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University of the Witwatersrand

School of Human and Community Development

Discipline of Psychology

MASTERS RESEARCH DISSERTATION

Like Father, Like Son?

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Community-Based Counselling Masters

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters in Community Based-Counselling Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand.

DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Community-Based Counselling Psychology in the Discipline of Psychology,
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Johannesburg

2015

The author hereby declares that this whole thesis / dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is her own original work.

Sindisiwe Charlotte Mlotshwa
Masters in Community-Based Counselling Psychology

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ABSTRACT

This investigation explored how fathers and sons perceive what it means to be a father. A review of current literature revealed that there has been extensive work on the theme of fatherhood. Though extensive, the literature has not included both fathers and sons within a single investigation. Thus, this study has included both fathers and their sons in order to explore their perceptions of fatherhood. The findings revealed that both fathers and sons believed that being a father meant that one had to be the moral guide and primary breadwinner of the family. Some sons experienced their fathers as being emotionally absent and demonstrated a desire to have more present father figures. This desire, along with the notion that "the father is the primary role model of the son" is in line with ideas pertaining to "New Fatherhood". With these definitions of fatherhood in mind, it was noted that all fathers believed that they still had some work to do before they could consider themselves the 'perfect' father. Despite this, the main findings of this investigation indicated that many sons continued to aspire to be like their fathers. While aspiring to be more like their fathers, the men in this investigation also felt that they needed to perform certain paternal functions better than their own fathers.

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Chapter 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

There continues to be a growing level of interest in the multifaceted nature fatherhood. As researchers increasingly explore fatherhood, more of them are finding that though some fathers prefer to not be involved in the life and development of their children (Eddy, Thomson-de Boor and Mphaka, 2013), other fathers do in fact want to have 'good' and existing relationships with their children (Khunou, 2006). Despite these existing desires, many of these fathers encounter difficulties in accessing their children. Certain studies indicate that some of the difficulties experienced by fathers are also related to established policies (Curran & Abrams, 2000). Khunou (2006) conducted one such study in which she demonstrated and argued that the court system does not give fathers the benefit of the doubt when it comes to getting custody of their children. In her paper, Khunou (2006) attributes this experience to policy makers and law enforcers whom, she states, "need to shift their attitudes and break their silence on the interests and needs of fathers" (pp. 265). Ultimately Khunou shows that societal views and perceptions on fatherhood can and do affect the paternal experiences that men have with their children and vice-versa. Children can be affected in multiple ways. One such way is that they lose a father figure who, in the case of the son, models his behaviour (Watts & Hook, 2009). Given that fathers model the behaviours of their sons, it is also likely that father-related experiences (or the lack there of) could also influence the aspirations of their boy-children. In light of this, this study intends to explore how fathers and sons relate to one-another. It also intends to explore how this influences the paternal aspirations of the sons; that is, the types of fathers that they hope to become in the future.

1.2. Aim

The aim of this investigation is to decipher the perceptions that fathers and their sons have concerning what it means to be a father. Having established this, the investigation hopes to determine if paternal figures are the types of fathers they describe. Regarding the sons, the investigations hopes to determine if they develop into the men that their own fathers are, or if they aspire to take paternal paths that differ from their own fathers. The investigation also hopes to determine the factors that contribute to the choices that sons make concerning whether or not they would

like to become the men/fathers that their own paternal figures are. In summation, this investigation purports to determine if internalised mental representations of fatherhood influence the kinds of fathers men and their sons aspire to and actually become.

1.3. Rationale

The father-son relationship is one that is of significant importance. The classical psychoanalytic theory suggests that this is because the presence of the fathers can influence the kind of man a boy develops into (Watts & Hook, 2009). In explaining this position Freud stated that during the phallic stage (when children are between the ages of three and five) of development, children develop strong unconscious sexual desires towards the opposite sex primary care-giver (Watts & Hook, 2009). Thus, according to the classic psychoanalytic theory, boys will develop an unconscious sexual desire for their mothers. This is related to or explained through what is called the Oedipus complex. The boy's unconscious fear of his penis being cut off by his father as a result of his sexual desires for his mother (castration anxiety) causes the boy to begin to identify with his father in order to protect himself from possible castration (Friedman & Schustack, 2009). His additional unconscious hope is that he will be able to have a relationship with a woman much like his mother through the paternal identification. Thus the boy's identity formation is influenced by his unconscious aspirations.

However, classical psychoanalytic explanations of male identity formation are susceptible to criticisms. The theory can be critiqued on the grounds that it focuses mainly on how the male influences the development of the younger male (Friedman & Schustack, 2009). It therefore considers the potentiality of the female to influence the development of the young male to a lesser extent, only referring to her as the object of his desire. Thus, neo-analytic approaches (like object relations theories) extend the classical psychoanalytic approach by including the female (or mother) as an important (primary) contributor to the development of the child (Watts, 2009). Further extensions of these theories include the father describing him as an important secondary object that facilitates the child's capacity to becoming independent of the mother (Diamond, 1998). In this way, both classical and contemporary psychoanalytic

approaches describe the father-son relationship as being vital in the boy-child's identity formation.

The notion that men play a significant role in the development of the boy child can also be supported by empirical evidence. For example, a study conducted by Zimmerman, Salem and Maton (1995) found that good quality relationships between fathers (and/or father figures) and their sons were associated with higher self-esteem, lower psychological problems and delinquent behaviours in boys. Another study conducted by Dubowitz, et al. (2001) reiterated the importance of the father-son relationship with findings that indicated that perceived paternal support is associated with a greater sense of social competence and fewer depressive symptoms in boys. It is probably in light of the findings in these studies that Richter (2006) states that a lack of contact between fathers and their sons, dramatically affects the male child – "particularly ... [their] social competence, behaviour control and school success" (p. 59).

In light of both the theoretical knowledge and the empirical findings described here, it is clear that the father-son dyad should not be neglected in research. Although there have been fatherhood studies that consider fathers and sons, – as indicated in the above examples (Zimmerman et al. (1995) and Dubowitz et al. (2001)) – no investigation has consecutively and qualitatively researched both fathers and their sons in order to explore themes (e.g. identification, aspirations reached as a father etc.) that come from within the relationship of the dyad. That is to say that, though informative, studies have tended to involve one member of the dyad (Nduna & Jewkes, 2011). As a result, this study is important because it qualitatively explores fatherhood-related perceptions, experiences and aspiration through the lenses or eyes of both fathers and their sons. It uses psychosocial ideas as a theoretical framework, and thus potentially contributes valuable and new information to the existing literature on fatherhood.

1.4. Theoretical framework: a psychosocial approach

The psychosocial approach is a mode of thinking that offers an explanation about how internal and external worlds interact and shape one another (Jefferson, 2008). The approach believes that the interactions of these worlds occur through the

psychological processes of projection, internalisation and identification (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). The historical groundings of the theory have often been associated with Mandeville. Mandeville was a physician that specialised in psychiatry and combined social and psychological observations in his writings about human nature (Jones, 2011). In this way, his writings have come to be defined as being psychosocial.

The invention of this theory is said to have given psychoanalysis an opportunity to reassert itself as an approach that usefully contributes to the ability of the social sciences to explain social phenomena. The need for psychoanalytic theory to reassert its contributions to the social sciences is based on certain critiques levelled against it. Such include the position that it tends to focus on intrinsic explanations to how the identity and/or personality of a person is formed (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). This is reiterated by Laplanche and Pontalis who state that "[this] notion is bound up with the Freudian hypothesis about unconscious processes: not only do these processes take no account of external reality, they also replace it with a psychical one'' (1967, p. 363).

An example that demonstrates how psychoanalysis is intrinsically based can be found in the manner in which it explains male identity formation. Early psychoanalytic theorists stated that during the phallic stage of development (between three to five years) the boy would develop sexual feelings for his mother. A contentious relationship would then be cultivated between the son and his father (Friedman & Schustack, 2009; Freud, 1924). It is argued that this contentious relationship is strongly related to the feelings that the boy child develops towards his mother. However, the 'intrinsic' and 'unconscious' fear of being punished by his father because of the sexual urges (i.e. castration anxiety) would cause the boy to assume manly characteristics and identify with the father, in the 'unconscious' hope that he would one day obtain his mother as his (the son's) own. Although this intrinsically based explanation is considered to be an important contributing factor in the explanation of (male) identity formation, the psychosocial theory considers it to be insufficient (Jefferson, 2008).

Instead, psychosocial theorists believe that the intrinsic matrices are more useful when regarded in connection to the external (social) matrices. That is to say that a consideration of both, enables one to better comprehend how identities are projected,

internalised and thus formed (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). As a result of this recognition, the psychosocial approach incorporates sociologically based explanations to provide clarity on a variety of social phenomena (Frosh, 2003). One example of these sociologically based explanations is that of symbolic interactionism.

Symbolic interactionism is a theory that is based on three core premises (Blumer, 1986). The first is that people act towards one another based on the meanings that things have for them (Snow, 2003). The second premise suggests that these meanings are acquired through 'interaction' with others (Blumer, 1986). Thus an infant will learn certain behaviours based on how people (mostly adults) act towards it. The third premise of symbolic interactionism states that the symbols, gestures and meanings are handled in and transformed through an interpretive process that is used by the person (i.e. infant) when s/he deals with the things s/he comes across in the social world (Snow, 2003). In summarising what symbolic interactionism is about, one can simply state that it is a theory that believes that the internal world (e.g. beliefs and values) and/or personality structure of the individual is shaped by his/her external world through symbols and gestures. It further alludes to the idea of social constructionism because it suggests that the individuals that people become (i.e. the identities they form) are 'constructed' in relation to and through the ways other social members interact with those individuals.

Social constructionism is significant to regard, as it is one of the features that make up the conceptualisations of the psychosocial approach (Frosh & Baraitser, Psychoanalysis and psychosocial studies, 2008). Hacking (1999) states that it refers to the construction of worldly items, which include beliefs that might also feed into who we as individuals, and what societies choose to become. The psychosocial theory's regard of social constructionism is also important to this paternally oriented investigation since fatherhood has been described as a concept that is socially constructed, and therefore one that is fluid (ever-changing) and diverse across different social settings (Morrell & Richter, 2006).

While constructionism can be related to this investigation, it is also important to note that it, like many other social theories, rejects psychoanalysis. Constructionists tend to critique psychoanalysis as it posits that it has expert knowledge on "innerness", as well as an adept understanding of one's unconscious world (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008).

They critique the idea that something can exist in and of itself. While this may be a significant critique, one could also critique constructionism for its single-sidedness, in that it's primary focus is the "outer". Hollway reiterates this in one of her articles, in which she argues that these anti-psychoanalytic positions are ''insufficiently cognizant of the psychological processes whereby the recursive formation of selves within their life settings is not only mediated by complex material, discursive and relational influences but also by dynamic, [inter-subjective], unconscious processes'' (2006, p. 466). Critiquing other such theories, she argues that they fail to adopt a developmental account of subjectivity. That is, they overlook the innate aspects of the person's being. Theories related to Object Relations are therefore important, as they are able to link the external with the internal worlds. Thus, Object relations further contribute to the development of the psychosocial theory to some extent.

The Object Relations theory is significantly influenced by psychoanalytic theory (i.e.: Freudian concepts). It however takes Freud's perceptions a step further in that it engages more extensively with the "outer" parts of the individual when trying to conceptualise how personality develops. Theories of object relations gained, but also lost ground in the 20th century. The development of these theories led to an emphasis on a multiple-person relationship – initially multiple meant dyadic (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). The dyad that intellectuals tended to focus on was often the mother and the infant, with Melanie Klein spear-heading the movement. That is to say that Klein appeared to believe that the mother was the most influential aspect through which the child came to comprehend and become in its world (Klein, 1996). Since the mother is the primary caregiver according to Klein (1996), it is also assumed that she is the primary recipient of the child's projective drives. Thus, primitive defences like projective identification and splitting occur in relation to the mother, thereby influencing the personality structure of the child. Projection identification is described as the act of projecting one's internal objects onto another person, and causing that person to internalise the projections and then act them out (McWilliams, 2011). Splitting, on the other hand occurs where the infant has good and bad experiences that are split off from each other (Klein, 1996). One of the split elements is projected to another person (namely the mother). This helps the child to protect itself from various threatening experiences. Hollway (2006) states that for Klein, "the significant unconscious dynamics, those that were formative of the psyche, were inter-subjective:

that is, they operated between people" (Hollway, 2006, p. 18). This is demonstrated in the abovementioned description. Thus, to some extent, it can be said that she connected the external and the internal – an important development for the psychosocial movement.

Further developments within object relations' theories included the likes of Donald Winnicott who suggested a triangular interactive space rather than the dyadic one. While Winnicott acknowledged the role of the mother, he also considered the father and/or other figures as being imperative to the development healthy personality structure (Winnicott, 1976). Thomas Ogden (1999/1994) states that he is indebted to Winnicott, as Winnicott played a fundamental role in Ogden's conceptualisation of the 'analytic third'. This third is considered to be important as it functions to capture the radical nature of inter-subjective dynamics. It is described as "the dialectical movement of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity... The third is a creation of the first two who are also created by it" (Ogden, 1999/1994, p. 462).

Lacan is a theorist who finds a great degree of his influence from object relations (Lacan, 2006). Lacan matured the concept the "mirror stage", which is important to regard in light of its consideration of 'relationality' or 'intersubjectivity'. Lacan's understanding of the 'mirror' is however different from that of both Winnicott and Klein (Lacan, 2006). Contrary to Winnicottian thought, the mother does not mirror the child's actuality back to him in a way that would aid the development of the 'true self' (Winnicott, 1976). Also contrary to Kleinian propositions, the mother is not the primary receiver of the child's projective drives. Instead, for Lacan, the mirror represents the integrity in which the mother presents her own perceptions of the infant (Lacan, 2006). The images that are perceived by the child result in his fallacious belief that he is complete and that his identity can be self discovered or discerned. In actuality, Lacan argues that what is happening is that "the child is identifying with a vision that comes from elsewhere, from outside" (Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2003, p. 40). Consequently, instead of being the origin from which communication is out-sourced, the ego (the personality of the child) is created in relation to an external entity, which is not always the mother. This explanation functions to expound upon the manner in which social/external sources of information function to shape the personality structure of the child. The psychodynamically influenced theoretical

position also functions to consolidate that which is social with that which is psychological – thereby creating the psychosocial theory. Such a consolidation is necessary when regarding that traditional theories (i.e. psychoanalytic theories) often focus on the individual's internal psychic reality.

In essence, psychodynamic theories have become increasingly sensitive to the social context in which the individual resides. Of particular interest, and important to regard in for this investigation, is the social sensitivity that psychodynamic theories have attached to the complex ways that males construct their identities (Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2005). It is these theories that have also subtly contributed to the analysis of paternal impacts on sons (Davids, 2002). However, their sensitivity is not sufficient as they can be critiqued for primarily focusing on relational dynamics and unconscious processes. For instance, Frosh and Baraitser (2008) recognise that psychodynamic literature (i.e. object relations)

"*… is more interested in talk as suggestive of underlying psychic structures that organize individuals' internal worlds in particular ways. This psychic realm is seen as being informed by actual events and therefore social structures, but as being located ''in'' and primarily constituted through unconscious processes. Individuals are ''unconsciously impelled'' to express themselves in particular ways in discourse, resulting in discernable patterns that will differ from individual to individual. An object- relational psychoanalytic reading therefore goes ''behind'' the text…*" (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008, p. 353).

This contribution is essential as it indicates that people are not static figures. It suggests that social aspects of a person's life can and do impact them and who they become. Yet this is not exclusive of the psychological, intrinsic elements of an individual.

However, psychodynamic literature can be critiqued on the fact that it does not make an explicit mention of the manner in which culture - and other social structures similar to it – impacts the being. Thus, a psychosocial theory would serve beneficial as, through its sociological and discursive roots, it demonstrates an interest in broader cultural discourses, as well as subject positions (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008).

In addition to considering the social influences, another positive element in this theory is its tendency to focus on the adaptive abilities of the ego (personality) (Hook, 2009). The theory holds a more optimistic view of people, considering how things can go right, and not just how they might go wrong. In other words, it provides some degree of hope that a person can successfully and productively move from one psychosocial stage of development to the next. This is especially demonstrated in Erik Erikson's eight psychosocial stages of development (Hook, 2009). These eight stages include:

1. Basic trust versus Basic mistrust (occurring in infancy)
2. Autonomy versus shame and doubt (Toddler)
3. Initiative versus guilt (Pre-schooler)
4. Industry versus inferiority (Primary/elementary school)
5. Identity versus role confusion (Adolescence)
6. Intimacy versus isolation (Young adult)
7. Generativity versus stagnation (Middle-aged adult)
8. Integrity versus despair (Late adulthood)

Basic Trust versus Mistrust refers to the human's initial demonstration of social trust (Erikson, 1963). The ability to develop social trust is connected to the infant's bodily experiences, which thereby lead to its capacity to develop a psychological state of trust (Maire, 1988). Once people have developed the capacity to trust the caregiver in their *environments* as well as *within themselves* they move on to the second psychosocial stage of development (*Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt*) (Erikson, Childhood and Society, 1963). Here they come to realise that they have the ability to grow into autonomous beings. Despite this realisation, they are still very much dependent on their caregivers. Continued reliance on another person (namely the care-giver) means that they doubt their abilities and also their independence (Hook, 2009).

If the individuals/children are able to overcome this doubt, they are then able to transition to the *Initiative versus Guilt* stage of development. In this stage, the individual's environment challenges him to be active and directed in mastering specific tasks (Erikson, 1963). At this stage of development people/children are expected to assume increased responsibility for their own bodies (Erikson, 1980). In addition to this, they might also be expected to assume the responsibility of others (e.g. their siblings). While the child is allowed to explore in this stage, s/he is given

boundaries, which s/he must either respect or ignore (Hook, 2009). Guilt is the emotion that the individual feels when s/he entertains the idea of dosregarding the limitations (Maire, 1988). The conflict between guilt and initiative contributes to the child's capacity to increasingly begin to take on the parental role, and thereby parent him or her self (Erikson, 1963). This suggests that he has begun to internalise the perceptions that his environment holds about what it means to be human or a particular type of human. Explaining this, Hook (2009) cites Erikson (1963) stating,

"Through the processes of the Oedipus complex, through strong identification with the same sex parent, and through greater awareness and respect for parental authority, the child now becomes able to do just that – [able] to take on, in part, a parental role over itself. The conscience of the superego now comes into operation" (p. 292).

