The Performances of Race, Masculinity, and Class among Black Male Cleaners at a Higher Academic Institution in Johannesburg

by

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ABSTRACT

Background: Previous studies have not explored how black working-class men perform race, masculinity, and class when they find themselves as a gender minority in a female-dominated environment, occupying a low status job while working in a high-status setting. However, we do know that men enter a low-class, female-dominated occupations like cleaning with male privilege, and it is not constructive to immediately assume feelings of inferiority. ***Aim:*** The study explored the performances of race, masculinity, and class amongst black men working in a higher academic institution in Johannesburg. The study asked, how do black male cleaners construct their race, gender identity, and class while cleaning at a higher academic institution in Johannesburg? ***Methods:*** Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 15 black male cleaners (ages 32-60) to pursue this inquiry. Data were analysed using thematic analysis, underpinned by Stephen Frosh's psychosocial framework, Judith Butler's notion of performativity and precarity, and Pierre Bourdieu's habitus theory. ***Findings:*** The testimony of the male accounts showed that one way the men tried to deal with their woundedness in finding themselves in an undermined job in terms of a racial, gendered, and classist hierarchy was to point out how much they had sacrificed for the benefit of others. For example, the men complained that they had to carry heavy objects which their female co-workers cannot or would not carry, yet they were paid the same wages. One of the men had years of untreated chemical burns on his hands, while another was willing to risk workplace health and safety regulations to benefit his employer. The men felt exploited by a system that values their labour but had no regard to the consequences to their mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. To deal with this denied pain and fear of losing one's job in an already elevated poverty-stricken and high unemployment landscape, the men attempted to reclaim their sense of dignity, respect, and self-worth by re-negotiating their work identities in such a manner as to not feel emasculated. ***Implications for future research:*** The study cautions future studies in black working-class masculinity to pay attention to how racial discrimination, sexual vulnerability, and conditions of precarity can create an exploitative work environment wherein these men may exhibit certain help-seeking behaviours as an attempt to gain a sense of recognition given the layers of vulnerability they face based on race, gender, and class.

Key words: black male cleaners; gendered labour; higher academic institutions; performances of class; performances of masculinity; performances of race

DECLARATION

I, Lindokuhle Mdeyi Ubisi, declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other University.

Signature of student:

Date: 05th of July 2022

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  "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the Heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" – James 1: 17.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.. 2

DECLARATION.. 3

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS...4

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION…….……………..………………………… 8

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY...8

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM...21

1.3. RESEARCH AIMS & OBJECTIVES...23

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS………………………………………………………...….24

1.5. OUTLINE OF THESIS...24

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK……………….……………...26

2.1. INTRODUCTION……………………………………………………………….….….26

2.2.1 STEPHEN FROSH'S PSYCHOSOCIAL FRAMEWORK WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON MASCULINITY STUDIES ……………………………………………………….……..26

2.2.2 JUDITH BUTLER'S NOTION OF PERFORMATIVITY AND PRECARITY …......….…30

2.2.2 PIERRE BOURDIEU'S THEORY OF HABITUS ………………………….….......….…36

2.4. CONCLUSION ……………………………………………….…………………….…39

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW……………………..………………...41

3.1. INTRODUCTION……………………………………………………………….….….41

3.2. BLACK MASCULINITY STUDIES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND HOW IT HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY STUDIED ………………..…………………………...…………….……44

3.3. CLEANING…………………………………………………………………….......….…58

3.3.1 CLEANING WITHIN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS……………………….……….62

3.3.1 OUTSOURCED VERSUS INSOURCED CLEANING…………………….…….…..66

3.4. MEN WORKING IN FEMALE-DOMINATED OCCUPATIONS …………………….…68

3.4.1 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN CROSSING-OVER TO

3.5. CONCLUSION……………………………………………………….………………..75

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODS….……………………….……….…..76

4.1. INTRODUCTION ……………….…………………………………..………….........76

4.2. PARADIGMATIC LENSES ……….……………………………………….…..…........76

4.3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH……………………………………..……….........78

4.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY …………………….…………………….….………...81

4.4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN ….…………………...…………………………….………...81

4.4.2 SAMPLING ……………………….……..…………………………………….....84

4.4.3 DATA COLLECTION DOCUMENTATION ……..…………………………..……...86

4.4.4 DATA ANALYSIS ……….………………………………………………...……90

4.4.5 RIGOUR AND CREDIBILITY …..………………………………………..……..94

4.4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS……………..……………………………….……96

4.4.7 REFLEXIVITY ……………… …..……………………………………….……..99

4.5. CONCLUSION …………………………………...……………………………………103

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS & DISCUSSION …………………….…………..…..104

5.1.INTRODUCTION...104

5.2. RECAP OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK...104

5.3. SYNOPSIS...106

5.4 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS………………………..……..…...…………….….……..…… 138

5.4.1 THEME 1: CLAIMING CLEANING AS A MASCULINE OCCUPATION: “WOMEN DO NOT HAVE OUR STRENGTH; WE HAVE THE MANPOWER...……………………………………………… 139

5.4.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Centering male cleaners in relation to job demands …………… 139

5.4.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Self-representations associated with work related boundaries ..…154

5.4.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: Location in hierarchy and issues of respect...................................160

5.4.1 THEME 2: PROBLEMATISING CLEANING AS A PROFESSIONAL AND PRIVATE ACTIVITY: “I LOVE MY JOB … NO, MEN SHOULD NOT BE CLEANING TOILETS”……………………………………………………………………………………..172

5.4.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Core beliefs and ideas about being a male cleaner.……................172

5.4.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Practical limitations within working spaces ....…… 179

5.4.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Separating cleaning as a job and a chore ....…......…..…… 186

5.4.1 THEME 3: ACKNOWLEDGING CLEANING AS A MEANS TO AN END: “SO, LAUGHING AT ME OR TAKING ME SOMEHOW CAN’T PUT BREAD ON THE TABLE”…………………………………………………………...........................…….……193

5.4.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Pre-occupational aspirations prior to entering cleaning ……..… 194

5.4.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Cleaning occupation facilitating the ability to provide….……… 199

5.4.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Future cleaning and non-cleaning aspirations ………….....…… 204

5.5 CONCLUSION…………………………………………………………………….……… 210

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION……………………………………………….....210

6.1. INTRODUCTION..210

6.2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS...210

6.3. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY..216

6.4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY...219

6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE, POLICY AND FUTURE RESEARCH............221

6.6. CONCLUSION..222

REFERENCE LIST……………………………………..…………………..…..222

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Semi-structured interview schedule.. 274

Appendix B: Participant information sheet.. 276

Appendix C: Participant consent form……………………………………..…..….. 278

Appendix D: Diagrammatical outline of data analysis... 279

Appendix E: Data preparation & transcription protocol... 282

Appendix F: Ethics clearance certificate.. 285
Appendix G: Turn-it-in report..286

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Before delving into the background of this study in the larger body of knowledge, I would like to share my own personal rationale to motivate the need for this study:

> My name is Lindokuhle (shortened Lindo) Ubisi. I am a 29-year-old black, male Lecturer at the University of South Africa in Pretoria. I currently hold a Masters degree in Social and Psychological Research from the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) as my highest level of education. About two years ago, while I was living in a student accommodation in Johannesburg, I had a moving encounter with one of the cleaners in my building. It was on a test day where I found myself pacing from the sixth floor skipping steps down the staircase. As a student finding myself in a metropolitan city like Braamfontein where the University is situated, you learn to mind your own business and tend to forget your manners at times by not greeting those around you. I guess this was my custom to avoid unnecessary interactions. However, on this day, while rushing to campus to arrive to write my test, I was forcibly provoked to consider a body I had never acknowledged existed before. As I paced down the second last floor, I distantly recognised one of the older, black, female cleaners was mopping the floor that morning. In my own impression, I figured she would hear me pacing down the stairs, and naturally give way to my urgency. This became our silent contractual agreement, as in former instances, she would acknowledge my presence and make way with no need of me to say anything.
>
> On this day however, while I was furiously rushing to write my test, she refused to abide by the previous rules of our engagement: She refused to stop and give way for my passing. Realising what had just happened, I tried my best to slide through an open spot as she was swaying back and forth - set in her own work duties. Perhaps to assert herself, she forcibly pushed me towards the wall with the full force of her body strength remarking: "HEY, DO YOU NOT SEE ME WORKING HERE?!" Many emotions ran through my mind during those few seconds: I felt confused, ashamed, and guilty as I was confronted by an old woman I had come to overlook for months while I was living there. Looking

back, I sense in her own way, she had cleverly devised this incident as her way of protest. I would say the remarkable meaning I took from that incident was that, if my life had not gone the way it did, I could have been a young, black, male cleaner, as most cleaners in South Africa (SA) are likely to be black. In that case, I wondered how this experience would have differed for myself and other black male cleaners[1].

This remained an interesting topic for me to pursue because in my own biased upbringing, I had never been personally acquainted with a male cleaner. Yes, in my primary and secondary school years, I do recall seeing male cleaners cleaning male facilities, such as male toilets. But this incident did not shift my perceptions that cleaning, or the cleaning of toilets in fact was gendered work. I was raised in a household where my father, uncles, and male cousins were discouraged from engaging forms of gendered labour, like cleaning or baby-sitting. Coming with these subjective biases, I wondered how much of them would be true at the end of the study. More so, I wondered if these men were aware of these biases, and how these ideas about gendered labour made them feel. Situating the study in the Higher Education context adds further value, as the employment conditions of low status workers in this sector have been a renewed concern following student demands for their insourcing as university employees in 2015-2016. Lastly, the higher academic institution (WITS) I decided to pursue the study in is a historically white, prestigious University within the African context, which has added aspects of race and class to examine.

To create a context to understand these experiences, I will first discuss the notion of cleaning as a possibly racialised, classed, and gendered occupation. This entails highlighting some of the racial dynamics of cleaning, including local and international statistics indicating the decline of white cleaners in a mostly white-owned, private global market that is the cleaning industry (Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Cranford, 2005; Kilkey, 2010). While it can no longer be entirely said that cleaners are invisible

[1] A cleaner or in other places of the world janitor refers to, "A person employed to take care of a large building, such as a school, and who deals with the cleaning, repairs, et cetera [administrative and support functions in such institutions]" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018).

in broader society, including portrayals on television and pop culture, the work of cleaners though is still seen as performed by anonymous (Sawhney, 2002), abused (Aguiar, 2005), and voiceless (Knotter, 2017) bodies on the margins of society. Furthermore, while the ratio of male-to-female cleaners remains favourably inclined to more women than men in most countries (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Kilkey, 2010; Knotter, 2017), the entry of men into cleaning, especially within higher academic institutions is not something new (Murray, 1982).

The higher academic institution context is interesting because higher academic institutions also operate according to a sex binary of male/female toilets, male/female quotas, and male/female identification markers on application forms (Burke, 2018; Crozier et al., 2016; Johnson, 2020). In fact, in every higher academic institution, one would expect to find a male cleaner cleaning a male toilet. This is to say that black male cleaners may not be performing work which other men have not been seen doing historically (e.g., cleaning in middle-class homes) (Qayum & Ray, 2010), but from a traditional African context, few to no black men can be seen performing this type of work, especially with the inclusion of cleaning female-only toilets. From this point of view, it then becomes unintelligible as Butler (1999) would claim to see a black man with a broom or toilet brush cleaning a female-only toilet in a higher academic institution. Yet what is often unspoken about is how black male cleaners perform cleaning – a historically black, low-class, female job - against the backdrop of being raised in a racist, classist, and sexist socio-economic landscape such as the South African context.

Internationally, particularly the US, there has been a movement by scholars such as Curry (2017a, 2021, 2022), Pass et al. (2014) and Franklin (1994) critiquing the way black men have been historically studied which has led to predetermined categorizations of sexism, patriarchy, or misogyny about black male body. The problem Curry (2022) points out is that many early criminology, sociology, and feminist theorists approached black men and boys from a white masculinity lens, suggesting that they face pressure to reproduce constructions of white patriarchy by utilising violence found in (white) patriarchal societies, and that they need saving as objects of want as well as their destructive black maleness. Curry (2018a, 2018b, 2018c), Gary (1981), and Hare (1964) maintain that such social categorizations fail to acknowledge the

constructions of sexual vulnerability, racial discrimination, and precarity created by a black misandric economic strategy targeted towards the oppression of black men. The work of Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto's (1999) work, for example, around racial and social hierarchies show that black males are oppressed more than their female equals because they are pressed out of civil society and subjugated to the bottom of the economic hierarchy. For these scholars, it is problematic to assume that black men inevitably become violent as most black feminist scholars claim without problematizing the conditions which many poor and working-class black men find themselves in (Curry, 2017a, 2018a, 2021; Franklin, 1994; Pass et al., 2014). Curry (2017a), for example, argues that poor and working-class black men face unique racial, socioeconomic, and political pressures which position them as vulnerable victims oppressed by a system which benefits from their racial and sexual vulnerability.

For this reason, Curry (2022), Franklin (1994), and Pass et al. (2014) and others reject feminist gender theories which reaffirm classist and racist interpretations of black men which have been refuted by contemporary social scientific research. Robert Staples (1976, 1978, 1982) and Anthony Lemelle Jr.'s (1995, 2010) provide insight into how colonialism, economic exploitation, and sexual deviancy has shaped our understanding of the role of black working-class men in American society. That is, these men are expected to provide and protect without voicing their own struggles (e.g., issues of depression, self-esteem, and 'John Henryism') in fear that the world may consider them as weak, emasculate, and lacking in positive self-regard (Jr., 1995; James, 1994; Staples, 1978). This scholarship suggests that black men pay a heavy price of protecting others but still seen as agents of brutality, laziness, and broken homes (Curry, 2018a; Gary, 1981; Hare, 1964). Essentially, the scholars argue against a white masculinity and feminist lens of studying black working-class men which ignores the racial, sexual, and economic exploitation of black working-class men by a white capitalist system, which has no regard for their mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing (Staples, 1976, 1978, 1982). The choices of these men then become limited given their vulnerability created by these precarious conditions (Jr., 1995, 2010; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Smith et al., 2022). Such a re-reading of black working-class male studies will certainly provide a richer and more in-depth analysis given these intersectional of vulnerability.

However, the work of Curry (2017a, 2021, 2022), Sidanius and Pratto (1999), and Smith et al. (2022) also provide a paradigmatic lens to approach the issues arising from the work of scholars invested in redressing issues previously ignored within Black Male Studies. These authors have moved away from simply re-producing black men as the stereotypical angry, deprived, violent, and rape-prone anti-feminist individuals as previous research has suggested as in hooks' (1992a, 1992b, 2004) corpus. Black Male Studies has now become a growing field of researchers producing scientific social research using a theoretical lens which departs from the notion that gender sexism or black misandric aggression is perpetuated black male poverty, racism, and vulnerability (Curry, 2017a, 2021, 2022; Jr., 1995, 2010; Staples, 1976, 1978, 1982). Black male cleaners find themselves in the same state of precarity as their female co-workers (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006). But the problem is that they are expected to hold down employment, even if it is potentially emasculating, because of their maleness and their expected ability to provide, otherwise they would be deemed as useless (Hunter, 2006; Mkhize, 2006; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2006). To note, the work of Staples (1976, 1978, 1982) shows that black men are not invested in the gains of patriarchy as they are equally if not more oppressed by the disenfranchising socio-economic and political systems which prevent them from arising to a better position in society given their layers of vulnerability as black, working-class men.

That is, these men are often faced with fewer means to provide a livelihood for them and their families which they cannot afford to decline but also take on the conditions which come with these employment opportunities (Jr., 1995, 2010; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Staples, 1976, 1978, 1982). For example, black male cleaners may be forced to clean female-only toilets as part of their job descriptions – a job requirement that might conflict with their personal or cultural identity - but cannot say no to their employers. Sidanius and Veniegas (2000) have labelled this phenomenon as the subordinate male target hypothesis (SMTH). According to Social Dominance Theory, the SMTH holds that the discrimination faced by men within subordinate groups, like black and brown men, especially under the authority of men within dominant groups like white, middle-class men, remains far more oppressive than that faced by women in the same inferior groups. Sidanius and Pratto's (1999) book titled, "Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression", provides an answer to such questions as to why such dominate groups discriminate against others

and why it remains almost impossible to eradicate this oppression using the Social Dominance Theory. According to the Social Dominance Theory, such intergroup conflicts, such as racism, classism, and sexism are derived through an evolutionary need to dominate and maintain hierarchal structures which sustains the benefits of one group over the other. That said, the group holding majority of power in within these structures will always create conditions wherein power will be transformed into states where they will always be in need (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In this case, the limited career options available to uneducated, black working-class men, such as the black male cleaners in this study, creates layers of vulnerability wherein other men of other classes can take advantage of their vulnerability.

Cleaning as a racialised occupation

According to Moolman (2013), South African social identities must be explored and understood from the socio-political and historical discourses about race and apartheid. This is because the concept of race in SA persists in shaping various social environments and identities in prolific ways (Durrheim et al., 2011; Erasmus, 2017; Maylam, 2017). To contextualise cleaning within this racialised context requires revisiting the institution and aftermath of apartheid. This system ensured segregation by denial of access, and inequality in the distribution of resources, as well as prejudicial violence based on racial stratifications (Byrnes, 1996; Clark & Worger, 2013; Moore, 2015). Apartheid ideology ensured that access to basic service delivery, higher education, and job opportunities was set up to privilege its white citizens (Thompson, 2008), while failing to improve the quality of life for its "non-white" counterparts (Johnston, 2014). Post-apartheid, in this 'Two Nation'[2] state (Marais, 2011), it is extremely rare to find white persons filling cleaning positions, especially in higher academic institutions. In fact, based on personal communication with the identified higher academic institution's cleaning services operations administrator (2021), all 726 employed cleaning staff identified as either black or Coloured[3]. At the same time, I should point out that in SA, there has been governmental policy, such as the policy of

[2] SA as a 'Two-Nation' state, is popularly associated with former South African president, Thabo Mbeki, refers to the racial, class inequality between and within social strata within SA's new economy (Marais, 2011).

[3] In SA, the term Coloured is part of a racial identification category along with black, White, and Indian. The term is used to distinguish persons who are mixed race, particularly those from black and White parents, or Coloured parents.

Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) to promote the economic transformation and participation of black people, including Indian and Coloured people, in the work environment (Shava, 2016). This led to a lot of poor whites not being able to enter certain jobs, such as cleaning – not because they did not want to – but because these jobs remain preferentially allocated to black, Indian, and Coloured people.

