a girlfriend in Grade 8 or 9?

Boys: (In unison) Yes!

Sidi: They do … because they see the money.

LC: Ok, why do you like girls which are older than you boys … e-e-e Cabashe?

Cabashe: Because they know they will have sex.

Rigby: Other girls are sexy and they have beautiful body and they can show that they are adults.

LC: Ooh, so Grade 7 boys they want to have sex with girls?

Modecai: Not all of them but many of them want to have sex. If you don't have sex you are still a virgin. They will call you a fool and you are like a girl.

The views of these male participants show that the cherished part of their heterosexual relationship is to be involved in sexual intercourse. Girls in Grade 7 to 10 are already mature and have 'sexy beautiful bodies' which attract boys as argued by Rigby. These however, could be negotiated presentations by these boys to the researcher as an adult. On the other hand, the views could be truly based on prior research done which showed that by the age of 14 more boys than girls had already been involved in sexual intercourse (Flisher 2003). Since

some of the boys were reported to be older they could also have been already the same age as those girls at high school. These boys were thus actively constructing masculinity through engaging or purporting to be in intimate heterosexual relationships. The views of the boys in this study relate to the views of other boys in the UK also in the last year at primary school. The boys in that study also talked about the appeal of going out with girls at high school (see Swain 2005).

Transactional sex is already part of some of these children's lives. Sidi above, argues that some girls fall in love with the boys because they see them with money. Boys with money will be able to take care of their girlfriends. This points to the reason why at Sidi's school boys liked gambling. To be a real boy one had to have a girlfriend and the girlfriends wanted boyfriends with money. While love comes from the heart it can be enhanced with money as argued by Sidi. Widespread poverty and lack of resources are contributing factors in transactional sex. Other studies although with different age groups show a similar trend on transactional sex. (see Hunter 2010; Groes-Green; 2013; Bhana 2013c). Again these children's genders and sexualities are being constructed by drawing on prevalent gender forms in South African society. Transactional sex in this case can be argued as an enactment of masculinity.

Boys feminise those boys who have not had sex. If they do not engage in sexual acts they are relegated to an inferior status of being at the same level with girls as argued by Modecai above. In similar studies (Renold 2007; Chimanzi 2016) it is argued that having a girlfriend is a manifestation of masculinity and failure to have one may lead to a boy being labelled gay or a girl. As boys interact with other boys they are pressurised to engage in sexual acts. Homosociality is thus the key to enacting heterosexual masculinity. This seems to fit with the idea of sex being something men do to women. Real boys must thus have sex with their girlfriends.

While boys look down upon other boys who are virgins they desire virgin girls as argued by some male and female participants during focus group discussions. The following discussion unfolded during a focus group discussion with female participants from Multiville Primary.

Keabetswe: If you are a boy the most thing you talk about is virgin girls. If you are a boy and you are a virgin; you are not a real boy.

Amogelang: Some boys ask you if you are still a virgin. If you say "Yaaa of course" they will say ok see you next week. They would ask you out and after

that they will ask you to their house and then something happens.

LC: Even Grade 7s do that?

Keabetswe: Me I know a boy in this school but I won't mention the name. So that boy actually likes inviting girls to his house then he likes touching you and things like that.

The views of these female participants show that some boys at this school were disciplining sexuality amongst some learners. Boys were being coerced to indulge in sexual activities to prove that they were real boys yet girls were to remain 'virgins'. This could be the way boys and girls were socialised in their communities. Girls were thus being denied control of their sexuality. The desire of boys to be sexually intimate with virgin girls and to prove for themselves if a girl was a virgin seem to have a bearing in proving that they are real boys yet this is a violation of the girls' bodies if carried out without their consent. The desire of boys to create a social status for themselves by having relationships with virgin girls was also observed in a study with high school boys in KZN (Bhana & Pattman 2011). The boys were sexually creating power over the girls despite the girls arguing as pointed earlier on that they were not sexual objects.

The relationships were not only love driven but also to fulfil their heterosexual masculinity. The views of the girls above and below show that boys at Multiville Primary were constructing masculinity through heterosexual relationships with girls. They liked kisses, hugs and inviting girls to their houses to become more intimate. The boys as argued above were dominating girls sexually. However, the girls knew what the boys would do if they visited them so they had the choice to go or not. One female participant argued that:

Amogelang: Some don't propose to you because they love you but because they want kisses, hugs and others do other things I can't talk. They invite you to their houses and want to do other things and I know we learn about them.

Some boys in the township primary schools are like sexual predators. This is shown by the way the boys dump the girls soon after engaging in sexual acts. When I asked the boys why they dumped the girls after engaging in sex they pointed out that they would have got what they wanted. This shows that what qualifies one to be a real boy is to have sex with girls. The following excerpt comes from a focus group discussion with male participants from Mazitike School. The boys were discussing their intimate relationships with the girls.

Cabashe: After having sex they dump them.

LC: Why do they do that?

Cabashe: I don't know.

Sizwe: When they have sex they dump them because that thing they wanted they got it so nothing else is left.

Sidi: They sleep with girls because they want to show their friends they are the real bo::sses.

LC: Oooh, so after sleeping with a girl you can tell your friends?

Sidi: And to impress their friends and to show that THIS IS A MAN.

The views of the boys above show that the essence of a heterosexual relationship among these township young boys is to have sex. The views of Sidi show that boys engage in sexual acts as a way of indicating a male identity. Along the same lines a 12-year-old boy in another research in South Africa points out that to be a man one must have sex with a woman (Shefer *et al* 2005).

The notions of insatiable heterosexuality and the need to have multiple partners are also consistent with the findings of Sathiparsad (2007) in KZN although these findings are based on high school learners and in a rural setting. The aspect of having sex among early adolescent boys defines their identity. A young boy must be involved in sexual intercourse to be labelled a real boy. Prematurely engaging in sex among young boys is thus a key component of the achievement and performance of successful heterosexual young masculinity.

To show that the sexual act by the boys is not only for enjoyment but also to accrue status some male participants repeatedly pointed out during a focus group discussion that boys after having sex with a girl would tell their friends. Normally the whole class would know about it. To these boys this would bring prestige, status and show that you are a real boy although this would be embarrassing to the girl as indicated by some girls during focus group discussions. However, some boys tried to justify their acts by pointing out that some girls became happy if it was known.

While some boys are adopting a violent masculinity to dominate other boys as well as girls some are not passive recipients of this peer socialisation process. As they engage with their peers they also analyse the views of their peers as indicated in the following excerpt from a male participant from Mazitike School during a focus group discussion.

Modecai: Some friends want to pressurise you to sleep with a girl. They say if you don't sleep with a girl you are not a real boy but I don't think that's a good

idea because that will increase teenage pregnancy, and other diseases, other STIs.

Modecai is not passively accepting the pressure from his peers but challenging it. Modecai is presenting an alternative discourse of masculinity. This indicates that there is not a uniform acceptance of violent masculinity. There is contestation, also by boys who are resisting it. However, these views of Modecai could have been influenced by elders in his life. The views of Modecai indicate that there can be different types of masculinity within the same school.

In conclusion this chapter identified and explored the different forms in which masculinities as a collective social form is expressed by Grade 7 learners in Ekurhuleni townships. The chapter also looked at individual experiences and perspectives on the social construction of masculinities. Some of the predominant themes that emanated from the five-month enquiry are homosociality and heterosexuality.

Homosociality, as argued in this chapter is at the root of the formation of young masculinities. In this study homosociality was mostly observed through gender boundaries during play time, the binary of hard boys and soft girls, gender-based tasks and problem solving. Both male and female participants from both the schools spoke of the playing of informal soccer as perceived as being a boys' game . This was a way of maintaining their gender boundaries. Boys also created the binary of hard boys and soft girls to perpetuate their gender boundaries and dominance over the girls. To the boys, being a boy thus entailed doing things that cannot be done or should not be done by the girls.

Most boys did not like to engage in activities which were traditionally perceived as feminine. Cleaning was thus considered girls work. However, a few boys and most girls talked of ungendering tasks. Some who challenged this form of masculinity were creating another form of masculinity based on equality. These were now advocating for an egalitarian type of relationship. Although some teachers also tried to make all the boys clean the classroom the stylish ones remained elusive, constructed and maintained their patriarchal dominance.

One way of obtaining homosocial desirability is through heterosexuality. Boys in this study engaged in heterosexual relationships. During their social bonding boys always talked about girls they loved or would like to have. They also criticised boys who did not know how to choose 'beautiful' girls. They referred to these boys as 'permanent cows with blind eyes'. Beauty was a socially constructed term referring to girls with big bums and wide hips. Boys

helped each other in choosing and acquiring these girls. Having a girlfriend created a social identity among the boys.

Homosociality thus played a major role in the formation of dominant young masculinities. Boys from both schools also believed in sexual intercourse for one to be considered a real boy. The boys and girls in this study also expressed their sexuality through kissing and hugging. The boys also believed in having multiple partners. These views show that boys and girls in primary school in the townships are already sexually active. They should not be considered as sexually innocent. The boys formed their masculinities by being heterosexually active. These views relate to the idea in the adult world in which the prevailing configuration of masculinity is heterosexual masculinity (Ratele 2011a).

Homosociality creates two clashing discourses as observed in the above discussions. One is based on solidarity to the male group while the other is based on heterosexuality (see Kiesling 2005). Boys in this study needed to create and maintain a close social bond on the other hand they had to be heterosexual (see Chimanzi 2019). However, the male homosocial bonds helped the boys in creating and perpetuating hegemonic heteromasculinity.

Having looked at the discourse of homosociality and heterosexuality in the social construction of male identities and some of its violence the researcher now explicitly moves on to the chapter on violence and social relations in the formation of masculinities. Issues of power, dominance, discipline and social control will be at the centre of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

VIOLENCE OR 'PASSION WITH STYLE'? (RE)-CREATING DISCOURSES OF YOUNG MASCULINITIES

5.1 Introduction

In this study violence involves the use of force or power against someone by a social group or as individuals. Violence involves the domination or taking control of both the physical and the social spaces of the one being violated (Hearn 2006). In this study it manifests through verbal targeting, dominating of playing and learning spaces, passing homophobic comments, bullying, threats, name calling, taking money and food from some girls and boys, passing abusive comments, refusing to play with someone due to his or her sexual orientation or that she belongs to a different gender category, and passing of negative sexual comments. Violence can emanate from the school or its community.

Citing different scholars Bhana (2013) argues that schools are not immune to the social context in which they are located. Violence taking place in the community can result in negative gender relations within the school as the powerful gender group tends to think it is the only way of solving disputes. What is happening at the school could be a reflection of what is taking place in the townships the learners are coming from (see SACE 2011; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya 2014).

Children's play in the primary school is highly gendered and often shrouded in various forms of bullying and violent practices (see Thorne 1993; Bhana & Mayeza 2016). Violence in the two schools in this study was acknowledged and witnessed by some of the research participants. Mncube & Harber (2013) argue that violence within the schools and against girls in particular is still a major problem in South Africa. This violence as observed in this study is mostly perpetuated by the boys on the girls. Violence inflicted by boys during their interaction with girls is important in understanding power relations in the field of gender.

However, less attention has been paid to the way children understand and make sense of violence and its relationship to gender identities, playing out on the school's informal terrains. These informal terrains include all the places where learners engage with each other within the school without the supervision of a teacher or other adults. This could be in classrooms, school corridors or playing fields. While less attention continues to be turned to

details and causes of gender parity within the primary school context in this study it was observed that children experience and make sense of violence in complex and diverse ways.

As children engage with each other formally and informally within the school, several forms of gender-related violence occur. Much of the violence occurs under the nose of the adults like child play. Bhana (2009a) argues that violence is slippery and thus not easy to categorise. The violence within the school in this study while difficult to categorise is inseparable from constructs of masculinity. Along this line Bhana (2009a; 2013) argues that violence in most cases is inevitably gendered. Many research participants attributed the violence to identity construction among the boys. In this chapter the reseacher thus sought to argue how violence as a source of masculinity formation among young boys shapes gender relations within the school informal and formal terrains.

While the play of boys and girls has some elements of abuse, some boys and girls consider it as a status accruing adventure. Boys' violence against girls has not been a priority in understanding boys and masculinities (Parkes 2007; Bhana 2013) although it is important in understanding issues of power relations in gender as observed in this study among young boys and girls. Violence is an important mode in the formation of young masculinities. Other research although carried out among the adults and high school boys indicates that violence is an important marker in the formation of manhood (Kimmel 2004; Hearn 2012; Hamlall & Morrell 2012). Ratele (2016b) also working with adults although contextualising it to Africans argues that violence is directly related to the formation of African masculinities. In this study the young African boys' social formations of masculinities include violence against girls, 'gender non-conforming' boys and young boys.

Violence, as a social construct (Mncube & Harber 2013) manifests itself in different ways and in different contexts as will be observed in this chapter. In this study violence is experienced through the relationship of straight boys and gays and lesbians. Violence in this study also manifests itself through creation of gender boundaries, bullying, fighting and being anti-authority.

5.2 'You whine like a girl': Homophobia

Sexuality is an important resource through which boys construct and police masculinity and the girls' femininities. As observed in Chapter 4 most boys endorsed heterosexuality as the only form of sexuality. This points to the social system of heteronormativity in which the

boys are conditioned to be heterosexist and homophobic. While most female participants from both schools did not see anything wrong in being a gay or lesbian, most male participants from both schools regarded homosexuality with disdain. Katz (1990) citing the works of Kieman and Krafft-Ebing defines heterosexuality as an erotic feeling for different sex and homosexuality as an erotic feeling for a same sex. However, as observed in this study heterosexuality is firstly a social construct. The social construction of one's sexual orientation and subsequently its categorisation by others is a vital pillar of power. The researcher will be arguing in this section how the social construction of heterosexuality determines the social construction of masculinity.

Heteronormativity asserts that heterosexuality is the only legitimate and appropriate form of sexuality (Berkovitch and Helman 2009; Williams 2013). While in some societies gay men and women have started to contest this aspect of patriarchy (Berkovitch & Helman 2009) in South African township primary schools it seems a highly regarded way of showing male identity. In these two township primary schools heteronormativity is a vector of oppression. It privileges heterosexuals while denigrating homosexuals. The boys who do not toe the heterosexual line are emotionally abused as they end up crying. As they cry they are further scolded that they behave like girls who cry easily. Crying is associated with expressing emotional pain among girls. To these boys crying ceases to be a way of expressing emotion but an indication of femininity. Crying is thus constructed as feminising boys. These boys want the gays and 'effeminate boys' to toe the heterosexual line. These boys are using sexuality to dominate other boys. Being heterosexual is presented as a masculine attribute in these two schools and in their communities.

Most of the boys at these two schools were thus still tied to the traditional heteropatriarchal way of showing a male identity. Although non-heteronormative desires have been there since time immemorial they have been subdued by traditional heterosexual leaderships (Ratele 2016b). It has been the social and political leadership in most African contexts that have been trying to silence same sex desires. This has created a continuum among the young boys in the township schools.

While it was not proved that there were boys from both schools in this study who engaged in sexual activities most of them did not approve of same-sex intimate relationships. The views of most male participants during focus group discussions and the few entries in diaries of both male and female participants show that gays and lesbians were chastised and denigrated

to a lower status. Being heterosexual within the context of the two schools in this study among nearly all the boys was normative. Heterosexuality in this study thus transcended nationality, age, class, ethnicity and racial boundaries. Katz (1990) argues that heterosexuality is represented as universal and ahistorical yet it is socially created within a particular historical culture. A real boy in this study was observed as heterosexual, a dominant patriarchal position boys reproduce of the ways they see around them.

Masculinities are relational in form and are thus studied in relation to femininity (Connell 1995; Kimmell 2008; Paechter 2012). This points to the concept of sexuality and gender. Below, the researcher will thus discuss sexuality before discussing gender in determining whether one is a gay or a straight boy. The researcher will argue in this section that the boys' denigration of homosexuality comes first rather than their denigration of femininity. In this study it shows that boys are conditioned within heteronormativity and patriarchy.

While section 9 of the South African Constitution forbids discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation nearly all the boys in this study pointed out that they did not like gays. Most boys from both schools during focus group discussions pointed out that they did not attack gays, however, that did not mean they approved of gay behaviour. This suggests that violence is not always used to impose gender and sexual norms on others. These boys though not violent can be considered to be in a complicity relationship with the violent ones. While some scholars reject the realm of nature and biology in determining one's sexuality (see Katz 1990), the understanding of sexuality by the boys in this study seemed to be based on their understanding of binary sex categories. If one was a boy he was supposed to love a girl sexually and if one was a girl she was supposed to love a boy sexually. The issue of homosexuality was unpalatable and thus unmasculine to them.

Some boys from both schools spoke about their dislike of gays during focus group discussions while some proceeded to diarise their experiences of how straight boys discriminated against perceived gays in their play.This is significant in that the homophobic boys can express their position openly, while those who were considered gay or who sympathised with gay boys expressed their position to the researcher separately in a way that would not expose them to abuse.TK a male participant from Mazitike Primary, as observed in Chapter Four entered in his diary how he witnessed a boy who was playing with girls being labelled gay and how he was also labelled gay at one time because he was seen playing with girls. This again confirms that the stigmatisation relates to girls and everything to do with

girls (i.e. femininity). So the stigma of homosexuality is used to try and police other boys and divide them from girls, while isolating the girls from boys.

In his diary entries, TK showed that he did not see anything wrong in playing with the girls. While he welcomed playing with girls in one of the focus group interviews he clearly pointed out that he did not like gays. TK may have been defining the term gay from a sexual feeling perspective while other boys looked upon a boy who mostly played with girls as a gay. The following excerpt shows the views of TK on playing and the issue of gays.

TK: To be a gay I don't like it because God made you a boy. Why do you want to change yourself?

LC: Ok, when you play at school do you want to play with boys or girls or you want to play with both?

TK: I want to play with them all.

To TK if you were born a boy then you must love a girl sexually. He seems to be sharing the views of most boys here. This conception of the subject therefore is that manhood is equal to heterosexuality. This indicates the conflation of sex, gender and sexuality as per the heteronormative order. However, by playing with girls he defies homosociality, which has seen him being labelled gay by some boys. His rejection of gays during a focus group discussion while being sympathetic to them may show the social influence of others. Since masculinity is socially formed he may be trying to please other boys yet in his private life as shown in his diary entries he sympathises with gays and girls. This speaks to the 'perfomativity' of gender as argued by Judith Butler. On the other hand, he is also refusing the disciplining that says he should only be playing with other boys.

Along the same lines as TK, some male participants from Multiville Primary during focus group discussions also pointed out that gays are subjected to insults. Gays were also considered soft. One of the male participants called Zamani also made an entry in his diary to show how homosexuals are treated at their school.

Sihle was a homosexual, so one day he wanted to play with the boys and they didn't want because they said he's soft. I felt bad because he tried to change himself but they didn't accept him.

Although Sihle tried to play with other boys his perceived sexual orientation made other boys not approve of him playing with them. The straight boys considered him to be soft, a characteristic which was mostly associated with girls. Many boys in this study as indicated in section 4.2.2 pointed out that they did not like to play with the girls because they considered

them soft. Some girls also pointed out during focus group discussion what they heard some boys saying about boys who were gay. Precious in her diary also pointed out that boys fear that if they show signs of weakness they will also be looked down upon by girls. Girls were thus also contributing to the social construction of strong boys. She proceeds to point out that boys who are strong are considered as 'bosses' by other boys. This aspect of bosses indicates domination by creating a hierarchy of boys, and an unequal gender division with girls.

While Precious, a female research participant from Mazitike Primary argues in her diary that she does not see any reason why someone must beat up another person for stating the truth, during a focus group discussion she further argues that people should not listen to other people but be free to express their sexual feelings.

LC Is it good or bad to be homosexual?

Precious: I think it's good, sometimes it's good because you should express your feelings. You should do what you think is best for you. You should not hear people saying to be a gay or lesbian is not a good idea. It's not a good thing. You should do what you think is best for you and for your life to carry on.

The views of Precious with regard to homosexuality are consistent in both her private and public domains as exposed in her diary and focus group discussions. The views of Precious regarding gays were also shared by many female participants from Multiville Primary. This suggests that the girls have more fluid gender and sexual identities, in which they allow greater space for differences.

Other female participants, pointed out that gays were not judgemental like other boys, they were kind and also liked making jokes. This could be read as resistance to the heteropatriarchal order that some boys are trying to impose, in other words embracing boys that have different gender and sexual identities. Keabetswe, a female participant from Multiville Primary argues that:

Keabetswe: There is a boy- well everybody says he's gay and he's our friend, he tells us jokes, he's always like around us, so I feel like being…(trails off).

Amogelang, a friend to Keabetswe when the discussion began pointed out that if boys were to be like girls then there would be less boys. As the discussion progressed, however, she pointed out that she enjoyed being among gays as they joked and made one laugh. Her acceptance of gays could have been socially influenced by her friends as at the beginning and

in her diary she argues against gays. The use of diaries in this study thus indicates the private life and feelings of the participants while the focus groups indicate their public domain or how they are socially influenced. Amogelang's private life can be indicated through her diary which runs:

> *Today when the schools were closing I saw a number of things happening. After school, after we got our reports and we were walking to buy some ice on the other street from school l saw a boy from the high school walking with a boy from our school. Most children think they are gays because we even saw them hugging and smiling to each other. Yazi my diary I even saw my ex-boyfriend walking with my worst enemy and they were even hugging. The way I got angry l even got home and told my sister.*

Amogelang's public life was at variance with her private life. In public she appeared to be accommodating gays but in private as shown by her diary entry it was the opposite.

Research participants in this study did not define gays according to their homosexual feelings only. All of them perceived that 'feminine characteristics' qualified boys and girls in this study to refer to a boy as gay. Precious, a female participant from Mazitike Primary entered in her diary on how a perceived gay boy physically assaulted another child after being referred to as a gay summarises everything. She described all the characteristics of this boy so as to qualify him as gay. Below is her diary entry.

> *Today Juday beat Zunguza because Zunguza said "gay…!!!" Juday was so angry. I understand it because he acts like a gay;* ***he brushes his thighs, he always speaks with a low voice, he dates with another boy, he goes with girls, he plays with girls, his room is decorated with girls' stuff, he always wants to clean the house and wash dishes and sweep the yard, he wears girls' clothes and shoes, makes-up his face and paints his nails and always grows his hair then relax or line-up, he loves boys.*** *I felt so confused because he knows that it's true so why does he beat another child, just because telling the truth and facts only he becomes angry. It's just he is silly ….*

It is imperative to understand how gays were categorised in this study by the respondents. The way Precious describes Juday is important because it shows how gay people are perceived in the microcosmic space of this school. The views of Precious proceed to suggest that gays have characteristics, which the children at this school are able to enumerate. This indicates a case of gender norms being imposed on those around them, to construct someone as gay, which is part of creating a hierarchy of masculinity in which gay boys are at the bottom. According to Precious, gays are not only sexually attracted to other men but also

associate with girls and speak with low voices. Washing clothes, dishes and sweeping the yard are considered duties to be performed by girls. This shows that the characterisation of some boys as gay has a double function: to inferiorise those boys as lesser boys, and to reiterate the unequal gender binary between boys and girls. A boy found doing these duties is in danger of being labelled gay. Maybe this is one of the reasons why most boys considered cleaning their classrooms as girls' work. If a boy dresses like a girl and also puts make-up, polishes finger nails and wears long hair and relaxes it he is considered to be a gay. Juday may not be gay but only shares some characteristics which are normally associated with femininity. He may also be half-conscious of these characteristics and actions. To him behaving like that does not qualify him to be a gay that is why he beat up Zunguza to prove his masculine power. Juday is being stigmatised for his perceived gender and sexual 'deviance' (see Judge 2018). Everything described about Juday is about gender, except where it says 'he dates another boy', which could be read as being about sexuality. Precious and other children at these two schools therefore seem to attribute homosexuality to boys that are perceived as gender non-conforming.

Being gay is looked down upon in some societies and gay people are attacked bcause of their sexual orientation (see Judge 2018). While Juday dated another boy he may not have wanted society to consider him gay since it carried some discriminating tones and sanctioning within his school. This is in line with other studies on the victimisation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in SA, which relates directly to why people 'closet' themselves to try and stay safe (see Nel & Judge 2008; Judge 2018) although this is related to older people. The fear of being discriminated against as a gay boy may have necessitated him to beat the other learner to silence him. To prove that his sexuality does not make him less of a boy Juday resorts to violence. Violence seems like the only way of solving disputes in this society. While Juday's perceived sexual orientation places him at the bottom of the male masculine ladder he exalts himself through violence to prove that he is not less of a boy. The beating of Zunguza by a gay defies the general belief that gays are weak and soft.

In this study it seems the 'straight boys' were doing a lot of bullying to impose subordination on other boys and girls. While most girls did not have a problem with gays they knew and understood the boys reaction to them. The subordination of young gay boys to the 'straight boys' relates to what happens in the adult world. Connell (2013) in his hegemonic masculinity theory argues that gay men are relegated to an inferior status thus are put at the

bottom of the gender hierarchy among men. Relegating someone to an inferior status due to his or her sexual orientation is a violation of that person's sexual orientation right. Below are some of the contributions made by a female participant from Mazitike Primary during a focus group discussion to show how the gays were treated at her school.

> Goodness: They call him bad names. They call him gay and other nasty words. They say you don't like to play with boys you act like a girl but you are a boy. They call you with names that you don't like and you end up crying but they say again you whine like a girl.

These views show the violence that the perceived gays undergo. Gays are given bad and nasty names as a corrective measure. Katz (1990) arguing on the invention of the term heterosexuality points out that Dr. Kieman defined homosexuals by their deviance from the gender norm. Boys who played with girls and do girlish stuff as pointed out above by Precious were also in danger of being labelled gay and thus doing things outside the prescribed norms. This points to the concept of heteronormativity which demeans and dehumanises anyone who is outside the heterosexual norm as argued above.

The acceptability and legitimacy of same-sex female desires within the context of the two schools in this study was challenged mostly by the boys. Homosexual girls like homosexual boys were not spared the wrath associated with their sexual orientation. A male participant in a focus group discussion at Mazitike Primary arguing on what he sees in his community pointed out that some lesbians end up being beaten by the boys. Some male participants within the same school pointed out that they did not like lesbians because they behaved like boys. Boys were thus safeguarding certain behaviours to maintain dominance over the girls.

Boys did not welcome competition from the girls. Some male participants in the study pointed out that lesbians competed for girlfriends with the boys a thing which most male participants despised. The violence by these boys on the girls seems to suggest that their patriarchal power is in a crisis. These boys wanted to maintain their dominance over the girls. These boys were thus against the transformation of the gender order. Lesbianism as a sexual orientation from the way male participants argued in this study cannot be accorded the same status with male heterosexualism in the gender order. Violence was thus being staged or advocated by the boys in this study to legitimatise patriarchy and mortify homosexuality. Trying to silence the lesbians by beating them or refusing to play with them is aimed at controlling the girls' sexuality and subordinating their bodies. Arguing on why same-sex

female desires are often attacked Ratele (2011a: 404) points out "it is part of societal forces aimed at controlling all female sexuality and at subordinating female bodies and desires to men's commands". In other words, the aim is to heterosexualise the perceived lesbians so that they continue to be available for male sexual gratification (Judge 2018). Ratele also argues that forms of manhood in contemporary Africa are defined by women's social relations. Ratele's views while based on black African adults resemble what happens among young boys and girls at primary school level in the townships of SA. The girls are supposed to subordinate their bodies to the boys' desires.

Some teachers did not like girls who behaved like boys. One female participant at Mazitike Primary while describing a perceived naughty girl at their school indicated that teachers always tell the girl who speak 'boys' language' to stop speaking like a boy. This type of boys' talk can also be referred to as *tsotsi* language[4]. According to Langa (2010) *tsotsi* boys within the school context are the boys who avoid attending classes and defy school authority in trying to create a certain masculine identity. Langa (2010:12) continues to argue that "[i]n terms of the hierarchy of masculinities at school, *tsotsi* boys were at the top of the hierarchy and highly visible and projected an idealised form of township masculinity". The action of the teacher in this study suggests boys have a specific way of speaking which was not to be emulated by the girls. The behaviour of the teacher tends to support a gender identity that is stable, that boys have a natural access to masculinity and its associated ways of speaking and girls do not.

Boys and girls are thus gendered by their emulation of gender constructs. Such cautionary statements are not only meant to control the girls' sexual orientation, but to also endorse heterosexism. The behaviour of the girl is not only considered inappropriate feminine behaviour but is linked with homosexuality (Msibi 2012). This seems to suggest the teachers at the school endorsed a certain gender identity. The attitude and prejudice by the teachers can lead to secondary victimisation or the abused learners losing confidence in the teachers and avoiding reporting abuse. However, some boys and girls may not emulate these gender constructs passively.

[4] This is a stylish way of talking mostly adopted by the naughty young boys and men in the South African townships.

