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Title: (Queer)-ying in South African Secondary Schools: Narratives of queer teachers and what they reflect on gender and sexuality discourse in post-Apartheid South Africa

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Declaration

I, Sumanah Mustafa (Student no: 482535) am a student in the field of Critical Diversity studies. I hereby declare that this MA research report is my own work and that I have followed the requirements made by the University of the Witwatersrand. I understand and accept the following:

- I understand the repercussions of plagiarism within the University of the Witwatersrand.
- I have acknowledged the use of others' ideas and thoughts within this research report by citing and referencing correctly.
- This research report will not be used in any future examinations.
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Signature: _____S.M_____ Date: _____03/08/2021_____

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Abstract

Queer teachers' positionalities reveal the relationship between identity (the personal), navigations around power (the political) and their teaching and learning practices (the pedagogical). This research focused on how queer teachers in South African secondary schools navigate the complexities of their identities in terms of their own in(visibility) within schooling spaces that have been historically (and presently) heteronormative, militarised and masculine. Moreover, this research was concerned with whether queer teachers resist and/or co-opt modes of surveillance within South African secondary schools. This research drew from qualitative data from six in-depth, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with queer teachers that have worked in a range of South African secondary schools. This research used thematic network analysis to situate themes within greater discourse around gender and sexuality in post-Apartheid South Africa, in order to reveal the interplay between how queer teachers navigate and make sense of their identities within existing power structures. The analysis indicated that there are multiple complexities that queer teachers face when navigating their identities. Issues of private/public identities, feelings of safety, precarious places of pedagogy and dominant modes of surveillance were revealed to be factors that heavily influence queer teachers' everyday experiences and teaching practices. Therefore, queer teachers in South African secondary schools negotiate their (in) visibility based on whether they feel safe and supported to do so. Furthermore, this research revealed that many modes of surveillance remain historical which in turn create contextual barriers for queer teachers to express themselves. These barriers are largely a result of South African secondary schools co-opting disciplinary practices (both materially and symbolically) which are homophobic, patriarchal and colonial. However, this research revealed that despite many modes of surveillance, queer teachers found ways to resist both personally and pedagogically. Lastly, this research reflects on whether queer teachers have a duty to disrupt the norms in schools when they can be systemically pressured to co-opt modes of discipline and surveillance for everyday survival.

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KEY TERMS

Cisgender: Referring to people whose gender identity or gender expression fits their assigned sex at birth (Meer, 2014).

Gender Binary: The categorisation of people within two genders. This separates the masculine (boy/man) and feminine (girl/woman). It restricts and limits gender expression for those who do not fit into the gendered norms. This system is particularly oppressive towards trans* and gender non-conforming people because they do not perform society's expectations of gender (Meer, 2014).

Gay: A label or identity for a man who has romantic and/or sexual feelings for other men. This is a chosen identity and many permutations may exist of this identity. For example, having romantic or sexual feelings does not necessarily mean you are gay unless you decide so (Meer, 2014).

Gender nonconforming/Gender variant: When a person's gender identity or expression does not match their gender assignment at birth. These people are gender non-conforming or gender variant which means that their gender expression and/or behaviour does not align with their biological sex (Meer, 2014).

Heteronormative/Heteronormativity: A system whereby heterosexuality (being attracted to the opposite sex and gender) is assumed to be what is normal in all spheres of life, from the everyday to media consumption (Meer, 2014).

Heterosexism: When heterosexuality is assumed to be the most normal form of sexual expression, which leads to people who are not heterosexual being marginalised (Meer, 2014).

Heterosexuality: When people are sexually, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to a different gender to their own (Meer, 2014).

Homosexuality: When people are sexually, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to people of the same sex (Meer, 2014).

Lesbian: A label or identity for a woman who has romantic and/or sexual feelings for other women. This also is a chosen identity and many permutations may exist of this identity. For

example, having romantic and/or sexual feelings does not necessarily mean you are lesbian unless you decide so (Meer, 2014).

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBT/LGBTQ/LGBTQIA+): LGBT is a popular acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It may also include the word queer and be written as LGBTQ. The acronym is always evolving and may be extended to include intersex and asexual people who are often marginalised within queer communities. The acronym can then be extended to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA) (Meer, 2014).

Patriarchy: An entrenched system where power in society is mainly dominated by males. This system enables male authority over private and public life. Patriarchy is a global problem which results in sexism, misogyny, and gender-based violence (Meer, 2014).

Queer*: This term has a history where it was used as a derogatory term. However, it has been reclaimed and now refers to the umbrella term for all gender expressions and sexualities (Meer, 2014).

*It should be noted that all teachers within this study identified in varying ways. The word "Queer " has meant more to some than to others. However, I have decided to use the umbrella term in order to try and encompass the multiple and complex sexualities that the participants expressed. According to Meer (2014), "'Queer' is often used as a broad term for all people who are not strictly heterosexual or cisgendered, including sexual minorities and gender nonconforming people," (Meer, 2014, p. 12). Therefore, I felt that this was the best word (at the moment) that could make sure that all identities were included.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Queer teachers, both locally and globally, navigate schooling spaces in complex ways. These navigations can either affirm or deny their identities depending on how they embody their sexualities within different contexts. In South Africa, although freedom of sexual expression is within the Constitution, queer people in South Africa are still discriminated against and marginalised by institutions. Unfortunately, legalisation and legislation does not necessarily mean that attitudes change accordingly. Queer people in South Africa are not necessarily always able to live with dignity and freedom (Reddy, 2010). Homosexuality within secondary schools is still policed and punished despite the legal freedoms South Africans have (Bhana, 2014). Hence recognising queer teachers' experiences is important in not only understanding freedoms and limits of queerness within South African secondary schooling, but in contributing towards enhancing freedoms of queer bodies through understanding personal narratives.

Global research has shown that queer teachers use an array of strategies and tools to create workable professional spaces. Some use methods of hiding and denial while others choose to reveal and celebrate them in order to create change. The growing body of research on queer teachers has, for the most part, been done within contexts of the North. This research has shown that restrictions on sexual expression can come in many forms within the schooling space. According to Ferfolja (2005), lesbian teachers have been discriminated against particularly within Catholic schools in New South Wales based on religious belief (Ferfolja, 2005). Further, research in the United Kingdom (UK) has been conducted on gay and lesbian teachers' views on the notions of private and public. Additionally, this research has been done with regards to identity, policy and practice (Ferfolja, 2005; Rudoe, 2018; Rudoe, 2010). However, although the research done in contexts of the North is helpful within the South African context, there is further research needed in South African academia.

Within the South African context, research on the experiences of homosexuality in secondary schools have predominantly focused on students rather than teachers (Bhana, 2014; Francis & Msibi 2011; Ngabaza & Shefer, 2019). However, the few studies that have been done on the subjectivity of queer teachers has provided greater insight into queer experiences. Studies have shown that South African queer teachers have faced difficulties within the workplace.

They have felt pressure to conform to gender norms in order to fit in and have felt fear of ostracization from their colleagues, students and their students' parents (Brown & Diale, 2017; Msibi, 2019).

The South African context also highlights the importance of intersectional experiences such as the entanglement of race, gender, sexuality and culture. This research describes the complicated nature of the private and public for South African queer teachers. There is a distinct lack of research being done on queer teachers experiences in African countries and this research aims to add to that body of knowledge. African societies have been homogenised as historically heterosexual and to this day there is discrimination against queer communities in several African countries such as Mozambique, Zambia, Angola and Rwanda. However, this idea of homosexuality as Western is a constructed myth (Msibi, 2011). According to Msibi (2011) this may explain why the global research on queer teachers does not focus on other African countries (Msibi, 2011).

South Africa is one of the few African countries where homosexuality is legalised which enables queer research in South Africa to be more prolific than in other African countries where homosexuality is criminalised. However, existing research has not taken the specific focus on the relationship between the personal and the pedagogical which is the focus of this project. The relationship between the personal and the pedagogical is important as research has shown that teachers are constantly negotiating between the two to inform their understanding of their personal pedagogies in relation to the schooling space. Moreover, queer teachers feel this negotiation more acutely in unique ways which emphasise the relationship between the personal and the pedagogical (Brown & Diale, 2017, Grace & Benson, 2000; Msibi, 2019). This research report therefore sets out to contribute to the understanding of this relationship through a theoretical framework that draws upon gender theory, space and place as well as critical pedagogy. It also uses Foucault's (2007) notion of the panopticon in order to explore how queer teachers navigate their personhood within their schooling institutions which enforces different modes of discipline. It further explores how the modes of discipline are entangled with gender, space, place, and pedagogy.

This research is then primarily concerned with how queer teachers perform their personhood within their professional lives and how this affects their pedagogical practice. Personhood refers to the philosophical concept of being a person in the world. However, the conceptions of personhood are multiple and varying. The idea of personhood in Butler's (2004) notion can

be on performance, as well as the materiality of the body and determination of society on what is deemed a worthy body. Philosophers have defined multiple notions of personhood in terms of the self, identity, agency, social constructions, narratives, change and relationships (Higgs & Gilleard, 2016). This research aims to explore how South African queer teachers navigate through their identities both materially and symbolically within schooling contexts which enforce disciplinary measures.

Today, hegemonic ideals are still rampant within perceptions of the teaching profession. According to Moosa and Bhana (2019), the perception of female teachers as nurturing and male teachers as predatory is still a wide-held belief. Msibi (2018) further explores how black men with same-sex desires feel even more marginalised based on their intersections of oppression. This specific subjectivity brings forth discursive notions of violent masculinities. There are racialised, gendered and, in this instance, sexualised ideas of the identities of perpetrators of violence within South African contexts (Moosa & Bhana, 2019; Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012; Msibi, 2018).

The disciplinary power of structure and institutions creates an undeniable gendered aspect of the production of labour and power (Connell, 2013). The production of gendered labour and power is historical within South Africa. During the apartheid-era, with the implementation of the *Bantu Education Act* in 1953, Hendrik Verwoerd, then Minister of Native Affairs, strategically created divisions of labour between races using this policy. This strategy was also gendered, however implicitly, as Black men were sent to the mines and Black women were kept in homes as domestic workers (Christie & Collins, 1982; Niehaus, 2009).

The history of gendered labour in South Africa also extended to certain professions; a heritage of segregation which can still be seen today. During the implementation of the *Bantu Education Act*, most male teachers were removed and replaced by female teachers to cut costs on wages (Christie & Collins, 1982). Historically this division was mostly in order to exploit women's labour for capitalistic means. However, over time the deterrence of hiring male teachers is accounted for by hegemonic ideals of femininity and masculinity.

It is clear from the research already done that the ways that queer teachers' experience their professional space is not unrelated to the socio-historical aspects of South Africa as there are still remnants of the past within the present. Specifically, space, place and gender come into play within schooling spaces. The use of space, place and time in analysis is useful,

particularly in post-colonial states like South Africa because of the very nature of coloniality as a process of domination, subordination and control over space (Christie, 2013).

The concept of pedagogies of place explores how context, ecological and environmental factors are fundamental to the nature of teaching and learning. Teacher's pedagogies are, therefore, strongly tied to where they live, the resources available and the everyday lives of students (Gruenewald, 2003; Halsey, 2006; Haymes, 1995). In order to contextualise the queer teachers within this research, it is important that we understand their identities as well as their pedagogical practice in term of place. Particularly, exploring pedagogies of place is pertinent within spaces like South Africa because of the very specific nature of precarity, resource scarcities and disparities between the rich and poverty stricken (Perumal, 2013; Perumal, 2015). Further, Bhana and Pattman (2011) argue that despite the intersection of poverty, violence and structural inequalities, there is possibility for individual freedom within oppressive structures. Global research has explored how different contexts require different pedagogies. Pedagogies of place explore the influence of community practice, identity and place within education (Gruenewald, 2003; Halsey, 2006; Haymes, 1995).

Pedagogies of place are related to ideas of critical consciousness and the everyday. Critical consciousness includes the idea that education is oppressive if it does not consider the everyday lives of students (Freire, 1972). According to Freire (1972), education must seek to liberate the oppressed. This can only be done with politically minded, radical teachers who are willing to go against the norms of society (Freire, 1972). In being, queer teachers act against the norms of heterosexual society. According to Ahmed (2006), in focusing the experience on queer subjectivities, we are made to attend to that which people do not see at first. We are made to focus our lens on the experiences of those who exist against the norms of society. Further, Ahmed states, "If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence; of how we inhabit spaces as well as 'who' or 'what' we inhabit spaces with.". (Ahmed, 2006, p. 1) This research aims to explore the orientations of South African queer teachers, of how they inhabit spaces as well as "who" or "what" they inhabit in secondary schooling spaces (Ahmed, 2006).

Queer teachers have in previous research been found to be radical in their pedagogical practice in order to challenge heteronormative spaces. However, this research does not assume to homogenise queer teachers as radical transformers of education nor does it expect them to be so. This research explores the relationship between queer teachers' experiences

and pedagogical practices using critical pedagogy as a lens through which to understand their experiences. Further, this research does not aim to make generalisations on experiences of South African queer teachers in secondary schools but investigates this relationship with what Freire (2000) describes as a critical sense of curiosity. Finally, this research aims to shed light into "pedagogies of possibility" (Grace & Benson, 2000, p. 90) for queer teachers in South Africa and how they find ways to resist (or not resist) within spaces of power, control and surveillance (Foucault, 2007).

1.2 Research Question

This research aims to answer the following question and sub-questions:

How do queer teachers in South Africa navigate their sexual identities in secondary schooling spaces?

1.2.1 *Sub-questions*

1. How do queer teachers resist and/or reproduce systems of surveillance within South African schools?

2. How do queer teachers make sense of their own pedagogical practices within South African schools while navigating their own identities?

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will elaborate on the theoretical framework that will be used within this research. In order to create research that will address the complexities of the topic within a social justice framework, the theories used will address multiple axes of oppression and power which intersect during the research. The research aims to provide insight into dominant discourses at play through queer teachers' narratives.

This research aims to provide insight into the ways in which queer teachers negotiate, accept and resist their non-normative subjectivities within heteronormative school environments. This research will explore the ways in which teachers experience panopticism through discourses around gender and sexuality, pedagogical practice as well as space and place. The following literature review explores the important frameworks I believe are required to explore the experiences of queer teachers with multiple lenses in order to do justice to the scope of their narratives.

2.1 Gender, Performativity and Sexuality: Theory and Discourse

Gender and sexuality have been discussed within varying critical discourses and have been constructed and reconstructed over time. Many queer theorists refer to the work of Foucault and Butler because both authors rely on the belief that gender, and sexuality discourses are unstable. Consequently, it is believed that the performance of gender expression and sexuality is unstable as well (Butler, 1999; Foucault, 1981). Butler (2004) explores the notion of gender in terms of personhood. Further, Butler (2004) states that normative discourses limit the ways in which a body can be livable and yet, contradictorily, can be a tool for personal emancipation. She states that:

> Sometimes a normative conception of gender can undo one's personhood, undermining the capacity to persevere in a livable life. Other times, the experience of a normative restriction becoming undone can undo a prior conception of who one is only to inaugurate a relatively newer one that has greater livability as its aim. (Butler, 2004, p. 1)

Butler (1999) conceptualises gender in terms of performativity. However, it must be noted that the term performativity has been reformulated over time through critique and temporality of theory. Performativity is the way in which people act out their gender which performs to societal and historical expectations (Butler, 1999). Butler proposes that performativity relies on the expectation of certain performances from certain bodies in certain spaces. Hence, the anticipation of performance is part of the performance (Butler, 1999). Further, Butler (2004) makes a compelling argument that gender is not only about the doing of performance but also the desiring of it. Gender has a desire to be acknowledged. As a result, those who do not fit the norms are not recognised. These bodies are made to be illegible by the codes in which they are born (Butler, 2004).

In linking the personal to the pedagogical, this research is primarily concerned with the dynamics around identity, the teaching profession and institutional identities. If gender itself desires (Butler, 2004), then the institutions that enforce gender are the agents of enacting this desire outwards. In the case of this research, the enacting agents are the schooling institutions with their own expectations of gender performance. Ahmed (2006) supports Butler's (2004) ideas of the effect of institutional spaces on queer bodies by conceptualising gender performance in terms of orientations (Ahmed, 2006; Butler, 2004). According to Ahmed (2006,) bodies do not merely exist within spaces but are affected and formed by those spaces. Ahmed (2006) emphasises that queer bodies embody and re-orientate according to the space they are in. Orientations can be negative but can also be complicated and even empowering. Therefore, this research aims to explore the understanding of the different ways that teachers' bodies orientate in schools. As Ahmed (2006) states:

> Bodies are hence shaped by contact with objects and others, with 'what' is near enough to be reached. They may even take shape through such contact or take the shape of that contact…Orientations are about the directions we take that put some things and not others in our reach. (Ahmed, 2006, p. 552)

Butler (2004) reiterates that what gender norms desire is then thwarted by bodies that reject the parameters of recognition (Butler, 2004). In Ahmed's (2006) conceptualisation these bodies go against the straightened line while in Foucault's (2007) theory, they reject the surveillance imposed. This surveillance and disciplinary power can be theorised using Foucault's (2007) idea of panopticism. Panopticism is when institutions and individuals are

co-opted in a system of discipline. This disciplining tactic is needed when order is disrupted and must be controlled (Foucault, 2007). Queer bodies within heteronormative spaces (such as schools) are bodies which are often disciplined because of the disruption of enforced order. Queer teachers' identities are directly related to dynamics of power, labour and knowledge. Identities can either be restricted or emancipated within these dynamics. It is imperative that gender and sexuality are discussed in terms of power, labour and knowledge as it allows for a more nuanced perspective on the experiences of queer teachers in secondary schooling.