The above extract also implies the development of a moral conscience in the person (Erikson, 1963). This morality is not just the result of parental prohibitions, but is also a result of the child's socio-cultural heritage. Erikson (1963) argues that the guilt, which facilitates morality growth, thus functions to repress and inhibit the unacceptable fantasies of the child. The challenge in this stage is to balance the sense for moral order with initiative. A parent who does not actively demonstrate moral forms of behaviour causes the child to experience a great deal of difficulty in its attempt to internalise social expectations (Hook, 2009). In so doing, identity formation becomes difficult. Thus, this particular psychosocial stage of development is especially important, as it has the capacity to help one better comprehend how men form their identities as fathers.

If the child is not arrested/stuck in the third stage, s/he is able to continue onto the next stage of development – *Industry versus Inferiority*. Here the child/individual realises that s/he can "win recognition by producing things" (Erikson, 1963, p. 233). S/he therefore becomes industrious. However, as s/he becomes industrious, s/he also begins to interact with a wider range of people – people outside of the family. This means that the child is more likely to compare himself/herself to others; who, if better, will make the person feel inferior.

Other stages include *Identity versus Role Confusion*, where persons (normally adolescents) are seeking to form their identity. Role confusion occurs when the individual struggles to form a secure identity. In this stage, all the sameness that was relied upon in childhood must be questioned and renegotiated (Erikson, 1963). This stage is important in that it creates the framework upon which the person can begin to enter into adulthood (Maire, 1988). Thus, identity formation forms a foundation for a successful motion into the next stage – *Intimacy versus Isolation*. In this stage individuals are looking "to invest in others, to forge important romantic relationships. The stage precedes the *Generativity versus Stagnation* psychosocial stage. In this stage, persons are interested in guiding the next generation (Erikson, 1963). The inability to provide this guidance (which contributes to self enrichment) can lead to a sense of self-impoverishment (Erikson, 1963). Difficulties in this stage can negatively affect one's capacity to move on to the final stage – *Integrity versus Despair*. In this stage, it is normal for people to reflect upon their lives, to judge them and see if there is any meaning in them. They also deal with the fear of death, which is one of their most significant challenges (Hook, 2009).

Erikson (1963) developed these stages because of his belief that people were not just a result of intrinsic, individualistic occurrences. He raised significant questions concerning psychology's understanding of neurotic disturbance, asking if it has "a visible onset… [if it resides] in the body or in the mind, in the individual or in his society" (Erikson, 1963, p. 19). In response to his own questions he argued that, "In recent years we have come to the conclusion that a neurosis is psycho and somatic, psycho and social, and interpersonal" (p. 19).

Overall, the psychosocial theory was created in order to enable psychology to reaffirm itself within the social sciences. Yet, the theory is described as controversial, being critiqued by certain social scientist groups for its use of 'untrusted' psychoanalytic theoretical bases. Psychoanalysis has been specifically critiqued since it demonstrates a particular interest in the "psychic" internal structures of the person. However an exploration of the varying developments within psychoanalytic work indicates that psychology has increasingly become interested in the relational aspects of a person's development through object relations. Despite this, psychology has still been critiqued for its inability to look at the text, discourse and various social structures like culture;

and how these elements influence the manner in which persons become who they are. It is because of this that the psychosocial model has sought to integrate psychology with social theories, thereby attempting to solve the 'problem' of psychology not being able to assert itself in the social aspects of humanity.

Thus, using the psychosocial theory within this investigation will enable the reader to have an understanding of both the social and psychological elements in the father-son relationship. That is to say, it will grant us an understanding of both the psychic/intrinsic *and* relational elements of male personality and/or identity formation.

Chapter 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Literature review

2.1. Introduction

A vast amount of literature has begun to explore the concept fatherhood and it's impact on the society. Inline with these explorations, this literature review aims to investigate works that are centred on the topic of the father-son relationship. Linked to father-son relationships is the concept of masculinity, which can shape how members of society perceive what it means to be a father or a son. It therefore follows that the first interest of this review will be to explore the notion of masculinity within literature. Secondly, the review will explore literature contributions to the definition of fatherhood. It is argued that this second endeavour will serve the purpose of assisting in the determination of whether sons become the men that their own fathers are/were. In addition to defining fatherhood, this review will explore what it means to be a son. Arguably, a definition of both fathers and sons also permits one to determine if and how fatherhood is modelled. In closing the review will demonstrate that, even though there have been father-son relationship studies, no South African qualitative project has explicitly explored issues of identification with both fathers and their biological sons included in the same investigation. This is important to regard, as it is the aim of this particular study.

2.2. Masculinity

Masculinity (otherwise termed manliness or manhood) refers to a set of attributes, conducts, and roles that are commonly related to the male sex (Friedman & Downey, 1999; Friedman & Downey, 2002). The term is socially constructed but also uses biologically based concepts to describe certain 'masculine' characteristics (Morrell, 1998). For instance, Merriam Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus states that masculinity is synonymous with terms like "muscular, well built, rugged, robust, brawny, heavily built, strong/strength," emphasizing the physicality of a person, rather than his character/personality (Merriam-Webster, 2014). In many instances, this might confuse socially constructed explanations of what it means to be a man since, for example, not all males are of a muscular build. While it is important to note that physicality can be used to expand on the meaning of the term, it is important to note that the term can have a very complex description. That is to say that the manner in which it has been defined in literature has changed and/or broadened over time.

Thus it follows that in opening this section of the review, a historical account of the term, beginning with a traditional description of masculinity, must be employed (Person, 2009).

2.2.1. Traditional masculinity

In the past, it was proposed that the "masculine ideology" had to acknowledge the traditional and socially constructed form of masculinity (Thompson & Pleck, 1995). This masculinity is one that constructed boys and men into persons who internalised particular cultural norms and expectations. The internalisation of these norms and expectations served the function of causing men to organise and process certain information about themselves and the external world (Abreu, Goodyear, Campos, & Newcomb, 2000). This ultimately operated to incline them towards exhibiting "male-appropriate" behaviours that were demonstrated in all if not most spheres of society. Regarding these "male-appropriate" and therefore "masculine" behaviours, Thompson and Pleck (1969) suggest that they referred to behaviours that were normally linked to toughness, success and anti-femininity (Burn & Ward, 2005).

Toughness in this context refers to physical, mental and emotional robustness (Burn & Ward, 2005). It means that men were mostly expected to be physically strong, intellectually competent and knowledgeable. It also means that they were often inclined to solve their own emotional difficulties without demonstrating forms of vulnerability that related to affect. The success aspect of traditional masculinity, as suggested by Thompson and Pleck (1969), argues that there were often high expectations for men to achieve in their professional careers, and thus, additional expectations for them to be able to provide for their families (Burn & Ward, 2005; Thompson & Pleck, 1969). Achievement in the professional sphere of life was often measure by income and position or status. Norms of "anti-femininity" were established and based on the belief that men should avoid undertakings and occupations that were stereotypically feminine (Thompson & Pleck, 1969). It can be argued that this correlates with perceptions of men being distinct, presenting differently to women and/or persons that portray feminine characteristics (such as some non-heterosexual men) (Connell, 2000). This idea of male separateness from other groups has been linked to hegemonic masculinity, which is the conventional term for traditional masculinity (Langa, 2012).

2.2.2. Hegemonic masculinity

The term, 'hegemonic masculinity', was coined by Connell (2000), who viewed it as the answer to the problem of legitimized patriarchy. This means that it explained how patriarchy functioned to ensure the domination of men over certain groups – namely women, children and non-heterosexual men. In this way, hegemonic masculinity was and is often used to explain concepts and issues pertaining to social stratification, men and gender (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Reiterating and expounding on its influence Connell and Messerschmidt state the following,

[Hegemonic masculinity] has provided a link between the growing research field of men's studies (also known as masculinity studies and critical studies of men), popular anxieties about men and boys, feminist accounts of patriarchy, and sociological models of gender (2005).

Hegemonic masculinity ultimately assumes that the essence of manhood is expressed in the male's ability to support his family (Langa, 2012). This ability is often enabled by a high professional position that ensures high economic gains, and/or a steady income. Such correlates significantly with Thompson and Pleck's (1969) explanation of the traditional form of masculinity, which proposes that masculinity is linked to professional achievements. Often, however, the ability of the father to provide for his family may mean that he is regularly absent from the home. This element of the hegemonic form of masculinity is something that may sometimes stand out in the perceptions society when they construct what it means to be the man of the home. White (1994) argues that such perceptions can and do serve a disruptive function in the shaping the boy's perceptions of masculinity. However, it could also be argued that it teaches the boy child, in particular, to desire to work hard in order to provide for the family.

Hegemonic masculinity has also been linked to risky sexual behaviours, where men can demand sex from women and girls (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). It demonstrates the perception that men view women as objects rather than human beings. Moreover, it thereby suggests that through this objectification and sexual exploitation, men can demonstrate certain levels of power over the women.

This means that persons who are defined as ‘hegemonic-ally masculine’ often demand sexual intercourse with multiple women and girls. It means that hegemonic masculinity refers to men who regard women to be sexual objects, that must be competed for (Langa, 2012).

In light of the aforementioned, it can be said that hegemonic masculinity is a crucial component of patriarchy. Literature has connected concepts of patriarchy with production, reproduction, sexuality, and also the socializing of children (Morrell, 1998) Similar to this and other previously mentioned concepts, others have suggested that it is linked to paid work, housework, culture, sexuality, and violence (Walby, 1990). In light of all the above-mentioned in regard to masculinity, it is clear that in traditional societies, there existed a globally identified form of masculinity. This masculinity, as has been expressed, was one that was significantly juxtaposed and even interlinked with the concept of power. This might also be associated with violence in traditional societies at times (Foucault, 1977). For instance, in a historical look into discipline and power, Foucault (1977) expressed that monarch-led or traditional societies often enforced their power through violence. Such might therefore perpetuate the position that hegemonic masculinity is very well linked to demonstrations of male violence. It therefore suggests that violence is one of the underpinning concepts that frame the notion of hegemonic masculinity.

While hegemonic masculinity might possibly be buttressed by the violence in the historical context, it is also important to consider that, as society has developed, power and oppression have not always been violently demonstrated (Morrell, 1998). It has been argued that through the defeat of fascism in the Second World War, society saw an end to the institutionalization of hegemonic masculinity. This meant that violence started to be less identified with hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1993). This occurred because there were no longer any huge wars for men to be encouraged to partake in, and thereby demonstrate their masculinity. Supporting the position of the minimized connection between hegemony and violence is Groes-Green (2009). This intellectual argues that hegemonic masculinity is now linked to privileged social classes, where men are more likely to demonstrate their masculinity through their economic gains (Groes-Green, 2009). It is in light of such noted changes that many

have also argued that it does not have a single, rigid and globally applicable definition (Person, 2009).

2.2.3. Masculinity to masculinities

Contemporary literature argues that masculinity should be comprehended as being pluralistic in form (Connell, 1993; Morrell, 1998; Person, 2009). This means that there is no single way of defining the term; instead there are many ways. The multiple ways in which masculinities can be defined owe their being to the different periods and spaces in which people have existed. This is also fundamentally based on how cultures, traditions and perceptions have varied over both time and space (Morrell, 1998). Corroborating this in one his articles, Connell (1993) argues that the culture of capitalism and European imperialism has varyingly affected the manner in which masculinity is perceived. His decision to associate issues of capitalism and imperialism with masculinity is seemingly based on the identification that men have acted as leading agents in the process of global domination in both historical and contemporary social settings. He considers class, race and region as having impacted the development of different masculinities. This is also something that is noted and suggested by Groes-Green (2009). In fact, literature has suggested that a historical analysis of masculinity could be the leading theme in conventional understandings of contemporary world order as men have been the leading agents in global domination (Connell, 1993). In a summated but general sense, it can be said that the two intellectuals (Connell, 1993; Groes-Green, 2009) postulate that the culture of capitalism has had varying influences on people since they have existed in different spaces and at varying times (Morrell, 1998). It is thus that literature suggests the existence of other forms of masculinity.

2.2.4. Subordinated forms of masculinity

Speaking to the development of other masculinities, Connell (1993) and Groen-Green (2009) regard subordinated forms of masculinity. These masculinities are the bases upon which hegemonic masculinity exists and expresses its ‘superiority’ (Langa, 2012). An example of a subordinate form of masculinity would be the kind that homosexual men are often categorized into. Homosexual masculinity is often considered to be a form that is significantly different from hegemonic masculinity. It is one that heterosexual men are often adamant to be contrasted from (Morrell, 1998).

Langa (2012) cites literature that states that the subordination of homosexual masculinity is expressed through the use of abusive forms of vocabulary. It can be said that the use of such abusive language causes hegemonic masculinity to appear homophobic in nature. This homophobia might also be a demonstration of the need of the hegemonic man to not be associated with anything that might be perceived as feminine. It thereby reiterates the need of hegemonic masculinity to separate itself from that which is associated with femininity.

Further constructions of subordinate masculinities have been made based on the argument that hegemonic forms cannot well capture the social inequalities and complexities of male powers (Groes-Green, 2009). This means that hegemonic masculinity ignores that there are other men who might not fall under a hegemonic umbrella that separates itself from femininity and/or perceived weakness. Some men for example might demonstrate some traditionally non-masculine behaviours, such as not reproducing through sexual activity or being a family provider. It is in light of these positions that "traditional versions and expressions of masculinity… have been disturbed and destabilized" (Walker, 2005, p. 226) in contemporary society. It can be said that this is particularly the case for areas in Sub-Saharan Africa. Here, conceptions of hegemonic masculinity have been found wanting and not sufficiently applicable to the vast or complete populace (Aboim, 2009; Groes-Green, 2009).

One reason why hegemonic masculinity is not globally inclusive of men in Sub-Saharan Africa can be explained in light of the economic statuses of different persons in the region. Economic gain is something that many Sub-Saharan African males are without (Aboim, 2009). That is to say that many males (as well as fathers), are either unemployed, or working for very low wages. Thus, it is argued that these members of the populace normally resort to other modes of action when attempting to demonstrate their masculinity. Expanding on this, Groes-Groen (2009) argues that working class men tend to use violent manners of interaction with female counterparts to demonstrate their power. This is used since they have little or no money to garner respect from the women and other members of society. The violent modes of interaction are therefore an alternative means by which the men can demonstrate and enforce their power.

However, in a society that has been subjected to globalization, it is not always easy to demonstrate one's power violently. Laws that seek to empower and protect women from violence have been put in place in the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa. Examples of regions that have been put under the lens of investigation include the area of Maputo in Mozambique, where religion, "egalitarian ideology, affection-based family democracy, and views of a 'new' caring man" (Aboim, 2009, p. 1) have been employed. Literature suggests that such implementations have led to men experiencing certain difficulties when attempting to demonstrate their masculinity (Groes-Green, 2009). South African men are not excluded from the male populace that experiences such difficulties. So how do these men continue to function in a society that seems to place pressures on them to be masculine? This can be answered through literature that has sought to critique the Connell's positions on hegemonic masculinity.

2.2.5. A critique on Connell's explanation of hegemonic masculinity

First it must be noted that Connell's (1993; 2000) contribution to the development of masculinity literature is very commendable since it functioned to demonstrate that there are a variety of different masculinities. Furthermore, his work demonstrated that there are certain power dynamics that exist between these constructions. However his work is criticized for not specifying the manners in which men negotiate these various masculine identities (Langa, 2012). In regards to literature on fatherhood, this may be problematic, as it would therefore not sufficiently expound on what contributes to how men navigate their paternal identities. Ultimately, what this means to say is that Connell's (1993; 2000) contribution to masculinity literature has been on a macro-scale, rather than a micro-scale. It might therefore cause one to assume that hegemonic masculinity is something that is purely "white" or heterosexual. However, literature extensions on the topic argue that this is not the case. For example, Demetriou (2001) argues, "hegemonic masculinity is able to transform itself in order to adapt to specifities of new historical conjunctures" (p. 355). This therefore means that hegemonic masculinity can be applied to contemporary South African contexts on both black and white men. If hegemonic masculinity were comprehended as something that was associated with whiteness, this would serve problematic in contemporary non-Apartheid contexts. This is because an increasing amount of black

South African men have begun to occupy powerful positions alongside white men. Understanding hegemonic masculinity in light of Demetriou's (2001) argument is also important since this particular investigation consists of black males only – some of which are leaders in their companies of employment.

2.3. Fatherhood

The above discussions of masculinities are important as they also impact the understanding of fatherhood. That is to say that literature on manhood is often coincided with that of fatherhood (White, 1994; Morrell, 2006). This is mainly done in light of fathers being male. Since literature on masculinity is often linked with literature on fatherhood, it should follow as no surprise that, like masculinity, defining what it means to be a father can be a complex undertaking. Confirming or reiterating this is literature that has described the concept of fatherhood as diverse and fluid in nature (Barker & Ricardo, 2005). In light of this, one is able to argue that fatherhood can thereby have no absolute definition, as it has had varying descriptions across both space and time.