Research participants in this study mostly boys tried to naturalise sexuality by not differentiating it from sex. However, sexuality is socially constructed as the researcjer has argued before while sex is biological. Many male research participants argued that these boys wanted to change the way they were created. Some cited God as having created them as boys and not as girls. Based on these views and what Precious pointed out above on what makes one to be referred to as gay, the researcher wishes to argue that sexuality is a social and historical construct. Foucault argues that sexuality cannot be thought of as natural (Weeks 2010). The boys in this study were trying to prescribe what they thought as the right sexual orientation by terming it natural. It is society that is prescribing and proscribing the actions of boys. For example, if a boy associates more with girls, he is labelled gay. This also speaks to homosociality as not being seen as gay as the researcher argued in Chapter Four. Society is the one sanctioning the behaviour of boys by labelling some social practices and activities feminine. The labelling of some boys as queer or gay is thus socially constructed and ahistorical. Although patriarchal traditionalists reject the existence of homosexuality, it has always been part of tradition (Ratele 2016b). Boys in this study were thus socially constructing heterosexual masculinities based on what their societies perceived as the 'right' form of masculinities.

In this section the researcher has argued that homophobia among township primary school learners must be understood through sexuality and gender binaries. Violence was exerted on those considered gay and lesbians.This is done to send a message to the victim that his or her sexual orientation or gender non-conformism is deviant and must be changed (see Nel & Judge 2008). Gay in this study as understood in other studies with young people of primary school age, is associated with "associations with girls, femininity, girls' forms of play, and subordination" (Bhana & Mayeza, 2016. 37). Boys in this study define themselves as real boys by what they are not, that is being gay. Being gay is a social construct used to exalt heteropatriarchal masculinity in these school contexts.

5.3 Bullying, racialisation of blackness and feminising the masculine body

Violence and bullying are interrelated oppressive social practices. Some boys in the two schools in this study appeared to bully some girls and some younger boys. Liang, Fisher & Lombard (2007) point out that evidence suggests that children who bully others may also be involved in violent behaviour. In this study bullying took the form of sexual bullying, physical violence, threats, name calling, taking food and money forcefully from some girls

and the younger boys and also passing abusive comments. This bullying was done by individuals or gangs of boys. Some male and female participants pointed out that some boys thought bullying was a sign of being a real boy.

Sexual bullying in this study refers to the unwanted sexual comments, touching or advances by some boys towards the girls or towards any learner. Some male and female participants mostly from Mazitike Primary reported to have heard or witnessed sexual bullying by the boys. Some were subjected to aggressive sexual advances and verbally degrading sexual comments passed on them (see Chimanzi 2019) as they interacted and played within the school's informal terrains. They indicated this both in the focus group discussions and in their diaries. Some male participants from both schools however, indicated that some boys seemed to believe that coercive sexual behaviour against girls is legitimate. To some of these boys it was a way of showing that they were real boys and these were tactics or strategies of making them aware they wanted to be in a relationship.

As observed in Chapter Four, some female participants indicated that they enjoyed playing with other girls because boys did not play fair when playing with them. Some female participants repeatedly pointed out that boys enjoyed touching their buttocks, breasts and other places they did not want to be touched during play. One of the female participants at Mazitike Primary had this to say when I asked if the girls liked to play with the boys or girls or in mixed groups.

> Nosipho: I want, ... I like to play with girls because boys like to touch the places that l don't want.

Nosipho also made numerous entries in her diary in which a certain boy would touch her breasts and at times slap her buttocks. One of the entries runs as follows:

> *Sipho came to me and said how are you black Spiderman. And I started to ignore him. And I said, "Sipho why do you like to bully girls"? Sipho* ***touched my breasts*** *and I said, "Sipho stop what you are doing right now", and he stopped. I felt bad because he touched me where he was not supposed to touch me.*

What happened to Nosipho points to routinisation of physical violation and intimidation by boys as part of play. While some girls did not like being touched by the boys in this way, some reported that they did not mind it. Some male participants at Mazitike Primary pointed out that some girls enjoyed being touched by the boys. Bianca, a female participant from

Mazitike Primary also highlighted the same issue during a detailed individual interview as indicated below.

Some girls experienced stigmatisation through racialisation of their skin colour and their body shapes. Nosipho in her diary entries as indicated above complained about boys who were calling her black Spiderman because of her natural skin and black cmplexion. Having a dark skin colour could not have been a qualifying complexion for a 'beautiful' girl according to these boys. The boys who were calling Nosipho Spiderman were not part of the research so the researcher could not establish if the name Spiderman had another meaning. However, Spiderman is a masculine figure. Since she liked playing soccer as she indicated in her diary the boys may have been stigmatising her as not fully conforming to femininity. Another girl in the study who liked playing soccer was rebuked often by the boys as they said she had calves like a man. Although Nosipho tried to ignore the boy, he did not stop what he was doing but proceeded to touch her breasts. The masculine bodies possessed by these girls could lead to them being considered as girls in 'wrong' bodies as argued above. These girls are considered as exhibiting masculinity in the wrong body (see Ratele 2011b). The behaviour of these boys could be considered as disciplining of a gender non-conforming girl, as they have strong bodies, and the dominant form of boyhood demands a weak body from girls. In this way male domination is enabled. By touching the breasts of the girl the boy is trying to feminise the masculine bodies of the girls.

Some boys were sexually bullying girls into dropping their relationships especially with young boys. They want the attention the girl might be giving another boy. The following excerpt was recorded at a female focus group discussion from Mazitike Primary.

LC: Do boys just say bad things about girls just because they are girls?

Dineo: Yes, because maybe you are used to playing with boys and they may say you play with boys in Grade 5 and they want attention and you are not giving them that attention they will say what I gave him they also need it. They call you with bad names.

LC: Y-e-s (encouraging her to go on).

Dineo: They say why can't you give them that thing [attention] and they will also give you theirs. If you refuse they can even slap you.

LC: They can even slap you?

Girls: Yes (in unison).

Dineo: Or they can kick you.

LC: Kick you again? (probing for more responses).

Goodness: When you tell them that you will tell the teachers, they will tell you that after school is after school we will get hold of you and we will injure you and you won't repeat it again. Even yourself you end up not coming to school afraid that person will beat you.

The boys being referred to in this excerpt have a belief that if a girl is in a relationship with a certain boy they are also entitled to the attention the other boy is receiving. These boys are trying to dominate girls and other boys through sexually coercive behaviour. They can also even go to the extent of threatening the girl even to beat the girl so that she can concede by giving them the same attention. By so doing the boys inferiorise the girls' bodies as commodities that can easily be acquired by any boy. They also proceed to threaten the girls not to report the abuse to the adults. If they report to the teachers the boys will wait for them at the school gate when the teachers are no longer there. The girl may end up dropping out from school due to fear that the boy concerned can harm her. While these female participants complained about this form of sexual bullying by the boys, they did not actually give a specific incident and a boy responsible for that act. This could have been their thoughts and feelings as there was no girl who was reported to have stopped coming to school due to abuse.

Some boys were involved in sexual manipulation. The patriarchal boys' repertoire of domination includes not only physical and sexual abuse and coercion but also psychological and emotional abuse. These boys can force a girl to be in a relationship with them if they know a secret about the girl. They will threaten the girl that if she does not comply they will tell everyone their secret. These views were written in a diary by Goodness, a girl at Mazitike Primary.

Today at school my friends and I we were three and we were walking during break time and we were talking about our past grades and the other boy came and hugged my friend and they kissed suddenly and we were like what now! The boy told us to stop looking at people's business and we asked my friend and she said this guy came to her yesterday after school and the boy knows her secret and it was hard for her to tell people about it. So she said this boy said she has to be his girlfriend otherwise the secret will be known by everyone and she said it was a very bad secret that is why we

don't have to know it. I felt bad because this boy is threatening my friend just to be his girlfriend otherwise her secret will be out and everyone will know it, that is not fair.

If the girl concerned was telling the truth, then she is in a forced relationship because she is afraid her secret will be known by everyone. This unwanted sexual advances puts the girl in a social-psychological intimidation position and her sexuality in a compromised status. This indicates how the sexuality of the boys is privileged and dominant while that of girls is responsive and subordinate. The relationship is a threat to the social and emotional space of the girl.

Most female participants complained that most boys wanted attention. By teasing and forcing girls to be in relationships with them, boys were drawing attention to themselves and also imposing an unequal sexual hierarchy on the girls. As observed in various sections in this study this worked to draw attention to themselves so as to be liked by the girls. While this act was not celebrated amongst the girls to the boys in question it was a way in which they were forming a certain male identity as indicated by Chris and Zamokuhle above. This is however a toxic way of constructing masculinity since some girls repeatedly pointed out during focus group discussions that real boys were supposed to be gentle to girls. The way some boys teased some girls made some girls think think about what would happen if they had the same power like that possessed by the boys. One girl from Mazitike Primary wrote in her diary about two boys who always teased girls.

She wrote: *I wish that God can change girls to be boys, so that they can stand for themselves.*

These views relate to those of Pearl from Multiville Primary, that some parents must teach their daughters to fight back. These views seem to suggest the systems in the schools are failing to curb violent masculinities thus girls to be on an equal footing with the boys in terms of violence. The schools' lax disciplinary systems tend to perpetuate gender-based violence instead of curbing it. These girls are now of the opinion that violence against them can only be solved through violence against the boys. This creates a power struggle relationship.

Sleepover tours create a conducive atmosphere for the formation of heterosexual masculinities. Bianca, a female participant from Mazitike Primary made an entry in her diary which shows that the behaviour of the boys at times has more to do with the formation of

masculinities rather than the desire to abuse the girls. Her views were shared by many male participants. In her entry she says:

> *There is a boy in our class who likes to touch girls body parts everyday. He always tells us that when we go to the farewell trip if we are going to swim he will touch our bums. We asked him why he says that to us. He said* ***it shows to be real man*** *in life. I felt really bad because other girls don't have parents to tell.*

While this move by the boys is sexual harassment, in the eyes of the boys it is a way of achieving status. Some boys behave and talk like that as they play within the school context as indicated by Bianca. The boy being mentioned by Bianca was not just playing but exhibiting different masculinities in different contexts. Swimming when the school goes for a Grade 7 farewell was an opportune time to show his heterosexual masculinity by touching the girls' buttocks. He really wanted to show what real boys do when they go out on trips with girls. While there is no problem as long as these acts are consensual, the way Bianca puts it, it suggests that the way some girls received it was not consensual. During a detailed individual interview Bianca indicated that some girls enjoyed it while some did not like it and viewed it as abuse. She repeatedly pointed out that some did not have parents or older people at home to report to so that they can come to school and talk about the issue. While girls in general were affected by this heterosexual move by the boys it affected vulnerable girls more. Girls who do not have parents to intervene when under abuse were deeply affected by the actions of the boys. Although the boys purported 'love' in their actions it can be construed as violence. The way sexual violence was experienced by the girls was not homogenous.

The views of Bianca that some girls enjoyed being touched by the boys were also shared by another boy from the same school. The boy however proceeded to point out that it was fine to touch if one is your girlfriend not all other girls. This boy pointed out that they always see high school boys holding their girls. These boys where thus drawing lessons from their social environment.

The inclusion of the parents in discipline shows the importance of the adults in the way boys and girls relate at school. Boys were reportedly afraid of parents of girls and would change their actions when they came to school. The way they constructed boyhood and the way they advanced heterosexual relationships became less violent. While parents seemed to play a crucial role in the protection of their girl children against toxic masculinity the schools were lacking in strategies to control it. Some female participants pointed that some teachers did not

take them seriously when they reported it and also that no serious action was taken to deal with the perpetrators. The following excerpt from a focus group discussion with female participants from Mazitike Primary shows what happens when girls report to the teachers.

LC: So when you report to the teachers what do the teachers do?

Patience: They just call the boy and they say the thing you did to this girl is not right.

LC: So do the boys stop doing it?

Girls: (In chorus) They don't stop.

Patience: They continue.

LC: So they don't listen to the teachers as well?

Girls: Yes!

The passive approach of some of these teachers is in line with other literature collected from some schools in SA (Mncube & Harber 2013). By paying little attention to the plight of the girls these teachers seem to be endorsing and perpetuating the violent forms of masculinity. This suggests that the institutional environment contributes to the reproduction of violent masculinities. In some studies in South Africa, it has been observed that teachers abuse children physically and sexually (see Human Rights Watch 2001; SACE 2011) and some of these abuses are swept under the carpet. When no serious action is taken against the perpetrators, the girls are discouraged from reporting abuse (see Leach & Humphreys 2007) and the teacher's credibility is undermined with the victims and other learners (see Thompkins 2000). The school environment can thus be a fertile territory for the production, reproduction and perpetuation of gender-based violence.

Some boys try to sexualise their play with the girls. Even when they engage in formal play at school they take advantage of their proximity to the girls and touch body parts that girls are not comfortable with. As indicated in Chapter Four boys like girls with big buttocks, so whenever they get an opportunity they want to touch the girls' buttocks. Precious one of the female participants from Mazitike Primary indicated in her diary that as they were playing with the boys one day, the boys wanted to touch their buttocks instead of touching their backs as required by the game.

Today we were playing spot with boys. The boys were silly because they wanted to touch our bums when they are supposed to touch us on our backs. I felt so bad because when a boy touches you where you don't want to be touched you feel uncomfortable with other children.

While the girls feel uncomfortable with the touching of their buttocks by the dominant boys in full view of their supporters this group of boys feel great and prestigious. By touching the girls buttocks these boys were drawing attention to themselves since masculinity is formed in front of others. Ratele on black masculinities points out that to be a black man depends on how your behaviour is accepted among other black males (Ratele 2001). Sidi and Modecai in Chapter Four indicated that boys feel good by touching girls' sexual parts and that qualifies one as a real boy in their eyes. Sidi also argued during a focus group discussion that some boys liked touching girls' sexual parts so that they can be horny and like them. Boys seem to be engaging in these violent ways to satisfy their sexual desires and perpetuate sexual dominance over the girls. While these two boys shared these views about other boys, they were considered nonviolent. They pointed out during focus group discussions that it was not manly to touch a girl by force. Sidi was highly regarded by some girls because he enjoyed playing with girls most of the time.

These two boys denoted a different form of masculinity. They do not look to 'traditional' violent forms of masculinity which tend to re-establish male power (see Morrell 2001b) but other forms of masculinity informed by an emancipatory and egalitarian mind. This shows that what one group of boys refers to as masculinity is valued differently by another group of boys within the same context at the same time. Therefore, some critical scholars of men and masculinities talk of masculinities rather than masculinity (see Connell 1996; Morrell 2001b; Ratele 2016; Langa 2020). Their views of a real boy are shaped by their family background as will be shown in Chapter Six under ethnicity.

Some boys force girls to hug them to boost their status. During a focus group discussion with female participants from Mazitike Primary the following excerpts resulted:

LC: What is being done by the boys these days at your school to show that they are real boys?

Keabetswe: Some boys force some girls to hug them and then they say if you don't hug me l am gonna beat you.

LC: Why do the boys do that?

Keabetswe: It is because when they go and ask other girls to hug them they say they don't want to or they don't want them that's why they abuse us.

The excerpt shows that when some boys ask the girls for a hug some girls refuse so they end up using threats and force. To some boys it is a way of establishing a relationship with the girls. For the boys such heterosexual advances are a way of accruing status. In fact, amongst the boys this suggests a normalisation of heteromasculinity. However, the views of the female participants show that the girls are resisting these patriarchal impositions. By touching them in places they don't like, the girls feel the boys are abusing them and taking over their space. A female participant from Multiville Primary pointed out in her diary that boys must stop abusing girls and they should also give the girls some space. This involves the physical and the social space. When the boys were invading the girls' games and taking their balls they were invading their physical and social space. Hearn (2006) argues that men's violence involves the control of the space of the violated talk or emotional relations.

Boys violence on girls also manifests through verbal targeting and coercion. As boys commented unreservedly on the girls' physical bodies as they walked by they were interfering with their social lives. As discussed in Chapter Four, both male and female participants repeatedly pointed out that boys liked talking about girls in their homosocial groups. The talk was centred mostly on how girls looked. This talk as the researcher has argued above was meant to subordinate the girls' bodies and control their sexual desires to the boys' commands. They talked about girls with flat buttocks and girls with big buttocks and wide hips. The following was said during a focus group discussion by female participants from Mazitike Primary:

LC: Do boys at times just say bad things to girls just because they are girls?

Bianca: Sometimes bati uneshwaba aupakanga, ume kabi like umubi yooo (Sometimes they say, you have flat buttocks, you don't have nice buttocks, you have a bad structure, like you are ugly yoo).

LC: Then how do you feel when they talk like that?

Bianca: Its bad, it hurts.

Girls: At times you feel like crying.

LC: But Bianca do you at times cry?

Bianca: Yes, I cry inside not outside.

LC: If people know that you are crying what are they going to say?

Thembi: They are going to gossip about you.

The views of Bianca relate directly to what was said earlier on by Amogelang. Girls feel deeply hurt when the boys describe their body structure. They are also afraid to express their

emotions through crying because the boys will laugh and gossip about them. Gossiping about someone is an indirect form of bullying (Mncube and Clive Harber 2013). This inferiorisation of the girls' bodies was meant to maintain power over them. The term 'ugly' was being socially constructed by the boys to refer to girls who had flat buttocks and not possessing wide hips. Most girls were irritated by this talk and repeatedly asked why boys treated them like objects. While this talk by the boys indicates heterosexual formation of masculinity amongst the girls it is a violation of their physical stature and social space. Girls like the boys wished to walk freely at school without being put under scrutiny by the boys. However, this freedom was compromised by the actions of the boys in their endeavour to be 'real boys'. A female participant from Multiville Primary repeatedly pointed out in a focus group discussion that when boys in their social groups see a girl passing by, they start to point out that the girls' buttocks are flat. However, from the boys' perspective being able to describe a girl sexually also comes with a heteromasculine status. However, the girls were not passive recipients of this male domination. They at times argued and tried to show that they were equal to the boys.

Engaging in sexual acts seem to come with some status among the boys. Boys thus want to make other learners aware whenever they have sexual intercourse with a girl. Some male participants at Mazitike Primary repeatedly pointed out that some boys enjoyed telling other learners whenever they had sex with a girl. As pointed out in Chapter Four, boys do this to show off to their friends, to impress their friends, to prove that they are the 'real bosses' and to show that they are real boys. This has an impact on some girls who do not want their secrets known.

Some boys spread rumours about being involved in a sexual act with a girl. As observed in section 4.3.2.2, having sex with a girl is a sign that you are a real boy. Since engaging in sex among the boys comes with a certain status and honour some boys presumably lie about it. Girls feel bad about issues of having sex with boys especially if its false. The following is an excerpt from Bianca's diary:

> *In our school there is this boy who always tell lies about other girls that he had sex with them and that thing he is doing is unusual in school. It hurts other children because all the school will know lies about her. I felt really sad about what he does to other kids.*

By lying about having sex with a girl the boy in this case is tarnishing the image of the girl while creating a male identity for himself.

Boys think they own the girls. They don't take it lightly when the girls turn them down. They tend to use abusive words to girls who do not accept their sexual advances. Precious a girl from Mazitike Primary narrated her ordeal in the diary when she had rejected a boy's advances.

> *Today Toto told me that he loves me and I said "futsek you boy bitch". He said don't tell me that nonsense. When I say I love a girl she accepts me and you are the first to deny my love, so l should tell you that you are even ugly and fat. I felt so bad because he told me the way I am and it is not good to be told that you are ugly even if you know you are beautiful.*

Toto attacked Precious because she had turned him down, a thing he was not used to. Some boys think they are entitled to the female bodies thus they can control and subordinate the girls. The way Precious on the other hand replied shows that girls do not accept domination from boys passively. Precious was equally using verbal violence like the boys in defending herself. She could have learnt that acting violently is the legitimate way of handling conflicts in order to stay safe. Thus, as girls strive to position themselves in relation to this violence they are at the same time rejecting it and incorporating it in their own beliefs and practices. Therefore, girls also get drawn into reproducing patriarchy by using an anti-woman discourse to assert themselves against boys. Both girls and boys thus use derogatory gender terms to assert power.

Respect and talking nicely is what constitutes a real boy according to some girls. During a focus group discussion with female participants from Multiville Primary when the researcher asked what the girls expected from a real boy one of them had the following to say:

> Pearl: They must be respectful and watch what they say.

Many female participants echoed the same sentiments about the boys. They pointed out that boys especially black boys at Multiville Primary verbally abused girls. Girls do not take lightly the use of words such as 'ugly' and 'fat' even if the girl is not like that. The use of these terms by the boys in front of other learners is meant to belittle the girls and maintain their dominance over them. The boys are trying to dominate the sexual space of the girls as they socially construct their identities. Thus what it means to be a real boy among the boys is at variance with what it means to be a real boy among the girls. The girls are challenging the

'toxic' talk of the boys and encouraging them to have more positive forms of identification through being respectful.

Some female participants seemed to be constructing femininity in opposition to the boys' aggression and entitlement. One female participant from Mazitike Primary wrote in her diary that there is a boy in their class who likes touching girls in places they are not comfortable with but she does not report him to the teacher because she feels it will be unfair to him. Girls are required to be caring and to place their own needs as secondary. This girl seems to legitimise violence and reinforce gender power inequality. This arrangement will create a dominant group of boys and a subordinate group of girls. The acceptance of this female participant of their oppression subscribes to Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity (see Connell 1987). This will tend to perpetuate the dominance of male members within the school context.

The acceptance of domination by the girls is not always through caring but out of fear. One female participant from Mazitike Primary during a detailed individual interview seemed to sympathise with the boys but later revealed that they were afraid of the boys.

LC: When girls are beaten by the boys do they go and report to the teachers?

Precious: Some they keep quiet because they don't want to hurt these boys, they just want to keep it inside.

LC: But why should someone keep that inside when that person is ill-treating you?

Precious: Because others when you go and tell the teacher after school they beat you and do funny things.

The views of Precious suggest that some girls do not sympathise with the boys but are coerced. The patriarchal behaviour of the boys is doing this. Violence is thus one way of gaining and maintaining social power within the school context by the boys. Masculinity is thus constitutive of violence as argued by Hearn, Kimmell and Ratele. Boys are not using it when under threat but it is part of being a real boy.

Bullying maybe learnt outside the school but perpetuated at school because the school ignores it or does not understand its nature. Sexual bullying at Mazitike Primary could have been emanating from the community where the school is situated. A number of participants during focus group discussions and in their diaries referred to the violence they witnessed in their communities. The violence was directed at girls in general and to the local municipality

due to poor service delivery. Even on going home at times the learners were attacked by unknown male assailants in the vlei[5] grasslands they passed through. Learners from this school were thus encouraged to move in groups when coming to school or going home. Some male members within this community were thus accruing power and socially constructing dominant masculinities through violence. Along this line, Hearn (2006) argues that boys learn violence in the context of general male domination. One male participant from Mazitike indicated in his diary how he saw some big boys in his community subjecting a girl to an inappropriate touch. TK, the male participant had this to say.

> *I was at home and I saw big boys trying to impress the beautiful girl but she did not like them so they started to harass her by touching her buttocks and breasts and she screamed, "No, stop it!". I came and said I will call my uncle if you do not stop what you are doing. I was so scared because I was not with my uncle at that time.*

These boys may have thought that physical coercion amounts to affection. Boys may also use violence to maintain their patriarchal social relations within the school context as argued above, based on what they witness in their community.

While some boys could have been forming masculinities through this violent heterosexual approach some like TK were at variance with them. His views show that his uncle did not condone sexually violent behaviour. TK threatened the older boys harassing the girls by calling an older male member. TK is adopting the stance taken by many ant-GBV campaigns that say what boys and men should do. Boys and men should be part and parcel of the mission of bringing toxic masculinity to an end. Research has shown that men who become part of the intervention report less perpetration of IPV (see Redpath *et al* 2008). By calling an older male member to intervene it shows that there are some positive older role models. This also indicates different types of masculinities within the same school and community. There are alternative ways of being a boy as compared to the dominant violent ones. These alternative masculinities shown by TK and other boys in this study include being non-violent, non-sexist and not being homophobic. This is in line with other observations made in studies in the townships with teenage boys (see Langa 2020.

[5] SA term referring to low-lying, seasonal marshy patches covered with tall grass during the rainy season.

5.4 Expressing passion with 'style'?: Culture of violence

Some boys indicated that they had different ways of showing that they loved a girl, even by starting by beating her up as indicated by some male participants from Multiville Primary during a focus group discussion. Beating up a girlfriend is seen as a way of securing obedience and trying to elevate oneself in front of the peers (Sathiparsad, 2007). This behaviour of the boys creates a patriarchal dominance in the relationship. The following excerpt from a male focus group from Multiville Primary indicates the manifestation of sexual bullying in boy-girl relationships.

LC: Why actually do the boys want to bully the girls?

Big Junior: When a girl dumps a boy and the boy want to beat the girl.

LC: Okay? (probing for more).

Chris: Some want to shela[6] (express passion) with a style.

LC: (Raises eyebrows for clarity).

Sipho: Want to flirt.

Chris: Want to get the girl to be their girlfriend with a style.

LC: Ooh! By beating?

Chris: Yes, some of them date like that.

Zamokuhle: They force a girl to a relationship.

The views in this excerpt show that some boys want to maintain or use violence to be in a relationship. In most studies on older people around the world, in most societies men enact intimate partner violence (IPV) (Kimmel 2004; Hearn 2012). The actions of some of the boys in this study forms a continuum with the adult world in South Africa which indicates that many men use violence in their intimate relationships (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell & Dunkle 2009; Morrell *et al.* 2012; DSD, DWCPD & UNICEF 2012). The literature on IPV, including intimate femicide, shows South Africa has some of the highest figures in the world. The data from these boys show that men's violence against women is inculcated from a young age. Mathews & Benvenuti (2014) argue that teenage girls experience IPV early in life through dating relationships. The violence within the two township schools in this study thus is a reflection or an elaboration of the broader community as indicated by some boys and girls of Mazitike Primary on what happens in their community. The researcher can thus argue here

[6] Zulu term used by a boy to tell a girl that he has a passion for her or he loves her.

that the young boys in the townships of Ekurhuleni are using violence to construct and enforce a destructive and dehumanising masculinity.

Some boys try to control the girls' sexual feelings. By beating a girl when she no longer loves you as a boy, the boys will be coercing the girls to remain in the relationship. By slapping the girls whilst seeking 'love' the boys seem to be trying to instil fear so that in the relationship they can remain in a dominant position. The boys are trying to maintain their relationships also through threats and taking control of the social spaces of the girls. The boys are claiming to have powers to terminate a relationship a move which denies the girls the same powers in a relationship. The views of the boys in this study speak to the horrific incidences bedevilling South Africa at the moment.

On 17 June 2020, the President of South Africa Mr Cyril Ramaphosa spoke strongly about gender-based violence after many women had lost their lives at the hands of former partners and men known to them. The President proceeded to read the names of the young and old women who had been gruesomely murdered by men. He referred to the femicide as a 'second pandemic' affecting the country after COVID-19. Many women in South Africa are killed because they ended the heterosexual relationship with their killers. The President called upon the men of South Africa to wage a war against patriarchy. It is with this view that in this study the researcher argues that a gender lens informed by the construction of masculinity should be employed in bringing to an end gender-based violence starting with the young boys. The boys' violence is not driven by passion but the desire to maintain patriarchal dominance. Violence has become the culture of South Africa which needs to be dealt from boyhood. It is the criticalness of boys and men as a social unity and as individuals in the construction of masculinity that needs a concerted approach.

5.5 'Are you a man who beats a boy?' Play and physical violence

Physical violence in this section entails beating, kicking and taking by force items of the girls and young boys. Both male and female participants narrated during focus group discussions and wrote in their diaries how some boys physically abused girls and the small boys. Generally, most of the abuse was levelled against the girls. Manyike (2014) studying township high school learners in SA found out that while both boys and girls were being abused the rate of girls being abused was higher.

In this study both male and female participants indicated that boys played rough. During a focus group discussion with female participants from Mazitike Primary when the researcher

asked whether the girls liked to play with girls only or both boys and girls the following unfolded.

Patience: I like to play with girls only because when you are playing with boys, boys like to play rough like beating us or kicking us.

Promise: I like to play with girls only because boys are rough they can't play well with girls, they just kick them and talk with them the way they like to talk.

Another female participant from a different group but from the same school had this to say:

Goodness: I like to play with girls only because boys always abuse us when we play with them. They beat us and want us to listen to them every time.

The views of these three girls were shared by many other girls from Mazitike Primary. This shows that the homosocial play of girls as indicated in Chapter Four is in response to the rough play by the boys. To take control of the playing space and also maintain their homosocial masculinity the boys thus resorted to rough playing. Boys were trying to create a male identity through violently excluding girls from their play.

The rough play by the boys has something to do with social power and formation of masculinities. During a focus group discussion with male participants from Mazitike Primary when the researcher asked how boys showing that they are real boys affected girls, one participant was quick to say:

Sizwe: To show that you are a real boy you beat girls and that affects them.

Along the same line a female participant from Multiville Primary had the following to say during a focus group discussion:

LC: Can you tell me what is being done by the boys these days at school to show that they are boys?

Amogelang: Some boys in the school hit girls just to show their girlfriends what they are capable of and they also hit girls because they want to be seen cool at school.