2.2 Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogical practices rely on the notion of critical consciousness. Critical consciousness within the context of education is the idea that teaching practices must follow pursuits of social justice and praxis. Education must be revolutionary in that it treats students like autonomous beings that can be agents of social change (Freire, 1972). hooks (1994) supports this notion of critical pedagogy and further defines it within the practice of emancipatory politics. She takes it further by implementing feminist ideologies within critical consciousness (hooks, 1994). Critical pedagogy aims to make visible the ways in which epistemology and discourse shapes the way we teach and learn. Further, critical pedagogy focuses on teaching and learning while addressing social injustices regarding all axes of oppression (Freire, 1972; hooks, 2014). Specifically, in this research, the refusal of gender is linked to the notion of critical pedagogy. Butler (2004) discusses this concept as a "critical relation to the norms" (Butler, 2004, p. 3) which is necessary for the emancipation.

The idea of critical relations should not be confused with the denial of the conditions of this world. Acknowledging critical relations is an understanding that we are made up of these conditions but that we can accept or reject certain terms within them. Hence, the more embodied critical relationship to norms (Butler, 2004) supports the idea of critical pedagogy because of the shared belief that emancipatory practices are led by ordinary people (Butler, 2004; Freire, 1972; hooks, 2014).

This radical notion of hope is part and practice of emancipatory politics (Freire, 1972; hooks, 1994). Freire (2000) discusses this notion of hopeful justice in terms of a "critical curiosity" (Freire, 2000, p.2). The idea of critical curiosity relates to critical consciousness as well as

other possibilities of thinking and being (Freire, 2000). Freire (2000) rejects the idea of neo-liberalistic ethics and demands that education must always fight oppression in order to be deemed worthwhile:

> The ethic of which I speak is that which feels itself betrayed and neglected by the hypocritical perversion of an elitist purity, an ethic affronted by racial, sexual, and class discrimination. For the sake of this ethic, which is inseparable from educative practice, we should struggle, whether our work is with children, youth, or adults. (Freire, 2000, p. 3- 4)

According to South African research (Bhana, 2014; Francis & DePalma, 2015; Msibi, 2019), there is a real need for critical pedagogical practices within sexual diversity education. Studies have shown that pedagogies targeting heterosexism are necessary within schooling institutions. These studies show that queer learners have often felt isolated and that teachers were often the perpetrators or enablers of homophobic discrimination (Bhana, 2014). Further, teachers felt that they were not properly equipped to confront these complexities (Francis & DePalma, 2015; Francis & Msibi, 2011). Therefore, there is a call for a critical conscientising of educators within South African secondary schools. Educators can be seen as one of the stakeholders that can resist and challenge heterosexism within these institutions (Francis & DePalma, 2015). Although some research has been done in South Africa about challenging heterosexism within higher education (Naidu & Mutumbara, 2017), the terrain of secondary education still requires further consideration.

The tenuous atmosphere in which South African queer teachers work makes it clear that anti-oppressive educational practices are necessary. Hence, it is important to investigate in what ways queer teachers may or may not resist power structures within repressive institutions. Zembylas (2019) theorises the idea of everyday resistance as affective within critical pedagogical practice. According to Zembylas (2019), teachers and students are always performing micro-political acts of defiance and creating movements within restrictive educational spaces (Zembylas, 2019). Further, Freire (2000) explores the relationship between teacher and student as integral to critical consciousness. According to Freire (2000), teachers must always be aware of the becoming of themselves as well as their students. This process acknowledges an “unfinishedness” in both student and teacher (Freire, 2000).

Further, critical pedagogy relies on what happens in relation between teachers and students rather than an act of transference of knowledge. Furthermore, relationality is foundational to the process of resistance (Freire, 1972). The relational dimensions of educators highlight the ways in which identity formation, interpersonal relationships and emotions have important implications for transformation within the South African secondary schooling system in a political climate where educational reform has become crucial.

2.3 Space, Place and Gender

Space has been theorised in multiple ways that addresses how the personal, practice and power shape and are shaped by social spaces. Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith (1991) theorise social space in terms of the spatial practices which are the everyday routines within, representations of practice which is manifested in architecture and design and representational practice which is the embodied experiences of everyday life (Lefebvre & Nicholson-Smith, 1991). The interpretation of the spatial explores social relations and dynamics articulated within different spaces, places and times (Massey, 2013). The post-structural conception of space and power is explored as one that is determined by daily practices which are made invisible through its mundanity (Foucault, 2007). According to Christie (2013):

> Holding the notion of space as central to the production of social formations provides particularly valuable insights into the ways in which inequalities are produced, endured, and may be contested. (Christie, 2013, p. 778)

Massey (2013) explores the dynamics of the geographical as one that is gendered and describes place as any location from the micro-geographical to the macro-geographical. Space and place can therefore refer to that of a room, an institution, a city and in the case of this research, the school. According to Massey (2013), these social relations are inter-related as well as inter-acting with power. Massey states:

> Moreover, since social relations are inevitably and everywhere imbued with power and meaning and symbolism, this view of the spatial is an ever-shifting social

> geometry of power and signification. Such a way of conceptualizing the spatial, moreover, inherently implies the existence in the lived world of simultaneous multiplicity of spaces: cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one another, or existing in relations of paradox or antagonism. (Massey, 2013, p. 3)

This contradiction within spaces is because of the nature of one's own and another's subjectivity. Massey (2013) relates this to the idea that there is always an observer and observed position and that both these positions occupy each other simultaneously. This notion of space, place and time can be related to Ahmed's (2006) argument about the queer body as ontological and orientated within spaces. She explores the ways in which Massey's (2013) observer and observed positionalities can also be understood in terms of the object and the objectified. (Ahmed, 2006; Massey, 2013).

Bell and Valentine (1995) discuss spatial geographies as sexualised within which bodies are sexualised (Bell & Valentine, 1995). Therefore, school as a spatial location is then one that cannot escape this gendering or sexualising aspect of spatial relations. It is only a question of how the multiplicity of positionalities in spaces are being constituted by the spaces themselves. Ahmed (2006) discusses the notion of objects in proximity that affect these spaces. There is a further particularisation of what kinds of objects are within reach of queer bodies within the school space and place which orientates them towards straightness (Ahmed 2006).

Butler (2004) further theorises space and place in terms of legitimacy. She discusses the idea of legitimacy to the recognition of personhood by individuals and institutions. This idea of legitimacy is in relation to a "field of intelligible sexuality" (Butler, 2004, p. 108) in which spaces recognise certain bodies as sexually legible. These parameters of legitimacy can be related to Massey's (2013) idea of boundaries which are not solidified but porous. The understanding of space is therefore a relationality between body, space-time and place that is not limited to expected social relations. Freire (2000) further discusses the relationality of body, space and place and states that being is "born out of the womb of history" (Freire, 2000, p. 5) which takes it out of merely being and into "presence" (Freire, 2000, p. 5). Presence which can, in Freire's words, "intervene, can transform, can speak of what it does, but that

can also take stock of, compare, evaluate, give value to, decide, break with, and dream" (Freire, 2000, p. 6).

Critical pedagogical theorists such as Freire (1972) discuss the foregrounding of context as important for the possibilities of social justice, Freire (1972) states that,

> Human beings are because they are in a situation. And they will be more the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it. (Freire, 1972, p. 90)

However, according to critiques, critical pedagogy does not focus enough on spatiality in terms of the rural (Gruenewald, 2003). Gruenewald (2003) discusses the importance of the pedagogy of place as one which incorporates place-based education. While foundations of place-based education and critical pedagogy interact and overlap, place-based education focuses on the relationship between community and ecology (Gruenewald, 2003).

Researchers have explored critical pedagogies of place in terms of racialised space. For example, Haymes (1995) explores the pedagogy of the inner city by exploring the ways in which Black urban identities are formed by the power structures within spatiality and how this can contribute to a decolonisation of education (Haymes, 1995). The experiences of teachers within rural versus urban contexts is therefore imperative to understanding different pedagogies' place including what barriers and freedoms exist within them (Halsey, 2006; Page, 2006).

Similarly, within the South African context, Perumal (2015) explores the ways in which immigrant teachers as well as South African teachers who suffered through apartheid navigate space and place within areas such as Berea, Yeoville and Soweto; places which are considered to be precarious spaces in terms of violence and poverty (Perumal, 2015). Perumal (2015; 2013) further theorises these teachers' narratives in terms of pedagogies of place, social justice and decolonisation (Perumal, 2015; 2013). The precariousness of a sense of place can be attributed to the tenuousness of identities which face hostility and societal scorn.

The pedagogy of place pursues the understanding of the socio-political and ecological in terms of the lived experiences that shape different subjectivities within different places.

According to Gruenewald (2003) critical pedagogies of place rely on indigenous, local and ancestral knowledge. Gruenewald (2003) claims that the socio-political approach cannot work without the acknowledgment of space, place and time. Space and place can therefore not be thought of in terms of linear time. Space and place are historically situated and can be sites of analyses for the purposes of social justice (Gruenewald, 2003). In terms of the South African context, Christie (2013) draws a relationship between space, place and social justice in South African education and uses historical geographies of education to analyse the contradictory tensions between the global and the local within spatialised pedagogies.

Christie (2013) further details what these spatial practices would represent in terms of South African schools. For example, spatial practices would encompass both everyday routines as well as the materiality of schools as products of history. Representations of practice manifest in their colonial variants of school architecture and the experiences of teachers and students in their everyday memories of school (Christie, 2013).

According to Christie (2013), the terrain of South African schooling using Lefebvre's (1991) conceptualisations of space which describes space as not boundaried but created through the interactions of social relations which have both symbolic and material value (Christie, 2013). Therefore, the idea of analysing space is not one that is limited to "things" but to the interaction of "things" (Lefebvre & Nicholson-Smith, 1991). Hence, as, this project focuses on queer teachers within the secondary schooling space, the relationship between space, place and time becomes focal in the understanding of dynamics within their particular contexts and narratives.

2.4 Discipline and Panopticism

Within this research, the idea of discipline is imperative for the understanding of the above given theoretical framework. One of the leading questions is: how is the queer teacher disciplined within heteronormative schooling spaces?

While the above has discussed how discipline can occur in terms of the performative body within teaching practices and discipline through the spatial, Foucault's (2007) theoretical concept of panopticism encompasses all these areas within which disciplining practices occur through instances of rejection and acceptance. According to Foucault, "The gaze is alert

everywhere" (Foucault, 2007, p. 195). This idea that the queer teacher's identity is negotiated and perceived through multiple gazes will be further explored within this research.

Foucault (2007) explores the notion of panopticism whereby there are various modes through which surveillance occurs with several actors performing the surveillance. The binary between normal and abnormal within a system is codified and reiterated through power and practice. Foucault (2007) concentrates on the idea that power is invisibilised and systemic. Over time, power no longer needs an individual to exert power but finds that subject to surveillance, enforces and reproduces the power themselves. Foucault (1988) describes power as not individualised but expressed in the everyday. Power is regulated not through coercive oppressive groups but through what Foucault terms "technologies of the self" which are every day, invisibilised and performed in daily life (Foucault, 1988).

The panopticon is an architectural structure used by Foucault (2007), to demonstrate the ways in which power is distributed and enacted within an institutional organisation. There is a binary created through the mechanics of the panopticon which separates those who are made visible and those who are made invisible by power (Foucault, 2007).

This is an interesting binary within which to explore the ways that queer teachers' experience their own identities in terms of visibility and invisibility. Within this research it is a focal point through which their subjectivities are experienced. The use of the concept of panopticism is useful within this research because it allows for analysis regarding any regulatory institution and the power relations within them. Therefore, the school as a regulatory space and the surveillance of subjects within this regulation is an important lens through which the experiences of queer teachers' can be analysed.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Queerness in the schooling space

Jones, Gray and Harris (2014) explore the multiple ways in which queer teachers' identities are experienced both personally and relationally. Pertinent questions such as queer teachers as role models and whether sexual identity should matter in the realm of teaching is explored though multiple contexts (Jones, Gray & Harris, 2014). In order to avoid essentialisation of these subjectivities, it is important to explore research that has been done on queer teachers' narratives both locally and globally.

According to Griffin (1991), queer teachers often find that hiding their identities is a matter of safety. Within her research, Griffin (1991) categorises four strategies that are used by queer teachers within schools. The strategies are as follows: passing, covering, being implicitly out and being explicitly out. According to Griffin (1991), passing is the strategy which requires explicit concealment of the teacher's identity to extreme levels; covering as a strategy often includes omission of personal information; being implicitly out entails sharing personal details without explicitly naming your queerness, while those who are explicitly out do (Griffin, 1991).

The discrimination or acceptance that queer teachers face is largely preoccupied with ideas of public and private. Hence the interrelations of public and private are one dominant theme which emerges within current research. For some queer teachers "coming out" is an event of conflict while for others it is imperative to do so. Carter Ford (2017) discusses the intersection of Black womanhood with lesbian sexuality in terms of honesty as a pedagogical practice while Gray (2013) explores the idea of "coming out" and what visibility means for queer teachers.

Visibility has therefore been discussed in multiple ways in relation to queer subjectivities. According to Gray (2013) the idea of shame is related to queer teachers being out. This effect of shame helps reproduce heteronormative norms within a schooling space instead of resisting them. However, this relationship is by no means simple. Resistance of the norms comes with complications of professionalism, acceptance and safety (Grace & Benson, 2000; Rudoe, 2010; Msibi, 2019).

In a study by Brockenbrough (2012), the experiences of Black male queer teachers in America complicated the notion of honesty and the abjection of the closet. The decision to not reveal their sexual identities caused the paranoia of being outed. However, the notion of the closet also created a space for agency and freedom. Sykes (1998) further explores the notion of the closet in terms of how lesbian physical education teachers both reject and accept negotiations of the closet, especially through their bodily interactions (Sykes, 1998). However, the idea of the closet is argued to be rooted in Westernised and rigid notions of queer identity (Tucker, 2009). According to Tucker (2009) the closet does not do justice to the experiences of queer South African men who come from different spatialities with fluid understandings of what visibility means to them. Further, the closet is discussed as oppressive for some. According to Mayeza (2021) coming out can also be a form of additional pressure for queer youth to declare their sexualities despite discomfort or fear (Mayeza, 2021). Therefore, the intersection of race, gender, space and sexuality within research of queer teachers is one that exposes these complexities.

The concept of the closet is complicated within such studies (Sykes, 1998; Tucker, 2009; Brockenbrough, 2012). Participants within Brockenbrough's (2012) study expressed the pressures of adhering to black masculinity within their respective schooling spaces. However, there were also possibilities of facilitation of queer students' troubles despite the constraints. In the South African context, a similar study done by Msibi (2019) explores black male teachers who are attracted to the same-sex. Within this study, the idea of privacy becomes linked to ideas of culture and religion. Modesty in sexual expression is seen as a mode of respectable professionalism. The fear of being in a vulnerable grouping is also attached to this idea of respectability. Therefore, heteronormativity is conflated with authority and power within the contexts of schools (Msibi, 2019).

Both studies by Brockenbrough (2012) and Msibi (2019) alike deal with the intersection of race, masculinity and sexuality within the teaching profession. This is important as there has not been much work done within the experiences of Black, queer teachers (Brockenbrough, 2012; Msibi, 2019). Msibi (2019) takes it one step further and describes the ways in which South African Black, male, queer teachers also ascribe their performance to ideas of culture with notions of culture being complex and contradictory (Msibi, 2019).Therefore, research highlights the ways in which race, class, gender intersect to create complex and diverse experiences for queer teachers.

Visibility is related to the roles of queer teachers within schooling contexts and educational practices. Some global research has shown that queer teachers have disrupted heteronormativity and fought homophobia (Grace, 2017). Within the Canadian study done by Grace (2017), it was evident that the integrity of teaching was made more serious by their queer identities. Teachers felt that they had to prove themselves within the teaching profession and went above and beyond to transform the schools they worked in (Grace, 2017).

Further, the relationship between teaching and advocacy is explored in research that attempts to connect the personal, the pedagogical and the political (Grace & Benson, 2000). Grace and Benson (2000) explore queer teachers' autobiographies in order to explore pedagogies of resistance against heteronormativity. Grace and Benson further use the notion of "pedagogy of possibility" (Grace & Benson, 2000, p. 90) within their research which relies on the hope that there can be transformative changes through pedagogy. In this study many aspects were explored: the role of declaring sexual identity, the role of culture and the site of school as a panopticon (Grace & Benson, 2000). In contrast, research has also shown queer teachers have a more ambivalent stance on their visibility and activism (Neary, 2017).The fear of teachers facing ostracism and being deligitimised is not only in relation to fellow colleagues but to their students too (Msibi, 2012). According to Brown and Diale (2017), teachers either perform acts of self-regulation or self-disclosure. Self-regulation refers to teachers' internalisation of homophobic sentiment from their school contexts resulting in regulation of their own behaviours. Self-disclosure refers to either implicit or explicit ways in which queer teachers allow their sexualities to be public knowledge (Brown & Diale, 2017).

According to Brown and Diale (2017), self-disclosure of South African student teachers allows for an exploration of students' curiosity and questioning in terms of the topic of gender and sexuality. Students use various strategies in order to address serious and intriguing topics such as sexuality. These strategies range from humour to outright discrimination. However, queer teachers have adopted these strategies themselves as useful pedagogical tools to create candidness and confront stereotypes while maintaining distance (Bhana, 2012; Brown & Diale, 2017). Further, queer teachers being "out" may provide representation for queer learners and offer possibilities of normalisation (Gray, 2013). Grace and Benson support that this invisibility of teachers' identities inhibit the visibility of queer students and teacher's choices to remain closeted contributes to upholding heteronormative school spaces (Grace & Benson, 2000).

Local research explores the ways in which the context of school reproduces binaries of gender and sex. Research on same-sex attracted student teachers revealed that ideas of gender and sex were conflated. Within this study, lesbians that perform masculine traits and gay men that perform femininity found that they were made to conform to the binary. These teachers felt that they had to perform their expected genders by means of clothing and bodily performance in order to be taken as professionals within that space (Brown & Diale, 2017). To my knowledge, there is a notable absence in African studies about queer teachers' experiences. It can be deduced that the reason for this lack of research is due to the homophobic laws of many African countries (Msibi, 2011). This, according to Msibi (2019) makes the growing body of work around this subject in South Africa more crucial as it is one of the few African countries where individuals are constitutionally protected on the basis of sexual orientation.