2.3.1. Moral teacher and guide

One of the earliest characteristics that defined what it meant to be a father was evinced by a man's ability to demonstrate responsibility and control over the moral and spiritual development of his children (Lamb, 2000). Contributing to the father's capacity to instruct the child's moral development was religion (Wilcox, 2002). This fatherly practice extended from Puritan periods and over into early Colonial times. In order to affect the morality of the child, it was the role of the father to teach him/her certain values that were conditioned by the family's religious positioning. The duty of teaching children morality that was based on specific religious values often also required that the children be taught how to read. Thus in some religious societies (e.g. Christian), literacy was valued as it enabled children to read scriptures independently from the father. This is something that was further valued since the Puritans were a group that had revolted from a Christian rule that prevented them from reading the Bible for themselves. Also contributing to moral development was the father's capacity to model whatever was in the scriptures (Lamb, 2000). It was not enough for him to simply educate through encouraging the child to read. Although such forms of

teaching were very prominent in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the early father-child relationship was described as distant and condescending. This was because parents believed that too much affection could lead to parental indulgence, which further ran the risk of tarnishing the character of the child (Pleck & Pleck, 1997).

It can be argued that the paternal roles that were demonstrated in the Western context were mirrored in the African contexts. For example, literature expressed that fathers in traditional African societies were described as being authoritative in nature. Zoning into the South African context to describe this mode of fathering Hunter (2006) states,

"*Elderly informants I spoke with tended to remember fathers and grandfathers as authoritarian figures who persistently demanded inhlonipho (respect)... [Furthermore, in] Zulu society the father, called baba, is respected and feared and his command is obeyed. A man does not talk when his father is present unless he is addressed*" (2006, p. 101).

From this extract, it can be suggested that fatherhood in pre and early colonial South African times was based on the idea that the man had a significant amount of power. He expected to be acknowledged through respect and fear. This kind of fatherhood is a demonstration of how hegemonic fatherhood was played out within the South African context. It is in light of the demanded respect that children – and sometimes the mothers as well – were viewed as inferior to the father. Thus the child was less likely to have a strong relationship with his father. The extract also demonstrates what it meant to be a person with standards within the context. That is, a moral person or child understood the concept of respect. And this respect was to be especially directed towards the father, who was at the top of the home-based hierarchy.

2.3.2. Breadwinner

The beginning of the 19th century industrial revolution also impacted the role of the father in the home (Lamb, 2000). During this period, men went to work in factories while women remained in the home, keeping charge of the children and other household activities. The masculine role of the father as provider was amplified in

this period. The act of providing is important to note as literature suggests that it is one of the defining features of hegemonic masculinity.

With the father away from the home, the mother became the moral teacher, and in many instances, she also became the disciplinarian. While mothers were increasingly involved in the upbringing of the child, the father was less involved. For example, they were less likely to demonstrate feelings and emotions towards their children. However, inline with hegemonic masculinity, they were considered the leaders of the household and thereby, the definitive disciplinarians and breadwinners (J. H. Pleck, 2004). It is important to note that before the period of industrialization, subsistence agriculture was an important means by which life was maintained in the home (Lamb, 2000). Both parents were often involved in this act. However, the occurrence of industrialization meant that breadwinning soon became a significant characteristic of 'good fathering', as such many fathers moved to regions that would permit them to become the 'good' husband and father.

The effects of industrialization on fatherhood were not isolated to Western contexts. On the other hand, literature indicates that such effects have been identified in much of the South African contexts as well (Richter, Chikovore, & Makusha, 2010). The introduction of taxation by colonizers inclined many men to move into the cities. It was thus that city life appeared to become the only means by which men could support and sustain their families. Some intellectuals argue that the need for fathers to leave their rural homes and rural ways of life was the foundation upon which many family related problems began (Mkhize, 2006). They argue that this is because fathers, contrary to outdated and unfounded popular belief, have the capacity to make a big difference in the life of a young child (Richter et al., 2010). Supporting such sentiments, Desmond and Desmond (2006) argue that households that have fathers are better off than those without since they provide support for the mother. The idea that the father supports the mother correlates with Psychodynamic literature, particularly Winnicott (Winnicott, 1976). According to Winnicott (1967),

"[T]he man, supported by a social attitude which in itself is a development from the man's natural function, deals with the external reality for the woman, and so makes it safe and sensible for her to be temporarily in-tuned, self-centred" (p. 147).

This means that the presence of the father causes the mother to feel supported. Since she feels this way, she is increasingly able to focus on things pertaining to herself, including her child. The perceived maternal support is argued to play a significant role in ensuring the children's nutrition, good health care and efficient schooling (Engle & Breaux, 1998). However, if the father is too preoccupied to consider the existence of the mother, as well as her need for him, she is less able to remain psychologically healthy. Things that might cause the father to become an absent figure include his need to provide for the family by leaving her and her children at home, while he works in far-away regions.

By focusing on the problems of breadwinning, intellectuals problematize the concept of fathers as breadwinners. Desmond and Desmond (2006) communicate this by arguing that households that have present fathers are better off than those without since fathers provide support for the mother. Adding to the problematization of the breadwinning father, it has been posited that the absence of the father in the home interrupts the process of identification (White, 1994). Tolson states,

"*[The] fathers appear alien, not only because he legislates and punishes, but also, more significantly, because his masculine presence can only be construed in his physical absence – his distance from family affairs. [The father] is an outsider because he goes out to work*" (Tolson, 1977, p. 24).

Since the father is an outsider, it is argued that he cannot affect the personality construction of his children – especially that of the boy child (White, 1994). However, such positions can be criticized for not considering that children can and often do have alternative father figures (Mkhize, 2006).

2.3.3. Alternative/social father figures

In the history of South Africa, father figures have not always been primarily associated to the child by means of biology. That is to say that in the absence (and sometimes presence) of the father children have identified other figures as paternal (Clowes, Ratele, & Shefer, 2013). Examples of these father-figures include the uncles, brothers, grandfathers, step-fathers, and other male figures who tend be involved in the upbringing of a child. Literature suggests that these father figures

became particularly important following the city-based migration, of many African men (Mkhize, 2006).

2.3.3.1. Grandfathers as alternative father figures

Literature seems to indicate that grandfathers played one of the most important roles in the development of the child succeeding the city-based migration of many fathers, who were soon followed by women and/or their wives in South Africa (Coplan, 2007). Women tended to migrate on account of the fear of being left by their husbands or significant others, as the men were often suspected of engaging in adulterous behaviours while alone in the cities. Other women left for the purpose of securing employment in order to help support the family. As women moved into the city, children had to be left with someone to care for them. This would often be someone who was kin to the mother and/or father. Literature suggests that the most preferred member of kin, with whom children are left, is the grandparent (Hank & Buber, 2009). It is possible that this might have especially been the case in traditional times – both globally and also in contexts of Sub-Saharan Africa.

In contemporary societies, grandparents continue to play an integral role in the development of the child. This is because they are often available when the working parent is not (Bullock, 2005). Given the increase in teenage pregnancy and single parenthood, literature has continued to suggest and reiterate the significance of the grandparent (Bullock, 2005; Hank & Buber, 2009; Mkhize, 2006). Generally speaking, researchers have found that intergenerational forms of interaction can have a positive impact on the child (Kivett, 1985).

While this is important to regard, it should be noted that literature on intergenerational contributions has been limited in that it has paid minimal focus on the grandfather. That is to say that most literature tends to take a generalised look at effects grand parenting (Burton, 1992; Force, Botsford, Pisano, & Holbert, 2000; Trute, 2003), while a negligible amount will specifically concentrate on the grandfather (Bullock, 2005; Kivett, 1985). In other instances, the literature will mainly consider the role of the grandmother and how she deals with grand parenting (Hank & Buber, 2009). Some have argued that part of the reason that literature has not highly focused on the grandfather is because he often takes a backseat in child rearing, while the

grandmother leads (Bullock, 2005; Hank & Buber, 2009). Yet, it must be said that there is a definite need for South African based literature that focuses on the roles that grandfathers play in child rearing as such are difficult to come by.

2.3.3.2. Stepfathers as alternative fathers

Over time, divorce has increasingly become an aspect of society (Earnest, 2003). Consequently, stepparents are more and more likely to be part of a child's life. This is the case even in the absence of parental forms of death in the family. Literature also suggests that alternative father figures play an integral role in the development of the child when there has been a divorce in the family. Divorce refers to the legal process of marriage liquidation (Earnest, 2003). In traditional societies, divorce implied that one of the parties involved in the marriage had broken the marriage contract through adulterous behaviours or physical cruelty towards the other partner (Steinzor, 1969). Later, a number of other transgressions were incorporated into the list of acts that permit one to request a divorce. These include abandonment, habitual drunkenness, and mental cruelty (Earnest, 2003). Yet Steinzor (1969) describes divorce as a wilful choice that is in line with our democratic heritage. Demonstrating a position that correlates with that of Steinzore (1969), Ernest (2003) states,

"*In our culture, love and personal choice in marriage are logical derivations of our constitutionally guaranteed freedoms… there must also be freedom to change one's mind. The image of the heavy hand of death in the marital vow, 'till death do us part', contradicts our traditions of liberty*" (p.9).

It can thus be stated that inline with the traditional liberties is also the choice to remarry. This is the case with many global and African households. Literature appears to suggest that stepparents can play an important role in child development as they buffer against the effects of single parenthood. An example of a study that demonstrates the possible negative effects of single-parenthood, and therefore the need for a supporting parental figure, is the *Third National Incidence Study* conducted by Sedlak and Broadhurst (1996). This study indicated that children from single-parent households had an 87% chance of experiencing physical neglect from the single parent. It also indicated that children had a 77% chance of experiencing physical abuse. Other investigations indicate that the increase in paternal absence

from the home is disturbing because it is often associated with poor school achievement, diminished child involvement in the labour force later on in life, as well as heightened risk taking behaviours (e.g. which often leads to teenage fathering/parenting) (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1998).

Although it can be said that stepparents contribute positively to the problem of single parenthood, other studies suggest otherwise (Anderson, 2005). This is especially the case in the South African context. For example, one South African study found that the children with stepparents are more prone to being exposed to sexual abuse (King, Flisher, Reece, Marais, & Lombard, 2004). Further studies demonstrate that stepchildren will receive less attention from the stepfathers compared to biological fathers (Anderson, 2005). This suggests the importance of a child having a biological father instead of an alternative one. However, it does not guarantee this importance. As has been demonstrated in previous arguments within this review, in some ways, stepparents do affect the life of the child positively.

2.4. Fatherhood across different spaces

Also demonstrating the complexities around fatherhood is the diverse manners in which it is understood across different spaces within a single time. For instance, literature indicates that western regions and/or contexts often define fatherhood in ways that are different to those of collectivist societies (e.g. African and Asian societies). Basing their logic on the concept of 'individualism', western-minded persons are more likely to consider the father as one who primarily cares for his nuclear family (Lamb, 1987). The nuclear family is defined as a two generational household of two sexually cohabitating adults and their unmarried children (Harvey, 1993). In this family, the husband is the instrumental leader, who takes up the role of the breadwinner. Within the modern contextual settings, this means that he goes into the larger community in order to earn money and support his family. His entrance into the larger community often permits him to become a natural channel through which values and community standards insert themselves into those of his family (Harvey, 1993). He is thus often regarded as being best suited for critiquing the manner in which his family conducts itself. It should however be noted that in contemporary society, more and more women are entering the work force. This means that the father

might not always be the one who brings social standards into the family. Instead, the mother and the father are increasingly more likely to collaboratively contribute to certain ideologies that are held by the family. Thus, positions of authority are sometimes shared.

As has been mentioned, the manner in which collectivist societies (normally African or Asian societies) define the family structure tends to differ when compared to Western societies. That is to say that in a collectivist society, the family is not always nuclear. In West African countries for example, many are still greatly dependent on the food that they grow themselves and the animals they own and herd to ensure their survival (Lamb, 1987; Iliyasu, Abubakar, Galadanci, & Aliyu, 2010). More often than not, the father is likely to take up the responsibility of herding the family animals and tending to the fields. As society has become more modernized, fathers may be less likely to tend to livestock and fields, and more likely to seek jobs that will ensure certain financial gains to support the family. As a consequence, families are increasingly reliant on their kin to assist them in raising their children. Thus kinship orders the social structure of many collectivist societies (Lamb, 1987). This reliance on kinship is what often causes children to have varying father figures with whom they might identify as they develop. In this literature review, these fathers have been termed 'alternative/surrogate' father figures.

In addition to family structures differing across varying spaces/areas, the values, morals and/or beliefs concerning the role of the father may also differ. For example, a study investigating the birth preparedness, complication readiness and participation of Nigerian fathers in maternity care found that fathers who were living in non-western contexts were highly unlikely to accompany the mothers of their unborn children to the delivery room (Iliyasu, Abubakar, Galadanci, & Aliyu, 2010). They were also not likely to be involved in any pre-natal activities, such as accompanying the mother to the hospital for regular check-ups. Many of the fathers reported that they had never heard of such things being done. For these fathers, fatherhood was/is fundamentally defined by their ability to provide basic needs (e.g. food and shelter) and protection for the child only after the birth of the child. The investigation further discovered that younger, educated men – who, are likely to have been westernised to some degree within their various educational institutions– were more involved in all (pre-natal,

birth and post-natal) aspects of child rearing. Ultimately, it appears that even though the spaces in which persons develop have the capacity to influence the values of persons, affecting the space can be other social constructions like education.

2.5. Psychology and fatherhood

While the above literature on fatherhood is very important to regard, it is also imperative that we note that a huge portion of the literature is based on non-psychological perspectives. It therefore follows that there is a need to focus more on the literature consisting of psychological frameworks on fatherhood. According to these frames, the study of fathering is new, especially in psychoanalytic developmental theories (Diamond, 1998). That is, in the past psychoanalytic literature, through a focus on the Oedipal complex, was centred on the father as a symbolic figure for masculine identification (Ross, 1982). Thus, in psychologically based literature, fathers were rarely portrayed as "real people capable of making major contributions to their children's development" (Diamond, 1998, p. 248).

2.5.1. "New" fatherhood

However, the reality of the father's contribution to the family's wellbeing began to be emphasised more predominantly in the mid-1970s. During this period writers began to emphasize that fathers could and needed to become nurturers in the family structure (Lamb, 2000). Such conceptions continue to occupy present-day social constructions, which, it must be noted, have not completely done away with the values of traditional masculinity (Morrell, 2006). This means that in addition to viewing the father as the provider of the family, contemporary fatherhood also considers 'real' fathers to demonstrate emotional involvement, caring and domestic helpfulness (e.g. cleaning the house and washing dishes) (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, & Lamb, 2000). Fatherhood, in contemporary literature, is not only studied in order to provide an explanation on the negative developmental outcomes in the child. The new father is therefore regarded as one who is more intimately engaged with his children and shares household duties with his wife. It should be noted that the household duties that he shares with her are those that were previously considered to be solely 'maternal' duties.

It has been suggested that the increased duty sharing is a result of various social changes. One that is important to note, and recurrently mentioned is the increase of female involvement in the labour force (Lamb, 2000). Corroborating this Lim (2002) writes,

"*One of the most striking phenomena of recent times has been the extent to which women have increased their share of the labour force; the increasing participation of women in paid work has been driving employment trends and the gender gaps in labour force participation rates have been shrinking.*" (p. 1).

It is further reported that between 1830 and 1940, women – particularly in America – were involved in family businesses or worked in factories until they married. By 1950, 12% of women with preschool children were in the workforce, and by 1997 that proportion had risen to two thirds (Cabrera et al., 2000). In the South African context, women who had been living in the rural areas, while their husbands worked in the cities began to move into the cities. This meant that household tasks could be increasingly shared between the husband and the wife. In addition to this, the access that children had to their mothers was beginning to be similar in degree to the access they had to their fathers. The number of women entering the labour force surged by 500% between 1921 and 1951 (Coplan, 2007).

Generally speaking, the amount of families where the father served as the sole breadwinner has decreased over the years. This is also demonstrated in both international and South African spheres (Hofferth, 1998). Women are also now viewed as providers (Ehrensaft, 1987; Pruett, 1987; Diamond, 1995). Regarding this, Diamond states that "…the mother who is involved in a demanding career may serve as the primary provider while the husband takes on primary care-taker" (Diamond, 1995, p. 90). In this way, he suggests that fathers continue to provide, but they provide differently. That is to say that they provide the children with emotional forms of care.

2.5.2. The father as the protector of the mother-infant dyad

It can be suggested that the father's capacity to care for his children also facilitates his capacity to protect them. While this has not been expressed in the more historical

accounts of this review, protection is argued to be one of the most archaic and universal paternal desires (Diamond, 1995). Some psychodynamically inclined intellectuals have hinted to this, with Winnicott expressing the importance of the father as he provides an essential protective holding environment for the family (Winnicott, 1976). However, though mentioning this protective paternal role in child development, intellectuals often emphasised the role of the mother in the child's development. It is in light of this that certain writers and researchers in the field of psychology have sought to engage with the father more extensively (Diamond, 1986; Diamond, 1998; Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2005; Frosh, Phoenix, & Pattman, 2003). In facilitating these intellectuals aim to emphasise the protective function of the father Gilmore (1990) stated,

"*Men nurture their society by shedding blood, their sweat, and their semen… and by dying if necessary in far away places to provide a safe haven for their people*" (p. 230).

In reviewing the contemporary psychological literature (which is arguably more psychosocial in nature), it appeared that the protective role of the father is mostly emphasised in cases where the child is yet an infant or still in the womb (Diamond, 1995; Zayas, 1987). Further developments of paternal literature seemed to demonstrate other roles that he plays as the child matures (Diamond, 1998). For instance, the father's role in facilitating the identification of his adolescent son is discussed by Diamond (1998). This serves to demonstrate that fathers can act as the sex role models of the boy child (Pleck & Pleck, 1997). While literature has begun to place an increased emphasis on the impact that fathers have on their sons, it is important to note that the emphasis is increased and not being initiated. This is because previous psychologically based literature has already made some mention of father-son relations through the Oedipal complex. That is, it has already sought to explain how the son unconsciously develops into a model of his father in order to ensure survival (Freud, 1924). This is stated to occur at the backdrop of a conflict between the father and the son, who seeks to attain the affections of the mother. While theories on the Oedipal complex have certainly contributed to literature on fathering, it appears that ending with Freud's (1924) conceptions would not have been sufficient. Hence it follows that contemporary intellectuals argue that the Oedipus

legend can now be reinterpreted as indicating the important role that the father plays in facilitating the child's separation-individuation from the mother (Winnicott, 1976). That is, "the Oedipal tragedy is more fully understood by appreciating the absent Laius' failure to help his son accomplish… [the task is separation-individuation]..." (Diamond, 1998, p. 247). This means that even though the father is 'absent', he still needs to be regarded. By indicating this, the importance of the father in the development of the child – especially the son – is made more blatant in psychology, as it has been in other social sciences.