Being a boy according to these participants revolves around violence. The views of Sizwe and Amogelang show that when boys beat girls they want to affirm their social identity through domination. The views of Sizwe also suggest that while the boys beat the girls to affirm their identity they are aware of how it affects the girls. The views of Amogelang also show that these boys abuse these girls to please their girlfriends. However, Keabetswe, arguing in the same focus group with Amogelang rejects that one can show that he is a real boy by beating girls.

Keabetswe: I don't think that is being a man by beating girls.

According to Keabetswe and the other girls, real boys must be smart and protect girls. A different female group from that of Keabetswe although from the same school, described how real boys must behave.

Mbali: A real boy must be a gentleman, must fight for girls and must never beat girls up.

Thando: They must act smart and not the other way round.

LC: In which way?

Thando: Smart in doing everything.

The views of a real boy by these girls is at variance with what some boys, mostly from Mazitike Primary, thought and behaved. The dominated group in this study did not accept and endorse the violent notions and acts of the dominant group. In most cases the girls opposed and challenged their domination. To these girls real boys should protect the girls by fighting for them and not abusing them. In related studies carried out with young men in the townships of South Africa real men were supposed to be providers and protectors (Mfecane 2005; Ratele 2016). The girls also pointed out that real boys were supposed to behave like gentleman by being careful, do the right things and be respectful. Some girls singled out some few boys who constructed masculinity in this positive or alternative way.

Girls were not the only ones physically bullied by some boys. Some older boys bullied the smaller boys. Some participants argued that they did this to impress their friends. Some younger boys did not accept their domination as they fought back. During a focus group discussion with male participants from Multiville Primary on bullying the following unfolded.

Big Junior: But me they don't bully me. They know me.

LC: What do you do to them?

Big Junior: I fight back.

Lesedi: This one (Laughter).

LC: What is Lesedi saying?

Lesedi: This one …He bullies me.

LC: Who?

Lesedi: Big Junior, everyday.

LC: Ooh, Big Junior! (lightening up the discussion).

Big Junior: No

Lesedi: He wants to impress his friends sir.

Big Junior: I don't have friends here at school sir. I just play with him.

The talk of Big Junior shows remorse. After the focus group discussion when I talked with them both it showed it was not something serious since Big Junior thought he was playing with him and also that Lesedi was quick to understand it. Along the same lines, one male participant from Multiville Primary wrote in his diary that a certain boy was caught red handed by a certain female teacher bullying them and the teacher threatened him and he became scared and that made the victims happy.

Shortage of essential resources leads to violent constructions of masculinity. Some boys use their power to demand and threaten girls and young boys for essentials such as money and food. This was reported mostly at Mazitike school by both male and female participants. One female participant from Mazitike Primary entered the following in her diary.

> *At school on Thursday Siya was telling me to give him my money and I said, "No, I am going to tell the principal because you want me to give you my money'. Siya said, "If you go and tell the principal I will show you the things that you have never seen in this world".*

Considering that Mazitike was made up of learners from poor backgrounds, Siya's actions could have been a result of poverty. In the context of social and economic disadvantages some boys at Mazitike Primary could have been using violence to acquire some essentials such as money and food for survival. Some boys in poverty can go to great lengths to prove their boyhood and maintain dominance over the girls and some weaker boys. The boys' power in this case becomes privileged in acquiring the scarce essentials of life. The food they get at school through NSNP could not be enough and the only hot meal they get in a day. This situation is in line with life in other township schools (see Bhana 2008).

The views of the participants above, however, show that the girls did not passively accept being bullied. They threatened to include the elders within the school in solving their abuse and domination. The inclusion of elders shows the unfolding of relations in an adult-controlled world among the learners within the school context.

Some older boys used their power to acquire essentials such as money and to manipulate class rules. A male participant from Multiville Primary called Zamani, in line with what has been discussed above indicated in his diary and also during a detailed individual discussion

how older boys treat the younger boys. During a detailed individual discussion this is what unfolded.

LC: In your diary did you write on how big boys threaten young boys?

Zamani: Yes, they threaten young boys.

LC: How do they threaten you boys?

Zamani: They see that they do not have power so they threaten them like demanding money. If they were talking in class, then the small boy wants to tell the teacher the big boys will tell them that they will beat them after school.

Some of these boys because of their physical power, will end up acquiring things they need from both boys and girls. The young boys and girls due to fear may end up not reporting the abuse to elders. This male participant also indicated that even if the older boys make a noise in class the young boys cannot tell the teacher because they will threaten them that they will beat them after school. When I asked him how they treated the girls he had this to say:

Zamani: They treat the girls the same way they treat the small boys because they think that they are the bo::sses of the school.

These boys were thus maintaining their dominance through instilling fear. Physical power is important in building social power. These boys consider themselves the dominating power at the school. The patriarchal dominance of this group of boys was curtailed by the inclusion of the adults at times as reported by some participants.

Social class played a role in the formation of violent masculinities. Lack of food could have been making some boys violent in order to get what they did not have as the researcher argued above, which is food in this case. However, those who could manage to bring money and food could buy their protection or control violence. Young boys were asked to give their food to the older boys in exchange of protection when they go home. One of the male participants had this to say during a focus group discussion.

Modecai: The big boys bully them; they say … as Suarez was saying they take younger boys' food. They usually say to them … they will protect them in the streets or anywhere so the boys don't report to the teachers.

Poverty results in the creation of certain identities among the older boys. Morrell and Makhaye (2006) arguing on poverty and masculinity in South Africa point out that lack of resources leads to the construction of violent masculinities. These views relate to the intersection of gender and age which will be addressed in Chapter Six.

Some boys did not accept equality with girls during play. Female participants from Mazitike Primary indicated during a focus group discussion how boys became violent when defeated by the girls. Being defeated by the girls indicates a crisis in the patriarchal dominance of boys resulting in violence against the girls. A female participant from Mazitike Primary pointed out during a focus group discussion that if they play soccer with the boys and they beat them they become angry and end up not playing with the girls.

> Dineo: If you are playing soccer with the boys and you score more goals than them the boys get angry. They say they don't play soccer with girls. Some girls are good in soccer.

Being defeated by the girls exposes them and compromises their patriarchal dominance. Since some girls are good in soccer this will expose the boys' stereotype that girls cannot play soccer. The boys will thus create boundaries to protect their patriarchal dominance as the researcher argued in Chapter Four. Therefore, the gender order that is being created through these practices also attempts to confine girls into specific femininities which are passive and physically weak. This speaks to the researcher's earlier discussion above about the positioning of femininity in a certain way. Trying to exclude girls from soccer shows an intricate manoeuvre in which femininity is actively limited to certain practices, which as a composite is inferiorised.

Some girls from Mazitike Primary also liked playing the prohibited game of spinning[7] together with the boys. This game is normally played by the boys only. A girl called Nosipho complained that when a girl wins whilst gambling some boys normally want to take the girls' money by force. The boys were trying to gate keep the game for themselves to avoid competition with girls. Being defeated by the girls exposes the boys' patriarchal dominance. The boys gambled for heterosexual gains as they wanted to be providers to their girlfiends when they win.

The boys did not tolerate challenge or competition from girls lightly. The reseaarcher asked the female participants during a focus group discussion what happens if the girls beat the boys in class since in his experience as a teacher in most cases girls at primary level are dominating the boys and the following discussion unfolded.

[7] A game of gambling in which one spins a coin and covers it with his/her palm and the other one guesses whether the part of the coin facing upwards is heads or tails. If you guess correctly, you win.

LC: If you beat the boys in class what do they do?

Dineo: They call you with names you don't like. They ask you if you are a man who beats a boy. They ask what type of a girl you are. They ask you if you do exercises since you have big calves. They tell you that you have the structure of a man.

LC: So they say many things like that because in class you are better than them?

Girls: Yes (in unison).

Goodness: Some boys ask you to help them, if you don't want they take your books and copy the answers then they end up saying you are the one who copied them.

Nosipho: Some they steal your books.

LC: And what do they do with the books?

Girl: They through them away.

Girl: They copy your answers.

LC: How do you feel as girls with this type of behaviour of boys?

Goodness: I feel like they are humiliating girls.

Dineo: I feel like they abuse us because they also talk behind us.

Girl: Some girls we feel sad and unhappy.

Elisa: You end up confusing yourself. You can't understand, you can't concentrate.

The views of the girls here show that boys turn to bullying when they lose control. Some boys within these schools are patriarchal and they want to be in control of everything but now their dominance is under threat so they are resorting to violence. They feel their powers have been eroded and thus they question what type of girls equal or dominate boys. The way Dineo puts it shows boys can only accept dominance from men and not girls. They end up teasing a girl saying that she looks like a man. This is all meant to inferiorise the girls and accept domination. Due to the fact that most girls outwit some boys in class at Mazitike Primary, boys resort to taking the girls books by force. Precious, a female participant from Mazitike Primary pointed out during a focus group discussion that most boys do not do their homework and that their marks were generally lower than those of girls. However, she pointed out that she did not actually know if the boys were taking revenge outside. From the view of other girls, however, it shows the only tool available to claim their dominance over girls is violence. The actions of the boys suggest that the hierarchy of gender power is under threat and is undergoing crisis transformation. These findings are in line with findings

elsewhere although in different contexts and age groups (see Epstein *et al* 2001; Groes-Green 2009).

The way the boys try to maintain their dominance is by creating a negative impression on girls. The girls above indicated that they feel humiliated, abused and confused. They end up not concentrating in class thinking how these boys treat them. Their learning process is also undermined as their books are forcefully taken away or stolen from them. Boys still want to maintain a superior status by undermining the girls. Bullying in this case is enacted to reduce the power of the girls. This may also be a reflection of the communities where these boys come from since schools are microcosms of their communities. The way boys at Mazitike Primary are violent can be aligned to the views of Manyike (2014) that the poverty in townships contributes to their higher violence rate within the townships and their schools. However, the violence within Mazitike Primary was also power parity motivated. The conflation of poverty and patriarchy are resulting in the construction of violent masculinities.

In maintaining their gender boundaries, the boys at times did not use kind words. Animal names were used on girls to keep them away from the boys' play.

5.6 'Even if you are scared of him, if you see a girl you stand up': Bravery bravado

Fearlessness is an internalised version of masculinity among some young boys. Ratele (2016b) arguing on masculinities and violence points out that fearlessness is a compelling act of manhood that many boys grow up to internalise. Fronting fearlessness masculinity, however, may result in injury. The desire for boys to portray themselves as fearless in the presence of girls in this study to draw the attention of the girls showed some dire consequences. During a focus group discussion one of the boys from Multiville Primary had this to say.

> Chris: Even if you are scared of another person or a big boy, and a big boy comes and say you small boy even if you know you are scared of him and you see a girl passing and you have a crush on her you stand up and say what are you saying … but you may come up with a black eye.

The views of Chris show the courage real boys have in the presence of a girl they love. They are also trying to show that in the presence of danger to the girl they should be able to protect her. These views conform to the black African traditional ways that advocated for a real man to be strong and fearless in order to provide and protect his family or girlfriend (see Mfecane

et al 2005). According to Chris, a real boy can stand up to the challenges even if he knows that his strength does not match that of the older boy. This "is more likely to be a defensive mask intended to communicate to others a lack of fear, a façade of bravado …" (Ratele 2016b: 50) even if one is afraid deep down. These boys could have been socialised into these toxic ideas by the elders in their communities and were now role playing them at school. However, as argued by Connell that children are not passive recipients of the socialisation process this could also have been a way of socially forming their masculinities. Fearlessness is at the root of boys' behaviour who are always ready for a fight and injury. This points to fighting prowess which is considered by some boys as a way of gaining status among peers and girls. This is in line with other research on construction of masculinities (see Swain 2003; Hamlall & Morrell 2012).

In this study in both schools fighting was found to be a way of showing that one is a real boy. Both boys and girls were reported to be involved in fights but mostly the boys initiated the fights. In this study a fight is a physically violent way of defending one's self or a violent way of trying to resolve a dispute or a violent way of showing the hard stuff of boyhood. The fights were mostly caused by boys trying to show that they were the 'bosses' of the school, engaging in illegal acts at the school, fighting for shortage of resources and by boys trying to prove to girls that they were real boys by having multiple girlfriends.

Some boys as they engage with each other at school at times want to prove to each other how strong they are. Strength is an attribute of masculinity (see Bhana 2008). Ratele (2016b) points out that physical fights erupt between individuals or groups of males to show one another who embodies the hard stuff of manhood. The following excerpt came from a focus group discussion with male participants from Multiville Primary.

LC: How do boys behave here at school to show that they are real boys and not girls?

Zamani: The big boys bully the small boys and *they like to be in fights so they can show their strength* (My emphasis).

Answering the same question, a female participant from the same school had this to say.

Amogelang: They show that they are real boys by acting strong, and they also like to tease others because they know they will end up fighting then they will show they are real boys.

The views of these two participants show that the ability to fight brings with it a status.

Some boys verbally tease others so that they can fight to show that they are real boys. Teasing was a vehicle used to provoke a fight. Some 'straight boys' teased boys who showed 'feminine' behaviour by calling them names. Girls were not spared by these boys as they were often considered weak and soft. Those who were somewhat masculine were teased since they did not conform to femininity a category which would qualify them to be dominated.

Boys also indicated that some boys engaged in fights to show who is the best fighter or who beats all the learners at school. These boys try to show their fighting prowess so as to have access to the girls. This could be explained by some scholars through the evolutionary theory of homosocial competition (see Kimmel 2004). In this theory male violence is regarded as a result of an evolutionary competition for sexual access to females. Along the same lines a boy at Multivalle Primary had this to say during a focus group discussion.

Lesedi: Some girls like the boys who beat the whole school. Like (name withheld) all the girls love him.

LC: But why do you think they like boys who can fight.

Lesedi: To protect them.

The vews of Lesedi were also echoed by other boys from Mazitike Primary during a focus group discussion. They pointed out that girls liked boys who were able to fight so that they can protect them when they are bullied by other learners. These views show that while girls disliked the violence perpetrated against them they found refuge in it. To be in complicity with the violent boys could be one of the strategies by some girls to survive in a violent environment.

Big Junior: If they see a boy being able to handle the pain they say you are man enough and gonna date you. They know that when someone wants to beat them you gonna stand and protect them.

Chris: A girl wants a man that is strong that when someone is pulling her you can say l don't want anyone to pull her [I don't want anyone to abuse her].

The views of these boys suggest that some girls love boys who are able to fight and endure pain. It is also imperative to note that these views are coming from minds that understand their communities to be marred with violence. Suffering pain as indicated by Big Junior above is seen as masculine. One boy from Multiville Primary even pointed out during a focus group discussion that most boys liked to play soccer because they do exercises which make them have "six pack and stuff like that" which was loved by the girls. The view of having an

ideal masculine body; “six pack and big muscles”, due to playing sport is in line with what was also observed in another study in South Africa among eight and nine-year-old boys (Bhana 2008). Having a muscular body denotes strength, hardness, sporting prowess, power and domination. However, in this study it went beyond all this to developing a heterosexual male body loved by the girls. Having well developed abdominal muscles is a sign of strength and that one can be able to protect a girlfriend. Sipho, a male participant from Multiville Primary pointed out during a focus group discussion that a real boy “must be brave and you must have a girlfriend and you must fight for your girlfriend”. Girls may need boys who are strong to protect them from bullies and abusers. Boys were thus adopting different strategies to express their passion to the girls and to accrue status by having a girlfriend or girlfriends.

While violence is the most obdurate behaviour among some boys and acknowledged by some girls, it is not the only form of boy identity. Some male participants argued that some girls did not only look at your fighting prowess but also your behaviour.

Zergo: But not all girls love the boys who are strong. Some girls look how your behaviour is. You can be strong but your behaviour not good you will be failing.

Neo: Some girls do not like boys who bully other boys.

The views of Zergo and Neo show dissenting masculinity. It shows that not only violent masculinities are hailed in this society. Most girls and some boys in this study from both schools while they witnessed and experienced violence they cast aspersion on all forms of violent masculinities.

Violence normally erupts within a context of conflict. Some conflicts erupted from gambling at Mazitike Primary. During a focus group discussion by female participants when the researcher asked about the games played by the boys the following discussion unfolded.

Thembi: The games that boys play its gambling, just like spinning which is not allowed at school.

LC: Playing with money?

Girls: Yes!

Thembi: Then they start to fight.

LC: Do they fight with girls or among themselves?

Thembi: All of them boys and girls.

LC: Do girls also join in the gambling?

Girls: Yes, but mostly boys.

Some participants also from Mazitike Primary entered in their diaries how fights erupted at the school as a result of boys gambling.

Although gambling is done by both boys and girls, more boys than girls were involved in it. Boys may be influenced by their elder brothers into playing this game. Normally when the researcher moves in the streets of Ekurhuleni Townships he sees young men gathered along the streets gambling. This speaks to the socio-economic conditions of the setting of this school. One female participant from Mazitike Primary pointed out that most boys did not like to be beaten by the girls in the game. Some when beaten by the girls would demand their money back. Boys were thus resorting to the use of physical power to keep on dominating and oppressing the girls. Boys were also always fighting amongst themselves during gambling. This is important because it again questions illicit behaviour of dominant masculinity being seen as rule-breaking or not accountable to structures of the school. To the boys it may be a way of displaying a form of masculinity. In this study the researcher thus wishes to argue that "it is constructions and displays of masculinity which have the greatest bearing on whether physical violence (a fight) erupts or not" (Hamlalla & Morrell 2012).

Some boys may resort to anti-educational systems to draw attention to themselves. Some boys at Mazitike Primary were reported not to attend lessons because of gambling. These boys were reported to be seeking attention by doing so. These boys are reported to enjoy being punished for not attending class for they believed it made them 'cool'. TK a male research participant at Mazitike Primary indicated the following in his diary:

> *Some boys annoy me, they want attention and bullying. Sometimes I saw two boys gambling and they did not come to class after break time so Mrs Pebetse chased them out of the class. They wanted to just to be liked by girls but other girls they think that is not cool at all they want a boy that likes school and wants to have a better future; big houses, nice cars but stupid boys think gambling not attending classes being punished everyday is cool. I believe that girls think better than boys, boys are just like to be given full attention and that is not cool.*

Some boys according to TK do wrong things like gambling, not attending classes and get punished so that they are liked by the girls. These boys believe to be a real boy you must be involved in issues that draw the attention of other people. These boys wanted to acquire girlfriends through doing naughty things. In a research with high school boys in Alexandra township in SA some boys became popular by disrespecting teachers and some girls were proud of them (Langa 2010). In this study it is reported that some girls liked boys who did

not do their class work. While there is a certain group of girls that are attracted by this behaviour, TK points out that some girls want boys who like school and have a bright future. By calling these boys stupid Tk is aligning himself with a group of boys and girls who like school. TK falls into the group Langa called 'academic boys'. These boys had strategies to maintain alternative masculinities. To him being a real boy means doing your school work so as to have a better future. He fantasises about the academic boys having nice houses and cars after leaving school. These are the boys he feels must be liked by the girls although he recognises that some girls like the naughty boys.

TK's positive form of masculinity is possibly shaped by his family and the public media. In one of his other diary entries he pointed out that he was seated with his family watching TV and he saw an advert that indicated that if one abuses a woman he will be arrested. He proceeds in that diary entry that some men are "not man enough to fight their battles and they abuse women to drown their sorrows". His views suggest that there are other nonviolent ways of constructing masculinity. As he watches TV with his family they also talk about those issues. The fact that he lived with his single mother and that they watched TV together and discussed topics on gender violence may have influenced his construction of masculinity. His family background was thus playing a pivotal role in his imagination and on how he portrayed himself as a 'cool' boy.

During a focus group with male participants from Multiville Primary it was also observed that while the naughty boys bullied other learners and stole from the teachers they were appreciated by some girls. When the researcher asked the reasons behind this the following discussion unfolded.

LC: Why do girls like these boys?

Zamani: Because they have money.

This suggests a resource-scarce context where different modes of socio-economic survival are pursued by the girls. The views of Zamani show the intersection of gender and class which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

A case of violence is repeatedly used to resolve any kind of conflict. Shortage of resources leads to violence. One female participant from Mazitike Primary entered in her diary how violence erupted in their class when one boy found his chair taken by another learner. This is the entry:

There is a boy in our class who always thinks he is strong and can beat anyone even our parents. It was Friday when the boy came late to school and found his chair not there. He started to ask for his chair. No one answered him but his friend answered him. He said it was the girl who was seated at the back row 1. This boy wanted to take the chair but this girl didn't agree so he wanted to fight with the girl. The class representatives ran to call the yard cleaner and he came and separated the fight. This boy wanted to fight with the cleaner and the cleaner told him he will show him how to fight with men not younger boys and girls….

Fights of this nature are common in most township schools which do not have enough furniture. Township life is normally riddled with violence because of scarce resources (see Mampane & Bouwer 2011; Manyike 2014). To these learners violence is the option to solve conflicts.

As a teacher at a township primary school the researcher also experiences these fights nearly on a weekly basis due to shortage of furniture at the school. Mostly the fights will degenerate into boys versus girls. Boys normally support another boy and girls will support a girl. Boys will be pulling from one side while girls will be pulling from the other side. This shows solidarity along gender lines.

The scenario of the above girl trying to put on a fight with the boy is not an isolated story. Another girl from the same school wrote in her diary that she had a fight with a boy because the boy always argues with other learners. The fight by the girls shows that they are not accepting the domination from the boys passively. They are trying to protect themselves and also fighting against their domination. This is an indication that in a violent setting, victims also sometimes respond with violence, because there is no other recourse. Where the school discipline is failing to solve disputes victims find survival strategies. This links with the teachers' complicity in the gender violence discussed earlier on.

5.7 Ungithathele indoda[8]: Fighting over partners

Girl-on-girl violence in response to heteropatriachal masculinity is an area that has not been critically attended to. Fighting amongst the girls in this study showed violent ways of solving heterosexual disputes. The fights by the girls were in response to the boys' desire to be

[8] It is a Zulu phrase meaning you have taken my man

labelled ‘cool’ by having many girlfriends. Girls from Multiville Primary during a focus group discussion pointed out that girls normally fight for boyfriends at their school.

Keabetswe: There are always fights here at school but its mostly girls.

LC: Girls fighting?

Keabetswe: Yes, because of boys. Some say UNGITHATHELE INDODA, UNGITHATHELE INDODA (YOU HAVE TAKEN MY MAN, YOU HAVE TAKEN MY MAN) and then they fight after school.

One female participant while explaining what it means to be a real boy wrote in her diary that boys use girls by dating and dumping them. She pointed out that boys show off in everything they do. She also pointed out in her diary that boys fight and hurt each other for girls. Another female participant from Multiville Primary also indicated in her diary that she witnessed two boys at school fighting over a beautiful girl. One male participant from Mazitike Primary indicated in his diary that he slapped a certain boy who was forcing his girlfriend to be in a relationship with him. The use of violence by this boy to defend a girl shows an inner life which is in contradiction with his public life. During group discussions he always talked about ‘real’ boys not being violent. The contradiction here is that he actually used violence to defend a girl. This shows how the boys are caught up in violence, also to try and act in defence of girls.

The female participant indicated that real boys were supposed to behave like gentlemen. The construct of the ‘gentleman’ underlines gender differentiation. She proceeded, however, to involve the parents in bringing gender equality. In her own words she says:

“…parents should teach their sons not to fight with girls and some other parents should also teach their daughters to also fight back”.

However, while she wants the boys to stop the violence she proposes that if they don’t, the girls must also be taught to retaliate.

5.8 ‘He has a gang and everyone is scared of him’: Gang- related violence

Violence within the community can be a result of gangs. These gangs can also influence the creation of gangs within the school context by certain groups of boys. Gangs within the school adopt bravery bravado and prop up fighting prowess, a masculine identity. According to the Department of Social Development, Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities and UNICEF (DSD, DWCPD & UNICEF) (2012) children as young as 11 or 12 years can be involved in gang activities within the school context. Some learners are caught

up in gang violence as innocent victims. Gangs provide a powerful source of norms and gender identity. Elements of gangsterism were reported at both schools by some of the participants.

Gangsterism and enactment of power in the social creation of a gender identity among the coloured boys at Multiville Primary was evident. Gangsters within the school had territories in which they operated. In an excerpt in Chapter Six on race and violence, Mxolisi, a black African male research participant points out that if one passes in the territory of the gang wearing expensive clothes he can be attacked. Gangsterism is associated with crime and violence (Anderson 2009; Chen *et al* 2019).

Crime and violence could be ways through which young boys do gender (see Butler 1993 on young men). The attack is racialised as one of the male participants indicated that coloured boys attacked the black African and the Indian boys. By attacking other boys of other races they may have been trying to ascertain and exalt their violent dominant masculinity. By so doing the coloured boys were exhibiting bravery bravado and propping up their fighting prowess. However, some of the black African boys pointed out that they did not accept the domination as they fought back. Individual black African boys by standing up to the coloured gangs were showing fearlessness in the face of danger. They were trying to put on a brave face as pointed out by Chris above although within they may have been gripped by fear. The researcher will come back to racialised violence when addressing the issue of masculinities and other social categories of difference in Chapter Six.

Gender gang-related violence seemed to affect girls more than boys at Mazitike Primary. Dineo, a female participant from Mazitike Primary recorded in her diary that boys in her class always wanted to touch girls where they did not like to be touched. Thembi, a female participant also at Mazitike Primary entered the following in her diary:

> *Today another boy was busy touching another girl called Pebby because Pebby is a shy and quiet girl in class. I think that boy was taking advantage of her because she is quiet and that boy has a gang of gangsters and everyone is scared of him so am I.*

Bianca, another female participant from the same school entered in her diary that:

> *There are two big boys today from my class who were touching a girl where she does not want. When she wanted to tell the principal they threatened her. I felt bad because the boys abuse us girls by touching us where we don't like.*

The girls did not tell the teachers in fear of retribution from the boys and their gangs. In similar cases in some research it has been argued that some learners are afraid to report an act

of aggression committed by one gang member for doing so would mean dealing with the entire gang (see Thompkins 2000; De Wet 2003; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya 2014).

The girls from this school as indicated in the diaries of the two girls did not report the abuse. Gangs thus provide security to the gang members to abuse girls and other boys without being reported to the elders. As indicated by Chris earlier on there are the boys 'proposing with a style'? Can touching girls without their consent be regarded as a strategy for proposing to a girl? While boys always use these strategies and they go unreported due to fear or acceptance or normalising the situation by some girls it borders on violence and abuse of the female body, their social space and dehumanising as indicated by Precious earlier on. Precious pointed out that she doesn't feel comfortable being touched on some parts of her body by boys in front of other children. The domination of the female bodies by some of the boys is leading to gender-based violence and femicide in the adult world where men are the perpetrators and women the victims.

While gangs are an international phenomenon, schools with gangsters are believed to have high violence rates (Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya 2014). Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya continue to argue that gang violence is born out of need and socially disadvantaged situations. This could have been the reason why there was a higher rate of violence at Mazitike Primary than at Multiville Primary. In other research projects carried out in the townships although with young men it shows that real men must belong to a gang (Sauls 2005).

Gangs help some boys learn some survival tactics within certain contexts. Some boys at Mazitike Primary formed gangs to get what they wanted and to maintain dominance over some girls and some boys. These boys could have been learning this type of behaviour from their community as some boys repeatedly pointed out that they always saw big boys touching girls in their communities. TK in section 5.2 pointed how he saw some big boys touching a certain girl when he was at home and how he threatened them by calling his uncle. Since some boys learn this behaviour from the community, gangs in schools should be regarded as a community problem since schools are part of the community and they reflect the problems of the community (see Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya 2014). The way TK is positioning himself on the other hand against these boys shows that not all boys construct masculinity through violent means or belonging to a gang within the township schools. When we speak of boys and men within a certain context being violent "we must not therefore slide to the

inference that all men are violent" (Connell 2000:22). Thus some masculinities are nonviolent.

5.9 Defying authority and disciplinary practices within schools

Morrell (2001c: 143) drawing inspiration from various scholars argues that, "particular disciplinary regimes are implicated in particular types of gender relations and identities that emerge in schools". While Morrell was referring mostly to corporal punishment the statement has relevance to different types of punishment or lack thereof.

At both schools in this study especially at Mazitike Primary boys were ill-disciplined. The bad behaviour of the boys in this environment could be construed as seeking attention and identity. Some boys in this study enacted masculinity through breaking rules and disrespecting teachers. This section looks at different forms of discipline by the teachers at both schools and tries to link it to the violence taking place at the schools in general and the formation of young masculinities in particular. Educators' methods of disciplining the boys seemed not to be working. The forms of discipline ranged from ordering learners to clean the classrooms, detaining them and to involving parents to help with the disciplining of their children. Boys disrespected teachers thereby disturbing the learning process. Disrespect to authority was mainly shown through making a noise in class, not doing homework, bunking lessons and being rude to teachers. In this section the researcher looks at disciplinary practices, disrespecting authority and its impact on gender relations.