The global research conducted produces multiple focal points within the relational of the personal and pedagogical. Therefore, the discourse of sexuality diversity education must be analysed in relation to global as well as local constructions of queer sexualities. Further, it must be explored how the global has affected pedagogical practice within South African secondary schools. This research is particularly focused on the visibility and resistance of queer teachers in relation to critical pedagogy. The next section of the literature review will explore sexuality and gender discourse within South African Secondary Schools which are predominantly homophobic in order to contextualise the spaces within which these queer teachers are negotiating their identities.

3.2 Homophobic Discourse Within South African Secondary Schools

Discourse on sexuality, gender and homophobia are particular to the South African context. Especially within South African secondary schools there are traces of the historical past within the present. Queerness has been erased in both classroom conversations, textbooks and curricula (Francis, 2010; Wilmot & Naidoo, 2014). The Life Orientation classroom has largely been the space in secondary schools to talk about gender and sexuality. Yet, some Life Orientation (LO) teachers have expressed fear and embarrassment when teaching gender and sexuality issues while others feel that they are not fully equipped to teach critically on the topic. Furthermore, research within South African schools has shown that LO education

is experienced by learners in rural spaces as moralistic, heteronormative and conservative (Francis & DePalma, 2015; Mayeza & Vincent, 2019).

Research has shown that globally, sexual diversity education is lacking in nuance. Education either erases or demonises queerness and non-heteronormative practices (Elia & Eliason, 2010). However, local research has shown that there are common contextual characteristics in sexual diversity education within South Africa. According to Francis (2018), gender and sexuality discourse within education has become strongly tied to HIV/AIDS education, which has reinforced the silencing of queerness. This public health framework within which sexual education has been placed created a discourse of direness around sexuality of young people rather than on placing focus on desire or sexual fluidity (Francis, 2018).

According to Ngabaza and Shefer (2019), South African sexuality education also remains in the discourse of regulation and punishment. Although the LO curriculum theoretically allows for engagement, practically the results are not conducive for students to make decisions regarding their sexual health and differing desires (Ngabaza & Shefer, 2019). According to Morrell, Bhana and Shefer (2012), this surveillance of sexuality is even more codified within the regulation of acceptable femininities. Adolescent South African mothers are seen as deviant in their sexuality because they defy the norms of family-hood (Ngabaza & Shefer, 2019; Shefer, Bhana & Morrell, 2012). Further, the South African curriculum presupposes that the ideal family is that of a nuclear formation within the confines of heterosexuality (Shefer & Ngabaza, 2015). According to Connell (2013) the conservative ideology of gender relies on the family structure as foundational to the structure of society.

Within these nuclear family structures it is expected that there be a gendered division of labour. The family structure does not mean that the negotiations of power are always stable or predictable. However, the ideal of family is strong within the social imaginary (Connell, 2013). This form of regulatory discipline can be elaborated upon by Foucauldian theory. According to Foucault (1978), regulatory discipline follows a more Victorian-era view on sexuality which invisibilises sexuality and problematises it as abhorrent and dangerous. Further, this idea is supported by Chappell, Rule, Dlamini and Nkala (2014) in the research of sexualities of South African youth with disabilities. According to Chappell et al. (2014), research of youth and sexualities has highlighted the ways in which society has constructed youth as incapable of understanding their own sexuality (Chappell et al., 2014).

Currently within the public sphere of South African national media there has been a discourse of outrage from parents at the proposal that young people should learn about topics such as masturbation and consent as part of the mainstream Life Orientation curriculum. Although current discourse around South African rhetoric around sexuality presumes a silence, this silence was contested in earlier African communities around the 1920s and 1930s. There has been a described sexual openness between generations which, following the Christian missionary-era, changed to one of a Christian moral code. Despite, many families in both rural and urban South Africa embracing Christian values, there was still a contradiction when it came to the perception of youth and sexuality (Delius & Glaser, 2002).

Deviant behaviours such as promiscuity and teenage pregnancy were both demonised by Christian values and simultaneously blamed on Western influence (Delius & Glaser, 2002). However, Delius and Glaser (2002) emphasise that the Christian missionary influence over sexuality in schools should not be over-estimated either, despite its success in undermining previous discourses around sexuality. Christianity during these times was not reified and the negotiations varied according to communities. The influences over discourse in sexuality in communities and schools were influenced by other factors like urbanisation and migrant labour (Delius & Glaser, 2002).

Foucault (1978) critiques the hypothesis that the articulation of Christianity within the formation of sexuality does not rely solely on the explanation of repression. Historically, there are multiple ways in which the topic of sex and sexuality exists discursively in order to create the rituals and patterns of expression performatively (Foucault, 1978). Further, Butler (1999) proposes the question of sex having multiple histories. Therefore, South African youth and sexuality have varying historical influences which created contradictions that manifest in the present.

Queer research within the South African context have been primarily focused on that of queer students both in the secondary schooling space and the tertiary schooling space. Youth and sexuality within the South African context is explored in a number of ways; from particularities of gender, sexual expression and preferences to the ways in which South African youth have co-opted capitalism into their sexual and romantic desires (Bhana, 2014; Bhana & Pattman, 2011; Kiguwa & Nduna, 2017; Naidu & Mutumbara, 2017). Particularly within the South African context, homophobia has been rife within secondary schooling systems despite the legislative progress made (Bhana, 2014; Msibi, 2011). Gender and sexuality have been discussed and perceived in terms that are static. This segregation and

discrimination is documented to have legislative history during the apartheid-era where queer relations were prohibited and queer rights were limited until the democratic era (Gevisser, 1995; Reddy, 2010).

During the apartheid era, in the 1980s, the gendered rhetoric around white South African nationalism became apparent with the implementation of forced conscription. This strategy was used by the apartheid state as means to regain a legitimacy of government that was increasingly being ostracised globally. The objectors of conscription who partook in the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) in 1983 faced a particular homophobic stigmatisation. The militarisation of state was directly linked to the white, heteronormative, masculine hegemonic discourse that the apartheid regime spread in order to control the public. State control was then particularly related to gender and sexuality in South Africa (Conway, 2008).

Homophobic discourse in the greater public was fuelled by creating a sense of moral panic at the loss of the nuclear family (and therefore loss of the nation). This militarisation extended to that of white South African schools (Conway, 2008). The militarisation of white South African schools during the apartheid-era is therefore pertinent to understanding schooling systems which are inherited in order to explore ways in which that discourse still permeates within the present. South African secondary schools largely remain within this mode of surveillance which is masculine, militarised and hetero-normative. According to Mayeza and Bhana (2021) schools within precarious spaces particularly suffer from modes of hegemonic masculinity which lead to violence and bullying (Mayeza & Bhana, 2021). Therefore, the South African context in relation to masculinities is pertinent in understanding the South African schooling space as gendered.

Currently in South Africa, as well as other African countries, the narrative on queerness is that it is a "Western" construct and would not otherwise exist in Africa (Msibi, 2011). The construction of homosexuality as "un-African" has created space for discrimination and sometimes extreme violence, especially towards Black lesbian women in South Africa (Mkhize, Bennett, Reddy & Moletsane, 2010). However, research has shown that there have been instances of queer relationships before colonial history in varying complexities which subverts this heteronormative mythology (Brown & Diale, 2017; Epprecht, 2004; Kiguwa & Nduna, 2017; Msibi, 2011; Niehaus, 2009). Therefore, race and class cannot be absent when discussing issues of gender and sexuality in South Africa.

With regards to South African queer teachers, less has been explored in terms of identity and professional practice. However, research that has been done has inquired into the intricacies of intersectionality within the subjectivity of queer teachers (Msibi, 2019). This research situates queer teachers within the discourse that permeates within the South African schooling space. Discourse around gender and sexuality in South African schooling remains largely homophobic, which makes navigations of queer teachers within South African schools even more pertinent as navigating these can be stifling and difficult. Without making generalisations or predictions, this research focuses on contextualising queer teachers within these public discourses around gender and sexuality within South African Secondary schools.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This project examines the experiences of queer teachers working in South African secondary schools with the aim of exploring the relationship between the personal and the pedagogical for these educators. The role of identity has been explored in a multitude of professional contexts and has been seen to be important in thinking about the political, emotional and social implications of identity within work spaces. This study explores how the micro-discourse with gender and sexuality allows for greater insight into the macro-discourse within South African schooling spaces. Queer teachers' subjectivities reveal the interplay of power, the negotiation of private and public and the role of identity within contexts of teaching and learning in South Africa.

According to Steyn (2015), with the fast progression of globalisation, it becomes increasingly clear that the ways which people co-exist within the hegemonic discourses around power relations are varying and always changing in relation to our differences and "Otherness". Hence, it is imperative that I foreground my research in this framework of discourse and power in order to be aware of nuances within different systems of oppression and their interaction with privilege and power.

The aim of this research is to complicate the perceptions about queerness and queer teachers by exploring the experiences of these individual queer teachers. Hence, a qualitative approach is necessary in order to gain the particular insights which will work with their own personal histories in relation to their personal lives and professional careers. Further, qualitative research focuses on the nature of subjectivity and the meaning-making process within social lives (Esterburg, 2002). Furthermore, qualitative research not only explores the subjectivities of participants but also explores the subjectivity and position of the researcher (Esterburg, 2002). According to Blake (1995), there has been increasing literature on teachers and their oral histories which have become recognised as important in efforts to understanding education. This research aims not to be merely research for the sake of research but to contribute to the unveiling of power structures which are normalised and challenging narratives that are dominant and unjust (Cannella & Lincoln, 2012).

This research will use thematic analysis in conjunction with discourse analysis to discern important themes that arise. This research requires a broad set of tools for deeper analysis and will therefore also be theoretically underpinned by Butler's (1999, 2004) theories on

gender, performance and sexuality, theories of space and critical pedagogy in order to understand the narratives as connected to broader social issues in South Africa. Further, this research will use critical discourse analysis in order to understand the varying discourses around gender and sexuality within South African secondary schools.

While the focus of this project is not about affect alone, discussion of the emotions expressed by teachers is important in unpacking within their narratives. Research within the social sciences is lacking in addressing this emotional communication between bodies, which is why affect studies is imperative in analysing the data to answer certain questions (Ahmed, 2004). Furthermore, this process will be a continually reflexive process where I challenge my own assumptions and hopes for my research to create research that will reveal "discomforting truths" (Boler & Zembulas, 2003, p. 110).

4.1 Positionality: Being a Teacher and a Researcher

> Once again, there is no such thing as teaching without research and research without teaching. One inhabits the body of the other. As, I teach. I continue to search and re-search. I teach because I search, because I question, and because I submit myself to questioning. I research because I notice things, take cognizance of them. And in so doing, I intervene. And in intervening, I educate and educate myself. I do research so as to know what I do not yet know and to communicate and proclaim what I discover. (Freire, 2000, p. 15)

My own teacher identity and profession is an underlying reason for the pursuit of this particular research. The above quote by Freire (2000) describes exactly the ways in which the role of teacher and researcher intersect. I am doing this research because I have my own experiences, but I do not claim to know if or how my own experiences relate to others. I cannot know the experiences of others without searching and re-searching which is what I have aimed to do with this project.

In reflecting on the interviews I have gathered, it is surprising how in some instances my personal relates to the personal of my participants, and how this helped with opening up

authentic communication between myself and the teachers I interviewed. Not that this is always so, but it is interesting to witness oneself within the research and to see how we form it and where it forms us. As, stated by Fitzpatrick (2013), the role of qualitative research is one which will transform the researcher (Fitzpatrick, 2013). In this process I have watched myself transform and learn through others.

Finally, this research followed all the ethical protocols stipulated by the University of the Witwatersrand. Ethical clearance was given (Ethics protocol no: DIV160918). Potential participants were given the following invitation to participate in the project (see Appendix A) and a Consent Form (see Appendix B), which stipulated that respondents were to remain anonymous and were not bound to the project if at any point they wished to not be so. The participant information sheet provided my contact details as those of both my supervisors and were asked to contact us at any time if they had concerns and queries about the research. All participants were informed that confidentiality would be given both individually and institutionally, pseudonyms were given and consent forms were signed accordingly. Transcriptions were recorded and transcribed verbatim and stored safely and securely.

4.2 Sampling

Participant Information

Pseudonym	**Age**	**Self-identified gender**	**Preferred pronouns**
Sumayah	32 Years	Woman	She/Her and/or They/Them
Nadia	25 Years	Woman	She/Her
Sam	28 Years	Woman	She/Her
Michelle	43 Years	Woman	She/Her
Leon	34 Years	Man	He/Him
Val	35 Years	Woman	She/Her

Participants were initially sought through personal contacts and the snowball technique through the Facebook page “Queer Comrades” through which most participants responded. Queer Comrades is a South African Facebook page which is dedicated to creating connection

and a support network between queer people. This can range from sharing stories, promoting queer businesses to hosting queer events.

Participants were contacted and interviewed in the year 2019 between the months September, October and November. Initially I planned to keep the research within the Johannesburg area. However there was a greater response from teachers in Cape Town through the call put out on "Queer Comrades". I then decided because of the lack of response from Johannesburg participants that I would use all participants willing from both areas as it is not necessarily a city-specific space driven project. Although my study predominantly focuses on the experiences of current teachers, one participant is an ex-teacher. However, I defend my decision to use this participant because the particularities of the experience was enriching to the study, particularly why the educational space was one that they decided to leave. The participant also had experiences teaching overseas and the comparisons they drew in relation to their experiences in South African schools were insightful.

Three participants were found from the Facebook page "Queer Comrades" and two participants were snowballed from one of the "Queer Comrades" respondents. One participant responded through a personal network query. Participants were invited based on their identification within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) umbrella. Although some did not identify with the word "Queer" itself, they all identified within the LGBTQIA+ definition. Although almost of the participants are self-identifying women, this does not mean that their experiences can be homogenised. In this research, their own self-identifications are emphasised but for the purposes of the research, the word "queer" has been chosen to be used generally as is stipulated in Chapter 1 of this research report. Initially I was hoping for a wider demographic of teachers with regards to race, class and religion. However, as this was snowballed the control over these factors was limited. Participants self-identified in terms of race, class and religion. In terms of race, three participants self- identified as coloured and three participants self-identified as white. One of the white participants described their background as Afrikaans while the remaining two described themselves as English. All participants self-describe their economic status as middle-class.

According to Browne (2005), the snowball technique has its pitfalls as it creates networks to be limited within the scope of their own ideas of inclusion and exclusion – who fits the criteria and who does not. However, the snowball technique can also be used to search for a

specific group of people where subjectivities are sensitive (Browne, 2005). According to Browne (2005), studies that have focused on sexuality often employ snowball sampling because of the specific networks marginalised communities may have. Further, Browne states that "Snowball sampling can enable researchers to gain access to individuals who live outside the boundaries of normative heterosexuality" (Browne, 2005, p. 49). Therefore, as this study focused specifically on queer teachers the snowball technique enabled access to a "hidden group" which otherwise may have been difficult to find (Browne, 2005).

It must be noted that although there were similarities in background for some of the teachers, I was reminded that no matter the seemingly limited network – the ways in which teachers experienced their own subjectivities were vast despite their similar categories in race, class, gender which are affected by their own networks and mine. I am aware that my own positionality as an Indian, middle-class student has narrowed the possibilities of my sample. I am also aware that there is a certain middle-class majority within the users of the Facebook page, "Queer Comrades".

4.3 Data Collection Techniques

4.3.1 Interviews

Data were collected through six, in-depth, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews in 2019 between the months of September, October and November. Although initially a focus group was planned for this project, the fact that participants were from two different cities did not allow for this technique to be used. However, since the research is focused on the particularities of each participant's context, the technique of one-on-one interviews allowed for more intimacy and trust between me and the participants.

According to McIntosh and Morse (2015), "the empathetic turn" within the method of interviewing is one which emphasised the researcher as not neutral but active politically in the process of research. Semi-structured interviews have thus been employed since "the empathetic turn" has been prolific in use within qualitative research. The use of a semi-structured interview entails having an interview schedule whereby the same set of questions are asked to the participants, however there is space for deviation from said interview schedule which allows for both flexibility and rigour (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). As, I was

searching for particular information about the experiences of queer teachers within secondary schools, it was important for me to have an interview schedule to focus the conversation, however, I too shared experiences that often opened up unexpected conversations. Therefore, the flexibility that semi-structured interviews allowed for the presence of myself as more than just a researcher as well as allowing the participants space to explore their own subjective experiences without too much restriction. Lastly, the use of six in-depth and semi-structured interviews offered insight into particular experiences of queer teachers, in a particular context within a particular time (Brounéus, 2011).

According to Brounéus (2011), when conducting in-depth interviews, there is a need for deepening understanding of the complexities of a particular experience, especially when experiences may be traumatic. In order to this, it is therefore imperative that one listens and reflects with empathy and non-judgement (Brounéus, 2011). Therefore, my intention within this interviewing experience was to be structured, yet to create room for spontaneity and to be critical but to listen with empathy. My own positionality also played a role in the interviews. As a queer teacher myself, I found it relatively easy to relate to the participants despite our different backgrounds. In most cases, I did not declare my own positionality immediately, but through conversation it was often revealed. I did not feel it was necessary to hide my own identity neither was it necessary to reveal it and felt when it was revealed that it was welcomed by the participants.

As a queer young woman from a Muslim family, there were moments in which I could share experiences with participants despite not sharing multiple intersectionalities of identities. For example, one of the participants who was a queer Muslim woman expressed their difficulties with a conservative family. Although, we did not share all intersections I viscerally understood what this kind of conservatism could look like within a Muslim family. As I did not share many identities with most of the participants there was an aspect in which I was the outsider looking within (Fitzpatrick, 2013). However, I shared many insider aspects with my participants such as queerness, teacher hood and with five out of six participants being within my own age range. There was a level of ease within all interactions depending on what points of connection we could find together despite the many ways in which our experiences (queer or not) differed.