Internationally, Cranford (1998, 2001, 2005) identified a declining trend from the 1980s and 90s in the US employment of white janitors. According to Cranford (1998, 2001, 2005), in the 1990s, white janitors made up almost 10 per cent of the janitorial industry, but subsequently there was an upsurge of employment of immigrant Latino, Mexican, Salvadoran, and Asian women – all racial minority groups. More importantly, Cranford's (1998, 2001, 2005) findings suggested the hiring of these and other minority groups merged with protest campaigns, such as the 'Justice for Janitors' advocating against the abuse, under-paying, and unprotected working conditions for janitors. Cranford (1998, 2001, 2005) noted the industry has been unregulated after the intensification of privatised, sub-contracting cleaning companies, where a majority of White owners manipulated undocumented immigrants to work late hours at cheap labour. The argument here is whether white cleaners were treated or would be treated in such a manner. During apartheid SA, a racist, master-and-slave relationship was evidenced in black male cleaners serving as male domestics in white, middle-class households being referred to as "house*boys*, wash*boys*, garden *boys*, …and kitchen *boys*" without any distinction for their age (Pariser, 2015, p. 272). Today, one wonders if it is possible for black male cleaners to encounter such racist and patronising attitudes not only from white but also black academic staff and students as a re-production of our racist discursive discourses and practices.

One such discourse is how whiteness and blackness rely on each other to produce certain subject positions and class relations wherein whiteness is seen as more superior to blackness (Fanon, 1952). However, blackness in a post-apartheid SA has gained multiple definitions to describe the history, identity, and mobilization of black South Africans (Ratele, 2003). Following the influence and work of Fanon (1952), black scholars such as Steve Biko (1978a, 1978b) saw blackness as a political and linguistic practice and encouraged black pride, consciousness, and identity.

Contemporary local scholars such as Ratele (2003) maintain that blackness ought to be grounded within SA's socioeconomic and political transition. That is, SA currently stands as a 'Two Nation' post-apartheid state divided by its racialized past while attempting to correct these race-based inequalities (Alexander, 2001; Ansell, 2004; Marais, 2011). Yet even within this new racial climate, there is a rising elite, black, middle class, while most black men still struggle to enter this new era, with limited numbers of black people occupying high profile political and social positions (Iheduru, 2004). This includes the increase in the number of black senior managers, entrepreneurs, and political appointees (Iqani, 2017). But black male cleaners might not be able to participate within this new economy due to the lack of essential material resources and lifestyle markers that are promoted by the rising, elite, black, male middle class. According to me, this might raise certain questions for black male cleaners as to whether they have in fact benefitted from the promises of the new democracy which subjugated their fathers and grandfathers to work in similar positions.

This inability to participate in the new democracy might carry a financial implication for most black men who might not carry the same financial ability to compete with black middle-class men as financial providers for their families (Morrell, 2006). To extrapolate from critical race theorists, such as Du Bois (1903), it is therefore in seeing themselves as cleaners from the perspective of this black, male elite class that a form of double consciousness may arise. Du Bois (1903, pp. 2-3) was an American critical race theorist who considered the internalised racial inferiority within African Americans as "a sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." That is, the conflict one internalises due to racial or class inferiority has the potential to affect one's dignity (Du Bois, 1903). Other critical race and psychoanalytic theorists, like Fanon (1952) in his *Black Skin, White Masks,* also noted this similar internal conflict arising within African who internalised the stereotypes and prejudices of their white counterparts. I note these as important influences on black male cleaners who work within a historically white university in which they encounter black and white academics and students.

Cleaning as a classed occupation

For many of us, cleaning is a 'dirty' job which requires the removal of waste, cleaning of excrement, and many such unpleasant tasks (Rabelo, 2017; Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Bosmans et al., 2016). Within modern-day pop cultural representations, such as *The Breakfast Club* (1985), *Maid in Manhattan* (2002), and *The Help* (2011), cleaners or janitors (the term commonly used in the US) are mostly constructed as humble, passive, and invisible bodies (Aguiar, 2005; Milkman & Wong, 2000; Waldinger et al., 1998). In SA, black female domestics maids in local movies (e.g., *Mama Jack,* 2005) and telenovelas, such as Flora in *The River* (2018 - in progress), Linda in *Housekeepers* (2018 - in progress) are mostly portrayed as occupying what Nyamnjoh (2010) terms an 'intimate-stranger' relationship within both white and black middle-class families. That is, while domestics appear to know their employers' private and intimate dealings, it becomes apparent that the families only treat them as a close family member when it suits them. This relationship therefore remains precarious (Jansen, 2019) and conditional (Nyamnjoh, 2010). As for the limited representations of black male cleaners, Bobo in the popular South African local series *Yizo-Yizo* (1999–2004) is forced to clean toilets as a form of punishment by the hard school principal. In another local favourite series, *Backstage* (2000–2007), Ziggy starts off as a young man who is employed as a cleaner. But he is soon discovered for his ability to dance and earns a scholarship with a local dance production company. It appears that when men are depicted in cleaning roles, it is only for a short time, and success is evident as they exit the cleaning industry.

Although the popular discourses evident within these depictions about aims to problematise the complexity of identity and agency in cleaners/janitors' lives, the storyline remains viewed from "a gaze framing the cleaner as lowly and pitiful in the social structure" (Aguiar, 2005, p. 71). At other times, the lives of cleaners are stereotyped to provide a hopeful but fantastical image about the future of cleaners. For example, in the end of the movie, *Maid in Manhattan* (2002), Marisa, the maid, goes on to marry a congressman and opens her own personal multi-million corporations. However, this kind of triumphant escape remains a reality shared by few maids employed in the industry for years (Aguiar, 2005). Instead, the reality is that cleaning is still considered a low-status (Rabelo, 2017), unskilled (Aguiar & Herod, 2006), and under-paying occupation (Bosmans et al., 2016). Especially in our classed society

preoccupied with realising our 'hidden' potential, we are told that cleaning is a dead-end job accompanied by fewer opportunities for growth, class mobility, and self-actualisation (Aguiar, 2005). For example, a man pursuing cleaning as a career may be warned of the potential of deadening his ambition as cleaning may shame, ostracize, and emasculate him in relation to other high-achieving men. This is because cleaning is taken as a lazy (Cranford, 2001), routinized (Milkman & Wong, 2000), and domesticated (Waldinger et al., 1998) job role, not associated with paid or 'men's work', such as childcare.

In other words, to be a cleaner, maid, or janitor is to be regarded as uneducated (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006), one lucky to have a job (Ally, 2006), and paid according to the minimal wage – built-in assumptions associated with 'women's work' (Bezuidenhout et al., 2004). But for many cleaners, cleaning remains the only option for lack of other available job opportunities in a sector of low-skill workers. For some, the job opportunity elevates one as a breadwinner which is better than staying at home (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006). However, in a large establishment such as a higher academic institution, we are more like to have daily interactions with cleaners because they form part of our social network of relations. In SA, some higher academic institutions have decided to absorb cleaners as permanent staff members, while improving better employment conditions, such as increases in salaries, safer working conditions, and union protection. But one can argue that even with better remuneration of this kind of work, the job that cleaners perform is still regarded as dirty (Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Bosmans et al., 2016; Rabelo, 2017), menial (Aguiar, 2005; Knotter, 2017; Sawhney, 2002), and insignificant (Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Milkman & Wong, 2000; Waldinger et al., 1998), compared to other occupations within a higher academic institution. This is because the power dynamics in high-status settings, such as higher academic institutions, do not favour low-status workers such as cleaners (Ngcobo, 2004). Although the cleaning of toilets is not the only work black cleaners perform, it remains one aspect of the job description which makes it easier to degrade and dehumanise work performed by easily unidentifiable cleaners (Gershenson & Penner, 2009).

The cleaning of staff and student toilets within educational institutions presents with certain assumptions (Molotch & Norén, 2010). For example, as individuals

working or studying within an educational institution, these relatively educated individuals can read the boldly written instruction behind most toilet doors: "Please leave the toilet as you would like to find it". However, toilet etiquette differs within public and domestic toilet use (Gershenson & Penner, 2009; Kira, 1976; Molotch & Norén, 2010). This can further differ when we refer to male versus female toilets, staff versus students toilets, as well as campus versus student residence toilets (Ingrey, 2012). For example, a student may leave a bloody pad in a student toilet but not at home. But since we do not see the need to know each and every cleaner (granted this would be a laborious task), it becomes easier for users of their services to distance themselves from their humanity and sense of personal dignity. That is, we may choose to see or not see cleaners as we go about our everyday business. This implies that cleaners can become 'faceless' (Sawhney, 2002), 'on-the-clock' (Aguiar, 2005), and 'non-speaking' (Knotter, 2017) subjects in a social hierarchy that strips them of any identity or personhood. Within this hierarchy, there is not only worth in investigating the positioning assumed by educated academic staff, students, and administrative staff in relation to cleaners, but any discourses which may be reproduced by the said persons to dismantle or reinforce any power relations between them and the black male cleaners within the context of a higher academic institution. What is worth noting is that their uniform is a self-identifying cue that one belongs to such an occupation (Daniel, 1996; Shaw et al., 2010; Tu et al., 2011). Not only that, the uniform becomes a way a person is classed before they can say or do anything (Adomaitis, 2003; Haise & Rucker, 2003; Nelson & Bowen, 2000). This is because unlike other uniforms, such as nursing, police, and army uniforms, that tend to elicit some form of admiration, authority, and respect (Johnson et al., 2015), a cleaner's uniform is associated with lesser status (Gershenson & Penner, 2009; Kira, 1976; Molotch & Norén, 2010).

Cleaning as a gendered occupation

Gender is an individual, relational, and contextual construct that is informed, and informs socio-cultural practices such as the socialisation of boys and girls, the roles they play within relationships, and who does what inside and outside the household (Butler, 1988; Connell, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1949). Experiences relating to gender, which occur at a conscious and unconscious level, are unique and become shared as rigid regimes of knowledge and practice to govern what is masculine versus feminine conduct (Connell, 2014; Foucault, 1977; Frosh, 1994). Repeated and regulative

discourses around how to perform these socio-cultural practices become embodied in a gendered, sexed, and sexualised body (Butler, 1988, 1990, 1993).

These enduring, yet shifting, socio-cultural practices eventually translate into prescriptive hegemonic systems, such as patriarchy and ideal masculine and female identity, consisting of differences within each society (Connell, 1995; Kiguwa, 2006; Langa, 2020). For example, in a traditional African household with a single working parent, the sexual division of labour in who cleans, cooks, and takes care of the children may fall onto the wife and female children. While in another similar household, the father and son may be actively involved with all the household chores, but the son may in future choose to not get involved in any chores within his own private household. Gender, from this point of view, is multiple, complicated, and an evolving part of our identities (Shafer, 2004).

The American philosopher and gender theorist, Judith Butler, maintains that gender as a social construction should be seen as a form of ongoing performativity instead of a single and static performance wherein, “gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed” (Butler, 1990, p. 97). From this point of view, gender plays a role in how cleaners and others perceive their job role (Ratele, 2013). Especially within the SA landscape, patriarchy confers certain notions and privileges to men – men are strong, resilient breadwinners not to be subjected to otherwise subordinate roles within the household (Ratele, 2013). However, the intersection of gender, culture, and work has evolved to men entering and sometimes taking over female-dominated occupations (Williams, 1993, 1995, 2013). This includes men migrating into care work (Calasanti & King, 2007), baking (Dumais et al., 1993), hairdressing (Robinson et al., 2011), escorting (Dennis, 2008), and gynecology related industries (Bickell et al, 1994). Although we speak of the feminisation of some roles that were largely the preserve of men (Lips, 2017), the literature does not begin to consider the masculinisation of domestic/cleaning work, a female-dominated occupation such as cleaning.

Cleaning is regarded as suitable ‘women’s work’ because of the emotional care related aspect (as it entails taking of the needs of others), which men supposedly lack (Dworzanowski-Venter, 2010). Emotional labour refers to the process of regulating

feelings and emotional expressions, including those which are inherent and expected by clients as part of the job requirement (Gross, 2015). Cleaning is regarded as 'women's work' because gender ideology like patriarchy sees gendered roles such as cleaning from a model of sexual division of labour (Akanle et al., 2016; Bernstein, 1986; Horne et al., 2017). A sexual division of labour sees men taking on roles outside the home, while women's roles remained constricted to inside the household (Akanle et al., 2016; Bernstein, 1986; Horne et al., 2017). By the same token, all jobs have gendered assumptions built within them based on pre-existing gender roles (Williams, 1993, 1995, 2013). For example, Burns' (1998) article titled, 'A man is a clumsy thing who does not know how to handle a sick person' shows the history of gender stereotyping[4] of men entering female-dominated occupations.

South African higher academic institutions have adapted a culture of hiring black male cleaners to perform various 'masculine' roles alongside other cleaning tasks, such as carrying heavy equipment, landscaping, garbage collecting, tree-felling, as well as other maintenance functions (Murray, 1982). The majority of work here denotes some sense of masculine qualities such as strength, endurance, control, independence and assertiveness (Donnelly & Twenge, 2017). In other words, the construction of the job description around these duties largely shows some differentiation of male and female qualities (Davies-Netzley, 2002). In this case, 'men's work' in a higher academic institution would often be associated with the carrying of heavy objects such as bricks and wheelbarrows, while 'women's work' would be accompanied by the carrying out of tasks such as the cleaning of toilets and washing dishes. But black male cleaners also have to carry non-traditionally masculine duties, such as carrying a mop and toilet brush. For this reason, their gender and sexuality may be questioned for doing 'women's work' (Kalemba, 2020; Khunou et al., 2012; Mashiya, 2014).

But then again, over the years, men have been welcomed and encouraged to enter female-dominated professions where they stand the chance to earn better salaries and occupy higher ranks within the same field as their female counterparts (Williams,

[4] Gender stereotyping refers to preconceived notions where masculinity and femininity are essentialized gender characteristics solely based on sex (Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe, 2015). For example, because one is born male, one should be tough, resilient, and demonstrate rational decision-making.

1993, 1995, 2013). The fact that men can enter, dominate, and re-label certain tasks as masculine-oriented shows that men may not necessarily experience female-dominated jobs such as cleaning as entirely emasculating (Williams, 1993, 1995, 2013). In fact, it is crucial to remember that men enter female-dominated professions like cleaning with male privilege (Williams, 2013), and therefore it should not be immediately assumed that they will become victims of emasculation. That is, men who find themselves in female-dominated occupations may monopolize positions of power, re-label certain roles as only masculine roles, and in turn create advantages which will favour other men in similar positions – a strategy called the glass escalator effect (Williams, 1992). But according to Williams' (2015) findings, research suggests this effect remains more limited when it comes to males from gender minority groups, such as gay men, as well as men from Latino and Asian nationalities. As for black male cleaners who find themselves as gender minorities in a female-dominated occupation, one wonders how they maintain their masculinity and class whereas others (and possibly themselves) may question their gender and sexual identity.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the growing visibility of men entering more non-traditional occupations (Williams, 2015), in this case black men entering cleaning as an occupation, there is an accompanying need to understand the personal meaning and experience of men doing domestic work (Bartolomei, 2010; Chopra, 2006; Kilkey, 2010). Throughout history, the rationalisation and role assignment of domestic work, including roles such as who should clean the toilet, has been shaped by past, changing, and intersecting micro- and macro-social processes and institutions of race, class, and gender (Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Bosmans et al., 2016; Cranford, 2005). For example, in apartheid and post-apartheid SA, domestic work and particularly the cleaning of higher academic institutions, has largely been a black (Ally, 2011), working-class (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006), and female, socio-economic activity (Ngcobo, 2004). With societal changes, identity-shaping processes produce shifting and at the same time continuing dynamics of race, class, gender, culture, and work (Ally, 2011; Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Ngcobo, 2004). However, historical records suggest that black male cleaners have also been cleaning in higher academic institutions such as the University of the Witwatersrand (formerly the South African School of Mines) as early as 1896 (Murray, 1982). In fact, the availability of black male domestic labourers can be traced as far

back as 'AmaWasha' (Zulu laundry washers) and 'kitchen boys' who worked as domestic servants in white middle-class families as early as 1886 (South African History Online, 2011). Yet, because cleaning has mostly been assumed to be a black (Ally, 2011), working-class (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006), and particularly female occupation (Ngcobo, 2004), the experiences of black male cleaners have been overlooked.

It appears that black male cleaners may have been working in higher academic institutions earlier or at the same time as black female cleaners historically (Murray, 1982). Yet, left un-problematized, cleaning as a profession and particularly the cleaning of higher academic institutions, solely becomes a black woman's lived experience – making invisible the role and importance of black male cleaners. Put slightly differently, while it is well-established that black South African men have been engaged in domestic work like cleaning alongside their female co-workers in various settings such as in nursing (Burns, 1998), housekeeping (South African History Online, 2011), and cleaning of higher academic institutions (Murray, 1982), the majority of literature around, cleaning and especially cleaning within higher academic institutions, has only viewed cleaning as an intimately black, working-class female's experience (Ally, 2011; Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Ngcobo, 2004). This, in turn, neglects the lived experiences of black male cleaners who *also* enter domestic work as racialised (Bartolomei, 2010), classed (Kilkey, 2010), and gendered subjects (Chopra, 2006).

A perusal of local and international studies showed a limited number of studies focusing on the lived experiences of black male cleaners – but a plethora of studies of studies of men working in non-traditional occupations (Bagilhole & Cross, 2006; Khunou et al., 2012; Peterson, 2014). But even as I combed through this literature, I noticed that many of them approached this phenomenon using either single or grand theory (e.g., Kalemba, 2020; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011; Simpson, 2004). The conception of hegemonic masculinity (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 1987; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) falls within this category. A common critique of these approaches has been their singular, essentialist approach, and lack of incorporation of the complexities of the inner and social worlds of men within fluctuating yet in some respects unchanging settings (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2008; Moller, 2007).