By disciplinary practices in this study the researcher refers to the totality of ways and systems used by the two primary schools to correct the behaviour of the learners. Disrespecting authority entails not paying heed to the disciplinary practices adopted by schools and not following school rules and polices. Male participants from Mazitike Primary pointed out that the teachers at times told them to move from one classroom to the other picking up paper or to remain after school cleaning the classrooms. Sometimes they were told to leave the class if they kept on disrupting the teaching and learning process. At Multiville Primary the research participants pointed out they were detained after school if they were naughty. One female participant pointed out that during detention they will be asked to finish their school work. Like at Mazitike Primary learners at Multiville Primary were also asked to clean their classrooms as punishment. However, at both schools boys did not like cleaning complaining that it was girls' work.

While teachers are prohibited by law to use corporal punishment some learners thought the teachers feared arrest. One male participant from Mazitike Primary pointed out that some teachers were afraid to beat the learners because the learners threatened them with arrest. This suggests there could have been teachers who were still tempted to use it or were threatening the learners through using corporal punishment. However, no teacher was singled out to be still using this form of illegal punishment. Since teachers were not using violent means of disciplining learners which some boys could have been accustomed to some were taking advantage of its absence (see Masitsa 2008). The following excerpt on the non-use of corporal punishment unfolded during a detailed individual interview when the researcher was discussing how learners were disciplined or punished by their teachers.

LC: Are there some teachers who beat you if you are behaving in a bad way?

Sidi: They are scared because there are other children who are threatening teachers to say we gona .. sizokubopisa (we will get you arrested) sir.

LC: So teachers don't beat you.

Sidi: Yes

At both schools the SGB and the parents were also involved in disciplining the learners. Both male and female participants pointed out that at times the schools wrote letters summoning some parents to school. However, some parents especially at Mazitike Primary did not honour their invites to the school. During a focus group discussion on the ill-discipline of learners at Mazitike Primary the following unfolded.

LC: What do teachers do when learners disrespect them?

Precious: They just call their parents.

Bianca: They call their parents and their parents don't come to school.

LC: So what do they do when their parents don't come?

Precious: But others when their parents refuse to come they take you to the School Governing Body (SGB) committee.

She proceeded to point out that the SGB can decide whether to suspend the learner or not. However, after all the disciplinary measures implemented by the teachers in the two schools especially at Mazitike this did not deter the boys from continuing the violent and attention-seeking behaviour. The boys could have been disruptive in class knowing that teachers did not have effective methods of disciplining them. This suggests the schools are not aware of how the boys construct their identities which could be a solution to their disciplinary strategies. Even in the adult world in South Africa the rate of violence is increasing amid

offenders being arrested and sentenced to long periods in jail. The solution could be through building alternative and non-violent masculinities in young boys so that when they grow up they don't solve problems through violent means.

While different approaches were used to discipline the learners, in the eyes of some boys they seemed more lenient on girls than on boys. The disciplinary measures implemented by some teachers could thus also have contributed in perpetuating dominant patriarchal masculinities. The male participants complained that the teachers favoured the girls during detention. The following discussion unfolded during a focus group discussion with one of the groups for the boys at Multiville Primary:

Zamani: When there is detention they (teachers) send the girls first.

LC: The boys are detained for more time than the girls?

Zamani: Yes

Sipho: I think the teachers like the girls more than the boys because everything bad Ma'am

Sibongile says it has been done by the boys.

During a focus group discussion with a different group from the same school the following was said:

Big Junior: The boys are detained for nothing… the teachers want to impress the girls.

However, when the researcher asked him why the teachers should favour the girls he did not have a proper reason he kept on pointing out that they wanted to impress the girls. One male participant pointed out that more boys than girls were given suspension cards. This could have been caused by the fact that more boys misbehaved than girls. The boys pointed out that most teachers complained that boys always made more noise as compared to the girls. By detaining boys for longer hours the teachers were creating a situation whereby boys were considered stronger than girls and could withstand the pain. The teachers' treatment of the boys contributed in creating a male identity which would lead to the continued domination of the girls.

Most research participants from both Mazitike Primary and Multiville Primary pointed that some boys were highly disrespectful to the teachers and this impacted on their learning. As the researcher argued above, this was more prevalent at Mazitike Primary. Some boys at Mazitike Primary mostly disrespected teachers by making a noise in class, teasing other learners or laughing at a teacher when he or she is teaching, dodging cleaning, argueing and

scolding teachers. The following discussion unfolded when the researcher asked some male research participants on what it meant to be a real boy:

LC: How do boys behave at school to show that they are boys and not girls?

Cabashe: They disrespect teachers.

LC: In which way?

Cabashe: They tease another child when reading.

Modecai: Some laugh at the teacher when he is teaching.

Answering the same question one female participant had this to say.

Bianca: They don't respect the teachers. They are ridiculing the teacher. They give them many nicknames, they disrespect them, they show them that they are different from girls who do not know how to disrespect.

The responses of these male and female participants from Mazitike Primary indicate formation of a male identity through disruptive behaviour. Hamlall & Morrell (2012) point out that disruptive behaviour in schools by the boys is related to the social construction of masculinity. Boys did not like to behave like girls. They disrespected the teachers so as to be different from girls. Teachers are people in authority and some of these boys were defying authority so as to be different from the girls.

Answering the same question another group of female participants from the same school pointed out that when teachers tell some of the boys to stop what they will be doing they answer the teachers back. One female participant during a focus group discussion pointed out that some even tell the teachers that they cannot tell them to be quiet since they were not part of their families. There is one male teacher from Mazitike Primary whom all participants both boys and girls pointed out was disrespected by most boys. They said when he starts to talk in class the boys will start to laugh at him. Some boys were reported to be always laughing at him saying he had a bald head that shone. One female participant pointed out that everytime this teacher came into their class the boys pushed their desks to make noise. The teacher is reported to have tried to discipline them and also take the leading boys to the office without any success. This also shows that at Mazitike bullying was not only between learners but that teachers were also victims. This is in line with what was observed in other studies in South Africa although with learners at high school (see Mncube & Harber 2013). All the participants pointed out that one of the Grade 7 classes was even suspended for a day for disrespecting this teacher. They were all requested to bring their parents before being

admitted back in class. During a detailed individual interview one female participant explained what led to their suspension and how they felt as girls.

LC: Why was your class suspended?

Precious: Because of um (3) boys in our class were so disrespectful e-e they called another teacher with nasty words.

LC: Why do they call that teacher like that?

Precious: Its because they always say this teacher is silly.

LC: Does he beat learners?

Precious: No

LC: So the whole class was suspended?

Precious: Yes

LC: What happened when you were suspended?

Precious: They said we should bring our parents.

LC: How did you feel about being suspended because of the boys?

Precious: … Eish… we didn't do anything it's only the boys.

LC: Were they the boys only or the whole class that was suspended?

Precious: It was the whole class but it was the boys who did it.

LC: So why didn't you tell the principal that it was the boys or so and so?

Precious: We were scared

LC: Of the boys?

Precious: Yes

LC: Are these the older boys or the younger boys?

Precious: Both old and young.

Precious also narrated this in her diary and pointed out that it was hurtful because they had not done anything. Boys at this school always threatened the girls with beating after school if they reported to the teachers. One female participant pointed out that they wanted to tell the principal about the boys being responsible but they were afraid that after school they would beat them. This behaviour by the boys defeated the view that in the classroom teachers assert power and authority in all activities that take place there (Mayeza 2017). This group of boys were thus controlling the school through this dimension of counter-school culture. These boys maintained their patriarchal gender order of dominance over the girls through threats and defying authority. Both young and older boys acted in solidarity in challenging authority. In solidarity there is power. The whole class was suspended but not even a single girl named the leaders of the violent act.

The rebel masculinity constructed by the boys is thus strengthened through homosociality. The behaviour of these boys is what Connell would refer to as 'protest masculinity'. This type of masculinity is constructed through defiance of authority (Connell 1996). Connell argues that boys engaging in this behavior are not driven by hormones but by the desire to acquire or defend prestige and also to create a difference. This indicates a vigorous response of the boys to their situation. Mazitike Primary as the researcher indicated in Chapter Three was engulfed in poverty and these boys could have been lacking other resources to construct alternative masculinities. The researcher can thus argue here that "rule-breaking becomes central to the making of masculinity when boys lack other resources for gaining these ends [prestige, difference and pleasure]" (Connell 1996:220).

The suspension of the whole class has an impact on gender. It has created an unchallenged patriarchal structure of gender relations. The boys were the ones who disrespected the teacher but the whole class was suspended because the girls were afraid to point out that the boys did it. While the girls felt it was not fair, boys worked together to affirm their gender power as a gender category. While the younger boys are oppressed at times by the big boys this time they worked together and made sure the girls did not report them. The boys in this case enjoyed their social power as a gender category. This is what Connell refers to as hierarchical dividend. The male gender category thus placed itself above the female gender category.

Boys, as indicated by one of the female participants always want to draw attention to themselves. These views were shared by many other boys and girls from this school. These boys will always want to draw the attention of the whole class so that the whole class will end up laughing at the teacher. To the boys teasing other learners while reading and laughing at the teacher sets them apart from girls. Along these lines one male participant pointed out that some boys liked arguing with the teachers and did not listen to them while they are teaching. Many girls also complained that considerable learning time was wasted by teachers telling boys to be quiet in class.

As at Mazitike Primary the researcher asked male and female participants at Multiville Primary to explain the behaviour by boys that sets them apart from girls and the issue of disrespect came up. However, the boys at Multiville pointed out that some of the boys did that to seek the attention of the girls.

Chris: Some boys will corrupt the teachers to make the girl look at him and they say it's cool and the girl can say he can stand up for himself.

Zeergo: Some girls like what the boys do in class when they start bothering the teachers. The boys start making jokes and the girls laugh.

Chris pointed out during the focus group discussion that these boys disrespect the teachers by answering back in a rude way when they are called to order. Another girl also highlighted the rude way some boys answer questions asked by teachers. These boys are challenging the teachers to win the hearts of the girls. These boys are of the opinion that girls like boys who are brave and possibly can protect them when they are under threat. The ability to protect your girlfriend is the characteristic of being a real boy. By challenging the teachers these boys are trying to show the girls how fearless they are. The formation of heterosexual masculinity is at the root of challenging authority. Boys want to acquire girlfriends through bravery bravado. However, this bravary bravado formation of heterosexual masculinity also disturbs the teaching and the learning process.

Some boys form masculinities by seeking attention. By making jokes boys will be drawing attention to themselves. Boys understand that girls like to laugh so they will be trying to capture their attention through jokes as highlighted by some male participants. However, as girls have stated the learning and the teaching process is disturbed.

While boys from both schools disrespected authority it was worse at Mazitike Primary. At Mazitike when some parents were requested to come to school pertaining to the behaviour of their children they never went to the school. At Multiville Primary the discipline was better as most parents turned up at the school when requested to do so. The non-compliance by some parents of Mazitike learners indicates the type of social environment the school was located in: poverty stricken. Their non-compliance could be regarded as endorsing the dominant patriarchal power of their sons.

In conclusion, in this chapter the researcher has argued that violence is monopolised by boys as perpetrators and constitutes male identity and is a primary mode of masculinity. Violence in the social formation of young masculinities is thus not a means to a pre-existing end but constitutes gender relations. As observed in this chapter violence tends to support gender-based hierarchies. It is adopted and used by some boys to create and uphold unequal relations between males and females as social groups. Gender violence within the schools is thus an obstacle in achieving gender equality within the education system in SA. Township primary schools as observed in this chapter are key sites for the construction and reconstruction of gender-based violence.

Power relations in this study are manifested through sexual bullying, creation of gender boundaries, fighting prowess and disrespecting authority. Lack of resources also results in the construction of violent masculinities within the school context. Power relations are thus informed by the boys' desire to form male identity. In this study the researcher thus argues that it is imperative to understand violence as an analytical construct in the formation of masculinity among young boys and girls. The school terrain is thus an important site for the social construction of young masculinities through gendered violence.

Some girls challenged their domination by fighting back and also involved some adults at home and school. While there were dominant violent practices some boys constructed masculinities through non-violent means. It is thus imperative to help all learners construct masculinities not based on sexual entitlement and violence. There are thus different masculinities within the same place at the same period of time. The communities and the families that learners come from play an important role in informing the way they construct masculinities. The violence that typifies the gender relations within the school needs to be located in the community and institutional culture and social norms. However, violence in the formation of masculinity can also be influenced by the intersection of other social relations namely age, class, race, ethnicity and nationality.

CHAPTER 6

YOU ARE NOT LIKE THEM, YOU DON'T FIT IN! INTERSECTIONAL INCLUSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS IN THE MAKING OF BOYS

6.1 Introduction

Children in their social interactions can construct and make meaning using the 'adult' abstract and complex categories of social divisions (Martin 2009) to create their social identities. Young masculinities can thus best be understood as they intersect with other socially constructed categories of inequality. A boy who doesn't match a particular context is regarded as not cool and labelled an ordinary boy. In this study some boys used specific categories to divide and distinguish individuals and groups and create arbitrary positions (see Jorgensen 2012). Chen, Bhana, Anderson & Buccus (2019) focusing on the coloured community in KZN argue that these structural inequalities produce behaviours associated with different forms of masculinities. In this chapter the researcher thus analyses gender in relation to other social inequalities in creating social categories among learners.

The intersectionality of gender and sexuality is pivotal in the understanding of masculinity as was observed in Chapter Four. As argued earlier sexuality is a vector of oppression (Cranny-Francis et al 2003). Boys who do not toe the heterosexual line are chastised and denigrated to an inferior status (see Connell 2013; Chimanzi 2019). The social relations of power intersect and shape each other (see Steyn & van Zyl 2009; Moolman 2013) depending on the context as observed in the two schools in this study. However, acknowledging the existence of these oppressive social relations in the construction of masculinity means the boys within the two schools in this study are heterogeneous and thus constructing masculinities differently.

The behaviour of some boys at both schools towards the other boys and girls signifies the importance of the intersectionality of gender and age. The way the older boys want to dominate most facets of social life within the school context shows that gender needs to be understood in connection with age.

Play at Multiville Primary was racialised. Coloureds, black Africans and Indians are apartheid racial categories carried over into the democratic era as explained in Chapter Three. The boys at Multiville wanted to maintain their racial categories during play. These racial groups of boys seemed to have different ways of showing how to be real boys. Although

South Africa is made up of different black ethnic groups very few differences of how to be a boy can be detected.

The concept of the intersectionality of class and gender was picked up at Multiville Primary. The way boys wanted to wear shoes and clothes with "labels" showed consumerism and gender identity. Some boys at this school also talked about burning of new clothes as a way to show off by some boys especially the coloureds. Some boys were reported to be putting in gold teeth as a status symbol.

Both Mazitike Primary and Multiville Primary had some learners from other countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Nationality is one of the oppressive social stratifications. Some local learners especially boys used derogatory terms to refer to foreign nationals. Some girls of foreign nationalities suffered multiple marginalisation as they were at times criticised by other local girls.

Although these dimensions of relations under law may seem equal, in real social life some groups are placed in favourable positions. The process of constructing a male identity creates a group that is different. The process inferiorises this 'other' socially created category. This becomes an alien group which cannot 'fit' into the dominant group, although the groups behaviourally are relational. It is thus imperative to understand gender in relation to other social stratifications. The way some boys form masculinities and how girls and other boys are affected is a reflection of these social relations of power. These social relations give more power to a certain gender category or dominant group of people. A person coming from a different group from the dominant one is considered 'other' or just ordinary.

6.2 Old bullies: Instilling fear and asserting power

While there was an outcry about older boys bullying younger boys and girls at both schools, it was more pronounced at Mazitike Primary. The wide age gap between learners in the same class could have been a contributing factor in this behaviour. While most learners in Grade 7 are supposed to be between 12 and 14 years of age some were believed to be over 15 years of age as indicated by some participants. This means that older and younger children are mixed in ways that are age inappropriate, resulting in domination of some younger learners by some older boys. However, the researcher did not verify the ages of these learners with the school authorities. Some older Grade 7 boys in this study reportedly dominated some younger boys and some girls in their classes. The researcher will thus argue in this section how the

intersection of gender and age indicates the disadvantages faced by some younger boys and girls within a school setting.

Some older boys use fear to maintain their dominance over younger boys and the girls. Both male and female participants at Mazitike Primary and Multiville Primary pointed out that there were some older boys who bullied girls and younger boys. These boys would threaten the girls and some boys not to tell the teachers if they did something wrong. One female participant, Lebogang, from Mazitike Primary wrote the following in her diary.

> *At my school there are bullies and they are too old. When they do something wrong you should not report them to the teacher because they will say we will catch you by the gate. The boy in my class his name is Thabiso. Everytime in the class he beats girls every day and he scares them. In the class he stays quiet and makes himself appear he is a good boy in the class. He is old and he should be in secondary but he is learning with children who are 12 years old.*

The views of Lebogang were echoed by several other participants from both schools but mostly from Mazitike Primary These older boys were reported to instil fear among the girls and young boys by beating them or threatening them to acquire what they wanted. These boys would take things like money and food from the young boys and girls. These findings are in line with another finding in South Africa where the older boys were considered bullies and also took money and food from younger boys and girls (see Mncube & Harber 2013). Most male participants who took part in this study who lived with both parents from Mazitike Primary had only their fathers working. This indicates an economic patriarchal dominance in the households. These boys unlike those from the other school who were exposed to both parents and were less violent could have been influenced by their economically male-dominated spheres and poor backgrounds. In the absence of economic powers and social status these boys were relying on violence as a way of expressing a patriarchal authority.

The older boys also used fear to silence their competitors. A certain boy from Mazitike Primary during a detailed individual interview pointed out that he was scared of the older boys because they threatened him. He was told that he wanted to appear smart and famous among the teachers. However, he argued that these boys were jealous because he was liked by many girls and he performed well in class and that these boys wanted attention from the girls. These older boys were thus instilling fear among the younger boys so that they can also acquire girlfriends and accrue status.

The social background under which the boys construct masculinities is very important. Groes-Green (2009) in his study on young men in Mozambique argues that to understand masculinities in Southern Africa there is need to understand the social background under which they emerge. The social background of these big boys plays a major role in the way they construct masculinities. Most of the violence as argued above came from Mazitike Primary which is shrouded in poverty.

The older boys used their physical power to maintain and perpetuate their dominance. Zamani, a male research participant at Multiville Primary brought in the issue of physical power as the reason for threatening. He pointed out that older boys threatened young boys because they saw that they did not have power. Zamani argued that the older boys were showing their physical power to their friends and to the girls. Another male participant from Multiville Primary pointed out that the big boys bullied the young boys to impress their friends. Another male participant however, highlighted that the big boys treated some girls in a similar way. Masculinity is constructed in the presence of others. They wanted to impress their friends by showing that they had the power to dominate all the other learners. Masculinity as a social construct is performed in front of other men and women (Bourdieu in Mfecane *et al* 2005). The older boys as the researcher has repeatedly pointed out in the previous chapter in this study were thus constructing masculinities by bullying some learners in front of other learners to draw attention to themselves. By drawing attention to themselves they presumed it was a sign of being a real boy.

Older boys showed their domination by asking younger boys to run some errands for them. Kelly, a female participant from Multiville Primary pointed out during a detailed individual interview that older boys bullied young boys by telling them to run some errands for them. They would for example ask them to go and fetch drinking water for them. When I asked her why they do that she said:

Kelly: I think they do that to show their friends that they are cool.

Cool is a term that is generally used to refer to a person who is fashionably attractive or impressive. This group of boys was thus trying to impress and draw the attention of their friends. Being cool was a way of being a real boy among the boys in this study. Langa (2010) commenting on the formation of masculinities among adolescent boys in Alexandra Township points out that masculinity among the working class boys involves being able to attract girls and being cool. Masculinity in this context can thus be argued as a configuration

of gender practice by the boys to navigate their surroundings and to identify themselves as real boys to themselves and others (Ratele 2007; Ratele 2016b).

Some boys as noted in Chapter Five, are attention seekers. Older boys in this study were seeking attention by challenging teachers. Several participants at both schools pointed out that the older boys would disturb the learning process by making unnecessary noise with the complicity of the younger boys during the learning process. Some of them liked arguing and challenging the teachers especially at Mazitike Primary. Mazitike, as the researcher indicated in Chapter Three is surrounded by many informal settlements signalling poverty engulfing the school. Manyike (2014) argues that townships are riddled with violence because there are few resources to use to shape their lives. Violence becomes one of the few resources available that is used to settle disputes within these contexts. Violence within the school is likely to be a reflection of the violence within the community. Some participants in this study indicated the violence typifying their community which made them not to attend school at times. The older boys from this school are thus likely to be role playing some of the violence they witness in their neighbourhood led by some male members of the community.

The big boys may resort to violence to show the superiority of patriarchal power. Some girls and young boys may have been undermining the power of the big boys. Thabiso mentioned above by Lebogang who was always quiet in class, may have been looked down upon by some girls and the young boys. These girls and young boys may have been taking advantage of his quietness then he would act aggressively to show his power. Unfortunately, Thabiso was not part of the research participants to hear his views.

It is imperative to understand the intersection of gender and age within the school context to understand its power dynamics. As argued above, the weaker members in a class which are the younger boys and the girls are scared of the older boys. Their relationship with each other and the school hinges on what is dictated by the older boys because they are scared of them. These learners are being coerced to be in subordinate positions to fulfil and endorse the power of the older boys. These boys are also monopolising the sexual space of the girls and young boys through labelling what they consider deviant sexual behaviour and also positioning themselves as the only ones who have the power to befriend girls they like. By running errands for these boys and not telling the teachers the younger boys and the girls are ascending and legitimising the power of the older boys.

6.3 Real Zulus and real Tsongas? Ethnicity and gender

In this section the researcher dwells on the black African ethnic groups which formed the majority of the learners within the two schools in this study. Different black South African ethnic groups of learners took part in this study. These included Pedi, Sotho, Xhosa, Tsonga, Zulu, Ndebele, Venda and Tswana. These categories as highlighted in Chapters Two and Three are very much the product of apartheid planning.These ethnicities are again currently being reinforced, mostly for political reasons. While the way boys at the two schools formed masculinity showed little difference along ethnic lines it was observed that masculinities are socially and culturally constructed and that ethnicity as a social-cultural category helps in the shaping of the gender relations. Some research participants alluded to different formations of masculinities by some ethnic groups.

Some participants from both schools singled out Zulu boys to be more violent. One female Zulu research participant from Mazitike Primary, however, seemed to differ with participants who said Zulus were violent. She pointed out that the Tsongas were the ones who beat girls most. Her views may have been influenced by the fact that there were many Tsonga learners although the school's home language was Zulu. However, this girl seemed not to like other ethnic groups and foreigners especially boys. This points to how prejudice operates across differences. Her dislike of foreigners will be discussed further when the researcher looks at intersectionality of gender and nationality in section 6.6 later in this chapter.

Real Zulu boys were supposed to be strong and shun girlish stuff as argued by Big Junior in section 4.2.2. There is a cultural stereotype about Zulu men being stubborn and violent. One principal arguing on primary school children along cultural stereotypes pointed out that Zulus were rude and violent (Mncube & Harber 2013). Most male participants in this study pointed out that boys of the Zulu ethnic group were violent. However a female Zulu participant from Mazitike Primary added more non-violent characteristics of a real Zulu boy. During a detailed individual interview this is what transpired.

LC: According to your culture what does it mean to be a real boy?

Bianca: If you are a boy you don't play with girls, you don't touch them where they don't want to be touched…

LC: Is that what the Zulu boys at this school are doing?

Bianca: NO

According to Bianca the Zulu boys at her school are not constructing masculinity according to the Zulu culture. Real Zulu boys were supposed to play with other boys only as observed in Chapter Four. This is in line with what was said by many other boys from different ethnic groups. Her understanding of what it means to be a boy may have been influenced by the socially constructed meaning of what it means to be a boy by learners from different ethnic backgrounds at the school. Bianca also believed in the Zulu culture boys are supposed to respect girls by not touching them in places they were not comfortable with. Her understanding of being a real Zulu boy could also be seen as presenting another version of boyhood. This is significant in showing the existing diversity in boys' positions within the same culture and context. This is in line with Connell's observation that within the same cultural setting there can be more than one kind of masculinity (see Connell 1996). Connell argues that even in any peer group there are different ways of understanding and 'doing' masculinity. In the townships where the learners are coming from and at the school where they are, there are now many ethnic groups such that the cultural beliefs of these groups may have diluted each other and learners are actively creating their identities.

Some ethnic groups encourage their boys to help with cleaning at home whilst at the same time doing boys' stuff. A Pedi research participant at Mazitike Primary said the following during a detailed individual interview.

LC: According to the Pedi culture what does it mean to be a real boy?

Sidi: You must clean at home, you must work in the garden and you must do boys' stuff.

LC: Boys stuff like what?

Sidi: Like cleaning the garden.

Sidi points out that according to the Pedi culture boys help in cleaning which is regarded as girls' work by some boys and that the boys had also specific jobs. Working in the garden is reserved for the boys in the Pedi culture as indicated by Sidi. During a focus group interview he argued along the same line on what it means to be a real boy at their school. His views were also shared by other male participants especially from the Tsonga ethnic group. Several research participant boys from this ethnic group believed that real boys must help in the house and treat girls well. Some of them did not see cleaning their classrooms as girls' work. However, cleaning the classroom was rejected by Cabashe a Xhosa boy, as girls' work. However, at home he cleaned as he lived with his father only and there was no female figure to do the work. Cleaning was also observed as girls' work by most Zulu boys.

While some cultural understandings in the social formation of masculinities could be picked up as most boys in this study showed more about being real boys by their social interactions than their ethnic backgrounds. Due to the fact that culture and ethnicity are not static, masculinity construction among the young boys could be undergoing social reconfigurement in the relations of power. Life in the townships where the children lived contributed in the social construction and shaping of masculinities. The society's gender relations of domination are thus reproduced by learners.

6.4 'Girls play their own stuff': Sport as racialised and gendered

Race is a social construction category employed to categorise people according to their physical variations by a society (Giddens 1997). These physical variations are socially significant to the group employing it. Racial divisions were significant to the apartheid government in South Africa so that they could implement separate development favouring the whites. Some of the violence and segregation some learners experience are a result of these racial segregations. In this study the learners in the two schools were put into three racial groups as explained in Chapter Three. These are Indians, coloureds and black Africans. While Mazitike Primary was mainly made up of black Africans, Multiville Primary had learners from the three racial groups although black Africans were in the majority.

The Indian and the coloured participants were mostly living near the school in an area previously reserved for Indians only. Their living in the same locality could have influenced their play at school. Most of the black African participants lived in the black townships within Ekurhuleni. The only female Indian participant in this study explained in detail how she perceives the play of boys of different races at Multiville Primary. Her views are a summary of the views shared by some boys and girls at her school. Below is her diary entry together with its title.

> **What it means to be a [real boy]**
>
> *Boys act smart when they are not. They act smart to charm the girls but they are actually not. They are just acting and they also act strong in front of the girls to make them like them… And the boys they mostly play soccer and the boys that are cool and nice and fun are only the Indian boys. The boys that like fighting are the black boys and the coloured boys. But all I want to say is that I sit with coloured boys mostly and we*

do not fight with each other, we play together. A lot of black boys fight with us also but I think all of us are equal.

Pearl points out that the behaviour of the boys we see is acting and it is done to please the girls. The performance of masculinity must have an audience or spectators. The behaviour of these dominant boys speaks to Butler's theory of performativity. The boys are acting to get a status symbol.

Pearl above argues that in reality the boys are not what they pretend they are. This is an example of a discourse of resistance from a female subject. She does not conform to the dominant patriarchal position created by a certain group of boys. She is resisting the 'charm and strength' portrayed by the boys to win the attention and subordination of girls. She racially singles out the Indian boys as the real boys as she considers them cool, nice and fun. The term cool has been repeatedly used by girls of different races from Multiville Primary to refer to real boys and not ordinary boys.

Pearl's views summarises the inter-racial play that unfolds in the context of violence at Multiville primary. By playing with coloured boys she is breaking both gender and racial stereotypes as presented and argued by some participants in this study. However, she could have found refuge in playing with these boys from the black African boys which she accused of speaking isiZulu during play, a language she did not understand. She also accused the black African boys of being violent and liked fighting with them. By aligning herself with one violent group affirms her view of solving disputes through violent means. In one of her entries in the diary she indicated that parents must teach their daughters to fight back when bullied by the boys.

The way the three racial groups formed masculinities was slightly different as observed in Pearl's diary entry and will be seen in the subsection below. Masculinity is thus a fluid concept that can shift in relation to race. The boys of different races seemed to be interested in different sporting activities. Coloured boys were regarded as more violent than any other racial group. The black African boys mostly wanted to draw attention through heterosexual relationships. Indian boys were regarded as quiet boys who liked doing their school work.

Sport is regarded as important in the formation of a male identity. Boys in this study especially at Multiville Primary associated being a real boy by engaging in sporting activities. This is in line with what was observed in other studies although by younger participants of

eight and nine years (Bhana 2008) and in a different context. Bhana (2008:3) argues that young boys' early association with sport is centrally about identity and doing sport, or at least establishing interest in sport is one important way in claiming to be a 'real boy'.

