

Perspectives of ‘new generation’ Black South African fathers on fatherhood

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology in the Department of Psychology, School of Human and Community Development, at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at this or any other institution.

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ABSTRACT

Existing literature on the experience of fatherhood in Black South African fathers is limited and commonly portrays fathers in a negative light. Scholarship and media representations tend to focus on the increasing number of absent fathers and the lack of parental care given by Black South African fathers. This study explores the perspectives of ‘new generation’ South African fathers on fatherhood. Eight Black South African fathers participated in semi-structured interviews focused on their experiences of fatherhood. Interviews were subjected to thematic content analysis. The primary theme to emerge from the analysis concerned the ways in which fathers spoke of themselves as ‘new generation’ fathers in contrast to old generation fatherhood. Three distinct yet interrelated themes are presented, examining the ways in which fathers described themselves as ‘new generation’; how gender was incorporated into ‘new’ and ‘old’ generation distinctions; and how their own fathers influenced participants’ perspectives of fatherhood. Findings suggest tensions between ‘new’ and ‘old’ generation ideals of fathering, but also strong investment in new generation fathering. These ‘new generation’ fathers represented a unique practice of non-hegemonic fatherhood, a resistant fatherhood, which opposes the negative stereotypes they are faced with.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

“Fathering is an art, a skill and an integral part of life to which investigators of the human condition have long paid scant attention” (Spooner, 1988, p.1755). In the last few decades, increasing interest in the study of fatherhood has produced an array of diverse insights into the meanings and understanding of fatherhood. Current research paints a multidimensional picture of fatherhood and offers a wide variety of different perspectives and approaches to the subject. Fatherhood can be understood as a biological, social and cultural role (Cabrera, Tamis-Lemonda, Bradley, Hofferth & Lamb, 2000). Fathers have taken on various roles in the family from patriarch, disciplinarian, breadwinner to the modern involved co-parent (Cabrera et al., 2000).

Despite the effort to increase and expand the scholarly investigations of fatherhood, the topic still remains complex and elusive. This is partly because fatherhood is not a fixed concept. The ever-changing role of fathers has been a particular challenge for scholars and researchers who attempt to track these shifts and changes whilst trying to create an accurate understanding of fatherhood. While biology defines the role men play in the reproduction of a child, the role of the man as a father changes with cultural, historical and socio-economic conditions (Ball & Wahedi, 2010).

It is understood that fatherhood is shaped by a host of diverging influences, including history, culture, society, economics, biology, gender, class and race. Fatherhood cannot be studied independently from the influences that shape and give meaning to it. The historical and cultural ideologies that influence the roles of fatherhood undeniably shape the quality of the father-child relationship, the amount of time fathers spend with their children and the activities they share (Lamb & Tamis-Lemonda, 2010). However there is no comprehensive theory that takes into account the complexity and changing nature of fatherhood, noting both internal and external influences that characterise fatherhood (Dick, 2011).

The complexity of fatherhood has also been studied in the South African context. Perhaps given the diversity of South African culture and society, understanding fatherhood is met with many difficulties. To fully appreciate the specific context in which fatherhood has been experienced in South Africa, one needs to examine the sociological and historical

determinants of fatherhood in the country (Morrell & Richter, 2006). Over the past 150 years Black South African families have been shaped and reshaped by colonization, removal and resettlement, racial segregation, oppression and racial emasculation (Townsend, Madvan & Garey, 2006). In the post-apartheid era Black South African fathers remain influenced by contemporary social and cultural factors. Despite the positive changes associated with living in a democratic country, Black South African fathers currently face high levels of unemployment and changing constructs of masculinity whilst negotiating traditional cultural ideals with the pressures placed by society on Western ideals of fatherhood. In the twenty-first century, “social changes are forcing adjustments in both popular and scholarly conceptualisations of fathers” (Cabrera et al., 2006, p127).

There appears to be a negative perception in the media and research literature about the commitment and role of South African fathers. “Most South African men do not seem especially interested in their children. They seldom attend the births of their own, they don’t acknowledge that their children are their own, and they frequently fail to participate in their children’s lives” (Morrell & Richter, 2006, p.2). This dominant view runs the risk of ignoring the subtleties of fatherhood that exist in the country today. Understanding the experience and meaning of fatherhood in South Africa may encourage fathers to become more involved in their children’s lives and foster a more positive image of fathers (Hinckley, Ferreira & Maree, 2007).

1.2 Research Aims

This research study began as an attempt to explore the experience and meaning of fatherhood in a subgroup of Black South African fathers. Initially the aims were to examine the possible understandings fathers hold about the father-child relationship, specifically what it means to be a father and how the father is represented in the family. In addition the study aimed to explore fatherhood by understanding the possible external and internal influences that have shaped fatherhood for Black South African fathers. The research was initially inspired by research (such as the quote by Morrell & Richter (2006) above) which suggested the probability that Black South African fathers are absent or uninterested in their children’s lives.

The aims of the study were then substantially refined in light of the results generated by interviews. Far from disinterest or absence, the men in this study focused their interviews on expressing wishes to be interested and present fathers. Given the results, the aims of the study

have shifted and been refined. Thus the focus of the study is to explore the contemporary perspectives of ‘new generation’ Black South African fathers on fatherhood. The study aims to understand tensions between old and new generational fathering in relation to gender, culture and the identification with one’s own father.

1.3 Research Rationale

In 2006 a multidisciplinary team of researchers in South Africa compiled a body of literature focusing on fatherhood in South Africa, which has contributed greatly to our knowledge on the topic (Nsamenang, 2010). The publication of *Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa* (Richter & Morrell, 2006) was the first book to concentrate on fathers and fatherhood in South Africa and thus highlights the achievements as well as the shortcomings of research done on this topic.

Although interest in fatherhood has increased both internationally and locally there is still little research done in comparison with the wealth of research and writing with respect to motherhood (Etchegoyen, 2002). To reduce the gap of our knowledge and understanding between motherhood and fatherhood, there is a need for more qualitative research to gain access to and explore the conceptual world of fathers (Richter, 2006).

Richter, Chikovore and Makusha’s (2010) systematic review of fatherhood in South Africa revealed several alarming statistics about fathering. According to Richter et al. (2010) South Africa has the lowest marriage rate and the second highest rate of father absence in Africa; furthermore studies suggest that most South African children do not experience a positive relationship with their fathers due to the lack of support and care given (Richter et al., 2010). However, South African men are beginning to reassess the value and their understanding of fatherhood in the twenty-first century and South Africa fathers are more involved in their children’s lives than previously assumed (Morrell & Richter, 2006). Given these contradictions this research study is useful in providing a voice for Black South African fathers exploring their perspectives on fatherhood.

1.4 Outline of chapters

The current chapter provides an introduction to the study and describes the aims, rationale and basic structure of the research to be presented. In chapter two, the relevant literature on fatherhood will be reviewed and discussed from a number of perspectives including a psychoanalytic theoretical perspective. Chapter three outlines the research method and

interview process. The results of the study are then reported in chapter four. Three themes emerged from the thematic analysis. The first theme centres on the generational perspective of fatherhood and the tensions that exist between old and new generational fatherhood. The second theme was the key topic of gender. The theme was linked to generational perspectives of gender stereotypes and how gender enactments influence fatherhood. Lastly the third theme captured the identification and disidentification of men's experiences with their own fathers, again enacting old and new generational perceptions of fatherhood. The concluding chapter discusses the results and consolidates the analysis. Particular emphasis is paid to the implications of 'new generation' fathering in 21st century South Africa, as well as to the important distinction between 'good' and good-enough' fathering. It considers insights attained from the study, and in light of the limitations, makes practical recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Research on fatherhood has received increased attention in both the social sciences and popular culture (Marks & Palkovitz, 2004). Research has often focused on the importance of fathers in families, their function and place within them, the causal factors behind the international trend of absent fatherhood, and the identification of possible ways of reversing this trend for the benefit of children, families, and society. Nsamenang (2010) pinpoints Africa as the least known and most scientifically neglected region with respect to research on fatherhood. The literature review will firstly examine debates concerning the presence or absence of fathers in childrens' lives. The trend towards absent fatherhood will be explored specifically in relation to the South African context. The numerous and varied roles adopted by fathers will then be examined, with specific focus on Black South African fathers. The literature review will also evaluate research focusing on historical, cultural and socio-economic influences on fatherhood and fathering in South Africa.

There is substantial pressure for men to be good fathers, however, it is difficult to establish what is 'good-enough'. Psychoanalytic theory offers a unique insight into what could be considered good-enough fathering, therefore a psychoanalytic understanding of fatherhood has been included in the literature review to offer a theoretical appreciation of the role and function of fathers, whilst establishing the concept of good-enough fathering. This study aims to better understand the perspectives of fatherhood and not necessarily to provide a psychoanalytic account of fatherhood. Psychoanalytic concepts have been included, however, as an important point of reference through which to discuss the results of the study, if not to interpret the results.

2.2 Debates concerning the absence or presence of fathers

As fatherhood has become an increasing focus of research attention, two seemingly contradictory trends have received much attention (Freeman, 2008). On the one hand, it has been observed that men are becoming more intimately involved in childcare. On the other hand, there has been increased concern about the international trend towards alarming increases of 'fatherless families'. These two divergent trends have prompted researchers to investigate the advantages of the presence of fathers in the lives of their children as well as

the disadvantages of paternal absence. This section explores the debates arising from this research.

One of the primary reasons for the increase in research on fatherhood pertains to the associated benefits of fathers on their children. Financial support, social value, cognitive development, emotional well-being and social competence are some of the foreseen benefits of male parenting (Richter, 2006).

Paquette (2010) and Tamis-Lemonda (2004) believe that fatherhood is not simply a social invention but rather a biological necessity of child development. Paquette (2010) has theorized the presence of an 'activation relationship' between father and child, where fathers are biologically determined 'playmates' who allow their children to explore and open up to their environment. The function of the father in relation to the mother-child dyad is to separate the child from the mother and introduce the child to the social world (Paquette, 2010).

Tamis-Lemonda (2004) suggests, however, that there is a risk in stereotypically characterising the father as the adventurous playmate and the mother as the quiet and nurturing attachment figure. It may be that fathers are not biologically primed towards adventurous interaction, but may instead do so because fathers generally spend less time with their children and are therefore motivated to engage in adventurous and stimulating play that is quickly appealing to young children (Tamis-Lemonda, 2004). Furthermore research has indicated that the 'adventurous playmate' father may be a Western construct and it is uncharacteristic for African fathers to play rough and tumble with their children (Tamis-Lemonda, 2004). It could equally be argued that there is a risk in stereotypically characterising African fathers as non-playmates, as their playing may simply differ from a Western notion of play. This debate illustrates how difficult it is to identify the essence of positive fatherhood.

On the other side of the coin, if there are foreseen benefits to having paternal care then there may be disadvantages in not having paternal care. Almost any kind of social pathology has been linked to children with absent fathers including drug and alcohol abuse, criminal involvement, teen pregnancy and suicide (Baskerville, 2002). Cabrera et al. (2000) have established five debilitating consequences of paternal absence. These include the absence of co-parenting for the child; economic loss which frequently accompanies single motherhood; the social isolation or disapproval often experienced by single or divorced mothers and their

children; psychological distress in the children of absent fathers; and conflict which may arise between the present mother and absent father.

Internationally, as well as in the South African context, society is experiencing a crisis of fatherhood, where large numbers of children are living in fatherless homes and grow up without knowing or seeing their fathers (Baskerville, 2002; Richter et al., 2010). Almost a decade ago American politicians were quoted alongside President Bill Clinton claiming that “the crisis of fatherless children is the most destructive trend of our generation” (Baskerville, 2002, p 695). While it is important to identify the negative consequences of absent fatherhood, an exclusive focus on such negative consequences may have the unintended effect of promoting a misleading idealisation and uncritical promotion of a father’s presence in a child’s upbringing. Such a focus can result in the stigmatisation of women-headed and single mother households and can lead to unintended negative effects on children and families (Flood, 2003; Lindegger, 2006).

Advocates of the claim that paternal absence causes a host of social, emotional and behavioural problems often “conflate and misconstrue research” (Flood, 2003, p.14). Research on paternal absence is often taken from sample groups of divorced families, where pre-divorce factors are not taken into consideration (Flood, 2003). The relationship between paternal absence and social problems becomes unreliable when not considering extraneous variables within divorced families and single mother households, including socio-economic status, quality of parenting and family relationships (Phares, 1996). These variables are sometimes more likely to create social problems than the absence of the father. Flood (2003) argues that until there is empirical evidence to support the simplistic claims between paternal absence and its endless list of negative consequences, one should not assume that a present father is preferable to an absent father.

It is therefore important to explore possible positive, as well as negative, consequences of having an absent father. Indeed, some research has suggested that growing up in a fatherless environment can often encourage children and adolescents to become better fathers themselves. Swartz and Bhana (2009) found that the teenage fathers in their South African study who grew up in fatherless families used their adversity as motivation for being present in their own children’s lives. Literature has shown that men who had absent fathers or reported negative childhood experiences with their fathers avoided replicating those mistakes with their own children (Jordan, 1990).

When debating the consequences of present versus absent fathers, it is important to acknowledge that ‘absence’ is not a simple variable representing a unified group of people. Swartz and Bhana (2009) have identified four different categories of absent fatherhood. These include:

1. Absent- deceased
2. Absent- never known/no contact
3. Absent- occasional contact
4. Absent- regular contact

Absent fathers, therefore, may fall into different categories, each with different implications for paternal involvement. Paternal absence does not necessarily mean that fathers have no contact with their children (Phares, 1996).

Whilst studies have shown both the benefits of a present father and the disadvantages of an absent father in the father-child relationship (Cabrera et al., 2000; Richter, 2006), it is clear that caution should be exercised when labelling the father as ‘absent’. “Every generation has its scapegoat for contemporary social ills: communism, rock and roll, drugs, feminism, television, now it seems to be the absence of fathers in the family” (Parke & Brott, 1999, p.3). The concept of the absent father is not one-dimensional, may hold multiple meanings and does not always hold entirely negative or destructive consequences for the father-child relationship.

2.3 The different roles of fathers

The different roles men assume as fathers in the lives of their children and family significantly influence their parental styles and involvement levels. Although emerging research regarding fatherhood has become more focused as the field has developed, discussion of the role of the father often negates the existence of individual variations in the different roles fathers play in their children’s lives, their families and society. While many fathers may not fit into the neatly established categorical roles suggested by some scholars, these roles establish parameters within which to conduct research, and organize research efforts to understand the complexities of contemporary fatherhood. This section aims to explore roles of fatherhood, both historically and in the present, whilst taking into consideration individual variations between fathers.

Edwards, Borsten, Nene and Kunene (2001) found that, in South Africa, African fathers typically adopt one or more of the following roles: either as a patriarchal figure-“controller”, an economic provider-“breadwinner”, or as a family man who provides emotional support as a father and a husband.

The ‘patriarchal father’ is seen as the traditional role of the father, dating back to the pre-colonial and early colonial period (Cabrera et al., 2000). The patriarchal father took centre stage within the family structure and controlled the running of the household, financial matters and responsibility for the discipline of children (Smith, 2006).

It has been argued that the breadwinner construct evolved from the period of industrialisation where ‘good’ fatherhood involved economic provision for the family’s needs by earning an income (Yarwood, 2011). Before the Industrial Revolution in South Africa caused by the discovery of gold and diamonds, society was predominantly agricultural (Edwards et al., 2001). Edwards et al. (2001) argue that this was particularly significant for Black South Africans who were invested in the patriarchal tribal way of life which comprised of hierarchical kinship and the division of labour between sexes (Edwards et al., 2001). The breadwinner role is a representation of hegemonic masculinity as a man’s measure of success is based on his economic worth. Traditional hegemonic masculinity maintains ideals of toughness, emotional invulnerability and heterosexual dominance whilst simultaneously avoiding feminine qualities (Adams & Govender, 2008).