Instead, Philips (2006) calls for a combination of multidimensional approaches, such as drawing on the post-structural work of Foucault, Butler, and Bourdieu, to explore the complicated individual, social, and context-specific features that shape the evolving yet unalterable performances of masculinity and class. Based on this practical and theoretical gap in knowledge, I decided to interview 15 black male cleaners employed at a higher academic institution in Johannesburg to explore their lived experiences and performances of masculinity and class while working in this specific context. To uncover latent feelings and experiences, I utilised the conceptual framework of Stephen Frosh's psychosocial theory with a particular focus on masculinity studies to. To better understand those who do not perform gender in an intelligible way and those who suffer because they find themselves in conditions outside of their control, I employed Judith Butler's notion of performativity and precarity. Because the performances of race, masculinity, and class are embodied within the interaction of an agent within multiple social and cultural fields, I further employed Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus to uncover the internalised as well as reconstructed habits, behaviours, and mannerisms within these multiple fields. Furthermore, since this study is located in the South African context, I also make reference to the practical and theoretical findings of multiple African-centred scholars within black male studies. I did not opt for a central theory to explain the performance of race, masculinity, and class amongst cleaners in a higher academic institution as South African masculinities differ according to race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and time (Morrell & Ouzgane, 2007; Ratele, 2017; Shefer et al., 2010).

1.3. RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Considering the literature and problem statement above, this research hoped to answer the following aims and objectives:

1. As a qualitative, exploratory study, this research aimed to firstly explore the lived experiences of black male cleaners in a higher academic institution in Johannesburg. The objective here was to provide an opportunity for black male cleaners to share their own, individual lived experiences with regards to identity positioning.

2. Secondly, the study further aimed to explore the experiences of being a (gender) minority in a female-dominated occupation, while working in a historically racialized and devalued occupation. The objective here was to explore how black male cleaners perform and make sense of their racialised, classed, and gendered identities while working in a mostly black, lower-class, and female-dominated occupation, that of cleaning.
3. Thirdly, the study hoped to discover how engaging in this work environment enabled study participants to draw meaning in relation to how they approached their roles as men at work and at home.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the research aims and objectives, the following research questions were proposed:

Main research question:

1. What are the lived experiences in relation to personal and social identity of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution in Johannesburg?

Secondary research questions:

1. How do black male cleaners construct their racialised, gendered, and classed identities in a predominantly black, lower-class, and female occupation?
2. How do black male cleaners perform their race, masculinity, and class, as men at work and at home, while working in a high-status setting, at the same time occupying a low-status job?

1.5. OUTLINE OF THESIS

This section presented an introduction to the study. This chapter also presented the aims of the study, the proposed research questions, as well as the research rationale.

Chapter 2 provides the study's conceptual framework namely Stephen Frosh's psychosocial framework with a particular focus on masculinity studies, Judith Butler's notion of performativity and precarity, and Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus theory are discussed, as well as how they will be used within the study.

Chapter 3 gives a perusal of the existing literature that informs the context of the study. The first section aims to enlighten the reader regarding the discourses and surrounding literature on masculinity overall, black masculinity, and South African masculinity. This section is followed with a literature review around the state of career

developments in historically male and female occupations, and a closer look at women in male-concentrated occupations, as well as men in female-dominated occupations. A further section presents a discussion around the work of cleaners, cleaning within academic institutions, as well as cleaning outsourcing versus insourcing conditions.

Chapter 4 provides a description of the research process, including the paradigmatic lens, research and methodological approaches followed in conducting the study. The chapter notes the research design, sampling techniques, data collection and analysis approaches used. The chapter also reports on the steps implemented to ensure rigour and ethical considerations adhered to in the study.

Chapter 5 reports the study findings, including the emergent themes and supporting quotations. The chapter also gives a discussion of the findings in relation to the existing literature. The discussion also relies on the theoretical framework to analyse the study findings.

The last chapter, Chapter 6, provides a summary of findings, the study limitations, recommendations as well as implications for future research. The study finally concludes by highlighting the major points and findings of the study.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Theories and conceptual frameworks inform research to explain, predict and offer relational explanations for the concepts, relationships, and understandings of phenomenon (Abend, 2008; Asher, 1984; Trochim, 2017). Theory and conceptual frameworks may be used to challenge, extend, or suggest new pathways to understanding the existing body of knowledge, often surrounded by critical bounded assumptions (Swanson & Chermack, 2013). A conceptual framework orients and describes to the reader the chosen theory, which summarises why the research problem under investigation exists and how it is to be framed (Swanson & Chermack, 2013). This framework acts as a structure, which supports and organises the concepts, relationships, and assumption for a theory of a study (Asher, 1984; Corvellec, 2013; Trochim, 2017). The primary purpose of a conceptual framework is to convey the meaning, nature, challenges, and internal debates that have been suggested in studying a particular phenomenon (Trochim, 2017). For this study, Stephen Frosh's (1994, 1997, 2019) psychosocial framework with a particular focus on masculinity studies, Judith Butler's (1993) notion of performativity and precarity, as well as Pierre Bourdieu's (1977, 1987, 2000) theory of habitus will be utilised to analyse the study's findings.

2.2.1 STEPHEN FROSH'S PSYCHOSOCIAL FRAMEWORK WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON MASCULINITY STUDIES

Stephen Frosh (2003, 2018, 2019) is a British psychoanalyst interested in the integration of aspects of psychological theory (psychoanalysis and discursive psychology) with the social fields of critical, cultural, and developmental studies. Though most of his research on masculinity is on young, white males, his conceptions of male identity can be used as a starting point for theory and practice. According to Frosh (1993, 1994b, 2019), our psychological (conscious and unconscious), cultural (intergenerational and everyday practices), as well as social worlds (lived and imagined) of what is masculine and masculine identity, become embodiments of both our 'inner' and 'outer' worlds. That is, our construction of gender, for example, is linked to various psychological (e.g., personal upbringing, meaning-making, and traumas), cultural (scripts, ideologies, practices), and social influences (based on race, class, historical time and so on), which translate to our experiences of gender in consistent, contradictory, and/or ambiguous ways (Kiguwa, 2006).

Unlike most gender theorists, Frosh and his colleagues (2003) foreground the role of psychodynamic phenomena (i.e., desires, anxieties, defences, instincts, ego, prototypes) and how these dimensions define how we experience masculine roles, identity, and sexuality. At the same time, Frosh et al. (2003) remain suspicious of the deterministic, top-down, and expert-driven role that psychoanalysis has had in writing on psychosexual development; instead drawing on our intellectual, cultural, and social history with gender. Frosh et al. (2003, p. 349) maintain that our individual gendered selves derive from a host of psychosocial influences, such as "personal experience, interconnectedness, intersubjectivity, affect, embodiment, agency." From this integrated view, Frosh and his colleagues (2003), similar to other gender theorists (e.g., Butler, 1990; Connell, 2001; Kiguwa, 2006), seek to provide a framework of gender and our experience of our individual gendered selves based on both our immediate personal and broader social environments.

According to Frosh's (1993, 1994a, 1995) seminal work in psychoanalysis, masculinity, psychosocial studies, as well as work with his colleagues (Frosh et al., 2002; Frosh et al., 2003; Pattman et al., 1998), from an early age, boys and girls learn crucial sexual differences based on the way there are treated. For example, boys learn through rough play like tug-of-war about noticeable psychological, bodily, and social characteristics, such as being competitive, demonstrating physical strength, and dominating others. These features become stored from early memory as the first known traits associated with being a boy. Through further interaction with the world and other boys, these boyish traits either become generalised, or questioned (e.g., a transgendered boy who enjoys playing with dragons), which challenges this fundamental prototype of what is a 'real' boy (Frosh, 1993, 1994a, 1995).

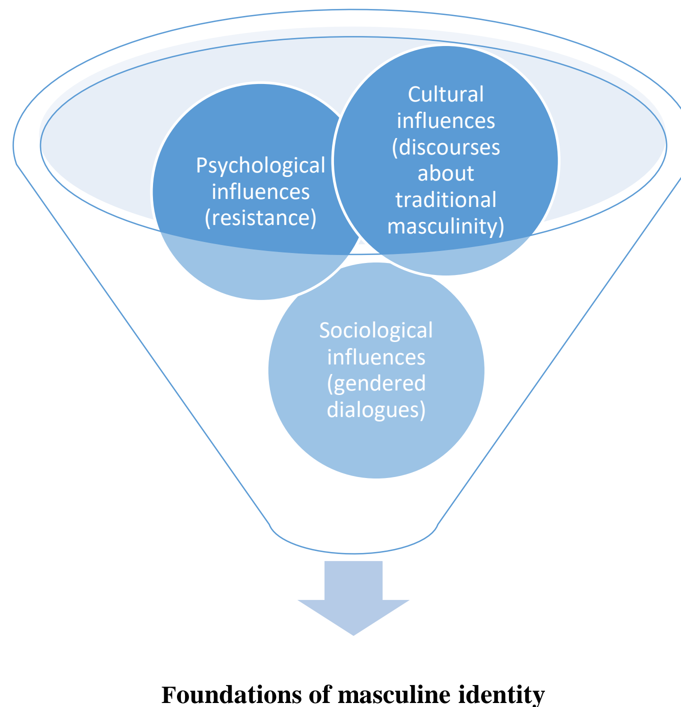

Figure 2.1 Frosh's foundations of masculinity

Frosh's (1993, 1994a, 1995) foundation of masculine identity has been modelled in Figure 2.1 above. This study broadly explores the lived experiences of men who enter a female-dominated occupation, such as cleaning, which remains a racialized (mostly black), classed (lower-class), and gendered profession (predominately female-concentrated) (Ally, 2011; Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Ngcobo, 2004). Frosh's (1993, 1994a, 2019) psychosocial framework and masculinity studies might be used to explore the experience of gender from a variety of domains, including a psychological (e.g., coping skills), cultural (gender norms), and social dimension (sexism), which become translated into the embodied representations of our gender identity (Butler, 1988; Connell, 1987; de Beauvoir, 1949). According to Frosh (1994a), these differences form from a continuous experience of gender and sexuality, made up from past and new events, passed down and re-constructed from early to everyday knowledge and practices, as well as defended and corroborated based on psychological and social phenomena. Frosh's (1993, 1994a, 2019) psychosocial framework particular focus on masculinity studies shows us how the study of masculinity is complicated and can be enriched by looking for various psychological, cultural, and social experiences.

For example, by utilising Frosh's (2003, 2018, 2019) psychosocial framework in masculinity studies to understand how men, in this case, black men cope with psychosocial and environmental stressors, an interesting case study that comes to mind is the 'John Henryism Hypothesis'. Sherman James, an African American public health researcher, coined the term 'John Henryism' from interviewing John Henry Martin, a black man from a poor sharecropper family who succeeded against all odds, despite his poverty-stricken background (James, 1994; James et al., 1983; James et al., 1987). Martin was well-known for his extreme determination and physical strength, which he later paid a severe price for in obtaining his numerous accomplishments. His immense physical strength allowed him to lift steel, work his own farm, as well as free his generation from the bondage of the sharecropper industry. Yet, by his late 50s, his health declined as he struggled with hypertension, arthritis, and peptic ulcer disease, the latter resulting in 40% of his stomach being removed. The 'John Henryism Hypothesis' has since been historically linked to the long-term effects of physical exhaustion and resulting health consequences specifically amongst African Americans males (James, 1992; James, 1994; James et al., 1987).

Although James et al. (1983) research initially looked at the biomedical causes of diseases such as hypertension with factors such as socio-economic background, the focus in these studies later considered the impact of acute psychosocial stressors (e.g., chronic financial strain, job insecurity, and daily racial insults), particularly faced by African American working-class men and women as contributors to adverse health outcomes (James, 1994). Some of James' (1994) ideas on the 'John Henryism Hypothesis' have been used and expounded upon in other studies to explain for example the psychological (fear, stress, anxiety), cultural (black men are expected to not show weakness, hide vulnerability, suppress any negative emotion), and social impact (avoiding places of high-visibility, surveillance, and police patrolling) of the psychosocial stressors faced by black men in society (Carter & Forsyth, 2010; Smith et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2020). Extrapolating Frosh's (2003, 2018, 2019) psychosocial framework, we can use the 'John Henryism Hypothesis' and recent literature around black working-class men elsewhere around the world to highlight the psychological (fascination of black men as a product of hard labour), cultural (sexual politics which fail to protect black men in the home and work environment), as well as the racist social and economic strategies (perceived bias and stigma about skills and abilities) intended

to subdue and exploit black working-class men (Jr., 2010; Moss & Tilly, 2001; Staples, 1982).

Internationally, the term racial battle fatigue (the chronic stress following from everyday biased racial treatment and their microaggressions adversely affecting biopsychosocial health) faced by American African males has been utilised to explain the stress-related symptoms (fear, anxiety, dehumanization) which exceeds available coping resources compared to other races (Carter & Forsyth, 2010; Smith et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2020). According to Smith et al. (2022), this form of attitude is witnessed mostly within all-white environments, such as historically white academic institutions as the one chosen in this study. Racial battle fatigue is most noticeable by the microaggressions towards black men working or finding themselves within these environments (James, 1994; Smith et al., 2022; Sue et al., 2007). According to Sue et al. (2007), "Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color." One of the recently covered incidents in a historically white Afrikaner higher academic institution is the incident of the Reitz Four wherein black female cleaners were subjected to humiliating conditions by white students attempting to reinforce the idea that they were against the integration of white and black students on their housing campus (Cloete & Sapa, 2008; Evans, 2008; Sapa, 2008). For black men who cannot or not allowed to express any grievances because of their supposed make-up, this can leave them with fewer opportunities to report experiences they find humiliating or emasculating.

2.2.2 JUDITH BUTLER'S NOTION OF PERFORMATIVITY AND PRECARITY

As noted in Orr (2012), the body is more than a vessel that enables us to experience reality through our senses. In other words, the body is more than a material entity, capable of being an object of interpretative and performative value. According to Orr (2012), the realization of our sense of embodiment and the embodied performances we consciously and unconsciously take on can shape how we see everyday reality. That is, taking ownership of our sense of embodiment cannot only be utilized to undermine dominant socio-cultural norms and worldviews, but can be a taken up as a source of shifting the socio-political climate (Orr 2012). As noted earlier, Judith Butler (1988,

1990, 1993, 2004) has always been interested in how we do (and undo) gender, or certain ways of being based on expected socio-cultural norms. A key term in Butler's (1993, p. xii) work is performativity, which is defined as "that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constraints". In *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*, Butler's (1993) analysis reveals that deviant performances (e.g., men cleaning female-only toilets) can produce bodies which in some societies are socially considered as less intelligible from conventional norms or discourses.

Butler's (1988, 1990, 1993, 2004) work, which has largely been influenced by Michel Foucault (1982, 1988, 1991), centers around how repetitive discourses, construed and maintained by disciplines construct gendered subjects (e.g., hetero-masculine and hetero-feminine subjects), as well as its consequences for relations of power (e.g., patriarchal systems producing the gender domination of women). According to Butler (1990), social processes, such as socialisation inculcates expected roles, behaviours, and ways of being about gender and sexuality – as well as how they should be performed. For example, young boys become socialized about how to present male gender and sexuality from dress, embodiment, as well as the physical presentation of being a man. Over time, these dominant socio-cultural expectations become culturally intelligible, or reliable and commonly accepted worldviews for boys and girls to judge others and themselves as complying with what is expected of them (Connell, 2005; Donaldson, 1993; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). However, it goes without saying that that these hegemonic assumptions may lead to actions and practices used to oppress and dominate others, such as gay men being shamed for their effeminise gender expressions (Connell, 2005; Donaldson, 1993; Wetherell & Edley, 1999).

For this study, it is important to first understand Butler's (1993) notion of performativity to understand what are intelligible versus unintelligible bodies. On the other hand, it is also crucial to introduce another concept in relation to bodies which Butler (2009) termed precarious or 'the precariat' – those in the margins of society who are more exposed to violence, injury, and displacement. Butler's (2009, i) contention is that those who find themselves in precarious conditions, for example, a historically black, low-class, and under-paying occupation where one is a gender minority like black male cleaners, are at "risk of not being qualified as a subject of recognition". I will begin the discussion around performativity first.

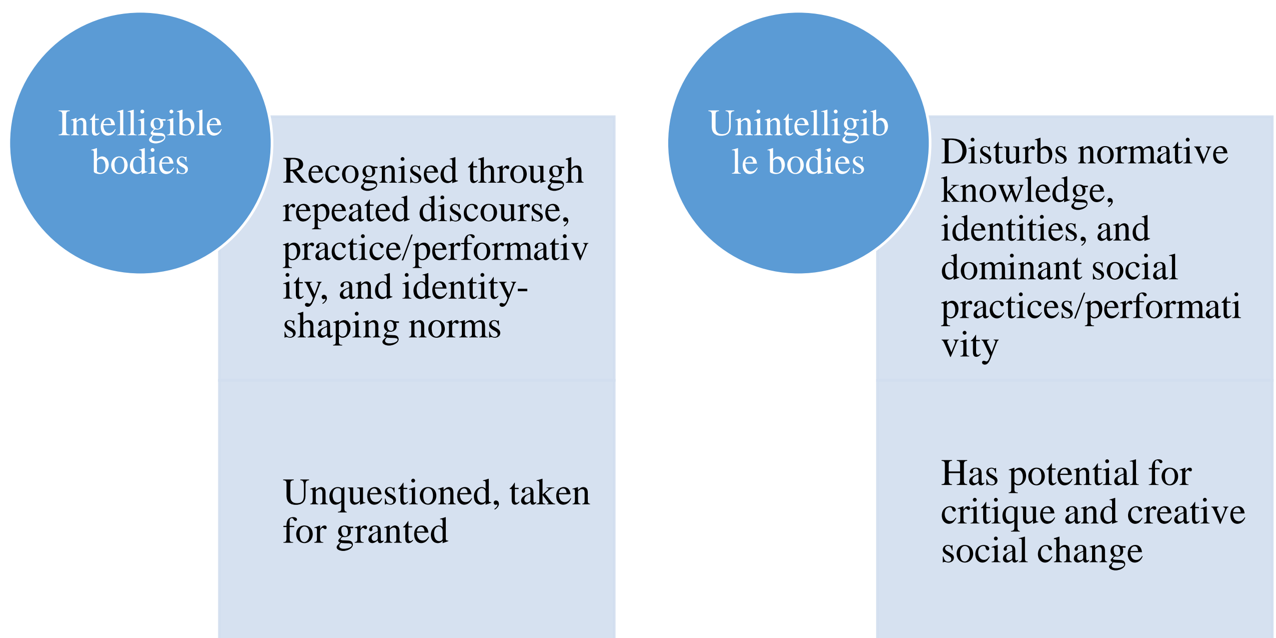

Figure 2.2 Distinguishing between the intelligible and unintelligible bodies as adapted from Vasterling, 1999)

Butler (1993) noted that intelligible bodies, formed as a demand in and from language, are those bodies (un)consciously performing a culturally familiar and unquestionable identity, such as a hetero-masculine man marrying a hetero-feminine woman. In this way, intelligible bodies manifest through embodied and repetitive performances, which causes less anxiety from others (Orr, 2012). As Figure 2.2 shows, the intelligible body is socially recognized and normalized by normative standards, which regulate and govern such bodies. On the other hand, in some societies, for example, a previously unseen transgendered woman performing femininity can come to be seen – from the outside but not from one's own lived experience - as unintelligible because of the sexed, gendered, and sexualised construction of the female body. This female performance by a biologically male body becomes socially seen - although not from the individual's own point of view - as less intelligible due to "the specific body that consistently and insistently performs femininity" (Orr, 2012, pp. 3-4). In other words, due to regimes of discipline and repetitive discourse about sex, gender, and

sexuality, the body and behaviours of femininity becomes recognized and accepted as intelligible based on the repeated performance by what is well-known of the female body (Orr, 2012). Therefore, when a transgendered woman performs femininity, it disrupts, again from a socio-cultural perspective - not a universally shared norm - the logical and repeated discourse of what and who should perform being womanhood (Butler, 1993).