While sport is important in the formation of masculinities in this study it is also racialised. Several black African boys associated playing soccer and talking about it knowledgeably with being a real boy. While issues of sport were less developed at Mazitike Primary, boys there liked soccer. While the school organised some tournaments with other schools, most boys from the school played the game informally. The little space within and outside the school was dominated by the boys through their informal games of soccer. However, as observed in Chapter Four, girls were not welcome in these games of soccer.

Like at Mazitike Primary, black African boys at Multiville Primary associated being a real boy with playing soccer and also talking about the game knowledgeably. During a focus group discussion, one boy highlighted that black boys wanted to play on their own. The boy was responding to the question whether boys and girls liked to play together. While the question was general the male participant narrowed it down so that it specifically focused on the black African boys.

LC: Do most boys want to play with both boys and girls or they want to play on their own?

Zamokuhle: Most BLACK BOYS want to play on their own because usually here at school we play soccer.

LC: What about the girls?

Zamokuhle: Girls play their own stuff like scotch, skipping and stuff like that.

The views of Zamokuhle show that the playing of soccer at Multiville is not only gendered but also racialised. The reason why the black boys play as a racialised and gendered group is that they like to play soccer. As observed in the previous chapters, the black African boys believed soccer helps in developing a muscular body which is admired by the girls. The reason for black African boys being more into soccer is that in the townships there are limited opportunities for sporting structures and only soccer provides a visible access to a 'cool' powerful style (Bhana 2008). Lack of developed sport in the townships and in their schools is attributed to the apartheid era where the schools were built in limited space without room for the development of sporting facilities. The playing of sport at Multiville Primary thus reflects apartheid anomalies and thus it is imperative to understand the social background informing

how boys choose sporting activities within a school context. This fits into the views of Kimmel (2008) that society and history provide the context followed in constructing identities.

Having girlfriends is important in the formation of a heterosexual masculinities among the black African boys as argued in Chapters Four and Five. While the game was racialised it was also used to exhibit gender power through the creation of gender boundaries. Girls irrespective of their racial group were not welcome in the games of played by the black African boys.

While the black African boys liked playing soccer to show that they were real boys, Indian boys were reported to like cricket to show that they were real boys. Unfortunately, there were no Indian participant boys in the study to explain why they liked cricket but the black Africans and Coloured boys repeatedly pointed out that the Indian boys liked to play cricket. Some coloured male research participants pointed out that coloured boys liked soccer, a point which was rejected by some black African male research participants. They argued that coloured boys did not like sport but to just relax waiting to fight. However, some coloured girls and black African girls pointed out that coloureds mostly liked to join girls in their informal games. During a focus group discussion on ways of being real boys by different races with some female participants from Multiville Primary the following unfolded:LC: Do boys at your school play the same games?

Mbali: Not all.

LC: Which game is liked by most black boys?

Mbali: Soccer!

LC: And the Indians?

Mbali: Cricket!

LC: And the coloureds?

Thando: I think coloureds want to play funny games with the girls.

LC: Which funny games?

Thando: Umgusha[9] nomablasana[10].

[9] It is a game mostly played by girls using a rope. One player will be skipping the rope while the other two hold it on either side.

[10] This is a term used mostly in the townships to refer to this game which is mostly played by girls although there is an increase in the number of boys playing it. Two groups of players on either side of a playing field will be trying to beat another group in the middle with an improvised plastic ball.

LC: They want to play with girls?

Girls: Yes!

Unlike most black boys who did not like to play with girls fearing that they can be labelled gays, the coloureds are reported to love playing with the girls. This suggests a more egalitarian understanding of girls by the coloured boys. However, their play was racialised as they liked playing mostly with Indian and coloured girls.

Choo & Ferree (2010) arguing on the work of Lareau on *Unequal childhoods* in America point out that within their community racial segregation of residential neighbourhoods resulted in dividing children into racially segregated informal play groups. Along this line in this study the racialised play is a reflection of the apartheid period which racially categorised people and settled them in different residential neighbourhoods. The black African boys play of informal games on their own was influenced by the black townships which most of them came from. Most of the coloureds and Indians lived in the same neighbourhood and this also played a crucial role in the games they played. While this area is now also accommodating black Africans the informal play of the boys and the girls is still along racial lines. This segregated informal play at home has informed the way learners play at Multiville Primary. It is therefore imperative to acknowledge that South African children's identities are best understood in relation to historical discourses of race and apartheid. Moolman (2013) supports the view that race in South Africa continues to shape social identities. Although her views are based on older people they are pertinent in understanding how young masculinities are formed.

While the Indian and black African boys engaged in their racially segregated games they did not welcome girls in their games as the researcher has argued above. In this way, sport was used to integrate masculinities but also at the same time to diversify them through racial polarisation (see Bhana 2008). However, whenever boys and girls played together it was along racial lines. The only Indian girl in the study and some coloured girls indicated that they liked playing with the coloured boys while the black African girls enjoyed playing with the black African boys. The apartheid legislation on race and space has continued to influence the type of sport and social interactions at some primary schools in the townships. Gender practices and relations mirror these past historical imbalances.

6.5 Knives, rough play and fighting back: Race, violence and the language of dominance

In Chapter Five the researcher talked about violent formations of masculinities. The violence. however, was gendered and racialised at Multiville Primary as the researcher argues in this section. Although black Africans and coloureds were reported to be violent the coloured boys were arguably identified as the most violent racial group. Coloured is a racial term socially constructed by the apartheid government to classify or describe a person from a 'mixed' racial background (Cooper, 2009; Chen *et al* 2019). The term has continued to be used in post-apartheid South Africa despite some debates over its continued existence (Chen *et al* 2019). Both male and female participants at Multiville Primary perceived that most coloured boys liked physical fighting. Black African boys tried to show that they were real boys by engaging in the abuse of multiple heterosexual relationships. Indian boys on the contrary were regarded as quiet and hardworking in class.

The use of knives and having territories is important in the way young coloured boys exalt their masculinities. During a focus group discussion with male participants from Multiville Primary the following unfolded.

LC: Is there a difference in the way the Indian, the black African and the coloured boys show that they are 'real boys'?

Boys: Yes!

Chris: Coloureds want to use knives.

Mxolisi: If you pass near their territory wearing expensive clothes they will take out a knife for you and they will want to take the clothes.

LC: So the coloureds are the ones who are ….

Neo: (Cutting LC) They are the ones who like to bully Indians and blacks.

LC: They bully Indians and blacks?

Boys: Yes

LC: Siyabonga what do you say?

Siyabonga: Eish (looking down) I... I agree with them because some of them use too much knives… But they will be defending themselves.

LC: Defending themselves from what?

Siyabonga: Black boys (looking down speaking with a low voice)

Zamani: Sometimes when you defeat them they will take out a knife and try to stab you.

LC: When you defeat them in what?

Zamani: In fighting.

The black African male participants from different focus groups' interview sessions repeatedly pointed out that coloureds were violent. Siyabonga, a coloured boy also alluded to the point about coloureds using knives. To the coloured boys using a knife as alluded by the boys quoted above is a sign of being a real boy. A knife is a weapon used to instil fear and perpetuate dominance by some young coloured boys. They tend to use knives in fights as they solve their disputes. Violence and the use of weapons such as guns is common among coloured communities (Cooper, 2009; Chen *et al* 2019). In this study the use of knives by the coloureds as gangs is evident of how dangerous the school environments are. The principal of the school alluded to the use of knives by some of the boys within the school. By using knives these boys are trying to dominate the informal playing spaces. They are creating a social group which is able to control other groups of learners through fear.

The coloured boys used knives to instil fear in the black African boys and the Indian boys to manipulate the use of scarce resources for themselves or acquire what they wanted. For example, they would use a knife to threaten a person wearing new clothes so that they can take them. However, there was no confirmation of anyone whose clothes were taken after being threatened by a knife wielded by the coloured boys. The views of Siyabonga a male coloured, were also echoed by some female coloureds and black Africans from the same school suggesting the coloured boys at this school used knives to intimidate other learners and also to protect themselves from the black African boys who were in the majority and were also regarded as violent.

The formation of gangsters and the use of knives by the coloured boys can be construed as a response to the hostile environment. Siyabonga's talking in a low voice in a focus group discussion full of black African boys is an indication of fear of the dominant group. He also pointed out that coloured boys used knives to defend themselves from the black African boys. The Indian girl as indicated above also joined the gang of coloured boys to be protected against the black African boys. She also indicated in another diary entry how boys should stop being abusers and give girls some space. Her diary entry and its heading runs as follows:

> ***My message***
>
> *Boys should act like gentlemen more and stop acting like abusers. They should fix their lives and stop ruining it more by hurting us more. And they should give us space and they shouldn't fight with other people, they should rather STOP!*

She writes with an emotionally charged voice as an Indian girl at a school where the majority of learners are black Africans and the boys there are considered violent. Her earlier diary entry clearly states that she plays with coloured boys and they don't fight but the black African boys are the ones who want to fight with them. The minority groups which are the Indians and coloureds have found each other and ganged up against the dominant group of black Africans to defend themselves.

Pearl above is digging into the issue of racialised violent masculinities. She voices that boys should be real men by being gentlemen. The term gentle refers to what the boys and the girls in this study refer to as cool. A gentleman in this context is thus a male figure who does not inflict pain on girls. By inflicting more pain on the girls they are also ruining their lives.

Violent masculinity is likened to a boomerang since it comes back to the perpetrator. Violent masculinities towards younger boys and girls as noted above and in the literature section has been observed but it has not reflected on the perpetrators and its racial connotations and formation of racial gangsters informed by the colonial imbalances of social space within a school context. The views of Pearl cast light on what is happening in the adult world where violent masculinities towards women affect the men themselves. Pearl is pleading with the boys to stop being violent and give the girls space and also liberate themselves.

While some coloured boys constructed masculinity through gangsterism others constructed it through rough play. While violence and being rough was characterised with boys play in general, female participants at Multiville Primary argued that the coloured boys were generally the most violent at their school. On playing rough this is what was said by some coloured girls.

LC: You are talking about some boys who are rough. Here at your school there are some Indian boys, there are some black boys and there are some coloured boys. Which ones normally play rough?

Girls: Coloureds (in one voice).

Thandi: Coloureds!

Twinkle: Coloureds are the ones who are playing rough. Sometimes they swear at us.

The views of these coloured girls were also echoed by some black African girls from the same school.

Ntokozo: Some of the coloureds are too violent and swear at us in their own

language, so they think their language is too tops [better than other languages] and they think we do not know it but we know the language.

Kelly: I think coloureds are the most dangerous because some of them come from dangerous backgrounds. Maybe their mothers or fathers are always saying strong language in front of them so maybe that's where they pick it up and take it to school ….

The views of both coloured and black African research participants are that coloured boys are more violent than the black African and Indian boys. The girls experienced the rough play mostly because as argued above the coloured boys did not like to be engaged in organised sport but to join girls in their informal games. This group of coloured boys wanted to maintain their patriarchal dominant practices against the girls in general. Turning to the girls also reflects contestation of masculinities as the coloured boys wanted to dominate through bullying the black African and Indian boys. However, some black African boys did not accept the domination as they fought back. The domination of the coloured and black African girls by these two racial groups of boys through violence as a social practice tends to create and perpetuate gender-based hierarchies.

Kelly attributes the violent behaviour of the coloured boys to their social background. She thinks the parents of these boys used the strong language used by these boys. Since the coloured boys lived in the same area as the Indian boys their behaviour can be attributed to their families and not the community. However, these are her own assumptions. The violent behaviour enacted by these coloured boys is in tandem with what happens in coloured communities (see Anderson 2009; Cooper, 2009; Chen *et al* 2019). These views seem to suggest that if boys were raised properly they would be well behaved in their adult life. Some scholars of gender equality "assume that if boys were socialised differently, they would automatically behave better towards women when they are men" Connell 2003:19). However, this is an over-simplified statement considering how gender socialisation works and that children are not passive recipients of the socialisation system.

While both black Africans and Indians, both boys and girls argued that coloureds were violent, the only female Indian participant in the research argued that all the boys are the same. However, during the focus group interview and in her diary she pointed out that she enjoyed sitting and playing with coloured boys. In her diary she explained the behaviour of boys generally and her feelings towards each race at her school. Her categorising of all boys

being the same during a focus group discussion a view which is shared by most girls irrespective of race, is based on the patriarchal dominance by the boys.

While she acknowledges the different forms of masculinities by different races, Pearl feels all people are equal. This may be the reason she plays with coloured boys leaving out the Indian boys which belong to her race. She also considers the Indian boys to be 'cool' and nice. Although the Indian boys are not violent she does not play with them. This suggests what the researcher indicated earlier on that in a violent environment one needs protection from a violent group. Joining the coloured group of boys guaranteed her security from the violent black African boys. In addition, her joining a group of coloured boys suggests that not all coloured boys are violent to all the girls.

The intersection of gender with age and race helps further in the understanding of violent masculinities. During a detailed individual interview with Siyabonga, a male coloured boy the following unfolded.

> LC: So at your school which boys are stubborn?... Which boys do not listen to teachers the Indians, the black Africans or the coloureds?
>
> Siyabonga: Mostly it's the coloureds and the blacks.
>
> LC: Are these the younger boys or the older boys?
>
> Siyabonga: The older boys.
>
> LC: Why do you think they do this Siyabonga?
>
> Siyabonga: They want to act like a buff.
>
> LC: What is a buff Siyabonga
>
> Siyabonga: Strong

The views of Siyabonga show that the older boys of the coloured and black African races were the ones who wanted to be seen as strong. These are the boys who wanted to be seen with well-developed bodies with muscles. This is in line with what was discussed in Chapter Five regarding boys at Multiville Primary having 'six packs and big muscles' This is also in line with what was discussed by most male research participants in both schools. Real boys were thus supposed to have power. Physical power within these schools also translates to social power. However, this was racialised as the characteristics of black African and coloured boys.

Among the coloured boys there were some who were able to renounce violence and disinvest in it (see Anderson 2009). Siyabonga, a coloured boy at Multiville primary while he played

with other coloured boys, castigated violent practices by other boys. Some boys pointed out that he was an attention seeker as he made unnecessary noise in class but unlike the other noise makers he did his class work. Unlike other coloured boys he was reported to have many girlfriends, a practice which was common among the black boys. One male participant summarised this boy's behaviour.

Chris: Siyabonga is 50:50. He is naughty and he is clever at the same time.

Siyabonga may have been performing different masculinities within different contexts. When he was in class he did his work but when outside or when the teachers were not there he depicted another form of being a real boy. This points to the views of Connell that masculinities are multiple, fluid and context related.

The intersection of gender, age, race and ethnicity can also help to understand the way masculinities are formed within an institution. During a detailed individual interview, Keabetswe a female research participant at Multiville Primary summarised these ways as she pointed out that older black African boys of the Zulu ethnic group were the ones who normally abused girls and small boys in the belief of constructing a male identity. She also argued that these boys thought it was 'cool'. To her and other girls cool meant something on the part of the boys. Her views suggest that not all older black African boys were constructing masculinities through violent ways. Her views were also shared by several girls of different races and ethnic backgrounds at Multiville Primary school.

Animal terms can be used to denigrate some people. In this research especially at Mazitike Primary, some boys used animal images in dehumanising some girls and boys. While some boys handled girls with care and respect some handled them in an uncaring and disrespectful way. One female participant from Multiville Primary had this to say during a focus group discussion.

Twinkle: Some boys really act like gentlemen, but some ooh they treat girls like animals.

The views of Twinkle show that there are different ways of portraying boyhood. The views of Twinkle on how boys treat girls negatively were given more meaning by the boys at Mazitike Primary as they used terms like cow, monkey and baboon to describe girls and some boys. One boy while scolding a girl likened her to a monkey. By likening the girl to a monkey the boy was removing her from the status of a human being so as to maintain dominance over her. However, he pointed out that the only good thing on her was her big buttocks.

Boys at Mazitike Primary accrued respect when they went out with a nice girl. Precious, a female participant and some male participants from Mazitike Primary pointed out that a nice girl according to the boys had a 'beautiful' face, big buttocks and wide hips. The description of Dineo shows that while she had big buttocks she did not qualify to be called a 'beautiful' girl since she was like a monkey. The boy could have been seeking attention from other boys or just inferiorising her.

Some boys at Mazitike Primary also used animal terms to maintain their boundaries during play. Nosipho entered in her diary explaining how the boys chased them away when they had asked to play hide and seek with them. While other boys wanted to play with them some pointed out that they were not going to play with the girls. One boy is reported to have started shouting that they did not play with baboons. These girls may have been ugly according to the definition of 'beautiful' girls by the boys at this school. The use of animal terms by final year primary school boys towards girls they do not like is not new. In a study of final year boys at primary school in Britain a certain boy keeps on referring to a certain girl as a cow (see Renold 2007). However, the use of these terms have not been critically analysed.

The use of animal terms such as monkey and baboon to describe girls who were 'ugly' could have been meant to boost the status of the boys since they were used in full view of the others. The use of these animal terms may also reflect the racist history of the use of these terms in the South African context. Up to now some whites use those terms to describe black Africans. Recently Danie Herselman, a white South African man depicted a black South African woman, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma as an ape on Facebook (see Daily Maverick 4 June 2020). This racial and sexist representation was meant to dehumanise the minister as a black woman. Along this line although the terms were used on black African girls by black African boys it suggests animalisation and racialisation by these boys, drawing on dominant colonial tropes. Boys who were not able to choose beautiful girls were not spared as they were also relegated to an inferior status by being referred to as 'permanent cows with blind eyes' as the researcher argued in Chapter Four.

Masculinities as the researcher argued in this chapter are constitutive of violence. However, masculinities are multiple and dynamic as argued by Connell, Hearn and Ratele among other critical scholars on studies of men and masculinities. Some of the violence is a positive

construction in relation to masculinities. Bravery bravado and fighting prowess in the face of violence fall in this category.

Language is used to categorise learners in the informal terrains of the schools. Language and the way the boys behave is one way through which girls can be marginalised and subjugated within the school context. Language was used to provoke and segregate learners of other minority racial backgrounds. Some learners used their home languages at a school where the school home language was different. For example, at Multiville Primary some black Africans continued to use isiZulu whilst the school's home language was English.

The use of dominant languages segregates speakers of other languages within a school context. During a detailed individual interview with an Indian female participant on how she felt to be in a class full of black African boys the following unfolded.

LC: How do you feel being an Indian girl at this school or in a class where there are many black African boys?

Pearl: I don't f::eel ok I just am (4) but I don't feel ok because I am the only Indian girl in class and some are like they don't care about me so …

LC: Do they at times say bad things about you as an Indian?

Pearl: No, I don't know because I don't speak the language they speak.

LC: Ok, so at times they speak their own language?

Pearl: Yes

LC: So at times you don't hear what they are saying?

Pearl: Yes

LC: So how do you feel when they speak their own language?

Pearl: I feel left out.

LC: Which language do they normally speak when you are in class?

Pearl: Zulu

Pearl felt as if the black African boys did not care about her since she was the only Indian girl in her class and she spoke a different language. Those boys always spoke in isiZulu; a language she did not understand. As a result, she felt left out. Most of the black African learners at this school spoke in isiZulu despite the fact that the school home language was English. These findings are in line with another research carried out at a former Indians-only high school in KZN (Hamlall & Connell 2012). While Indian learners spoke English the African boys spoke isiZulu which made the Indian boys feel frustrated and threatened. The

use of isiZulu during informal interactions at school may be contributing to Pearl not playing with both the black African boys and girls as she indicated in her diary. Besides most girls being violently abused by some boys, Pearl is in a more segregated position because of her minority race and unable to understand the language spoken by the majority of the learners at the school. While most girls complain about violence from the boys and their concerns debated in the school violence discourse (see Prinsloo 2006; Bhana 2009; Mncube & Harber 2013; Bhana & Mayeza 2016) girls' experiences from the minority races who speak a different language are not prioritised. Their perspectives and needs remain invisible. While they have a common demand with other girls of the subordination of their gender identity they have their own separate struggle of being oppressed by the dominant language. The experiences of these girls is a product of intersecting patterns of racism and gender. It is thus imperative to study gender in conjunction with race.

Provocation using a home language was interpreted by the black African girls along racial lines. Swearing involved the learners using their home language and not the school home language. The swearing was perpetrated by the coloured boys against the black African girls. A female black African participant Ntokozo complained as indicated above that the coloured boys liked to swear using their home language. She also pointed out that the coloureds thought that their language was superior to theirs. Ntokozo felt threatened and intimidated by the coloured boys speaking their language and not English or isiZulu which she understood.

The use of home languages in a multiracial institution as argued above creates tension among learners of different races. In a study at a high school in Durban it was observed that "Language proficiency served to widen the racial divide and create tensions between Indian and African learners" (Hamlall & Morrell 2012). In this study the division was not only along race but also along gender lines. Boys of a different race tried to dominate girls of another racial group.

6.6 Cool, or nice and respectful?

Not all boys form masculinities by being violent or by seeking the attention of other boys or girls. Both male and female participants from Multiville Primary pointed out during focus group interviews that Indian boys did not like fighting. At this school unlike most of the black Africans and coloured boys, the Indian boys were considered 'cool', nice and obedient.

The term 'cool' has been used by many male and female research participants from both schools in describing real boys. The power asserted with the 'cool' pose enables the boys to

exalt and display themselves through which they gain prestige (Majors 2001). However, some male and most female research participants are at variance with what it means to be 'cool' according to the stylish and dominant boys. They have repeatedly used the phrase 'not cool' to boys who are violent, who want attention and who engage in multi-heterosexual relationships. These practices are associated mostly with coloured and black African boys. Pearl in section 6.4 above in her narrative of what it means to be a real boy says, "the boys that are cool and nice and fun are only the Indian boys". Her views were shared by other male and female participants from her school from different races.

The term 'cool' in this study is being used by some boys and girls to refer to boys who are calm, composed, respectful, obedient and who do the right things. These were the social configurations of practice or social presentations expected from real boys in this group. These social presentations were mostly found among the Indian boys.

Doing well in class comes with a status. Some participants regarded boys who listened to the teachers and performed well in class as real boys. During a focus group discussion on the formation of masculinities by boys of different races the following was said about the Indian boys.

LC: How do the Indian boys show that they are real boys?

Chris: The Indians do well in class.

Sipho: They respect the teachers, even other learners.

These views by the black African male participants show that the Indian boys are forming masculinities in a different way from the black African boys and coloureds. The Indian boys were also reported to be doing their classwork and homework as a result they were doing well in class. This shows that they had respect for their teachers. This was at variance with the black African boys who liked to make a noise in class and fight with the teachers and other learners. The Indian boys were thus forming transformative gender relations through rejecting the violent dominant forces of doing gender. However, one coloured boy argued that not all Indian boys were respectful. This reflects the multiplicity of masculinity within the same context.

The aspect that different boys from different racial groups within the same school engage with each other and girls differently shows the fragmentation and multiplicity of masculinity. The term 'cool' was used by most research participants from both schools to refer to social practices that denote a real boy. The researcher can thus argue that "Being cool means many

things, though, with different signifieds, context-bound, and practised differently" (Ratele, Fouten, Shefer, Strebel, Shabalala & Buikema 2007:122).

6.7 'The foreigners say electricity is generated in Maputo': Nationality racialised and gendered

The discourse of belonging and not belonging based on nationality status creates hierarchies of power relationships. Discrimination based on nationality as a way of constructing a male identity was observed in practices and relations among black African learners of foreign origin and black SA citizenry. At both schools in this research there were some black African learners from neighbouring countries such as Malawi, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The way some black African boys and girls of South African origin related with some black African learners of foreign origin showed how gender 'interacts' with nationality as a category of difference in marginalising certain groups of learners. Some male and female participants from both schools indicated that some foreign national learners were relegated to an inferior status. During informal interactions within the school, xenophobic statements were made and derogatory terms used against the learners of foreign origin. These statements were mostly used by the local boys against the foreign boys, with a few girls also falling victim.

The issue of nationality is important in how some boys create their identity. Some xenophobic statements are made by local nationals in order to maintain a difference to foreign nationals. These statements entail telling the foreign nationals to go back to their countries, stigmatisation and discrimination. In this study these statements were mostly levelled against immigrant black boys by the SA black African boys. The segregation of not 'fitting in' is not only based on nationality but also on race as these are only black learners targeted. Tafira (2011) refers to this xenophobia which characterises social relations between black South Africans and their black immigrant brothers and sisters from other African countries as new racism. This reflects on the apartheid era where 'otherness' was important along racial and ethnic categorisation. This seems a continuation of colonial mentality where violence against blackness was perpetuated by the white-led administration now in a different version being perpetuated by a black person towards another black person socially categorised to be of lower status due to skin colour and nationality. Some scholars have referred to this not as xenophobia but negrophobia (see Langa & Kiguwa 2016). The black

African foreign learners are racially segregated as a group that is different from the other and thus cannot fit in the dominant group.

Some SA boys feel the foreign nationals are taking their spaces and must go back to their countries. During a focus group discussion with male participants from Mazitike Primary when the researcher asked what the boys thought about the immigrant learners in their class one participant had this to say:

Sidi: Sometimes they call them by xenophobic terms. They say what do you want from our country. They say go back to your countries. They say you are taking our, places then they start to argue in class. The foreigners say electricity is generated in Maputo this and that.

Rigby: Its true! (Shouts a boy from Mozambique).

During a focus group discussion with female participants from Multiville Primary it was pointed out that local boys liked teasing foreign learners.

LC: What do you think about learners from other countries?

Mbali: They tease them and say go back to your country. But they are just like us but the cultures are not the same… It does not mean if they are not from SA they must be teased.

LC: How do they tease them?

Mbali: Hey you, go back to the farms, go back to your country and look after the cattle.

LC: Why do they say that?

Thandi: Maybe to impress other people.

LC: Are these the boys or the girls who normally tease these foreigners?

Girls: Boys (In unison).

Mbali: They want to please their friends and girlfriends, or at times learners from other schools when they are passing through our school.

The views of Mbali were echoed by many other South African participant nationals. Their countries are looked upon as backward areas like farms. The foreign learners are told to go back there to go and look after cattle. It is like these children are not worthy to be at school but on farms looking after cattle thus being relegated to an inferior status. In most discussions or arguments these learners are reminded about the poverty of their countries and told to go back. Foreignness is thus associated with poverty. Due to their foreignness and poverty these children are exposed to abuse and exploitation.

The local nationals want to dominate the social space in class by belittling the foreign nationals. Some foreign nationals are told to keep quiet in class by being reminded that they are foreigners as indicated by Mxolisi below. This generates an argument in class with foreigners answering back. The answering back of foreigners indicates that they are not accepting domination from the local nationals. Mostly these arguments were reported to be among the boys as the girls seemed disinterested in their power contestations as the researcher will argue below.

Some foreign learners were stigmatised due to their nationality. They were laughed at and teased by some local boys. During a focus group discussion with male research participants from Mazitike Primary the following unfolded.

LC: What do you think about learners in your class who are not South Africans?

Cabashe: There is someone in our class, they laugh at him. They say he comes from Malawi.

LC: Why do they laugh at him?

Cabashe: Because he is not from this country.

Sidi: There are others who want to laugh at the spellings of others. Like Siya. Like this Venda likes laughing at others. He likes beating my friend and I don't like it. I fight for him.

Along the same line during a focus group discussion with male research participants from Multiville Primary the following unfolded.

LC: How are foreign learners treated in your class by local learners?

Mxolisi: I don't think its nice thing to make fun of them because they are human beings like us. They still need to get the language we speak.

LC: So there are some people who make fun of them?

Mxolisi: Yes

LC: What do they say?

Mxolisi: Some say keep quiet you come from this country; Malawi, Zimbabwe something like that.

Sipho: They call them names like foreigners, Shangaans. They tease them.

The following was said by a female foreign participant during a detailed individual interview about how foreigners were treated at her school.

Keabetswe: Some are given ugly looks and start teasing them saying they bring us diseases and stuff like that. They also say their parents are taking their

parents' jobs.

The above discussions by male participants from both schools show how nationality is important in understanding social relations within a school context. These derogatory statements are levelled against people who have a weaker social status, the foreigners. The countries from which these learners come are denigrated so as to inferiorise these foreign learners. The beating of Sidi's friend indicates violence against a foreigner. However, there are some boys like Sidi and Mxolisi who feel the foreign nationals are equal to the local nationals and that they deserve to be protected from the local abusers.

What happens in the community has a bearing in the relations that unfold within the school context. Learners originally from SA complained and teased learners from other countries because they accused them of taking their parents' jobs. The boys seem like they are waging a war on behalf of their parents whose jobs are taken by the foreigners. The nationals seem to be in a competition with foreigners over limited resources. Xenophobic attacks in SA generally take place in urban areas riddled with poverty. These are the areas where SA nationals accuse the foreign nationals of taking their jobs and women (Nkealah 2011). The shortage of resources in these poverty-stricken areas relates to the historical background created during the apartheid era by the Group Areas Act of 1960. Xenophobic attacks are mostly experienced in poverty riddled areas in SA (see Tafira 2011; Nkealah 2011). The behaviour of these boys is influenced by the community. Some of the xenophobic discrimination and threats by the local boys as the researcher has argued above, are over girlfriends or to impress girls in general. Having a girlfriend is a sign of being a real boy as argued in Chapter Four and elsewhere in this study.