According to Edwards et al. (2001) fathers who consider themselves as the ‘family man’ prioritize their responsibilities as a parent, husband, educator and emotional supporter more than their financial or disciplinary role. This construct is typified in the Western nuclear family of recent modern times and appears to conform to norms and values associated with Western ideals (Edwards et al., 2001).

Although these three primary roles of fatherhood have been understood to develop chronologically through time, it can be argued that different fathers assert different roles within their family and cultural context. Edwards et al. (2001) found that rural, transitional and urban Black South African fathers each stressed different roles depending on whether they had a strong allegiance to African traditions or conformed to Western norms of modernization. Urbanization involves not only the physical movement from rural to urban living but also an entire lifestyle change, through which norms associated with rural traditional living are sometimes exchanged for norms of modernization (Edwards et al.,

2001). Edwards et al.'s (2001) study suggested that South African men who experience urbanisation often move away from the strict tribal authority of African communities and towards the paternal responsibilities and roles associated with Western values.

Another way of categorising paternal roles concerns identifying different levels of paternal involvement in relation to the child. Tremblay & Pierce (2011) suggest three levels of involvement. The first level is the intensity of paternal involvement, which refers to the amount of time spent together by father and child. The second level is defined by the nature of the paternal involvement indicated by the type of activities father and child engage in, falling on a continuum between play and responsibility. The last level consists of the quality of paternal involvement, referring to the appreciation of the father's parenting by the child, falling on a continuum between good and bad.

A study of Black teenagers in South Africa offered an alternative informal categorisation of fathers into various roles. Fathers were considered either as 'absent father', 'financial father/quiet father' who is financially present but emotionally absent, as the 'faithless father' who has multiple girlfriends and shows little respect for his family or the 'talking father' who can be depended on emotionally (Swartz & Bhana, 2009).

A significant shift in the recent transformation of fatherhood at the beginning of the twenty-first century is the emergence of the 'good father' who is caring, affectionate and involved in the raising of his children (Morman & Floyd, 2006). "There has been an emerging detraditionalization of fatherhood, one in which the perception has expanded from an exclusive view of the father as the distant protector and breadwinner to the nurturing, actively involved father who is more emotional and intuitive" (Dick, 2011, p.120).

This new fatherhood narrative could be positioned within Kekale's theory (as cited in Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). He posited that Finnish fathers exhibit three different fatherhood metanarratives: pre-modern, modern and postmodern (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). Pre-modern fathers are specifically patriarchs and authoritarian whereas mothers are the primary caregivers (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). Thus the parental roles are fundamentally different from each other. In modern fatherhood the father adopted the role of the breadwinner of the family (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). The postmodern father, in contrast, inhabits a 'new' father role characterised by nurturance and caregiving, thus the divide between maternal and paternal roles has equalised (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). According to Eerola and Huttunen (2011) it appears that men with higher socio-economic statuses (SES) tend to narrate their

fatherhood within the post-modern metanarrative compared to those with lower socio-economic status. This suggests that a higher SES in men may increase involved fatherhood or perhaps create a greater awareness of the post-modern or new fatherhood metanarrative (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011).

Very little research has been done concerning the emergence of the ‘new’ or postmodern father in the South African context specifically related to Black South African fathers. Instead Black fathers in South Africa are often linked to the ‘absence trend’ or, more damagingly, are depicted through the media as objects of suspicion with respect to violence and sexual abuse of women and young children (Lesejane, 2006). Child abuse and particularly infant rape has received extensive media coverage recently in South Africa, where “the spotlight of shame has focused squarely on men” (Posel & Devey, 2006, p. 16). Posel and Devey (2006) argue that Black South African fathers have been identified by some within government and the public as the source of moral decay. This representation of Black South African fathers is limiting and severely damaging to those individuals striving towards a ‘new’ fatherhood.

2.4 Influences on fatherhood

The way in which men enact the role of fatherhood is significantly influenced by a host of factors. One approach to creating a sense of meaning and understanding of fathers is to assess the social, economic and cultural conditions influencing fatherhood as a shifting construct over time (Morman & Floyd, 2006). For the purpose of this study the historical, cultural, socio-economic and individual influences affecting fatherhood will be explored within the South African context.

Historical influences

The experience of South African fathers has been strongly influenced by the history of the country (Morrell & Richter, 2006). Dating as far back as the period of colonisation up until the Apartheid era, many Black fathers were separated from their children due to migrant labour practices (Morrell & Richter, 2006). Since the discovery of gold and diamonds during the 1800s and then the Group Areas Act during Apartheid, migrant labour in South Africa became an integral part of many Black South African men’s lives, thus influencing their experiences of fatherhood (Rabe, 2006). Men worked in distant places far from home and were often only allowed annual visits to return home to their families, thus the experience of fatherhood was limited and constrained at the time (Morrell & Richter, 2006).

Many Black families growing up during Apartheid grew up without a father's presence in their lives, as a consequence of migrant labour but also as a consequence of the turbulent political situation for Black South Africans at the time (Morrell & Richter, 2006). The Apartheid regime has left a "historical legacy of racial emasculation" and thus it is an important factor when thinking about fathers and fatherhood today (Morrell & Richter, 2006, p.8). However fatherhood patterns are changing since South Africa became a democratic country in 1994 (Walker, 2005). The social and historical climate of South Africa post 1994 has become another factor influencing patterns of fatherhood among Black South African fathers.

Cultural influences

When attempting to understand the status of fatherhood in South Africa the underpinnings of African culture could offer further explanation. However African culture is not one-dimensional and many researchers problematize culture by cautioning against the construction of an encompassing African culture. Lesejane (2006) argues that, while African culture is not homogeneous, there are enough commonalities to enable generalisation within this broad value system.

Notions of fatherhood in African cultures are significantly linked to the philosophical foundation of *ubuntu* which encourages the collective social responsibility of the community (Mkhize, 2006). African cultures thus see fathering as the responsibility of the community as a whole and not the sole responsibility of the biological father. Several theories claim that African fathers epitomise the portrayal of a strict patriarchal head of the family. Rather than taking on an active role in parenting which is left to the mother and other female relatives, African fathers usually take on a more symbolic role (Mkhize, 2006; Morrell, 2006).

"The paradox of patriarchy is that while a father may be head of the family, simultaneously he is constrained from being a central character within it" (Freeman, 2008, p.114). It has been hypothesized that the patriarchal role of the father encouraged by some African cultures may contribute to the relative absence of fathers in child care (Nsamenang, 2010). Spjeldnaes, Moland, Harris and Sam (2011) interviewed South African teenage boys from low socio-economic backgrounds about their understanding of fatherhood. Many felt ill-prepared for fatherhood as they lacked paternal role models of their own. They described their fathers as unapproachable and irresponsible, and longed for emotional closeness to their fathers (Spjeldnaes et al., 2011).

Patriarchy in African fatherhood can, however, easily be 'blamed' for the production of the distant and irresponsible Black father in current research and popular media. "The current problem is that African patriarchy has become distorted and a new patriarchy without obligations or reciprocity has emerged" (Lesejane, 2006, p.179). The traditional patriarchal father figure in African cultures, according to Lesejane (2006), is not just the head of the household but also carries many responsibilities that exhibit good fathering. These responsibilities include enforcing moral authority and guidance for the family and children; becoming a leader and being responsible for the affairs of the family; being the primary provider of the family's material needs such as food and shelter; being a protector of one's family and children against any perceived threats; and becoming a good role model especially for their sons so they in turn can embody the values of good fatherhood (Lesejane, 2006). However due to several historical and social factors, traditions of 'African' fatherhood have become distorted. Although African culture influences the experience and meaning of fatherhood for Black South African fathers, this does not necessarily imply that culture is a negative influence and perhaps the morals and values of African culture denoting fatherhood should be revisited (Lesejane, 2006).

Like culture, understanding the function of religion in the formation of fatherhood ideals and practices is useful for increasing the understanding of paternal interest and behaviour among religious communities (Furrow, 1998). Certain religious groups assert an interest in family values which influence fathers with those religious beliefs. There appears to be little to no research on how religion has influenced fatherhood despite the importance of religion in the lives of many Black South African fathers.

Economic influences

According to Shows and Gerstel (2009), most men emphasize employment as being central to the understanding and practice of fatherhood. South Africa's increasing rate of unemployment, especially among Black male South Africans, limits the ability for fathers to provide financially for their family and children (Mkhize, 2006). According to African tradition "a man is a man because he can provide for his family" (Mkhize, 2006, p.186), however without a job and with high rates of poverty in South Africa, many African men struggle to assert themselves as fathers. There is a need for an alternative understanding of manhood and responsible fatherhood. Although unemployed fathers cannot financially

provide for their families they can still assert and embrace their roles as fathers through other avenues (Rabe, 2006).

Understanding fatherhood may vary when considering the socio-economic status of fathers in South Africa. Working-class fathers living in townships or remote rural areas may differ in their experience and conception of fatherhood compared to middle-class and upper-class fathers. However an interesting finding among South African men was that most fathers, whether rural, transitional or urban, all stressed their breadwinner responsibilities above their other responsibilities (Edwards et al., 2001).

Social influences

The ways in which fathers practise fatherhood entail enactments of masculinity and gender relations (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). The role of gender offers a framework in which fatherhood in South African can be studied (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). One study reported that fathers are more likely to increase their involvement with their children if they have a greater proportion of male children in the family (Morman & Floyd, 2006). Difficulties and tensions emerge when fathers attempt to find ways of practising 'new' fatherhood whilst confronting gender issues (Henwood & Procter, 2003). Current gender issues include the increased levels of employment of women in the workforce. Increased levels of employment in women have challenged the traditional model of hegemonic masculinity and the old assumptions about fatherhood. When mothers are employed, fathers are more likely to be involved in the care of their children and the household (Show & Gerstel, 2009).

Although several masculinities exist in the South African context, the notion of hegemonic masculinity "emphasizes competition, wealth, aggressiveness and heterosexuality" (cited in Kahn, 2009, p.32). Hegemonic masculinity can be considered a version of masculinity whereby male dominance is supported and perpetuated within a particular society. Hegemonic masculinity encourages certain forms of expression of gender and masculinity which are viewed as superior to others. The exploration of how dominant masculinities are reproduced in fathers is imperative in understanding how they negotiate fatherhood. Challenges to the traditional construct of hegemonic masculinity require new negotiations of gender relations in parental care and perceptions of fatherhood (Shows & Gerstel, 2009). "Classic constructs of masculinity; work, sport and body are being replaced with child-centred rhythms and new measures of accomplishment" (Morrell, 2006, p.21). By restoring

the value of fatherhood in constructs of fatherhood, men are able to adopt new fathering identities that foster positive father-child relations (Morrell, 2006).

Another social factor influencing fatherhood in South Africa is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. One of the contributing factors to the absence of fathers is death (Posel & Devey, 2006). Many South African households are headed by single mothers raising children whose fathers are deceased. In light of the current HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa where most infections are concentrated in the sexually active population the majority of people infected are parents (Desmond & Desmond, 2006). The spread of HIV/AIDS contributes to fatherless households, however what is most prevalent in South Africa is the number of HIV positive women in the country (Wiener, Vasquez & Battles 2001). Instead of focusing on paternal absence due to HIV/AIDS an important issue to discuss is the investigation of paternal experience and involvement with children living with HIV/AIDS. The debilitating presence of HIV/AIDS in the South African family indicates how important it is to challenge the traditional roles fathers adopt whilst operating in new challenging environments (Roy & Dyson, 2010). Authors have explored the critical role fathers play and the potential they have to reduce the burden of HIV/AIDS on the younger generation (Desmond & Desmond, 2006; Palitza, 2008; Wiener et al., 2001).

The influence of the father's father

The relational dynamic between a father and child is an important and long-lasting influence on psychological, developmental and psychosocial matters (Morman & Floyd, 2002). The dynamic experienced within the father-son dyad influences how that son one day becomes a father himself. Men's understanding and commitment to fatherhood is affected by many factors, one of which is their relationship and experiences with their own fathers (Guzzo, 2011).

Guzzo (2011) hypothesized that the practise of fatherhood in men is either based on modelling their own experience with their fathers or by compensating for the negative experiences they had. Guzzo's (2011) research tests these two practices of fatherhood; namely the modelling hypothesis or the compensatory hypothesis. The modelling hypothesis is based on theories of social learning that suggest that an individual's behaviour and attitudes are learned from and modelled upon the behaviours of people who were influential and important, particularly during early development (Guzzo, 2011). Fathers are considered as important influences during early development and therefore are influential to their son's

perception and attitude towards fathering and fatherhood. Under the modelling hypothesis men use their experience with their fathers as a model for their own approach to fathering. If the modelling hypothesis is correct, one could presume and predict that men with good fathers would themselves be good fathers and vice versa (Guzzo, 2011).

The compensatory hypothesis proposes that men compensate for the perceived shortcomings of their own fathers, in essence wanting to be different and inadvertently wanting to be better fathers than their own fathers (Guzzo, 2011). Many men compensate by “adopting attitudes towards fatherhood that is based on the current ideal of the involved father” (Guzzo, 2011, p.271). Guzzo’s (2011) research suggested that the modelling hypothesis was more prevalent whilst the compensatory hypothesis was poorly supported by the data, however “this research is merely a first step in investigating how men’s attitudes toward fatherhood emerge and how they affect fathering behaviours” (Guzzo, 2011, p.286).

2.5 Psychoanalytic understandings of fatherhood

Psychoanalytic psychology was perhaps the first theoretical school of thought to examine the role of the father. In 1900, Sigmund Freud wrote that the loss of one’s father is the single greatest loss a person can experience (Jones, 2008). Furthermore Freud was a major influence in shaping the 20th century’s views of parenting and child development. The contribution of psychoanalytic psychology to the theoretical understanding of fatherhood over the last century has been instrumental to furthering our knowledge on the topic. An overview of the past and present psychoanalytic contributors to the study of fatherhood will be explored.

Oedipus complex

Freud’s theory on the psychosexual development of children was the most influential theory on the father-child relationship (Parke & Brott, 1999). The role of fathers was crystalized in the Oedipus complex where fathers were viewed as the central figure in early child development (Etchegoyen, 2002). The Oedipus complex occurs during the phallic stage of development and progresses differently for male and female children. During the boy’s phallic stage around the age of 3-5, the boy becomes sexually attracted to his mother. He loves and desires her but the father stands in his way and becomes a rival for the mother’s affection. Boys also become aware of the genital differences between males and female and thus assume that girls were in possession of a penis which was removed. The boy develops castration anxiety as he believes that he may be castrated for desiring the mother. To avoid

this he represses his affection for his mother and identifies with his father (Hook & Watts, 2002). The notion of identification as a compromise to rivalry is crucial to the dissolution of the Oedipus complex and solidifies the role of the father in child development: without the process of identification the father's symbolic function is compromised (Ceccarelli, 2003).

Female children also experience a deep love for their mother but the awareness of genital differences in their male counterparts and thus their absence of a penis creates penis envy. Girls blame their mothers for the lack of a penis and turn their desire towards their fathers, in the hope that he can give her a baby to replace the absent penis (Hook & Watts, 2002).

The father in the Oedipus complex has a paternal function to impose the law against incest and thus regulate desire, intervening in the imaginary incestuous relationship between mother and child and thereby creating a necessary symbolic distance between them (Etchegoyen, 2002). The father plays an important role in the sexual development and emotional growth of his children: Freud quoted that "every new arrival on this planet is faced by the task of mastering the Oedipus complex, anyone who fails to do so falls victim to neurosis" (as cited in Etchegoyen, 2002, p.32).

The dominance of the Oedipus complex in psychoanalytic thinking has minimised and overshadowed the role of the pre-oedipal father and its important contribution in the development of infants (Stone, 2008). Pre-oedipal years usually constitute from birth to three years and include the oral, anal and the transition into the phallic stage. Although Object Relations theory placed importance on the infant's pre-oedipal years, the role of the mother in the theory took centre stage whilst the father's role was considered as a solely supportive one (Stone, 2008).