According to Dwyer and Buckle (2009), the benefit of being an insider, where you share group membership with your participant, is that participants may be more open and trust the

researcher, while the benefits of being an outsider is that you may see what those within cannot as they are too submerged within their experiences. However, Dwyer and Buckle (2009) discuss the in-between space of the insider-outsider dynamic which explains that the insider-outsider binary is too dualistic for qualitative research. They argue that human experiences are complex, in which sameness doesn't necessarily mean there will be automatic understanding and that difference does not necessarily mean there will be alienation (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). In my interaction with participants, I experienced various modes and instances of understanding and tension which was negotiated from varying modes of connection and belonging. In my experience, I moved fluidly within this in-between space of insider-outsider and this allowed me to see and understand from different perspectives rather than hold myself to the binary of the insider versus the outsider.

According to McIntosh and Morse (2015), semi-structured interviews allow for focused intent with participants while Browne (2005) highlights that sensitive issues need particular conditions for meaningful engagement in the interviewing process (Browne, 2005; McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Therefore, in-depth and semi-structured interviews allowed for participants to feel more comfortable to talk about their experiences without the worry of input from various participants. It allowed for ample time to be given for each participant to narrate their experiences within their own agency and control. Power must be acknowledged during this process as there is always the issue of power dynamics between researcher and researched during in-depth, one-on-one interviews. The fact that participants were the ones who responded to be part of this research and that it requires particular personal reflection shows that participants did indeed feel empowered to talk about their experiences, and also perhaps felt a need to share these experiences (Browne, 2005).

During the first interviews, I realised that some of the questions were answered using less probing. By the last interview, I had refined which questions were important and which I could let go of. I had only encountered the theory of space and place after I had conducted the first interview and so questions were honed accordingly from the second interview onwards. This was not a hindrance to the first participant as the first participant was very engaging and so their interview could be analysed using the theory of space and place despite questions not being focused on that aspect. Over time, it was clear that some of my questions were not phrased effectively but with more interviews it became easier to gage what was important to participants.

Each interview took place wherever the participants felt comfortable and convenience played a large factor in the choice. I travelled to the location of choice for participants in Johannesburg and Cape Town. I travelled to Cape Town to meet the respondents personally. Interviews lasted from one to one and a half hours. Three teachers were from the same school as one teacher who responded through "Queer Comrades" referred me two of their colleagues. The other three participants were from a range of different schools in Johannesburg and Cape Town respectively.

4.4 Data Analysis

All participants' interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcribed interview data were then coded and analysed using techniques of thematic network analysis informed by an awareness of the ways in which discourse and power relations shape subjectivities and lived experiences. According to Attride-Stirling (2001), thematic network analysis is therefore guided by the critical theoretical framework around power informing this project. Thematic network analysis allows for researchers to look at the smaller ideas or codes to interpret them into larger patterns of understanding. It not only identifies themes but sees how these themes interact and intersect with one another to form a network of ideas and meanings (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Therefore, this research used thematic network analysis because this method makes it possible to recognise patterns and links between themes that emerge in interviews and to relate these to broader social dynamics and power relations (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

The process of thematic coding drew on Attride- Striding's procedure for thematic network analysis. The steps that she outlines are as follows: 1) codes the data according to guiding themes 2) identifies the themes, 3) construct the thematic network, 4) explore the thematic networks, 5) summarise the thematic network, and 6) interpret the patterns (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

According to Clarke and Braun (2014), thematic analysis allows for a flexible process of interpreting peoples' experiences (Clarke & Braun, 2014). This is further supported and extended by Attride-Striding (2001) as it takes what Clarke and Braun (2014) refer to as "patterns of meaning" and links them to one another to create a thematic network (Attride-Striding; Clarke & Braun, 2014). Therefore, I have decided to use thematic network analysis

especially because of the way in which it enables themes to emerge and allows for wider interpretation of participants' experiences without theoretical limitations. Finally, the use of thematic analysis allowed for the research question to be refined and evolve through the process of data collection and analysis (Attride-Striding; Clarke & Braun, 2014).

4.5 Thematic Network Analysis

Thematic Analysis is often used within qualitative research because of its ability to analyse data without limiting the scope of analysis. There are many ways in which thematic analysis is approached, however the foundational method is to break down data within codes and themes (Clarke & Braun, 2014). I have chosen the approach which uses the foundation of thematic analysis which uses codes and themes and further conceptualises them into networks (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Therefore, interview data will be analysed through the tool of thematic network analysis. According to Attride-Stirling (2001), thematic network analysis is aided by the tool of using thematic networks which are "web-like illustrations (networks) that summarise the main themes constituting a piece of text" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 386).

Thematic network analysis, using the tool of thematic networks, "enables a methodical systemization of textual data, facilitates the disclosure of each step in the analytic process, aids the organisation of an analysis and its presentation, and allows a sensitive, insightful and rich exploration of a text's overt structures and underlying patterns" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 386). This research will follow the propositions made by Attride-Stirling (2001) which grounds the idea of thematic networks in elements or argumentation theory which analyses data in terms of claims and counter-claims in order to detangle arguments for the purpose of solution-making. However, although thematic analysis follows the premise of understanding implicit meanings within discourse within explicit text, it does not follow the solution-based organisation of argumentation theory (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

Thematic network analysis involves the organisation of themes into three categories:

1. Basic themes: Lower-order themes that are most evident in the text. These themes will eventually be organised as organised themes and then within global themes.

2. Organised themes: Basic themes that are categorised in order to develop more abstract concepts. The organised themes categorise the basic themes into ideas of signification and reveals more underlying meanings within the text.
3. Global themes: Themes which encapsulate the text which are categorised from organised themes. These are macro-themes which support larger arguments, positions or assertions within the text about reality (Attride-Stirling, 2001)

These three levels of categorisation allow the researcher to unravel the implicit and hidden meanings within text. Thematic network analysis does not analyse text within the given categories through hierarchy but an understanding that all the themes are connected and interwoven (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

Example of thematic network analysis:

Basic	**Organised**	**Global**
Feelings of safety	Manifestations of queer teachers' experiences.	Experiences of identity within the workplace

4.6 Discourse and Power

Exploring discourse and power within qualitative research is approached in varying ways. While some researchers focus on the relationship between power and language as a means of analysis, others approach discourse within systemic social patterns and practices (LeGreco, 2014). This integration of language, structure and practice is part of the poststructuralist approach which acknowledges that meaning can be both reproductive and simultaneously transformed through language (Phillips & Jørgenson 2002). Hence, acknowledging discourse and power compliments the use of thematic network analysis and vice versa by extending the idea of categorising themes in a way which reveals the implicit meanings within the participants' practices and experiences through language. While the three categories of

thematic network (Basic themes, Organised themes and Global themes) allow for a wider lens with which to link the patterns of meaning within qualitative data, it does not explicitly link the notion of implicit meanings to that of hegemonic power structures (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

The use of thematic network analysis in conjunction with a critical understanding of discourse makes it possible to uncover the underlying relations of power that shape, and are reflected within, the ways in which queer teachers make sense of their experiences in heteronormative school spaces. While thematic analysis is used to guide the process of organising and interpreting the data, this process is thus deeply guided by the imperative to uncover power relations through critical engagement with language and the specific and broader contexts from which it emerges. According to Gee discourse analysis focuses on making what seems normal and banal to us – "new and strange" (Gee, 1999, p.8). In making things new, we are then able to see more clearly the mutli-layered meanings within communication (Gee, 1999). Although discourse analysis is not used within this research, this particular aspect of making the normal and everyday into the new and strange is one which this research attempts to do through the use of linking themes and patterns (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Gee, 1999). The normal and banal can also be defined within power and hegemonic structures which are invisibilised through common-sense understanding (Steyn, 2015). According to Steyn, "dominant formations do not act singly, and are not experienced discretely within people's lives." (Steyn, 2015, p. 383). Therefore, the ways in which the intersection of hegemonic structures such as heteropatriarchy, are reproduced, resisted, or reframed in language and practice is important to decipher within the data (Steyn, 2015).

The identification of which discourses are at play was therefore vital to understanding the experiences shared by participants in this study. Secondary literature was therefore used to relate the interview data to the broader context of the South African schooling system and its transformation following the end of apartheid. Further, in order to be able to analyse participant experiences and interpretations of their positionality within the schooling space, it is vital to understand that the subject is not immovable and therefore a complex entity to understand, especially in relation to discourse and power.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

The following analysis has used the given theoretical framework and literature in order to create meaning out of the narratives of six queer teachers. The following analysis does not attempt to homogenise the experiences of the participants as their narratives are nuanced and complex despite, and because of, their similarities and differences. The analysis has used the tool of thematic network analysis to identify categorisations of themes. No themes are dominant or subordinate but are interconnected and intersect one another to form a coherent and meaningful analysis within various discourses. The analysis is divided into the following thematic networks:

1. *Negotiating queer (in) visibility: What does it mean to be "out" in schools?* (Sub-sections: a) The complexities of queer teachers' navigations within South African Schooling spaces, b) Are South African Secondary schools "safe" for queerness?)
2. *Masculinities, Discipline and Affect* (Sub-sections: a) Masculinities and Homophobia in South African Secondary Schooling, b) Disciplining "Soft" Emotions)
3. *The duty of disruption by queer teachers* (Sub-sections: a) Acts of resistance b) The role of the political within pedagogical practice)

5.2 Negotiating Queer (In)visibility: What Does It Mean to Be "Out" in Schools?

The first section of this analysis will focus on how queer teachers experience their own visibility within their respective schooling institutions and what that means to them. Queer teachers' experiences of visibility have often been related to the notion of the closet. According to Sedgewick (1990), the closet has historically been a foundational aspect that has defined queer experience. Through narratives within media, literature and real life, whether a queer person has made it known or declared their sexuality has been essential to the queer experience. However, Sedgewick also reiterates that the closet is a complicated concept which can be both joyous and painful; a site for a multitude of complex experiences (Sedgewick, 1990).

Globally, queer teachers have experienced the closet in terms of a space of contention, where it can be used as a space for freedom and a space which restricts (Brockenbrough, 2012; Sykes, 1998). While locally, the closet and what this negotiation means for queer teachers is

intersected by race, class, culture and gender (Msibi, 2019). Further, South African research has shown that the idea of coming out can reinforce the idea that queer identities are deviant from the norm (Mayeza, 2021). Tucker (2009) argues that the closet can limit the experiences of South African queer people as they are rooted in Westernised ideas of queerness. Furthermore, the historical background through which South African secondary schooling institutions have been created is one which is patriarchal, militaristic, colonial, white and heterosexual (Bhana, 2014; Conway, 2008; Gevisser, 2013). This specific South African historical and socio-political context is one which shows continuity within the experiences of the participants. Hence, within this study the experience of coming out is used to understand the participants' experiences through a particular lens rather than limit their identities in relation to the closet.

The notion of public and private identities was a focal theme that was both explicitly and discreetly talked about within the participants' experiences. Griffin (1991) discusses the relationship of queer teachers in the closet in terms of four strategies, namely passing, covering, being implicitly out and being explicitly out. The following section, which introduces the narratives of the participants, is largely analysed through the understanding of these queer teachers' narratives through the multiple and intersecting strategies they used in South African Secondary schooling through various modes of surveillance and control.

5.2.1 The complexities of queer teachers' navigations within South African Schooling spaces

The six participants within this study came from varying backgrounds with complex and nuanced differences within their experiences of teaching as queer teachers in South African schools. It must be noted that South African Secondary Schools cannot be homogenised and that they are characterised in terms of resources, school culture and historical structures. While participants described differing narratives in terms of context, there were many instances where experiences were similar. The use of Griffin's (1991) four strategies were useful to unpack the stories of these queer teachers. However, their experiences were not limited to these strategies and moved beyond them in complex ways. The following sub-section will explore the various experiences of queer teachers in terms of their (in)visibility within schools and how they personally navigated different schooling contexts.

None of the participants described experiences of extreme situations within their workplace which forced them to take drastic measures in order to hide their sexuality. This strategy is regarded as the strategy of "passing" (Griffin, 1991) However, the experiences of teachers' ideas of concealment complicated the idea of concealment itself. Optimistically, the lack of use of this extreme strategy can be analysed in terms of a positive progression in how queerness is perceived within South African schooling spaces more positively. However, it must be noted that all participants were middle-class and therefore the experiences cannot be generalised to queer people in more precarious environments.

Precarity within schooling environments affected the ways in which teachers navigated their situations. In analysing different queer teachers' experiences from different contexts, it was clear that the situation in some schools were more precarious than others. This difference in environments led to different decision-making processes by the teachers. Leon is a self-identified gay man who had difficult experiences while working in a school which he describes as poverty-stricken and aggressive. Leon is also a psychologist and could critically and empathetically engage with this context, he iterated,

> Ya, you know and ultimately the problem then is poverty isn't it? It's poverty, its desolation, deprivation, all those things.

Therefore, Leon felt it was necessary to not fully disclose his sexuality as he felt there was already tension between students and teachers and adding sexuality would make this relationship more uncertain. He describes predominantly using the strategy of "covering" by intentionally hiding information from students and fellow colleagues on his sexuality. The strategy of "covering" describes when queer teachers do not implicitly or explicitly signal their queerness and may intentionally omit personal information about themselves in order to hide their queerness (Griffin, 1991). Out of all the participants, Leon made it clear that the space and place of the school he worked in was one in which poverty and violence played a large role in the interpersonal relationships. In order to establish the context of this school, Leon described the way in which one student that arrived at the school had faced murder charges and with this knowledge permeating the school space. The reaction from students was a sense of reverence while there was an active sense of fear from teachers within the school. Therefore, Leon, unlike the other participants, felt he had more of a reason to stay silent on the nature of his sexuality. However, he was also critically aware of what that overt

act silence about their sexuality meant in terms of representation. For example, Leon defended his position of not revealing his queer identity, relying on his students knowing. However, he also was able to critically engage with his decision and what it means,

> I think they knew, they strongly suspected that I was gay because the way that that one boy asked me - the others had the slight smile - we're finally addressing the topic. That's just now my impression. So, in a way it's always been in the room isn't it? [...] So by not being acknowledged, maybe you're also giving a type of message isn't it?

Leon does not make it explicit what message this sends but it can be deduced that it is a feeling of shame attached to queerness. Some research discusses queer teachers' shame as an emotion that affects the nature of coming out. This shame can be attached to culture, professionality and teacher-student relationships (Brockenbrough, 2012; Gray, 2013). It must be noted that shame was not explicitly mentioned by all the participants but the use of implicit strategies such as coming out can be related to ideas of internalised homophobia and shame. According to Brown and Diale (2017) teachers perform this type of self-regulation when they have internalised the homophobia of their current schooling context (Brown & Diale, 2017).

Teachers' different experiences showed that the meaning of space is constructed by how they feel about their identities: the space shapes them and they shape the space. Although Leon's context was more extreme and therefore needed more extreme measures, other teachers felt that there was more space for openness. However, this openness was limited. Most teachers choose to divulge more details though being "implicitly out". Three participants, Sumayah, Sam and Val, described their experiences within this strategy. According to Griffin (1991), the strategy of being "implicitly out" refers to when queer teachers readily share details about their lives which signals their queerness but do not explicitly name it (Griffin, 1991). These acts of being "implicitly out" were often discussed in terms of the idea that these queer teachers' queerness was common-sense or obvious. The idea of their queerness being common-sense was often related to their own ideas of performativity and identity. Notions of public and private were discussed in relation to relationships with visibility. Many teachers explained their negotiations of visibility in terms of the performativity of their gender and sexual orientations. With regards to visibility, Butler (2004) proposes that performativity relies on the expectation of performances from certain bodies within certain spaces (Butler,

2004). Using this idea of the expectation of performativity, teachers' descriptions can be analysed in terms of how teachers rejected or accepted queer performativity within their workplace.

The ways in which these queer teachers' performances were rejected and accepted relied on the strategies of implicitly and explicitly expressing their sexuality (Griffin, 1991). According to Sumayah, her queer identity did not need to be expressed explicitly. They saw her identity as visible enough to students that there was no need for "coming out". This obvious performance is traced back to her earlier memories. They describe their own experience of their sexuality in relation to their sister's sexuality. They describe their sister as the one who was feminine and performed to all the expected feminine norms such as motherhood and marriage. Sumayah self-identifies as lesbian and prefers the pronouns "She /Her" and/or "They/Them". They view their queerness as being explicit by their gender expression and identify this as always having been the case. Sumayah emphasised,

> Oh, come on, I wasn't that tall when I came out. I mean, what about me speaks - oh I'm so obviously straight?

Other teachers like Sam felt that it was not necessary to come out to students because she felt that the whole idea of coming out was built on heteronormative expectations of queer bodies. Sam stated:

> I've never actually told my parents. I just literally, you either accept me for who I am, or you just don't. So, I never actually told them because no one ever goes - oh guess what I'm straight [whispers the word straight]. No one says that so I was like why should it be verbalised if you are not?

It can be deduced through Sumayah's repeated assurance of their own performativity that they feel they fit within the expectations from a queer body within a heteronormative space. Sam and Sumayah use the strategy of implicit expression which neither denies nor affirms their identities in the schooling context (Griffin, 1991). This state of ambivalence in the declaration of their sexualities supports Sedgewick's (1990) description of the closet as a complicated concept which many people reject and feel trapped by. Particularly Sam's

experiences of coming out highlight how the closet is a way in which the norms of heterosexual and queer narratives are made to be different.

Interestingly, other participants such as Val felt that the nature of their teaching subject and interests pointed out their self-evident queerness. Val was the only teacher who felt that her pedagogical practice embodied her queer performativity. Val is a PE teacher and her love of sports was for her an indicator of her queerness throughout her life. Similarly, to Sumayah, Val relies on the expectations of the external as well as the internal world to negotiate what their expression means to them. She is strong and confident about the performativity of her explicit queerness. However, she never explicitly reveals this to her students. Val describes the ways in which she performed her sexuality throughout her life before she verbalised it. She explained,

> I didn't want to deceive anyone. So, I didn't want to shock people. [laughs] when I say it they must be like "Oh. that explains a lot." So that was my whole game plan. So, I spent a lot of my childhood not discussing my sexuality but showing it in my behaviour and how I dressed. I just made sure they knew that it's not a conversation that we can have. But you are allowed to observe and make your own conclusions. So, it was difficult, it was really difficult.