The reason of the foreign nationals being laughed at or teased as observed above is not only that they are not from this country. Some foreign nationals cannot speak fluently and write proper isiZulu which is the dominant language at both schools. This draws laughter and teasing from the locals who can write and speak isiZulu fluently. At Mazitike the issue of speaking isiZulu was serious as it was the school home language. As I argued above it was the dominant language even at Multiville where the school home language was English.

Some local boys were violent in their interactions with foreigners. Sidi in a focus group discussion above and during a detailed group discussion pointed out that there was a Venda boy who bullied his Zimbabwean male friend. Ratele (2016b) although arguing among young black men points out that some men are marginalised by among other things

nationality and language. Along the same line although in a different way, young foreign boys like the friends of Sidi and others in the township schools of South Africa are marginalised by their nationality and language. However, there are some local boys like Sidi who fight for the dominated foreign boys.

Seeking attention and impressing girls is important in the construction of a male identity within a school context among the boys as observed in this study. During a focus group discussion with male participants from Multiville Primary the issue of seeking attention by some boys was given as some of the reasons of talking and acting in negative ways towards foreign learners. The following is what unfolded during a group discussion when the researcher asked the male participants why boys laughed or teased foreigners.

LC: Why do they do that?

Chris: Some of them just want attention in class.

Mxolisi: Some of them like to impress the girls.

Masculinity as a social construct is performed in front of others, for others' approval and to further one's heteropatriarchal masculinity. In this study the boys were saying and doing negative things to foreigners to gain attention from other learners in class and to position themselves as 'good' boys in the eyes of the girls. This would help them in acquiring some girlfriends and fulfilling their heterosexual masculinity as outlined in Chapter Four. These local boys are positioning themselves as powerful in the eyes of the girls and other learners.

Some local boys felt they were in a direct heterosexual fulfilment competition with foreign boys and wanted to resort to violence. During a focus group discussion with some male participants from Mazitike Primary on relations between local boys and foreign boys the following unfolded.

Cabashe: There is a certain boy in our class who thinks he is smart. He takes our girlfriends and we are going to beat him, WE WANT TO BEAT HIM!

LC: Where does the boy come from?

Cabashe: He comes from Mozambique but his friend is from KZN.

Cabashe as an SA national thinks he owns the girls and the foreign national boys cannot be in a relationship with them. He thus thinks of resorting to xenophobic violence to solve this issue. The local boy is positioning himself in a dominant way to maintain his superiority as a South African. Like he indicated in another quote earlier, foreigners are denigrated just because they are foreigners. Thus to Cabashe being a South African comes with a status.

Very little if anything is known about the day-to-day experiences of black African immigrant girl learners. Their concerns are normally grouped together with those of other black African girls as a social group yet xenophobic terms are used on them by both local boys and girls. During a focus group discussion by male participants from Mazitike Primary on the relationship between foreigners and locals the following was said.

Modecai: Maybe if a beautiful foreign girl passes by and one boy proposes and if she does not accept they start to scold her. They call them Kwerekweres.

Sidi: Bati AMASHANGAANI! (Cutting short Modecai).

The talk of Modecai and Sidi show that some boys think they own the foreign girls. They don't think foreign girls can turn them down when they tell them that they love them. When the foreign girls don't entertain them they become violent using xenophobic terms. The boys talk is aimed at inferiorising the immigrant girls' sexuality while creating and maintaining a superior status as local boy nationals.

Along the views of Modecai and Sidi many research participants from both schools in this study pointed out that black foreign national learners were often called makwerekwere[11] by other black South African learners. Makwerekwere is a slang derogatory term often used by some black South African citizens on fellow black Africans from other African countries (see Tafira2011; Matsinhe 2011; Vandeyar 2013; Field 2017). The origin of the term makwerekwere lies in language differences. The way black African immigrants speak is incomprehensible to the black South Africans. It is presumed the phonetic sound goes like "kwerekwerekwerekwere", hence the name makwerekwere (Tafira 2011). While the use of the term makwerekwere has its origin in the immigrants' way of talking its now used as a multi-derogatory term for black African immigrants from Africa. Its use now has some overtones of sarcasm levelled against foreigners which has nothing to do with the way they talk.

There is more to calling the foreigners makwerekwere than the way they speak. During a focus group discussion with boys from Mazitike Primary the following unfolded:

LC: What do you think about learners in your class who are not South African citizens?

Cabashe: Some call them amakwerekwere.

[11] This is a term used in South Africa by South African black nationals on black foreigners from other African countries

LC: Why do they call them amakwerekwere?

Rigby: They call them amakwerekwere because they are foreigners. They have good brains and they pass like Rigby he got 49 out of 50 and he is a foreigner.

Suarez: Some of them are laughed at because they do not know how to speak isiZulu.

To some learners like Cabashe as alluded in his earlier talk the term makwerekwere is just a derogatory term used to refer to foreigners. On the contrary, Rigby a foreigner himself points out that it is a term used to refer to foreigners because they are good in class. To Rigby and some boys as the researcher has argued above performing well in class comes with a status. Rigby is indicating a different form of masculinity. To them it is a way of achieving heteromasculinity as they impress and end up having many girlfriends as Rigby claimed in one of his diary entries. The other local boys feel threatened by boys like Rigby so they start to call them with these terms so as to maintain dominance over them. The researcher can thus argue here that the issue of constructing masculinities by the South African citizens versus makwerekwere results in reproducing hierarchies of belonging. Being a South African citizen came with a social status which was denied to immigrant learners. The local black African boys by using these terms may also have been trying to create a dominant social platform for the construction of a male identity by instilling an inferiority complex in the immigrant fellow learners.

Some local boys want to use their oppressive citizenship powers in coercing immigrant girls into a relationship. As indicated by Modecai above if a black African foreign girl refuses to be in a relationship with a black African local boy she can be subjected to xenophobic name calling like kwerekwere. As indicated above by Sidi some black South African nationals call the black African foreigners amaShangaan[12]. Kwerekwere and Shangaan are both derogatory terms used by the local nationals to refer to black African immigrants from Africa. From his own experience as a teacher the researcher once heard a female South African teacher telling a girl child from Zimbabwe in their school not to come to their school with 'amaShangaan hair style'. This girl was not even a Shangaan but an Ndebele. The use of the word amaShangaan by this lady teacher was meant to belittle the foreign child. The use of these terms by the local boys on immigrant girls is meant to belittle foreign girls so that they give in to their heterosexual relationships.

[12] These are the Tsonga people mostly from South Africa and Southern Mozambique. However, the term is now used by some South African citizens in a derogatory manner to refer to people of foreign origin.

Foreign national girls' experiences of discrimination and prejudice as girls are greater than of those of the local national girls. While girls are generally dominated by boys as the researcher has discussed in various sections in this study, some girls are also looked down upon by other girls due to their nationality. At Multiville one male research participant pointed out that some local girls were rude to foreign girls. During a focus group discussion this is what he said.

Zamokuhle: Some girls are also being rude to the other foreign girls.

Their nationality gave these girls the 'superiority' power and feeling to be rude to girls of foreign origin. One foreign female participant from Multiville primary during a detailed individual interview pointed out how some foreign girls had been disrespected at her school.

> Kelly: Mostly, if you are a foreigner like me you don't get the respect that you deserve because they think you are different from them and you a-a-a, YOU ARE NOT LIKE THEM, YOU DON'T FIT IN.

Some local nationals were thus trying to differentiate themselves from the foreign girls. They did not respect the foreign girls to show that they did not qualify or 'fit in' their group. Binaries of differences of belonging were thus enacted to inferiorise foreign learners. It was based on those who were like them and those who were not like them. If you were not from the dominant group (them) that means you did not 'fit in', in fact you were considered as the 'other'. Language as a cultural signifier was used to categorise learners as one of them or not one of them. At both schools the ability to speak and write isiZulu among the black learners was a determining factor of whether one fits in or not or of foreignness. Girls who were considered 'not like them'were thus being relegated to a lower status by other girls. This social practice tends to create a hierarchy of power with local boys at the top of it and girls of foreign origin at the bottom of it. Crenshaw (1991) although working with old women argues that the violence most women experience is also shaped by women's social categories such as race, class and nationality. The violence and discrimination some girls of foreign origin within the township primary schools experience in this study are linked to their nationality and class. Most of these foreigners from poor backgrounds attend school in the townships where they do not pay fees but where xenophobic attacks are on the rise. More xenophobic labelling in this study was experienced at Mazitike Primary, suggesting that immigrant learners are more at risk at this school than at Multiville Primary. The experiences of girls as a social group within townships' primary schools is thus not heterogeneous.

Creating a group called the 'other' involved stereotyping. Stereotyping was used as a tool to discredit and discriminate against black African foreign learners especially at Mazitike Primary. Some local learners especially the boys pointed out that the armpits of foreign boys produced an offensive smell. Matsinhe (2011:305) while studying old foreigners in SA says, "In the South African imagination, African foreign bodies emit foul odours". Black African foreign nationals are perceived as ignorant of the technology of using fragrance to conceal bad body odours. Some black African national boys labelled black African foreign learners as having stinking armpits, suggesting that they were actively learning this behaviour from their communities.

Some local boys discriminate against black African foreign learners not because they are dirty and they have stinking armpits but due to jealousy that some are better than them in class. During a focus group discussion with boys from Mazitike Primary the following unfolded.

LC: What do you think about boys in your class who are not South Africans?

Sidi: Sir, they say they smell, their armpits smell, but others are just happy because they beat us in class. Like today there is a boy who got 49 out of 50.

These views point to stereotyping as argued by Modecai from the same focus group as Sidi.

Modecai: They think they are dirty. If they see one foreigner who is dirty they will end up saying all foreigners are dirty.

These views are in line with those of Rigby a foreigner from Mozambique who argues that local boys don't do well in class and he always does better in class than them. He proceeds to point out in a paragraph below that he got 49 out of 50 in an assessment. To Rigby performing well comes with a heteromasculine status as he is liked by most girls at school as he boasts. To the local boys this becomes a challenge as they see their power waning. This leads to violence as indicated above by Cabashe about black African foreign boys taking their girlfriends. The locals thus resort to violence towards the foreigners when they realise their control and dominance over girls is slipping away. Hearn (In Msibi 2009) commenting on old men on formation of masculinities argues that men may resort to violence if their powers are challenged and under threat. Along the same line boys may become violent when they realise that their heterosexual masculinity power is under threat. Losing a girlfriend to a foreigner is thus a threat to a local boy's heterosexual masculinity.

The foreign black African learners' bodies are observed as objects on which graphic images of hatred and scorn are scribbled. Matsinhe (2011) arguing on the treatment of African foreign nationals in South Africa points out that bodily odours are perceived as evidence of imagined foreignness. The views of Matsinhe are, however, based on grown up men and women. The young black African boys in this study may have thus been learning this talk from their communities so as to maintain a superior and dominant status over the black African foreign learners.

6.8 'Pearl is wearing funny Nike shoes': Class and authenticity

Class is an important social category in the social formation of masculinities. Along this line Reimers & Stabb (2015) argue that class forms the foundation of human identity. However, very little is known about the intersection of gender and class in a township primary school context. Class is a social power category that works to marginalise those who are different. The intersectionality of class and gender within the school environment tends to affect the girls more than the boys as observed in this study. This was mostly noticed at Multiville Primary mostly during civvies days[13]. The issue of class at Multiville Primary was mostly highlighted by the female participants who were mostly the victims as individuals and as girls as a social group. These girls also highlighted how some boys were affected in their social relations with those who could afford to buy expensive clothes and bags.

Class in this study was centred around the issue of consumerism. Consumerism in this study centred around learners who could afford to wear makes of shoes and carry bags of certain brands and those who could afford to put in gold teeth. This was mostly observed among the black African boys which indicates the intersection of class and race with gender in the construction of masculinities. Putting in of gold teeth was not only a way of appearing smart but was used to acquire herosexual power and social status as boys with them reported to be always smilling to charm the girls. Some boys also burnt new clothes as an indication of their socio-economic status. What is interesting here is it was not being done by all the boys, but one particular racial group. This was reported to be mostly done by coloured boys. The intersectionality of gender and class in this study is juxtaposed with race. While this intersection has been studied in the adult world (see Groes-Green 2009; Shefer *et al* 2010; Christensen & Jensen 2014) very little is known about this intersection in boys' narratives in

[13] These are days when learners go to school without uniform but wearing their own clothes. This is normally done during fund-raising days.

constructing boyhood in township primary school context. The way the boys in this study manipulated the resources around them to create a male identity is unique although the aim is the same as with the older men. Black African and coloured boys in this study engaged in different ways to position themselves as social beings with power.

Wearing a certain brand of shoes or clothes is a key to secure a certain identity among some township primary school boys. Boys who came from families which could afford to buy them expensive brands of clothes liked to compare their clothes with those of other boys. By so doing they were trying to show off that they came from better families than those who were not putting on expensive brands of clothing. It is thus imperative to understand the socio-economic background of young boys to understand how they construct masculinity. During a focus group discussion with female participants from Multiville Primary one girl pointed out that boys liked comparing their backgrounds. When the researcher asked how the boys compared themselves another girl from the same group had this to say:

Ntokozo: They always talk about the things that he wears like he always wears clothes with BRANDS and they think that person is much better than the other person.

The following evolved when the researcher asked another group of girls from the same school on how boys behaved to show that they were real boys.

LC: Can you tell me what the boys are doing these days to show that they are real boys?

Mbali: When its civvies day they compare their clothes. Let's say Pearl is wearing funny Nike shoes and I am wearing Adidas. I am gonna say Pearl is wearing fake!

LC: So its mostly done by the boys?

Girls: Yes

This shows that some boys preferred a certain brand of clothes and fashion accessories. These boys think they are much better than the other boys who do not wear those brands or labels. From the viewpoint of the girls the boys wore expensive brands as a status symbol. Ratele (2016b) points out that the issue of labels continues to be popular in South African black urban areas and it remains an axis of meaning for some models of masculinity. The boys in this study were thus constructing a certain form of masculinity through dressing in expensive brands. In a study of 10 and 11 year olds in the UK it was observed that "clothing and footwear was used as an important component in the consctruction, negotiation and

performance of masculinity" (Swain 2002:1). This also indicates the intersection of gender and class. The brands worn had to be 'original' not 'fake'. Nike and Adidas are shoe brands that come with status as indicated by the participants. However, Nike is more expensive than Adidas. The one putting on an Adidas can challenge the type of Nike his competitor is wearing as indicated by Mbali above. Words like 'fake' and 'fong kong' were used to refer to the cheap copies of the expensive brands. Some boys even went to the extent of lifting the legs of some girls to show others that they were not wearing 'original' labels. The following unfolded during a focus group discussion with some girls from Multiville Primary.

LC: The boys want to show off that they have money at home?

Keabetswe: For example, when wearing civvies, you will see them [boys] come to your shoes like (lifts another girl's foot) "What's this? Is this a. (4) you are wearing FAKE! IS THIS ORIGINAL, IS THIS, IS THIS?" and they look at your shirt, "Did you buy this from Total Sport? And if its fake yo-yo, that is why I think it is better for us to wear uniform because if you are wearing civvies everyday there gonna be drama.

LC: Are these the boys who mostly do this?

Keabetswe: Yes! Yes!

LC: Girls don't do that?

Keabetswe: Yes, yes they don't mind.

Mbali: Yes, boys expose you especially when its FAKE. Yooo they come and do this to you (lifting someone's leg by the calf to expose the foot). "Yoooo i-F-A-KE yooo". Then they make a joke of you, yoooo.

The views of the girls above show how the boys valued original expensive brands of clothes and shoes. They might even ask you where you bought them. Total sports is a store that sells good quality sportswear. Learners who bought their clothes there were considered to be richer than the others. Those who come from impoverished families ended up buying their clothes from Chinese shops in Johannesburg as indicated by Noluthando below. Wearing 'original' labels and 'fake' pairs of shoes was an indication of parents' socio-economic status.

Wearing of civilian clothes during civvies days has an impact on the learning process as well as on gender relations. This is in line with Kimmel's view on gender that it is a specific set of behaviours produced in specific social situations (2008). On civvies days some boys even change their style of walking. This means there will be excitement and heightening of emotions as learners from poor families are belittled and laughed at in front of their

classmates. Boys were singled out as the perpetrators. The girls are the ones who debated mostly about this imbalance of power. The views of these girls show that learners from poor backgrounds may feel insecure during civvies days. Keabetswe suggests that it is better to always wear uniform because when they are in civilian clothing there is 'drama' at school. This shows that there is chaos within the school as some learners wear different styles to be seen while some laugh at others not wearing 'original' labels. Although both boys and girls from poor backgrounds were affected by this it had more impact on the girls. While girls as a social group are dominated by the boys, poor girls are also looked down upon by other girls. This means the experiences of girls are not heterogeneous. During a focus group discussion on how boys expose girls wearing 'fake' labels one of the girls had this to say.

Noluthando: Even some girls expose you because they have money at home. They come to you and say, "Heyi made in China, abana imali batenga eJozi". (This is made in China, they don't have money; they buy from Johannesburg).

In Johannesburg there are some Chinese complexes which sell clothes of cheap quality in bulk at very low prices. These are the shops where poor families go to buy clothes. Girls from poor backgrounds are reminded by other girls that they are poor. They are exposed by being told that their families are poor and they buy from shops for poor people. It seems most learners have a general feeling that people who wear clothes labelled 'Made in China" are poor. However, one girl argued that when something is labelled 'Made in China' it doesn't mean its fake. She argued that China is South Africa's biggest trading partner so it doesn't mean that some of these children will be wearing fake. While she shared her sentiments those whose parents could afford expensive clothes for them considered anything labelled 'Made in China' as fake. Buying from the Chinese shops or wearing something labelled 'Made in China' was an indication of someone's social class. The experience of some learners from poor backgrounds, especially the girls on civvies days at Multiville Primary was thus not a pleasant one.

It was not only the expensive shoe brands that were fetishised by the learners at Multiville Primary. The social position of some learners at Multiville Primary was also shown by the bags they carried. Learners mostly boys from the families which could afford to buy their children satchels of good quality and expensive brands as argued by Keabetswe below, looked down upon learners from poor backgrounds.

Keabetswe: Yes, and some black boys (beats her palms in a way to show that I don't

know how some boys at their school behave) (3) they must be very labelled like- and if you don't carry a labelled bag let's say you are carrying like a-a-a

Amogelang:(shouts) Powerland!

Keabetswe: Yes, Powerland or Charmza you are not so cool- you are not so cool (4) you -YOU ARE JUST ANY BOY but if you carry Adidas, Nike, Redlet all these you are the coo::lest. It shows at your house they have money, that's how you actually see the real boys and actually that's how they show off.

Learners who had bags such as Powerland and Charmza were regarded as not cool. Real boys carried books in bags with labels of Adidas, Nike and Redlet. This indicates a hierarchy of brand names. The use of these bags shows the social status of their families. 'Cool' boys were being differentiated from 'just any boy' by the bags they carried. The use of 'any boy' and 'cool boy' indicates a hierarchy of masculinities. The phrase 'just any boy' refers to a male figure passively socialised into a boy whereas 'a cool boy' denotes an actively social and self-uplifted status from a boy status. The views of Keabetswe show that if you cannot afford a bag of a certain brand you don't have the prestigious status and power possessed by the boys who carry their books in the Adidas, Nike or Redlet bags.

Clothes, especially expensive brands are not just innocent pieces of material (Ratele 2016b) that make boys and girls look good but it comes with identities usable by individuals and groups to oppress or charm others. Ratele (2016b) while arguing on the wearing of expensive brands of sneakers in the black African townships of SA points out that they are about acquiring class status, gender status among peers and impressing a certain kind of girl. As the researcher argued above, having an expensive brand of clothes, shoes or bag gave power to someone to look down upon someone who could not afford them. As argued by Kelly below, boys try to show power over each other through their socioeconomic class. The group of boys who come from a poor background is thus marginalised. As indicated by Keabetswe above they are not 'cool' since they are like any other boy. The boys also desired these labels to 'charm' and show off to the girls. The following excerpt came from a female participant during a focus group discussion.

Thando: Some boys they like to wear nice clothes so that their girlfriends can be like that guy has that *va-va-voom* thing. The thing is these days boys are not right.
They are full of show off.

Kelly aired her views during a detailed individual discussion.

Kelly: Others like to show off like, "At our house we have this you don't have that". That's how boys show that they have power over each other.

These boys will be showing off that their families can afford to buy expensive brands of clothes, shoes or bags for them. This shows the social position of the family. Coming from a family that has enough money to buy what they want has prestige and power. Kelly during the same group discussion says she thinks these boys want to impress their friends. Some other girls in the same group suggested that these boys mostly wanted to impress the girls. Thando, one of the girls felt the boys did this mostly to impress their girlfriends and not only girls in general. The views of Ratele are based on his experiences with the young men in townships, thus different to what happens among the young boys in the townships within a school context although they create a base for learning. The views of these mostly black African boys are thus likely to be due to their exposure to the life in the townships. In other research in the townships of SA it was also observed that "adolescent boys are expected to be stylish and wear expensive designer clothes (Langa 2010:2). However, the way the boys at Multiville presented themselves went beyond the wearing of stylish clothes to create social power and a visible male identity.

Consumerisms are directly linked to selfhood. The stylish boys in this study were also reported to walk in a certain way which was also highlighted by Ratele (2016b) commenting on young men. Changing the way they walked was meant to show their class status. The way of walking was meant to draw attention and impress the girls. One of the female participants had this to say during a focus group discussion on boys who wear clothes with reputable labels:

Thandi: They walk like gentlemen and they bump (a style of walking) *wabona* (you see).

When I asked if they walked like this in front of other boys or girls, Thando indicated that they walked like that mostly in front of the girls. When I asked why most of these boys walked like this in front of the girls Thandi had this to say:

Thandi: They want to charm us.

These boys were therefore trying to obtain girlfriends through wearing certain brands of clothes and changing their way of walking. By so doing they were creating a certain male identity. Ratele (2016b) argues that putting on a certain label and walking in a particular way

would create a certain masculine identity. While Ratele's analysis of labels did not dwell much on class but acquiring a social status and male identity, in this study the issue of labels is juxtaposed with the social position of the family. The boys in this study were using their families' social position to enhance their heterosexual masculinity.

Class as a category of difference can also intersect with race and gender in the social formation of a male identity. In this study at Multiville Primary some coloured boys were reported to show that they were real boys by burning new clothes and putting in gold teeth. During a focus group discussion by female participants from Multiville Primary on how boys of different races show they are real boys the following unfolded.

LC: Is there a difference in the way the Indians, the coloureds and the black boys at this school show that they are real boys?

Keabetswe: Mostly coloureds are the skhothane[14] bafaka igold (they put gold teeth).

LC: What do you mean by skhothane?

Mbali: Like izikhothane sir bantu … bamoshe imbahla. Bathenga izicathulo sidulayo baceda bayasishisa, bashisa imali izinto zinjalo. Babonisa abantu kuti hey bacwele cwele (Skhothana sir are people who destroy clothes. They buy expensive shoes then they burn them. They burn money and other things like that. They show people that they have money).

LC: So here at our school the coloured boys do that?

Girl: Yes

However, while the girls argued along this form of identity by the coloured boys they did not single out an incident when it had happened.

Some boys, especially black African boys were also reported to be putting in gold teeth as a status symbol. Some girls pointed out that boys with gold teeth were always smiling to charm the girls. Gold teeth were thus used as a vehicle to fulfil the need for heterosexual masculinity.

Consumerisms especially expensive brands of clothes, pairs of shoes and bags carried meaning tied to identities mostly for black African boys from the townships. It is thus imperative to understand how black African boys socially construct their masculinities in conjunction with class in a school context. Coloured boys on the contrary tried to show their

[14] A Zulu term used to refer to men who show off by buying expensive clothes then burn them.

socio-economic power through burning new clothes. This kind of action by boys of different races within the same school to impress the girls indicates the plurality of masculinities.

The narratives on ‘fake’ and ‘original’ transcend the gender versus class dichotomous discourse to include race. This speaks to the belief and prejudice that anything made in China is ‘fake’. This is anti-Chinese hate speech.

While some boys from Multiville Primary, a middle class school constructed masculinity through consumerisms, some boys at Mazitike Primary, a school riddled with poverty constructed masculinity violently due to limited resources. Boys from Mazitike fell in the caregory referred to as ‘any boy’ as argued above. To prove their boyhood, they thus resorted to violent means. This is the group referred by Connell to as the marginalised. This group will use other means to prove their manhood as argued by Groes-Green (2009), although her views were based on young men. The violent heterosexual relationships exhibited by some boys may thus have been a way of reworking their male superior power and dominance in the midst of poverty.

In conclusion, it is imperative to understand gender through its intersection with other social systems namely age, class, ethnicity, race and nationality. These social relations are mostly oppressive in nature. These unequal social relations shape and reshape the constructions of masculinities. The intersection of gender with these unequal social relations results in the formation of different masculinities.

Boys at Multiville Primary engaged in different sporting activities as a way of showing that they were real boys. These sporting activities were along racial lines. Black African boys at both schools enjoyed playing soccer as a way of showing boyhood. Sport especially soccer is played as a way of claiming to be a real boy (Clark and Paechter 2007; Bhana 2008; Bowely 2013; Bhana and Mayeza 2016). Age was observed at both schools in this study as an oppressive social category. Older boys at both schools bullied younger boys and girls. The intersectionality of gender and class was visible at Multiville Primary school. Boys at this school liked to show off through wearing expensive brands of clothes and carrying books in bags of certain labels. Using bags with labels such as Nike and Adidas made a boy look ‘cool’ and be different from other ‘ordinary boys’. Some boys at this school were reported to like burning new clothes as a way of showing off their social status.

The issue of nationality categorising learners and creating gender identities by some learners at the two primary schools in this research indicates the importance of the intersection of these social divisions. Terms such as makwerekwere and Shangaan were used to refer to immigrant learners. The issue of language is very important in identifying foreignness. There has been research on poverty among learners in general (see Bhana 2005: Parkes 2007; Karlsson 2009: Manyike 2014) and how different races interact (see 2008) but very little if any has been carried out on the day-to-day experiences and views of black African immigrants in SA township schools at primary level. It is imperative to bring up the silenced narratives of the underrepresented social groups within the school context. This study has established that these immigrant learners are accorded an inferior status to the local learners due to their nationality.

The issue of the intersectionality of gender and other social categories revealed that some girls are more affected than the boys. Girls coming from a weaker social group are often looked down upon by other girls. Girls coming from poor backgrounds and of foreign origin were not only laughed at by boys but at times they were also denigrated and looked down upon by other girls. The plight of the girls at these two schools was thus not heterogeneous. It is therefore imperative to seek and understand the lived experiences of these marginalised social groups. The experiences of these girls can be likened to the views of Crenshaw (1991:1242) that "the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class".

Some of the things 'cool' signified in this study range from being studious like the Indian boys, having many girlfriends like the black African boys, belonging to violent gangs like the coloureds, speaking the dominant language and being respectful. However, this depended on the context and group of learners involved. Boys and girls, as they relate within the township school context, reproduce and also construct hierarchies of belonging.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters explored the social and individual construction of masculinities at two primary schools by Grade 7 boys in townships of Ekurhuleni. Various themes were identified with violence and sexual objectification perpetrated by the boys being central. The interaction of violence and sexualisation produces oppressive conditions in which some boys can dominate girls and 'lesser boys'. This calls for a critical scrutiny of boys and masculinities. Violence in this study is shown to be applied by boys to draw boundaries and make exclusions constitutive of 'real boys'. Masculinity construction is one of the central factors that shape the children's play behaviours at primary school in a township setting. Male homosociality and heterosexuality among the Grade 7 boys in this study also plays an important role in the social construction of a male identity. While being homosocial is important in being a real boy, as outlined in the existing literature and studies (see Plummer 2001; Chimanzi 2019), it is not adequate without the appendage of the 'quality' of the heterosexual partner, as the researcher argues in this study. The construction of masculinities in this study is shown to be continuously contested by the alternative voices and actions of the 'lesser' boys and girls as they denounce certain practices of hegemonic masculinities.

Boys in this study socially created 'beautiful' girls and labelled boys who do not endorse or abide by this division as "permanent cows with blind eyes". In fulfilling heteropatriarchal demands some boys adopted violent strategies of "expressing passion with style". Social differences based on the binary of belonging and not belonging were adopted to create and recreate dominant positions and inferiorise the 'other' or the ones who did not 'fit' in. These constructs reflected on and gave meaning to social categories of difference namely: age, social class, race, ethnicity and nationality. While violent masculinities seemed dominant, other alternative and positive masculinities seemed to emerge. The schools played a major role in reproducing the dominant patriarchal masculinities, although the learners were not passive recipients of the socialisation process.

As the researcher draws conclusions and summarises in his findings, he briefly restates the research questions and relates them directly to the findings. This will help understand the title

of the study; '**Young boys at play? Gender relations and township primary school learners' construction of masculinities in South Africa'.** In a nutshell the findings indicate these are not just young 'innocent' boys playing, but young boys actively constructing their male social identities. They are actively constructing masculinities being guided by their physical and social environments. They accept and reject some socialisation aspects of their schools, communities and societies as they actively create their male self and social male identities. They actively construct through different practices what they consider a real boy in relation to a 'real girl'. The inclusion of girls and the use of multiple methods of collecting data in the study helped in understanding alternative masculinities and the voices of the dominated groups. The voices of some boys and girls in their private lives, that is in their diaries, and the voices of the boys in focus group discussion indicate competing forms of masculinity construction and how girls both endorse and reject some of the dominant forms of patriarchal masculinity.