Winnicott (1964) however paid attention to the father's role in an infant's pre-oedipal years. He believed that from conception forward the father is responsible for creating a holding environment for mother and infant. Some theorists have criticised Winnicott (1964) in neglecting the father's role as he predominately focuses on the notion of a 'good enough' mother, however Winnicott emphasised that the mother's ability to be a good enough mother depends partly on the presence of the father. If the father can provide a protective and secure environment for the mother, it enables her to provide a holding environment for the infant. A strong relationship between the mother and father not only provides a secure container for the infant but importantly creates a buffer against the hate an infant can generate towards the mother (Etchegoyen, 2002).

However before the infant experiences hate towards the mother, the mother develops hate towards the infant without the infant even knowing or experiencing it (Winnicott, 1947). Winnicott (1964) believed that the maternal hate a mother feels for her infant is not only rational but necessary for both mother and infant. Perkel (2006) highlighted another role of the father in infancy as he functions as a 'phallic container' for the mother's hate towards her infant.

Recent contemporary psychoanalytic literature has encouraged theorists to extend the concept of maternal hate by exploring the less acknowledged experience of paternal hate (Long, 2007). The lack of interest or investigation given to paternal hate mirrors a typical pattern throughout psychoanalytic and psychological literature on parenthood. Fathers are seen as helpless passive observers to the birth and development of their infant whilst the mother is portrayed as an instinctive caregiver and yet is maddened by her internal conflicts (Long, 2007). By acknowledging the presence of paternal envy and paternal hate fathers are recognised as real objects in their infant's development and not exclusively the infant's buffer or mother's phallic container (Long, 2007).

Paternal hate or envy occurs when a man is faced with the prospect of fatherhood (Long, 2007). There are several reasons why fathers may experience paternal hate towards the infant or mother, most of which are unconsciously provoked. The arrival of a child can trigger a father's feelings towards his own father; it may be a painful reminder of their non-existent or troubled relationship with their own fathers (Long, 2007). Furthermore seeing a mother and child together may activate a father's early experiences of being mothered (Long, 2007).

Paternal hate can also manifest in fathers as men begin to feel excluded from the mother-child dyad, and hateful feelings are projected towards the mother, child or their relationship (Long, 2007). A man's sensitivity towards exclusion could manifest from their intensified dependency rooted in childhood. Pregnancy accentuates the maternal figure in the wife which may reinforce or activate a husband's association or identification with his wife as his mother figure arousing unconscious concerns about his sexual adequacy and increased dependency needs (Zayas, 1987). Pregnancy and the birth of a child can act as a powerful enactor or reawakening of unconscious Oedipal conflicts (Jarvis, 1962; Zayas, 1987). Fathers may experience a regressive identification with the young boy who was denied his first sexual object (Jarvis, 1962).

Pregnancy

The pregnancy of the wife is an important period for the father as it may cause him to rethink or rework past and present relationships (Jordan, 1990). There are many internal struggles that are evoked when entering the new identification of fatherhood, and men may struggle to incorporate the paternal role into their identity (Jordan, 1990; Long, 2007). Men take on no physiological changes when becoming fathers and thus assume the role psychologically, making the psychological changes associated with fatherhood particularly important for researchers to explore (Raphael-Leff, 2008).

In early psychoanalytic writing there was often a lack of attention paid to the father's experience during his partner's pregnancy (Hunt & Rudden, 1986). Recent modifications within psychoanalytic theory have suggested that the desire to have and nurture children is not primarily rooted in female biology but also involves psychological processes which are experienced by women as well as men (Hunt & Rudden, 1986). Exploring pregnancy fantasies or womb envy in boys and men are important to an understanding of male psychology and the meaning of fatherhood (Hunt & Rudden, 1986).

The Forgotten father

In the 1940s and 1950s there was a significant shift of interest towards the role of the mother and psychoanalysis became mother-centred in its theory (Etchegoyen, 2002). Subsequently the father became known as the forgotten parent of psychoanalysis (Freeman, 2008). Melanie Klein, Anna Freud and Margaret Mahler, amongst others, directed the shift away from the significance of the Oedipus complex towards noting the importance of the mother in the infant's early development, specifically in the conflicts of separation and individuation (Etchegoyen, 2002). Object relations theory was at the forefront of turning psychoanalysis into a mother-centred perspective. This also became known as a period of 'mother-blaming' in psychology, a sexist bias towards studying maternal contributions to children's emotional and behavioural problems whilst ignoring possible paternal contributions (Phares, 1996).

However psychoanalytic ideas of fatherhood in the 21st century focus on the importance of co-parenting and the specific importance of both the mother and the father in child development (Etchegoyen, 2002). No longer is parenting synonymous with mothering but rather considers the significance of both maternal and paternal care.

The Internal father

Within the context of a psychoanalytic theoretical framework, the father is seen as a facilitator of the separation-individuation period, as a container for projected anxiety that originates in the mother-infant relationship and as an attachment figure and object relation in his own right (Jones, 2004). Given the significance of the father's role throughout different developmental periods; father-loss or absence appears to have long-standing developmental effects which impact the cognitive, integrative, structural, and defensive capacities of both child and adult (Jones, 2004).

Whether present or absent, however, the father plays a role in the child's internal world. "Psychoanalytic theory assumes that despite the physical and emotional absence of a real father, there is always some kind of internal picture and representation. Father exists as an object in the internal world" (Etchegoyen, 2002, p.34). Important research on the construct of the internal father came to light during World War Two where children of soldiers in battle had never seen their fathers but were able to develop a fantasised image of their fathers (Etchegoyen, 2002). The intrapsychic father is developed through an intricate web of interaction including innate knowledge, the mother's relationship with the actual father, the mother's internalised father and the infant's actual relationship to the father (Etchegoyen, 2002). The acknowledgement of the presence of an internal father has important repercussions when observing the high number of children growing up with absent fathers, particularly in South Africa today. Target and Fonagy (2002) assert that the actual presence of the father is not essential as fatherless children are able to construct an internal father through the presence of father-like figures or simply through fantasy.

The good-enough father

The notion of 'good-enough' as a parenting style was originally coined by Donald Winnicott (1960), a psychoanalyst, who dedicated much of his theory and practise to the parent- infant dynamic. Psychoanalysis, broadly speaking, has largely been a theory that focuses on the parent-infant and parent-child relationship.

Winnicott (1960) viewed the mother as possessing certain maternal characteristics and qualities that enables the infant to develop and thrive in their environment despite their inability to control it. 'Primary maternal preoccupation' is the concept referring to the state of mind the mother enters when caring for the infant, in the first few months after giving birth (Winnicott, 1960). Maternal preoccupation refers to the mother's adaption and preoccupation with the infant's needs at this early stage of development (Winnicott, 1960). The mother's

role in the infant's development is crucial. Thus there appears to be much pressure placed on the mother to provide adequate maternal care. However, Winnicott (1960) alluded to the notion that mothers are only required to be 'good-enough' mothers and not expected to provide the ideal or 'best' maternal care. Winnicott's idea of the good-enough mother emphasizes the undesirability of either idealizing or denigrating the mother, thus eliminating the possibility of a persecuting ideal for mothers to live up to (Samuels, 1996).

Although Winnicott's theory of good enough mothering would appear to stress the maternal over the paternal role in the development of the infant, in psychoanalytic thought the concept of 'mother' is often employed as an archetypal idea denoting 'primary care giver'. Hence it may be appropriate to theorise around the 'good enough father'-a notion that has been given scant attention. The good-enough father has not been written about very much, which begs the questions as to why do we prefer to either idealize or denigrate the father (Samuels, 1996)? Like mothers, men fail to be ideal fathers, however, this is psychologically realistic (Samuels, 1996). As Stone (2008) asks if optimal failure is appropriate in mothers should it not be the same for fathers?

A few writers have begun to look at the notion of the good-enough father (Diamond, 1998; Stone, 2008). The notion of a good-enough father is not only relevant for psychoanalytic theories but relates to the present struggle of fathers to be perceived as good parental figures. However they are faced without a yard-stick to measure their 'goodness'. Contemporary literature emphasizes a multitude of differentiating features that characterise 'good' fathering however the standards of good fathering vary for every context imaginable. At the beginning of the 21st century, however, most writers recognised that a 'good' father should be "loving, affectionate, involved, nurturing and consistent in the raising of his child" (Morman & Floyd, 2006, p. 117).

Winnicott's concept of the good-enough mother is one which is widely accepted not only by different theoretical schools of psychological thought but by many people outside the psychology profession (Layland, 1981). Exploring the psychoanalytic notion of a good-enough father could prove useful for contemporary explorations of 'good' fathering. Diamond's (1998) ideas on good-enough fathering serve to illuminate the uncharted territory of active, engaged fathering. Diamond (1998) believes that the good-enough father, like Winnicott's good-enough mother, provides an optimum, yet not necessarily perfect, facilitating environment for his infant's development. Diamond (1998), however, tracked the

tasks of the good-enough father throughout his child’s life cycle, thus extending Winnicott’s theory beyond the infant’s early development. Diamond’s (1998) description of a good-enough father includes several psychoanalytic roles ascribed to fathers such as performing the role of a container, protector, facilitator, model, challenger and initiator. The following table summarises the role of a good-enough father according to Diamond (1998, p.254):

TABLE 1 The Tasks, Paternal Imagos, and Developmental Phases Requiring Provisions from a “Good Enough” Father with His Son

Fathering Task	Paternal Imago	Son's Phase (& Ages)
1. Provision of holding environment for dyadic attachment	Protecting, providing container for primary dyad (“protective watchfulness”)—“holding father”	(Primary mutuality) 0-1 year
2. Serving as alternate attachment figure	Exciting (“second”) other; “mirror of desire”; “reflective object”—“dyadic father”	(Early separation-individuation) ½-2 years
3. Facilitating separation-individuation (1st individuation)	Liberator for differentiation; powerful, playful “ideal” (representing separateness and desire)	(Rapprochement/individuality consolidation) 1½-3 years
4. Modulating negative and aggressive affect	Facilitator of instinctual mastery (representing “sheltered” male strength)	(Separation-individuation/preoedipal/ anal) 2-4 years
5. Providing male mode of toilet training and valuing phallic masculinity	Model; facilitator of bodily-genital mastery; sanctioner of phallicism (interior as well as external)	(Preoedipal/anal/phallic) 2-5 years
6. Supporting gender/gender role development	Facilitator of congruity, sameness, and affection (“homerothic identification”); container for optimal (progressive) maternal differentiation	Preoedipal/phallic through (adolescence) 2½-Teen age
7. Serving as oedipal challenger	Challenger (representing, restraint, discipline & self-control); authority	(oedipal 3½-6 years

	(“judge”)—“triadic father”	
8. Initiating and mentoring instrumental and expressive masculinity as well as group relations	Initiator; teacher; leader	(Latency/mid childhood) 6-12 years
9. Supporting adolescent individuation (2nd individuation)	Container for paternal de-idealization and optimal differentiation	(Adolescence) 13-19 years
10. Mentoring transition to young adulthood (3rd individuation)	Initiator and sanctioner of adult masculinity	(Young adulthood) 20-30 years
11. Facilitating paternal development and (further) reconciliation in adulthood	Mentor of generativity and otherhood; mutuality and equality	(Mature adulthood) 25-45 years
12. Playing important roles in mid adult and later life development (4th individuation)	Facilitator of integrated masculinity and healing (“wise elder”); “declining” father in reversing roles (“genetic immortality”)	(Mid-late adulthood) 45 years

TABLE 1 (continued)

According to Diamond (1998) the absence of good-enough fathering produces inimitable consequences at each developmental stage. Stone (2008), however, takes a less dogmatic view of good-enough fathering. Stone (2008, p.50) follows closely Winnicott’s notion that a good-enough mother is not perfect; instead her “failure is essential as it enables the infant to gain from the experience of frustration”. Therefore a good-enough father is allowed to fail to enable the infant to develop. Several factors can affect the quality of fathering provided for the infant. These include factors involving the infant, the mother and others in the infant’s life and the relationships between each other (Stone, 2008). In review of contemporary attempts at providing standards for what is considered ‘good’ fathering, one may refer to a Winnicottian outlook that a ‘good-enough father’ does not have to perfect but just ‘good-enough’ (Stone, 2008).

The sophistication of psychoanalytic ideas about the human psyche offers a thickening and enrichment of the current understanding of fathers and fatherhood (Young, 2009). The theories underlining fatherhood may help in enriching our understanding of fathers in South Africa. However the ever-changing role of fathers has been a challenge for psychoanalytic theory and presently no comprehensive body of knowledge exists that takes into account the changing nature of fatherhood (Dick, 2011). “Those scholars who examine fatherhood from a socio-cultural perspective do so at the risk of minimizing the in-depth psychological perspective offered from psychoanalytic thinking and vice-versa” (Dick, 2011, p.124).

2.6 Conclusion

Through the literature review it becomes apparent that there is no single definition of fatherhood and no fixed standard of fathering practices as fathering roles are being deliberated and reassessed in light of historical, cultural and socio-economic influences (Smith, 2006). Some researchers follow the historical shift of fatherhood to create an understanding of the role of the father. It has been said that every historical period highlights a dominant belief about the role and principle task of the father in the family dynamic (Morman & Floyd, 2006). Others frame fatherhood as a cultural product, therefore as culture changes so do understandings and meanings of fatherhood (Morman & Floyd, 2006). Fatherhood is a human, social and cultural role and therefore should be explored as such (Morrell & Richter, 2006). What becomes apparent from a review of the literature is the need for more studies on fathers in South Africa. “Fathers are a potential resource to children but this is currently under-appreciated and not properly tapped” (Townsend et al., 2006). Currently there is a strong international lobby to promote a new identity of fatherhood, one which consists of affectionate, caring and involved fathers (Townsend et al., 2006). There is a great need for the increased recognition and exploration of this new identity of fatherhood emerging from South African fathers.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

3.1 Research approach

This exploratory study aimed to understand the generational perspectives of Black South African fathers. Because of its exploratory nature, this research study is located within a qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research is not merely the humanistic equivalent of quantitative research, offering detailed verbal data instead of statistical data; instead qualitative research is a broad and varied research approach that can be applied using numerous methods and theoretical frameworks (Willig, 2001). The ontological assumptions in qualitative methodology reason that human life and the human psyche is complex,

meaningful and continually changing (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000), thus a qualitative method of analysis is appropriate for this study, which aims to explore the ever-changing concept of fatherhood. Few studies have collected and analysed the personal experience of fatherhood from fathers themselves (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). With few exceptions, men's own voices are often absent in much of the research done on fatherhood (Guzzo, 2011). Studying fatherhood and the ever changing role of fathers using a qualitative methodology enables researchers to tackle the complexity as well as to capture the unique meaning of fatherhood offered by each participant.

3.2 Research Questions

1. How do Black South African fathers experience and understand fatherhood in relation to past, present and future generations of fathers?
2. How do these perspectives relate to gender, culture and their experiences of their own fathers?
3. What do the participants consider as good-enough fathering?

3.3 Participants

This study has limited its scope of exploration to Black South African fathers for several reasons. Statistically only 40% of Black children in South Africa live with their fathers compared to 90% of White and Indian children who do (Richter et al., 2010). This disparity between racial groups is possibly influenced by socio-historical and economic factors. The status of Black South African fathers and possible influences on fatherhood has shaped the focus of this study and thereby specified the sample criteria. Due to the small sample size and the qualitative nature of this study findings are not statistically representative and offer instead an in-depth qualitative exploration of the experiences of the fathers interviewed.

The participants in this study consisted of a purposive sample of eight Black South African fathers working in Johannesburg, South Africa. Purposive sampling, a form of non-probability sampling, enables a researcher to choose the participants according to the goals of the research (Morgan, 1998).