This embodied sense of her sexuality has carried forth into her professional life where she feels that she is performing her sexual identity through the avenue of sport. In iterating that this was not a topic she wanted to talk about there is a sense of secrecy and sensitivity around her sexuality. Within Val's narrative there is a clear strategic performance to appease her own sense of honesty as well as to control peoples' reactions to her sexuality. Val's experience of not describing the need for honesty as part of pedagogical practice is explored by Carter Ford (2017). However, being honest was enacted by performing in a way she felt made her queerness obvious. This was seen as more of a personal value to not deceive rather than a professional one. As previously mentioned, her own performance was attributed to her playing sport and therefore not displaying what she defined as heterosexuality. She thinks that this performance is what contributes to her students knowing about her sexuality:

> I mean, like I'm very sport oriented. I know that's such a cliché but like, you know, people can see and I'm assuming kids can tell. Like, I just assume everyone can tell that I'm a raging lesbian...

According to Sykes (1998), the ways in which physical education teachers specifically negotiated their sexuality was strongly through their bodily expressions (Sykes, 1998). The way in which Val identifies with being a sportswoman is strongly related to her performance and identity of her sexuality. There was a common link between the teachers' narratives that students must just "know" about their identities. The assumption of "knowing" disrupts the expected notions of "coming out" as many teachers felt they were "out" just by being a particular body in a particular place. According to Griffin (1991), these teachers who assumed students' knowledge of their queerness had implicitly made students aware of their sexuality by adhering to what they saw as obvious queer performances (Griffin, 1991). This can be further unpacked using Sarah Ahmed's (2006) theorising of queer orientations.

Queer orientations refer to the ways in which queer bodies feel their proximity to queerness within a particular space. Bodies therefore orientate accordingly towards, away from and within queerness in order to navigate different spaces. Orientations therefore differ depending on what the proximity to queerness means for a particular body. Further, Ahmed (2006) is preoccupied with how performance of sexual orientation is navigated within space and time. According to Ahmed (2006), queer bodies orientate according to the proximity of objects within the space. To link this back to the experience of Val, the proximity to the sports field within a school was one that signalled her own queerness to herself and others. This can be further supported by the idea that what is considered masculine and feminine relies on the interplay between what is considered part of hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic femininity (Connell, 1995). Regarding the participants' orientations, these queer teachers acknowledge and see their proximity to queerness as obvious. This proximity is made more obvious in relation to the South African schooling spaces they inhabit, which are historically heteronormative, patriarchal, colonial and Christian (Bhana, 2014; Conway, 2008; Delius & Glaser, 2002).

Out of six participants, only one participant felt at ease enough to be open about their sexuality within the school they worked in. Michelle was the only participant that described experiences where she would discuss her relationship and reveal aspects of her personal life

to students and colleagues alike. Michelle worked at an all-girls school. She made it clear that she would explicitly mention her wife to students in order to normalise the relationship. Michelle had a less conflictual relationship with being "out". Having done her own research on queer teachers and their experiences of being "out" in the classroom, she expressed a certain confidence engaging with the topic. She detailed how she had "come out" in the interviewing process within the school she works in currently and how it was promised to her that it would not affect her daily interactions. However, she discussed the subtle ways in which she is made to feel different and how she has openly voiced her concerns over this kind of discrimination:

> In some of the transformation workshops we've had, I speak very forthrightly about micro-aggressions that I do experience. I suppose one that I'm thinking of is with the previous head, where we sort of said something… We were talking about holidays, and I said something about, "Oh my wife did X-Y-Z, or she wanted to go to - I don't know - the cricket - or whatever it was." And he said, "Oh, does your partner do -" And I'd just used the word 'wife', and then he used the word 'partner' back to me; which, for me, is because he's very uncomfortable with the idea of using the word 'wife,' for a woman.

The above scenario encapsulates the heteronormative ideals of the nuclear family and how when this is disrupted, there is often confusion on how to categorise. According to Connell (2013), the hegemonic foundations of gender rely on the expectation that the nuclear family is created within society. Therefore, it can be deduced that Michelle's relationship fractures this ideal and subverts hegemony. Using Butler's (2004) concept of legibility, her relationship dynamics are made illegible through the ideals of heteronormative relationships (Butler, 2004). Michelle disrupts heteronormativity within this schooling context by being illegible within her family structure (Grace, 2017). Despite the school being outwardly accepting, it is clear that heteronormativity has authority within the context of this school (Msibi, 2019). This particular anecdote shows the continuity of historical South African schooling contexts which were influenced by the apartheid system. During the apartheid era the heteronormative and patriarchal militarisation of South African schools was a direct result of the fear of the loss of the nuclear Christian family (Conway, 2008; Delius & Glaser, 2002). The narrative of

Michelle shows us that although we are in the Democratic-era, normative structures that are reminiscent of and inherited from South Africa's history still remain in place making Michelle's strategy of being "explicitly out" as one that is subversive and political.

It is clear that all of the queer teachers that participated in this study used different strategies and negotiations to survive within their schooling contexts (Griffin, 1991). However, it must be noted that not all of these negotiations can simply be categorised in terms of one strategy. In multiple narratives it can be seen that some uses of specific strategies were more clear; other negotiations were more complicated. Boundaries of these strategies are blurred by some teachers' experiences and expressions. Queer teachers often had conflicting perceptions of their concealment which would sometimes be directly opposite to their actions. Boundaries were often blurred and complicated by multiple roles that queer teachers had to perform for their colleagues, students and parents. These negotiations often related to how teachers felt their queerness related to professionality and safety (Grace & Benson; Rudoe, 2010; Msibi, 2019). Sam sways between strategies of covering and implicitly "coming out", which complicates the boundaries of strategies used. She does not share personal details with her students. However, her fluid definitions of self, allow for there to be ambiguity within her personal and professional life. Her reluctance can be attributed to wary feelings around boundaries between her and her students as well as potential discriminatory views of parents. The ambiguity with which she navigates her sexuality can both be attributed to her personal views as well as a defence-mechanism against rejection from her professional peers or parents. According to Msibi (2012), queer teachers often remain silent about their sexualities from fear of being delegitimised by both parents and students (Msibi, 2012). Sam explained

> But because of my sexual preference you need to be careful of your interactions with certain groups of kids. So, learners that are out and are fully aware. "Hey, this teacher is cool." might take it too far. So when the kids hug me, it's like "No." but it's just one of those things where "Okay, the lesbian teacher did this." and you're like mxm...then your sexuality becomes questioned completely. Your behaviour. Your interactions. And some parents even take it too far. I mean, they take it to the level of - "How can a child respect this?" You know?

The relationship of expression of sexuality and professional identity are described by teachers as a complicated one which considers the perceptions of not only students and colleagues but parents as well. Sam emphasises a strong relationship between her perceived sexuality and respectability. Within her experience there is clearly a fear that students may equate her queerness with being cool which may lead to inappropriate conduct. Therefore, making their own sexuality neutral is also a defence mechanism. Grace (2017) found that queer teachers often over-compensated for their sexuality and the denial of their sexuality was used to prove their professionality (Grace, 2017). Msibi (2019) supports this by exploring how modes of modesty in sexual expression was seen as more respectable for teachers.

All teachers used Griffin's (1991) strategies within their professional practice and yet the boundaries between these strategies were made complicated by the different scenarios and complexities of context which required them to move fluidly between the strategies. Modes of self-regulation and self-disclosure (Brown & Diale, 2017) were used separately as well as simultaneously. For some teachers, the boundaries between strategies are blurred between different spaces. As previously mentioned, Nadia's navigation of her sexuality drastically changes from her home space to her school space. Her identity is complicated with regards to the private and public because her experiences between home and school differ vastly. Nadia explained how her family is unaware of her sexuality and would not accept it because of their strict Islamic values. However, her identity is known by colleagues and students at school. Intimate details, such as the fact that she is engaged to Sam, are public at school and yet not public at home. It can be deduced that in her experience modes of surveillance are less oppressive because within school, she felt like she could express herself within limits. She said:

> I just really feel the conflict at home. I don't feel the conflict here because here I can be myself. The children are different. The children here themselves are also gay and lesbian. So we can relate to each other and things, but we just don't advertise it. We can speak about it but we won't speak personally about it.

It is clear from the above quote that Nadia is emboldened by her students who are "out" and feels understood by them. Although she has neither implicitly nor explicitly come out, she does not deny her same-sex relationship within the school. Her ideas of respectability are linked to her ideas of privacy with regards to her sexuality. Similarly, Val discusses her own

sexuality as part of her private life which is separate from her professional life. Therefore, some teachers feel that the professional boundaries extend to all parts of what is considered private – sexuality being one of them. Val supported this sentiment and stated:

> The way I've approached teaching is very much professional. I don't allow the children into my personal life. So, whether it's my sexuality or my bank account or my family life, anything. I don't talk about it because I don't think it's appropriate not because I'm trying to hide it. So my sexuality just kind of falls under that.

As Foucault (2007) describes, there are multiple gazes which teachers face within schooling contexts. Teachers have described the parameters of professionality and in turn how it affects their expression of their sexuality. However, many describe this as a norm of professionality rather than a form of discipline, which supports Foucault's idea that self-regulation becomes the vehicle for institutional discipline (Foucault, 2007). The multiple sites of surveillance within the experiences of these queer teachers results in a more complicated manoeuvring of Griffin's (1991) strategies queer teachers use within schooling spaces. Although, the strategies (Griffin, 1991) provide a useful and insightful categorisation of queer teachers' experiences of (in)visibility, it is clear that the different relationships which move between personal and professional with multiple school stakeholders are complex and requires teachers to use strategies simultaneously and creatively in order to survive. Furthermore, the use of some strategies which are described by Griffin (1991) as ones that uphold norms are used by teachers in ways that are discreetly subversive. Even though teachers cannot always explicitly be out within schools, the subtle communications between bodies are meaningful to both teachers and students.

5.2.2 South African schools as a "Safe Space" for queerness?

Queer teachers discussed the complexities of navigating their queer identities in terms of the private and public. One aspect which was discussed in multiple ways was the idea of school as a "safe space" for queer teachers and students alike. For some teachers the South African context creates a volatile and precarious environment through which they have to negotiate their identity. Research has shown that queer teachers feel a sense of vulnerability within their professional space, which is directly related to their feelings of safety (Harris & Gray,

2014; Grace & Benson, 2000). Although much work has been done on queer teachers' experiences within the West (especially within the United Kingdom), there has not been much work done within the African context. The following section highlights some contextual aspects which affect the ways in which queer teachers strategise within South African schooling spaces, especially when those spaces feel unsafe.

Representation was discussed as a factor within these negotiations and how despite feelings of vulnerability, the power of representation should not be undermined. Despite the fact that some queer teachers like Sumayah felt that their queer identities were not worth mentioning, their queerness was an important factor within representation and role-modelship for current queer students:

> I felt when I was growing up, I felt as though I had nobody to look up to or to speak to about like, non-straightness. I thought it was important to be one for the others.

As previously introduced, the idea of representation was explored in various permutations, which resulted in different meaning-making processes. The idea of representation was one that other participants explored within their experiences. Particularly for Sumayah, the importance of representation was tied within the importance of students feeling safe. Vryheid High school* students faced a lot of everyday violence in the areas they lived in, as well as within their own homes. School as a safe or unsafe space addresses the intersection of violence, race, class and sexuality. Although most students at the school faced daily violence for several reasons, sexuality proposed another added layer of potential threat to students.

According to the participants, the idea of school as a safe space was important not only for education but for well-being. Ideas of school as a safe space were described in terms of emotional safety as well as physical safety. However, it was explained that although safety was an important ideal, it was much more difficult to realise within some contexts than with others. Safety within schools was predominant, with some teachers facing more immediate repercussions because of their sexual orientation. For some teachers' school symbolised a space of safety and openness with regards to their queer identities. Sumayah saw the school as one that had become a safe zone for queer bodies, despite not being one historically. They referred to a queer student to describe the ways in which some students felt more comfortable in performing their queerness at school than at home:

> I watched him when he toward his guardian. You know, his walk just changed and he went for a very obvious gay walk to like a, super straight-presenting one. And you know, that happens, and I take a lot of pride in us being a space of safety for our kids and that they find themselves and they don't.

The above anecdote describes how the large representation of queer teachers within a school can create the self-acceptance of queer students within the space (Gray, 2013). This normalisation of queerness allows for queer students to navigate schooling spaces with more possibility. Using Ahmed (2006), queer orientation and the use of lines as a means to analyse boundaries, this movement and change of orientation can be attributed to the school space itself. Within this anecdote of a student changing their walk within the confines of what is considered straight, the student feels it is necessary to perform heterosexuality outside of the parameters of school where they do not feel as safe. In comparison, their proximity to queerness within the school space is attached to safety. Unlike Sumayah, the negotiation of Nadia's private and public identity was conflicting but the school is a space in which Nadia can be close to queerness and find comfort in it. As previously mentioned, Nadia's parents are unaware of her queer relationship which in turn means that Nadia must deny it. Hence, to an extent the school becomes one of the places where this otherwise secret relationship is now made public and allowed Nadia to express herself.

Meanwhile, other teachers were lucky in that the school context had always provided a safe space for them. For example, Val described her experience as such:

> Ya, I've always felt safe. Ya, I've worked in three different schools and management never ever cared about people's sexuality. It just didn't come up. You know, if you do your job - dot your Is - cross your Ts, then everything is fine but especially in this current job that I'm in it's very very open but I suppose it's the time as well. It's now 2019 when I started working it was 2008 so everybody's mentality has changed I think.

However, the private school which Val works in is very progressive with its policies towards gender and sexuality. Val explains that the school would be very receptive to changes such as uniform policies. She reasons that there is a generational difference with perspective and most of the staff body are young. Nadia also supported that there is a generational difference in the openness of students compared to when she was at school and describes how the

students have pioneered the feeling of safety and comfort. The school as a safe or unsafe space is focal to how queer bodies experience their freedom to express themselves. However, what a space means is relative and although some of the participants share the same schooling space, their experiences differ because of the dialogic way in which the body experiences space and the space experiences the body.

The relationship between queerness, the body and space create an intimacy. According to Ahmed (2006), orientations of bodies relate to the intimacy between bodies in spaces. The idea of the school as a safe or unsafe space can then be related to the idea of intimacy, with what is intimate moving out of the private and into the public sphere. The role of 'safety' or 'unsafety' blurs the ideas of public and private while complicating what it means to be within an intimate space. The school, in many ways, becomes an intimate space between students and teachers and within the school are multiple intimate spaces. Sam describes the way in which she considers her class as a "safe space" and how this intimacy created is also one that relies on the notion of confidentiality. She stated,

> What you guys share here should be safe here. And not be ridiculed by someone on your way home or have someone else say it. So, I take it seriously – some of the – most of the kids I would say take it seriously. So, they freely ask me things – like "Miss, what if you aren't sure – what if you like boys and girls. Is it wrong and all – am I gonna go to hell?" So the weird things that they ask me and I was like "Wow".

Sam's idea of a "safe space" is then strongly related to a necessary confidentiality which she feels creates an environment in which students can talk to her about sexuality openly. Sam described the school as a safe space not only for teachers but for students alike. She thinks this is attributed to the shift from a previously held religious ethic of the school to a more current secular ethic. This particular school's historical context is one that had moved from a largely Christian rhetoric to a more secular one. However, this can be attributed to a largely missionary and militaristic context within South African schooling historically (Conway, 2008; Delius & Glaser, 2002). The importance of mutual confidentiality between teachers and students within defining the classroom as a safe space is one that is supported by Nadia:

> They know they can speak to me about anything, that stays confidential to me because that is important because whenever I will trust in them or confide in them with - I expect them to also keep it as well. So, my classroom is safe haven.

The school as a safe space creates freedoms and limits within the ways that teachers teach students. While teachers like Michelle and Sumayah feel that the school is safe enough to create critical pedagogies and confront authority, others, like Leon found that his feeling of unsafety within his school creates certain limits of pedagogical practice. Previously, the rejection of the closet has been discussed in terms of rejecting the parameters of heterosexuality and the expected performance of homosexuality. However, with regards to Leon and his experiences of safety, the rejection of the closet can also be for purposes of safety. For instance, Leon later reiterated that being gay added another layer of danger which already existed because of the violent nature of the school. He stated:

> You already targeted as a teacher. You know by virtue of being a teacher you're hated by these kids you know? They hate you. So now if you're admitting to being gay what would be, what would be - why that - what would be the point of that reaction? What would the parents do, it's just another added complication and you just don't have the strength for that. It really is about stamina.

Other studies of experiences of teachers have focused on space and place, particularly how teachers in marginalised groups navigate different spaces: from the rural to the urban as well as precarious spaces of poverty and violence (Halsey, 2006; Page, 2006; Perumal, 2014). According to Perumal (2014), teachers can often feel precariousness within a space when their identities are ones that can create potential harm for themselves (Perumal, 2014). These findings support the experiences of Leon who felt the most uncertainty at his workplace because of the potential volatility he may have faced. Leon describes the spaces that the students come from as violent. He describes how the violence beyond the school space affects the violence within the school space. The violent interaction moves through the macro-systems to the micro-systems: from the education system, the community, the school, the parents, the students and the staff.

However, some schools like Vryheid High School manage to thwart this permeation of violence which Leon's school could not. Participants such as Sumayah, Nadia, and Sam found that the violence from the students' communities were able to be kept at a distance and the school space was made to be a safe space. Therefore, despite the similarities in terms of the students' experiences with poverty and violence from these two schooling contexts, the ways in which precarious space interacts with the pedagogical practice of the teachers cannot be generalised. These two schools share some precariousness but their contexts also differ in ways that are subtle and complex. According to Christie (2013), the spatiality of South African schools in terms of the daily material and symbolic relations which are entangled with history of the space. Although Perumal (2013) discusses precarity, it is not discussed in terms of how under-resourced schools are affected by historical influences.

The idea of pedagogy of place within under-resourced schools brings about a need for further exploration into how we group schools together as similar and different. Therefore in all schooling contexts, precarious or not, the negotiation of space for queer teachers (in)visibility is strongly related to feelings and experiences of safety. Further, in this research it has been vital in understanding how queer teachers make their sexualities visible or invisible. Furthermore, it highlights the need for further insight into how material and symbolic violence shapes experiences of queer bodies and how in turn those queer bodies shape potentially violent spaces. The way in which this shaping occurs can be surprising: queer teachers who may feel physically unsafe in a space may create a sense of safety for students just by existing within the schooling space.