For Butler (1993), who mostly aligns with Foucault's ideas in *Discipline and Punishment* as well as *The History of Sexuality (Volume 1),* maintains intelligibleness works and is sustained by how bodies are positioned - which translates to what we can/not say and can/not do. As Butler (2007, p. 24) puts it: '"Intelligible" genders are those which in some sense institute and maintain relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice, and desire." In other words, when an individual performs outside of the normative reference or disciplinary knowledge, it becomes easier, or at least over time, to be noticeable. Butler's (1993) notion of (un)intelligibility, borrowing concepts from Derrida's theory of iterability and consequently citationality, claims that intelligibility is maintained through repeated performance of what is culturally acceptable, or precisely what is recognisable. As Purdy (2016, p. 2) notes, "Cultural intelligibility implies that the repetitive utterance of the norm has created a definitive identity." According to Butler (1990, 1993, 1996, 2004), a subject in turn, learns to perform and regulate themselves from enacting and observing these socially approved and deviant performances/identities because these are intelligible. To be regarded as an intelligible body, Stoffel (2018, p. 50) adds, "there are certain normative gender presuppositions to which an individual must conform in order to be 'intelligibly human'."

In this study, I will consider whether or not and how men who enter female-dominated occupations, such as cleaning, consider themselves as deviant for performing what might be considered as 'women's work', based on where they come from or view their job in relation to their gender identity. This is because the reality of men cleaning toilets, especially those who are forced to clean female-only toilets, may be culturally considered as unintelligible in some societies given what Vasterling (1999) considers the limits, insofar as language is concerned, prescribes to the sex, gender, and sexuality with the male body. This, in turn, may carry implications for the black men in this study and how they perform their masculinity. For example, one may

theorise how this deviance from the norm affects their male identity at work and at home. As masculinity is a varied and non-fixed category, it might be worth investigating how the men manage these performances of masculinity to fulfil certain roles when at home and at work. For example, these men may choose to act according to dominant and culturally intelligible ways, conforming to heterosexual masculine norms (e.g., refusing to wash dishes at work), to conform to intelligible male identity but may have to renegotiate their identity when it comes to being forced to clean female-only toilets – an act they might not be used to as part of their job description.

Precarity is a multi-facet term, associated with several related terms, including precarious, precariousness, as well as 'the precariat' (Kasmir, 2018). Butler (2009, as cited in Kasmir, 2018, p. 2) saw precarity "as a generalised human condition that stems from the fact that all humans are interdependent on each other and therefore all are vulnerable." Butler (2009) saw precarity as a different concept given that it remains distributed unevenly amongst different socio-economic groups. In fact, precarity remains more prevalent amongst poor, marginalised, and alienated individuals or communities who remain susceptible to economic hardship, job insecurity, personal injury, common or state violence, as well as forced displacement. Precarity speaks to the notion that majority of the world's population struggle with securing stable employment and or a guaranteed salary (Butler, 2009). It makes sense that the term precarity was introduced in scholarly research during the 21st century namely because of a response to political efforts against unemployment and social exclusion of certain classes mainly within capitalist societies. Precarity has in fact been a commonplace feature within these societies and has continued to exemplify the lives of working-class individuals, especially in the Global South (Kasmir, 2018). Within these conditions, employment and people's livelihoods are characterised as unstable and insecure (Butler, 2009).

Precarity underscores the fact that informal, temporary, or contingent work is the most dominant form of work labouring people rely on in the contemporary world (Bourdieu, 1998). More predominantly, many people around the world cannot obtain or sustain a steady income or secured job. They survive mostly their menial, unskilled, and unreliable jobs, such as garbage collection, domestic work, or any short-term kind of labour that is facilitated via the internet (Kasmir, 2018). According to Butler (2009), precarity refers to this unpredictable cultural and economic state of vulnerability. Butler

(2009, cited in Kasmir, 2018, p. 2) makes a comparison of precariousness from a transhistorical and existential perspective “as a general and pervasive human experience, one that extends beyond the current political-cultural moment and affects people of all socio-economic groups.” Framing precariousness from this ontological, philosophical point allows us to gauge much more of close-to-the-skin descriptions of precariousness as characterised by feelings of vulnerability, displacement, and hopelessness about the future (Kasmir, 2018). By employing this lens, precariousness becomes less about transforming relations of class, but becomes a structure of feelings and experience, following from transhistorical and existential conditions of social life (Kasmir, 2018). Butler (2009) further added that within precariousness, social value is granted to certain lives and bodies, to which others are denied, while some bodies are protected and others not.

According to Butler (2009), this implies that certain individuals remain more prone to a) precarity (being poor, marginalised, and alienated), and/or b) precarious conditions (e.g., exposure to injury, violence, exploitation) as well as c) being in a heightened state of precariousness (anxious, insecure, uncertain about one’s the future). For this reason, precarity is, of course, not only related gender-based violence but other types of intersecting forms of violence, such as black racial misandry (Curry, 2017a, 2018a, 2018c; Smith et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2020). An example is Ralph Ellison’s (1952) book, “Invisible Man”, in which he claims that invisibility is one of the core features of black racial misandry. In the text, the narrator, a young black male senior, testifies to his precariousness, “I am an invisible man…I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fibre and bone – and I might even be said to possess a mind. But I am invisible, understand, because people refuse to see me” (Ellison, 1952, p. 78). Another recent instance is Curry’s (2017a) book titled, “The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood”, who uses contemporary social scientific research to argue that black men have been subjects of systemic violence, racial oppression, and denial of rights and recognition. He and others argue that black men struggle with increased psychosocial and mental health problems like rape, death, suicide, disempowerment, and racial battle fatigue (Curry, 2017a, 2018a, 2018c; Carter & Forsyth, 2010; Smith et al., 2020). It is Curry (2017a, 2018a, 2018c) and others’ (Jr., 2010; Staples, 1991) contention that we understand the racialised, classed, and gendered existence of black male life to be able to appreciate how structural racism,

economic and sexual segregation, as well as precarity affect the lives and deaths of black males.

2.2.3 PIERRE BOURDIEU'S THEORY OF HABITUS

Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1990) presents a theory of power and practice based on how we conform through an interactive process of agents (habitus), the external structure (fields), and its exchanges (capital). According to Bourdieu (1984), agents interact and exchange capital (knowledge, experiences, ideas and so on) every day from a host of external structures (education, science, art, religion, and bureaucracy among others). Each field (the external structure) exerts requirements (tastes, beliefs, norms, behaviours, habits, and mannerisms of doing) for the agent to gain membership within the field (Schäfer, 2014). Bourdieu (1977) extended 'capital' to refer to not just economic capital, but the social, cultural, symbolic knowledge, and networks available to the agent. According to Bourdieu (1977), the language, tastes, knowledge, skills, and networks attained from one field can be transferred or reproduced in another field. Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1990) referred to the skills and dispositions ingrained into the body and mind of the individual by these external structures as the habitus. Habitus also involved how an individual's experiences and opportunities cause them to act accordingly or modify their reactions (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1990).

However, to better understand Bourdieu's theory, one must also understand Bourdieu's concepts of the doxa, orthodoxy, and heterodoxy. The doxa forms part of Bourdieu's theory of power and practice through the interaction of the external structure (fields), agents (habitus) and its exchanges (capital) (Schafer et al., 2008). Doxa refers to the unquestioned, undisputed ideologies, discourses and language we have become accustomed to as the 'undisputable truth' (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1986). Doxa, for example, can be the gendered nature of how we think about occupations as 'men or women's work'. These taken for granted assumptions, as Butler (1977, 1984, 1986) and Foucault (1997) would argue, turn into repeated discourses, language and defended statements about the doxa Bourdieu termed as orthodoxy.

Orthodoxy are statements such as 'men should not carry a mop or toilet brush'. The statement maintains patriarchal norms through repeated discourses about what men and women can and cannot do. This narrative about gender eventually translates to an

ideology (doxa) that it eventually becomes ‘undisputable’ to see a man carrying a mop or toilet brush. However, the ‘undisputable’ allows space for a competing understanding of these ‘truths’ to be re-examined – a position Butler (1977, 1984, 1986) termed as heterodoxy. Heterodoxy refers to a situation where a doxa is interrogated and de-naturalised by some crisis or “awakening of political consciousness” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 170). For example, women entering male-dominated occupations such as during war time - and staying in those occupations after the men’s return questioned how certain occupations could only be performed by men. Figure 2.3 demonstrates how the doxa and orthodoxy maintain gender ideology, and how heterodoxy destabilises this ideology.

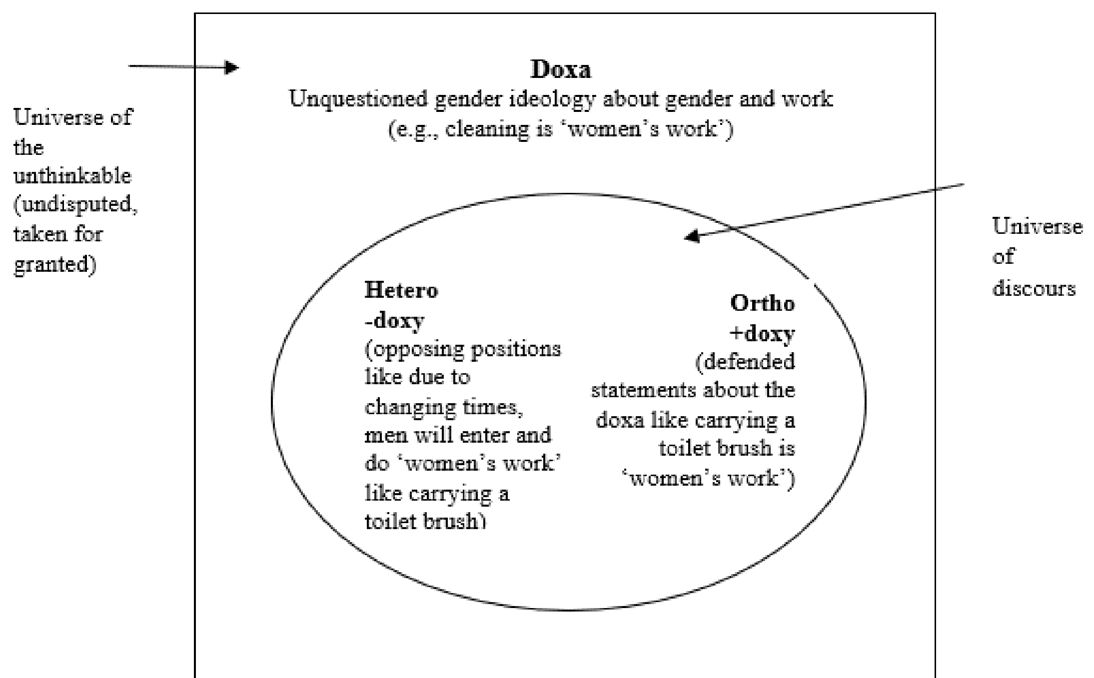

Figure 2.3: Relationship of the doxa, orthodoxy and heterodoxy in relation to the (de)naturalisation of work and gender ideology (adapted from Bourdieu 1977, 168)

It should be noted however that the emergence of a heterodoxy does not guarantee a change of the status quo but can be regarded as heresy by the dominant group (Bourdieu, 1986). This is because it remains mediated by the orthodoxy, or in other words defended by the dominant and visible group within society (Bourdieu, 1977). Instead, according to Fram (2004, p. 3), “The emergence of heterodoxy draws attention to the ways in which domination is structured through social institutions, cultural norms, and taken-for-granted practices in daily life”. Most commonly,

heterodoxy emerges in times when the marginalised identify the arbitrary, interest-serving workings of a doxa which benefit the dominate group (Fram, 2004). In this case, the feminist movement of the 1960s in the US and UK allowed for women to interrogate norms about women's right to vote and enter the workforce, which gained independence for women to enter various occupations to this day.

To return to the habitus, Bourdieu (1977) therefore claimed that habitus is formed through a corresponding doxic-relationship between what is known to be ("the rules") and expected ways of being ("playing the game"). This situation implies the individual acts in line with the required tastes, mannerisms, and hence habitus of the related field. However, black male cleaners (agents) do not fit into their working environment (field). The chosen higher academic institution is a prestigious environment of mostly white, middle-class academic excellence (economic, cultural, and social capital). In fact, most of the men in this study (10 out of the 15) had a education level of Grade 10 and less at the time of the interview. This means that they can easily be undermined, disrespected, or even excluded by language, class, and mannerisms acquired by academics and students within this environment. This, in turn, may produce an agent-field dislocation. The agent's reactions to this dislocation may be varied, including confusion, assimilation, disassociation, acclimatization, or even woundedness (Bourdieu, 1998). A real-life example of is Lange et al.'s (2015) study, "Wounded learners failed by schooling: Symbolic violence and re-engaging low-income adults," which showed that previous school experiences of failure scared and wounded adults from low-income households from returning to formal or informal education.

Similarly, in SA, many poor and working-class black men have had educational opportunities of primary and secondary schooling taken away from them by the apartheid government (Byrnes, 1996; Clark & Worger, 2013; Moore, 2015). Other studies in elsewhere in the world such as in the US, also showed that most black working-class males remain largely concentrated in blue-collar because of the fewer educational opportunities because of structural inequalities intended to prevent black men from entering high profile positions compared to their white counterparts (Curry, 2017a; Gary, 1981; Staples, 1978, 1982). As for the black male cleaners in this study, it is worth exploring if the years of working for such a future-making space such as a

higher academic institution, compounded by other intersecting systems of oppression, such as racism, ageism, and sexism, may have configured their realities as embodied by shame, disappointment, and potentially feeling wounded. In Lange et al.'s (2015) study, it is suggested that such adults suffer from discouragement, depression, and despondency after being failed by such social institutions such as the education system. Lange et al. (2015, p. 84) further makes the following conclusion about the fate of these adults:

> Consistent with classic studies by Bourdieu and Passeron (1970/1990) and Willis (1978), not returning for further education reproduces their socio-economic position, a form of symbolic violence in which they are unknowingly complicit in the reproduction of their own marginality.

Bourdieu's (1977) habitus can be utilised to understand how black working-class men working in higher academic institutions may develop certain habitus to cope with their positioning within this racialised, gendered, classed space and occupation. This is especially given their minority in a female-dominated occupation and high surveillance space, such as a university. Building on Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) key concepts, the performance of race, masculinity, and class may occur from multiple social fields the men might have acquired certain knowledge and experiences they might have heard of or personally experienced themselves. The men, for example, know that cleaning is a historically black, female, and under-paying job. As a gender minority working in a feminine and low-paying occupation, the men might draw on existing or alternative performances of race, masculinity, and class to position themselves within this field. For example, some men may be required to clean female-only toilets - something which is frowned upon in their home or culture (field). Yet, because their work description stipulates that the cleaning of female-only toilets forms part of their jobs, new knowledge, thoughts, perceptions, habits (habitus) might form to cope with the demands of this work environment (field).

2.3. CONCLUSION

This section provided an in-depth discussion and literature which informed the study's conceptual framework, namely Frosh's psychosocial framework particular focus on

masculinity studies, Butler’s notion of performativity and precarity, as well as Bourdieu’s theory of habitus.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. INTRODUCTION

As stated earlier, the emergence of black male cleaners within academic institutions is not a new concept in local and international research (Aguiar, 2005; Cranford, 2005; Murray, 1982) - although these studies have not explored the lived experiences of such men, especially when it comes to the performances of masculinity and class. International literature has considered studies on movements where black janitors advocated for equal rights and better working conditions within state and private organizations (Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Knotter, 2017; Russell, 2017). A number of other international studies have explored the relationship around men entering non-traditional occupations and their attitudes towards their work (Bagilhole & Cross, 2006; O'Connor, 2015; Robinson, 2011), gains and compromises of doing 'women's work' (Shen-Miller & Smiler, 2015; Torre, 2018; Williams, 1993, 2013, 2015), a typology of men who enter female-dominated work (Williams & Villemez, 1993), 'cross over' trends (Bradley, 1993; Campuzano, 2019; Gross, 2015), and even how they maintain their masculinity (Calasanti & King, 2007; Dennis, 2008; Jones & Aubrey, 2019). While gender and social class were taken as key areas of analysis (Bagilhole & Cross, 2006; Lupton, 2006; Simpson, 2004), the interplay between race (black), gender minority within the occupational sector (men), class (working class), job setting (working for a higher academic institution), and job status (cleaner) have not been taken to account together.

Locally, prior to the investigation of this study, I had not come across any study on the lived experiences of black male cleaners, especially in a higher academic institution. The one study that I found centred on the lived experiences of black female cleaners in higher academic institutions, discussed in Bezuidenhout and Fakier's (2006) study titled, *Maria's Burden: Contract Cleaning and the Crisis of Social Reproduction in Post-apartheid South Africa*. As much as this study was ground-breaking in terms of the historical, racial, class, gendered, and occupational lens of approaching care work such as cleaning, Bezuidenhout and Fakier's (2006) study did not consider how these experiences would differ for black male cleaners. Although there have been various local studies conducted about black men who find themselves in gender-atypical jobs, such as nursing (Kalemba, 2020), social work (Khunou et al., 2012), as well as early

childhood education (Peterson, 2014), no local study has attempted to explore the lived experiences of black male cleaners, particularly in a higher academic institution.