The participants were sampled from a company-based nursery school in Johannesburg. The on-site nursery school caters for the parents who work at the company, which is a transport company. It caters for the entire staff ranging from the CEO and directors of the company to the cleaners and drivers of the company. The school fee is R500 a month which is affordable for most of the employees. The nursery school has approximately fifty children ranging from new-borns to six year olds. The participants were chosen from this specific nursery school for two main reasons. The first and perhaps more predominant reason was the access the researcher had to the nursery school as the researcher's mother works there and was able to put the researcher in touch with the Principal to access potential participants and to arrange interviews. The second reason the researcher accessed her participants from this specific nursery school was the diversity of demographics of the fathers whose children attended the nursery school. Given that it is a company based nursery school and the school fee is largely subsidised by the company, the fathers who bring their children range in age and socio-economic status, allowing the data to become rich in detail and diversity.

The following sampling criteria were specified for the study:

- Black South African fathers
- Have at least one child under the age of six attending the Nursery School
- Reside within the region of Gauteng

- Speak and understand English, as this was the chosen medium for the interview

To specify the sample further in terms of age, socio-economic status or culture would limit the availability of potential participants and the diversity of the sample.

Participants ranged in age from 30 to 50 years old. Four of the participants were in their 30's, three were in their 40's and one was in his 50's. All the fathers were Black and all of them are currently employed. The participants' level of education included secondary education without Matric, Matric diploma, diploma level and university degree. The participants' occupation ranged from lower level entry jobs (cleaner and gardener) to supervisor and manager. Seven out of the eight participants were married and lived with their children. Only one participant wasn't married and didn't live with his child. Two participants had children from different women and two had adopted children in addition to having their own. Three participants had only one child, two participants had two children each, two participants had three children each and one participant had four children.

TABLE 2 The age and gender of the participants' children

	Under one years old	2-3 years old	4-6 years old	7-12 years old	13-18 years old	19-25
Male		3		2	1	1
Female	1		4	2	1	1

3.4. Data collection

With permission from the Nursery School, letters inviting fathers to participate were sent to potential participants and a notice was put inside the entrance of the School. The aims and focus of the research were explained in the letters. Potential participants were asked to telephonically contact the researcher if they were interested in participating in the research. Once participants had telephoned the researcher and volunteered to be interviewed, a time was scheduled in which to conduct the interview.

Data was gathered using a semi-structured interview format. A semi-structured interview provides a means for the researcher to gather the interviewee's life experiences and allows the researcher flexibility to follow the interviewees' stories (Willig, 2001). However, it is

important to acknowledge that the researcher was guiding the participants' responses based on her research agenda, thus the interview discussions were limited to the scope of the research questions. The data was constructed and defined by the researcher; the researcher imposed a structure of exchange therefore limiting the breadth of the data (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). This bias is unavoidable in qualitative research but is nonetheless important to acknowledge. Interviews are useful in gaining understanding rather than explanations and allow opportunity for participants to reflect on their answers to the questions.

Based on the findings of the literature review, the interview schedule (Appendix D) consisted of several broad open-ended questions that encouraged the participants to explore their understandings of fatherhood. Open-ended questions allow personal narratives to emerge. Hollway & Jefferson (2000) warn against the use of 'why' questions as they unconsciously motivate participants to defend or hide the meanings of their feelings and encourage intellectualisation. The interview schedule was developed around the literature and encouraged open-ended responses to emerge from the questions.

The semi-structured interview format allows for deviations in the conversation, however, there is enough structure to ensure that all of the important topics are covered (Willig, 2001). During the interviews, questions were not always followed in the same format and the order of the questions was largely dependent on when it appeared appropriate to ask them. Several probes and additional questions were used during the interview to encourage the participants to elaborate and explore their answers further. Despite the flexible format of questioning, the researcher began each interview asking the participants to reflect on what it is like to be a father, allowing them to direct discussions of fatherhood. In addition each interview ended with the researcher asking the participants if they would like to add anything that hadn't been covered in the interview. This strategy encouraged participants to conclude the interview for themselves by either providing new information not covered by the interview, by commenting on any previous statements or by providing parting remarks.

The interviews were held at the Nursery School in a private conference room, allowing for discretion and privacy. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour and were conducted in English. On completion of the interviews, they were transcribed verbatim from the audio-recordings.

3.5 Data analysis

3.5.1. Thematic analysis

In alignment with the exploratory nature of the study the data was analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a considerably flexible and user friendly method of data analysis and can be applied across a range of theoretical approaches (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The aim of the analysis was to explore the perspectives of Black South African fathers on fatherhood. Analysis was therefore not primarily theory-driven but instead derived from the data.

Thematic analysis is used for identifying, analysing and reporting a number of themes within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was chosen for this study as it allowed the researcher to sufficiently organise and simplify the data on the one hand whilst also allowing the researcher to explore and describe the data in rich and thorough detail (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is a helpful methodology when exploring diverse and complex topics such as fatherhood in Black South African fathers; it has allowed the researcher to look for patterns of meaning in each of the interviews and has highlighted issues of potential interest for analysis and discussion. Thematic analysis is advantageous for this study as it provides thick description, summarizes key features, highlights similarities and differences and generates unanticipated insights (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

There exists various forms of thematic analysis and as such no exact procedural blueprint exists for researchers to use when conducting an analysis. The researcher utilised Braun and Clarke's (2006) procedural steps as a guideline and background for conducting a thematic analysis of the data. The aim of the thematic analysis was to discover and identify concepts and themes embedded throughout the eight interviews.

The first stage of analysis involved the researcher familiarising herself with the data by reading and rereading the stories generated by the participants. The continued reading and rereading of the data allows for the emergence and tentative identification of important themes present in the data (Crossley, 2007). This first step was repeated until the researcher felt confident that all relevant and important themes, both manifest and latent, were fully explored and understood in the context of the data generated by the participants. The researcher also provided for herself a one page summary of each of the interviews to help encapsulate the core themes of the stories for further analysis.

The second stage of analysis involves generating initial codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once the researcher was familiar with each of the interviews she re-read each transcript and began to highlight specific quotes that stood out from the data that would be of particular use for the analysis chapter of the research. Furthermore an initial coding system was adopted to help organise the data.

The third stage of analysis involves searching for themes within the data. Whilst reading through the data the researcher began to pull out themes that emerged from the data. The researcher began to compile a list of themes that emerged from each interview, often using a quote from the data to represent that theme. Once the researcher had a list of themes from each interview she began to compare the lists and compile one master list; by doing so she was implementing the fourth stage of analysis which consists of reviewing the themes in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher then re-read each interview with the master list of themes in mind and began to refine the themes that appeared to emerge from the data. At the end of this process the researcher was left with a list of eighteen different themes. These were considered as sub-themes as many of the themes could be grouped under one overarching theme or could be merged with another theme. Through the use of a mind-map the researcher was able to group the eighteen different themes into three main themes that defined the research findings. Thus the researcher was able to complete the last stage of analysis as these three main themes were defined and named.

These three themes then formed the focus of the results chapter. In line with the aim of foregrounding the voices of participants, the results chapter is primarily data driven. Once the results chapter was complete, the relationship of the data to theory and research are then explored in the discussion chapter.

3.3.2 Trustworthiness and reliability of qualitative research

“The aim of qualitative research is to understand and represent the experiences and actions of people as they encounter, engage and live through situations” (Elliott, Fischer & Rennie, 1999, p.216). Standards of good practice in qualitative research must be established to ensure trustworthiness and reliability of the interpretations or conclusions drawn from the data (Elliott et al., 1999). Seven evaluation criteria have been developed to address aspects of good qualitative practice and thus improving the trustworthiness and reliability of data analysis.

Firstly, by ‘owning one’s perspective’ and disclosing one’s orientation and preconceptions, a researcher aims to become more transparent in their data analysis (Elliott et al., 1999). This was achieved by including a section on reflexivity in the methods chapter. This disclosure helps readers to interpret the researcher’s data with respect to the researcher’s positioning and for the researcher to remain reflective herself. The second evaluation criterion involves ‘situating the sample’. In the participants section under the methods chapter the researcher describes the participants using specific demographic details. This aids the reader in judging the range of people and situations to which the findings might be relevant (Elliott et al., 1999). The third evaluation criterion expects the researcher to base their analysis on detailed examples (Elliott et al., 1999). In the results chapter, the themes found in the data are explored by drawing on rich and detailed quotes from the interviews with the participants.

A ‘credibility check’ is the fourth evaluation criterion that improves the validity of qualitative research (Elliott et al., 1999). The researcher’s supervisor played an integral role in checking and supervising the analysis of the data throughout the research process. Another ‘credibility check’ can be conducted by the readers if extensive examples are provided in the results chapter, thus acting as ‘auditors’ themselves (Elliott et al., 1999). The fifth criterion emphasises ‘coherence’ in the data, thus an understanding of the data is based on a framework or underlying structure (Elliott et al., 1999). In this research a generational framework of understanding Black South African fatherhood underlies the data analysis.

The sixth evaluation criterion requires the researcher to acknowledge the limitations of applicability of the findings in the research (Elliott et al., 1999). The limitations section in the discussion chapter discusses how generalization of the findings is limited due to the small sample size and explains the limits of extending the findings to other contexts. The last evaluation criterion specifies that the data findings should resonate with the readers, thus the research should aim to bring the participants’ experiences to life (Elliott, 1999). The results chapter of this study has been designed in such a way that it aims to represent the participants and their stories in a realistic and accessible manner. These seven evaluation criteria are an attempt at developing a widely-recognised guideline for evaluating qualitative research which is necessary to win wider recognition and acceptability for qualitative approaches to psychological inquiry (Elliott et al., 1999).

3.6 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is important within a qualitative paradigm as a way of acknowledging the role of the researcher in the research process. By being reflexive, a qualitative researcher can ensure that they are “conscious of the cultural, political, social, linguistic and ideological origins of their own perspective and voice as well as the perspective and voices of those they interview and those to whom they report” (Patton, 2002, p. 65).

Over and above the influence that I have on my interpretations as a researcher, I must also acknowledge the possible influence that my interactions with the participants may have had on their responses. The way that participants conduct their interviews can depend on their audience (Patton, 2002). During the research process I reflected on three ways that I could have influenced the participants’ answers to my questions: through my personhood (age, gender and race), through my perspective as a researcher and lastly through my relationship to one of the teachers at the nursery school.

Firstly it is possible that the participants in this study have told their stories to me in selective ways given that I am a young white female. The socio-historical differences between myself as a young single white female and participants, who were older Black fathers, are likely to have coloured our interaction and levels of disclosure in the interview. The themes identified in this research arose in the context of the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). It is important to acknowledge how my age, gender and race could have had an effect on my relationships and interactions with the participants during interviews. Since fatherhood is a gendered construct, my gender identity may have influenced the interview process and interpretation of the data. Being younger than all of the participants as well as coming from a different cultural background may have both hindered the participation of the fathers to share personal stories and, on the other hand, may have encouraged them to share their stories with an outsider. Although it is difficult to judge what effect my personhood had on the participants, an interview question was included in the interview schedule to gauge the participants’ feelings on this topic. I asked the participants towards the end of the interview how they felt being interviewed by someone who is from a different gender and cultural background. Most of the participants expressed appreciation that someone with a different background was interested in interviewing them about their views on fatherhood. None of the participants voiced that it was difficult or different to speak to me because of my age, race or cultural background and many of them said they were eager to

share their stories. Despite the positive responses it is important to hold in mind that my personhood (age, culture and gender) could have consciously or unconsciously affected the interviewees.

The reflexivity in this study requires an examination of my motivations towards conducting this particular research and it is therefore necessary to consider my perceptions of fatherhood and thus my own relationship with my father and how this could affect the research process. Based on my position as the researcher many of my interpretations have been influenced by my own personal views and experiences; I have tried to stay as close to the stories that the participants have shared with me. I believe that the qualitative methods I have used and a qualitative interviewing style and analysis have allowed the participants' voices to come through.

Lastly my connection to the nursery school where my sample was taken must be acknowledged. My mother is one of the teachers at the Nursery School. Although my connection to my mother wasn't explicitly revealed in the interview process some of the participants made the connection themselves, because they noticed our shared surname or, in the case of one participant, our similar appearance to each other. None of the participants appeared uncomfortable or uneasy about my connection to her.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethics clearance for this study was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethical considerations included the guarantee of confidentiality, informed consent, the voluntary nature of participation and consideration of potential benefits or risk of participating in this research.

Participants received an information sheet (Appendix A) that summarized the goals and general nature of the study and what would be required of them should they consent to take part in the present research. The sheet informed them that they had the right to withdraw from the study, or decline from answering specific questions, at any time without repercussions. Participants were informed that although the recordings of their interviews and transcripts would not be destroyed, as they may be useful to future research, their recordings and transcripts would be stored in a secure locked cupboard. The participant information sheet also informed participants that, although their names were known by the researcher, no

identifying information was linked to their transcripts or would be mentioned in the research report, future publications or presentations.

The name of the nursery school with which participants were affiliated was excluded from the transcripts and research report and pseudonyms were used in place of participants' real names in order to ensure confidentiality. A participant consent form was provided in order to ensure that participants understood their rights and what was required of them if they consented to participate in the research study (Appendix B). Further, since the interviews were audio recorded, participants were presented with a consent form to audio record the interviews (Appendix C). Only the researcher had access to the audio recordings and only the researcher and her supervisor has access to the interview transcripts.

Finally, although the study was not expected to carry any psychological harm for the participants the interview may have re-evoked and re-opened painful memories concerning their experience as fathers as well as memories and experiences of their own fathers. However in the interviews the fathers did not overtly experience any distressing reactions and instead expressed finding the experience an enjoyable and positive opportunity to share their stories and opinions.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the themes found in the transcribed interviews. The participants' narratives in the interviews appeared to centre around three core themes. The first theme that emerged was a generational theme whereby the participants saw themselves as new generation fathers and compared this with their fathers' and forefathers' generation. Not only was there a comparison between the old and new generation of fathers but there was a sense that the new generation of fathers were disidentifying themselves from their fathers and the old generation and trying to shape a new generational way of fathering.

The second theme was that of gender. Again the theme was spoken about generationally, with participants opposing 'old' views of gender and attempting to adopt a new generational viewpoint. The participants' understanding of fathering and fatherhood was interwoven with how they related to their own wives, their mothers and their sons and daughters. The conflict between creating a new generation of fatherhood that promotes gender equality was staged against entrenched stereotypical assumptions about fathers, mothers, daughters and sons.

The last theme concerned how the participants' experience of fatherhood was rooted in their experiences with their own fathers. The participants' fathering was intimately linked with how they were fathered as well as how they were not fathered. The way they told their stories is saturated by the stories of their fathers, on possibly both a conscious and unconscious level. On the one hand, participants pursued the same values and lessons instilled and learnt from their fathers while, on the other hand they disidentified with their fathers: trying to mend their wrongs, avoid their mistakes and forge a new path of fatherhood which diverged from the path of the old generation of fathers.

4.2 New Generation fatherhood

A constant comparison made by the participants was between what they conceived as the old generation of fathers and where they positioned themselves as new generational fathers.

My father is from the old school meaning he is old generation. Obviously there are ways in trying to raise children that would be different to how I'm raising in that he's more, he was more strict, ok he instilled values but some of the values were a bit harsh.

So I'd try to eliminate that very harshness and try to have a more of a discussion (Rabe p.5).

Rabe positions his father's parenting style as a product of the old generation. Several of the fathers felt that the old generation of fathers were too punitive with their children. In response they partly disidentified themselves from this harsh image and identified instead with a new generational perception of creating a balanced, less punitive, relationship with their family and children. Rabe feels that his father was attempting to instil values through his parenting, however he feels his father's approach was too harsh and, in opposition, aims to be less authoritarian with his daughter.

Rabe believes that the generational shift in fatherhood is in response to a perception that Black South African fathers in previous generations were primarily seen as financial providers. He explains that during Apartheid Black fathers would come and work in Johannesburg while their families stayed in the homelands and the only contribution they could make to raising and providing for their family and children was financial. However since 1994, along with the emergence of a democratic country, came the emergence of a new generation of fathers.

But with our generation now the guys of I don't know they call us the Y2K, we are getting more involved with the, in the upbringing of our kids. Slowly but surely, not every one of us but a minimum of us is getting there slowly but surely (Rabe p.6).