2.5.3. Compensatory fathering

The aforementioned seeks to emphasise that regarding the father permits us to identify how his shortfalls (such as his absence) impact the psychological development of the son. It is in this that we comprehend that becoming a father can awaken particular emotions from the one's own experiences as a child. Diamond (1998) argues that fathering can often be unsettling for men who are typically not accustomed to demonstrating emotions that are evoked by children. It can be said that this might be caused by traditional ideologies about masculinity, as it downplays the importance of emotional expression. While some present day fathers might indeed find the act of fathering unsettling, in many cases, the act can serve a restorative function. This function is evoked by a feeling of being able to reconnect with one's own father through fathering. Thus,

"*the role of a loving father is the capacity to accept that it is the baby's right to bring him all it's needs, fantasies and feelings… It is further suggested that this is one of the qualities possessed by the good-enough pre-oedipal father*" (Layland, 1980).

In other words, some men view the fathering space as being an opportunity for them to compensate for the things that their own fathers failed to do for them while they were sons themselves. However, it might be queried how the son knows that he has not received fathering that is positive. Some have argued that various social constructions have impacted understandings of what it means to be a good enough father.

For instance, religious institutions have demonstrated a certain level of influence on family-related culture, beliefs and values (Wilcox, 2002). Previous investigations have attested to this, suggesting that there are two religious factors that have the capacity to affect parenting. These include religious participation and distinct religious practices, which can ultimately affect the parents' values and behaviours towards their children (Wilcox, 1998). Yet, even though religious structures can affect paternal parenting positively, in other instances it might not. That is to say that contemporary understanding of what it means to be a father might not be positively affected in all instances. For instance, paternal nurturance (which is an aspect defining the "new father") might be disregarded in religions where good-enough fathering is defined by the father's increased focus on breadwinning.

Educational institutions also have the capacity to limit manifestations of the new father, as educated fathers might become too busy to attend to their children. In the past research has indicated that education has the capacity to influence the role that the father chooses to play in the home (Hanson, Morrison, & Ginsburg, 1989). Even though it might cause fathers to be absent from the home, it also suggests that it might also influence increased paternal involvement. Confirming this was a study that was conducted in Nigeria (Iliyasu et al., 2010). This study found that educated fathers were more likely to be involved in both the pre and post-natal development of the child.

Suggestions about how institutions – like the abovementioned – have the capacity to influence understandings about "good-enough fathering" problematize notions about compensatory fathering. This is because compensatory fathering is primarily based on the idea that the father seeks to restore what was 'broken' in his childhood through a different relationship with his son (Layland, 1980). It does not appear to take other factors (such as religion, education etc.) into consideration. Despite this problem, compensatory fathering is important since it acknowledges the father-son relationship and since it seeks to explain why sons might desire not be the men their perceive their fathers to be. "Compensatory fathering" is also significant because it directs our attention to sons and suggests that we need to understand them more extensively.

2.6. Sons

Male children (i.e. Sons) can be described in conjunction to the concept of masculinities. For example, in describing what it means to be a boy, Friedman and Downey (2002) state that

"*[male] peer groups… tend to be cohesive, bounded from girls and from adults, and organized hierarchically. Dominance rank governs much [of the] behaviour. In free play, juvenile boys tend to be more territorial, competitive, not accepting participation by girls and devaluing behaviour deemed feminine or girl-like. Verbalizations tend to be confrontational…* (p. 209).

The above description of boys, mirrors that of hegemonic masculinity to some extent. It has been mentioned that hegemonic masculinities are those that seek to separate themselves from femininity and anything else that might be perceived as inferior. The hierarchical manner in which the boys are organized further suggests that young boys can also be grouped into 'subordinated' masculinity.

Adding to literature on boys/sons is classical psychological literature, which appears to suggest that the son is best understood in connection to the parents. For example, the Oedipal complex, which suggests that that the son (when between the ages of three and five) develops an unconscious sexual desire for his mother, resulting in his father becoming his rival (Freud, 1924). Castration anxiety, on the part of the boy/son causes him to identify with his father, therefore resulting in him performing the 'masculine' activities that his own father carries out.

However, the theory does not explain why some sons do not desire to be like or identify with their fathers. Fortunately, suggestions have been made to address this issue. For instance, literature seems to suggest that the son's own experiences with the father have the capacity to influence his paternal aspirations (Diamond, 1998). For example, in some cases, sons whose fathers are absent often desire to be present. Psychosocial literature suggests that this is a compensatory act that is intended to help the son make up for his own father's mistakes. Psychosocial literature further posits that the son's need to be different from his father can be affected by other persons. For example, Blos (1985) argues that in the (physical or emotional) absence of the

father the internal image and identification of the son is influenced by the conscious and unconscious, attitudes that the mother might have towards the father. Thus, if the mother has a negative attitude towards/concerning the father in his physical or emotional absence, the boy is likely to internalise these attitudes and they come to form his male-identity – they shape who he is. Her capacity to influence the type of relationship and perceptions that the son has concerning his father suggests that she acts as the "gate-keeper" (Diamond, 1998). Supporting this position Atkins (Atkins, 1982) states that the mother has the capacity to get in the way of the father's attachment and active engagement with the son. It must be noted that this does not mean that the father is no longer important in the son's identity formation. Instead the father influences the development of the son indirectly through the attitudes of the mother.

These theoretical positions can be identified in some South African qualitative investigations. For example, in *One Line, Two Line... fathers and sons in struggle in South Africa* (Adonis & Krwala, 2011) one son expresses how he does not want to become the kind of man that his father was/is. An in-depth observation of the boy's story shows that paternal absence and maternal experiences with the son's father significantly influenced his position.

2.7. How fathers view their sons

Sons are often preferred over the daughter in many societies, especially if it is expected that the family will have only a single child (Williamson, 1976). These preferences are especially predominant in highly Confucian communities, which are often found in China. They can also be found in certain traditional African regions where high fertility rates tend to be influenced by different socio-cultural factors. Some examples of these factors include the economic value of children, insurance for old age, lineage, posterity, and expecting that one's relatives will assist in child-rearing (Beyeza-Kashesya, Neema, Ekstrom, Kaharuza, Mirembe, & Kulane, 2010). In Ugandan societies, for instance, it has been found that adults often prefer to have a boy child first, as this ensures that the family lineage will be maintained. Female children are valued as income since they bring in a bride price or dowry. However, their value continues to lie in their capacity to provide the male child with the resources to continue the family name, since the boy-child uses dowry to get him-self

a wife. This is also important as it means that he will be better able to care for his aging parents. Thus, sons might often be viewed as a form of insurance that the father uses to ensure the prolonged sustenance of the family and its name. In light of this, fathers might sometimes attempt to develop their sons into themselves, or better versions of themselves. In this way, it has been further argued that fathers view their sons as prospective versions of themselves (Yablonsky, 2000). In order to facilitate the development of a miniature and a later adult self, fathers might become very involved in the development of the child. It can be said that this is conducive to concepts of new fatherhood, where the father is more involved and nurturing parental figure (Morrell, 2006; Yablonsky, 2000).

2.8. Studies on the father-son dyad.

The extensive information reviewed above regarding fathers and sons indicates that there has been a great deal of interest in fathers and their sons in literature. This interest, it must be noted, has not been solely based in theory formation. Instead, interest has also significantly been found different types of studies. Many of these studies have proved useful in empirically demonstrating the importance of the father-son relationship. Examples of these studies have been mentioned in the rationale of this research report – namely Zimmerman's (as cited in Richter, 2006) and Dubowitz et al.'s (2001) studies.

Further studies revealing how important the father-son relationship is have been conducted in the South African context. A good amount of these studies have been qualitative in nature. One such study was conducted by Nduna and Jewkes (2010). Her investigation focused on and was titled, *Undisclosed Paternal Identity in Narratives of Distress among Young People in Eastern Cape, South Africa*. Although the study did not have an isolated interested in father-son relationships, it was able to attain findings that suggested the importance of the father-son relationship. For example, it found that boys in the Eastern Cape tended to show an explicit desire to know their fathers when the time came for them to transition into man-hood. When this opportunity was denied them, frustration or anxiety arose, suggesting a son's deep desire for his father (Nduna & Jewkes, 2010). Examples of qualitative studies in South Africa that are particularly interested in investigating men in relation to fatherhood tend to focus on either the experiences (and perceptions) of sons (e.g.

Swartz & Bhana, 2009), or those of fathers (Eddy et al., 2013). In other words, the investigations do not include the paternally related perceptions and experiences of both the father and his son. Since there is no literature or qualitative investigation in the South African context that explores the fatherhood perceptions and experiences of both fathers and their sons, this investigation will explore these to determine if they affect the father-hood related aspirations of the sons and the fatherhood behavioural outcomes of the fathers.

2.9. Summary

Overall, there has been a great deal of interest in the father-son relationship among both theorists and researchers. Since most – if not all – paternally related literature explores fatherhood in conjunction to notions around masculinity, this section of the investigation was initiated with a review of masculinity-based material. It was noted that masculinity is pluralistic in form. In light of the association between fatherhood and masculinity/masculinities, this review identified that there is no single way of defining fatherhood. The review then explored how fatherhood has been defined across both space and time. The varying manners in which fatherhood has been understood confirmed that it, like masculinity, is complex and ever changing.

Sons, as boys are also connected to literature on masculinities. Both hegemonic and subordinated forms of masculinity can be used to determine expound on what it means to be a boy. Psychologically based literature can also be used to expand on the concept of being a male child and/or son. However, such literature was previously and primarily used to hypothesise that the son develops into a man much like his father through the process of identification. Classical theorists suggested that identification functioned as an unconscious defence mechanism that relieved him of the fear of being castrated by his father (Freud, 1924). However, it was noted that such theorists failed to expound on why some males choose to follow paths that differ from their fathers. It is this gap in literature that psychosocial writings have sought to cover through notions like “compensatory fathering”.

Literature on father-son relations is not limited to theory. Thus, also reviewed are studies conducted by various investigators. However, despite the increased move towards investigating fathers as and sons, no qualitative investigations have

demonstrated an interest in exploring the perceptions, experiences and aspirations of both fathers and their sons synchronously. It is in light of this gap in literature that this particular study explores fatherhood from the perspective of both fathers and their sons.

Chapter 3:

METHODOLOGY

3. Methodology

3.1. Main Research Question

Are there similarities in the perceptions, experiences and aspirations of fathers and sons?

To answer the abovementioned research question, the following (additional) questions ought to be answered:

3.2. Additional Research Questions

3.2.1. How do sons perceive and experience their fathers?

3.2.2. How do fathers perceive and experience their paternal roles as fathers?

3.2.3. How do fathers and sons experience each other?

3.3. Main Objective

To use abovementioned research questions to determine if and why men might (or might not) aspire to be like their fathers.

3.4. Methods

3.4.1. Research design

A qualitative methodology was used in this investigation. Qualitative forms of research refer to those investigations that stress the importance of quality over quantity (Miller & Brewer, 2003). That is, they focus on social meanings rather than numerical statistical data. Moreover qualitative research views society as consisting of people's perceptions of the social world. In light of these views, qualitative researchers argue that "knowledge of the social world is incomplete unless we also understand people's social meanings" (Miller & Brewer, 2003, p. 239). However, social meanings are often not static. Thus qualitative research becomes important, as it does not disregard the fact that people are different within different times and spaces. In other words, it acknowledges the role that context tends to play in shaping how people begin to make meaning of their respective phenomena. It therefore allows us, as researchers, to begin to explore the various meanings that people place on certain phenomena.

According to Willig (2001), the objective of qualitative research is "to understand 'what it is like' to experience particular conditions... and how people manage in certain situations" (p. 9). This means that through a qualitative investigation this study was able to explore the perceptions and experiences of men relating to fatherhood. Such also contributed to the investigation's capacity to determine if sons aspired to be like their fathers. Also important to regard as well is the use of terms like 'particular' and 'certain' in Willig's (2001) definition of qualitative research. The highlighted terms suggest and emphasises that the approach is able to regard that individual conditions and situations can differ across different settings. This therefore suggests that varied perceptions, experiences and, potentially, aspirations are likely. These variations imply that participants involved in qualitative research are, to some extent, given the opportunity to express their own views. This is important in regards to this investigation since it emphasises that we will be able to:

1. Hear the voices of the fathers (perceptions),
2. Know how *they* were fathered (experiences),
3. Know how *their* experiences affected their paternal aspirations,
4. Hear the voices of the sons (perceptions),
5. Know how *they* were fathered (experiences),
6. Know how *their* experiences affected their paternal aspirations.

Though their environments may influence the views and the experiences thereof, it is imperative that we regard that these are not influenced by the researcher. In light of all the aforementioned, a qualitative approach to research was needed for this study as it functioned to provide investigators with detailed information about the phenomenon of interest (Durrheim, 2006).

Qualitative research places a great deal of emphasis on the study of phenomena from the perspective of the insider (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Thus, through this investigation, readers hear the each of the voices of the fathers and how they fathered their sons. Moreover, one is able to hear the voices of the sons and how they were fathered. In this way, the reader is able to determine if the self-descriptions and perceptions of the fathers regarding how they fathered their sons is congruent with those of their sons. This is a unique and important aspect in father-son investigations. Its unique nature is found in the poverty of known research that seeks to expound on

the experiences and perceptions of both paternal figures and their sons on the issue of fathering.

Although critics of the methodology emphasise that detailed information can be contaminated by the subjective views of the researcher, it is important to note that qualitative investigators attempt to avoid this through the process of reflexivity (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Reflexivity is something that requires the investigator to be aware of his/her contribution to the research findings (Willig, 2001). Wilson and MacLean (2011) state that it is "the practice of reflecting upon the qualitative research process for the purpose of identifying subjective and contextual factors that may have influenced the research outcome" (p. 191). As a result, it can be argued that the process of reflexivity restores the strengths of qualitative research methods, thus making it significantly useful and suitable for this study.

3.4.2. Participants and sampling method

The participants of this study consisted of five South African fathers and their sons (22 years of age and above). Altogether, ten men participated in this study. Individual interviews were held with each participant. Fathers could not participate if their sons could not participate and vice versa. It must be noted that there was one instance where a son was interviewed and not his father. This was due to the father's busy schedule. In this case and in light of purpose of this investigation, it was decided that the qualitative information he provided would not be used in this study. The sons involved in this study did not need to have their own children in order to participate. There were no requirements in regards to their levels of education. However, other requirements had to be upheld. In addition to the abovementioned requirements, it was also imperative that all men be Black Africans. This was not mentioned to the participants but was done in order to somewhat standardise the data. Economically, all participants were in middle class Africans, with most occupying the upper and fewer occupying the lower middle class. The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 56 years.

The fathers and sons informing this investigation were requested to volunteer to participate through word of mouth advertising. That is, the researcher asked colleagues and friends to share information pertaining to the research with fathers and

sons they knew. It must also be noted that the researcher also verbally communicated the details of her research with potential participants. Moreover, to be noted was that she often communicated with the sons first. This is because she tended to find them more accessible as they tended to be close to, but not in, her social spheres. In cases where a father demonstrated verbal and/or non-verbal interest in the investigation, the researcher would request his email address from his son. This permitted the researcher to send an email that contained an electronically attached letter (*See Appendix A*). The objective of the letter was to expound on the purpose of the investigation. It also served the function of notifying fathers and sons of that which was expected of them in the overall investigation. Once the email was sent, the fathers could communicate a date that best suited them in order for the interview to take place.

Appointment setting with the sons was on a face-to-face level of communication. In other instances, sons were communicated with using *WhatsApp*, general text messaging, and telephonically. Other telephonic conversations were with either the wives of the participating fathers. The wives tended to mediate appointment setting, as most fathers were often too busy to meet or schedule appointments with the researcher themselves. Once fathers agreed to participate, the researcher sent an email with the abovementioned letter (*See Appendix A*).

This investigation used a combination of purposive and snowball non-probability sampling methods, respectively, to attain participants (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). This is because the researcher found that advertising through posters and other modes was not efficient. As such, most participants were gathered using 'word of mouth', email, text messaging and voice calling. The participants were permitted to take part in the study on a 'first come first serve basis'.

3.4.3. Data collection method

Once consent forms were signed, data collection commenced. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews (see *Appendix G* and *H*) for all participants. Semi-structured interviews are interviews where the researcher prepares questions on a particular topic of interest while also leaving significant space for the interview to develop naturally (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). The interview questions for this investigation are designed to encourage participants to talk about the concept of

fatherhood. It should also be noted that the interview questions for fathers were not designed to be entirely similar to those of the sons since the two are not in the same stages in life.

It was originally decided that all participants would be interviewed individually in a room at the Emthonjeni Centre of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. However, this later proved very difficult as most participants could not make it to the centre. Consequently, the researcher had to meet with the fathers at their preferred location. For example, some participants were met at their places of work, while others were seen in their homes. While the researcher had to be very flexible in order in meeting with the participants, what could not be changed was the requirement for a private meeting space. The researcher hypothesised that the individual and private interviews would increase the degree to which participants were open, honest and informative. This also meant that the use of individual interviews would be able to reduce the likelihood of sons and fathers presenting socially desirable information. All interviews were recorded using a voice/audio recorder, at the consent of the interviewees (*See Appendix E*). The interviews were all set to take up a period of 50 minutes. However, some fathers gave very brief responses that were only minimally extended even when they were probed further. Such minimalism in interviewee responses often made the interviewing process very difficult. Interviews with participants who provided closed and/or minimalistic reposes tended to last for about thirty to forty minutes. Despite this, the researcher was able attain useful information for the investigation. To explore experiences related to the interviews, a reflexive section is included in this investigation. Once recorded, the interview sessions were transcribed into a secured computer where only the interviewer/researcher could gain access and engage in the next step of data analysis.