Instead, there has been a plethora of studies looking at issues of masculinity when men enter female-dominated occupations (Dworzanowski-Venter, 2010; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011; Peterson, 2014) and how issues of class, culture and race define men's preferred work roles (Kalemba, 2020; Khunou et al., 2012; Mashiya, 2014). Yet, in SA, there are no studies which have considered the complexities of working in a high-status setting, such as a higher academic institution, and at the same time occupying a low-status job like cleaning, and how men within these spaces perform masculinity and class. Instead, local literature has looked at the lived experiences of black female cleaners and domestic workers within academic institutions (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Githaiga et al., 2017; Ngcobo, 2004). As such, there is a dearth of literature which considers the gendered aspect of being a gender minority within a largely female-dominated occupation while working for a highly-esteemed setting like a higher academic institution. This study remains the first to present important findings about the lived experiences, particularly the performances of masculinity and class amongst South African black male cleaners working for a higher academic institution in Johannesburg.

Since there is limited literature in this area of study, I decided to build a literature review around the performances of masculinity according to race, class, and gender as overlapping and competing social categories. As it has been established that black men have been involved in cleaning within various settings such as in aristocratic mansions (Pariser, 2015), private households (South African History Online, 2011), and higher academic institutions (Murray, 1982), I thought I would then introduce a study into cleaning as an occupation and in particular cleaners within higher academic institutions. This section reviews the current working conditions of cleaners and the debates and historical trajectories of insourcing versus outsourcing worker patterns. The review reports on the wages, the nature of work performed by cleaners, as well as the restructuring of contractual cleaning. To understand the lived experiences of working in such a context, the review introduces a section on the history of men working in female-dominated occupations, such as nursing, social work, and teaching.

The reason for this is to locate how black men manage various performances of masculinity and class while working in these gender-atypical jobs.

Furthermore, I introduce the study's broad conceptual framework, including Stephen Frosh's (2019, 1994b, 1993) psychosocial framework with a particular focus on masculinity studies, Judith Butler's notion of (un)intelligible bodies, as well as Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus. Frosh's (2019, 1994b, 1993) psychosocial framework unearths psycho-dynamic elements, such as anxieties, denials, defences, conflict, as well as deeply-rooted unconscious phenomena which shape masculine identity. Butler's (2011) notion of (un)intelligible bodies underlies the role and implications of how deviant performances (i.e., men doing 'women's work'), which go against dominant expectations, come to be socially seen as less than intelligible. Butler's (2011) analysis shows how bodies once considered less intelligible can become intelligible by shifting dominant racial, gendered and class norms. Bourdieu's (1977, 1986, 1990) habitus refers to the habits, tastes, and mannerisms ingrained into the body from the external structure to enable the individual to exist in a particular field. However, Bourdieu's (1977, 1986, 1990) theoretical lens suggests various possibilities to the habitus, namely that it is not static and context specific. In fact, new habitus form, which may defend, complicate, and adapt to the existing temporal space, actors, situation and/or multiple selves (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986, 1990).

3.2. BLACK MASCULINITY STUDIES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND HOW IT HAS BEEN HISTORICALLY STUDIED

A reading of black masculinity studies in SA and how it has been previously studied is the primary focus of this section. The discussion introduces the multiple social categories which intersects with black masculine identity to produce various forms of performances of masculinity. To structure the discussion, I will only focus on the interrelated role of race, class, and gender in relation to how masculinity is performed. The section will provide critiques of how poor and black working-class men have been previously studied within these discussions.

Race and the performances of masculinity

Africa and specifically SA has undergone radical transformation over the last centuries, which has shaped the way masculinity is performed (Morrell, 2001; Ratele, 2017; Shefer et al., 2010). One such instance is the consequence of apartheid on the black

male body. Morrell's (1998) work in *Of boys and men: Masculinity and gender in Southern African studies,* remains one of the most significant texts in understanding the racial hierarchies of masculinities that followed the aftermath of apartheid. As Figure 3.1 shows, Morrell (1998) refers to three types of masculinities that emerged during this time. In this study, I will only be discussing the first two of the three: traditional/rural masculinity, urban masculinity, and white masculinity.

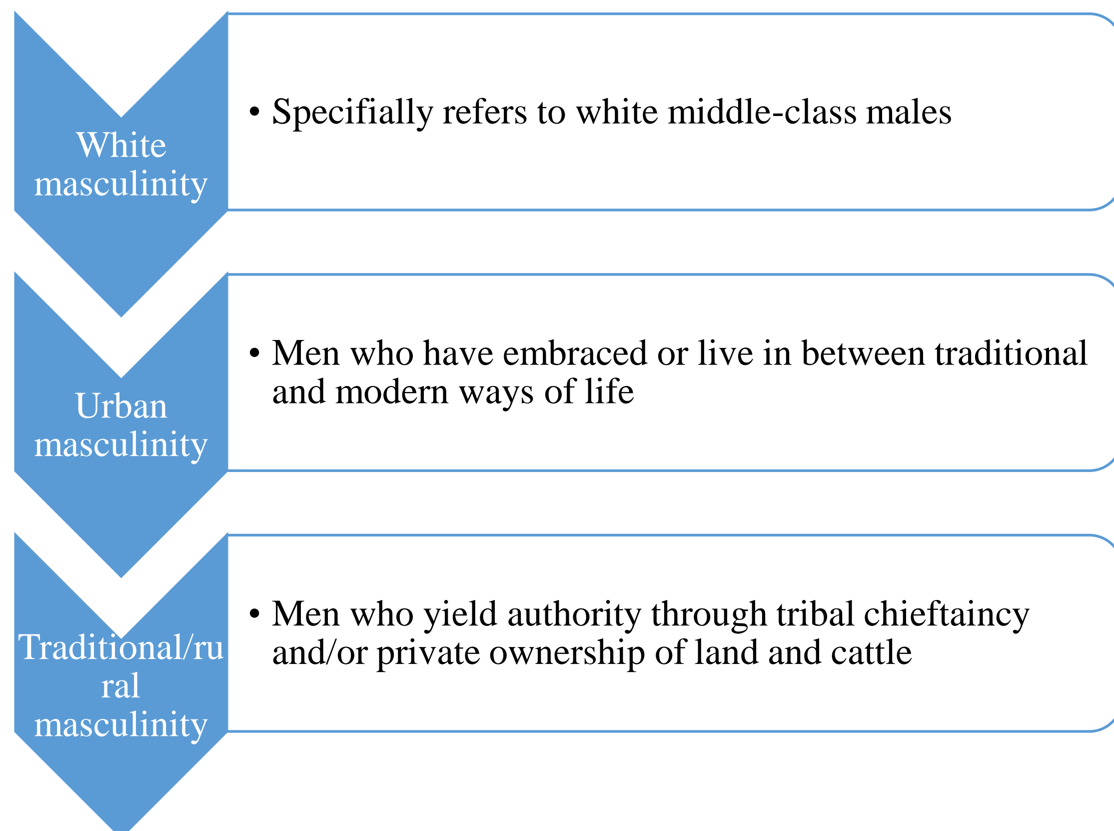

Figure 3.1 Hierarchy of masculinities as a result the apartheid regime (adapted from Morrell, 1998)

Traditional/rural masculinity

It goes without saying that black masculinities, or more closely, traditional African masculinities differ depending on their position in the continent, diversities in culture, language, ethnicity, as well as religious affiliation (Hunter, 2006; Mkhize, 2006; Morrell, 1998). But throughout history, traditional African masculinities have been embodied around affirming African cultural identity and heritage (Ellapen, 2007; Hunter, 2003; Ratele, 2017). Despite the shifting norms in most traditional African communities, there have always been behaviours and expectations that have sustained

traditional African masculinity. These include amongst others, closeness with one's ancestry, tribal relations, performance of traditional rituals, as well as herding cattle on generational land (Hunter, 2006; Morrell, 1998; Mkhize, 2006). Particularly in SA, black men from different ethnic tribes express and participate in a range of activities which carry the same symbolic meaning. For example, Mfecane's (2016) *"Ndiyindoda"[I am a man]: theorising Xhosa masculinity,* reveals how a boy - despite his sexual orientation - earns his right to manhood in Xhosa to be called 'indoda' (a man) by getting traditionally circumcised. These traditions are somewhat similar in the Venda (Sivhabu & Visser, 2019), Sotho (Mohlaloka et al., 2016), and Zulu tribes (Hunter, 2006). The roles and activities performed during these rites of passage and consequently for boys who become men, in leading their own households, were consistent with stereotypical masculine norms, such as performing physically demanding tasks, acts of courage, risk-taking behaviours, preserving the family legacy as well as asserting male dominance (Ratele et al., 2010; Morrell, 1998; Mfecane, 2016).

Part of being a 'real man' in this context could be gauged in terms of being a provider (Hunter, 2006; Mkhize, 2006; Morrell, 1998), a leader (Mohlaloka, 2014; Monyela, 2017; Shefer et al., 2010), paying lobolo (Bayi & Hawthorne, 2018; Chiweshe, 2016; Makama, 2020), protecting one's family (Carton & Morrell, 2012; Hadebe, 2010; Rudwick & Posel, 2014), as well as showing sexual prowess through fathering children (Morrell et al., 2012; Oxlund, 2012; Sivhabu & Visser, 2019). However, recent studies such as Hunter's (2006) powerful work: *'Fathers without Amandla (power): Zulu-speaking men and fatherhood',* showed that this traditional set of gender relations has changed due to the economic disempowerment of men due to poverty and unemployment. Research with men who find themselves without employment in these contexts report that they feel severe pressures to provide (Mkhize, 2006), and experience a breakdown in their family relations (Hunter, 2006), and acute depression (Radford, 1999). Silberschmidt's (1992, 2001, 2005) work on men experiencing socioeconomic disempowerment - with women being more empowered - suggested these changes had negative implications for male identity and sexual behaviour. This is because as Hunter (2006, p. 106) puts it, men to think of empowerment and disempowerment in a zero-sum manner wherein, "If men have

power, women have none; if women are empowered, then men must be disempowered."

Urban masculinity

Urban black masculinity was forged by the migration of black men from reserves and bantustans[5], given the demand of black labour for mining in urban cities during the apartheid era (Ellapen, 2007; Morrell, 1998; Walker, 2005b). This type of work was regarded as "hard and dangerous work, demanding endurance and physical strength" (Morrell, 1998, p. 622) – a crucial symbol of masculinity that has been assigned to the male black body. For those who could not find work in mines, the most readily available option was to seek 'women's work', resulting in their emasculation as black men (Morrell, 1998). Post the apartheid regime, urban masculinity transformed into a diverse culture amongst black males pursuing in some ways a lifestyle characterized by technologies, language, dress, music, food and evident in other artefacts of modernism (Ragnarsson et al., 2010).

This resulted in some men adopting more radical, progressive, and egalitarian norms when it comes to love and romantic relationships (Ratele, 2013). This includes gender roles such as in marriage, child-rearing, household chores, sexual negotiation, distribution of wages as well as equal employment opportunities (Barker, 1998; Ratele, 2013; Sideris, 2003). However, Morrel (1998) notes that it should be remembered that this group of men found themselves in between traditional family values, practices, and belief systems. Then again, it should be remembered that urban black men found themselves experiencing the pressures of trying to afford a comfortable lifestyle, relative to other competing classes, such as the white middle-class, at the same time with limited opportunities in owning property (Ragnarsson et al., 2010). These frustrations and obstacles often resulted in black men engaging in violent acts to assert their maleness - at times targeting women and children (Shefer, 2007).

On the other hand, those left behind were moved by the white government to certain demarcated areas which came to be known as townships - occupied by black

[5] "The Bantustans or homelands, established by the Apartheid Government, were areas to which the majority of the Blacks population was moved to prevent them from living in the urban areas of South Africa" (South African History Online, 2019).

men who had even fewer opportunities than those navigating between township and urban life (Langa, 2020; Morrell, 1998; Ellapen, 2007). Township masculinities have been largely characterized as personifying lifestyles associated with fast cars, gangsters, substance abuse, HIV infection, unemployment, and fathering many children with multiple women (Ragnarsson et al., 2010). Some men in the townships have been described as viewing love and romantic relationships through obsession, possessiveness and demanding the utmost commitment (Huysamen, & Boonzaier, 2015; Langa, 2020; Morrell et al., 2012). Women are reported to be brutally chastised for seeking independence or alternative male companions (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Huysamen, & Boonzaier, 2015; Shefer, 2007). These men display their anger and frustration for feeling inadequate through their intimate relationships (Shefer, 2007). In this case, both urban and township masculinities remain in flux - each opting to stabilize phenomena such as extreme loyalty from women partners, financial prosperity, and aggression (Ellapen, 2007; Langa, 2020; Ragnarsson et al., 2010).

A large body of studies around black masculinity in SA tend to align with the claims made by hooks and others in the field that the ideal image of poor and working-class black men is that that they are violent, dangerous, and hyper-sexual (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; hooks, 2004; Langa, 2020). In fact, hooks (2004) would maintain that there are very fewer instances where black men can be regarded as non-violent, reassuring, or as romantic and loving partners in their private households. However, Curry (2017a, 2018a, 2021), Franklin (1994) Pass et al. (2014) point out that there is a problem to assuming hooks and others' deteriorating positions about the nature of black men. For example, Curry (2017a, 2018a, 2021), Franklin (1994) and Pass et al. (2014) argue that this historic characterisation and racial microaggression of black men as aggressive (hooks, 2004; Peterson, 2014; Sue et al., 2007), threatening (Ellapen, 2007; Langa, 2020; Smith et al., 2020), compensatory (Boonzaier & de la Rey, 2004; Gary, 1994; Shefer, 2007), and need saving from black masculinity (Curry, 2017a; Hare, 1986; Jr, 1995) has led to the lies that we have been told about black men. Previous research has shown that hooks was influenced by racist social sciences rather than social scientific studies (Curry, 2017a, 2018a, 2021; Franklin, 1994; Pass et al., 2014). For example, while hooks (2004) states that black men are violent within households where they cannot get jobs, she does not distinguish whether this is due to masculinity or economics (see for example Curry, 2017a; Jr, 1995, 2010; Staples, 1982). Economic

exploitation resulting from racial discrimination based on race, skill, and hiring remain one of the under-reported forms of prejudice committed by employers amongst racial minorities in America, including the poor, working-class black male population (Moss & Tilly, 2001; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Staples, 1982).

Another problem with hooks' (1992a, 1992b, 2004) argument is that she fails to question whether the women in those households are just as violent (Al'Uqdah et al., 2016; Fox & Benson, 2006; Hines & Douglas, 2010). Previous studies have confirmed that intimate partner violence (IPV) is a bidirectional phenomenon and historically has included the homicide of black men in the US and abuse of children among poor black families are predominately committed by women (Al'Uqdah et al., 2016; Caetano et al., 2005; Hines & Douglas, 2010). Caetano et al.'s (2005) research for example suggest that majority of couples who report incidents of domestic abuse engage in bidirectional IPV. The evidence shows that black couples are more likely than their white counterparts to report bidirectional IPV. Severe unidirectional and bidirectional IPV is commonplace among black and Hispanic couples. Moreover, the evidence shows that bidirectional IPV is further associated with the characteristics of the female (Caetano et al., 2005). Hines and Douglas' (2010) research with a sample of 302 men who sustained IPV from their female partners showed that the men in the help-seeking group reported significantly higher rates of all types of IPV. Within the male and female sample in the help-seeking group who engaged in physical and psychological violence, the female partner was reported to using 6 times the rate of severe physical and psychological aggression. What is more is that the study reported that female partners showed twice as high rates of various types of aggression than their male partners (Hines & Douglas, 2010). Based on this evidence, Curry (2021) rejects hooks and others' claims maintaining that they were authored by racist criminologists in the 1970s and 1980s to explain higher rates of murder and sexual assault in poor black environments.

Class and the performances of masculinity

Class, or more precisely social class, is also an important aspect of masculine identity (Ratele, 2017; Morrell, 2001; Connell, 2005). Class refers to stratifications in society where one is seen as belonging to a social group based on the tastes, education, income, occupation, or social networks (Bourdieu, 1984). Below, Figure 3.2 shows the most

recognisable divisions of social class within society: upper-, middle-, and lower-class. To borrow from Marx's (1844/1964) alienation theory according to division of classes, Figure 3.2 shows how class remains a social, political, and economic hierarchy which alienates people based on membership within a particular class. The lower- or working-class, is responsible for most of the labour - but remains isolated from any decisions about their labour, as they are kept preoccupied with getting the job done. The middle-class, exploits this labour power to get a profit which they use to further enrich themselves. But ultimately, the upper-class makes macro-level decision about policy and practice. This is especially when it comes to decision-making that influences the rest of the other role-players in the hierarchy (Marx, 1844/1964).

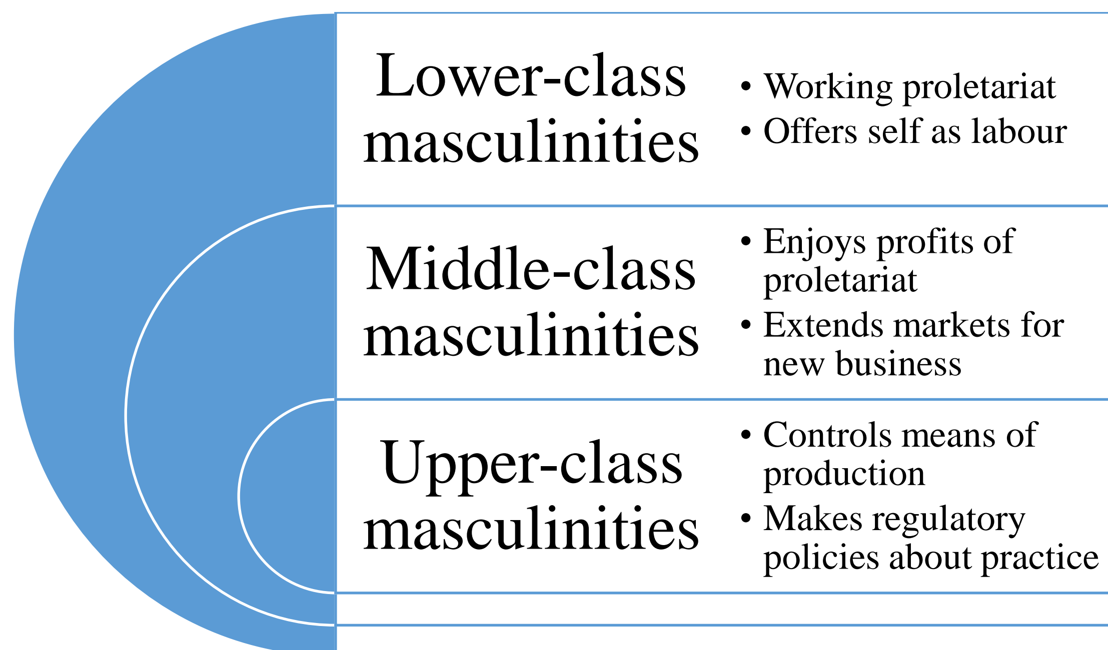

Figure 3.2 Divisions of social classes and performances of masculinity at each level

Black men also find themselves classed based on these levels. Moolman's (2013) paper, *Rethinking 'masculinities in transition' in South Africa considering the 'intersectionality' of race, class, and sexuality with gender,* for example shows that class allows certain masculinities to form which further draw the divide in terms of how men evaluate themselves in relation to others. One of the recent emerging classes in SA is the rising, elite, black male middle-class, sometimes referred to as the 'clever blacks' (Iqani, 2017; Kitis et al., 2018; Thomas, 2015). This class has often not only been

criticised to have profited from the fruits of democracy, namely the change of the country's leadership to the hands of a black minority. But also, for not improving the socio-economic conditions of those black South Africans still stuck in the realities of apartheid government (Iqani, 2017; Kitis et al., 2018; Thomas, 2015). In a similar vein, as men are classed, occupations also remain classed with high-profile and high income-earning careers found to be mostly occupied by white, middle-class males (Campbell, 2012; Rebus, 2014; Van Wyk, 2021).