In addition to the frequent comparison between old and new generation fathers, participants also compared themselves to other fathers. In the extract above, Rabe does not believe that all fathers have changed from an old to a new generational framework. Many of the participants commented on how they saw some contemporary fathers as lacking in their paternal duties and responsibilities, and sometimes set themselves apart from these fathers:

Other fathers I've checked they don't care...I don't think it's fine to give up on your children (Jacob p.9-10).

Don't doubt if the child is here, it's here, so now you have to pull up your socks, face that thing (Phila p.9).

Jacob and Phila's statements above implicitly refer in some ways to the trend towards absent fathers. Jacob recognises that fatherhood can be difficult and offers constant challenges,

however he believes that if a father gives up on or abandons his child he does not care about his responsibilities as a father. Phila's comment refers to the lack of commitment he sees in other fathers, especially at the point of owning responsibility for the birth of one's own child. His phrase 'pull up your socks' is addressed to contemporary fathers, implying the value he places in fatherhood and his intolerance for absent fathers.

Seymour linked the generational shift in fatherhood to Apartheid and the financial role of the Black South African father. He felt that the previous generation of fathers struggled to assert themselves as fathers because of the constant disadvantages they faced on a daily basis.

Researcher: *And how are you and your father different from each other?*

Seymour: *The difference is now that that that life before and this our generation, the life is not the same. Because right now I do have my own work, I do have my own money; I do have my own house. You know the older people maybe they still somewhere with his parents, you know they don't have enough money to feed us or maybe he doesn't have a nice place to sit. But now we do have things that is our own. You see that is the difference because we do manage to do things but previously the older people they were struggling* (p.4).

Seymour felt that the new generation of fathers, post-apartheid fathers, have more opportunities and better access to education and employment, thus making it easier for them to be fathers than in previous generations. He equated having a job, money, a car and a house to having the ability to be a good enough father.

Providing financially for their family was a concern for many of the participants. *"It was worrying me as a father that eish my son is going to grow up in a small house and maybe I'm not going to afford to buy him whatever he needs"* (Jacob p.3). Tebogo, like Jacob felt he couldn't satisfactorily fulfil his role as a father because he couldn't comfortably provide for his family financially. *"I knew what kind of father I wanted to be, even though I'm not close to that but my wish is still there"* (p.5).

Despite these worries, participants alluded to several different roles and duties they take on as a new generational father. One interesting role is that a father should be more than a father to his children; he should also be a friend.

“When I am sitting with them playing games or whatever they don’t treat me like a father they treat me like their, her friends” (Rudi p.2). Rudi felt a certain accomplishment and sense of pride in the idea that he was not just a father to his daughters but also a friend.

Rabe felt that this level of intimacy was something that was inherent in White families only:

“What happens with white people just from the word go they, the way they bring up their kids they are more, they are more friends than just a father as opposed to, with us Blacks whereby usually it’s the father is the father, he is the provider finish and klaar as opposed to the white community whereby there’s that oneness about them that was instilled from early age.” (Rabe p.7).

Instead of fathers wanting to be seen as the head of the house, the disciplinarian and the respected elder, they wanted their children to see them as equals and to create a different type of relationship and have a different type of interaction between father and child. Rabe not only sees this emergence of the father as friend as something distinguishing the old and new generation but something that distinguishes Black South African fathers from other cultures. What the participant felt he observed from White families is that White fathers developed a different level of interaction with their children compared to Black fathers. Rabe describes an ‘oneness’ that White fathers supposedly have with their children; and perhaps he is trying to illustrate that the closeness he is trying to encourage with his daughter is something that is missing in the relationship or interaction between Black fathers and their children more generally. This racial comparison again implicitly highlights the divisive influence of apartheid on Black South African fatherhood.

The concept of being a friend to one’s children implies a changed dynamic between father and child. By being friends a certain strictness or harshness is also removed from the relationship, replaced by a wish to be closer and more intimate with one’s children. Rudi expresses this vividly by saying *“Help me be father to my kids not to be a lion to the kids so that they are hiding under the table”* (Rudi p.6). Rudi implies that at times he struggles not to be a strict father, whose children hide away from him as if he is a ‘lion’. His plea for help underscores his sense that a change is needed in how fatherhood is understood.

He believes that being a ‘lion’, a terrifying figure, is not what a father should be like and separates his ideal of a father as completely removed from any terrifying ‘lion’ qualities. Tebogo also juxtaposes harshness against a more open approach:

I believe in talking not smacking or doing something. I believe in talking...if you don't talk to them, you just be harsh to them there is nothing they are going to hear (Tebogo p.6-7).

The idea of discipline and punishment arose frequently in the interviews as participants expressed a pull to move away from corporal punishment, something that their fathers (the old generation of fathers) practised, and trying to establish less harsh methods of discipline with their children.

“The best advice is do not fight with your family, sit down and discuss things and make sure that you understand each other” (Seymour p.3). Seymour's view of discipline attempts to eradicate any violence or harm and foregrounds talking with one's child as the method of communicating. For some fathers discipline applies not only to punishing their children for bad behaviour but also allows fathers to teach and guide their children through life. In Seymour's words *“Fathers are the ones who're actually supposed to herd and give directions at home” (Seymour p.4).*

I'm practicing, checking which ways I can use to help her to grow up nicely and which way I can use to punish her if she does something wrong...But I do limit the punishments because sometimes I can see that punishment is not helping him but damaging him (Jacob p.2).

Jacob speaks about the positive and negative aspects of discipline. On the one hand discipline serves as a tool for guiding and inhibiting negative behaviour but the parameters of discipline or punishment can also be pushed too far and can hinder a child's ability to see the purpose or function of discipline. Jacob recognizes the delicate balance between the two.

It's very difficult to just let go and say no I'm going to give him freedom, he can go and do whatever he can do. Because that maybe end up being a damage to him, tomorrow he could end up being not a good father or besides be a father he can end up not being something, he can just be a useless person that it's going to be my problem again to look after him even when he is old (Jacob p.1).

In addition to Jacob's compromise with providing the right amount of discipline or punishment is also his battle with giving his children freedom to explore their world but at the same time setting down boundaries and giving guidance with those boundaries.

This internal struggle between what is right and wrong, helpful and harmful for his children illustrates his strong investment in raising his children. The dire consequences he imagines for his children should he not succeed, becoming a bad father or a useless person, suggests not only his strong investment but also the importance of him not failing. It is interesting that one of these consequences concerns intergenerational fatherhood, perhaps implying Jacob's sense of having to break a generational pattern.

I can teach him lot of things, yes. How to play, how to communicate with other children, how to differentiate between wrong and right (Phila p.1) Phila and Jacob, along with the other fathers, felt their fathering could make a difference to their children's upbringing and well-being but also expressed the difficulties that come with raising children.

These days to be a father, some kids still take it like it's a game or it's a joke or whatever (Rapula p.10).

To raise a child is not child's play (Rudi p.3).

Rudi and Rapula emphasize how difficult it is to be a father and convey how important they feel it is to take fatherhood seriously. Rabe (p.2) expresses that *"there is no recipe for being a father"*, highlighting the challenge of being a father because there are no guidelines on how to do the job. Many participants described fatherhood as much more than a label or a title. Rudi (p.1) for example evocatively said *"It's not just the name it's a sentence"*. A strong sense of responsibility to fulfil certain roles and duties was conveyed, *"I am a father you know I have to be involved, wherever my son is I have to be there"* (Jacob p.7).

This involvement and investment was described right from the start. The pregnancy and birth of their children, for most participants, was a particularly meaningful memory.

Like from birth immediately she was born I was actually there at the hospital I was there in the delivery room. So that on its own it was like a 'wow' thing for me as in here is somebody I helped bring into the earth and this blood of my blood and she's mine, do you understand...But the day she was born whereby I held her, I was actually the first one to uh hold her before even the mother saw her, I actually saw her before the mother on its own, it was very meaningful as a father (Rabe p.2).

The combination of bringing someone into the world that is part of you and then being the first to hold your baby, which is most often a privilege given to the mother, represented,

something incredibly important for the participant. Being present for one's child's birth is not particularly common in African cultures where men are excluded during the labour and birth process (Morrell & Richter, 2006), so perhaps this experience of being there for the birth was also memorable as it represented a resistance against typical Black South African practices of fatherhood.

Many participants described experiencing many changes from the day their children were born, including many sacrifices. For instance Rapula sacrificed his dream of coming to Johannesburg to study to become a lawyer and instead went straight into work so that he could provide for his child. J.P. made *"big changes to become a father, I quit drinking"* (p.5). The biggest change however seemed to be the change of identity and responsibility from only thinking about themselves to encompassing their identity and responsibilities to include their children.

You've got a little child that comes into your life that changes the whole demographics of the way you live (Rabe p.2).

You don't think for yourself you just think for the kids...each and everything you do as a father you don't do things on your own, you have to sit down and come to an agreement (Rudi p.3-6).

You don't think for yourself anymore because you have to think for him (Phila p.1).

It seemed for many of the participants their life agenda turned around and their main concern was for their children's well-being.

To be a father means to show you are a grown up and you can able to raise something and make it the way I am (Jacob p.7).

Jacob describes how fatherhood symbolises his transition into manhood. His statement also illustrates his paternal desires and wishes in that he hopes to raise his child to be like him. *"As a good father I don't expect to see my son not being a good father because I am a good father, he must be able to learn from me"* (Jacob, p.10).

Being a role model for their children was an important sentiment expressed by most of the fathers.

I look at something that can help my kids to become when they grow up and try teach them the right way of living, to generally teach them how to live or how to become like me as a father (Jacob, p.1).

Because children like to copy what they see from others and let it be the right things so that tomorrow they can be good fathers also, yes for the generation to come (Phila, p.10).

For Jacob and Phila, becoming a father also means raising their sons to be good fathers. Fatherhood is not about individuality but is described as inherently intergenerational. J.P. describes an aspiration to produce children who will not only be good fathers, but will be better fathers than himself.

If you are a good father you need to be a good role model so that even tomorrow when they are uhh, when you got kids like boys they have to grow up the very same way you...but not the very same way they have to be more advanced than me, taking care of their family cause it's very important... you wish for your child to be like more, to be more than you, you know. Hundred times more than you (J.P., p. 9).

J.P. links his desire to be a good role model to his hopes for the future of his children. At another point in the interview he also links his standing in his culture.

To be a father in my culture, the society respects you a lot. Especially our black society because they can see that this man is a respected man he's got a family to look upon, he's not a child anymore (J.P. p.6).

J.P.'s intergenerational description of fatherhood is both forward-looking and backward looking. Fatherhood earns him the respect given to those men who transition into manhood by becoming fathers. This respect is also not about individuality. Fathers are seen to have standing in society and responsibilities beyond their immediate families.

To be a father in South Africa you're not the father of your own children, you must be a father to other children's also (Phila p.9).

Every father you come across on the street is your father (J.P. p.7).

Both Phila and J.P. emphasised that fatherhood is not limited to fathering one's own biological children but also implies a level of responsibility for society's youth as a whole.

4.3 Gender

The interview schedule included only one question about gender, pertaining to whether participants would have preferred a girl or boy child and what implications this had for them. Issues of gender spontaneously arose, however, in other aspects of the interview discussions. These arose particularly in relation to how they related to either their sons or daughters and to how their paternal role was compared to the mother's role in parental care. The gendered roles of mothers and fathers also arose in interviews. The theme of gender was chosen as a core theme for analysis because it was often spoken about with reference to conflict between the old and new generation fathers. Participant vacillated between identifying with gender stereotypes and rejecting and disowning those same stereotypes.

The initial interview questions posed was, "In what way did the gender of your child affect how you felt about being a father?" Rabe responded:

The gender of my child uh it didn't really, it didn't affect how I felt about being a father because I was prepared for either a boy or a girl and I, look I said whatever God provides for us there is a reason why he gave us a daughter as opposed to giving us a son so it didn't really affect anything. To me uh um a child is a child regardless of the gender yes uh look I wouldn't say I would've loved having a boy then we could play soccer and other things together but it didn't, it didn't really matter at that stage because uh um I don't have any say or any rights as to what uh gender the child is so like I'm saying I was really surprised anything that God gave us was a blessing and we took it as it came" (Rabe, p.2).

Like many of the participants, Rabe stresses that the gender of his child was 'God's will'. He began by stating that the gender of his child didn't affect how he felt about being a father and repeated that the gender of his child was not important. His statement that he would have *loved having a boy*, however, suggests that he did indeed have a preference for a son but this preference is difficult to unambiguously state.

Since most of the participants have either only sons or only daughters it appeared that most of the participants grappled with the idea of having only one gender of children. However among the participants it was apparent that the fathers who grappled with the gender of their children the most were the fathers who only had daughters. As one father explained, "I wished for a boy because most of the fathers wished for the boys" (J.P., p.2).

I was hoping maybe God would give me a son, unfortunately we actually...but anyway I don't have to say unfortunately because it's the love of God then there comes a girl (Seymour, p.2).

Seymour and J.P. both express their disappointment in not having a son. Seymour, like Rabe, did not unambiguously state his wish for a son. As soon as he said “unfortunately”, he interrupted himself and corrected himself. It is important to bear in mind that both Seymour and Rabe may have felt self-conscious about expressing their disappointment in having girls as they were being interviewed by a female researcher.

Jacob, who had both male and female children, expressed his happiness in having a boy, especially given that his first born was a boy. *“Because he was a boy I was so happy. I wanted that, I wanted it to be the first born in my house to be a boy and then it was just like that and then it was, I was so excited”* (Jacob, p.4).

The wish for a son has cultural roots. Rudi says, *“I grown up in a rural areas and then I'm too rural and as a father you are expecting to have the boy”* (Rudi, p.2). The wish for a son may also be linked to traditional gender stereotypes. Jacob (p.4), for example, gave several reasons why he wanted his first born to be a son. Firstly, *“a boy it's more responsible than a girl”*. He believed that having a first born boy meant that his boy would grow up and look after his younger siblings, whereas if the first born was a girl she would grow up and marry another man and would then look after her husband instead of her younger siblings. Secondly, Jacob, felt it was important to have a son in order to carry on the family surname. Lastly he felt that boys are more attached to their mothers and so a son would look after his wife. If for instance he and his wife were fighting, his son would *“protect his mom all the time”*.

Rapula wished for a daughter as he felt it would balance his family of three boys. This wish may also be based on gender stereotypes.

There is one of my uncles that had boys only the problem is that they always fight, they always fight because this one is telling himself that he is more clever than that one, so if there is a girl, I think it's going to help me. Because every time they are going to fight the girl is going to run to us and tell us, they are fighting that side. Ja, that's how it's going to help me. She's going to be the one to tell me, what's going on there, what are they doing are they drinking or are they smoking or whatsoever. She's going to come

back home and tell me. Boys only, won't tell you what's going on. They will just do their own thing, they won't come and tell you (Rapula, p.7).

Rapula's reason for wanting a girl is that boys get into more trouble. Similarly, his fears about having a girl referenced gender stereotypes.

I like boys. Girls, I can't say I don't like girls because I haven't had a girl but I'm seeing the problems you are having when you are a father of girl at home you see, that is what I'm seeing on my neighbours. When the girls start growing up eh, you must always lock the gate (Rapula, p.2).

Rapula's implicit comparison foregrounds female sexuality. Rabe also identified the 'difficulty' of having daughters, pointing to what he felt was a girl's vulnerable sexuality and susceptibility to the sexual advances of other men.

I want my daughter to know me as her friend and her dad also as a result her being a girl she would, she wouldn't really have to go out there and look for love and friendship from older men and whatever kind of nonsense that goes on around the world...and obviously when the time comes when she gets of age I would sit her down and tell her about boys and what funny things boys will do to you (Rabe, p.5-6).