This section has discussed the ways in which the visibility of queer teachers is influenced by multiple and complex negotiations of identity, representation and spatial relations. These negotiations are experienced through multiple modes of discipline which are regulated through ideas of professional space and the (de)limitations of relationships within them. It must be noted that only two of the schools were discussed in terms of this feeling of volatility and precariousness. Therefore, South African schools must not be homogenised and reified by violence. However, it is important especially to note the multitude of realities within the South African Schooling space in which queer teachers are trying to survive. Historically and currently queer bodies in South African Secondary schools are still struggling to maintain safety and comfort within their workplaces (Bhana, 2014). The precarious pedagogy of place within the South African Secondary Schooling in relation to feelings of marginalisation by

queer teachers needs further research in order to understand how strategies of (in)visibility are used within these spaces (Bhana, 2014; Griffin, 1991; Perumal, 2014).

5.3 Masculinities, Discipline and Affect

Queer teachers within South African schooling spaces had to negotiate their queer identities through the norms of hegemonic masculinities. Within the participants' experiences, performative masculinity permeates the everyday encounters of teachers and students, which shapes how they are made to behave. The performance of masculinity within South African secondary schooling follows hegemonic masculine ideals which are largely homophobic, heterosexual, violent towards women and hierarchical (Connell, 1995; Donaldson, 1993). Historically, with the Christian National Party in power and enforced Bantu education, there were particular manifestations of masculinities. Corporal punishment was the norm and the punishment of sexual expression was severe even within the limits of heterosexuality (Niehaus, 2000; Morrell, 1998). Although disciplinary modes have changed over time, various forms of discipline still permeate schools today. According to Foucault (2007), the use of the concept of panopticism is one in which varying invisibilised modes of surveillance within an institution create modes of control on everyday life (Foucault, 2007).

This chapter will further explore the ways in which hegemonic masculinities are used as a mode of control of sexuality within South African schooling spaces. This mode of control is largely described in terms of the everyday routines of South African secondary schooling life, which is described as militaristic, masculine and heterosexual (Conway, 2008). The role of discipline was described by all teachers with varying degrees of acceptance and rejection. Further, the role of discipline related to ideas of masculinities and either displaying or withholding emotion as part of disciplining measures. This chapter will discuss how the schooling spaces are described within notions of gendered space and emotions. Further, what is explored is how discipline enforces ideas of heteronormative masculinities within these schooling contexts though the surveillance of "soft" emotions. This chapter also focuses on how the affective economies (Ahmed, 2004) within schooling spaces maintain and are shaped by the ideals of hegemonic masculinities and femininities in which "soft" emotions are rejected or discouraged. It must be noted that the term "masculinities" rather than one masculinity will be used within this section based on Connell's (1995) categories of

hegemonic masculinities and South African research on masculinity which describes how there are multiple masculinities within the South African context (Bozzoli, 1983; Morrell; 1998).

5.3.1 Masculinities and Homophobia in South African Secondary Schooling

According to Bhana (2014), research shows that homophobia within schooling contexts has been strongly tied to heterosexual masculinity (Bhana, 2014). South African schools are sites in which hyper-aggressive forms of homophobia are supported with notions of gender inequality and gendered performance (Bhana, 2014). In the participants' experiences this gendered performance included that of the performance of discipline within schools. Within similar contexts, Sumayah and Leon spoke about discipline as both punitive and beneficial. Discipline was spoken about with reverence and with dislike. The role of discipline within a schooling space that is precarious is then one that needs to be explored. For instance, Sumayah describes her role as the co-head of discipline with a sense of pride. They described their role that deals with the most severe misdemeanours which results in them relating with their students in a particular way:

> Leading discipline means I'm a little bit of a frightening character. So, they very seldom are nice. They're respectful but they're not nice so...

However, they describe the school's approach as respect-orientated rather than fear-based. They explained that the school balances the line of discipline and freedom:

> Look it's conservative for the most part but it is not as oppressive as most no… Liberal people would see. I don't consider myself a liberal. I'm probably a radical. Undoubtedly actually. Um, so for me it's still too conservative, you know we still have girls who wear skirts and we have boys who wear pants.
>
> …But, we're not school where we are like, girls you can't do that or boys you can't do that. We work within a system that is difficult and broken obviously but no, I like to think we certainly work bloody hard to be, a space for our children to be comfortable.

The negotiation of power and discipline is a complex one for teachers who are trying to use the system in order to create change. In contrast to Sumayah's schooling context, Michelle's school is one which has many resources where children come from stable upper-middle class backgrounds. Yet the issue of girls wearing pants has still not been approved by the authorities of the school. The uniform in this instance becomes the site of enforced gender norms as well as a way to subvert the norms. Students in this school used the ideals of hegemonic masculinities by revolting against the uniform rules. According to Niehaus (2000) within the history of South African secondary schooling, the uniform was used as a means to repress deviant sexual behaviours and define norms of hegemonic masculinities as well as femininities (Niehuas, 2000).

Although, currently school uniforms are not so directly related to punishment of sexual expression, the same rules remain in even the most progressive spaces. It is clear then, that the historical remains within schools even now and in the most intimate way. Within the above anecdote, punishment and repression relates to the clothes which are most intimately tied to the body and what that means for students within differing contexts. Modes of discipline are made more explicit within the more precarious public schools while made more implicit in Michelle's private school. This is not to say that disciplinary tactics should be generalised to all public and private schools. There is also a distinct difference between co-ed schools versus the all-girls school that Michelle teaches at. However, Michelle discussed gendered expectation which can be related to that of patriarchal ideas. Girls are expected to follow traditional performances of femininity. She said,

> Because the structure of the place makes it less socially acceptable. This sort of… you know by the structures I mean - management, the religious ethos, the parents. The kind of expectations that these girls will grow up to be either high-powered empowered woman-CEO - or marry the [school removed] boy and have babies and, you know, go to yoga for the rest of their life.

The above anecdote describes how masculinities permeate all schooling contexts. This is apparent even in the context of an all-girls school. Girls in this all-girls school are expected to perform a femininity which is directly related to patriarchal ideals of femininity. This supports the notion that hegemonic femininities rely and relate to what is considered

hegemonic masculinities (and vice versa). Hegemonic gender norms are inherently unstable by the nature in which they are often failed, however, the expectations still remain and travel through time. Although the modes of discipline within the all-girls school are different to that of the context of Sumayah and Leon's respective schools, heterosexual masculinity still permeates this space. Discipline in this form is also codified and symbolic (Foucault, 2007). Girls are expected to perform heterosexual masculinities even when there are no actual men around. In contrast, Leon's school was described as hyper-masculine and violent. According to Leon the mode of severe discipline within his school did not suit his nature and he felt forced to adhere to the space's rules of discipline. He described the everyday discipline tactics as masculine and militaristic. He further reiterated that it is not only the male teachers who felt this pressure to perform but the female teachers too. This performance of masculinities was seen as the most effective way to manage classroom discipline. He described the everyday routines of his school as one that invisibilised homosexuality:

> You know before you go into an assembly everybody lines up and you have to know look at their bags and the blazers and their ties and everything. It's so stupid but no there wasn't, there was no discourse really, there was no talk around gay stuff really. I think…there's the sense that you're supposed to be very hyper masculine presenting maybe in that context as a teacher because you wanna come across or you're told to come across is really strong and assertive. That's your classroom management. So I think I was, you know you get put into that role, get pushed into that role.

According to Morrell (1998), hegemonic masculinities are always fluid and in flux. Hegemonic masculinities also operate largely (but not only) through institutions such as state, church and schools. The school as a site of hegemonic masculinities is therefore, historical and hugely influential in the socialisation of students through everyday practices (Morell, 1998). According to Christie (2013) social space within South African schools encompass everyday routines and the embodied experiences of students and teachers. It was clear through many teachers' descriptions that South African schools currently still perform militarised and seemingly arbitrary tasks in the name of discipline, despite both teachers' and students' resistance. The gaze within schools is therefore particularly male and heterosexual (Foucault, 2007). According to queer teachers, schools are regulated through heterosexuality

within the everyday. As described by Leon, the regulation can be seen in the uniforms, the traditions, the daily routines and expected performativity. According to Foucault (1988), heteronormative masculinity within this context would be regulatory as "technologies of power" which dominate subjectivities which do not conform to this power, while "technologies of self" refer to the modes of self-regulation of individuals (Foucault, 1988). According to Leon's descriptions, both regulations through power and regulations through the self are operating at once in order for Leon to safely navigate the schooling context. These modes of regulation are further enacted through various strategies. As previously mentioned, Leon used the strategy of "covering" in order to protect himself within his schooling context (Griffin, 1991). According to Griffin (1991), covering requires that the teacher conceal by means of omission of personal information. Within this hyper-masculine and heteronormative context, Leon performed his sexuality as more aligned with that of a straight, White male which kept him from revealing his identity (Griffin, 1991).

The idea of schools as a masculine, heteronormative space is historically bound to the apartheid era. Historically, the state took a militaristic stance on enforcing gender norms through rituals of nationalism like conscription (Conway, 2008). This history is particularly pertinent within Leon's description of the modes of discipline still present in current schools. However, it must be noted that research has shown that although this historically dominant form of hegemonic masculinity within South Africa is White, Christian, colonial and heterosexual, the ways in which masculinity has changed and formed within that mode of surveillance is multiple and varying (Conway, 2008; Morrell, 1998), while historically, in Bantustan schools the National Party missionary ethic influenced schooling to be sexually repressive and punishing (Niehaus, 2000).

The ways in which masculinity, race and queerness intersect within South African secondary schools is an aspect which most participants did not talk about. However, one participant described the intersection in terms of the history of Vryheid Highschool. Sumayah described the history of their school as one that was all-male, all-white and a military school during the Apartheid-era which has become the co-educational, mostly Black and Coloured populated school that it is currently. Sumayah did not further describe what the ramifications of this history might be within the space. However, there is space for South African researchers to ask how "ghostly hauntings" of the past manifest in schooling spaces, which hold such different memories and experiences of the past and present (Radway, 2008). This is further

supported by Christie (2013) who explores South African schooling in terms of space and describes schools as material and symbolic of their history which produce colonial variants (Christie, 2013). History cannot be separated from the present as there are remnants from those pasts within the everyday practices of these schools. Massey (2013) further reiterates that space is gendered through practice and representation. Leon's and Sumayah's descriptions reinforce that the everyday practices of their schools follow a mode that is heterosexual, masculine and militaristic.

In many ways research has shown that Afrikaner masculinities and Imperial masculinities differed within their ideas of domination. However both dominant hegemonic masculinities within South Africa focused on the oppression of women, people of colour and those who were outside the norms of heterosexuality. Both kinds of dominant masculinities also adhered to the ideas of church and state (Connell, 1995; Morrell, 1998). These historical hegemonic masculinities are still seen to be pervasive now within South African Secondary schooling and the existence of queer teachers within the space highlights the continuity of oppressive forces and in retaliation the subversion from students and queer teachers to these oppressive forces. Hegemonic masculinities within schooling spaces have been influential in shaping the mobility of queer teachers within these spaces but have also allowed queer teachers to push back and reject the performances of hegemonic masculinities.

5.3.2 Disciplining "soft" emotions

According to Niehaus (2000), the main mode of disciplining tactics within secondary schools was historically one that was overtly punishing and violent. The descriptions of the ways in which teachers engaged with students was one that was domineering, oppressive and tyrannical. Corporal punishment was the norm and the missionary background of teachers allowed for a Christeo-normative ethic in which students needed to be controlled in order for them to be redeemed (Niehaus, 2000). This is supported by Zhao (2011) who speaks about the view of adults on the agency of children (especially around taboo topics) as one that is mainly paternalistic (Zhao. 2011). Although disciplinary tactics have changed within the South African schooling space and corporal punishment is no longer allowed, what seems to remain within the experiences of queer teachers is that the masculine and militaristic routines and behaviours within South African schools is enforced by means of a negation of "soft" or

“feminine” emotions. This sub-section will discuss this particularity of how hegemonic masculinity plays out within school spaces and how queer teachers navigate the use of emotions within their pedagogical practice.

As previously discussed, the experiences of queer teachers were in relation to hegemonic masculinities which were enforced on the daily routines of school life. Queer teachers remarked on gendered aspects of their schooling spaces which conveyed that there is a particular relationship with space, gender and the threat of violence. Teachers and students alike perform a certain kind of masculinity in order to ensure safety and control over students. This performance can either result in a feeling of ambivalence or being part of a hierarchical order which is rewarded within schools. For example, Sumayah in contrast to Leon does not describe the pressure to perform masculinity explicitly but describes it as part of her identity as a queer person. Interestingly, their identification with masculine ideals results in a rejection of “soft” displays of emotion. Despite their ideas of themselves as radical in politics, interestingly when discussing the topic of emotions, Sumayah rejected this as feminine practice:

> I mean I don't cry over them but I recognise my role and my worth is for children who don't come from very much. Of course I do. But I don't know if I'd call it emotional? Probably call it like intellectual and like, kind support? Not emotional. That's a girly term isn't it? Emotional. So, no I certainly do regard the importance of what staff play to children. That's very important, ya of course.

Throughout the interview, there are these instances in which they refer to themselves as outwardly queer. Their description of their queerness is directly related to their ideas of what is considered feminine and their rejection thereof. In this case, the idea of emotions is directly related to the term “girly” which is said as a term that is negative or unwanted within the schooling space. Nadia also describes the ways in which emotions should be left out of teaching for fear that students see you as “soft” which shows an underlying discourse around femininity as not conducive to codes of discipline. Therefore, the masculine aspects of the schooling space, especially within discipline, are accepted by some teachers but rejected by others. Some teachers felt that there was no role of emotions within the relationship between

student and teacher. When bringing up the role of emotions, Sumayah immediately had a visceral response and rejected the question, they said,

> What the hell is that? What is that? No, seriously, what are emotions? I don't know what that is. What is that?

The rejection of the word "emotional" in Sumayah's case is a rejection of aspects of femininity or what they termed "girly". However, despite the rejection, the care with which Sumayah expressed their feelings for their students was clearly one of emotion and affect. While others felt that there definitely was an importance of emotions but that there were limits in how far a teacher should expose themselves, especially in volatile situations.

> You're also... but then it comes back to what is your role and like do you have to take all of your insides and splatter it onto the middle of the classroom to be doing your job and I don't you should be doing that, you know?

Leon further described how the principal of the school did not support the idea of 'soft' care for students and the emotional response that Leon believed in was not supported by the general ethos of the school which was highly disciplinarian and aggressive:

> Be strict. Be harsh. Be nasty. I suppose otherwise like sharks the kids kind of sniff out. You know, the kindness, the softness, the understanding whatever. And I think early on I just knew that that's not the kind of person I want to be moulded into. That's b*******. I don't want to be that person. That's not the role I want to play in their lives you know? But it gets to you so the reason I'm talking about this is that even though the disciplining system was harsh and there was all the demerits and all that. It really is an extension of the diseased pasts and present of all the kids and what they get at home. So what I really learned in that time is how teachers are being blamed so much you know?

The role of emotions was further discussed in relation to pedagogical practice. Some teachers actively see emotions as a hindrance within pedagogical practice, while others see it as a means for more active learning. Nadia explains that emotions hinder learning and that they

can cause teachers to behave irrationally towards their students. The realm of the emotional is then placed within the irrational and seen as a sign of weak leadership. She said:

> I think as a teacher, you need to be very neutral. The whole point of teaching is not to show emotion. Because you know when you show emotion, you are showing the learners that...Well according to some people when you show emotion. You show the kids that you are a weak leader and some children actually take advantage of that when they see that you are a soft person…It's a good thing to know when to use your emotions and when to not use your emotions.

However, Sam expressed the opposite and felt that emotions were important as a pedagogical tool and an acknowledgment of the hardship her students face daily:

> In teaching yes, look it's an emotional job or shall I say a career choice because I mean if you are going to be cold-hearted towards children that probably experience that coldness on a daily basis - it's not a good space for them to be in. So, if you are happy, sarcastic, weird and wacky with them. They prefer learning in that space. So, the more at ease you make the space. The better for them it is to learn and understand - the freer they are to ask questions.

Teachers had differing relationships to the performance of masculinities. The experiences of Leon and Sumayah are directly contrasted because of gender dynamics. While Sumayah uses heteronormative masculinity to self-regulate, it is also part of her expression of their own queerness. Power for them is associated with masculine performance within the schooling context as it is for Leon. However Leon feels more oppressed by this heterosexual masculinity and performs to it only to protect himself. Leon rejected this performance of oppressive masculinity in theory while in practice he adheres to and understands why this is so within unsafe spaces.

Paradoxically, the performance of masculinity creates simultaneous spaces of safety and unsafety depending on the subjectivities and contexts. Both schooling spaces prescribe within the performance of masculinities but within Sumayah's context it is done so less oppressively than within Leon's context. According to Foucault (2007) the idea of the schooling institution

as a panopticon is determined by what power makes visible or invisible within a space (Foucault, 2007). Within the schooling contexts heterosexual masculinity can either invisibilise or visibilise queer teachers. Power relations are complicated by individual teachers' negotiations of their subjectivities within it. The different permutations of power support Foucault's (2007) theory that power is not merely an oppressive force enforced on subjectivities but is negotiated through and with different subjectivities. In the experiences of queer teachers, the ways in which hegemonic masculinities surveil teachers and students is also through affect and emotions. According to Steinberg, "Power dictates the structures of schools, teachers, students, and families. Power seeks to sustain and reproduce itself. Power insists on discipline to maintain the status quo." (Steinberg, 2010, p. 9).