While prominent black masculinity scholars such as hooks (2004) have continued to perpetuate this idea of class domination, which suggests that black men from various socioeconomic classes have been co-opted through various means of socialization to aspire to the envied materiality of the white middle-class male. Such scholars maintain that the failure and frustration of competing within this racially, politically, and economically disenfranchising system, is what inferiorizes and frustrates black men to become violent, misogynistic, compensatory rape-prone predators. Hooks (2004), for example, drew her implications of black men's fatherly absence, growing up from a sub-culture of extreme violence in the ghettos, as well as the backlash against the capitalist system's exclusion as resulting in black women, and the family, becoming the target of black aggression. According to hooks (2004), black families do not only collapse because black men are preoccupied with the ability to provide for their families; but through the oppression of black women that follows from black men struggling to maintain a sense of power. Curry (2017a, 2017b, 2019), Curry and Utley (2018), and Jr. (2010) reject these claims pointing out that these scholars overlook the fact that black men also become victims of rape, sexual harassment, or any other sexual violation.

Scholars such as Curry (2018c, 2021, 2022), Jr. (2010), and Oluwayomi (2020) reject hooks' (2004) racist, classist, and feminist characterisations about black men. For example, empirical research by Hammond and Mattis (2005), Harnois (2017), and Hunter and Davis (1992) have disproven the assumption that research. These studies build on existing research following the standpoint of black women who have reported the role of black men in social justice campaigns (Blee & Tickamyer, 1995; Gooley, 1989; Hunter & Sellers, 1998), indicating a contradicting relationship of men's support of women's freedom and social justice. For instance, Harnois' (2017) study reported

high levels amongst black and brown men showing gendered political consciousness, that is demonstrating an awareness of issues of gender inequality, articulating this inequality as illegitimate, as well as showing collective efforts to engender gender equality. Hammond and Mattis' (2005) study reported the meaning of manhood among African American men being configured around having a sense of responsibility and accountable for their actions, thoughts, and behaviors. Hunter and Sellers' (1998) study also suggested that both African American men and women showed similar support for feminist ideology, with marriage and education being an even more predictor of higher support for men.

Curry (2017a) maintains that contemporary social scientific evidence has also refuted the idea that black men are chauvinist and against gender equality. For instance, Simien's (2007, p. 130) study comparing national data on the attitudes towards feminism showed a gender gap in the attitudes of black men and women, concluding that, "The attitudes of African American men are, on the whole, more liberal and progressive than the attitudes of African American women." Harnois' (2010, p. 68) paper titled, "Race, gender, and the Black women's standpoint", concluded that "black men and black women being equally likely to embrace many of the core ideas associated with the black women's standpoint." Harnois' (2014) later work on the similar subject of black men's standpoint on supporting black feminism titled, "Complexity Within and Similarity Across: Interpreting Black Men's Support of Gender Justice Amidst Cultural Representations that Suggest Otherwise. Hyper-Sexual, Hyper-Masculine?," for example, reported similar findings suggesting that black men embraced many of the central tenets put forward by black feminists. In fact, Harnois (2014, p. 80) reported that "black men recognise and are critical of gender inequality at rates similar to black women".

Furthermore, Curry (2021) points out that both seminal work by Barclay and Cusumano (1967), Biller (1968), Hannerz (1969), and later evidence by Moran and Barclay (1988) and Pitt and Sanders (2010) underscore that most of the work relying on white patriarchal ideology to describe black men is based on outdated claims to deploy black and brown men as inherently deviant. For instance, Curry's (2021) uses contemporary evidence in his compelling book chapter titled, "Decolonizing the Intersection: Black Male Studies as a Critique of Intersectionality's Indebtedness to

Subculture of Violence Theory" to show that a new content analysis of available studies in the field shows that hyper-masculinity is a in fact racist term. Most importantly, following the historical origin of the term, the primary works (Barclay & Cusumano, 1967; Biller,1968; Hannerz, 1969) have been used to establish the idea of hyper-masculinity are dedicated to explaining black male deviance. Curry's (2022, p. 5) more recent work proposes a move towards evidence based Black Male Studies, concluding that previous research by scholars such as hooks on the intersection of race, class, and black masculinity "…rely on outdated criminological assumptions such as subculture of violence theory. Consequently, feminist gender theories restate classist and racist interpretations of Black males that are out of line with contemporary social scientific research."

Gender and the performances of masculinity

Kalemba's (2020) study, *'Being called sisters': Masculinities and black male nurses in South Africa,* suggest that gender is far more complex as the body can be assigned meaning in various ways, such as through our embodiment of roles, dress, and experiences as belonging to a specific gender (Butler, 1999, 2004, 2013; Shafer, 2015; Steyn & Van Zyl, 2009). This means that gender is not only a social but relational concept as we learn through social representations, as well as observing others being rewarded or chastised for acting out of these gender norms (Butler, 1990).

Khunou et al.'s (2012) study, *Social work is 'women's work': An analysis of social work students' perceptions of gender as a career choice determinant* shows that gender is an evolving and not deterministic construct that is performed, imitated given the available scripts, role assignments, as well as social and cultural expectations. From this point of view, gender is a discursive practice which manifest as 'real' in people's roles, performances, and particular settings - but not necessarily a material given of the body itself (Garfinkel, 2013). Ultimately, one's sex and gender do not always correlate in a straightforward manner (Garfinkel, 1967, 2013). But performances of gender can occur or be imitated in a stylized repetition of acts, hence Butler (1990) prefers the term gender 'performativity', that that they can be recognised as certain performances of gender.

Below, Figure 3.4 demonstrates the most identifiable performances of masculinity linked to gender performativity.

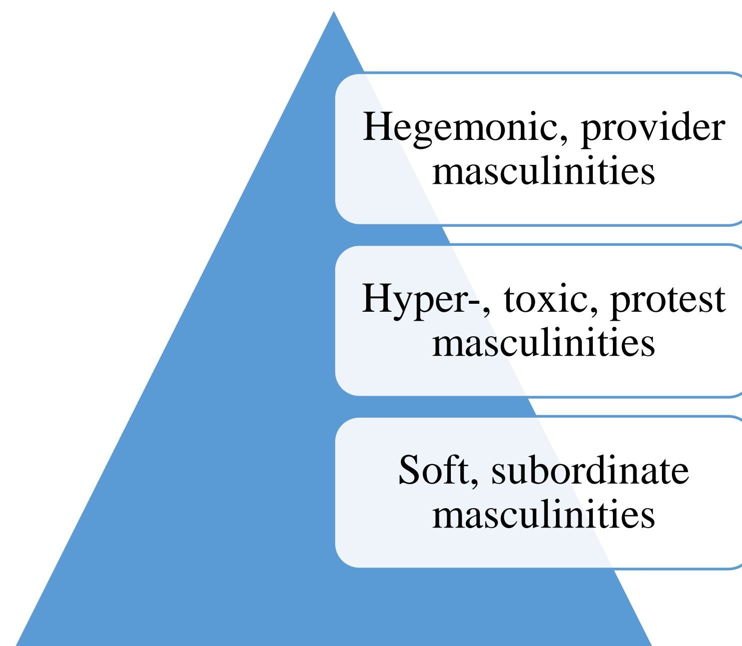

Figure 3.4 Performances of masculinities linked to gender performativity

Soft, subordinate masculinities

Soft masculinities have emerged from the backlash of men who chosen not to express themselves in the usual 'rough' way of traditional masculinity (Ayuningtyas, 2017; Jung, 2010; Steele, 2015). From the influence of the queer and gender-fluid communities, to the Asian K-pop culture, to the metrosexual movement which refer to men who spend much time in the upkeep of their hair and skin care, 'soft' men defy dominant ideals of being a man (Leung, 2012; Ngubane, 2018; Putri & Mintarsih, 2020). Soft masculinities have mostly been popular within Korean, Japanese and other Asian nationalities, wherein men such as the 'seonbi' and the Japanese kawaii culture were embraced and more admired for being cute and showing a softer side of their masculinity (Leung, 2012). Softer masculinities, according to these cultures, encourage men to have a tender, warm, and gentle exterior, with strong inner will, determination, and strength of character (Leung, 2012). Men who ascribe to softer masculinity are admired for their ability to demonstrate 'softer' personality traits, such as purity, innocence, and politeness (Steele, 2015).

In SA, Ngubane (2018) writes that the movement towards softer masculinities have emerged because of movements, such as the #MenAreTrash and #MeToo movements. Ngubane (2018) notes that the rise of this new kind of masculinity has resulted in men being more self-aware, and breaking stereotypes as to what is to be a man contrary to the traditional masculine characteristics, such as being in charge, emotionless, and using violence to resolve conflict. While Ngubane (2018) encourages South African men to aspire and not see soft masculinities as a threat, (Morrel, 2006) claims men who do not display dominant cultural stereotypes of masculinity (e.g., bravery, aggression, resilience, and courage), risk being labelled as 'soft', 'spoiled', 'fragile', and 'weak' which has consequences to how they are treated within their societies. One of these instances can be seen in the treatment of other sub-ordinate masculinities like feminine gay men experiencing harassment, homophobia, and hate crimes for expressing themselves in a feminine way. This can be seen in the homophobic and transphobic attacks of gay activists such as South Africa's Somizi Mhlongo (2017) and the US' RuPaul (1995) for dressing like a woman.

Hyper-, toxic, protest masculinities

While softer or 'spoiled' masculinities (Evans & Blye, 2003) sits on the one spectrum which challenges what a man should be (Leung, 2012; Ngubane, 2018; Putri & Mintarsih, 2020), hyper-masculinity refers to men who exaggerate male stereotypical behaviours, such as power, dominance, and control (Morrell et al., 2012; Mosher & Anderson, 1986; Ratele, 2008). According to the online Encyclopaedia Britannica (2018), hyper-masculinity refers to

> …a sociological term denoting exaggerated forms of masculinity, virility, and physicality. Scholars have suggested that there are three distinct characteristics associated with the hypermasculine personality: (1) the view of violence as manly, (2) the perception of danger as exciting and sensational, and (3) callous behavior toward women and a regard toward emotional displays as feminine.

Most common forms of hyper-masculinities are seen generally in competitive sports, such as wrestling, body-building, and football (Hickey, 2008; Kirk, 2010; Vokey et al., 2013). Hyper-masculinity is infused with the undermining of other subsidiary masculinities, such as 'embattled masculinities' (Bentham, 2015; Edwards, 2004; Holthuysen, 2011), or as termed in other literature 'diminished masculinities', used to

describe the masculinity of men living with disabilities (Robertson & Smith, 2013). Men who display hyper-masculine tendencies often do so to boost feelings of doubt, anxiety, and imperfection about their own masculinity (Bentham, 2015; Edwards, 2004; Holthuysen, 2011). But men may also enter certain professions to enhance a certain image and ideal of themselves, such as security or private bodyguards, who work with danger and life-threatening situations, which corresponds to hyper-masculinity as these men get to respond a with certain amount of force (Berg, 2010; Cock, 2005; Sefalafala, 2012). Hyper-masculinities often lead to toxic forms of masculine expressions (Kupers, 2005). As pointed out earlier, the term has been heavily criticised for relying on outdated data which aimed to vilify and cast black men as violent and unable to control their criminal urges (Curry, 2021; Moran & Barclay, 1988; Pitt & Sanders, 2010). According to Kupers (2005, p. 713), toxic masculinity refers to "the need to aggressively compete and dominate others and encompasses the most problematic proclivities in men." In SA, toxic masculinities have been linked to men's display in misogynistic ways such the increase in gender-based violence (Langa, 2020; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2007; Ratele, 2008), typified by early historical texts, such as John Stuart Mill's (1869) *The Subjection of Women*.

Another form of masculinity within this category is protest- or working-class masculinities (Connell, 1995; Fine et al., 1997; Walker, 2006). Walker (2006, p. 5) in *Disciplining protest masculinity,* defines protest masculinity as "a protest of the relations of production [working-class men against] the ideal type of hegemonic masculinity." A prominent characteristic of protest masculinity is the egocentric pre-occupation with oneself as result of feelings of emptiness and disempowerment. According to Connell (1995), men in this category may cope with feelings of insecurity by displaying a "tense, freaky façade, making a claim to power where there are no real resources for power." In SA, for example, this 'rebel masculinity' can be seen in Langa and Kiguwa's (2013) study *Violent masculinities and service delivery protests in post-apartheid South Africa: A case study of two communities in Mpumalanga,* wherein a marginalized group men protested against poor service delivery and municipalities to take action against infrastructural backlogs. In this study, Langa and Kiguwa (2013, p. 20) suggested that "violence was used by the working-class men to deal with their sense of disempowerment and emasculation." Protest masculinity therefore has been linked to destructive and unmanaged ways of expressing injustice against the hegemony of

idealised masculinity (Langa & Kiguwa, 2013). This form of masculinity remains most prevalent amongst blue-collar and working-class men who must prove themselves as equal to men of higher social class. For example, Fine et al.'s (1997) study, *(In) secure times: Constructing White Working-Class Masculinities in the Late 20th Century,* showed how poor working-class men struggled with the pressures of forming a coherent sense of identity during economic and social crisis, such as adapting to the technology that has overtaken manual industries. In this instance, Fine et al. (1997) noted that protest masculinity can be used in a useful manner to join men who struggled because they are at the margins of society.

Hegemonic and provider masculinities

But amongst the various performances of masculinities, there has been extensive work around Connell's work on hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987; Connell, 2001; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Dominant or hegemonic masculinity refers to roles and privileges, which have been traditionally legitimized as appropriate or acceptable for men and women (Connell, 1987). This includes roles and behaviours such as sexual negotiation, sharing of household chores, child rearing, salary formation, occupational segregation, et cetera encouraged (and discouraged) by both men and women in society (Connell, 2005). Connell (2005, p. 77) notes: "Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women".

Hegemonic masculinity thrives through the ideals of heteronormativity (Connell, 2005; Donaldson, 1993; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). Essentially, heteronormativity relates to the societal view of alignment between one's biological sex, sexuality, gender identity and roles (Harris & White, 2018). In its simplistic form, in each society, there are certain norms, behaviours, and experiences which are promoted as acceptable to men and women (Connell, 2001; Donaldson, 1993; Wetherell & Edley, 1999). In the case of hegemonic masculinity, the expected form of masculinity is validated and perpetuated through various mechanisms, such as sexual prowess, body-building, and male contests (Kiguwa, 2006). In Pinnock and Douglas-Hamilton's (1997) study, for example around gangs, rituals, and rites of passage, showed that young men situated in the Cape Flats were more rewarded and respected

for acting violently against other men. This, in turn, validated that they could be independent and could gain acceptance to be part of a gang (Pinnock & Douglas-Hamilton, 1997).

According to Kiguwa (2006), for hegemonic masculinity to maintain its dominance, other forms of masculinities are opposed through oppressive mechanisms, such as homophobia and sexism, which lead to shame and isolation for stepping outside of the norm. However, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) firmly note that hegemonic masculinity is an unfeasible goal. Instead, hegemonic masculinity can only assert itself against non-hegemonic and subordinate types of masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity reproduces itself by promoting exemplars of symbols, which typify cultural expected authority – but one can never fully attain it (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). But in SA, hegemonic masculinity has manifested itself in men's ability to provide and sacrifice for their families (Hunter, 2006; Mkhize, 2006; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2007). For example, in Mkhize's (2006) work on black fathers, the sense of achievement in being a 'real man' was expressed as the ability to provide for one's family's livelihood. Kumar (1993) links provider masculinity with what he terms as "utopian patriarchalism", where like Sennett and Cobb (1972), men affirm their own significance according to how much they can sacrifice to fulfil their patriarchal duties. As Hosking (2006, p. 217) puts it, "Nothing much more is demanded from fathers than to be a good provider and protector of his family."

It should be noted however that Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) stated that in every society, hegemonic norms also marginalize men of other races, sexualities, classes, and cultures. This allows for a much closer inspection of the operation of intra-gender inequality. Instead, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) postulated hegemonic masculinity could be conceptualized through plural masculinities. That is, there are various forms of masculinities even within hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). But the dominant type usually is the one which subjugates other men and not just their female counterparts. Following from this assertion, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) maintained that all men are persuaded by social norms to align themselves to this type of dominant masculinity. The reinforcement and pressure to confirm to idealized masculinity instils a system of gender-based hierarchies, which

reproduces itself in everyday interactions (Morettini, 2016). For example, Ratele et al.'s (2010) telling study, *We Do Not Cook, We Only Assist Them': Constructions of Hegemonic Masculinity Through Gendered Activity,* illustrated that young boys already saw gender roles as part of what men and women cannot do. Yet Ratele et al. (2010) noted even within the influence of dominant masculinities, boys and men can resist and counter their outlook of hegemonic masculinity.

A major critique of Connel's concept of hegemonic masculinity is that it represents a Westernized ideal of a white, middle-class, heterosexual male's identity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). However, as highlighted earlier, in each society, the typical qualities of ideal masculinity are championed differently as per the social, cultural, community and religious context, implying that not all forms of hegemonic masculinities validate the patriarchy found in white patriarchal societies (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). As Christensen and Jensen (2014, p. 71), argue in "Combining Hegemonic Masculinity and Intersectionality," that "Gendered power relations are dynamic, unstable, and ambiguous, and dominant forms of masculinity do not always legitimize patriarchy. Therefore, the question of men's patriarchal oppression of women must remain an open empirical and contextual question." For this reason, not all forms of performances of masculinity which appear linked to dominant forms of masculinity should be interpreted through Connel's hegemonic masculinity lens.