Rabe expresses his awareness of his daughter's sexuality and explicitly links this to his role as her father: if he is a good father, she will not look for an inappropriately sexualised father figure elsewhere. He also says that, as a father, he should be her friend, linking to ideas about new generation fatherhood. The juxtaposition of father as friend and father as custodian of a girl's sexuality suggests tensions between new and old generation fatherhood in relation to gender.

Rudi also sets himself in opposition to gendered stereotypes linked to culture about girls and boys.

And then as I am a father I can say I am um growing up in a rural areas where we're used to girls doing girls thing, boys doing boys thing so we find that is our kids we have to teach them to cope with the living in the democracy. And then boys we mustn't tell them say that we are the boys you can't do girls' thing, girls can't do boys thing and then they must learn to be independent to be strong in whatever situation (Rudi, p.1).

Rudi feels that growing up in a rural context influences one's perceptions of girls and boys, sons and daughter. However he highlights that things have changed, especially through the country's transition into a democracy, representing equality not only between different races but also between men and women. Perhaps aligning himself with new generation fatherhood, he suggests that boys and girls should not be raised along gender lines but should instead grow up strong and independent regardless of their gender.

There is no difference because what made me see them the same is that when I am sitting with them playing games or whatever they don't treat me like I'm a father they treat like their, her friends. That's why I realise no man, to have a boy or girls it doesn't make any different. A kids is the kids. They need to be treated the same. You can be a boy and you can have boys and you can have girls but they need to be treated the same, equally (Rudi, p.2).

Participants spoke about overcoming gender stereotypes not only in relation to their children but also in relation to their views of maternal and paternal care.

Even if their mummy she is not around they mustn't see the gap that my mum is not there and then she means uh we don't have uh parents. If their mom is not there, I am there as a parent to them and they must be open for me to me as also I am open to them (Rudi, p.1).

Rudi's comment references the perception that parental care only consists of maternal care and only mothers take care of children. Rudi emphasizes that, if the mother is absent at home, this does not imply his absence as a parent. He claims fatherhood as similar to, rather than different from, parenthood.

Rudi conveys that he wants to take on the role of both the mother and father, and not be seen as just the father in the family. *"You don't say no because you are a girl go and speak to your mom and you are a boys go and speak to your dad, no you sit them together as a family"*. Rudi challenges the gendered divide between mothers and daughters, fathers and sons.

The fathers in this study, then, portray themselves as attempting to challenge gendered roles of fathers and mothers, seeing themselves as able to do both. They also speak about reconceptualising the roles of mothers and fathers in the family. Rudi expresses that he can communicate with his daughters just like a mother would, despite being a male. Rabe

describes the change he experienced when becoming a father in relation to his parental roles and responsibilities:

The way fatherhood has changed me, I'll speak for me myself in that um you know it's waking up at late to look after the baby. It's not just my wife that's supposed to do that, we like share tasks (Rabe, p.9).

Rabe positions himself as a new generation father who wants to share the roles that wives are traditionally "supposed to do". Seymour expresses a similar sentiment:

I'm also doing the house chores. We have to share, there is no this is for the lady, they must cook, you must do the gardens, no no (Seymour, p.5).

Although some of participants emphasise their capacity to perform the same role as a mother, they also emphasise the need for both mother and father to be present in the family. Seymour found it crucial for a child to have both a mother and father *and* for the parents to work together for the good of their children.

Researcher: *And what do you think happens to the children when the mother and father go their separate ways*

Participant 4: *ohhh! That's a big problem for the children cause if mother and father are separated then there is no one who is going to guide the children...But if are together mother, father and the children we are can see if there is something wrong (p.8).*

Rapula also emphasised how parenting is a joint effort between mothers and fathers.

It's a good thing to be a father but sometimes eh there are some difficulties when the mum is not around you see. Because when my wife, the first time she gave birth she wasn't working but we were running something like a spaza shop so when she is busy on the spaza shop I have to care of the baby (Rapula, p.1).

This joint effort from some fathers may be related to new generation fatherhood as well as the realities of the lives of many mothers, who work and do not stay home to look after their children.

[Fathers] have to be involved because mothers sometimes cannot carry the responsibilities alone you know, cause you know children are like children, both sides

you have to be there. Cause mothers of today they are not like mothers of yesterday, yesterday's mothers had to stay behind and fathers would go to work for them and come back. But mothers of today they, these are modern days, you know mothers of today are working mothers, working very hard, they are driving and all this and then you know they've got they don't have time like us, cause they are working you know, you have to be there, you have to cook for the children also. During the olden days they say you know the women is a women they have to cook and wait for her to, that is what our grandfathers, forefathers did but these are modern times, you have to be there (J.P., p.5).

J.P. compares “modern days” to the days when his grandfathers and forefathers saw the role of women in a particular way, a traditional view of women as domesticated and limited in their roles to looking after the household and children. Rapula remembers an older relative telling him a story about women:

I remember one of the old “Mandala” back in Kwa-Zulu Natal he used to say eh. He was telling the aunties to listen to him, he was telling them eh boy, to have a wife it's a problem but a wife is a different animal, a wife is a different animal but you MUST have it in your house, you must have it, it's a different animal, you can't look after it like a cattles or what-what but you must have it in your house, because we need it, without a woman you can't call it a house, this is not a house. Same goes to the fathers, without a father in the house there is no pillar. A father is like a pillar in the house, a man is like a pillar (Rapula, p.5).

There is a tension in different parts of Rapula's interview between old and new generational understandings of gender. Here, he refers to what an older relative has ‘taught’ Rapula about women and their role in the family and the running of the household. By including the role of fathers (“same goes for fathers”), Rapula tries to integrate this with his ideas about women and how women are portrayed in society today.

How mothers saw fathers in society was another interesting sub-theme that emerged in the interviews. Rabe explained how some women hold negative views of Black South African fathers:

To be a father in South Africa today its actually um a hard thing because with um the things that are going on in our country and what we see on T.V., there's not really trust

for fathers especially for, like I don't want to say for Black fathers per se because it happens across the colour board in that kids are getting raped by their own parents by their own families so the mothers themselves are not even trusting their partners with their own kids so it's quite hard to be a father because you have to prove yourself that you know what, this one is just my daughter that's all, there's no ulterior motives and there's nothing to it. So in that aspect the T.V. is uh like being a hindrance in us being intimate with our daughters. Like I will give an example uhh like a friend of mine the wife doesn't actually even want him to bath the daughter because why, because she thinks, you know those evil thoughts go in her head...the mothers especially are being judgemental about us who've got daughters.

Rabe's description implicitly compares 'bad' fathers who are sexually damaging to their daughters and 'good' fathers who are not. He describes a gendered experience of feeling a lack of trust, particularly from mothers, about the intentions of fathers towards their children, especially their daughters. He explained that, through increased media coverage, rape cases between fathers and daughters have become more visible, negatively affecting how many mothers view fathers.

Researcher: *And how does it feel that some mothers don't trust their husbands?*

Rabe: *I wouldn't blame them and then I would blame them at the same time. Uh look it's just the mother instinct in them that is telling them 'no you know what put a hedge around your daughter' it's not like they don't trust the father, they don't trust the society the father is living in. And then I would blame them as they are supposed to know that the father has got the best interest at heart for that child... I would blame them because she's supposed to know that the father has got the child's best interest at heart and there's no way that the father would intentionally hurt the daughter. So it's the society that we are living in that is making the mothers to think the way they are thinking. And as fathers we always have to prove ourselves to them that this is my daughter and there are no ulterior motives, I've got the best interest at heart for this girl.*

When faced with the possibility that mothers don't trust fathers, Rabe expressed conflict about whether or not to blame them. He moves between an explanation of fatherhood based on his own emotional connection with his children and an explanation of fatherhood

based on dominant societal portrayals of fathers. It is clear that, as a father, he feels potentially judged by others.

The participants often judged their fathering ability according to how their wives viewed them.

I don't know if my wife can tell you if I'm a good father or bad father. But for me I look, take myself to be a good father you know, for my kids and my family. Cause I'm there always there for them, even things are bad, tough we're together. Fighting for this. Cause most of the fathers tend to give up so easily, they divorce, they do all these things. But just to give up easily is not right, you must think about the kids also. Cause you know women of today they are very harsh to men but we, we're still there (J.P).

Researcher: *So there's a lot of pressure on men to be good fathers, especially from their wives?*

J.P.: *I won't say there is a lot of pressure, cause if you do the right things there is no pressure. If you do the wrong things there will be pressure. Cause if you do it right I mean who is going to pressurise you but if you do it wrong then your wife is going to complain. And the complaints come with pressure, so complaints come with pressure you know. If she complains then you know there's going to be lots of pressure.*

J.P.'s comment illustrates the more general pressures that participants felt about fatherhood in South Africa today. There is an overwhelming amount of pressure to be a 'good father' from society and the media, alluded to by Rabe, there is pressure from their wives and mothers and there is also the pressure they place on themselves. These pressures are often complicated by the role gender plays in shaping fatherhood and how fathers practise fatherhood in relation to their sons, daughters and wives.

4.4 Father to Father

This section focuses on how each participant is influenced by their relationship with their own father. This particular theme poignantly demonstrates how the way in which one was fathered influences how one fathers in turn. The physical or psychological presence or absence of one's father is significant in how participants understood their roles as fathers. Of the eight participants interviewed, two had absent fathers. Three had fathers who were present during their childhoods and three lost their biological fathers during childhood. These

different circumstances had different consequences and each will therefore be discussed separately.

4.4.1 Absent fathers

Two of the participants grew up without ever knowing their biological fathers. Both participants spontaneously offered this information before being asked about their fathers by the researcher. The absence of their fathers was important to them and intrinsically influenced their own journey of fatherhood; they did not separate their experience of having had an absent father from their own experience of fatherhood.

I'm grown up and I am on my own, and but ah I not holding a grudge for him. You see I can see him but it doesn't mean maybe I need him in my life. That's, that's it and then ah in my life nè and I have realised that those people who were not raised by their fathers are successful in life because they become strong and strong and strong to be independent to know that in life you have to stand up for your life (Rudi).

Rudi comments that he doesn't hold a grudge against his father for leaving him when he was born, however he emphasises that he was on his own and he had to stand up for himself. By communicating to the researcher his experience of a solitary existence the participant is also communicating the void left by his absent father.

Rapula openly expressed the difficulty he experienced growing up without his father.

Researcher: *And how did it feel growing up without a father?*

Rapula: *Eish it was...even now it's still difficult. Ja because I still want to know where he is, he is still alive or what but the problem is I can't go out and look for him, why can't he go out and look out for me? Why should I go out and look, which means he doesn't need me. But I need him...but not exactly just to know who, how does it look like, where does he stay, have I got the brothers or sisters or what? I only need to know those things, not to say that he is a rich man and I need the money, no nothing, just to know him and if I've got brothers, sisters cousins, everything. That is all I want to know.*

Rapula struggles to articulate why he needs his father but powerfully conveys the gap left by his absence. Whilst both participants spontaneously mentioned their absent fathers, neither of them related this to their current experience of fatherhood. The links between their fathers

and their descriptions of themselves as fathers, however, suggested the influence of their fathers on their own experiences of fatherhood.

Rapula almost repeated the same ‘mistake’ as his father, since his father left his mother when she was pregnant with him; Rapula came close to doing the same:

Researcher: *“And how did you, how did it feel when you found out you were going to be a father for the first time?”*

Rapula: *“Ehhh eish I was thinking I was thinking of running away because I was, I think when I got my first child I was still at school”*

Unlike his father, Rapula did not run away when he found out his girlfriend was pregnant and in fact brought up his first child as a single parent when his girlfriend passed away. He also adopted his wife’s son from a previous marriage. Although Rapula did not directly make the connection between his experience of his absent father and his own experience as a father, his commitment to fatherhood perhaps compensates for his father’s absence. Instead of repeating what his father did, he does the opposite.

Both of the participants disidentified with their fathers’ roles as being absent caretakers by identifying with a strong nurturing and present fathering role.

They mustn’t, when they look at you they regret why we have a father like this. That is what I’m making sure of my kids, I’m not regretting to be a father and I’m proud to be a father and I’ll be um I’m struggling to be a most respectful father and who’s got responsibilities to look after his kids (Rudi).

This disidentification from their fathers, of course, did not absolve the pain left behind by their absence. Rudi clings onto his father’s abandonment by stating *“Try to forgive and forget. Although it, it’s not easy to forgive and forget”* and perhaps the desire to become a better father is linked to this pain.

You don’t need to go to school to be a father, you don’t go to, there isn’t any technical or teachers school or university that can teach you to be a father. To be a father is something that, ah, that is something that is in my heart, to be a father. Because you can’t, you can’t just say I am not a father because of this, I am not able to be a father because of this and that. You can, you can be poor, not have any, not working and not have anything but it doesn’t mean you are not a father. It’s love that comes first,

because even if you can have everything, the first thing that will come to your heart is love. Nothing can stand in my way of being a father (Rudi).

4.4.2 Present fathers

Three out of the eight participants grew up with fathers who had some sort of involvement in their childhood. Despite their fathers' involvement in their childhood and upbringing the three participants described a conflict between identifying and disidentifying with their own fathers.

My father is from the old school meaning he is old generation. Obviously there are ways in trying to raise children that would be different to how I'm raising in that, He's more, he was more strict. Ok he instilled values but some of the values were a bit harsh. So I'd try to eliminate that very harshness and try to have a more of a discussion, how can I say? There should be more of a balance in the way we talk with my daughter. We should...my father was father he wasn't my friend. I want my daughter to know me as her friend, my dad was my dad when we were growing up and only recently as things have started changing in the world he's become more like my friend but initially he was my father (Rabe).

Rabe describes experiencing his father as very guarded, *"He was just a father so there was a bit of...not resentment per se, but you know a bit of, there was a demarcation that I could go up to"*. Although he felt there was no "resentment" towards his father for not being more friendly and affectionate, his father's distance clearly made an impact on him as Rabe repeatedly mentioned throughout the interview his desire for more intimacy with his father, *"My dad was just like a father to me he wasn't a friend but obviously with time he learnt that he supposed to be my friend also my father."*

His desire for his father's intimacy influenced the quality of relationship he wants with his daughter in the future: *"But with me I want my daughter to know there is an open door policy per se in the family with me as her father I'm also her friend"*.

A disidentification with his father has occurred which influenced how he understands his role as a new generation father, for example to *"take her to the shopping malls, take her to buy her little dresses when she grows big, buy the dresses together, help her choose things, in that regard I'm showing interest in her upbringing."*

Although these participants disidentified with their fathers much like the participants who had absent fathers whilst growing up, these three participants more explicitly spoke about how they disidentified themselves from their fathers.

Tebogo explicitly compared himself to his father. He was deeply concerned about his ability to financially provide for his family. He was the participant with lowest socio-economic status compared to other fathers and his preoccupation with finance consumed him to the extent that he saw his ability to be a good father as dependent on his ability to provide for them financially. Tebogo's mother had been the breadwinner of the family and his father had never worked or offered financial provision.

My mother was the breadwinner, all of my life, like when I'm going to school till I finish my Matric and have children try to find some job, my father have never worked. He has never worked in all his life according to me, maybe he worked before I was born? But since I was born he didn't have any job. So that was a problem for me but I couldn't blame him, I don't know what the situation was or whether he wanted to work or maybe he was sick or too old for work, I don't know. So until now recently 2007 when he passed away, that's how I knew my father (Tebogo).

The experience that his father was financially dependent on his mother, and not dependable or providing, strongly influenced Tebogo's preoccupation with being a father who can financially provide for his children and family. By disidentifying with his father he resisted becoming like his father.

I'm different from my father cause now I'm still young, I've got two children, I'm trying to work for my children, I don't know whether he didn't want to work for me or he has a problem of working so I'm different because I know that I have to find a job to maintain my children. I don't know about me what he was thinking while I was young (Tebogo).

Phila is a father of a two year old boy; he is not married to the mother of his child and mostly sees his son on weekends. When he was young he didn't grow up with his father around because his father was always working, and it was his mother who raised him. When he was a little older they moved in with his father but at 15 his mother passed away.