3.4.4. Data analysis method

The gathered qualitative data was organised into themes and then analysed using thematic content analysis. Themes are patterns that the researcher finds in his/her gathered qualitative information (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic content analysis is defined as a type of analysis that detects and analyses themes across data-sets (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). In describing thematic content analysis Braun and Clarke (2006) state that, "[it] can be a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or

unravel the surface of 'reality'" (p. 5). This is important to note given that the aim of this study is to explore and therefore 'reflect' fatherhood experiences and perceptions, and use these to explain the aspirations and current realities of sons concerning fatherhood. Abduction is described as a form of reasoning that can help the investigator develop a hypothesis from a creative moment where understanding about a particular phenomenon is (and/or thought to be) grasped (Lipscomb, 2012). Dubois and Gadde (2002) state that the abductive approach in qualitative research is useful if the investigator hopes to discover new variables and other relationships. Since abduction is sometimes criticised for being prone to producing falsifiable insight, researchers tend to use deductive thematic analysis to refine abductive hypotheses (Lipscomb, 2012). The ability of deductive reasoning to refine abductive data is based on the fact that deduction is driven by existing theories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this investigation these theories will include, psychoanalytic, social interactionism and social constructionist theories.

Induction is the third type of thematic data analysis and is considered to be an empirically elaborative form of analysis (Chong, 1994) that is driven by the researched information (Hayes, 2000). It is an important utility in thematic analysis because it can produce rich data that – unlike deductive reasoning – is not limited by existing theories. It is also important because it can be used to test the hypotheses developed through abduction (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Lipscomb, 2012). Given that abduction is limited without deductive and inductive reasoning, this investigation used all three forms of thematic reasoning or analysis. This enabled the investigator to ensure that the research findings were as accurate and rich as possible.

Below is a clearer representation of the data analysis steps:

1. ***Transcription of interview data*** – this data was transcribed and stored in a secured computer where access was limited to the researcher/interviewer only.
2. ***Abductive thematic analysis*** – the researcher then conducted a creative exploratory analysis of the data to determine if new information could be attained concerning perceptions and experiences on fatherhood.
3. ***Deductive thematic analysis*** – existing themes that were attained from existing literature were used as a basis for further analysis.

4. ***Inductive thematic analysis*** – data was organised into themes based on qualitative patterns identified by the researcher in the data. It functioned to cover the themes that deductive thematic analysis could not cover.

To ensure that the process of analysis was free of subjective researcher opinions, the researcher received guidance from her research supervisor on the analysis and interpretation of the key themes.

3.4.5. Ethical considerations

Informed consent was directly attained from each participant, as all were above the age of eighteen (see *Appendix A* and *Appendix B*). The informed consent document expressed that the anonymity of participants and the confidentiality of information they presented was to be maintained. It also informed them that they would be recorded via audio on condition that they agreed to do so. Further expressed was the right of the participants to not respond to interview questions and/or terminate the interview if and whenever they chose. According to Wilson and MacLean (2011), questioning participants about unpleasant events in their lives can sometimes result in psychological distress. Although it was not expected that this investigation would induce any research related stress, participants were nevertheless provided with the Life Line contact details, where they could receive free assistance from Life Line counselling employees. No participant reported a need to use these services because of what the investigation might have induced. The participants were also given sufficient information (verbally and via the informed consent document) concerning the purpose and process of the study before deciding to participate in it. In addition to this, they were given the contact details of the researcher if they should desire to follow up or query on other and/or unclear information pertaining to the investigation. The data collection did not proceed until ethical approval has been attained.

Chapter 4:

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to the overall aim of this investigation. Through the qualitative technique of thematic analysis, some relevant themes and sub-themes have been identified from the data. These are presented in this section and serve to generate a better understanding of how fathers and sons relate to one another. It is important to note that the identified themes are based on information that was communicated by the participants. It is also important to note that these themes have been linked to existing literature where possible. Transcriptions of this information have been analysed, however, only a few selected quotes are used in the report. With the permission of the participants, this chapter uses the transcribed quotes to support and represent the themes and findings that emerged throughout the analysis of the data. The chapter also includes a concluding section that discusses the findings. This section functions to link the findings with relevant literature and psychosocial theory. For ethical reasons, pseudonyms are used to protect the identities of the participants. Thus it should be noted that all respondents are to be referred to as:

- Father 1 and Son 1
- Father 2 and Son 2
- Father 3 and Son 3
- Father 4 and Son 4
- Father 5 and Son 5

Before discussing the findings, it is imperative that the reader be familiarised with the impressions that were gained by the researcher during the interview process. This reflexive information will provide an important contextualised base for the analysed findings that will follow.

Altogether, this investigation consisted of ten participants. Five of these participants included black fathers, and the other five were the biological sons of the mentioned five fathers. All fathers were employed middle to upper-middle class men. Most of their sons were engaged in their tertiary education, while the minority (two out of the

five) were employed. The two that are employed work in the corporate world. Both are currently occupying junior positions at their places of work. Of those that are studying, one is involved in a study-based internship. None of the sons were married, but some were involved in what they described as serious relationships. All participants were black males residing in South Africa. All the respondents were interviewed individually and at varying times.

4.2. Researcher's experience

4.2.1. Reflexive introduction

Boonzaier and Shefer (2006) argue that it is imperative for researchers to engage in reflexive thought when investigating qualitative material. This is because reflexivity allows the investigator to be more aware of the manner in which s/he has affected and/or contaminated the outcomes of the research (Willig, 2001). Denzin and Lincoln (1998, cited in Boonzaier and Shefer, 2006, p. 5) state that reflexivity is a process whereby the researcher continually reflects upon the entire research process and how s/he might have influenced it. Thus, reflexivity is important in interview-based investigations because it permits the researcher to identify various factors that might have affected the interview process. It is for this reason that this section has been included and shared with the reader.

4.2.2. Reflections of power (ethnicity/race, age and gender)

Prior to the recruitment of participants, one of the researcher's concerns was the effect that social identity could have on the data collection process. Social identities are imperative concepts that ought to be considered as they are connected to phenomena like race, ethnicity, gender, religion and class. These phenomena have the capacity to influence how we relate with one another, and how we relate with one another is often influenced by the concept of power as well. Reiterating this, Wilsons and MacLean (2011) argue that "[t]he researcher may be [sometimes] seen as an authority figure by the interviewee[s], and the interaction [between them] may also be influenced by the researcher's social status, gender, age, or ethnicity" (p. 203). The position that power tends to influence the manners in which we relate to one another is also mirrored by the likes of Foucault (1977), who states the following:

In human relationships, whether they involve verbal communication such as we are engaged in at this moment, or amorous, institutional, or economic relationships, power is always present: I mean a relationship in which one person tries to control the conduct of the other. (1977, p. 291)

It is potentially in light of this that Seidman (2012) argues, "the interview relationship is fraught with issues of power" (p.101). Given South Africa's history, Seidman (2012) further argues that relationship and rapport establishment of researchers and participants from different racial and ethnic backgrounds may thus be difficult. When relating this position to my own experience, it must be said that I did not feel that the race impacted my rapport establishment negatively. This might have been because both the researcher (myself) and participants are of the same racial group. On the other hand, the different ethnicities appeared to affect the manner in which I interacted with some of the participants. For instance, when interacting with the fathers, I found that I was more reserved and highly conscious of myself. I felt the incessant need to be respectful towards them. This might have been because of the highly regarded expectation for youth to respect elders within my own ethnic and racial setting. As a Zulu youth, I have always been taught that it is important to respect my elders, regardless of their class. It is important to regard that the notion of respecting one's elders as a black youth is noted in both historical (Mazrui, 1975) and contemporary (Day, 2014) literature considering the South African context. The identification of the concept of "respect for elders" in contemporary South African culture is important to note. This is because the society has experienced a great deal of cultural assimilation, where Western Cultures, as well as various religious and a-religious philosophies have integrated with native South African cultures. In Western entertainment, for instance, it is not uncommon for a child/youth to speak in a tone that black South Africans would consider disrespectful. Thus, it can be said that when such assimilations are disregarded, one would not be able to better comprehend the experiences of the young black researcher (myself) with the older black participants. Overall, in light of my perceived and believed obligations to my elders, I found that I wanted to ensure that I did not offend them through the manners in which I probed them. In this sense, it can be said that my interviews with these fathers was affected in some way, as it could have limited the amount of data I attained. However, on the same note, my tendency to communicate with them in a respectful manner might have

also caused them to desire to share more with me, than they might have shared with someone who failed to identify the need to respect.

On the other hand, my interactions with their sons were different in the sense that I felt more relaxed when interacting with them. Thus, in addition to ethnicity, it can be said that the researcher-participant interactions were also influenced by the extraneous variable of age. This has already been alluded to in the above paragraph. However, a more explicit expression of the contribution that age played in this investigation is yet imperative to make mention of.

On the topic of age literature suggests that older participants may feel uncomfortable with being interviewed by a young interviewer, especially in cases where they feel that the interviewer places them in subordinate positions (Seidman, 2012). In light of this, I made the conscious decision to ensure that I did not make any of the participants feel subordinate. However, my conscious effort might have been employed too extensively as this seemed to have limited my capacity to openly communicate with significantly older participants. It was often difficult to view them as equals in the interviews. While this did not stop me from asking more sensitive questions, it must be note that it made it more difficult.

In addition to ethnicity and age, I also felt that gender affected the manner in which I interacted with the participants. On this point, Johnson and Moore (1993) argue that gender relations are a significant dynamic in shaping the interview process. They argue that these have the capacity to influence the sort of data that is obtained. This is especially the case for qualitative investigations. In restating Johnson and Moore's (1993) perceptions, it can be said that the interviewing relationship is often affected by sexist attitudes. For instance, one might find that males interviewing females can be overbearing, while females interviewing males can sometimes be too reluctant to control the focus of the interview (Seidman, 2012). Both scenarios have the capacity to limit the richness of the collected data. Moreover, adding to the limitations might the male participant's dismissiveness of the female interviewer. In my own experiences, I found that my gender did affect the mood of the general interview. There was some discomfort that might have been because of the gender differences. I also got the sense that both fathers and sons might have revealed more if I was not female. However, the fact that I knew some of the participants outside of the

interview process might have also contributed to the duality in my data. Fathers and sons might have wanted to paint a positive image of their families in order to maintain my good impressions that I had concerning them.

It did not often happen that sons reported different information to their fathers. However, in instances where this did occur, the researcher decided to not confront the fathers and/or sons explicitly as this could have negatively affected confidentiality agreements. Instead, it was decided that this information would be up for interpretation, should the need arise.

Though I received a lot of assistance from mothers and sons, it must be said that I also found the process of securing the interviews difficult. This appeared to be because both the researcher and the fathers were often busy throughout the course of the week – including weekends. In some cases, some fathers would have to cancel as other important meetings or unanticipated family functions would come up. Although this was a very distressing time for the researcher, most interviews with fathers were eventually secured. However, the difficulty in securing interviews with certain fathers seemed to have resonated in the interviews. For instance, a pattern was noted in that interviews that were easily attained were more extensive and took longer than those that proved more challenging to secure. This often caused me to feel that sons were more open than fathers. However, my experiences with the fathers in comparison to the sons might have been associated with fathers desiring to finish as early as possible to make other appointments. Alternatively, the discomfort may have been with the researcher who might have felt that she was invading their space and time.

4.3. Research Findings

This study aimed to determine the perceptions that fathers and their sons have concerning what it means to be a father. In determining these perceptions, the investigation further hoped to decipher if the views influenced the kind of fathers that the men became and/or aspired to become. Since sons were interviewed in relation to their fathers, the extended aim of this investigation was to explore if the relationship between fathers and sons influenced the described aspirations of the sons, as well as their definitions of fatherhood. Much of the data in this investigation yielded knowledge that reiterated information from already existing literature on fatherhood.

That is, the themes that the participants brought up were similar to those that are in current literature. For instance, many of the participants appeared to associate fatherhood with themes that correlate with hegemonic masculinity and/or traditional descriptions of fatherhood. Within the concepts, men discussed the different roles that fathers are stereotypically expected to play in the home. Such roles included (1) the father as the moral guide, (2) the father as the breadwinner and (3) the father as the "non-nurturer". Extended investigations also indicated that biology did not always precede "real" fathering. There were participants who felt that they received paternal guidance from alternative figures, who exhibited the aforementioned roles of a typical "father".

4.3.1. Fathers and sons talk about what it means to be a father: Traditional fatherhood in contemporary society

One of the traditional manners of describing fatherhood entailed descriptions of the father as the moral guide. According to the men in this investigation, fatherhood also meant that they, as fathers, should have the capacity to provide for their family. Other parenting roles, like that of nurturing, were discussed and these will be elaborated upon below. First, however, is "the father as the moral guide".

4.3.1.1. The father as the moral guide

In the literature review section of this investigation, it was deciphered that one of the earliest characteristics of fatherhood included the role of the father as the moral guide of the family (Lamb, 2000). Fathers were expected to take charge when it came to teaching their children values and creating certain moral boundaries. Often, the boundaries were informed by the family's cultural and/or religious groundings (Wilcox, 2002). With this in mind, this investigation will define morality as the principles that enable one to distinguish between what a particular group of people consider to be right and wrong. This definition is provided in light of the relative truths of right and wrong that people construct.

The idea of the father as the moral guide of the family was echoed in this investigation, supporting positions demonstrated by existing literature. This is evinced in the sentiments of one father who stated:

Father 1: [Fatherhood] means… just giving direction to the whole family. It means to take responsibility on their spiritual growth, being a Christian I think that is fundamental…

While not explicitly stated, this extract suggests that some fathers feel that it is important for them to lead their families morally. Given his Christian beliefs, one could site a Biblical text found in *Ephesians 5:23*, where men are told that "…the husband is the head of the wife…" (Ephesians 5:23, New International Version). In light of this Christian father's sentiments and the Christian text, one is able to identify that he considered himself to be the leader, the head and the guide of the home. His job was to lead his family towards a particular mode of thinking, believing and thus, morality. Since he is the head, it can also be said that he facilitates thought. This father, as a Christian, felt that his moral teachings were important as they facilitated the spiritual development of his whole family. In other words, he viewed fatherhood as pertaining to being a spiritual leader in the home. He saw this as one of the most fundamental aspects of being a father. This, however, could be interpreted as embodying patriarchal beliefs that may often undermine mother's role in inscribing morality in the family structure. It speaks more to traditional forms of masculinity than to contemporary forms, and therefore might not find full acceptance in today's society (Lamb, 2000). Thus, what should also be regarded is the age of the father (who is in his late 50s), as it might have contributed to the traditional conception of what it means to be a father.

It could be argued that, being part of an older generation, this father's position is not connected to youthful or contemporary comprehensions of what it means to be a father. However, this investigation revealed that the idea of the father as a moral guide was echoed in interviews with certain sons as well. It was particularly echoed by his own son's perceptions of what it means to be a good father. For example, when asked by the interviewer, "*what does it mean to be a father*? *How do you understand the term*?" *Son 1* (who is also the son of Father 1) responded by saying,

Son 1: umm, [unclear], being a father, umm, [unclear], he's supposed to be a guide for his children I guess. You know, teach them right from wrong. Umm, let's see umm. Yeah umm, well he's the ***head of the household*** *and what not but that's more like… Basically umm he's supposed to* ***employ certain values*** *to his kids, to his family and*

ensure that his kids are operating within the boundaries of those values *and what not... Umm I can't think of anything else anymore. Hmm well umm I suppose* ***disciplinarian****. Yeah but that's all in umm 'cause that's one of the things he has to do to make sure that his kids don't steer away.*

From his position, it appears that this son also felt that fatherhood could be associated with the father acting as the moral guide of the family. Although this participant did not mention Christianity as the core of his position, his sentiments serve to dispute the idea that traditional conceptions of fatherhood are related to older generations alone. Furthermore, it demonstrates that traditional positions concerning what it means to be a father continue to exist in contemporary society.

The idea that the father acts as a moral guide was not isolated to the perceptions of *Father 1* and *Son 1*. Other dyads appeared to hold similar views. For instance, *Son 5* expressed that he felt that a father had to act as a "*disciplinarian*". Although his father did not use the term of disciplinarian, as will be noted below, he felt that he as a father needed to guide his son in some way. Commenting on what it meant to be a father he stated,

Father 4: *When the child is born, it makes you proud… yah… it makes you proud… it makes you feel overjoyed to be a father in the beginning. Then when they grow, that's where you see that it's not only the joy that goes with it. It's also the responsibility and then* ***the guidance*** *and the support and without those, the family is not fulfilled.*

Although this father and his son were not as religious as *Father 1* and his son, it must be noted that both dyads (*dyad 1* and *dyad 4*) associated fatherhood with certain moral ethos and principles.

Despite this, Christianity still appeared to be one of the most influential points upon which the idea of "father as moral guide" was established. Certain fathers seemed to believe that one's capacity to be a good father with sound morality was influenced by the mentioned belief system. This was iterated in another interview with *Father 2*. Since Christianity influenced his moral positioning, this father also sensed the need to pass his beliefs onto his son. In his interview he stated the following:

Father 2: So I thought over the course of my life and because I have very strong Christian values in my upbringing, its to pass them onto my son and to be able to reflect that, just as the heavenly father is love, even your earthly father has the same wellbeing, similar to your father.