3.3. CLEANING

This section provides an overview of the history of black men cleaning in various institutions dating as early as pre-colonial SA (1880 to 1893). This includes the establishment of 'AmaWasha' (laundry men) by the early 1890's (South African History Online, 2011). These were mostly black men and a few women who made their living through laundering for white, unmarried miners. The 'AmaWasha' were in demand in a time where women were in shortage for maintenance services like cooking or washing (South African History Online, 2011). The 'AmaWasha' represent a key contradiction in SA's history of black men doing 'women's work'. 'AmaWasha' show that while black men laboured tirelessly alongside their female counterparts - doing a gender-neutral job during at that time - gender roles for black men have since changed (Morrel, 2001; Ratele et al., 2010; Ratele, 2013). However, there has been limited

attention given to the minority of men working in these non-traditional occupations, particularly in a high-status setting like a higher academic institution.

However, perhaps re-visiting the word ‘domestic work’, ‘cleaning’, or ‘clean’ might shed light as to who should be cleaning. The word clean has symbolic meaning, implying dirt-free and without impurity (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), while cleaning involves an act of caring and emotional labour[6] (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). These terms carry immense value-laden qualities across gender and class status (Aguiar & Herod, 2006; Bosmans et al., 2016; Rabelo, 2017). For example, Qayum and Ray (2020, p. 115) noted:

> Since domestic workers in much of the world today are primarily female, domestic service has appeared to be synonymous with women’s work. Moreover, domestic work itself is overwhelmingly considered women’s work and is devalued as such, and because of its association in India and elsewhere with dependency, servility, dirt, and pollution, further degraded. Precisely because the “domestic” is seen as a distinctively female realm, the presence of men [is] limited but ongoing.

The next section further looks closely at black men and women cleaning within academic institutions. This includes the controversial acts by students on campus, such as the 2008 video at the University of the Free State of four white students ‘hazing’ elderly, black female cleaners to challenge policies of student integration on campus (Cloete & Sapa, 2008; Evans, 2008; Sapa, 2008). These and other such contentious actions present cleaners’ loss of dignity, wherein students feel that they ‘pay’ the salaries of cleaners, and therefore can mistreat them (van Reenen & van der Merwe, 2016).

This follows an exploration of the power dynamics between staff and students in relation to cleaners (van Reenen & van der Merwe, 2016). For example, staff may demand cleaners to perform random tasks, such as picking up boxes to their cars - tasks

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[6] In sum, emotional labour alludes to the “the modification of emotional expression which may involve faking and suppressing” (Grandey, 2000, p. 95) in cases to express “organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions” (Morris & Feldman, 1996, p. 987).

which are not part of their job description. The problem is that cleaners also have to report to a direct manager with a specific job description outlining where they need to be at specific times. At the same time, some staff members have welcomed cleaners to their departmental lunches and year functions. On the other hand, some students have taken upon themselves to 'initiate' cleaners to certain university cultures through activities inducing embarrassment, abuse, and humiliation (van Reenen & van der Merwe, 2016).

Then again, cleaners in other parts of the world are respected for the work that they do (Casciani, 2005). In some higher academic institutions, students have been part of workers' strikes, advocating for their improved working conditions (Davids & Waghid, 2016; Luckett & Mzobe, 2016; Pillay, 2016). This demands revisiting labor discourses around outsourcing cleaning staff (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006). The review later explores repercussions of the former intensification of outsourcing of cleaning services by higher academic institutions, as well as the recent move towards the permanent absorption cleaning staff within South African higher academic institutions.

History of black men cleaning

The history of African men involved in cleaning as a professional can be traced to pre- and colonial times as servants hired in and around the household as "houseboys, washboys, garden boys, …and kitchen boys" (Pariser, 2015, p. 272). According to Pariser (2015), employers referred to them as "boy" or "boi", despite the differences in age. Also to note, for an extended period, women were overlooked in official statistics and records of domestic servants until World War II, based on the assumption that they were all males (Pariser, 2015). But to better understand how black masculinity in this context, it requires us to first appreciate the socioeconomic and political landscape at that time.

Given the establishment of one government in 1910, SA had land divided following unrest between the White Boer and British control[7] (South African History

[7] It should be noted here that while I make a reference to British colonial segregationism, there is a difference between that dispensation and apartheid, as these are distinct periods of colonialism with specific implications for race, class and gender relations. In this study, my focus will be mostly the impact apartheid on black men's performances of race, class and gender relations.

Online, 2017a). Black people however were not considered in this distribution. In 1910, some black tribes were gradually removed by off their land and forced to settle elsewhere. From 1913 to 1993, the white Afrikaner government passed laws not only to segregate blacks and whites from mixing (e.g., the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, 1949). But also, the allocation of land, movement, and education of blacks in 'white areas' was strictly monitored under law (Bantu Education Act, 1953; Group Areas Act, 1950; Land Act, 1913; Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, 1945).

Meanwhile, cheap labour was growing in farming and mining production (South African History Online, 2017a). The rise of the gold and diamond mining industry from the late eighteenth and nineteenth century in urban areas gave the opportunity for black men to enter the emerging black working-class (Stewart, 2012). The term, 'Kitchen Boy'[8], in the South African context, related to the range of work black males performed, such as sweepers, miners, gardeners, bakery worker, cattle herd, store assistants, but mostly as domestic servants during the late nineteenth century in urban areas (South African History Online, 2011, 2017b, 2018-19). This included some laborers from the Southern and central African regions (Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi), termed "tropical boys", to enter the competing market (Brown, 1988).

Much like 'AmaWasha', 'Kitchen Boys' were largely represented in now what is considered 'women's work' (South African History Online, 2011). However, most of these jobs paid less (South African History Online, 2018-19). Some African men choose to remain in their generational farms, while some worked for plantations (Ellapen, 2007; Lewis, 2011; Morrel, 1998). The government introduced a migrant labour system where young men seeking employment in the city were required to pay taxes to come into town. Later, this system was handed over to chiefs to manage (South African History Online, 2017a).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, with the falling of major restrictions in apartheid laws, the growing cities of Egoli, Kimberly and other emerging cities, attracted an influx of young black men eager to take hold of the available

[8]'Kitchen Boy', a contemptuously term, was used by whites in the apartheid SA era to refer to a farm labourer and domestic servant (South African History Online, 2017).

employment opportunities (South African History Online, 2017a). This included work in menial and physically-demanding work in baking, textile, machinery factories to name a few (Clark et al., 2007). However, the rise of these employment opportunities did not secure equal opportunities for all (Morrel, 1998).

Some men entered more service delivery and retail industries as garbage collectors, gate keepers, watchmen, railway workers, machine operators, car washers at car dealerships, et cetera (Clark et al., 2007; Katzenellenbogen, 1982; Nzula et al., 1979). By this time, urban black masculinity became redefined through "new styles of dress, (violent) modes of behavior and an open scorn of country simplicity" (Morrell, 1998, p. 625). By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there were already wealthy black families who had benefited from the mining industry settling in vibrant townships like Sophiatown and District 6 (Ellapen, 2007). In this excited urban populace, the media become a major source of influence with outlets such as Drum magazine "recreat[ing] the voices, images and values of a black urban culture" (Morrell, 1998, p. 625). This became crucial in establishing a more distinct culture, which redefined the position of black identity in post-apartheid SA (Ellapen, 2007).

Despite urban masculinity positioning itself away from the traditionalist values of rural African masculinity, these men were never "devoid of rural experiences" (Morrell, 1998, p. 625). Some men found themselves caught in between rural and urban life. In rural areas, jobs were inclusive but not as lucrative as in the urban areas. However, given the limited availability of jobs in urban areas, this created tension in how men could define themselves as embodying the favored representations of masculinity. As Morrell (1998, p. 623, cited in Ellapen, 2007) puts it: "In the urban areas, work became a mark of masculinity for the black body. The other option for men was to undertake 'women's work which resulted in the emasculation of black men". In essence, black men entered cleaning jobs as a readily available means to secure an income.

3.3.1 CLEANING WITHIN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Below, is a passage following an interview with a male cleaner at Harvard University about 'Cleaning After Hours' (Green, 2016):

> A scene from the 1985 film, *The Breakfast Club,* perfectly sums up how many people refer to custodial workers: When the school janitor strolls into the detention room, one student tries to embarrass another by telling the janitor that his friend wants to pursue a career in "the custodial arts." The cleaner retorts, "You guys think I'm some kind of untouchable peasant? I am the eyes and ears of this institution my friend."

Cleaners perform various functions related to mopping, sweeping, polishing, watering of plants, vacuuming, locking, delivering, checking of available cleaning supplies et cetera (Aguiar & Herod, 2006). Other functional duties performed cleaners may include emptying trash, cleaning garbage bins, cleaning urinals, spot cleaning of blood and mucous and removing vomit and feces from public areas (Aguiar & Herod, 2006). These 'dirty' functions are to be seen in a degraded (Gershenson & Penner, 2009), undignified (Brown-May & Fraser, 2009), and lesser position in the social hierarchy (Greed, 2009). Indeed, the frequent exposure to toxic and noxious cleaning chemicals, especially when protective gear is not provided can result in possible infections, which was the case for some workers within the contractual cleaning dispensation (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006).

On Tuesday, the 20th of February 2008, a racist video featuring five elderly, black cleaners being 'initiated' by four white, male students at a whites-only student residence raised much visibility to the perceptions and working conditions of cleaners within SA (Cloete & Sapa, 2008; Evans, 2008; Sapa, 2008). The four white students were seen as racially humiliating the five cleaners. This included making references to a favoured Afrikaner way of life seen in making the cleaners consume beer, run races, play rugby, asking the cleaners to kneel and eat a dog-food looking dish, which unbeknown to the cleaners, had been urinated upon. The video, shot the previous year (2007), surfaced after the University of Free State had issued an Integration policy regarding student residence dissolving the segregation between black and white sharing of residences (Cloete & Sapa, 2008; Evans, 2008; Sapa, 2008).

The student footage was taken in a male-only resident called 'Reitz'. The footage presents an assertion by one of the white-male Afrikaner students maintaining: "Once upon a time the "Boer" lived peacefully here on Reitz Island until one day when

the less-advantaged discovered the word 'integration' in the dictionary." After the cleaners are urged to eat and drink their portions, one of the students ends the video with the following: "That, at the end of the day, is what we think of integration" (Cloete & Sapa, 2008; Evans, 2008; Sapa, 2008). The views expressed within the footage sparked a lot of division and mixed feelings amongst South Africans with comments on social media and YouTube, for example (YouTube, 2008):

Some said the video re-awakened South Africans to the racial, gendered, and institutional re-victimisation of certain groups the post-apartheid landscape (Cloete & Sapa, 2008; Evans, 2008; Sapa, 2008). Others, like the latter two commenters above, rejected any claims of racial injustice, gender subordination, and any implications for hostile institutional relations (Conradie & Brokensha, 2014; Shefer, 2012; Soudien, 2010). Besides the racial tension and hostilities, which erupted, the video ignited much attention and soul-searching to the representation and working conditions of cleaners within South African institutions (Githaiga et al., 2017).

Perhaps the focal realisation was how the four elderly black women and one man within the video did not speak or could speak up about these mocking activities, which occurred the year before. The University's Rector and Vice-Chancellor at the time, Frederick Fourie, addressed the media: "I am deeply saddened that students apparently see nothing wrong in producing such an offensive and degrading video," he said. "I have publicly said several times that [this university] is not a place for racism. It's a gross violation of the human dignity of the workers involved" (Evans, 2008). At the trial of the 'Reizt-Four', named after the four white students, their lawyer, Kemp J. Kemp, advised a guilty plea for the defendants due to their realisation of wrongdoing.

But at the trial, Kemp maintained that despite the workers participating freely in the video, "that the former students did not urinate in the mixture that the workers drank. He said they used a bottle and put it in their pants to make it look like they urinated into the mixture of Oros (squash), garlic and protein powder" (Smith, 2010). Two years after the trial, the four students were "fined R20 000 each or 12 months in prison with an addition six months suspended jail sentence for the next five years on condition that they do not commit another act of crimen injuria" (Eyewitness News, 2010).

Today, the video still raises concern of the care for and representation of vulnerable bodies in private-owned institutions (Githaiga et al., 2017). The video demands closer inspection of the racial, gendered, and precarious occupational status within spaces such as higher academic institutions which should serve as an example of the realisation of democracy (Davids & Waghid, 2016; Luckett & Mzobe, 2016; Pillay, 2016). But sadly, the footage and expressed views highlighted the culture (or lack thereof) of transformation within higher academic institutions (Msila, 2016; Soudien, 2010; Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016). What is more, the painful and humiliating experiences of cleaners have been told but without reparation and transformation of their dignity and working conditions (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006). As Ally (2011) maintains, we live in a society which cheapens the value and dignity of certain individuals based on their racial and socioeconomic position.

3.3.2 OUTSOURCED VERSUS INSOURCED CLEANING

Higher educational institutions have the potential to hire many support staff. In fact, support functions such as the cleaning of toilets are essential for the operation of a clean learning environment (Ryttberg & Geschwind, 2017). Currently, there are no available statistics on the number of black male cleaners in higher educational institutions. But the National Contract Cleaners Association (NCCA) of SA reports that the cleaning industry employs about "100,000 cleaners with a gender split of two females to every male and the annual turnover of outsourced cleaning services is in excess of R2.5 billion … with approximately 1,750 contract cleaning companies countrywide, of which 400 belong to the NCCA" (Damonze, 2011).

Since the mid-1970s, the cleaning industry has been heavily accused of exploitative and illegal business practice (Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund, n.d.). This resulted from a number of private cleaning companies providing adverse working conditions, inflexible working hours, and poor wages to contractual workers (Van der Walt et al., 2003). In SA, this became prominent with universities intensifying the contractual cleaning services from private companies, resulting in a high number of cleaners being retrenched (Van der Walt et al., 2003). Before the outsourcing period, WITS, for example, had approximately 600 cleaners, whereas after the contracting-out of cleaning services, their outsourcing outlet at the time, 'Supercare' had only 280 workers (Van der Walt et al., 2003).

Cleaners in the United States and United Kingdom earn about $24,990 ($12.02 per hour) and £17,939 (£7.60 per hour) respectively per annum (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2018; Payscale, 2018). In SA, it was announced in 2017 by the Department of Labour that the minimum wage increase for domestic workers and for contract cleaning workers within metropolitan areas will be R13.05 per hour, or R587.40 per week or R2,545.22 per month from January 2018 (South African Labour News, 2017). According to WITS (2017b), salaries of outsourced were increased from R4,500 in January 2016, to R6,000 from June to December 2016, and a further increase set at R7,860 (cost to company) in 2017.

Given these conditions, SA has been experiencing countless protests by workers and students due to dissatisfaction with unjust and inequitable work and student policies

(Davids & Waghid, 2016; Luckett & Mzobe, 2016; Pillay, 2016). Often the demands of workers and students requires radical, transformative, and sustainable changes, which will enable accessible service delivery to ensure job satisfaction as well as student success (Davids & Waghid, 2016). Bezuidenhout et al. (2004) argue that the cleaning industry has been part and parcel of university operational structures. According to workers and students, it remains the universities' responsibility to partake in transformational change as part of the universities' social justice agenda (Msila, 2016; Soudien, 2010; Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016). This speaks to the moral code as enshrined within the Constitution to preserve and realise every individual's basic human rights (Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016).

However, due to the success of movements such as the #OutsourcingMustFall movement, the projected increase of salaries and insourcing of workers as part of university staff is meant to provide better opportunities for workers to better their livelihoods (WITS, 2017b). The University now is estimated to insource about 1530 workers in cleaning, catering, security, transport, waste, grounds, and landscaping services (WITS, 2017b). As Figure 2.4 shows, workers are expected to benefit from subsidies to allow their children to enrol with the universities in which they are employed. Universities promise much safer, protected and more regulated working conditions. Universities also ensure open, accountable, and better cooperation with unions to negotiate work-related issues (see Diagram A below) (WITS, 2017b).

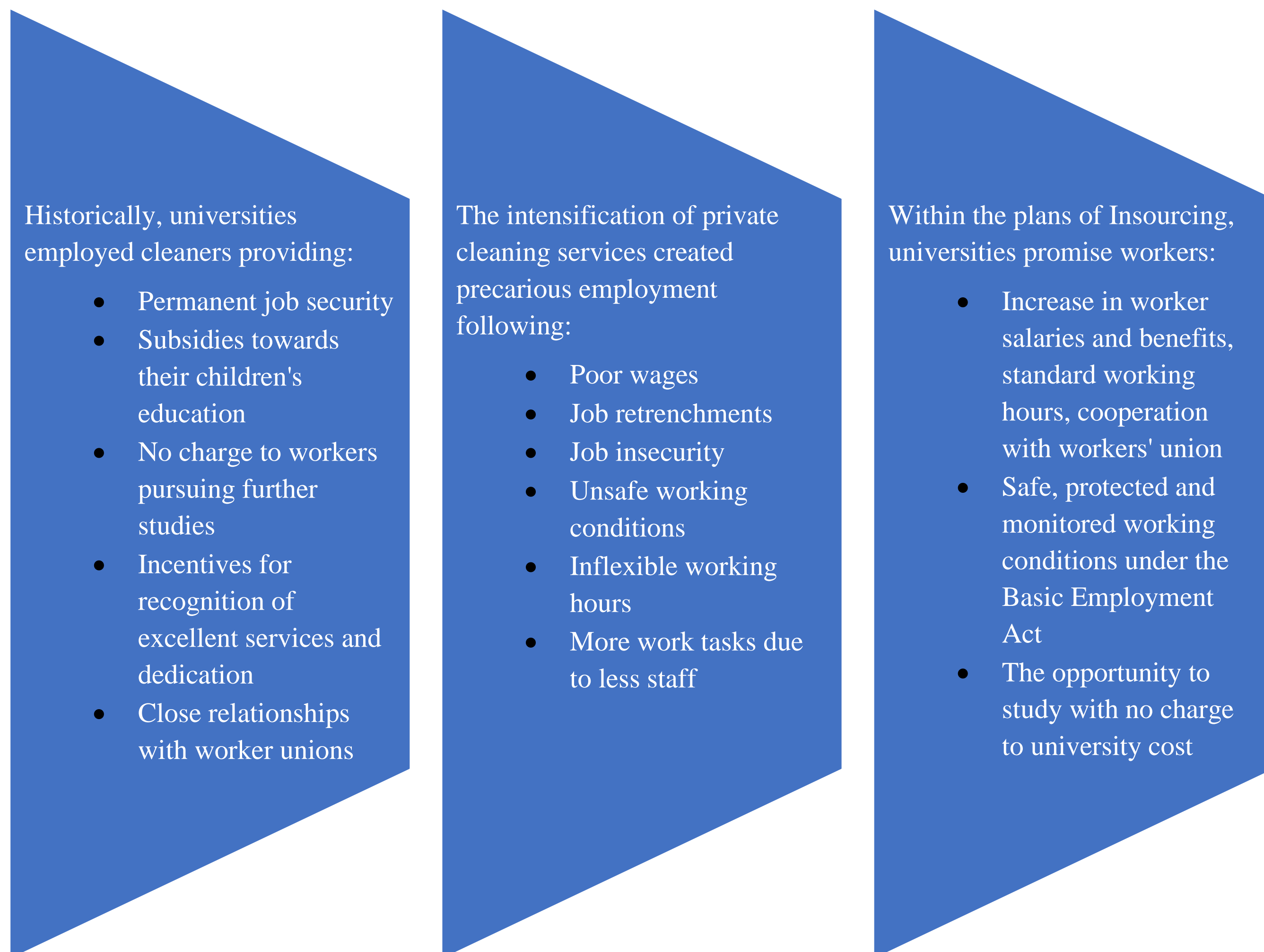


Figure 3.5: Working relationship between universities and workers employed in cleaning catering, security, transport, waste, grounds and landscaping services smaller

3.4. MEN WORKING IN FEMALE-DOMINATED OCCUPATIONS

In Willyard's (2011) study, *Men: A growing minority*, a male psychology graduate student reflected on his experience of finding himself in a female-dominated job:

> When Michael Kessler entered the clinical psychology graduate program at Midwestern University in 2004, he had no idea he would be the only man in his class of 15. But the gender disparity quickly became evident. After arriving at orientation, one of Kessler's classmates said, "I guess you're going to be the only guy that we have in our class."
>
> Kessler was shocked and then embarrassed. He wondered if he had inadvertently picked a "girl" profession. Over the next few weeks, he questioned

his decision to become a psychologist. "I felt out of place," he says.