It is clear that although queer teachers subvert the norms of many of the routines and structures within their schooling context, the affective economy (Ahmed, 2004) of hardened masculine discipline and the rejection of emotions is still adhered to, preferred and sometimes rewarded by the school system. According to Ahmed (2004), emotions are not only psychic but social, not only individualistic but collective. The ways in which emotions or in this case, lack of emotions, is one that has circulated through and within this schooling space (Ahmed, 2004). This withholding of feminine or soft emotions is done for various reasons but is clearly an emotional response that many queer teachers had within schools, whether out of the need for survival (as is the case for Leon) or generally to maintain an illusion of control in the powerplay between students and teachers. Within this sub-section it is clear that the "soft" emotions are not seen as professional or effective. This is generally the common-sense knowledge that is passed on by older teachers and is normalised through the intangible affective manifestation of masculinities within a South African school; teachers feel they must embody a certain masculine form of authority. Some of the queer teachers such as Leon are critical about their complicity in maintaining the status quo of discipline through the means of hegemonic masculinities, while most of participants were not. This way of embodiment was seen as normal and professional.

This sub-section has discussed the ways in which the schooling space is gendered by the expected performances of masculinities through the rejection of emotions and how queer teachers have negotiated through this aspect of regulation. Although many queer teachers find this heterosexual masculine schooling space difficult to navigate, many still choose to do so to ensure control and safety. Further, the gendered space of South African schooling as

reminiscent of the Apartheid-era ideals has many transfigurations. Patriarchal notions of discipline, masculinity and the role of emotions permeates within the space of South African schools within these particular contexts. According to research (Niehaus, 2008; Morrell, 1998) the masculine nature of South African schools has been firmly entrenched throughout history. However, the permutations within the present especially through the experiences of queer teachers is complicated. Queer teachers have subverted the norms by just existing in the space but have also co-opted into disciplinary behaviours that are still reminiscent of the past.

However, it must be emphasised that this is not to say that queer teachers are upholding the status quo themselves but to note that this system of surveillance has remained strong, intact and therefore hard to fight as individuals. Further, schooling institutions as panopticons create a system of surveillance which is codified through practice and representation (Foucault, 2007). The mode within which schools are surveilled is codified in gender and, for the most part, this surveillance still idealises heterosexual and patriarchal ideologies. Lastly, the role of emotions and the affective economies (Ahmed, 2004) maintained within these dominant ideologies within schools needs further exploration.

5.5 The Duty of Disruption by Queer Teachers

Global literature discusses how queer teachers are often role models to their queer students and how one should see their identities as a politically disruptive force (Grace 2017; Gray, 2013). Further, especially within studies in the North, queer teachers have been researched in terms of the relationship between queer teachers and advocacy. Queer teachers often disrupt the norms of heteronormative schooling spaces and have been discussed as having gone above and beyond to change schooling institutions (Grace, 2017; Grace & Benson, 2000). According to Grace and Benson, the intersection of queerness and education can create spaces for "pedagogy of possibilities" (Grace & Benson, 2000, p. 90).

However, in contrast, within local research it is found that queer teachers often feel it necessary to hide or diminish their queer identities in order to fit in with the norms of the schooling space they work in. This is as a result of fears of feeling ostracised, unsafe and othered. Research has shown that the majority of teachers in South Africa are homophobic

and describe it as immoral and "un-African" (Bhana, 2014; DePalma and Francis 2014; Msibi, 2012). Furthermore, according to Brown and Diale (2017), queer teachers felt that their queer identities were being conflated with professionality. Within this clearly precarious context, it is therefore pertinent to ask the importance and urgency for South African queer teachers to resist in volatile circumstances where they possibly face worse consequences both personally and professionally.

The following section will explore the ways in which South African queer teachers have resisted despite their circumstances in both intentional and unintentional ways. The ways of disruption can therefore be analysed in terms of the varying ways that these queer teachers critically relate to the norms within their specific contexts.

5.5.1 Acts of resistance

According to Zembylas (2019), when teachers are faced with repressive conditions within the schools that they work in, there are often instances of micro-political acts of resistance. There were clear instances in which teachers subverted the norms or questioned the status quo, these micro-political acts of resistance revealed themselves to be subtle and personal to each participant. Zembylas (2019) discusses that the very nature of everyday acts of resistance is that they are often invisible (Zembylas, 2019). Further, these invisible acts of resistance support Freire's (1972) notion that teachers who become political actors within their environment become critically conscious. I argue that queer teachers' navigations within secondary schools reveal varying descriptions of resistance which are based on the idea of everyday and mundane acts which stand against the status quo.

Some teachers felt that they were active participants in resisting the norms within schools. Two participants, Sumayah and Michelle, talked about how they felt that disruption was a political duty. Sumayah, whole-heartedly felt that they pioneered the eventual acceptance of queer presences at school. They use this anecdote to demonstrate how things had changed gradually over the seven years that she had worked there:

> You know, where we, was it a Valentine's...maybe a Valentine's dance. And I think part of it was boys can't bring boys as partners. So, of course I ripped it down, went to go argue a bit, wasn't listened to then but of course the more I spoke, the more sensitised people became to you can't control the way you are. And ya, slowly it

> changed but initially it was very much in your f**** face you know? It was like so obvious. And now it's now not so.

It was clear that for Sumayah, her identity was a disruptive force and intentionally so. They were the first queer teacher that arrived at that school and thereafter, four more queer members of staff had been hired. Meanwhile, the openly queer student presence was growing with many of them being part of the student government. The fact that the student body was becoming more outwardly queer with the representation of a growing queer faculty supports previous research which shows that queer teachers' visibility can subvert heteronormativity within schools (Grace, 2017). However, the role of authority and power can complicate this subversion of heteronormativity. Sumayah also made it clear that it was a combination of them being queer and growing steadily in a position of power made it easier to fight for certain causes. The value of authority and discipline within the schools is apparent. With them being the co-lead in Discipline, it was clear that power played a large role in the influence that they had within the school.

The subversion of power relations does not always dismantle power by abolishing it but is done so through the mechanism and manipulation of power itself. This notion can be supported by Foucault (2007), although some individuals can disrupt the system which they are fighting, often it is done so within the parameters that that system allows. This is performed in the everyday regulation of the self in relationship with power (Foucault, 2007). By their own account, Sumayah, could change the minds of the authorities within the school system only when they became an authoritative figure themselves and when they sufficiently proved their worth. However, as global research has shown, Sumayah exampled one of the heroic figures of queer teachers which actively fought homophobia within their schooling context which highlights that this can be one of the roles of queer teachers (Grace, 2017).

This relationship between authority and possibilities of freedom is made more explicit by the experience of other participants. This is a contentious relationship between power and the possibilities of pedagogy (Grace & Benson, 2000). Michelle described herself as a disruptive figure in the culture of the school that upholds traditional values. Although, she noted in the interview that the school has a transformation administrative team, long-standing traditions hold power over any of the issues that arise. For example, she was told that girls at this school are still not allowed to wear pants even though students have pushed for this change in

uniform. However, according to Michelle these issues face the challenge of facing the "Old Girls" (old students who are now active alumni and still hold influence within the school) which is where they find the most resistance to change. According to Steyn (2015), those who are within privileged groups often uphold the status quo because of their own investments within the norms (Steyn, 2015). However, this discrimination is veiled within the realm of tradition and culture. Using the terms of the gatekeeper within Foucault's (2007) panopticon, the "Old Girls" within the school are the guards over this notion of tradition and culture which resists change (Foucault, 2007). There is a clear conflict described by Michelle between the values of the school and her values. She describes this in terms of the contradicting ideas of freedom. In the following statement, the concept of Freedom is discussed as a foundational value within the school. Michelle explained:

> …The definition that the Headmistress holds of freedom, and mine, are very different. [*Laughter*}. And probably she would feel that mine impinges on hers, perhaps. You know, so it's very hard to - I don't know - find a concrete way in which values can really exist in a school.

Therefore, the element of discipline within this context is instilled through a moral code such as values of "Freedom". However, the dominant ideas of "Freedom" always adhere to the institution rather than the needs of the teachers and the students. The idea of freedom is dependent on the dominant group to decide what freedom means and who it benefits. According to Freire (2000), dominant classes prefer that education remain neutral in order to immobilise action, the same class can also claim ideas of progressive politics when it is suited to their agenda (Freire, 2000). For example, in relation to the ways in which Michelle's school operates, the implementation of a Transformation Office allows people to think that there is a level of progressive politics which allows teachers and students to dissent. However, the ways which the office operates shows that it is still following the authoritarian ideologies of the school's traditions. This is an example of what Freire (2000) describes as the constant tension between authority and freedom. Although Freire (2000) does not call for a limitless freedom, he does emphasise the importance of ethical limits which are lead by the notion of freedom itself.: "The more consciously freedom assumes its necessary limits, the more authority it has, ethically speaking, to continue to struggle in its own name" (Freire, 2000, p. 76)

The necessity for teachers to disrupt and subvert norms was heightened by the intensity with which institutions exerted control. Michelle discussed the contradictory ways in which she has negotiated her queer identity as a disruptive tool. She expressed that in her previous school she was less overt about it because the school was a freer and more open space. Her current school with its traditional norms around gender and sexuality has created a greater need for her to use her identity as a means for resistance. She described it in terms of moral duty which supports Freire's (2000) idea that ethics cannot be separated from education (Freire, 2000):

> There are expectations of them being nice ladies that require - well, for me personally, require - as a moral duty, a lot of pushing.

The female students within the school also resist the parameters of performance, especially pertaining to the expectations around femininity. Their mode of resistance is to question rules and authority on behaviours required of them. These instances of resistance are supported by Freire (1972), who argues that modes of oppression often result in modes of resistance (Freire, 1972). Michelle, explains:

> They do, yes. They very much push against that. You know, there are traditions at this school - like there's a curtsy that they're asking questions about. And - like I said - those questions, those conversations get shut down. About: "Why do we curtsy?" and, "Shouldn't we receive an award?" and, "Why do we call you Madam?" *Ja,* they've not been able to break those up yet. But they're really amazing at pushing.

Instances of resistance of both teachers and students can be theorised by what Freire (2000) terms critical curiosity which is described in terms of alternate ways of thinking which fight oppressive structures (Freire, 2000). Students have been discussed as more progressive in their navigation of sexuality than teachers. Michelle continues to describe the ways in which the students' views on gender and sexuality surpass many of the conservative teachers' capabilities of handling these issues. The students in this case (similarly to that of Sumayah's students) propel the change of gender and sexuality discourse within their schools. It is clear from Michelle's response to her students' resistance that there is a transference of knowledge between teacher and student as well as admiration. Freire (1972) emphasises that an important part of critical pedagogy is the relationality between teacher and student which is foundational to resistance.

Teachers had varying experiences of their own pedagogical subversion. While some teachers subverted the norms through their curriculum and pedagogy, others did not want to risk being exposed. As mentioned previously, participants such as Sumayah and Michelle both feel confident to resist against norms within their respective schools, while others were not so sure if they made significant change within their environments. However, in relation to the concept of Freire's (2000) concept of insignificant significant gestures in which unintentional but meaningful interactions, however small can have an impact on student and teacher. This is further supported by Zembylas (2019) who discusses the idea of how teachers in difficult teaching environments often find ways to defy the norms through micro-political acts. Despite not feeling like they were disruptive, some queer teachers still performed unintentional defiant acts which made a difference.

Leon described a subtle moment of significance through an anecdote on a lesson which discussed World War II and the oppression of queer people during the Holocaust. This started a discussion on homosexuality. Leon discussed how although he did not reveal his own sexuality, he used the opportunity to normalise the idea of homosexuality. One of the students paid close attention to this conversation and later when Leon was leaving the school inquired if he was gay. Despite not revealing himself, Leon described this moment as significant in that he felt that he was a representation to this student. Freire (2000) addresses the idea of the insignificant significant gestures that teachers make which reveal to us that in the most mundane exchanges there can be great potential for transformation for both teacher and student (Freire, 2000). These moments that sometimes go unnoticed by the teacher are profound moments for the students who receive these gestures. These gestures are especially important in the context of South African schooling as research shows that queer students often feel alone and ostracised (Bhana, 2014).

According to Zembylas (2019), the small acts of defiance are micro-political. Teachers and students who experience limited freedoms in schooling spaces enact their defiance through these means (Zembylas, 2019). Therefore, the ways which disruption occurs can be analysed in ways which are both intentional and unintentional (Freire, 2000). In the case of Sumayah and Michelle, their disruption was intentional and directed with their identities being open, while with Leon the effects were unintentional and yet still impactful. However, Leon despite having impact in some instances did not feel that it was the role of teachers to do so. This brings about the important question of whether it is a duty for queer teachers to disrupt norms

within a system that is so burdensome. Leon surmised on the idea of resistance within schools:

> Ya, I just think you know teachers are so overburdened and ultimately there's not really that much wrong with showing up, meeting the minimum standards, make sure the kids pass and go home at the mark. That's your job ultimately, those are the most important things, other things are kind of add-ons. Of course, there's wonderful value in it and it would be great if we could all do those things as teachers, but those things are cooked up in these spaces, these intellectual spaces right?

Participants such as Sam and Nadia were reluctant to describe their pedagogical practice as intentionally disruptive. However, interestingly, when describing their experiences and practices it was clear that both teachers still pushed against certain societal norms such as religious belief. Sam described her own subversion within her pedagogical practice which especially questions her largely Christian students. Homophobia is rife within the South African schooling system and this hinders progressive education especially within LO classrooms (Bhana, 2014). South African research emphasises that religion, especially Christianity, has strong influences in how teachers teach sexuality especially in LO classrooms. Teachers often feel pressured to perform to the conservatism of parents at home (Bhana, 2014; Mayeza & Vincent, 2019). Sam's experiences in the LO classroom describes how religious and conservative views affect pedagogy. The dominant religious view of students influenced the way in which gender and sexuality were discussed within the classroom. Sam describe how she pushes back against this Christian-rhetoric:

> So, some of them get that and some of them are just stuck on "No, the bible says" and it's a bit sad for me to realise that, they're not very open-minded about the entire idea. And it's mostly, the bible says, god says and then I literally end up blurting out, "When did you have the conversation with God?" Did he tell you? Are you assuming? And the kids are like "Miss." and I was like "Apologies." So, I realise I step on toes when I do things like that.

While Sam described how her form of resistance is to teach students that societal expectations, especially expectations from parents do not necessarily need to be adhered to. She also emphasises how pursuits should also aspire to be collective rather than individual. She said:

> These days we have parents that are telling children, "You need to study this. You need to end up with this career." Now that is not what we sell the kids at school, what we sell the kids at school is that - it doesn't matter what your parents think, you are getting educated so that you can change your future in whatever career path you like. But it has to be something that gives back to the community, you know, you can't just take every time and not give back.

Val is the only participant who did not find that she had to resist in her schooling space as it was one in which there were progressive ideas about gender and sexuality. She was adamant that, "Nobody really gives a shit about gender-norms. NO one really cares. There's a lot of, how to I say, gay teachers." Despite this assertion she later says, “They actually don't give a shit. Sometimes they say that this one is really gonna m**r out the closet one day. You know we are kind of sensitive to it but there's never been any bigoted ideas or behaviour.” The comments of Val reveal a contradictory idea of progressive politics. She states that people do not care about sexuality and yet teachers make comments about students who they suspect deviate from heterosexuality. The mention of the closet also supports Sedgewick’s (1990) idea that the closet is seen as a focal point of a queer person’s narrative. Without realising it teachers within this school still express ostracising behaviour even if it is well-intentioned. This supports Foucault’s (2007) notion that power is invisibilised through everyday acts and normative views which are upheld through repetition (Foucault, 2007). Within this anecdote we see that it is normalised to interpolate a queer body into certain performative expectations and it is normalised to define queer people before they are allowed to define themselves. Val’s lack of critical engagement with the discourse within her school can be attributed by the fact that the school performs inclusivity through policy. This policy shrouds everyday micro-aggressions into obscurity. This could be attributed to her lack of political action within this space.

According to Freire (2000), “Sometimes a simple, almost insignificant gesture on the part of a teacher can have a profound formative effect on the life of a student” (Freire, 2000, p. 26). Foucault (2007) discusses how the subversion of power lies in the everyday resistances against normalised performance made mundane by the daily repetition of these performances (Foucault, 2007). Power is therefore subverted in the subtle gestures, changes and transformations of old routines and traditions (Foucault, 2007). Similarly, Zembylas (2019) everyday acts of resistance are imperative within critical pedagogy and whether intentional or unintentional, all these teachers could be seen as enacting everyday acts of resistance – whether it be with care or with active political conscientisation through pedagogical practice (Zembylas, 2019). Whether teachers were actively aware or not, teachers rebelled within their various restrictive environments. However, although it could be said that queer teachers who participated within this study had resisted despite difficult circumstances and performed the duty of disruption, it does not mean that disruption is inherently a duty for queer teachers. Lastly, it must be noted that all participants resisted in ways which were very personal to them whether be Leon’s feelings towards toxic-masculinity or Sam’s strong atheist views which lead her to question her students’ beliefs. This section highlights how micro-political resistance is tied to the personal and in turn the personal is tied to the pedagogical.

5.5.2 The role of the political within pedagogical practice

According to Crenshaw (1989), the personal is political while Ahmed (2004) describes the personal as structural and emphasises how structure can oppress the personal. Freire (2000) further theorises the personal, the political and the pedagogical and describes teaching and learning as a political act (Freire, 2000). In exploring notions of the personal and political within the teachers’ narratives, it was clear that while some felt that the relationships between their identities and pedagogy were political and importantly so, some detached from the idea of the political. This sub-section will explore how queer teachers feel about their own identities and how some participants feel it is political while others felt it was merely a sexual preference.

The way in which participants’’ identities were politicised was often done so with the direct use of “queer” as a description of themselves while teachers who felt their identity was not political did not actively use the word “queer” to describe themselves. The word “queer” had been discussed by participants as political in nature. Both Nadia and Sam, interestingly had aversions to the ideas of naming their identities – when asked about their feelings of the

identification of "queer", both were not comfortable with it and when discussing their identities, both just felt that they were just "themselves" and their own sense of identity was not related to the broader queer politics. Identity politics is an uncomfortable terrain for both Nadia and Sam as they both do not consider their identities as anything that marks them as different.