My father is a hard work(er), on that one ja. And he knows how to take care of children even though now I can say now he didn't spend a lot of time with us, on

weekends he did. Ja, on weekends we did spend a lot of time, we drive around, looking...he's living maybe the life that maybe is similar to mine because even now my, and it's more difficult but I'm trying because I'm working now on weekends, I'm not with my child, I'm here. That's the thing.

Phila pointed out the similarities between his father and himself, although this was not a positive identification. He explained how strongly he yearned for a family.

You know there was a time now I think I say eish I was coming back from church ne, I just watch the memory came back and say eish people are happy with their families, check. The man and the wife and the children, how can I manage to live that life? How can I change my life from what I'm living now and make it similar to that one, how? I said no man but there is some other way to do that but I said no man what is the right way? I ask myself on that time I say... or maybe I was meant not to have a family I don't know, why? Why, the question is why.

His perceived inability to achieve his idealised family has left him feeling unhappy and incomplete. *"Now uh, I'm happy but I'm not happy. The thing is what means to me is I don't have a family of my own. That's what I want in my life".*

4.4.3 Lost fathers

Three participants lost their biological fathers, two because their fathers left them in early childhood and one whose biological father passed away when he was two years old. Their experiences of losing their fathers highlights that although their fathers weren't present for most of their childhoods, they weren't completely absent in their lives or upbringing either.

Seymour didn't live with his father when he was growing up because of conflict between his mother and father's sides of the family, although he does currently have a good relationship with his father. Seymour strongly believes in working with his wife and family to share responsibilities: *"I don't want to mess up with my family, I want the family to stay intact. Things must go well, even though I'm having the problems I must sort it out by sitting down and discussing with my wife".*

Seymour's wish for a united family may be related to his divided upbringing, *"You know when you see other families, parents going with their kids going sometimes they going to the*

zoo together, you know I was, I liked that life. You know going to places you see, you find that the families are sitting in the park, some get-togethers”.

Jacob is a father of four children, two young boys and two adopted teenagers. His biological father died when he was two years old and he was adopted by his mother’s new husband. Jacob identified strongly with his adoptive father and, wanting to be like him, he in turn adopted two children. Jacob continues to wish to adopt more children because of being an adopted child himself.

I used to tell my wife one day if God could give me a lot of money I’ll make sure I adopt all the cultures in my family. I can have, ok I’ve already got Black kids, I’m gonna have White kids, Indian, Coloured, all them I want them in my family I want to be a rainbow family. I wish one day God could give me money then I can be like that.

J.P. has two daughters. His first daughter was born when he was young. Although he stays in contact with her he has never lived with her. He is currently married to the wife of his second child who is six years old. J.P.’s father left him when he was five years old and he felt he never really had a “fatherly experience.

Researcher: *And how did it feel not growing up with your father?*

J.P.: *I feel, it was, for me it was a bad feeling you know, asking myself why? But then I told myself if I’ve got children it’s not going to be like that, I mustn’t, you know, I mustn’t do what my father did, you know.*

Despite the fact that J.P. didn’t want to repeat what his father did to him, and that he “*mustn’t do what my father did*”, he is not fully present for his first daughter. This was difficult for him to explore in the interview, and at one point he said, “*I’m proud of myself because here am I, I’m with my children. I did not do what my father did, you know*”, without reference to the similarities in their lives. At another point in the interview, however, he speaks about this similarity.

My mother played a big role because she used to tell me remember you don’t have a father and when you have children you won’t make the very mistake your father did. So just like this thing like father like son, it’s not working. Cause I made a mistake with my first kid, impregnating a woman without marrying her, the relationship didn’t go well which is when she reminds me.

The father-to-father section illustrates the dynamic influence the participants' own fathers had on their understanding and experience of fatherhood. The participants were asked at the beginning of the interview to 'tell a story about their own fathers'. However, much like the topic of gender, discussion of the participants' fathers thereafter entered spontaneously throughout the interview and was a constant point of focus. The prominence of this theme throughout the eight interviews suggests the important impact fathers have on their son's perspectives of fatherhood. Categorising the participants' fathers as either absent, present or lost paternal figures has presented further insight into the debate concerning the absence or presence of fathers in South Africa today.

4.5 Conclusion

The three core themes explored in this chapter were central to understanding how the participants made meaning of themselves as fathers and their understandings of fatherhood. In the first theme, participants compared old with new generations of fathers. This comparison included how culture influences old and new generation fathers and the changing roles, responsibilities and qualities of the new generation of fathers. Comparisons were made between the old and new; and how the views and values of the old generation inform new generation fatherhood despite attempts by participants to differentiate the two.

The second theme of gender stereotypes also suggested tensions between the old and new generation. Notions of gender ideals and gender stereotypes are immersed in the practise and understanding of fatherhood, where the participants confront gender relations with their sons, daughters, wives and themselves.

The third theme centred on how fathers negotiate the path of fatherhood based on their experience with their own fathers. Fathers in this study both identified with their own fathers and resisted old generation fatherhood by disidentifying themselves from their fathers. This was illustrated in the analysis by examining the participants' experiences of their fathers who were either present, absent or lost. The three 'categories' of fatherhood demonstrated how the each of the fathers either identified or/and disidentified with their fathers and how this influenced their own experiences of fatherhood.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This research began as a study exploring the perspectives of Black South African fathers regarding their experiences of fatherhood. The interview questions were designed to explore the meaning and practice of fatherhood for Black South African fathers, and the factors that may have influenced and shaped their paternal roles in the lives of their children. The major theme elicited in interviews concerned the representation of participants as ‘new generation’ fathers. Their depictions of themselves as new generation fathers included a strong communication by participants of wanting to be perceived as good fathers. The discussion that follows aims to address the three prominent themes that emerged from the thematic analysis. Further examination is then given to the ‘generational’ understanding of fathers in the 21st century and a discussion of how the concept of ‘good-enough’ fathering can be fruitfully developed in light of the research findings.

The overarching theme to emerge from interviews centred around the ‘generational’ comparisons made by the participants between the new and old generations of fathers. This has been termed the generational theme. This overarching theme was further subdivided into three distinct yet interrelated themes, each of which will be discussed below.

The theme of new generational fatherhood explored the ways in which participants positioned themselves as new generational fathers compared to their own fathers and forefathers who were recognised as the old generation. Tensions between the ideals of the two generations surfaced as participants disidentified themselves from the values and practises of the old generation. Participants felt that the old generation of fathers were too punitive and authoritarian. They identified better with an approach to parenting where talking is favoured over corporal punishment and intimacy and friendship with their children were considered good qualities in fathers. The participants in the study described how their roles as fathers were shifting away from the primary role as financial provider or disciplinarian and were encompassing several others roles in which they aimed to become more involved in their children’s lives and thus less distant, emotionally and physically, than the old generation of fathers.

The consensus from the participants towards adopting a more involved and less punitive role within the family is similar to Henwood and Procter’s (2003) study on fatherhood. In that

study, it was found that “interviewees showed such a clear preference for new involved fatherhood because it contrasts with the previous, prevailing model of a bread winner, disciplinarian and authority figure. This model was seen as having prevented their own fathers from developing relationships with other family members, thus losing out on family life” (Henwood & Procter, 2003, p.314). This study was not conducted in South Africa. It is noteworthy that the South African sample expressed similar preferences for involved fatherhood.

The shift from the bread winner role to ‘new involved fatherhood’ may be influenced by economic and social factors. The participants in the present study were all currently employed at the time of the interview. Edwards et al. (2001) reported that in his study on urbanisation and the changing responsibilities of African men, most fathers, whether rural or urban, stressed their breadwinner role above their role as patriarch or family man. There has been some debate regarding whether the contemporary South African trend towards ‘absent’ fatherhood is related to social, cultural or economic factors. Because all of the participants in this study were employed and experienced some degree, however varying, of financial stability, they were protected from unemployment and therefore, to some degree, from the pressures of financially providing for their families. It is possible that the socio-economic status of the fathers in the study allowed them to comfortably explore other roles and responsibilities of fatherhood without the worry and concern of being the breadwinner for the family. The participants in this study ranged extensively in terms of income, with some fathers earning very modest incomes. The difference between the findings of this study and those of other South African studies may therefore suggest that even relative economic freedom facilitates greater engagement with fatherhood.

There was also recognition amongst participants of the negative influence of Apartheid on Black South African fatherhood. Participants felt that the old generation struggled to assert themselves as fathers, financially and emotionally, due to the disadvantages Black South African men faced as a marginalized group. The impact of the Apartheid legacy on Black South African men is profound. The disruption of families and parenting was widespread as Black South African men were physically separated from their children and families because of the Group Areas Act and the sequel of migrant labour systems (Morrell & Richter, 2006). Many Black South African men were also emotionally separated from their families and were experienced as emotionally distant fathers. This disempowerment and racial emasculation had a negative effect on fathers’ abilities to assert themselves in the community and in their

own homes (Rabe, 2006). According to the participants post-apartheid fathers have more opportunities, such as better education and employment, thus making it easier to be better fathers. The identity of the 'new generation' father also signifies the emergence of the 'post-apartheid' father who is faced with increased opportunities and favourable conditions to assert himself in varying roles and responsibilities.

The second theme in the analysis is linked to the overarching 'generational' theme that explores the tensions between the old and new generational understanding of fatherhood. A thematic analysis of the role gender plays in fatherhood highlights the conflict between identifying with and rejecting 'old generation' gender stereotypes. Participants discussed gender stereotypes in relation to how fathers relate to their sons and daughters and the gender preferences experienced by the fathers, as well as comparing the mother and father's role in parental care. In Eerola and Huttunen's (2011) study pre-modern and modern fathers emphasised the divergent nature of masculinity and femininity in relation to fatherhood and motherhood. However, the study showed that post-modern fathers were able to interpret diversity in gender roles in the enactment of fatherhood (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011).

What was evident in the present study of 'new generation' Black South African fathers was the difficulty with which the fathers embraced 'new generation' ideals of gender expression. Fathers in this study expressed a preference for diversity in gender roles and, in interviews, clearly confronted and struggled with gender stereotypes. These struggles were sometimes explicitly linked to their struggle between old and new generational ways of experiencing fatherhood. The new generation of fathers are working against traditional constructs of hegemonic masculinity and redefining their markers of masculinity. Masculinity is socially constructed and acted upon; men choose how to behave as fathers based on a number of repertoires (Morrell, 2006). Some fathers have more power in terms of money, jobs and material resources than others (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Although the fathers in this study clearly grappled with gender stereotypes versus gender role diversity, there was a willingness to explore both masculine and feminine traits of fatherhood, motherhood and childhood.

The impact of the researcher's gender on the interviews was taken into consideration, particularly in terms of how this may have influenced the way in which participants presented their perceptions of gender. Participants may have been reluctant to admit to conforming to certain gender stereotypes that hold negative assumptions about women and mothers given

that the researcher was female. Likewise it may have also been difficult for the participants to express views which contradict the construction of hegemonic masculinity. Although it is difficult to determine the extent to which the themes may have been different had the researcher been male, the interview data clearly suggests that participants accessed a range of less stereotypical 'repertoires' (Morrell, 2006): these repertoires were available for access, albeit sometimes ambiguously or with contradiction.

The last theme identified in this research concerns the participants' relationships to their own fathers. The theme 'Father to Father' explored how participants' experience of fatherhood is rooted in their experiences with their own fathers and how they are strongly influenced by this relationship. The dominance of this theme in the research interviews highlights an important area for the study of fatherhood. Dick (2011) underscores the importance of the father to father relationship to the extent that he asserts, "Understanding the complexities of men's relationships with their own fathers has been the missing link in understanding how men construct their fathering role" (Dick, 2011, p.108).

A paradox emerged from the analysis whereby participants were heavily influenced by their relationship and upbringing with their own fathers, but at the same time disidentified themselves from their fathers, wanting instead to shape a new generation of fatherhood. In analysing participants' stories of their own fathers, the analysis identified three sub-themes relating to whether their fathers were absent, present or lost parental figures. The participants with absent fathers strongly felt the void of their absence and experienced difficulty growing up without a paternal figure. These participants avoided the same mistakes their fathers made and compensated for their father's absence through their caring and loving presence in their own children's lives. The participants who experienced their fathers as present were also conflicted between identification and disidentification with their fathers. However, it appeared to be easier for them to discuss this process. Those participants who lost their father either through death or abandonment still experienced their presence and influence despite their current absence in their lives.

Guzzo's (2011) theory hypothesis on modelling and compensatory models of fatherhood is supported by this study: fathers used both compensation and modelling when taking their fathering experiences into their own approaches to fatherhood. However, Guzzo (2011) suggested that modelling was a primary strategy. In contrast, the participants in the current study appeared to use a mixture of compensatory and modelling behaviours in the enactment

of fatherhood. All the participants, whether experiencing their fathers as present, absent or lost paternal figures, modelled some of their fathering practices on their relationship with their fathers, whether positive or negative. In addition the participants also used compensation in their fatherhood practices based on their experience and relationship with their own fathers.

The relevance of the distinction between an absent, present or lost father to this analysis highlights the complexity of the position of the father in a child's life. A father may be physically absent but nonetheless emotionally present or a father may be physically present but emotionally absent (Morrell, 2006). This complexity is important to keep in mind when exploring the argument surrounding absent fathers in South Africa. The 'absence trend' of Black South African fathers has raised many concerns about the possible negative impact of paternal absence on children and families (Richter et al., 2010). The fathers in this study, while clearly expressing the negative impact of paternal absence in their lives, expressed considerable investment in compensating for their own experiences through a 'new generational' identity of present and involved fatherhood.

5.2 New generation understanding of fatherhood in the 21st century

The most unexpected finding from the research interviews was the degree of investment these Black South African fathers expressed towards raising their children. It appears that these fathers are resisting the negative stereotypes associated with Black South African fathers and therefore provide non-hegemonic perspectives of fathering and fatherhood. The seemingly alarming trend towards 'fatherless families' that the media and academic literature have promoted in relation to Black South African fathers does not apply to these eight fathers. Although these fathers represented a small proportion of Black South African fathers, their voices contradict the majority of the literature on Black South African fathers, offering an alternative construct of Black South African fatherhood.

"Fatherhood is a role that is understood and exercised in different ways. Not all men accept the role of fatherhood and may avoid it through abandonment, flight or denial. For those who accept the role there are many ways of interpreting fatherhood" (Morrell, Posel & Devey, 2003 p.75). The fathers in the study appeared to interpret their understanding of fatherhood through a 'generational' lens. Although the study did not specifically aim to understand or explore the 'generational' perceptions of Black South African fathers, it became a remarkably dominant and cohering theme for analysis. This generational interpretation of fatherhood was

based on the identifications and disidentifications the fathers made between old and new generations of fathers. Although the idea of a 'new generation' father identity has been established in international research, limited research has explored a new fatherhood identity in Black South African fathers. In comparison with the literature review, this study highlights a set of voices that have been marginalised in both the academic and the social world.

It may be argued that the 'new generation' father identity that emerged in the analysis is one that is strongly predicated on Western values, practices and ideals of fatherhood, emphasising individuality and involvement. The participants' accounts of fatherhood depicted parenting representative of a Western nuclear family, consisting of a mother and father and their children (Mkhize, 2006). Phila was the only single father in the group, however, his desire for a family centred on the depiction of a nuclear family, complete with a wife and husband living together with their child.

Research has shown that most sub-Saharan societies tend towards collectivism which involves an extended family system (Mkhize, 2006). Extended family systems promote collective fatherhood where the responsibility to raise and support children does not fall exclusively on the biological father but extends to other male members of the family, such as the brother, uncles and grandfathers (Mkhize, 2006). Where traditional African thinking is informed by communal life, Western thought is targeted towards individualism (Mkhize, 2006).