The expressions of this father demonstrate his belief that religion has the capacity to contribute positively to paternal figures parenting abilities. He seems to believe that religion teaches him to love his children *as the heavenly father is love*. When juxtaposing this father's views with those of his son, certain similarities were also noted. However, there were also certain differences. For instance, both seemed to believe that being a father meant that you held a *teaching role.* When describing the role of a father *Son 2* particularly stated that,

Son 2: … he's there to provide for the family, he's a teacher…

His father, in speaking on his need to *pass* his Christian values onto his son, reiterated the idea of the "father as the teacher". That is, both felt that fatherhood entailed an educative role. However, it was again noted that religion was a stronger influential feature for the father than for the son, as the son did not site religious principles for his position. However, this was not the case with all sons. Some sons, like their own fathers, did consider religion a fundamental feature in the construction of their morals. This was seen in the case of *Son 5*, who stated the following;

Son 5: My religion has played… umm… it has really influenced me and my family. Who I am as a person is because of my father and our religious grounding… a lot of my values have been influenced by my father… because you can see that the man he is is influenced by his beliefs. I believe in what he believes so the man that I am is basically influenced by what we both believe.

His father echoed his son's position in that he saw religion as a primary paternal role influence. When describing what it meant to be a father, he said,

Father 5: being a good father means…it means a lot but… maybe I should start here… umm... The man I choose to become is based on what I believe… and I believe in God. When I became a father I… I… umm... I said to myself that I wanted to be a

good father. Before that, I had been a very naughty boy. I did not attend church on a regular weekly basis as I do now. But the day my wife told me that she was carrying my son was the day I knew I had to be a good example for him. The only way I could do this was through having these Christian values ingrained in my mind and heart so that I could teach them to my son. So you see, being a good father means teaching… and sometimes the best lessons are thought through examples…

In a general sense, it seemed as though most fathers and sons agreed with one another. They generally believed that fatherhood meant that one had to act as the moral guide and/or teacher of the family, especially the son. According to the psychosocial theory, moral development contributes to how one develops his identity (Erikson, 1980). The theory purports that the same-sex parent particularly influences this moral development. In this investigation, it was clear that men believed that fathers played a fundamental role in helping the son to become a moral being. In this case, Christianity seemed to shape the moral structures of the participants. While some sons did not specifically mention Christianity as the foundation of their morality, one son did. This son seemed to identify more with his father compared to the other two sons. He appeared to have internalised his father's moral views. Upon investigating this, it appeared that the correlating views of *Father 5* and *Son 5* might have been influenced by the close nature of their relationship.

While the closeness of *Father* 5 and his son might have indeed contributed to their correlating moral views, this supposition does not explain why other sons, who were not as close to their fathers, seemed to hold similar views on the father's role as the moral guide of the family. In explaining this, the psychosocial theory suggest that the son's ability to internalise his father's belief systems might have been influenced by the father being a good "role model". Commenting on this Erikson (1963) states,

[that one] of the deepest conflicts in life is the hate of the parent who served as a model for the superego, but who… was found trying to get away with the very transgressions [that] the child can no longer tolerate in themselves (p. 257).

This implies that internalising a particular moral structure can become difficult when the parent does not actively portray what it means to be moral. Given the excerpt one would hypothesise that sons in this investigation were better able to internalise the

moral beliefs of their own fathers if they saw their fathers behaved in accordance to what they 'preached'.

Although the theory provides a good explanation for this relationship between the fathers and the sons, one should not disregard the role that nurturance played in the identity formations of the sons. However, it is important for us to first consider the traditional views of participants on the notion of "the father as the provider" if we are to best comprehend the how the role of the father was understood when juxtaposed with the act of nurturance. This is because the concepts appeared to overlap and the theme of providing seemed to be the basis upon which views on nurturance were established.

4.3.1.2. The father as the provider

In the literature review, it was determined that the paternal act of providing for one's children has existed throughout the course of history. However the role of the father as the provider was amplified during the periods of industrialisation and urbanisation (Lamb, 2000). It was noted that this was true for both global and South African contexts. Moreover, literature suggested that these ideas have continued to exist within contemporary settings (Mkhize, 2006; Richter, Chikovore, & Makusha, 2010). This is something that was also reiterated in this particular investigation. Describing their roles as fathers, participants stated,

Father 1: [Being a father] means to be a provider to the family…

Father 2: … when you say a 'father', … he's someone who would go the distance for you. Someone who will sacrifice anything to make sure that you have a good life and make sure you have a good living…

Father 3: …It's also … the support and without those, the family is not fulfilled.

Most of the fathers seemed to consider fatherhood as implying that one needed to provide for the family. It seemed that the inability to provide would mean that they were not capable, good enough fathers – that is if they were even fathers at all. It was as if Gilmore's (1990) statement of how "*Men nurture their society… by dying if necessary in far away places to provide a safe haven for their people" (p. 230)* came

to life. This was indeed true for *Father 1* who narrated that his own father had rarely been at their rural home during his development, as he worked in the city for the purpose of providing for his family.

The views of the abovementioned fathers concerning the need for a paternal figure to provide were echoed by their sons, who stated,

Son 1: ... being a father… yeah I suppose being a provider…

Son 2: …A father… yeah, he's there to provide for the family…

Son 3: … Someone who cares and provides for the family.

Both the sons and the fathers above had described either directly or indirectly themselves as Christians or very cultural individuals at some points in their interviews. This suggests that religion and culture might play a significant role in their beliefs. However, it must also be noted that the idea of the father being a provider was not exclusive to persons who had religious and cultural groundings. Another son, *Son 4*, who described himself as an agnostic, stated the following,

Son 4: … A father is someone who is quite dependable, you know… like my father…[so fatherhood]… relates to always being able to provide...

Also revealed was that the ability to provide was often associated with apparent self-directed pressures that caused many fathers to work hard. It appeared that working hard enabled the fathers to meet the apparent requirements of 'good fathering' as it, by extension, permitted them to provide for the family. This is something that was expressed by the son of *Father 4* who stated,

Son 4: You know he works really long hours and he's not a guy that sits still. So you know in terms of like yeah, in terms of always being able to provide for us I'd say yeah he, he takes a lot of the burden. He takes a lot of the burden and tries his best.

Agreeing with *Son 4*'s sentiments was *Son 2* who stated,

Son 2: … a provider. You know he's one of those people who likes to employ like a hardworking type of umm [unclear] of character…

Fathers also mentioned this concept of hard work in relation to being a good father. One father, when expounding on his position of what it means to be a father expressed the following,

Father 3: I think that that is hard and it needs a focused person. If you are not focused you can lack in other things. The biggest thing that is related to the father and is hard is job security. We always try to make sure that we are secured where we are…

In this extract, the father seems to indicate that being a paternal figure requires focus, as one is under constant pressure to provide for his family. The need to focus implies the need to exert yourself in the act of providing. It could be said that this act of exertion is synonymous with "working hard". Thus, this father seems to have felt that focus was an imperative aspect in ensuring that he was better able to financially support his family through the work that he was engaged in. His need to ensure job security is important to note in contemporary societies where women are increasingly joining the world of the employed. It is also important to regard since most of the fathers in this investigation were married to employed women. It seemed that being married to such women placed greater pressures on the fathers to provide financially. One father stated,

Father 5: … I am the provider in my family… but my wife works as well. Even though she works, she only acts as… as… as my helper. She helps me… she is doing me a favour. She does not need to work. See, if she… lost her job… the pressure would on me to do more. But if I loose a job… then…

Though their wives were employed, men still felt that their job as fathers was to provide. Thus, even though society has begun to permit the sharing of household roles, it appears that fathers still consider themselves to be the main breadwinners. The abovementioned quotations of the sons also indicate that sons feel the same way. All the sons in this investigation expressed that the father was one who played to provision role in the family. Thus it can be said that the views of the sons were much like the views of the fathers in regards to breadwinning/providing and fatherhood.

According to psychosocial theorists, the fact that the sons and the fathers hold similar views about fathers needing to provide for the family could be explained in both social and psychological modes (Jefferson, 2008). That is to say that the participants might have had intrinsic perceptions of what it meant to be a father. Potentially supporting this was *Father 4* who was asked about the things that influenced his understanding of fatherhood. He was asked,

Interviewer: … What and who do you think influenced your understanding of what it means to be a father?

Father 4: Uhhm… myself. Just when I grew up started understanding life and things like that. Yes I started forming my own ideas of what.. what… ehh… being father is, what fatherhood is all about. Uhhm, yah but no uh… it's not influenced by anybody. Just uhhm.. just myself. My thinking.

This father seemed to indicate that he had an intrinsic understanding of what it meant to be a father. He seemed to report that his understanding of fatherhood could not be explained in a social sense. However, upon further probing, it became clear that social elements could not be excluded in explaining how he came to perceive the fathering role. This is demonstrated in the following exchange:

Interviewer: Can you tell me maybe what influenced your thinking?

Father 4: Ehhm... Experiences in life. As I grew up as I experienced life, as I spoke to people as I saw what was happening around me. Ehhm… and then yeah… I started forming my own ideas because I read a lot, I listen a lot and I'm a very opinionated person so… so… and I'm not scared to... to… to… tell people what I think… so that just yeah… that's just me.

In assessing these interview extracts, one can argue that perceptions of fatherhood can be psychosocially influenced. This is because the perceptions cannot be explained without both social and psychological elements. They are socially influenced in that people's beliefs and positions are influenced through their interactions with and observations of other people. The psychological element is revealed or suggested in his statement of how no one influenced his perceptions. That is to say that although he

interacted with a range of different people and observed other social and cultural occurrences, he identified that there was also an internal element that shaped his decisions and his perceptions. This internal element may have been psychological in nature, but it is difficult to pin point it, as he barely mentioned his own father in the interviews. It is easier to identify the psychological influences of the sons' perceptions as they tended to report that their interactions with their fathers impacted their belief that the father is the main breadwinner in the family. Son's seemed to identify with their fathers on this point, believing that they also needed to be capable providers if they were to become good fathers.

Overall, fathers seemed to want to ensure that they were the primary providers in the family, and sons seemed to aspire to be like their own fathers in this regard. This appears to have been influenced by them viewing their fathers as providers in the family. Since the psychosocial theory also regards the psychological (including Freudian) elements, one could explain this element of identification in conjunction to the Oedipal Complex. According to Hook (2009), the child is able to take on a parental role over himself and his siblings through the processes of the Oedipal Complex. This means that son's begin to become like the fathers in that they seek to provide for their future current and families. Sons in this investigation did not report that they were providing for their siblings (or current family members), as most were still students. Two were working, but reported that they were not earning enough money to support other people.

4.3.1.3. The father as the non-nurturer??

While the act of providing was significantly noted as relating to fatherhood, it appeared that nurturance, though often related to the maternal figure, was not overlooked. The sons in this investigation seemed to demonstrate a particular interest on the topic, indicating that providing for the family was not sufficient if a man was to be described as a "good-enough" father. It seems that they felt that the father needed to hold an additional role in the family – and this role is that of nurturing. Exemplifying this is the extract below, which is a direct quote from *Son 4*.

Son 4: … somebody who wants the best for their children, and has to see, you know, umm life choices and life decisions of the child as something which can impact them

in the future. Umm, but always being there. I think that's really important. Always being there to, to talk about things with your child. Talk about problems umm… ja and you know you have to, you have to love your children. You can't, can't choose your, can't choose your family. So I think that's very important. That's what I think it means to be a father. Somebody who's loving, somebody who's understanding… somebody you know you can always, always rely on when things get tough.

This son felt that a good father was one that had to love and understand his child through a physical and emotional presence. The role of nurturing, it must be noted, is not one that finds significant manifestation in traditional societies. However, literature on fatherhood indicates that such paternal roles are increasingly important to persons in contemporary societies (Lamb, 2000). An identification of this change seems to have been reported by certain fathers in this investigation. *Father 5* for instance, in describing a sensitive incident in his past reported the following,

Father 5: When I was younger, I got my wife pregnant. We were not married at the time and this was very wrong in the eyes of my family. I was not very religious but my culture… it kind of influenced my knowledge of how wrong it was to have a child before marriage. I knew my father would not be happy about the incident and he wasn't! I think what I would have wanted for him at that time was for him to be more involved, to help me, to guide me and to be more…

Interviewer: More caring and present?

Father 5: Yes. More caring. The person who ended up helping through that process… so that I could know what to do as a man and father was a neighbour. He counselled me and told me that I needed to be a man now. He even helped me marry my wife… I respect that man even today.

Having noted his own personal experienced, this father reported that he purposed to be more present for his son. He did not want his son to go through what he had gone through. He wanted his son should feel loved and appreciated. This is something that was particularly noted by his son who described his father in the following manner,

Son 5: My father has influenced a lot of what I understand… I mean… in terms of what it means to be a father. You know, he's the kind of person I can talk to about anything. I think what helps as well is our weekly family meetings. Everyone gets to speak and share their view about a particular issue, you know. So… I would have to say that makes my father a pretty okay father… he is a good father"

Son 5 therefore viewed his father's ability to listen to his children's views as positive, thereby making *Father 5* a good father in his sight. He seemed to appreciate that his father was able to support him on an emotional level. This is particularly emphasised by his closing statement in the above extract, where, he describes his father as a "*pretty okay father… a good father"*. The relationship between this father and son suggests to us the importance of nurturance in this particular family. The role of the father as the nurturer of the family was not exclusively allocated to this family. Other sons seemed to identify the importance of a nurturing and/or emotionally present and caring father as well. In addition to this, fathers seemed to demonstrate an added interest in indicating that they cared for their children. For *Father 5*, this interest seemed to be based on his own relationship with his father. He seemed to want to make up or compensate for his father's shortfalls. Psychosocial theorists argue that compensatory forms of fathering occur when fathers seek to restore what was 'broken' in their own childhoods. Fathers do this by forming more positive and/better relationships with their own sons. Though compensatory fathering was one of the primary reasons why *Father 5* sought to be a good father to his son, it was noted that the caring element of fathering was sometimes strongly related to one's religious beliefs.

For instance, *Son 5* stated that he considered as father to be "somebody who wants the best for their children, and has to see, you know, umm life choices and life decisions of the child as something which can impact them in the future". Like the religious Father *2*, who was previously cited stating that "*a father is someone who cares, he's someone who would go the distance for you. Someone who will sacrifice anything to make sure that you have a good life and make sure you have a good living*", this son's comment suggested that valuing the future of your child also implied that you cared and/or were cared for.

Father 2 particularly indicated that he felt that in addition to the traditional concept of protecting, a father also played the role of carer. In my interview with him, this father had stated that he had always purposed to be a parent that was physically present. He reported that in entering the world of work he had decided that he would be the kind of father that was constantly present. Thus, he said, he worked his way up the ladder so that he could be in a position to delegate work to his employees so that he could be more available for his children. This therefore allowed him to be able to develop a "good" relationship with his children, which also permitted him to indicate to them that he cared for them through the time he spent with them. This appears to be something that was noted by his son who stated the following,

Son 2: My father was as present as he possibly could… he was a good dad. I mean… you saw that he cared about where you were going in life so… yeah.

While the element of caring ran through many of the discussions of this investigation, it must be noted that in some instances, sons felt that their fathers had not been caring enough. Despite this it was clear that a nurturing father was desired. One son reported that he experienced his father as being emotionally absent. This he seemed to attribute to the father being constantly busy in an effort to provide for the family. This son was *Son 1* who stated,

Son 1: I suppose after growing up… what I realised is that as far being an emotionally present father, yah I cannot expect that from him. He is not going to be that emotional dad. Like I cannot, if I'm having problem whatever, he is not the first person that I'm going to go to. My mom is going to be that person.

According to his son, *Father 1* was often perceived as busy. In regard to this, *Son 1* states,

Son 1: … You know he's one of those people who likes to employ like a hardworking type of umm [unclear] of character umm. Yeah he's forever telling us that we need to, we need to study and…yeah you know… as opposed to umm yeah like at the end of the day we are working for our future. You know, always telling us that when we grow up we need to be able to take care of our family what not what not. And ja you know whenever he sees that you're being lazy, that actually really irritates him, you know.

He's grown up being a hard worker so, even his father was a hard worker, so you can see that he feels that the only way you can make it in this life is to work hard.

The above extract reiterates that this son viewed his father as a hardworking man who laboured and exerted/s himself in order to provide for his family. It also interestingly indicates that he experienced his father's concerns with his future differently from the other sons. For this son, it appeared to exude fewer warm feelings in *his* concerns about his children's futures. Thus, though his father cared about his son's future, *Son* 1 seems to have felt that his father was less concerned about his emotional struggles. In further discussions with this son, it also became clear that this characteristic was something he preferred to not have as a future father – he hoped to be more caring. In this sense the son did not want to be like his father. The psychosocial theory would suggest that the reason that this son did not want to be like his father is because society now promotes a different more nurturing form of fathering (Diamond, 1998). In addition to this the psychological element of the theory would suggest that he felt that his father dropped his family. *Son 1* might therefore long to compensate or make up for what his father was not able to do for him in his future family (Diamond, 1998). In this way, the son might feel that he has fixed what was broken in his own life. Blos (1985) also suggest that in the (physical or emotional) absence of a father the internal image and identification of the son is guided or shaped through the mother's attitudes towards the father. These attitudes can be internalised by the boy child consciously or unconsciously. *Son 1*'s mother might have negative views about the emotional absence of *Father 1*, and might be something that *Son 1* has internalised.

While it is likely that *Father 1*'s family views him as emotional unturned to them, it must be mentioned that, *Father 1* seemed to feel that it is/was important to nurture and/or care for his children. In one instance, for example, he states the following,

Father 1: … you don't want the, the, the child to feel that our daddy loves this one and doesn't love me you know.

This extract indicates that this father recognises that a child has a need to feel loved and nurtured. However, it appears that his son did not always feel nurtured. Interestingly, this son's father had had a similar experience. The father of *Son 1*,

Father 1, described his father as having been an absent figure, such that he had to be raised by his mother and other male community members. This was in the emotional sense, and also the disciplinarian sense. *Father 1*'s father was described as one who was often working in town, causing most of the care-giving responsibilities to fall on the mother. In light of the extracts and the general information given by *Father 1* and his son, it can be said that *Father 1* became the man that his own father was. While he is often in close proximity to his son, as they live in the same house and have done so throughout *Son 1*'s childhood, it yet appears that the attempt to provide made it difficult for *Father 1* to be experienced as a nurturing figure. With the Psychosocial theory in mind, one would state that *Father 1* internalised his father's characteristics. *Father 1* might have felt that he would be castrated if he did otherwise. He, like his son, may have aspired to be better at a conscious level. It is thus that he able to outwardly speak about the father's need to love and care for his children. However, at an unconscious level, he might feel that the only way to be a powerful man is to be like his own father.