According to Walks (2014), the word "queer" can create discomfort because of its confrontational or derogatory past. However, the reclamation of the word has become a political act for many. According to Walks (2014), many feel that the terms "gay" or "lesbian" are still aligned with heteronormativity and homonormativity. Both hetero-normativity and homo-normativity still uphold the status quo while "queer" is seen as a term which subverts the status quo. Nadia and Sam's discomfort with the word "queer" can be seen as a means to detach the political from the personal. Their sexual identities are for them individual rather than part of a collective movement. While for Sumayah and Michelle, the political forms a large part of their own sense of identity. They both identify as "queer" as well as teachers. For Sumayah, her background contributed greatly to their own sense of political action. They describe their family background as anti-oppressive historically,

> My dad was on the board of Robben Island as well. He got a bit of a shout out in Long Walk for Freedom. Ya, so yes. Anti-apartheid narratives and ANC organising and resistance was part of how we grew up.

Michelle similarly explained that for herself the political, personal and pedagogical are all intertwined and feels that it is necessary to do so. However, she also shows understanding for those who choose not to. She said:

> For me personally, I can see that there is definitely a link in my own teaching and in my own identity and teaching lives. Because for me, they're not really separate. I've never really divorced the one from the other. And I know many teachers, either have to, or choose to. Which is, you know, I kind of get politically angry at that? But I also understand that I suppose. So for me, I have seen the kind of transformative power of

> having – *ja* – of that being the case. But I also don't know that it's sort of fair to expect that of every teacher or to suggest that that's the only way that it could happen.

The differing experiences of identity within the teachers' narratives reveal that the emotions attached to them range from ambivalence to anger. Michelle, offered a possible explanation for the depoliticisation of queer teachers from their identities. She expressed that it is not the duty of queer teachers to be politically active as the emotional labour can take its toll. According to Samuel (2013), the move away from politicising queer identity is related to the proximity to symbolic violence. Queer teachers who accept their identities politically also accept the hardship and precarity that comes with it. Therefore, it can be deduced that teachers may actively move away from this symbolic violence in favour of positions which put them closer to privilege and power (Samuel, 2013). Michelle reiterated the emotional labour that comes with political work and how the practicalities and realities of everyday life can hinder that role. She explained:

> *Ja*, I suppose that it gives me… a lot of my sense of purpose comes from the impact that I have on the people that I work with there every day. But, I suppose just the stage that I'm at at life where, you know, with a growing family with a baby coming - being available on WhatsApp until midnight every night for pupils who need academic things or you need a pep talk or you are having a crisis or whatever is not really sustainable. And giving that amount of myself, I kind of have to give it in other places now.

As discussed previously in the section, *Masculinities, Discipline and Affect*, emotions were discussed as a tool for better pedagogy as well as a hindrance to learning. Both Michelle and Leon described the limits of emotions as well as the personal within the pedagogical. Both teachers communicated a level of exhaustion which stops them from fully immersing their lives within their profession. The external demands of life as well as the internal demands of teaching in South African schools creates boundaries that are necessary for the well-being of the teacher. Yet, this may limit pedagogical opportunities for the students. For example, Leon describes an incident where a student had written the words, "Sir is a gay p**s" on a desk and another student who was alarmed at the message showed it to him – he describes that this

moment could have been a teachable moment had it not been for his own feelings of being burnt out, he said,

> Ag, I mean I suppose if I had the energy or whatever, like I thought afterwards like if I had written it on the board in big letters - you know, Sir is a gay p**s - it would be really interesting kind of discussion you know, Language use and sexuality and gender. You know, misogyny, the word p**s. You know where does it come from? How do we treat each other. Whatever, there's a whole lot of things you could do in terms of Life Orientation, but I think I just left it you know? You just you know, like, Michelle Pfeiffer in dangerous games, you're not going to revolutionise the school with one poignant discussion or something.

In his last sentence of the above statement, he also describes his thought that a teachable moment cannot change a system and that media representations of inspiring teachers have contributed to this kind of rhetoric. Sumayah also discussed their exhaustion. They are constantly working for and perform multiple roles within the school. However, it is in their work that her repeated attempts to change the system despite being an individual had slowly but surely changed the culture of the school.

This sub-section has discussed how different queer teachers have different ideas of the necessity of the political being linked to their identities. It has been shown above that the political is also linked to the practical and the limited capacities that South African teachers feel they have in the face of many adversities. Further, it is important to note that queer teachers may still feel that their teaching can be political without necessarily involving their own queer identities. Furthermore, it is therefore pertinent to question Freirean (1972) ideals that all teachers have a duty to be political. It is clear from different queer teachers' experiences that the systemic injustices of South African society makes it difficult to do so even if there is a desire to.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

> The teacher is of course an artist, but being an artist does not mean that he or she can make the profile, can shape the students. What the educator does in teaching is to make possible for the students to become themselves. (Freire, 1990, p. 181)

Both global and local research done previously has explored how queer teachers have been discriminated against within the schooling context and made to hide their identities for the sake of arbitrary markers of professionalism. However, queer teachers have also been subversive within schooling institutions, role models for their students and pedagogical pioneers despite the limitations of heteronormative spaces. They have noticeably changed the schooling spaces that they have been in. My overarching question for this research was: How do queer teachers in South Africa navigate their sexual identities in secondary schooling spaces and what are the pedagogical possibilities that emerge in this context?

The participants in this research provided rich experiences and insight into the ways in which the systemic and the individual interweave. The complexities needed a wide array of lenses in order to analyse the multi-faceted experiences. Therefore, the research made use of gender theory, critical pedagogy, space and place and the concept of panopticism to be able to explore their experiences with deserved nuance. The themes that emerged explored and discussed the various permutations of surveillance that queer teachers felt inhibited their self-expression and pedagogy and the freedoms that persist despite the various modes of discipline and surveillance within the South African schooling system.

Emerging themes from this research were 1) *Negotiating queer (in)visibility: What does it mean to be "out" in schools?* – exploring how queer teachers experience and navigate their sexuality in the workplace as well as how these navigation relate to ideas of (in)visibility, *2) Masculinities, Discipline and Affect* – investigates how teaching strategies are affected by hetero-normative masculinities within school contexts and how this is entangled with emotions within teaching practices *3) The duty of disruption by queer teachers* – questioning the subversive role of queer disruption as transformative within schooling contexts. Using these themes, this research explores the intricacies of experiences of queer teachers within Secondary schools. The overarching research question explores firstly how queer teachers

navigate their sexuality within their schooling institutions and secondly, the relationship between who they are, how they teach and the limits and freedoms that queer teachers experience within their personal and pedagogical practices.

Firstly, the participants' experiences of the public and private were contested. While some teachers chose to reveal their queerness either explicitly or implicitly using various strategies, others decided to deny it. This choice was linked to ideas around what is considered private and public knowledge, adherence to professionalism and feelings of safety/unsafety. Feelings of safety/unsafety largely contribute to the negotiations of queerness between private and public personas. While some teachers felt that the schools that they worked in created openness and a sense of safety for queer bodies, others felt that their workplace fostered possibilities of discrimination and violence. In addition, these feelings of safety/unsafety are particular to the South African context as ideas of violence permeate and blur the line between communities and schools within them. However, safety, if unattainable for some both materially and symbolically, is an ideal that many teachers felt was aspirational and necessary for transformative education.

In terms of this theme, the modes of surveillance are within what is considered private and public knowledge within local and global discourse. As previously discussed within my analysis, the experiences of these queer teachers largely supported evidence that has shown that queer teachers often feel more constrained by ideas of professionality in both global and South African contexts. However, the contextual aspects that affect ideas of professionality are linked to varying influences such as culture and religious influences. Ideas of professionality rely on the repression of sexual expression which are reminiscent of the past in which colonial missionary schools and the apartheid state regimented schools to be militarised with a Christian ethic. When queer teachers talked about the ideas of professionality, this was linked to instances of silence, secrets and shame.

The idea of intimacy is one that I touched upon in this research but did not focus on. Queer teachers are not the only creators of intimacy within school spaces. However, the relationship between something as personal as sexual identity and the public/private sphere binary reveal that schools are particularly intimate spaces where ideas of public and private are blurred. Queer teachers, whether "out" or not, invite an intimacy where personal questions may become property to the public. This is either encouraged or discouraged depending on the teacher. The act of being "out" can be actively helpful to queer students within the space to be

able to be their authentic selves. However, it can also put pressure and cause anxiety for queer teachers. Therefore, notions of safety/unsafety depend on the relations between space and place. Intimacy can either mean healing or harming. I propose that schools as intimate spaces in relation to queer identities needs to be explored further.

The idea of intimacy and the role of emotions is a complicated one within schools. According to many of the queer teachers the strategy often used within these spaces was one of discipline. Discipline was characterised by masculinity. Discipline allowed for severity to be revered and for softness to be frowned upon. I explore this as a historical remnant within present-day schooling systems. The role of emotions within pedagogical practice was either blatantly scoffed at or subtly discouraged. Teachers that felt it was important either had limitations on the extent of emotional participation or found that even if they desired more emotional practice, their environment did not allow for this. However, it was clear through language that was used by the teachers such as "my kids" that teachers either aimed for care within pedagogical practice but also inadvertently followed a paternalistic regime that schools institute. Therefore, the idea of care and non-masculinised practise should be explored as subversive practice in South African classrooms.

The theme of *"Masculinities, Discipline and Affect"* explored the ways in which various micro-functions of power such as space, bodies, emotions and institutional structures intersect. According to Southgate (2010), discipline and punishment are performative powerplays within schools. Southgate (2010) focuses on how teachers inflict punishment through directive power. However, within this research both queer teachers and students are disciplined through masculine modes of power is one which is more non-directive. Queer teachers describe how they prefer masculine forms of discipline to softer, more emotional practices. They are encouraged by colleagues to do so, so that they are in turn not taken advantage of by students who see them as soft. Many teachers co-opted this form of surveillance on bodies and emotions without criticism. However, others found themselves performing to these masculine ideas but were critical of this kind of pedagogical practice. The fear of being seen as "soft" seemed to relate to ideas of being seen as different. In turn, being seen as different within the schooling space would mean that one could be isolated and therefore punished. The history of militarised masculine schooling spaces in South Africa, has left this legacy that anything deviant from the heterosexual, masculine norm will be ostracised or punished. Hence, the feelings that queer teachers express in terms of this co-

opting of masculinities within schools is linked to the affective economies (Ahmed, 2004) that South African hegemonic masculinities have created; economies of fear, shame and isolation.

This research has revealed that some queer teachers are unsung heroes as well as markers of transformative teaching. However, the situations that queer teachers confront within the South African context include a complicated array of experiences; from poverty and trauma to the direct opposite of privilege and power. Their experiences are parallel with the inequalities and disparities of present-day South Africa and this directly affects how they negotiate their own identities. Hence, the way they navigate their personal and professional lives does not merely adhere to narratives of role-model-ship but also narratives which require delicacy in order to survive within the workplace. The contextual narratives of precarity differ especially from the global narratives which focus more on queer teachers in Western spaces. Indeed, there are similarities in terms of larger institutional pressures on schooling spaces globally and by extension queer teachers' experiences and navigations. However, this research touches on the ways in which South African queer teachers face additional challenges in terms of safety and space as well as how it related to structural oppressions.

Additionally, beyond survival there are still acts of subversion within these tenuous spaces. Some teachers feel that their queer identity is what drives the need to transform a space. However, what is clear within these narratives is that it should not be the expectation of queer teachers to be the sole pioneers of change in schools which are systemically bound in patriarchal, hetero-normative and colonial ideals. These contested views of identity and politics are affected by a range of intersections of race, class and religion. The politics of sexual identity are both embraced and resisted by different teachers: where some see their identity as inherently political, others merely see it as a part of who they are (and who they are is separate to identity politics). Hence, queer teachers can be important role-models within restrictive schooling spaces but this should not substitute for true systemic and institutional change. Teachers should not have to wear their queerness on their sleeves for change to happen. Therefore, the section which focuses on *The duty of disruption by queer teachers* explores the ways in which queer teachers intentionally as well as unintentionally subverted schooling spaces. However, it also questions whether it is necessary for queer teachers to do so with the additional contextual and structural burdens that are placed on

South African teachers. This question needs further exploration, however it can be concluded that whether it is a duty for queer teachers to disrupt or not, queer teachers disrupt regardless of intention. What the participants' experience showed is that there are always instances of insignificant significant gestures between queer teachers and students which subvert the norms which both have to adhere to. These personal and intimate moments are meaningful and create space for critical questioning of the norms.

This research aims to link the personal experience to critical pedagogy and so it explored the relationship between the experiences of queer teachers (the personal), the ideas of resistance of the norms within schooling spaces (the political) and how these navigations relate to teaching and learning (the pedagogical). According to Freire (1972), critical pedagogy relies on the idea that education cannot be within a politically neutral ideology and therefore teachers must be political (Freire, 1972). I wanted to explore the participants' feelings of political teaching within their narratives and found that their experiences to be contested. While some found their work and their identities deeply political, others took a more apolitical stance. However, it brought about the question of what constitutes political sentiment within these contexts and can queer teachers be political merely by being who they are?

The narratives of queer teachers emphasise power relations within schools. Dominant systems of oppression such as patriarchy, hetero-normativity and colonial influence are still rampant in the South African Secondary schools. Narratives of gender and sexuality are still dominated by the proximity to the straight line (Ahmed, 2006) while education is stifled by masculine ideas of discipline. Further, queer teachers' experiences also reveal that some systemic injustices that have not changed. However, there are also many freedoms that have become available to those who would not have felt free in the past. Queer students are leading school bodies and queer teachers are actively advocating for queer rights in schools. Furthermore, this research has interrogated a complicated relationship between the personal and the pedagogical which is unpredictable in nature but has revealed that queer teachers do indeed change spaces in the same way that the schooling space changes, orientates and re-orientates teachers' navigations.

The exploration of the systemic and the individual through queer teachers' narratives reveals that, in many instances, individual freedoms cannot wholly thrive in systemically oppressive systems. These systemically oppressive systems must be situated within the South African

context in which systems of surveillance, power and control are inherited from the previous apartheid state. Hence, although some queer teachers reveal to be the exception to that rule but we must aim to change the education system with a focus on dismantling historical influences today which continue to create modes of surveillance and discipline so that queer teachers no longer have to be exceptions – they can just *be*. This research has shown that despite immense difficulty queer teachers have resisted in insignificant significant ways (Freire, 2000). Freire's (1972) notion that when there is injustice, there is resistance - is indeed true. These queer teachers have shown that small acts of resistance can make a significant impact in the lives of students in South African secondary schools.

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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sumanah Mustafa and I am a Masters student in Critical Diversity Studies at the Wits Centre for Diversity studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. As part of my studies, I have to undertake a research project, and I am investigating queer teachers' experiences within the specific secondary schools that they work within. The aim of this research project is to explore particular narratives in order to understand these experiences and how they affect teachers both professionally and personally.

I would like to invite you to take part in this study which would require you to take part in an in depth one-on-one interview. All interviews will be organised in a safe and secure area and if assistance is needed with a means of transport that will be provided. The one-on-one interview will take at most 1 hour and 30 minutes. With your permission, I would also like to record the interview using a digital recorder. If there are pertinent follow-up questions that arise from the first set of interviews, I may request short follow-up interviews.

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this research, and there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. You are allowed to withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to. Please feel free to address any questions you do not feel comfortable with.

All interviews will be completely confidential and anonymous as I will not reveal your real names or identities. There will be strict monitoring of data collected which will be security-locked on the devices that I store the data on and all identifying information will carefully anonymised and not disclosed to anyone else. I will be using a pseudonym to represent your participation in my final research report. If you experience any distress or discomfort at any point in this process, we will stop the interview or resume another time.

If you have any questions at any time during the interviews about this research, feel free to contact me or my supervisors on the details listed below. This study will be written up as a research report and if you wish to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,
Sumanah Mustafa

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Appendix B: Consent Form

Title: (Queer)-ying in South African Secondary Schools: Narratives of queer teachers and what they reflect on gender and sexuality discourse in post-Apartheid South Africa

Researcher: Sumanah Mustafa

I, ……., agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve. Please circle the relevant options below.

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous	YES NO
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in their research report	YES NO
I agree that the interview may be recorded using audio	YES NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously by other researchers following this project (provided they receive their own ethics clearance)	YES NO
I understand that I may withdraw participation at any point of the research process and that there will be no penalties if I do so	YES NO

…… (Signature)

…… (Name of participant)

…… (Date)

Appendix C: Interview Schedule

1. In-depth individual interview questions (semi-structured):

What is your full name and your preferred pronoun?

How old are you?

Where were you born and raised?

How do you identify in terms of sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, gender and religion?

Briefly describe your teaching background:

- How long have you taught for?
- What did/do you teach?

What was your journey or reasons that brought you to this profession?

What was your own schooling background like – can you share any specific memories that come to mind?
How would you describe your gender and sexual identity?

When did you realise you were queer and what did that mean to you?

How would you describe your teacher identity?

How would you describe your relationships with your colleagues and students?

What are the values and ethos of the school?

What are your own values and do you think they match with that of the school you work for?

How would you describe the relationship between your teaching practice and your identity?

How do you feel about teaching – what are the emotional investments you have with your profession?

Can you describe any positive and/or negative experiences you have had at work related to your queer identity?

How do you feel about your queer identity within your work space?

- Is there any conflict - do you feel you need to change anything to fit in or do you feel it is accepted?

What would you describe as transformative education?

- Would you say that the education being taught at your own school is transformative?

What do you think is the relationship between who a teacher is and that role within transformative education?

What is your current working space like to work in?

- How would you describe the space?
- Do you feel safe there?

What do you think education should look like in South African secondary schools?

- What do you think critical thinking should entail?

What do you think a teacher's role is within transformative education?

- Does it matter what your values or identity is when thinking about transformative education?

How would you describe your school in terms of the feelings and perceptions around gender and sexuality?

- Do you think gender and sexuality should be discussed more openly within schools?

What do you think the roles of emotions play in teaching?

How would you describe the emotional landscape of your schooling institution?

- Do you think emotions and emotional investment is valued within your school?