Being a real boy is a particular version of ruling masculinity which Connell refers to as hegemonic masculinity. However, in this study , the researcher argues for the use of the term dominant masculinity since the dominance is resisted by some boys and girls. This version of masculinity is normative, dominant, naturalised and it is created through a demand for conformism. 'Real boys' in this study are reproducing a particularly toxic form of masculinity which is violent, sexually violating, repressive and destructive to girls, to other boys and also to themselves since they are also exposed to more violence and risky practices. This explains why South Africa's levels of violence against women and male homicides by other males are amongst the highest in the world. However, these boys are challenged by the girls who point out that such boys are not 'cool'. To these girls, 'real boyhood' is synonymous with being a 'cool boy'. To most girls respect was a resource of 'coolness' or boyhood. Girls argued that the boys were supposed to respect the teachers and the girls. These girls and other boys are creating alternative masculinities with practices of egalitarianism and inclusion.

In this chapter the researcher summarises and makes conclusions of the research findings, draws some limitations of the study and concludes by airing some policy and research recommendations.

7.2 Summary and conclusion of research findings

Masculinities in this study are considered as male signs (Brittan 1989) or male self-presentations (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill 2003) that boys (re)produce through practices to become 'real boys' or 'cool boys' to themselves or others in any given context and time. Masculinity construction by these young boys is thus for self-actualisation as well as social acceptance. The boys in this study were actively constructing masculinities and as they did so they used their physical and social environments. In short masculinities in this study are shown to be hierarchical, multiple, collective, active constructions and dynamic (see Connell 1996). However, some boys and girls rejected the dominant violent forms of masculinity and endorsed alternative and non-violent forms of masculinity.

The identified and discussed themes in Chapters Four,Five and Six are summarised below. The stated objectives, research questions and existing literature is related to where possible.

7.2.1 Boys' masculinities and homosocial and heterosexual desires

The talk and behaviour of some boys defeat the assumption by the adults of child innocence in the study of sexuality (see (Thorne & Luria 2002; Bhana 2013a; Prinsloo & Moletsane 2013) and masculinity construction. The talk and the behaviour of these boys tend to equip them with power to dominate social relations with girls. In this study most research participants both male and female at both schools subscribed to homosocial bonds while being heterosexual. Their talk and positioning as real boys go beyond childhood in the eyes of the adults and current literature as they 'play' with 'sex terms' in enforcing their dominance.

Homosociality as a way of showing that one was a real boy was observed on how social boundaries were created during play and in other associations when not in class. Maintaining homosocial bonds among the boys also helped them, paradoxically, in acquiring heterosexual relationships. Boys in this study constructed their ideas of what it means to be a real boy in constant reference to the practices and definitions of girlhood. This is in line with Kimmel's view that masculinity only obtains meaning in relation to femininity (Kimmel 1987; 2008)

This section answers one of the research questions stated as, 'What **are the masculinitiesas in individual and collective social forms in two township primary schools of Ekurhuleni in South Africa?'** Boys within their schools constructed masculinity through maintaining their homosocial bonds. Boys created gender boundaries during play time, mostly through

their games of soccer. The boys argued that the girls did not know how to play the game as well as talk about the game knowledgeably despite some girls having a knowledge of the game. This is in line with other research carried out with young boys although in a different context and with different age groups (see Epstein *et al* 2001; Clark and Paechter 2007; Bhana 2008; Bowely 2013; Bhana and Mayeza 2016). Through their games some boys created the binary of hard and soft bodies to maintain boundaries and dominance over the girls. Homosocial transgression was thus not supported by most boys. These boys were thus playing or drawing boundaries and making exclusions (see Connell 2002, 2005) in constructing their masculinities.

Maintaining male to male social relationships helped the boys to share some social problems. Some boys pointed out that real boys should share their problems with other boys and not girls.

While much research has been done on gender roles and sexuality (see Shefer *et al* 2010; Msibi 2012) very little has been done in understanding how tasks are divided in the school context and how it can be traced to the influence of the apartheid period. Boys also tried to create gender boundaries through dividing work along gender lines. Some boys categorised cleaning as girls' work. Most participants pointed out that at home most of the cleaning was done by female members of the family. The refusal of some boys to clean the classroom was thus informed by their family backgrounds. Gender roles or tasks tend to support and perpetuate male dominance and patriarchy. Some girls also aligned themselves with dominant narratives of gender roles when they pointed out that it was the duty of the boys to provide for and protect the girls. This indicates the importance of including the girls in the study as some endorsed this form of culturally dominant partriarchal masculinity. The issue of boys as providers mostly came from the girls' diaries. The idea of boys entrusted with the role of provider can be partly attributed to colonial era migrant labour where men were the ones who were allowed to go to town and work to sustain themselves and their families while many women remained in the rural areas raising the family which is care work. It is thus imperative to understand the historical institutionalised categorisation background of SA as it forms the backdrop in the social construction of young masculinities. Some teachers were also giving different tasks to boys and girls endorsing a gender division of labour which advances male dominance. There was solidarity among boys who did not want to clean the

classroom. Insisting on this behaviour reflects on the pattern of the past in which men were 'naturally' considered dominant (Lindegger 2006).

While boys did not like to play with girls, they endorsed heterosexual pursuit of girls as a sign of being a real boy. Both male and female participants in both schools reiterated that boys enjoyed sitting in groups talking mostly about girls. Male participants also talked about helping each other to acquire girlfriends. The boys' repetitive talk about and obsession with sex was also observed in a related study of Grade 7 boys in an inner-city school in KZN in South Africa. (see Martin & Muthukrishna 2011).

In this study it was in their homosocial groups that they talked about 'beautiful' girls. These girls were said to have 'sexy bodies'. Sexy bodies were characterised by having 'curves, big bums and wide hips'. Words like "uneshwaba" referring to girls with flat buttocks were constantly used by some boys in objectifying and inferiorising some female bodies as they did not match the classification of 'beauty'. Boys who did not choose 'beautiful' girls were also relegated to an inferior status. They were likened to "permanent cows with blind eyes". So boys who do not go for verified girls are feminised as 'cows'. This indicates that these boys in their endeavour to create a real boy went beyond the heterosexual praxis the researcher discussed in the literature section to discipline girls by imposing heteropatriarchal ideas of acceptable female embodiment through socially constructed characteristics of 'beauty'. Some boys used animal metaphors to dehumanise and inferiorise the girls that do not conform to heteronormative standards of beauty. Ratele (2011) arguing on older men points out that manliness is closely associated with what is construed to be the sexual appeal of the female partner. Some male and female participants talked about some boys engaging in sexual intercourse in attempts to demonstrate accomplishment of a dominant norm of heteromasculinity.

Through homosocial encouragements conforming boys attempted and sometimes succeeded in having multiple girlfriends. Both male and female participants at both schools pointed out that some boys had many girlfriends. While some girls complained that it hurt their feelings some boys justified their emotional and sexual promiscuity as a sign of being a 'real boy'. The ability to have and control many girlfriends came with prestige among many boys. This shows similar results in a study carried out with older boys at high school in the context of masculinity and HIV in the rural areas of KZN (Sathiparsad 2007; Sathiparsad *et al* 2010). Boys drew inspiration from their communities which regarded having multiple partners as a

sign of manhood. This was mostly done by black African boys of all nationalities and ethnic groups and of different social class backgrounds unlike the study in KZN.

Homosociality and heterosexuality are key interconnected themes in the construction of young masculinities. The researcher can thus argue in this study that homosociality among the young boys plays a central role in framing oppressive terms for heterosexual relationships (see Chimanzi 2019). However, the boys' homosocial stances are distinctly homophobic. At the same time the heterosexual desires should not supersede homosocial desires. Homosocial stances among the boys in this study are powerful tools in defining, shaping and maintaining themselves in heteropatriarchal positions. Transgressing homosociality called for a penalty on the transgressors, as such transgressors are subjected to stigmatisation as gays or lesbians. Checks and balances have to be maintained to make sure boys remain in a homosocial position while being heterosexual. To be a real boy entailed having a girlfriend yet maintaining homosocial associations so as to be able to maintain the heterosexual relationship. It is in a homosocial relationship that one learns and understands heterosexual relationships. Failure to maintain both crucial aspects that characterise boyhood results in one being relegated to an inferior status within the hierarchy.

While many boys prided their maintenance of homosocial bounderies as an enactment of masculinity, some girls mostly through their diary entries argued and criticised those partriachal practices. Some girls made entries in their diaries on how they negotiated with boys to join them in their games. The girls were arguing against the perceptions of the boys that they were 'soft' and therefore incompetent in games of soccer. This is an attempt by the girls to position themselves on an equal footing with the boys.

Girls did not passively accept the domination by the boys. At times boys invaded the girls' play to disrupt them and take their balls. This is in line with other research on gender with young boys and girls (see Connell 2002). This aggressive approach by the boys is to show their power and dominance. However, in this study the girls responded in aggressive ways to protect their social and physical space. Some girls reported in their diaries that they became 'cheeky' when the boys disturbed their play. Some girls also get drawn into paradoxically resisting while simultaneously reproducing patriarchy by using an anti-woman discourse to assert themselves against boys.

7.2.2 Play, bravery bravado, intimacy and violence

Violence is central in the construction of young masculinities in the township primary schools as observed at both Mazitike and Multiville primary schools. Some boys used force to control others and to get what they wanted from some girls and some younger boys. Homophobia, abusive behaviour, bravery bravado and disrespecting authority are some of the social practices adopted by some boys to identify themselves as real boys. However, these violent constructions of masculinities were not passively accepted by some boys and girls. Some boys were,however, in complicity with this macho version. It is in this section that the research question "How are boys' identities drawn from repertoires of violence and discipline in schools, and the generalized violence that typifies dominant constructions of masculinity?"is going to be exemplified.

7.2.2.1 Homophobia-related violence

To most boys in this study heterosexuality is considered the only legitimate and appropriate form of sexuality. Some boys in this study constructed masculinity through demonstrations of misogyny and homophobia. Both male and female research participants in this study did not want to be associated with being gay or lesbian as these derogatory terms carry with them the risk of homophobia-related violence. Homophobia-related violence is "an instrument of gender and sexual oppression" (Judge 2018:11). Homophobic words such as 'moffie' and 'stabane' were used against boys who associated more with girls to coerce them to toe the line of heteronormativity. Homosociality as a mode to reinforce dominant forms of male identity guides some boys to patrol and stigmatize behaviours construed as abnormal (see McGuff & Rich 2011). Homosociality was thus prescribed while homosexuality was proscribed for and by both boys and girls.

The view of masculinity as necessarily homophobic is entrenched in the learners' social cultural background. Some male participants especially at Mazitike Primary highlighted in their diaries how gays and lesbians were treated in their communities. During focus groups many participants from both schools while denigrating homosexuality argued that it was 'natural' to be heterosexual. These views seem to fit into the argument of Michael Kimmel. He argues that "The fear of being perceived as gay, as not a real man, keeps men exaggerating all the traditional rules of masculinity" (Kimmel 1994:133). The fear of being referred to as gay made nearly all the boys consider heterosexuality natural and thus the normal way of expressing sexuality. Boys were fearful of lesbians taking their girlfriends.

These boys wanted girls to keep on 'servicing' heterosexuality for being lesbian is considered a threat to hetero-patriarchal power and masculinity (see Ratele 2011a). Ratele points out that lesbianism in most African contexts is considered a threat to the dominance of African men. Ratele's analysis was related to the views of older black African members of society. In this study along the same line the boys argued that lesbianism disrupted the sexual order. These boys wanted to perpetuate a heteropatriachal order. The views of these boys are learnt from the community and heterosexism nurtured among boys is to be reproduced again in the adult world. This explains the continued homophobic harassment that epitomises South African society (see Nel & Judge 2008). This points to the problem of heteronormativity and calls for a critical study on boys and masculinities to understand the normalisation and naturalisation of heteromasculinity and its 'toxic' privileges.

Some male and female research participants were not complicit with heterosexual power domination. They provided a competing form of masculinity which is non-normative and draws on other principles, such as heterosocial engagement, non-violence, allowing boys to be more emotional and less hypersexual. They did not consider it being a real boy to impose gender and sexual designs on another. However, these participants were quick to point out that while they did not see anything wrong with homosexuals that did not mean they were also homosexual.

The fear of being labelled gay resulted in some boys adopting contradictory positions in the production of their public and private selves. During focus group discussions a certain boy argued aginst homosexuality but in his diary he refers to it in affirming ways. Other participants in their diaries and during a detailed interview regarded this male participant as a homosexual. His public association with girls led these participants to label him homosexual. The use of multiple data collection methods helped in establishing these contradicting two faces of one boy.

7.2.2.2 Play and abusive behaviour

In as much as most boys tried to maintain gender boundaries, like learners sharing the same world (see Swain 2005) in this study the boys and girls at times would sit, talk and play together. However, the interactions were characterised by boys' patriarchal domination, bullying, toxic passion, fighting prowess validation and bravery bravado. The relations were characterised by these violent acts and some boys considered it the way to be real boys. Violence in this study is thus constitutive of gender relations (see Kimmel 2004; Hearn

2012). In this study the violence against the girls is done by the boys known to the girls and some who have a 'passion' for the same girls. The use of words like passion and love by some of these boys in this way denotes a set of heteropatriachal practices, justifying violence and aimed to ensure male domination. South Africa is considered as one of the countries with the highest levels of femicide and rape in the world. This points to the wide spread of domestic and gender-based violence in SA (Peacock 2013; Statistics South Africa 2018). Based on the data obtained in this study schools are like training grounds for GBV. This relates to the views of Connell (1996) that schools are fertile terrains in the construction of different versions of masculinities.

Some boys' play was characterised with abuse. They also talked of different ways or 'styles' of expressing passion to justify violence. They tried to dominate the girls' physical and social spaces as a social group and as individuals. During play some boys took advantage of their proximity to the girls and fondled their breasts and touched their buttocks. It was highlighted by some boys that most boys drew pleasure in touching and fondling girls' breasts. This approach by some boys makes girls feel like objects and the unwanted sexual advances degrade them (see Martin & Muthukrishna 2011) and inferiorise them. These meanings boys gave their sexual behaviours, feelings and fantasies are decisive elements in the construction of masculinity (see Ratele 2011a on older men).

Constructing and maintaining the heteropatriarchal power and masculinity through coercion was notably practised by black African boys in both schools. Some boys became aggressive when turned down by girls as potential boyfriends. They resorted to using insulting words to inferiorise the girls. Insults such as "you are ugly and fat" were used to make girls feel bad, as indicated in the diaries of some girls. Most boys did not, however, realise their coercive power as they regarded it as a way of being a real boy. This speaks to the invisibility of dominant forms of power to the ones privileged to possess it (Kimmel 2008) in unequal power relations between the boys and girls. However, some girls in their diaries pointed out that on rare occasions they fought the boys' domination by insulting them in return or telling the teachers.

In maintaining boundaries some boys resorted to violence. Some boys played rough to make sure they created and maintained homosocial groups and playing space for themselves. They would kick or use abusive words to make sure girls did not join them. Violence is thus used to justify male homosociality and perpetuate male dominance during informal encounters in

the playground. By so doing the boys would acquire resources such as playing space for themselves. This is in line with existing literature on child play although in different contexts (See Connell 2000a; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2003; Swain 2005; McGuffey & Rich 2011).

Some boys did not welcome equality from the girls when they played together. When defeated they would resort to violence. They would even ask what type of a girl defeats a boy. Being defeated by a girl indicates a crisis in the patriarchal dominance of masculinity resulting in violence against the girls.

Some boys constructed masculinity through teasing other learners. Some girls pointed out that some boys liked teasing girls so that they can develop low self-esteem. Some girls pointed out that this makes them lose concentration in class thinking about what the boys do to them. This answers the research question. "How do constructions of masculinity systematically affect girls' and boys' schooling and life in general?" They also pointed out that they also do this to show off to their friends. Masculinity is constructed in front of others thus the behaviour of the boys relates to Butler's theory of performativity. Teasing was also used as a vehicle to provoke a fight. Both male and female participants at both schools pointed out that boys especially coloureds and black Africans liked fighting. They indicated that the boys engaged in fights to show their strength and power. Fighting also emanated from the shortage of resources such as furniture especially at Mazitike and over boyfriends and girlfriends. Poverty thus results in the construction of violent masculinities.

If boys compete with one another for girlfriends this will create homosocial tension (see Kimmel 2004; Morrel & Swart 2005) and violent masculinities. Some older boys wanted to forcefully acquire girlfriends from younger boys. Some SA boys also seemed to be competing for girlfriends with boys from other countries. At Multiville Primary some female participants pointed out that girls always fought for boyfriends. The boys at the school were reported to have multiple girlfriends. The boys were thus causing violence through their multi-heterosexual relationships. To the boys as the researcher argued above having many girlfriends was a sign of being a real boy. Engaging in physical fights to solve problems indicates that violence is the only way of solving disputes in this community. The eruption of violence among the boys and between the boys and girls in this study hinges on the construction of masculinity (see Hamlall & Morrell 2012).

While violent masculinities characterised what it meant to be a real boy in the two schools in this study, non-violent alternative masculinities were also emerging. These forms of 'doing

boy' were not informed by homosocial bonding although it was common among some groups of boys. Some of these boys enjoyed playing with girls and felt bad when other boys did not like to play with the girls. Some boys argued that cleaning was not girls work only. When the macho boys defied the teachers on cleaning the classrooms they cleaned the classrooms with the girls. By cleaning at school and home without complaining these boys were adopting new ways of being a boy as they rejected that boyhood is shown by shunning some tasks traditionally considered feminine. MacLean (2009) writing on older men points out that engaging in non-traditional work roles is an indication of engaging in alternative masculinities.

7.2.2.3 Violence through disrespecing authority and bravery bravado

Some of the boys in the two schools in this study showed disrespect for teachers as an apparent sign of masculine achievement. Both male and female participants in their narratives indicated that many boys did not do their class work, made a noise in class, bunked lessons and were rude to teachers. Some of these boys showed bravery bravado by even challenging bigger boys and teachers .

Some of the mentioned boys thought showing disrespect for authority was a sign of manhood. This relates to what Connell (1996) refers to as protest masculinity. Rule breaking as demonstrating masculinity is an imperative end where resources of obtaining or defending prestige are scarce. The behaviour of these boys relates to the protests against the illegitimacy of apartheid laws and how these legacies have continued into the present era. Some participants pointed out that they lost learning time due to protests in their communities. Protests and formation of violent masculinities are common among the black communities in SA (see Langa & Kiguwa 2013).

Violence was not only meted out on other learners by the macho boys. Some teachers were also repeatedly abused in their execution of duty. Some boys disturbed the teaching and learning process by teasing other learners while reading or just passing some rude comments about the teacher when he or she is teaching. Some boys were reported to be calling some teachers by nasty names or moving tables to make a noise when teachers get to class. Some would even refuse to answer questions while others would throw their hands in the air in a disrespectful way while talking to the teachers. Some boys bunked lessons to gamble. These acts were described as seeking attention and respect from the girls. These findings relate to other findings in the townships although with high school boys (see Langa 2010; Mncube &

Harber 2013). These boys became popular through disrespecting authority and some girls were proud of them. The behaviour of some of these boys fits into the growing body of literature on disruptive behaviour by school boys and how the behaviour is attributed to the schools' disciplinary practices, gender politics and hegemonic masculinity (see Bantjes & Nieuwoudt 2014). Of interest is the nexus between violent masculinities and sexuality. Most of the violent boys wanted attention to achieve a heterosexual relationship. To them it was like a strategy to fulfil their heterosexual desires. Many participants pointed out that by being disrespectful these boys thought it would gain them sexual access to girls. The use of diaries helped the girls expose this behaviour among the boys. This helps generate new qualitative data on the ways in which masculinities and gender relations are formed among South African primary school boys.

However, some boys constructed and maintained alternative non-violent masculinities. These were the academic boys who rejected the dominance of violent masculinities by even calling it 'stupidity'. To them real boys must do their work and focus on having a bright future marked with beautiful houses and cars. The behaviour of these boys within the same institution points to the multiplicity of masculinities. These are the boys who would even attempt to stop GBV in their community and not only at school as the researcher discussed in Chapter Five.The views of these boys are informed by their families and public media on GBV.

As corrective measures to bad behaviour teachers would detain learners doing homework, letting them clean classrooms or call their parents. Some of the parents did not turn up when they were called by the school. This was like endorsing the dominant violent behaviour of their children. The boys also complained that all the punishments which they were given favoured girls. Detaining boys longer than girls for the same offence is tantamount to teachers creating tough boys. The corrective measures taken by the schools were not enough as the boys continued with their behaviour unabated. As observed by all the participants at Mazitike Primary, a whole Grade 7 class was suspended for ridiculing a teacher but nothing changed. Most of the boys whether younger or older were involved in undermining teachers actively or by means of complicity. They were creating a fearlessness form of masculinity yet undermining the teaching and learning process. By failing to curb the violent constructions of masculinity the schools are endorsing blindly unequal power relations. This creates and

perpetuates toxic young patriarchal masculinities while in the adult world efforts are being made to eradicate them.

Fearlessness in the face of danger defines a real boy. Some young boys in this study wanted to draw attention and portray themselves as fearless in front of girls by challenging older boys. Some boys also engaged in physical fighting amongst themselves as an indication of fearlessness. Gangs of boys also showed fearlessness. These forms of fearlessness relate to what was highlighted in other studies with children (see Murnen *et al* 2002; Parkes 2007) with the exception that bravery bravado in this study and meant to achieve a heteropatriarchal status. The actions and behaviour by most boys in this study were informed by the desire to have many girlfriends. The model of fearlessness "persuades many young males to actively support the idea that successfully masculine males are always ready for a fight, ignore pain, play it cool and, of course, never show fear" Ratele 2016b:50).

Ratele proceeds to point out that not allowing feelings of fearlessness and vulnerability stem from dominant cultural construction of masculinity.

7.2.2.4 Masculinities and other social categories of difference

Masculinities in this study was understood in relation to other categories of difference. Related to observations in this study, Yuval-Davis writing on categories of difference namely gender, class, race, ethnicity, age and nationality argues that "these are not just different categories of social location, but categories that also have a certain positionality along an axis of power, higher or lower than other such categories" (Yuval-Davis 2006: 199). These social divisions were socially created by some boys within the school context in an attempt to create a male identity. It is in this section that the research question "What is the nexus between constructions of masculinity and class, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation and nationality?" is related to the information obtained in the study.

However, the aspect of sexual orientation has been addressed in the preceding sections so it will not be discussed here. This section also helps in understanding further the aim of the research by discussing the sources used as guides in the construction of masculinities.

Class as a category of difference that has a bearing in the construction of masculinities was noticed at Multiville Primary. The issue of class was centred around consumerism. Some children who came from families which could afford to buy them expensive clothes, shoes and bags showed off. The issue of wearing clothes, pairs of shoes and bags of certain brands

was common among the black African boys. The findings in this study relates to the available literature from the West as argued by Swain that clothing and footwear are important components in the construction, negotiation and performance of masculinity (Swain 2002). In this study boys who wore Adidas or Nike shoes were regarded as 'cool'. These boys normally walked in a stylish way to draw attention and show off their status. The use of labels and walking in particular ways in creating a male identity relates to other studies although with older people in SA townships (see Ratele 2016b). Ways and styles of presenting oneself are important aspects in creating a male identity. Hearn on the critical studies on men and masculinity while criticising Connell's definition of hegemonic masculinity. argues on ways and styles of male presentations going above cultural presentations (see Hearn 2012). These are the ways and styles in this study some boys are actively exhibiting as they adopt, reject, construct and reconstruct what they consider appropriate gender identities using the available resources. They are not passively assimilating cultural and societal socialisation processes but they are using the wealth their families have in presenting themselves in a particular way within their school context. The satchels for their books also fall in with this stylish way they presented themselves. They also prided themselves over the shops where they bought their clothes. The boys also used the terms 'original' and 'fake' to categorise learners who came from poor families. The poor and the marginalised group is the one referred to as any other in other studies although on older people (see Posel 2010). This is the group referred to as 'not part of us' in this study. It is through the gender lens of the female participants that this research managed to identify these social constructions. The female participants critically discussed the impact of these constructions on their social and learning processes. The female participants denounced the wearing of civilian clothes at school as it exposed the poverty of some learners and also affected the learning process as the 'real boys' paraded their status.

Bearing in mind that these ways and stylish actions were coming from black African boys at a middle class school, requires one to look at the issue of race. This speaks to the issue of race, class and identity formation in post-apartheid SA in which the black men and women want to position themselves in a favourable manner (see Narunsky- Laden 2008; Posel 2010) bearing in mind how they were disadvantaged during the apartheid era. Middle-classness among black Africans is produced as a collective and individual identity through patterns and practices of consumption (see Narunsky- Laden 2008). Some boys in this study see themselves as occupying a certain position and status within their school among other

learners. To show this they have to dress in a particular way, walk in a particular way and carry bags of certain brands. Narunsky- Laden (2008) argues that an apartheid state continues to inform and shape identity options in post-apartheid South Africa. The behaviour of these boys speaks to the intersections of race, gender and class as simultaneous social processes of creating a male identity. Although this was done mostly by boys, a few girls were reported also to look down upon other girls. The experiences of girls at Multiville were thus not homogenous. This relates to the concept of intersectionality as argued by Crenshaw.

The participants used the binary terms 'cool' and 'not cool' to differentiate between what they called 'any boy' from a real boy. 'Any boy' pointed to any biological male figure in their class while being a real boy or cool boy went beyond the biological in his active social presentation. The real boy is the stylish one who always wants to draw the attention of other learners. These are the boys actively emulating dominant forms of masculinity around them or actively constructing masculinity using the resources around them.

The participants pointed out that boys wore expensive brands of clothes and shoes and carried books in satchels of certain brands to gain status among peers and impress a certain kind of girl. Expensive clothes are thus not innocent pieces of material (Ratele 2016b) but tools used by certain boys to impress, charm and at the same time oppress. By boasting about the wealth they have at their homes and laughing at other learners, boys will be ascertaining their power and superiority.

While the black African boys constructed their identity by wearing expensive clothes and shoes, the coloureds showed off by burning expensive things such as shoes and clothes. Both coloured boys and black African boys also liked to put in gold teeth as a sign of status. Some girls pointed out that these boys were always smiling to charm them. Class was thus being used as a vehicle to fulfil a heterosexual status. Indian boys on the other hand constructed masculinity through working hard in class and being obedient. Within the same school boys of different races were thus constructing different masculinities.

Ethnic identification played a crucial role in how some boys constructed masculinity. The Tsonga and the Pedi boys presented a different version of boyhood at Mazitike Primary. They embraced gender equality. These boys were reported not to show any sign of violent masculinities as compared to other boys. One of the Tsonga boys also pointed out that at home he watched television with his parents on issues of gender violence and discussed it

with them. This played a crucial role in displaying an alternative positive way of being a real boy. His support for the emancipation of girls went beyond the school boundaries when he 'faked' calling his uncle to intervene when he saw a group of boys abusing girls in his community. This speaks to the importance of diaries in this study in exhibiting the private face of life that was not evident in focus group discussions among the boys. To these boys understanding the plight of girls was a sign of being a real boy. Along this line Bhana (2005) argues that masculine identities in schools reach back to the family and their social location.

Boys construct masculinity in relation to femininity as alluded to in various chapters and sections in this study. This finding relates to what happens in the adult world (see Kimmel 1987). One Zulu boy argued during a focus group discussion that as a Zulu boy he was not supposed to play netball and other soft games like girls. Zulu boys were supposed to play games that make them 'hard' and strong like rugby and soccer. The playing of these games by the Zulu boys was thus informed by their interpretation of their 'culture' which required them to be strong and muscular and be different from girls. A Zulu girl pointed out that according to the Zulu culture real boys were not supposed to play with girls and were supposed to respect them and not just touch them the way other boys did. However, she argued that some Zulu boys at her school were not constructing masculinity according to the Zulu culture.

This points to contesting versions of what it means be a real boy in the Zulu culture. This fits into the argument of Connell (1996) that within one cultural setting there can be more than one kind of masculinity. On the other hand, since culture and ethnicity are not static, masculinity construction among the boys in this study could be undergoing reconfiguration. These boys were taking an arbitrary position in their relationship with the girls. These boys like other boys from other ethnic backgrounds were actively constructing their masculinities drawing lessons from their communities and school which were comprised of different cultures. This relates to the argument by Connell that children are not passive recipients of the socialisation process but actively construct their identities based on the resources available.