Paternal absence was a noted flaw in the father-son relationship. This investigation indicated that sons valued the emotional presence of the father, while they did not disregard the 'need' for the father to provide for them. *Son 2* and *Son 1* both who felt that he lost out on some nurturing on account of his father's busy schedule. Indicating this in the interview this son stated, "*I would have wanted my father to spend more time with us as his family*". Despite noting this particular flaw in their fathers, both sons reported that they felt that their fathers had been good fathers at the end of the interview. Such might be best explained by the concept of the *internalised father*. According to this concept, the paternal imagos are intra-psychically constructed as both real and fantasised images of the father (Diamond, 1998). These constructions function to help the child develop certain adaptive and defensive structures that make life and/or his relationship with his father more manageable. Thus it could be said that the *real* perceptions of these sons concerning their fathers' emotional absence are amalgamated with their fantasies. It is through this amalgamation that the sons begin to perceive their father's in a more positive light. The amalgamation therefore serves a defensive function that potentially enables the sons to continue to view their fathers as good or "good enough". This may then encourage these sons to become the types of fathers that their own fathers are, regardless of noted shortfalls. While it is likely

that they could develop characteristics of their fathers, both sons still reported a desire to be better than their fathers in the sense that they wanted to be more emotionally present.

4.3.1.4. New fatherhood in contemporary society: the role model

In addition to associating fatherhood with the duty of caring, the findings also indicate that the men in this investigation believe that fathers should act as role models to their sons. These findings are in line with literature propositions, which posit that fathers tend to model male behaviours for and/or to the son (Diamond, 1998; Pleck & Pleck, 1997). Most of the fathers in this study believed that they played an important role in the developmental paths of their sons. They felt that they affected their sons' growth into 'manhood' or 'fatherhood' significantly through the manners in which they carried and presented themselves as current fathers. The fathers stated:

Father 1: A father… it means to be a role model to your children.

Father 2: Look I think it's… ehh… the most important part about fatherhood is…is role-modelling. You actually become… you are a role model to your child 'cause the only… eh… behaviour… who you are and how you act and how you conduct yourself, that's how your son is going to conduct himself and so you have a high responsibility to be able to ensure that the way you behave, the way you conduct your life is in a manner which you can be able to look back and say "I have been a good role model to my child in terms of what I do. Because, as I say that monkey see, monkey do. And so what it means is that it's not what you say, it's more what you do that actually impacts on his life – your child's life.

Father 4: Okay… ehm… father is… it just can mean a lot of things… it can be a mentor… uhh.. it can be just somebody… eh.. one looks up to.

Father 5: A father is someone who leads by example… you are exemplary for your children... I knew that I had to lead by example… so I had to lead the life that I wanted my children to lead…

Of course, it should be noted that the fathers desired their sons to copy the good things that they – as fathers – did. In some instances this caused some of the fathers to

choose to hide the things that they used to do in the past from their sons. Some examples include engaging in risky sexual behaviours, drinking and smoking. *Father 5* was worried that his son would adopt negative personality traits if he were to become aware of the things his father used to do. He stated that the birth of his son and the identified effects of his own life were the reasons he wanted to change who he was. As is noted in the extract above, he desired to lead by example and be a 'good' role model for his son, much like the other fathers. It can be said that this would then facilitate the process of *positive identification* on the part of the son. In many ways, it should be noted that the father's 'positive' manners did affect his son (*Son 5*). His son supported this by stating,

Son 5: …Who I am as a person is because of my father and our religious grounding...

This is clearly indicated in that this son, like his father, does not engage in risky sexual behaviours, drink or smoke. He stated that his religion as well as his father's leadership had contributed to this. *Son 4* also stated that felt that he was like his father who, like *Father 5*, was not engaging in risky behaviours. Expressing this belief *Son 4* stated,

Son 4: I mean everybody nowadays is always like "You're just like your dad. You know, you look like him, you sound like him. Umm you know just basically the way you behave is just like your dad". And I think that's saying something about the way I was influenced by him.

While this mirrored the reports of *Son 5*, it should be noted that *Son 4* did not cite religion as contributing to his current behavioural presentation. This suggests that fathers might play a more significant role than religion in shaping the values of their sons. It also supports psychologically based theories, without necessarily disregarding social theories. That is to say that it emphasises the accuracy of Oedipal functions, while also considering that society or culture/religion influences the identity formation of the boy.

4.3.1.5. Section summary

Overall, traditional concepts of fatherhood continue to exist in contemporary social contexts. In addition to being demonstrated through unceasing views of the father as moral guide and provider, they are also indicated in that some fathers continue to be viewed as non-nurturing parents. Despite this, the data in this investigation indicated that there is a desire to move away from the non-nurturing paternal role to the nurturing paternal role. However, as indicated in the case of *Father 1*, a desire to love (and/or nurture) your children, might not be played out or noted by those very children. In cases where fathers were not able to meet the needs of their sons, sons are argued to have developed paternal imagos that enable them to continue to function and interact well with their fathers. The paternal imagos also enable positive forms of interaction in potentially difficult father-son relational circumstances.

4.3.2. Fatherhood and biology: the biological versus the alternative father

Literature suggests that biological fathers are not always present members of the family structure (Nduna & Jewkes, 2011). This might be because of a variety of reasons, which could also impact the overall development of their children. As noted above, the father has often been identified as the moral guide, breadwinner and also the nurturer of the family. These designated roles often impact the perspectives of people who might then assume that men cannot develop optimally without their biological fathers. Echoing this position, are certain intellectuals in the domain of psychology who suggest that the absent fathers can be the source of many social ills (Clowes et al., 2013). More specifically, the 'biological' father is often described as an essential contributor to the mental and psychological health of boys who are developing into young men (Lupton & Barclay, 1997; Lewis & Lamb, 2004). Reiterating the importance of the biological father, Diamond states,

"Becoming a father … is itself a prodigious task all to easily and deceptively signified by a circumscribed and observable event. Thus we are led to believe that one "becomes" a father when one's female partner has given birth to the jointly conceived baby" (Diamond, 1992, p. 41).

It is in light of such suggestions that many come to believe that sons who do not grow up with their biological fathers are deprived. This may indeed be the case as some investigations have indicated. For instance, a study conducted by Nduna and Jewkes (2011) indicated that some sons longed to have their biological fathers present. In addition to this, the sons felt that certain developmental milestones would have been reached more efficiently and favourably had their biological fathers been present figures.

While the role of the biological father appears to have been given great importance literature, participants of this investigation seemed to believe that alternative father figures played significant roles as well. While this study interviewed sons and their biological fathers, it is important to note that not all participants felt that their biological fathers had influenced their paternal understandings and aspirations. In fact, most of the fathers in this investigation seemed to cite alternative figures as having contributed to the men they grew into. Some examples are expressed below.

Father 1: As a boy when I was growing up, you know, the elders would be telling you that you have to do this as a man. Uhm so the, the elders, the people that were around me I think they, they, they modelled me into that. And here when I'm talking about the elders or the old—I'm talking about the community elders. It wasn't really specific to the family.

Father 4: [Being a father]… It doesn't really mean much because you know in black language you refer to people that you are not even related to as father. Father in law is your father, step father is also your father. So I think it's just somebody… ehh…that you can relate to and talk to… He doesn't have to be biologically related to you.

Father 5: For me, my neighbour really influenced me a lot. He influenced the man I am today. He was the one who gave me advice when I got my wife pregnant… My father… no, he wasn't really involved.

Fathers *1* and *5* seemed to identify the importance of an alternative father figure based on the absence of their fathers. That is, Father 1's father was physically absent as he was working in the city most of the time. On the other hand, Father 5's father was experienced as emotionally absent. Based on the experiences of these two fathers, it is

easy to assume that paternal physical and/or emotional absence influences the idea of a father figure not having to be biological. However, Father 4 suggests and additional reason to why certain men value the presence of an alternative father in addition to the biological. This is indicated in his extract, in which he states, "…*in black language you refer to people that you are not even related to as father*". In so saying, he suggests that conceptions of an alternative father figure are also influenced by one's culture. It is also important to note that this father perceived his father as being both physically and emotionally present. Thus, it can be said that cultural beliefs about an alternative father figure are not always influenced by the presence and/or absence of the father.

While fathers seemed to define fathering as something that they acquired from varying male figures, some sons seemed to only identify their fathers as persons who played a fathering role. However, instead of identifying *other* men who had fathered them, the sons tended to express that their own fathers often fathered boys that were not their biological sons. For instance, in describing his father the following son stated,

Son 1: For most part of our childhood he umm, he's the one who took over umm paying fees for my uncles… But then he basically took over because my granddad you know, he wasn't really making that good a salary for him to take care of them, so he took over as the father figure with them, and then he put them through school and ja. You know he has that responsibility.

Another son, *Son 4*, also stated that his father had bought clothes for *Son 4*'s friend after being told that the friend was struggling. In stating this, he sought to demonstrate that his father played what he understood to be the fathering role to sons that were not his own. Both sons seemed to indicate that the alternative father was one who provided resources for other children and/or people. This is a view that appeared to be somewhat different from that of the fathers'. This is because the fathers in this investigation seemed to feel that the alternative father figures gave emotional forms of support, which was in addition to the moral guidance. Older men in this investigation thus seemed to crave emotional forms of support. They also seemed to feel that these could be, and had been, attained from persons that were not their biological fathers. What was also interesting to note was that *Son 5*, whose father appeared to have had

the greatest longing for paternal emotional presence, felt that his father had been a very good and very present father. In our interview he stated, the following after being asked if he felt that his father was a good father;

Son 5: Yeah… he's a good father man.

Interviewer: Please motivate that… Why do you say that he's a good father?

Son 5: Well he's the type of father that… umm… our lives have not been easy, you know. My father had to provide for us and a lot of the time being busy makes it hard for a father to be there and be aware of his children's views and what not. I think what helped us a lot are the family meetings we have once a week. You know, you sit down and you are given the opportunity to express whatever is on your mind, even if it is not in line with… umm... with what your dad says. I mean but you know, there have been those times when he has disregarded what the family says because he's 'the head of the home'… I guess.

Interviewer: And how was that for you?

Son 5: It tends to be irritating and upsetting when he does that because it makes it seem like your voice counts for little… but I mean… the times he has gone against the family vote… I can literally count that in one hand. He's not perfect. He listens to us way more than not.

Of all the dyads interviewed, this dyad seemed to have the greatest emotional connection. *Father 5* seemed to have sought to improve on the things that his own father had not done for him in the sense that he demonstrated more interest in his son's well-being and choices. Also demonstrating this was his indication of how he was interested in his son's love life as well. This is significant to regard as *Father 5*'s own dad had not made *Father 5* feel supported when he was having children and considering marriage. In our interview, *Father 5* expressed how he often asked his son about the ladies his son was interested in marrying. He seemed to have a very clear understanding of what his son desired in a life mate. Thus it could be said that *Father 5* aspired to be different from his own father, and that this is indicated by his emotional presence for his son.

Overall, it can be said that alternative fathering is a concept that was considered in this investigation. Moreover, alternative fathering appears to have been a theme that predominated in the experiences and the perceptions of the fathers. Sons made little mention of this and seemed to identify their own fathers as playing a paternal role in the lives of their friends and families. The sons seemed to feel that this paternal role was expressed through the act of breadwinning and/or providing. On the other hand, fathers felt that alternative father figures acted as moral guides and provided emotional forms of support. It seemed that *Father 5*, particularly felt this way and it was noted that he became a father that ensured that he provided his children with the emotional support and guidance he felt his own biological father did not provide him with.

In going through these findings, one may begin to wonder if the different ways in which these fathers and sons experienced the notion of alternative fathering may have been influenced by the new concept of nuclear families within Black African homes. Such notions seem to predominate in urban societies where westernisation is more likely than in rural societies. Most of the fathers in this investigation grew up in urban settings for the majority of their childhoods. The exception is *Father 1*, who grew up in a rural setting.

4.3.3. Paternal expectations: how they affect the son's aspirations

The fathers in this investigation often expected that their sons should follow in their footsteps. They expected that their sons should have morals and values that were similar to their (the fathers') own morals and values. They also demonstrated high expectations in terms of academic achievements and general life achievements. Diamond (1998) argues, "Gratifications and disappointments for the father exist throughout the development of his son" (p. 282). Such was noted in the stories that the fathers told regarding the development of their sons. When sons appeared to not be following in their father's footsteps, fathers would become disappointed. One father expressed that seeing his son take on a life path that differed from his own was one of the difficult things in becoming a father.

Father 4: The hardest thing about being a father is – eh – is, is, is… sometimes you live your life through… you want to… you live your life that you missed out on through your children…

In wanting to live his life through his son, this father was engaging in what we have defined as compensatory fathering in the literature review (Layland, 1980). This means that this father might have had aspirations that he longed to achieve as a young man. He might not have achieved these things and/or might have simply wanted more. To achieve these aspirations, he seems to have attempted to live through his son. Alternatively, one could state that this father was trying to create an image of himself through his son. Advocating this is *Father 4*'s statement, in which he says,

Father 4: With Son 4 for instance, I had wanted him to do science… I was teaching him science and everything but he just didn't like it at the time… You expect a lot from your children. 'Cause for me, I was good at maths and science and… eh… I thought he would become that you know thinking he is my son. He's gonna like the same thing.

In stating this, the father expressed how he tried to live his life through his son. He also used another example. In that example, he had wanted to become a professional athlete but had faced some difficulties along the way. He felt that pushing his son to do the same would make him feel better about his missed achievements. However, he later noted how his tendency to push his son caused their relationship to dwindle or become weakened and fragile. From my interviews with sons who felt that their fathers had been trying to live vicariously through them, it became clear that they often felt highly pressured to meet paternal expectations. *Son 4*, for instance, stated that he would often choose to ignore his father in order to gain some relief from the paternal pressures. In his interview this son stated the following,

Son 4: I like being told in general about you know, about the way life works and all those type of things you know, but I don't like being told you must do this and you must go here and what not. Because, I mean the decision for me to come to [university name] was essentially my dad's decision as well. You know it's like ok you know, because I wasn't going to complete matric anyway. You know I was going to go play soccer. I was offered a place at some academy and what not. And he's like "No,

you're going to get an education". So he's like "Ok, you can go to Wits, they play soccer there, there's a team. You can play there, you can study". Umm, so the decision to come to Wits was my dad's decision. You know he's influenced me in all type of ways.

Interviewer: How do you feel about the decision?

Sons 4: Initially I was like "Uh!". I didn't have the level of defiance where I could just say no, because I respected my parent's quite a lot. You know I was like okay, they're obviously making this decision because they care about me you know umm... and I was a bit resentful in the beginning, especially in the first year. I hated being at [university name], just hated it.

Son 4 clearly had some difficulties with the expectations that his father had, as these expectations seemed to contradict the path he wanted to take in life. However, what is interesting to note is that such difficulties were only initial. *Son 4* reports that he later enjoyed University and states that he continues to do so. A similar line of thinking was noted in *Son 1*'s experience. Like *Son 4*, *Son 1* felt that his father often had certain expectations of him. However, *Son 1* felt that he never reached his father's standards and he believed that this often resulted in their relationship having some tension that he feels continue to exist. In his interview this son reported,

Son 1: ... But I think the other thing that used to touch me a lot was umm he liked comparing you to other children a lot. Umm, like ja he would compare me to my friends a lot. Umm, either academically or just general stuff, even sports. Like he would always say "But [friend's name] is like this…[friend's name] this…[friend's name] that". Or, ja you know he would always compare you to your friends. Or always ask you…to this day he actually still asks me "What is this one doing? What is that one doing?". Like you know ja you're taking interest but why are you asking me? Like dude you know I haven't spoken to none of these people in such a long time. I realised that (he even does it with my brother), I realised that he's basically just trying to see how far my friends are and he's trying to compare and see how far is my son and where should he be. And I really hated that like "No, no guy we are two different people. We are really different people". So I really hated that. Sometimes I

would I would feel…like there were times when I'd be like "Hey guy, just go and adopt them if you like them that much". You know, that used to touch me a lot.

Thus, it can be said that in certain cases, paternal expectations created friction in the relations that sons had with their fathers. However, in both of the abovementioned cases, the sons seem to express the situations in the past tense. This suggests that they may have both learned to like living in the paths that their fathers encouraged them to move towards. In fact, both of the sons reported that they had grown to be like their fathers in most things. In conjunction to this, Freud might have cited elements of the Oedipal struggle. For instance he might have said that these sons struggled under the power of their fathers until they reached a point where they felt that identification might be a better option. That is to say that the sons may have felt that to identify was far better than to 'die' under the hand of one's own father. Reiterating this *Son 4* even reported that he felt that he was very much like his father now when compared to the past. It appeared that what contributed to this were the reduced pressures of his father to make his son like himself. His father also noted how his son had begun to like math and science only after he had reduced the pressure. This could be correlated with the psychosocial concept of positive identification. According to Diamond (1998), positive identification occurs in instances where the father demonstrates his love for his son by being proud and encouraging of the son's real self. This means that the father is one who is not experienced as critical and undermining. The hostility that the son unconsciously feels towards his father, as well as the castration anxiety is therefore curbed by these 'positive' paternal demonstrations. Thus, it can be said that *Father 4* increasingly becoming his son's companion improved the *Son 4*'s relationship with his father.

Sons *3* and *5* seemed to have a similar type of relationship with their fathers, in the sense that they positively identified with their fathers. This may be because they percieved their father as being supportive of their life decisions. *Son 5*, in particular, described his father as a "*good father"* because of his capacity to regard *Son 5*'s views on family matters. He felt respected by his fathers, and with this in mind, it can be said that he viewed his father as his companion. This son felt that his father had only minor flaws and reported that he aspired to be like him. Interestingly, this father was also described as one who was interested in his son's future. The father reported

that he and his son would often discuss *Son 5*'s future openly. The two would also talk about the types of women his son wanted to marry. This close and mostly peaceable relationship between the two may have impacted the development of positive relations and also *Son 5*'s desire to be like his father.