The lack of mention of collective fatherhood from the participants can be interpreted in several ways. Historically there was been evidence of a rapid decline of collective fatherhood in Black South African families due to numerous socio-economic factors (Mkhize, 2006). These factors range from the effects of colonialism and Apartheid, urbanisation and high rates of HIV/AIDS infection (Mkhize, 2006). The media also plays an important role in promoting certain ideals of fatherhood, particularly Western ideals as South Africa media is most often influenced by the West (Clowes, 2006). These factors make it difficult to meaningfully enforce the concept of fatherhood as a collective responsibility of male members of the family. Trends towards absent fatherhood may themselves have undercut the importance of collective fatherhood for many fathers in South Africa, simply because the current generation of fathers may not have had an experience of present fathers themselves.

There was however evidence of some collective fatherhood when the interviews made mention of fatherhood in South Africa. Although the participants made no mention of

collective fatherhood in relation to their own children, they often made mention of it more generally. For example, Phila explained what it meant to be a father in South Africa:

To be a father in South Africa you're not the father of your own children only, you must be a father to other children also. You must be a good example, maybe you see that child is naughty, you must say eh don't do that, then you give a good guidance like you give on your child...When you are a father; don't be a father for your own children only be a father to all. Because children like to copy what they see from others and let it be the right things so that tomorrow they can be good fathers also, yes for the generation to come.

Phila's comment illustrated that although part of 'new generation' identity is reminiscent of Western ideology, African traditions and values remain an important reference point. The term 'new' in the new generation father should not be synonymous with 'better', as that would imply that Western values of fatherhood are 'better' than African traditions. The new generation father is simply different. Importantly, however, 'new generation' fatherhood in this study offered participants ways to resist existing hegemonic discourses around Black South African fatherhood.

When it came to creating standards of what they considered good-enough fathering the participants did not align themselves with one image or fathering role. Instead they drew from various different ideas about paternal roles, characteristics and responsibilities. Many participants acknowledged the importance of providing financially for their children and families. One participant discussed how he worries that his son will have to grow up in a small house and how limited finances are a struggle when wanting to provide his son with the things he needs and wants. Some participants placed their role as breadwinners as their primary function or responsibility within the family, while other participants, who were more financially stable, prioritised other roles.

None of the participants, however, saw their role as exclusively relegated to the breadwinner of the family; they included other roles such as disciplinarian, educator, role model, confidant and co-parent. This combination of several roles into an all-encompassing image of 'new generation' fathering contradicts some of the research that suggests that the role of the father has evolved from the colonial father, to the breadwinner and then to the (idealised) family man (Edwards et al., 2001). The term 'evolved' assumes that the family man is better than the colonial or breadwinner father, again, conforming to the Western ideals of the father as the

contemporary family man. The participants' merging of several paternal roles into their perception of a good-enough father, illustrates both their identification and disidentification with the old generation of fathers and their contemporary perceptions of new fatherhood.

5.3 The good-enough father

If the most unexpected finding of the study, then, was the degree of investment communicated by fathers in comparison with what has been suggested by the literature, it is important to further explore the dominant tone of the interviews. The quotations included in the previous chapter represent the overall tone of interviews, in which participants went to considerable lengths to convey to the researcher, and perhaps to themselves, that they were good fathers. This need to strongly align with a perception of being a good father is also reported in the literature. A research study looking at measures of good fathering reported that many participants were concerned with the possibility of being considered a 'bad' father (Henwood & Procter, 2003). The standards of 'good' fathering continue to change from the distant, breadwinner, disciplinarian role of previous generations to the more engaged, involved and emotionally available father (Morman & Floyd, 2006).

There is a difference, however, between a 'good' father and a 'good-enough' father. "Men committed to being good fathers may perform in mostly different ways, with the same performances sometime being viewed as successful or unsuccessful depending on the implicit definitions held by those making the evaluation" (Day et al., 1998, as cited in Adams, 2005, p.394). Middle-class ideals of a good father emphasising certain Western values and norms may not apply to Black South African fathers and may actually create impossible lived ideological dilemmas for Black South African fathers (Adams, 2005). The standards of 'good' fathering developed by any socio-economic or cultural group create a dilemma because most fathers do not fulfil all the criteria to be considered as 'good' fathers.

Winnicott developed the notion of a 'good-enough' mother to ensure that the role of the mother was neither idealised or denigrated, thus a 'good-enough' standard of maternal care can be reached without complete failure of the task (Samuels, 1996). This is beneficial for both mother and child, as the child is receiving adequate care whilst the mother is given the opportunity to succeed in her maternal role despite the reality of optimal failure. The same can be said for fathers. Good-enough fathering is not a prescription but rather represents something of what fathers can contribute to their child's development and well-being (Adams, 2005).

Diamond (1998) ascribes twelve fathering tasks to the life-cycle of a child, beginning at birth and ending in mid-late adulthood. These tasks help explain the role of the good-enough father in the different developmental phases of a child's life. Based on the findings from the thematic analysis, it is evident that the participants were able to fulfil several of these good-enough fathering tasks. Some of the tasks the participants consciously fulfilled included the provision of a holding environment for mother and infant; valuing masculinity in their relationships with their sons, supporting adolescent individuation and mentoring the transition to young adulthood (Diamond, 1998). Providing these numerous roles is considered as good-enough fathering. Furthermore it is likely that many unconscious tasks were fulfilled, without any deliberate attempt made by fathers; these include serving as oedipal challenger and serving as alternate attachment figures (Diamond, 1998). In summary, simply the presence of the father during early development provides elements of good-enough fathering.

The application of Winnicott's notion of 'good-enough' parenting to fathers offers an alternative understanding of fatherhood compared to the social understandings in the literature. The implications of a psychoanalytic understanding of fatherhood, specifically a Winnicottian notion of good-enough fathering, allows for the father to fail as a paternal figure. In fact, good-enough fathering requires the father to fail as failure enables an infant and child to gain from the experience of frustration and failure (Diamond, 1998).

The participants in the study all experienced some degree of paternal failure by their fathers, either through their absence or abandonment or through their emotional distance or strictness. Despite these paternal failures the participants were able to gain from the experience of failure and frustration. The use of the concept of the good-enough father has further implications when applied to the South African context. When one of the participants was asked about the experience of being a father in South Africa, he said:

That I'd say is a little bit challenging in South Africa because um, if you can check most of the kids now, there are lots of rules in South Africa that's um that's disturbing most of the fathers to be a good father (Jacob).

Jacob acknowledged the difficulty of becoming a good father in South Africa because of what is expected from him as a father from society, cultural communities, the church, wives and children. The social understanding of what constitutes 'good' fatherhood is linked to the debate on present and absent fathers in South Africa as well as the negative stereotype of Black South African fathers. The consequence of quantifying 'good'

fathering roles and responsibilities is that more fathers are considered 'bad' paternal figures as they don't meet the socially constructed standards of 'good'. In contrast, good-enough fathering gives fathers the opportunity to successfully fulfil their roles as fathers. The possibility of South African fathers seeing themselves as 'good-enough' implies that they may be less likely to see themselves as failures and society can begin to move away from the 'fatherless crisis' and instead concentrate on the emergence of the 'new generation' Black South African father. The pressure communicated by fathers in this study to be 'good', and not just 'good-enough', suggests a need to reorient future research away from a focus on bad fatherhood towards including an awareness that this dominant representation may set up an impossible ideal for fathers wanting to resist this categorisation.

5.4 Limitations of current research

The first limitation of this study is the small sample size that was collected for analysis and interpretation. Although generalizability is not specifically the aim whilst conducting qualitative research, the data collected and thus the transferability of the interpretations made are limited and must be acknowledged. However the researcher felt that the data collected for this study was in-depth and rich enough to provide valuable understanding into the experience of fatherhood, and particularly to possible exceptions to existing research, despite the limited sample size.

It is important to note that all participants were currently employed whilst the interviews were conducted thus influencing their socio-economic status. The participants' employment status meant they were able to financially support their children and families. Employment is likely to be influential for father's perceptions of fatherhood. The participants' employment status thus further narrows the sample characteristics and again limits the transferability and generalizability of the data to other people and contexts.

With reference to methodology, although one-on-one interviews are considered a useful method in accessing participants' personal experiences and perceptions, the self-reported nature of interviews necessarily present some limitations. The data in this study cannot transparently reflect the 'truth' of fatherhood, as interviews were always mediated by self-report. However given the personal nature of the questions, the one-on-one interviews appeared to be the most appropriate method of data collection.

Although the researcher has attempted to remain reflexive, it is important to acknowledge that the data was limited by the scope of the research questions and that ultimately the interpretations made by the researcher will be subjective as it is not possible for the researcher to remove herself from the context of the research. For example, the researcher's personal relationship with one of the teachers at the Nursery School may have been a limitation to the study as participants may have felt inhibited or self-conscious during the interviews. Similarly, the researcher's background is different to that of the participants in terms of race, culture, gender and class, and this is likely to have influenced the study. The participants may have told their story in a particular way or adapted it to suit the researcher, a white middle class woman. Therefore it is possible that the interviews do not represent their actual experience but rather a version of their experience. Had these same participants been interviewed by someone who they perceived as belonging to or sharing a similar background, it is possible that other stories and themes may have emerged.

This research study was conducted in a language that was not the participants' first language. It is possible that subtleties and nuances in descriptions may have been overlooked due to the participants' difficulty in conversing in a second or third language. While these interviews aim to represent the subjective truths of the fathers participating in this study, it is possible that the researcher was not able to fully access their experiences as these were translated into English before being voiced.

5.4 Suggestions for future research

The topic of fatherhood in the South African context requires attention and expansion in the research field. Existing research on fatherhood in South Africa is limited thus a variety of qualitative and quantitative studies should be employed in order to explore the concept of 'new generational' fatherhood that emerged from this study. Since the sample size from the study was relatively small a larger sample size would be useful to increase generalizability and inference. Comparisons between South African fathers of different racial, social and economic backgrounds, in relation to the 'new generation' father, would be beneficial in furthering our understanding of South African fathers.

As fatherhood is not a static concept but rather one that shifts and changes over time, a longitudinal study would be of great value to the existing literature. Understanding how fathers experience their children growing up and adapting to the various developmental

challenges that their children face will shed light on how they experience fatherhood over time.

According to Shows and Gerstel (2009) few studies focus on how employment shapes fatherhood and even fewer compare fathers in different class positions. Given the aforementioned limitations of the sample characteristics, future research should examine how employment and unemployment in South Africa shapes fatherhood as well as compare fatherhood in different SES groups. Although the sample size was small, fathers with very different income levels were included in this study. Despite these differences, themes suggested many similarities. The emphasise many of the participants placed on financial duties and employment in fatherhood points to an interesting and understudied avenue to explore in future research.

Black South African fathers are not a homogenous group but in fact consist of varying cultural, ethnic and class backgrounds. Further research into fathers from all different backgrounds, socio-economic statuses and classes is necessary in order to gain an understanding of the unique lived experiences of fathers. It is important to acknowledge the diversity in the experiences of fathers.

5.5 Conclusion

In South African there is still a considerable amount of research to be done on fathers and the portrayal of fatherhood, particularly Black South African fatherhood (Smith, 2006). Furthermore, there are few studies on fatherhood in South Africa that seek to capture the voices of fathers themselves. The aim of the research was to explore the perspectives of ‘new generation’ Black South African fathers on fatherhood. The study made use of individual in-depth interviews that followed a semi-structured format to explore the experiences of the eight participants.

The findings of the study emphasized the concept of ‘new generation’ fatherhood in the 21st century amongst Black South African fathers. Participants demonstrated a clear preference for new involved fatherhood which they distinguished from the old generational constructs of fathering. However, tensions between old and new generation’s paternal roles and responsibilities were evident, particularly around cultural values and gender stereotypes involved in fatherhood. Participants were involved in a process of identification and

disidentification with their own fathers, the old generation, whilst trying to determine a standard of good-enough fathering that resonated with each of them respectively.

By exploring the contemporary understanding of fatherhood from the perspectives of the eight participants a broader understanding of Black South African fatherhood has emerged. However, given the contradictions of the findings with the current literature on South African fatherhood it is vital that further research is conducted to explore the multifaceted picture of Black South African fatherhood in the 21st century.

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APPENDIX A: Participant Information Sheet



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Greetings,

My name is Kelly Marcisz, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Masters degree in Clinical Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am interested in Black South African fathers and how they experience fatherhood, how they practice their fathering roles with their children and what has influenced them as fathers.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. Participation in the study is completely voluntary and there will be no consequences if you decide not to participate. If you choose to participate but then decide to withdraw from the study at any time, no questions will be asked. You may refuse to answer any questions during the interview process.

Participation in this research involves an hour long one-on-one interview where you will be asked about your understanding of fatherhood and how you practice being a father with your children. With your permission the interview will be recorded on audio tape in order to ensure accuracy of information collected. All of your responses will be kept confidential and pseudonyms will be used in the research report. The audio recordings will not be seen or heard by any other person and will only be processed by myself. The tapes will be kept in a secure locked cupboard and will be retained for two years following the successful examination of the research report should publications arise or five years should no publication arise. The results of the study will be written up in a research report and can be accessed through the University of Witwatersrand Library. Once the study has been completed I will send you the results of the study in the form of a one page summary.

There are no risks or benefits when participating in this study. However should you feel that the interview process brought up any uncomfortable feelings that you would like to discuss, arrangement for free and accessible counselling can be made for you through Lifeline counselling services who can be contacted on 011-728 1331 or the Emthonjeni Centre at 011-717 4513

If you choose to participate in the study please sign the attached consent form. Should you require any further information about the study, please feel free to contact me on 082 7266392 or email kmarcisz@hotmail.com or call my Research Supervisor, Prof. Carol Long on 011- 717 4510.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated.
Kind Regards

Kelly Marcisz
(Researcher)

Prof. Carol Long
(Research Supervisor)

APPENDIX B: Consent Form

I _____ consent to participating in an interview conducted by Kelly Marcisz for her study on South African Fatherhood

I understand that:

- Participation in this interview is voluntary
- That I may refuse to answer any questions I would prefer not to.
- I may withdraw from the study at any time.
- No information that may identify me will be included in the research report, and my responses will remain confidential within the interview
- Direct verbatim quotes from the interview may be used
- I understand the risks and benefits involved in participating in this study

Signed _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: Consent Form (Tape Recording of Interview)

I _____ consent to the interview conducted by Kelly Marcisz for her study on South African Fatherhood being tape-recorded.

I understand that:

- The tapes will not be heard by any person not present during the interview and will only be processed by the researcher and her supervisor
- All tape recordings will be kept in a safe, locked cupboard for the duration of the study
- All tape recordings will be retained for two years following the successful examination of the research report should publications arise or five years should no publication arise
- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D: Interview Schedule

- Check consent form signed and information sheet understood

“Good morning/afternoon, thank you for meeting with me today. I am going to ask you a few questions about your experience of fatherhood and fathering. If you are unsure of any of the questions please do not hesitate to ask me to clarify. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer, please let me know and we will move on”

1. Tell me what it is like to be a father?
2. Tell me a story of when it was really meaningful for you to be a father?
3. Are you a first time father?
4. What surprised you about being a father?

Probe: What was easy or hard?

5. In what way did the gender of your child affect how you felt about being a father?

Probe: Was there a desired gender of the child during the pregnancy? If so, what gender?

6. Tell me a story about your own father

Probe: How are you different or the same as your father?

7. How do you think fathers should be involved in their families?

Probe: How are you involved?

8. What/who has helped you to be father?
9. What/who has gotten in the way of you being a father?
10. What does it mean to be a father in your culture?

Probe: What in your culture do you agree with and what do you disagree with

11. What does it mean to be a father in South Africa today?
12. How was it being interviewed by me?
13. Is there anything you would like to add that I have covered in the interview?

APPENDIX E: Permission Letter from Nursery School

9th March 2012

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Ann Denman, Principal of (omission of name) give permission to Kelly Marcisz to approach the parents at the school to participate in her research on Fatherhood in South Africa. I will allow her to place a notice in the reception area of the school to invite the fathers to participate. She may also hand out letters to the parents at the school at an appropriate time.

Kelly has been given permission to conduct her interviews with the fathers in one of the available conference rooms at the Nursery School.

Best Regards

Ann Denman