Some boys and girls in this study were dominated and oppressed by older boys, thus it is critical for studies of boys and masculinities to take an intersectional approach within the school context. They were beaten, money and food forcefully taken away from them and asked to run some errands for the older boys. Some participants pointed out that these older

boys did this to show that they were 'cool'. Thus masculinity is performative as argued by Butler in her study of gender. Coolness was associated with being a real boy. They wanted to appear 'cool' by drawing attention to themselves and the girls they liked. Some participants argued that the older boys wanted to show off their physical power by dominating other learners. This is in line with available literature as argued by Bhana & Mayeza (2016: 38) that "the higher levels of violence in Grade 7 boys compared to other grades is linked to the construction of masculinities, age, size and body in the play of power over other boys in the lower grades". By not telling the elders about their oppression some learners were legitimating and endorsing the superiority of the patriarchal boys. However, some younger Grade 7 boys at Multiville pointed out that they challenged the domination of the older boys by fighting back.

Age related violence was more pronounced at Mazitike Primary. Poverty could be the contributing factor as it brings with it complex intersectionalities of oppressive social relations (see Manyike 2014). In the lack of other resources violence becomes the only form of solving problems and acquiring what one wants. The older boys were drawing lessons from their violent communities as indicated in some of their violent protests which the researcher has alluded to in the earlier chapters. Most of the research participants in this school also pointed out that their fathers were the only ones going to work indicating a patriarchal socially privileged community. The jobs they did however, indicated a marginalised group. Their violent formation of masculinity may thus have been a reworking of a male superiority identity in the context of poverty (see Groes-Green 2009).

Nationality is a category that represents a violent type of power relation within a school. In this study black African learners of foreign origin were denigrated and relegated to an inferior status by indigenous black SA learners. Xenophobic terms such as *makwerekwere* and a*mashangani* were used against the learners of foreign origin. These terms were used during informal debates in class or when playing. These terms were mostly used by the black South African boys against boys of foreign origin and against foreign girls to a lesser extent if they turned them down in their heterosexual advances. Foreign girls were also looked down upon by some local girls. The experiences the girls received were thus not homogenous. This relates to the views of intersectionality by Crenshaw. Some foreigners were labelled as having stinking armpits. Labelling the foreigners was meant to inferiorise and perpetuate dominance over them. Due to fear of labelling nearly all the participant foreigners in this

study did not want the researcher to know that they were foreigners. These learners seemed to be learning these xenophobic utterances from their communities since xenophobia is evident in most poor black townships of SA (see Nkealah 2011; Tafira 2011; Field 2017).

Detailed individual interviews with foreign participants showed that local black African boys used xenophobic statements to appear 'cool' and draw the attention of the girls. However, some foreign boys indicated that they were not scared of those boys because they were better than them in class. The foreign boys were thus creating a competing alternative form of masculinity. Some of the foreign boys also prided themselves in having many girlfriends as a sign of boyhood. These boys were thus repositioning their male identity through non-violent means.The local nationals may have been resorting to violent utterances against the foreign nationals when they realised their power was under threat.

Pronunciation of isiZulu terms was an indicator of an immigrant learner's status and amounted to social ridicule and inferiorisation. Some foreign research participants indicated to the researcher during detailed interviews that they were not segregated because no one knew that they were foreigners as they had started Grade R at their schools and spoke isiZulu the dominant African language with an acceptable accent. However, at Multiville Primary some coloureds and Indians felt alienated during play time as they did not understand isiZulu which was spoken by most learners although the school's home language was English. In this study since isiZulu was the dominant language this was used as a vehicle to provoke, alienate and dominate learners of other minority racial and nationality backgrounds.

In conclusion, the study has aimed to contribute to the scholarship on young boys' construction of masculinities in the township schools of Ekurhuleni in SA and how it impacts on gender relations. In this study it has been revealed that being a real boy is not a homogenous phenomenon. Boys construct masculinities actively being informed by culture, community, family, social and physical environments. Violence is a constitutive ingredient in the social construction of these masculinities. The experiences of some female learners and some boys in the SA township schools indicate that they are exposed to an invisible form of violence. The inclusion of female participants and the use of diaries in this study helped in understanding young masculinity construction and its impact on gender relations. It was through diaries that most girls managed to bring to the fore their experiences. Their experiences bring rich literature which is absent in most studies on chidren in the middle age group. The use of homogenous sex groups also made the girls speak without fear. Oppressive

social categories are created oblivious to the adult world. Terms like ‘unesishwapha’ (you have flat buttocks) and you are ‘a permanent cow with blind eyes’ are meant to dehumanise and inferiorise certain groups of learners while honouring others. This speaks to the quality of the heterosexual partner. Objectifying and describing girls sexually points to the importance of language and discourse in producing gender inequality, also for these boys. This social categorisation of some girls and boys goes beyond heterosexual and homosexual literature in most research. To the boys possessing dominant power is normal (see Kimmel 2008). Masculinities are multiple, active constructions created and recreated through individual and collective efforts. As boys engage and interact with each other and girls they are not just playing but actively and aggressively constructing masculinities. The relationship between boys and girls in a township primary school context is power oriented thus it requires a gender lens in understanding the criticalness of the study of boys and masculinities to understand and also reflect on the adult violence in the SA social landscape.

It is thus imperative to problematise boys and young masculinities to understand the violence that typifies the adult world. Some boys try to dominate other boys and girls. As they do so they use the available resources such as culture, community, family, school and other social categories of difference namely age, class and nationality to position themselves. Experiences of abuse of learners in the minority in the school context are less known. The study also aimed to look and understand the experiences of the minority groups of learners around gender relation issues in the school context. The minority groups included immigrant learners, non-black Africans or learners who did not speak isiZulu the dominant language.

Schools consider boys as naughty and violent instead of understanding them as complex subjects whose behaviours are influenced by gendering pressures to conform to dominant forms of male identity. The term real boy was used to indicate an active construction of masculinity rather than using the term boy which is more aligned to the sex role theory. A child born with a male organ is labelled a boy and thus passively socialised along that line. In this study the ‘real boys’ behaviour went above the naturalised and limited ‘‘boys will be boys’’ phenomenon. Boys are not passive recipients of the socialisation process but active subjects constructing as groups and individuals what they consider an appropriate male identity- this is what it means to be a real boy. Keabetswe a female participant from Multiville Primary on numerous occasions during focus group discussions tried to distinguish what she called ‘any boy’ from a real boy. At one stage she pointed out that if one is a boy

and is still a virgin he was not considered a real boy. This meant one needed to be actively involved in an intimate relationship to be considered a real boy. In another discussion on consumerisms she argued that if a boy carries his books in a Powerland or Charmza bags he was like ‘any boy’ but if he used Adidas or Nike he was considered the ‘coolest or a real boy. A cool boy or real boy thus engaged actively with the resources around him to create a masculine identity. .He is a macho, heteronormative, homophobic, homosocial and fearless boy who constructs masculinity in relation to femininity. He is the boy who socially constructs a ‘real girl’to perpetuate his heteropatriachal power.

The use of different data collection methods brought rich and contradictory knowledge on the social and private life of boys, especially on perceptions of gays. In group discussions some boys argued that it was bad to be gay but in their diaries they exhibited the opposite. While some boys bragged about violent constructions of masculinity in focus group discussions, girls lamented their experiences in diaries, and argued for alternative non-violent masculinities in focus group discussions and in in-depth interviews.

The inclusion of the girls in this study helped not only in understanding them as victims but also as resisters of boyhood construction in how they argued and challenged some dominant masculnine constructions. While the boys used the binary ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ to exclude girls and perpetuate dominance over them, the girls themselves used the binary ‘cool’ and ‘not cool’ to challenge the macho boys. For example, having many girlfriends and disrespect for authority to achieve heteropatriarchal masculinity among some boys were denigrated as ‘not cool’ by most girls. Respect as an alternative form of masculinity was articulated by ‘lesser’ boys and girls. Respect is at the root of an egalitarian relationship, as advocated by these boys and girls. It is thus through the use of multi-data collection methods and the inclusion of girls in the study of young masculinities that new literature in this field can be realised.

7.3 Limitations of the study

The outcome of the study was subject to some methodological and contextual limitations. The study was carried out with 37 Grade 7 learners from two township schools in Ekurhuleni. The study sample was not large enough to make general conclusions on the construction of young masculinities among young school boys in all the townships. The conclusions drawn in this thesis are thus more applicable to the two schools in the study and to the participants in particular. The study did not have deeper background information on the race, ethnic group and nationality background of each participant on the construction of masculinities. To do so

would have resulted in huge volumes of work since all the participants came from diverse backgrounds. The participants were, however, asked to highlight their experiences and opinions with regard to construction of masculinity taking into consideration their diverse backgrounds.

The other limitation pertains to sensitive data coming out and how to handle it. The study took place immediately after daily school closure, giving little time for both focus group discussions and the monitoring of diaries on the same day. The schools also had many activities which also resulted in the postponement of focus group interviews and encumbered the planned monitoring of diaries on a regular basis. This resulted in a longer period of collecting and organising data than had been anticipated, and inadvertently in a delay in discovering the reported abuses. When made aware of the violations, the researcher took the required steps and made his findings about violence and related recommendations known to the two schools concerned, and to the relevant government department, to address them.

7.4 Recommendations

The obtained data calls for some recommendations to be made. One of the objectives to this study clearly points out that the researcher intends to disseminate theoretical and empirical knowledge not only to academic audiences but also to policy makers and educators so as to more widely inform policy and practice in the areas of gender equality and violence. These recommendations thus fall into two broad categories namely policy and research.

7.4.1 Policy recommendations

The violence that characterise the formal and informal terrains within the school context calls for further critical studies on boys and masculinities. The boy is the chief agent in the social construction of the male identity which shapes and reshapes the social relations among boys and girls. Hence programmes should be designed for schools to specifically address the question of masculinity formation among boys.

The social bonds among the boys in this study enforce heteronormative relationships among the boys and girls. This type of relationship denies the girls an equal relationship with the boys through the objectification of the girls. Girls and some boys are subjected to humiliation and inferiorisation, also through hypersexualisation and sexual abuse. Homosexuals are subjected to abuse as they are positioned as inferior. This indicates the criticalness of the study of boys and masculinities as these problems are also reflected in the adult world. The

problem of gender inequality and gender-based and homophobia-related violence perpetrated by men is rampant in South Africa. It is like the intimate heterosexual violence in the township school context is a training ground for the fierce GBV that typify adult relations in SA. It is against this background that the researcher recommends that the Department of Social Development and Welfare in conjunction with DBE applies a gender lens in understanding and drafting a policy that fosters positive social relations among learners at primary school to address the violence that characterises SA.

Children spend a considerable amount of their childhood time at school so the DBE and schools should create more conducive environments to learning and social development. The DBE through its schools should instil positive forms of masculinity construction amongst the boys of primary school age. This may even help even at adult age since some assumptions are that if boys were socialised in positive ways at an early age they may behave well towards women when they are older (see Connell 2003). Therefore, addressing these boys' formation of masculinities may help to ameliorate the excessive incidence of violence against girls, women and non-conforming boys.

There is need to transform the violent way of what it means to be a real boy. The DBE can do this through transforming its LO and Life Skills curricula. Issues of power relations and constructions of masculinity must be taught from the time of attending primary school. These topics should include boys' and girls' experiences of play and interactions within the school and how identities are constructed. LO teachers should have a sound understanding of what it means to be a real boy at their school and how different learners experience and give meaning to their play during formal and informal times at their school (see Bhana & Mayeza 2016). This will help them to provide alternative ways of being a boy or alternative versions of being a real boy. Case studies, scenarios and examples of experiences of minority groups should be used during learning and teaching.

All teachers need training in areas of gender and violent masculinities in particular so as not to bring their own versions on what it means to be a real boy and fail to help learners within the school context. Workshops and clubs on gender must also be formed which are learner centred at school level. Experts in gender and masculinity construction should run joint workshops for learners and teachers on what is GBV and how it manifests in different contexts within the school and broader community. These workshops should also help learners understand the steps they follow should they become a victim of GBV. Clubs are

there to bring awareness among other learners on manifestations of violent masculinities and positive alternative masculinities. This can be done through projects, drama, poems and debates. Interschool programnes of these clubs can be organised where information is shared through these activities. Provincial education departments and their districts must monitor the implementation of gender- related programmes within schools. They must also make sure the gender social clubs are well funded.

Township schools continue to experience incidences of poor discipline which have an impact on teaching and learning. School codes of conduct should thus problematise constructions of masculinities. Issues of gender and power relations should be explicitly inserted, explained and made available to every learner and teacher. A gender lens should be used in monitoring play in school grounds.

Schools in the townships must offer more heterogeneous sporting activities to make learners aware of gender equality as an everyday way of life. The issue of 'boys' work' or 'girls' work' should be addressed by teachers so as to redefine the dominant and oppressive elements of masculinity.

7.4.2 Research recommendations

Although the study was done with a small group of learners, valuable information on experiences and opinions on what it means to be a real boy were obtained. These were obtained through the use of focus group discussions, diaries and individual detailed interviews. With the high rate of violence in the township schools it is recommended that further studies be conducted with bigger sample sizes using other different methodologies. These studies should be learner-centred so that their experiences are well documented and are best understood. An intersectional approach is recommended so as to unearth the experiences of the minority and weaker groups of learners.While the researcher has explored and written on age in understanding gender relations, a study specifically on this issue would be of more use among primary school learners in the townships across grades. Older boys in this study have been found to bully other learners and challenge educators in a performance of bravery which is a way of constructing masculinity. Relations of older boys with other younger learners and teachers thus need further study using a gender lens.

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ANNEXURES

Appendix A: Background information on research participants

Pseudonym	Sex	Nationality	Race	Ethnic group	Parent/ Guardian	Class of parents/ guardian	Age

Appendix B: Invitation to participate

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology

Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

Dear Potential Participant

My name is Luckmore Chimanzi and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Doctor of Philosophy (D Phil) degree in Sociology at the University of Pretoria. My research project focuses on what it means to be a 'real' boy today and its impact on young girls and boys.

Taking part in the research will require doing three things. First you will be asked to attend two focus group sessions. These focus group discussions will last between 30 minutes and one hour. The discussions will be held after school hours in one of the classrooms at your school. These discussions will be tape recorded. Participants in your group will be asked to sign an agreement to keep the discussions confidential. The focus group discussions will be based on general questions on what you think about what it means to be a 'real' boy. Secondly you will be asked to keep a diary for a period of two months. In this diary you will be asked to record all issues that you encounter relating to boys talk, actions, play or work at school. You will also be asked to express your feelings with regards to these activities. An interview will also be organised with you as an individual if there is need to shed more light on the group discussions and diary recordings.
All your contributions to this research will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used and all other identifying characteristics changed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Participation in this research is voluntary and thus you can withdraw during the course of the research should you wish to.

If you choose to participate in this study please read carefully the following form, if you agree to take part, write down your name and surname and then sign it. Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards
Luckmore Chimanzi

Appendix C: Assent form from participants

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology

Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

I_____, hereby grant permission to Luckmore Chimanzi (17365482) to audio record and use my focus group discussions and also use the information in my diary and interview for the sole purpose of his research and for future publication if the need arises, provided it is not in direct violation of what he stated in his above letter. I also promise that I will not tell anyone what we discuss in the focus groups.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix D: Parents information letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology
Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

Dear Parent

My name is Luckmore Chimanzi and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Doctor of Philosophy (D Phil) degree in Sociology at the University of Pretoria. My research project is on the construction of masculinity by young boys and how this impacts on gender relations. The data to be collected will enrich the field of gender studies. I am therefore kindly asking you to give permission to your son or daughter to participate in this study.

The University of Pretoria, the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and the school principal/SGB have given formal permission for the study. The participation of your child is entirely voluntary and your child will only be asked to take part in the study when you have given me the permission to ask him or her.

Participation in the research will require your child to do three things. First he or she will be asked to attend two focus group sessions. These focus group discussions will last between 30 minutes to one hour. These discussions will be tape recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysing data. Participants in your child's group will be asked to sign an agreement to keep the discussions confidential. The focus group discussions will be based on general questions surrounding your child's beliefs, values, experiences and ideas around masculinity construction by boys in grade seven and how this impacts on gender relations. Secondly your child will be asked to keep a diary for a period of two months. In this diary he or she will be asked to record all issues that he or she encounters relating to boys talk, actions, play or work at school. He or she will also be asked to express his or her feelings with regards to these activities. Please do not read or help them with their diaries as I would like to gain their honest opinions.

All contributions to this research will be kept confidential. Access to the collected data will be limited only to my supervisor and me. Pseudonyms will be used and all other identifying characteristics changed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. However, direct quotes from the discussions or diaries maybe cited in my research report but this will be without any identification of the source of the comment. Participation in this research is free and thus your child is free to withdraw during the research should he or she wish.

If you are willing to give permission to your child to participate in this research, please sign the following form and return it to school with your child. Your child's participation in this study will be highly appreciated.

Kind regards

Luckmore Chimanzi

Appendix E: Parents' consent form

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology
Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

I _____, in my capacity as the parent / guardian of _____ hereby give my consent to his/her participation in the research to be conducted by Luckmore Chimanzi.

Signed _____

Dated _____

Appendix F: Principal's information letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology

Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Luckmore Chimanzi and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Doctor of Philosophy (D Phil) degree in Sociology at the University of Pretoria. My research is on the construction of masculinity by young boys in grade seven and how this impacts on gender relations. The data to be collected will enrich the field of gender studies. I am therefore kindly asking for permission to carry out the study with grade seven boys and girls at your school.

Learners who take part in the research will be asked to attend two focus group sessions. These focus group discussions will last between 30 minutes and one hour per session. The discussions will be held after school hours so as not to disturb the teaching and learning process. These discussions will be tape recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysing data. Participants will be asked to sign an agreement to keep the discussions confidential. The focus group discussions will be based on general questions surrounding the learner's beliefs, values, experiences and ideas around masculinity construction by boys in grade seven and how this impacts on gender relations. Secondly they will be asked to keep a diary for a period of two months. In this diary they will be asked to record all issues that they encounter relating to boys talk, actions, play or work at school that show masculinity construction or domination of one group by the other. They will also be asked to express their feelings with regards to these activities. Lastly one on one detailed interviews will be held with some selected learners to shed more light on their diary entries.
All the learners' contributions to this study will be kept confidential. Access to the data will be limited only to my supervisor and me. Pseudonyms will be used and all other identifying characteristics changed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. However, direct quotes from the discussions or diaries maybe cited in my research report but this will be without any identification of the source of the comment. Participation in this research is free and thus the learners from your school are free to withdraw during the course of the study should they wish to do so.

If you allow me to carry out this research at your school, please sign the consent form attached to this letter. Your school's participation in this study will be highly appreciated.

Kind regards
Luckmore Chimanzi.

Appendix G: Consent form from school principal

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology

Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

I _____, in my capacity as the principal of the school, consent to allowing Luckmore Chimanzi to conduct his research, with those learners at this school who consent to participate and whose parents give assent to their participation.

Signed _____

Dated _____

Appendix H: Gauteng Department of Education information letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sociology

Pretoria

Email:
chimanzilc@gmail.com

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Luckmore Chimanzi and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Doctor 0f Philosophy (D Phil) degree in Sociology at the University of Pretoria. My research is on the construction of masculinity by young boys in grade seven and how this impacts on gender relations. The data to be collected will enrich the field of gender studies. I am therefore kindly asking for permission to carry out the study with grade seven learners from 3 primary schools in Ekurhuleni.

Learners who take part in the research will be asked to attend two focus group sessions. These focus group discussions will last between 30 minutes and one hour per session. The discussions will be held after school hours so as not to disturb the teaching and learning process. These discussions will be tape recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysing data. Participants will be asked to sign an agreement to keep the discussions confidential. The focus group discussions will be based on general questions surrounding the learner's beliefs, values, experiences and ideas around masculinity construction by boys in grade seven and how this impacts on gender relations. Secondly they will be asked to keep a diary for a period of two months. In this diary they will be asked to record all issues that they encounter relating to boys talk, actions, play or work at school that show masculinity construction or domination of one group by the other. They will also be asked to express their feelings with regards to these activities. Lastly one on one detailed interviews will be held with some selected learners to shed more light on their diary entries.

All the learners' contributions to this study will be kept confidential. Access to the data will be limited only to my supervisor and me. Pseudonyms will be used and all other identifying characteristics changed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. However, direct quotes from the discussions or diaries maybe cited in my research report but this will be without any identification of the source of the comment. Participation in this research is free and thus the learners from the chosen schools are free to withdraw during the course of the study should they wish to do so.

Your consent will be highly appreciated.

Kind regards
Luckmore Chimanzi

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**27 July 2017**
Validity of Research Approval:	**06 February 2017 - 29 September 2017** **2017/193**
Name of Researcher: **Address of Researcher:**	**Chimanzi L.** **85 Hamilton Avenue**
	Brakpan
	1541
Telephone Number:	**078 4698330**
Email address:	**chimanzilc@gmail.com**
Research Topic:	**Young boys at play? Gender relations and township primary school learners' construction of masculinities in South Africa.**
Number and type of schools:	**Two Primary Schools**
District/s/HO	**Ekurhuleni North**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above the onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the schools and/or offices involved to conduct the research. a separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the school (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

27/07/2017

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7 Floor, 17 Simmonds Street Johannesburg,
2001 Tel: (011) 255 0458

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
4. *A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.*
5. *The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
6. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.*
8. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
9. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
10. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.*
11. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
12. *On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.*
13. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
14. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

.....

Ms Faith Tshabalala
CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 27/07/2017

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Appendix J: Ethical clearance letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

12 February 2018

Dear Mr Chimanzi

Project:	**Young boys at play? Gender relations and township primary school learners' construction of masculinity in South Africa**
Researcher:	**L Chimanzi**
Supervisor:	**Prof C van der Westhuizen**
Department:	**Sociology**
Reference number:	**17365482 (GW20171114HS)**

Thank you for your response to the Committee's letter/ correspondence of 5 December 2017.
I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 12 February 2018. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should your actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Maxi Schoeman
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate and Research Ethics
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: tracey.andrew@up.ac.za

cc: Prof C van der Westhuizen (Supervisor)
Prof D Bonnin (HoD)

Appendix K: Focus group interview guide

Ice- breaker

The researcher gives a sweet to every participant. He then throws one sweet at a time in the air and let the participants get it. He throws a total of fifteen sweets. Each participant counts the number of sweets he or she has. The number of sweets equals the number of points they have to say about themselves. The first sweet given gives everyone an opportunity to at least say something.

Provisional discussion questions

1. Do you prefer same sex groups or mixed groups? (Homosociality).
2. What do you think about boys who play with girls only? (Will bring in the issue of homosexuality and heterosexuality here.)
3. What games are usually played by boys? Do boys like girls in their games?
4. How do the girls feel about the boys' play?
5. What do boys spent most of their time talking about when not in class?
6. How do the girls feel about the talk of boys?
7. Do boys pick on girls just because they are girls?
8. How do boys behave at school to show that they are boys and not girls?
9. How are you punished or disciplined by your teachers? Is it the same for boys and girls?
10. Who cleans your classrooms?
11. What do you think about learners in your class who are not South Africans?
12. In your own way what do you think means to be a "real" boy?
13. Is there a difference in the way the Indian and the black boys at this school show that they are real boys? (This question is relevant to the school of mixed races).
14. How does showing that you are a real boy affect the girls at this school?

Wrapping up

Is there anything you would like to add about what we have been discussing? Anything about what boys do or their behaviour that shows what it means to be a boy that we have not talked about?

Appendix L: Diary completing guidelines

➢ You are going to keep a diary for 2 months.

➢ You should try not to let the diary keeping influence your behaviour.

➢ Record all important events which you may perceive as traits of being a 'real' boy.

➢ You should pay particular attention to the following:

- What it means to be a 'real' boy.
- Boys' behaviour that show that they are boys and not girls.
- How boys play and their attitude towards girls.
- Boys talk which relates to girls.
- Issues of homosexuality and heterosexuality.
- The way boys and girls play.
- The work that is given to boys and girls that is different by the teachers.
- Different forms of discipline or punishment given to boys and girls.
- Different forms of behaviour shown by boys of different ethnic or racial backgrounds.
- The behaviour shown by the big boys at the school.
- Any improper behaviour towards learners who are not South Africans.

Below are examples of diary entries:

Date	Events-What happened	Feelings
28-06-2018	There are two boys in our class today who were touching a girl where she doesn't want to be touched.	I felt very bad. I didn't like it at all. The boys abuse us the girls.
05-07-2018	Some girls during break were laughing at Faith because she comes from Mozambique.	I felt happy because Faith thinks she is smart because she passes Mathematics every time.

Appendix M: Summaries and recommendations

The principal
Mazitike Primary School

17 July 2019

Ref. Report on research findings and recommendations

Preamble
May I kindly start by expressing my greatest thanks for according me an opportunity to carry out a study with your learners on the formation of young masculinities. It was a pleasure working with your learners. May I also take this opportunity to thank you and your SBST for carrying out the debriefing and counselling sessions as per our arrangements.
The research came up with some interesting and challenging aspects on the way boys and girls relate within your institution. These you will get in detail when the dissertation is finalised. For now, I want to highlight some few challenges and possible interventions that you can adopt. These are directly on the violation of the children's rights. As required by law, when a researcher comes across a child under abuse, he or she has to notify the relevant authorities. This is the reason I am notifying you and the Gauteng Department of Education.
Challenges
1. Sexual bullying
- Girls complain about boys touching their breasts and buttocks.
- Passing negative comments on body shapes of girls by boys.
- Coercive sexual behaviour- boys forcing girls to love them.
- Some boys who like to play with girls are referred to as gays.

Some boys within your school believe coercive sexual behaviour against the girls is legitimate.
2. Violent talk and activity
- Some girls complain that they are beaten by the boys.
- Some boys say bad things about girls.
- Boys intimidate the girls so that they don't report their abuse to the teachers.
- Some boys taking food and money from other learners.
- Some boys disrupt the teaching and learning process by making noise and disrespecting teachers.

Recommendations
1. Identify and track the affected learners for individual intervention.
2. Introduce programmes at school level to address the generalised behaviour of sexual bullying.

Suggestion
You can have:
a) boys' forum on gender

- Boys can always meet once a week as a club and discuss positive ways of being “real boys”
- They can always make posters and pamphlets to educate all the other boys at the school.

b) girls’ forum on gender

- Girls can meet once a week to talk about their rights.
- Help other girl children to understand what is sexual bullying and to open up when they are under abuse.
- Design ways of educating all girls within the school about their rights.

Both boys’ and girls’ forums can organise joint programs. They can have a joint drama in which they educate their peers on issues of gender.
They can have poems and short stories to present at assembly.
Abused learners within the school context can approach these forums for assistance. Some learners may find it comfortable to report abuse to a peer than an elder.
3. You can have suggestion boxes to have a general idea of what is happening among your learners.

Kind regards
Luckmore Chimanzi

Appendix N: Summaries and recommendations

The principal
Multiville Primary School

29 July 2019

Ref. Report on research findings and recommendations

Preamble

May I kindly start by expressing my greatest thanks for according me an opportunity to carry out a study with your grade 7 learners on the formation of young masculinities. It was a pleasure working with your learners. May I also take this opportunity to thank you, your Life Orientation educator and your school counselling committee for helping me in selecting the participants and carrying out the debriefing and counselling sessions as per our arrangements.
The research came up with some interesting and challenging aspects on the way boys and girls relate within your institution. These you will get in detail when the dissertation is finalised. For now, I want to highlight some few challenges and possible interventions that you can adopt. These are directly on the violation of the children's rights. As required by law, when a researcher comes across a child under abuse, he or she has to notify the relevant authorities. This is the reason I am notifying you and the Gauteng Department of Education.

Challenges

1. Sexual bullying
   - Girls complain about boys touching their breasts and buttocks.
   - Passing negative comments on body shapes of girls by boys.
   - Coercive sexual behaviour- boys forcing girls to love them.
   - Some boys who like to play with girls are referred to as gays.

Some boys within your school believe coercive sexual behaviour against the girls is legitimate.

2. Violent talk and activity
   - Some girls complain that they are beaten by the boys.
   - Some boys say bad things about girls.
   - Boys intimidate the girls so that they don't report their abuse to the teachers.
   - Some boys taking food and money from other learners.
   - Some boys disrupt the teaching and learning process by making noise and disrespecting teachers.
   - Some coloured boys were reported to be the most violent and brought knives to school.

NB. These challenges have a bearing on the way boys construct masculinities, so I suggest a gender lens in addressing them.

Recommendations

1. Identify and track the affected learners for individual intervention.
2. Introduce programmes at school level to address the generalised behaviour of sexual bullying.

Suggestion

You can have:

a) boys' forum on gender

- Boys can always meet once a week as a club and discuss positive ways of being "real boys"
- They can always make posters and pamphlets to educate all the other boys at the school.

b) girls' forum on gender

- Girls can meet once a week to talk about their rights.
- Help other girl children to understand what is sexual bullying and to open up when they are under abuse.
- Design ways of educating all girls within the school about their rights.

Both boys' and girls' forums can organise joint programs. They can have a joint drama in which they educate their peers on issues of gender.

They can have poems and short stories to present at assembly.

Abused learners within the school context can approach these forums for assistance. Some learners may find it comfortable to report abuse to a peer than an elder.

3. You can have suggestion boxes to have a general idea of what is happening among your learners.

Kind regards

Luckmore Chimanzi