However, in cases where fathers continued to pressurize their sons, it was noted that sons did not aspire to become like the fathers. Although they cited their fathers as contributing significantly to the manner in which they understood what it meant to be a father, they felt that these fathers had not done their jobs optimally. They regarded positive contributions of their fathers to their overall development, but continued to feel that there were certain things that the fathers could have improved upon. One son stated:

Son 1: [He's] influenced me a great deal. I mean I don't drink I don't smoke. I go to church every Sabbath umm. Umm like I see the value of working hard… The positives and the negatives, they've influenced me a lot… [but] I suppose watching him, growing up, there's certain things that I want to be like and certain things that I don't…

4.3.4. Concluding remarks: Are sons like their fathers?

In conclusion, this investigation revealed that conceptions of what it means to be a father are often associated with hegemonic masculinity. This is important to regard since hegemonic masculinity is a traditional type of masculinity that is often associated with "traditional fatherhood". In traditional fatherhood, and thus in the results of this investigation, "good" fathering was associated with the idea that men needed to act as the moral guides of their children. Often being a moral guide also meant that they were the ones who were in charge of disciplining the children. The findings also revealed that some paternal figures that felt that fathering could be linked to moral guidance, also felt that their religions affected their positions. For these parents, their religions taught them how to be good parents. Unlike other fathers, community members and their own fathers were less significant influencers.

Still in conjunction to traditional masculinity, the findings also revealed that some persons continue to consider the father as being the main provider. This means; even

though the mother contributes to financial provisions in the home, the father is expected to play a bigger breadwinning role. Thus, more pressure is placed on the father to provide. While this pressure appeared to be self-directed, it also appeared that sons had similar expectations. Of course, it could be argued that such expectations were influenced by the sons' social and paternal observations. A psychosocial theory would not refute such a view, but would introduce additional viewpoints, that are also psychological in nature. Thus, one would state that the similar views that sons and fathers had, might be in light of the types of identification (mainly positive), which were discussed in this investigation. Such identification might also explain why traditional concepts of what it means to be a father continue to exist in a contemporary society that may often be assumed to be vastly different from ancient and/or traditional societies.

The continued existence of traditional forms of fatherhood was also revealed in one man's experience; namely *Son 1*. This son related that he felt that his father was an emotionally absent figure. Despite having negative feelings concerning this, Son 1 seemed to consider his father's emotional absence as normal. He even went on to describe his father as having "*been a good dad*". He, though within the age group of all of the sons of this investigation, expressed that he expected to get emotional forms of support from his mother instead. All other sons seemed to have had different experiences with their own fathers when compared to *Son 1*. That is to say that their fathers were viewed as having tried to be emotionally present. These fathers had also communicated their desire to be emotionally present. Some reported a desire to be present in this way as they had felt that their own fathers had not been present and/or caring for them. Thus, previous lacking experiences seemed to shape the aspiration to not be like one's own father.

There were noted instances where fathers felt and saw the need to care for their sons. In cases where biological fathers were not available to provide support – both emotional and physical – men felt that such could be attained from alternative father figures. Given the African context in which the investigation was conducted, it should be noted that fathers felt that it was normal for one to have non-biological father figures. This view point influenced some of the fathers in this investigation to play "fathering" roles in the lives of men and/or boys that were not their own biological

sons. Other fathers regarded the need to be "caring" and/or emotionally present and explicitly loving towards their children, however, this was not always noted by their children. For instance, *Son 4* seemed to indicate that he felt misunderstood and emotionally separated from his father in his early development. However, this changed as he entered adulthood. *Son 1* on the other hand, seemed to have a current sense of his father being less emotionally present; while his father (*Father 1*) seemed to feel that he was emotionally present, if not trying to be so. Ultimately, all fathers and sons seemed to have correlating views of what it meant to be a father. In this sense, sons in this investigation were like their fathers. While they held similar views, the fathers did not always live up to what they described a father to be. For *Father 5*, this seemed to be because of having internalised his own father, who is described as having been a hardworking provider that was more absent than not.

In addition to caring, fathers also felt that they needed to be role models to their sons. Frequently, fathers felt that they played a fundamental part in shaping who their sons became. This significantly affected the characters that they expected their sons to develop. In some cases, fathers thought that their sons would grow to have similar interests as themselves. Consequently fathers would try and instruct their sons regarding the paths that they felt their sons should go. In certain cases, it became clear that the teachings that these fathers employed were a means through which the fathers lived vicariously through their sons. The sons who sometimes felt that their fathers were placing too much pressure on them to become better men did not initially welcome these attempts. Sons would either withdraw from the father or demonstrate feelings of wanting to do so. One son (i.e. *Son 4*) seemed to motion towards taking developmental and career paths that was different from that of his father. However, it appeared that Son 4 was better able to comply when his father became less demanding and/or pushy. Son 4, like Sons 3 and 5, was better able to internalise his father and thus identify with him when his father began feeling more like a companion.

Throughout the investigation, the only aspect that seemed to differ between fathers and sons was the notion of the alternative/social/non-biological father. In describing what a father was, fathers were more likely to suggest that biology was not necessary. Very few sons seemed to regard alternative fathers. Of the sons that did mention

alternative fathering, these sons did not seem to feel that other men had acted as fathers towards them. Instead they felt that their fathers had fathered other non-biological children. They seemed to base this feeling or perception on their fathers' ability to provide certain resources to the non-biological children and/or extended family members. Fathers, on the other had, felt that they had been fathered by alternative figures. These alternative figures were moral guides and caring counsellors towards them. The alternative father figures fulfilled certain roles that had not been fulfilled by their own biological fathers. These alternative father figures were described as uncles, neighbours, community members and God.

Overall, the main findings of this investigation determined that men did aspire to be like their fathers when their fathers were perceived in a "positive" light. However, it was also noted that all men (the sons in particular) did not experience and perceive their fathers as being fully good. Most men recounted certain paternal downfalls, which seemed to cause them to want to be different from their own fathers. "Paternal downfalls" in this investigation seemed to mostly refer to the emotional absence of a father.

Chapter 5:

LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

5. Limitations and Implications of research

5.1. Methodological limitations

Subjectivity is often one of the primary problems with qualitative research modalities. Since this is a qualitative investigation, it should be noted that the researcher was highly likely to demonstrate subjectivity in the manner in which she analysed the data. The researcher's culture and subjective threatened to filter into the investigation in certain instances. That is to say that the researcher was often tempted to challenge the views of the participants based on her own perceptions. Such would have negatively impacted the research in that it could have shaped the views of the participants or caused them to become defensive in their responses. The researcher's culture often caused her to feel the need to be respectful towards the father in this investigation and this often made certain questions difficult to ask. To buffer against these limitations, the researcher had personal access to a supervisor who challenged the researcher's subjective positions. Furthermore, the researcher was careful to reflect on the role that her own personal views had in her capacity to objectively analyse the researched findings.

Secondly, many of the themes that were explored in the study were of a personal, sensitive nature. As such, participants might have not felt very comfortable disclosing such information in a face-to-face interview. This might have especially been the case with the fathers who knew that the researcher had established relationships with their sons. Thus, while sons were more open, it appeared as though some fathers were more reserved in terms of the information they produced. They might have also chosen to present their relationships with their sons in a better light than may have been the actual case. It therefore might have been better if the researcher did not know the participants involved in the investigation on a first-hand basis. Thus, it is possible that additional themes might have emerged if all participants felt comfortable with the researcher.

5.2. Practical limitations

The investigation was complicated by the fact that it used a semi-structured format to interview participants. While open-ended questions permit the researcher to gain access to thick information, they may also prompt participants to provide ambiguous

answers. Moreover, participants might not understand the questions asked in the same way. This is a factor that was noted in this investigation. However, in this investigation, it was hoped that the use of semi-structured interview material, combined with spontaneous probing would provide participants with clarity about the question asked. This would therefore provide some form of uniformity in regards to how questions were understood in the investigation.

Also to be considered is that this study focused on black males living in South Africa. Although the participants did not need to be South African, it should be noted that the investigations was racially narrow. Consequently, it could be argued that this may limit the generalisability of these findings to African races residing in South Africa.

The interviews were recorded via audio to facilitate efficient collection of data. In light of this, it is possible that some participants may have felt uncomfortable sharing too much information. Of course, it should be noted that the researcher attempted to assure them that all the information that they produced would be kept confidential. The participants signed a contract confirming this. Moreover, the participants were provided with a document that would serve as a reminder of the promised confidentiality. The medium of choice in these interviews was English. This was to make the transcription process easier. Not all participant, however, were highly fluent in English. In cases where this was noted, participants were allowed to speak a native language. However, participants were limited to isiZulu. Although some participants were more comfortable speaking isiZulu, it should be noted that this was not their first language. Thus it is possible that the thickness of the interview data attained was limited. Yet, overall, participants seemed to understand the questions asked and responded as elaborately as possible.

In addition to the abovementioned, participants partook in this investigation on a voluntary basis. Since it was voluntary, many of the participants were difficult to secure. This often negatively affected the time-lines of this investigation. Moreover, it is likely that some participants might have produced information that was socially desirable. However, since the interview was of both fathers and their sons, in some cases, it was found that what the father did not reveal about himself, the son would reveal and vice versa. Moreover, it should be noted that the researcher made a strong

effort to build rapport with the participants, and reiterate their anonymity. Thus the problem of social desirability is likely to have been buffered against.

5.3. Implications for future research

Although this investigation sought to take angle that has not been taken before, it is important to note that more work still needs to be done. In the future it is recommended that a father-son investigation of this nature include varying racial groups. In this way, the research will be able to determine if there are any differences in the manner in which fatherhood is understood and experienced across different racial groups. However, it is important to note that this project has been able to set a framework that might facilitate the implementation of more efficient and large-scale investigations.

5.4. Key recommendations

These recommendations are made in light of the findings of this study, and are specifically intended for fathers. Although men in this investigation acknowledged their shortfalls as father figures, the findings also indicated that fathers may sometimes feel that they are better fathers than they are perceived to be by their own sons. This might therefore cause certain fathers to not seek to improve the manners in which they interact and relate with their children. Thus it is recommended that fathers try to communicate more openly with their sons concerning the father-son relationship. This means that fathers need to be more open to the positions that their sons hold. Such might also positively impact the son's desire to be a better father, as it provides the man with more insight and more specific paternal goals.

Also in conjunction to father-son communication, this investigation found that some sons felt that their fathers had not thoroughly engaged with them in matters pertaining to girls and sex. In these cases, it was revealed that the sons often had to learn for themselves or attain information from other sources. Since South Africa is a country that is highly rated in regards to HIV/AIDS infections, it is recommended that certain modes of action be employed to encourage fathers to more actively teach their sons about the dangers of sex. It is noted that there are a variety of currently existing organisations that help fathers know how to become "good enough". However, fathers

need to have easy access to these organisations. This might therefore require such organisations to be advertised at a larger scale.

6. References

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7. Appendixes

7.1. Appendix A

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500

Information Sheet for Fathers

Hello,

My name is Sindisiwe Mlotshwa. I am currently enrolled as a Masters in Community-Based Counselling (MACC) Psychology student at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and it is necessary that I conduct this research project to fulfill the requirements of my degree. This research project explores how sons and fathers understand fatherhood and how this understanding influences the kinds of men they become.

I wish to invite you to participate in this study. Should you agree to participate, you will be interviewed once for a period of 50 minutes at the Emthonjeni Centre in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Interviews will be recorded using an audio/voice recorder only if you are willing to have the interview recorded. If you are not comfortable with certain questions, you do not have to answer them. If you are not comfortable with the interview as a whole, you are free to terminate it at any point during the session. Should you, however, be willing to be interviewed, please note that all interview material will be stored in a secure computer where only I and my supervisor will have access. Once analysed, the content (in voice and transcribed form) will be destroyed. For the purposes of the study, I may directly quote some of your statements; however, your identity will remain unknown to readers.

Should it come to pass that you participate in the study, but then later choose to withdraw yourself and therefore your father, you are free to do so. Nothing will be held against you in those regards and your integrity will be maintained. Furthermore, if participating in this study evokes any distress, you can contact a counsellor at Lifeline (Tel: 011 788 4784/5) for free. That is, efforts will be made to ensure the health of both you and your father. The research outcomes will be presented in the form of a research report. If you are interested in the findings of the study, a results

summary will be provided on our website (www.LikeFather-LikeSon.simplesite.com). Alternatively, you may contact me (email: sindicmlots@gmail.com).

Requirements for participation include the following:

- You must be a father,
- You must have a living son,
- Your son must be over the age of 18,
- Your son must participate in this investigation.

If you desire to participate in this study, please read the abstract below and sign in the designated area.

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor.

Sindisiwe Mlotshwa – 079 084 0336; sindicmlots@gmail.com

Malose Langa- (011) 717 4536

Yours sincerely,

Sindisiwe Mlotshwa

7.2. Appendix B

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500

Informed Sheet for Sons

Hello,

My name is Sindisiwe Mlotshwa. I am currently enrolled as a Masters in Community-Based Counselling (MACC) Psychology student at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and it is necessary that I conduct this research project to fulfill the requirements of my degree. This research project explores how sons and fathers understand fatherhood and how this understanding influences the kinds of men they become.

I wish to invite you to participate in this study. Should you agree to participate, you will be interviewed once for a period of 50 minutes at the Emthonjeni Centre in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Interviews will be recorded using an audio/voice recorder only if you are willing to have the interview recorded. If you are not comfortable with certain questions, you do not have to answer them. If you are not comfortable with the interview as a whole, you are free to terminate it at any point during the session. Should you, however, be willing to be interviewed, please note that all interview material will be stored in a secure computer where only I and my supervisor will have access. Once analysed, the content (in voice and transcribed form) will be destroyed. For the purposes of the study, I may directly quote some of your statements; however, your identity will remain unknown to readers.

Should it come to pass that you participate in the study, but then later choose to withdraw yourself and therefore your father, you are free to do so. Nothing will be held against you in those regards and your integrity will be maintained. Furthermore, if participating in this study evokes any distress, you can contact a counsellor at Lifeline (Tel: 011 788 4784/5) for free. That is, efforts will be made to ensure the health of both you and your father. The research outcomes will be presented in the form of a research report. If you are interested in the findings of the study, a results summary will be provided on our website (www.LikeFather-

LikeSon.simplesite.com). Alternatively, you may contact me (email: sindicmlots@gmail.com).

Requirements for participation include the following:

- You must be a son,
- You must have a living father or father figure (non-biological father),
- Your father or father figure must participate in this investigation.
- You must be over the age of 18,

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor.

Sindisiwe Mlotshwa – 079 084 0336; sindicmlots@gmail.com

Malose Langa- (011) 717 4536

Yours sincerely,

Sindisiwe Mlotshwa

7.3. Appendix C

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500

General Consent Form (Fathers)

I _____ have read the information sheet and I understand that this research project requires the participation of both me and my son. I understand that I cannot, therefore, participate without him. Furthermore, I am aware that participation in this investigation is voluntary; that I can withdraw at any point I choose and that my identity will remain unknown to the public (except the researcher). Finally, I know that should the interview result in psychological distress, I can contact Life Line on 011 788 4784/5 for assistance. In my awareness of this and all else that is in the information sheet, I consent/agree to being a participant in the investigation that is currently being conducted by Sindisiwe Mlotshwa.

_____ _____

Signature Date

7.4. Appendix D

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500

General Consent Form (Sons)

I _____ have read the information sheet and I understand that this research project requires the participation of both me and my father. I understand that I cannot, therefore, participate without him. Furthermore, I am aware that participation in this investigation is voluntary; that I can withdraw at any point I choose and that my identity will remain unknown to the public (except the researcher). Finally, I know that should the interview result in psychological distress, I can contact Life Line on 011 788 4784/5 for assistance. In my awareness of this and all else that is in the information sheet, I consent/agree to being a participant in the investigation that is currently being conducted by Sindisiwe Mlotshwa.

_____ _____

Signature Date

7.5. Appendix E

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500

Audio/Voice Recording Consent Form

I understand that the recorded contents of this interview will be transcribed for the purpose of further analysis and that my identity will be protected. I further understand that access to the transcribed material will be restricted and stored in a secure location where only the researcher (Sindisiwe Mlotshwa) and her supervisor will gain access. Lastly, I understand that the interview content will be destroyed on completion of the investigation. Thus I …….., grant permission for this interview to be audio recorded.

Signature _____ Date _____

7.6. Appendix F

School of Human and Community Development
Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Tel: (011) 717-4500

Consent for the Use of Direct Quotes:

I _____, am aware that this investigation may need to report what I have said word-for-word in the 50-minute interview. I also understand that should the researcher indeed need to do quote my words, my identity will remain unknown to all individuals who read the findings of this study. Only the researcher (Sindisiwe Mlotshwa) and her supervisor (Malose Langa) will know my identity. I therefore consent to this investigation directly quoting my statements.

_____ _____

Signature Date

7.7. Appendix G

Interview Schedule for Fathers

Participant: _____

Age: ☐

1. What does it mean to be a father?
2. What do you think has influenced your understanding of fatherhood?
3. What are the hardest things about being a father?
4. What are the most pleasing things about being a father?
5. What experiences shaped the kind of father you have become?
6. In what ways are you the kind of father you wanted to be?
7. What factors contribute to making your experiences and aspirations as a father difficult to achieve.

7.8. Appendix H

Interview Schedule for Sons

Participant: _____

Age: ☐

1. What does it mean to be a father?
2. What do you think has influenced your understanding of fatherhood?
3. What kind of relationship do you have with your father? Please Explain.
4. Do you believe that your father is a good father? Please motivate your answer.
5. What do you believe your father could have done better with regards to parenting?
6. How have your experiences with you father influenced you?
    a. In terms of the man you are today.
    b. In terms of the man you want to become.