This section considers how certain occupations have historically been sex-typified as male- or male-only jobs. The migration of men into ‘women’s work’ is not a new phenomenon (Jones & Aubrey, 2019; Simpson, 2004; Williams, 1993). Globally and locally, men have been crossing-over to more domestic/female-dominated careers such as nursing (O’Connor, 2015), early childhood education (Jones & Aubrey, 2019), hairdressing (Robinson et al., 2011), care work (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011), and many others. But men are often discouraged from entering female-dominated jobs due to false beliefs that men cannot demonstrate care or that their sexuality might be questionable (Campbell, 2012; Macintosh et al., 1997; Whittock & Leonard, 2003).

The process of occupational segregation by gender has to do with the concept of gendering of employment (Jones & Aubrey, 2019). This is because occupations themselves are not gender-neutral or similar across race. Most of the evidence presented here regarding men crossing over to women’s occupations is mostly true of white populations. The evidence does not reflect many black or brown in the US who have lower levels education, and remain outnumbered by black females in terms of qualified lawyers, doctors, and managers (Gary, 1981; Staples, 1982; Williams, 2015). But they are designed and carry assumptions built into them with certain gender norms (Williams, 1993). A noteworthy example is the sexual division of labour in professions such as medicine (Bardouille, 2019; Hirata & Kergoat, 2018; Marlowe, 2007). Men constitute the majority of medical doctors, while women dominate the nursing profession (Le Boudec et al., 2021; Riska, 2008; Turtle et al., 2018). In this case, women are seen as suitable for more nurturing and expressive jobs (Williams, 2015), while men occupy more independent jobs, requiring technical proficiency as well as decision-making ability (Simpson, 2004). This segregation of occupations speaks to Connell’s (2005) concept of hegemonic masculinity where characteristics associated with heterosexual male identity (e.g., physical strength, risk-taking, and decision-making ability) are often prized as favourable as those linked to heterosexual female identity (Willimas, 1993).

According to Williams (1993), it is very rare for men to cross-over to female-dominated occupations, and those who do usually do not stay long within these

professions. For those who do cross-over, they have often have to manage their gender identity daily as those inside and outside the profession will time to time question his manhood and sexuality (Williams, 1993). This is because when men transition to female-dominated, their pay, benefits, and status decline, or when better opportunities for men open up in other fields.

As noted earlier, cleaning has not always been exclusively a feminised job (Cox, 2006; Moya, 2007; Sarti, 2016), or shown men a complete absence of men (Bartolomei 2010; Qayum & Ray, 2010; Tranberg Hansen, 1989). In the United States for example, Jim Crow segregation isolated black men to menial jobs such as housekeepers, garbage men, janitors, and sanitation workers (White and Cones, 2013). These black men were not only economically deprived and oppressed but some of the most adamant and revolutionary voices of social change (see White and Cones' (2013) anthology of this history in the book titled "Black man emerging: Facing the past and seizing a future in America"). Instead, cleaning has been devalued, like most blue-collar work (Hu et al., 2010; Kosut, 2006; Lubrano, 2005), as boring, requiring no skills, as well as lacking in excitement (Hennequin, 2007; Inkson et al., 2007; Lips-Wiersma et al., 2016).

Prevalence of men in female-dominated occupations

Men continue to dominate male-dominated professions like the medical profession with a male-to-female ratio of 1:0.7 (Tiwari et al., 2021). Furthermore, statistics from the Engineering Council of South Africa's 2012 to 2013 annual report, indicated in the registration category of professional engineers, there were 15 036 men, compared to 561 female professional engineers (Engineering Council of South Africa, 2014). Furthermore, according to the Law Society of South Africa (2019), of the 27 223 practising attorneys in 2019, 16 168 were men, with 11 055 being women.

In contrast, for men who enter female-dominated occupations, Willyard (2011) suggests the number of women to men completing their psychology degrees is 3 to 1. According to the European Trade Union Committee for Education (2012), in Europe as a whole, more than 90% of early childhood teachers are estimated to be female. Indeed, in 17 out of 27 EU member states, the proportion of male early childhood teachers is below 1% (Oberhuemer et al., 2010). According to Furness (2007), in the UK, the representation of male-to-female social workers between 2002 and 2005 of the student

registrations for social work programmes, 83% were women. Locally, WITS and the University of Johannesburg (UJ) recorded between 10% and 13% male social work students (personal conversation with Mr Matumba, UJ, Dept of Social Work). Ned et al. (2020) review into the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) database from 2002 to 2018 showed that a total of 5180 occupational therapists were enrolled with the Council in January 2018. From this total, the database showed that 95% (n=4193) consisted of females, while the remaining 5% (n=267) were males. Van Antwerpen and Ferreira (2010) pointed out that in 2010, only 5% of the 30 000 registered members with the Association for Office Professionals of South Africa (AOPSA) were men.

Occupational sex segregation

Occupational sex segregation remains an oppressive system which aims to reserve certain roles, such as technical and domestic work for men or women only (Blau, 2013). This phenomenon is often the cause of the wage gap between men and women (Willima, 1993). Yet the political project of alleviating occupational sex segregation is one which is hard and complicated. This is a hard task because once men enter female-dominated occupations, they tend to rise above women in pay and promotion in the same field, reproducing gender hierarchy within that field itself. This occurs mostly due to the sexist de-evaluation of women/femininity at the expense of the over-evaluation of men (Williams, 1993). But to better understand occupational segregation by sex, one must first understand the mechanisms of sex-typing and emotional labour.

Because occupations function as gender institutions, job slots are mostly created with a male and female person in mind (Williams, 1993). That is, occupations become gendered and are seen as requiring either feminine or masculine skills (Cross & Bagilhole 2002). Williams and Villemez (1993) pointed out that occupational sex segregation in the workplace is reinforced by powerful social control mechanisms, such as sex-typing, which translates to traditionally forms of labour (Kalemba, 2020; O'Connor, 2015; Tiwari et al., 2021). Childcare, for example, is commonly regarded as a 'natural' job for women, thus rendering it 'unnatural' (not to say uncommon in certain parts of the world) for men to do. As Cameron and Moss (1998, p. ix) put it, "caring work is gendered not just because the workforce is nearly always women but because of the way the work is thought about".

In this case, women are seen as having suitable characteristics in expressive, nurturing, repetitive and routinized work, while men continue to be reserved intellectually-demanding and technical tasks (Kalemba, 2020; O'Connor, 2015; Tiwari et al., 2021). For example, in Burns' (1998, p. 33) review tracing the history of South African black male nurses using official reports, minutes of meetings, letters and autobiographical accounts, revealed statements such as, "A man is a clumsy thing who does not know how to handle a sick person." What such statements reveal is that men are not only actively discouraged from entering domestic/female-dominated occupations (Burns, 1998), but that those who do enter such professions, might face the possibility of their sexuality being questioned and/or possibly being emasculated (Burns, 1998; Kalemba, 2020; Williams, 1993).

What the above also demonstrates, is that men may be seen as lacking certain essential qualities, such as warmth, patience, and care, which precludes them as suitable from entering certain occupations, such as nursing or care work (Burns, 1998; Kalemba, 2020; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). This suggests men are not capable of performing emotional labour (Du Toit, 2012; Dworzanowski-Venter, 2010; Rohde, 2014). As defined earlier, emotional labour refers to the ability to demonstrate the required emotions in a certain environment, particularly when regulation of emotions is part of the job description (Grandey, 2000; Gross, 2015; Hochschild, 1983). Men are often considered as unsuitable in occupations where emotional labour is a requirement because men cannot be seen as having the ability to care for the needs of others, while women are expected to be the pillars of emotional care and support (Burns, 1998; Kalemba, 2020; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011).

3.4.1 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN CROSSING-OVER TO FEMALE-DOMINATED OCCUPATIONS

Men enter female-dominated work environments for various reasons. For one, major world or national events, such as a world war or an economic crisis, force men to take the most available jobs (Williams, 1993). Because of such economic devastation, men must find the most readily obtainable jobs outside of male-dominated occupations, such as in the US' Economic Depression where jobs were scarce (Jones & Aubrey, 2019). However, with changing gender norms and attitudes, men have been more willing and

supported in challenging dominant socio-cultural values about what is 'men' versus what is 'women's work'. Such men are willing to rebel and reject traditional gender stereotypes, such as men cannot take care of women and children (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011).

Simpson (2004) also suggests that those who have entered 'women's work' can sometimes be influenced by women growing up, or problems with working in male-oriented jobs. At the same time, some men may already have similar personal characteristics as women in female-dominated occupations - and therefore the job comes naturally to them (Simpson (2004). But men enter and continue to face more challenges (not of course as severe as women entering male-dominated professions) than opportunities when they enter female-dominated work environments (Cross & Bagilhole, 2002; Lupton, 2000; Williams, 1993). The next section explores these opportunities and challenges while offering evidence of a typology of men's own agency in their occupational choice when entering 'female jobs'.

Revolving door and stopgappers theory

There are numerous studies which have tracked the turnover patterns of men entering and exiting female-dominated occupations. For example, Jacobs' (1993) longitudinal study of US men entering female-dominated jobs showed that, men enter 'female jobs' through a 'revolving door', wherein men only stay for a short period while seeking 'male jobs' thereafter. As Jacobs (1993, p. 61) puts it: "employment in female-dominated fields for men is … unusual and often brief". The reasons for this are that men face stigma, judgement, and prejudice both inside and outside 'women's work', and these attitudes continue throughout their stay in that job. According to Jacobs (1993), these attitudes remain in sway because in some societies, gender non-conformity is still harshly frowned upon. Jacobs' (1993) research suggests men leave female-dominated jobs due to social and peer pressure, which intersects with the unattractive economic prospects of doing 'women's work' (poor salaries, lack of job status, and a limited career path).

Recent evidence by local and international scholars such as Simpson's (2004) *Masculinity at work: the experiences of men in female-dominated occupations,* and Khunou et al.'s (2012) *Social work is 'women's work': An analysis of social work students' perceptions of gender as a career choice determinant,* confirmed these findings by suggesting men enter and shortly leave female-concentrated occupations

because they are discouraged, and feel that they are low paid and undermined by the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the job. Another theory linked to men declining 'female jobs' is Torre's (2018) 'stopgappers' theory. Stopgappers refers to men who enter female-dominated occupations but soon leave, transitioning from female to male jobs. But Torre (2018) explains this phenomenon is most prevalent amongst men in lower occupations, such as service, administrative, and clerical work. This is the case as occupations at lower levels do not pull educated people who can buffer gender stereotypes by affirming their usefulness in society (Cotter et al., 2011). This correlates with the earlier figures I presented by Van Antwerpen and Ferreira (2010) that of the 30 000 registered members with the secretarial and office professionals association (AOPSA), only 5% of the members were men.

Male privilege

As highlighted earlier, it should be noted that men enter 'women's work' with male privilege (Willimas, 1993). This is because men who find themselves as gender minorities in female-dominated occupations may monopolize positions of power, and in turn create advantages or decisions which will favour other men in similar positions - a phenomenon term the glass escalator effect. This because men can maximise this advantage to advance further in salaries and career growth. This makes men's cross-over to 'women's work' that much more of a boon as they can utilise their masculinity to advance alongside their female co-workers in the same job (Willimas, 1993). One of the reasons for this is that men are trusted and automatically seen as breadwinners than women.

As Mashiya (2014) study, *Becoming a (male) foundation phase teacher: A need in South African schools?,* showed that because they are already few, men in female-dominated occupations become tokenised and face limited competition towards being promoted. That is, because men are in need, they easily become targets for promotion (Mashiya, 2014). These are the implications of William' (1993) glass escalator effect. Namely, that the over-evaluation of men lends women to become lesser to the value of men. But then again, Williams (2015) maintained that the glass escalator effect is not applicable to men of colour such as black or brown men, or those with a male identity that is not heterosexual. It should also be made clear that the female-dominated occupations referred here are educated white-collar occupations taken over by white men as most blue-collar occupations are disproportionately comprising of Black

people—men and women (Gary, 1981; Staples, 1982; Williams, 2015). Drury (2008) notes that this is because of the role of gender prejudice and stereotyping. But because of this male privilege, men can then structurally change certain female-dominated to be male-dominated (Williams, 1993).

Yet Bradley (1993) maintains there are very few instances were previously female occupations changed to be all-male, as opposed to the growing changes in occupations from male to be female dominated. Bradley (1993) describes three agencies in men's decisions to cross-over to female-dominated occupations, namely (1) takeover and (2) invasion, wherein structural changes take place to bring about transformations from female to male workers (e.g., cotton spinning and personnel work). The other form of change Bradley (1993) refers to is (3) infiltration, wherein occupations such as nursing are still female-dominated, but there are few men to carry out an invasion. While Bradley's (1993) theory has been widely accepted internationally (Giesler, 2006; Seman, 2006; Simpson, 2009), few studies have been conducted locally to confirm its relevance.

3.5. CONCLUSION

This section highlighted the dynamics of studying masculinity by unpacking the interplay between sex and gender. The review further explored some of the tensions and discourses around black masculinities. The available literature around the history of men cleaning, cleaners in academic institutions, cleaning within outsourced versus insourcing conditions, as well as the implications of men entering female-dominated occupations.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides a detailed overview describing the employed methods used in the methodological approach, research design, sampling, data generation and documentation for this study. The study utilised a qualitative methodological approach and interpretive research paradigm were used to explore the lived experiences of black male cleaners within academic institutions. Qualitative methodologies research approaches allude to the various tools utilized to conceptualize the study design of data collection and analysis (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). A qualitative, multiple case study research design was followed to inform the research process. Thematic analysis as well as the conceptual framework were used to analyse and interpret the study findings. Also covered in this section are the ethical procedures which guided this study.

4.2 PARADIGMATIC LENSES

A paradigm refers to an established way of thinking (Wahyuni, 2012). A paradigm follows from accepted research traditions within a study discipline (Vosloo, 2014). A paradigm consists of long-standing theories, models, approaches, and research methodologies underpinned by rules which guide action taken to pursue knowledge (Vosloo, 2014). This calls for researchers to be informed in selecting the type of paradigm guiding the research and write-up of findings (De Vos et al., 2011). An interpretive paradigm was selected as a meta-theoretical paradigm in this study. The ontological and epistemological assumptions of an interpretive paradigm followed in this study will be also discussed below.

4.2.1 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM

Ontology relates to a particular view regarding reality, while epistemology relates to the nature of knowledge as well as the how we end up knowing that knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), an interpretive paradigm holds the view that reality is socially constructed where individuals construct their own meaning of reality through organizing and constructing experiences. The focus here remains in the individual's encounters, how people use these encounters to construct meaning, as well as how these encounters shape their reality (Gelderblom, 2010). An interpretive approach is interested in the interactional,

linguistic, and contextual dynamics in how individuals defend multiple and truths (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This is because interpretivists believe that our lived worlds are construed through multiple realities, which are configured by social actors and thereby construct meaning of their lived experiences (Wahyuni, 2012). The role of the interpretivist is to understand how this meaning is situated within the participant's specific context from their point of view, as opposed to assuming the role of an objective observer (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Ponelis, 2015; Wahyuni, 2012). This requires a constructionist stance, which stems from an interpretive paradigm (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Constructivism acknowledges the presence of the researcher in the data generation and holds that the research findings are created rather than discovered (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I also acknowledge that, I as an interpretivist researcher, am part and parcel of the research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This position will thus allow me to be subjectively involved in analysing the findings of the research, whilst presenting new insights from the lived experiences under investigation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Ponelis, 2015; Wahyuni, 2012). Interpretivist researchers utilize a variety of methods to obtain meaning of multiple truths in participant's specific contexts (Creswell, 2007). This involves remaining invested in the underlining meaning in how language and power relations within discourses and interactions sustain the norms and social institutions of hierarchy (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). However, the distinctive characteristic within these different methods remains the ability of the researcher to interact with his/her participants in their natural setting (Wahyuni, 2012).

Following from this interpretivist assumption, I also decided to be directly involved in the real-life contexts of my participants, asking, and observing them while they demonstrate areas they clean. Through the interpretivist lens of engagement, I was able to gain insight into the tasks, work duties, and interactions partaken as they go about their occupation (Wahyuni, 2012). To generate data to answer the proposed research questions, I employed the data-collection methods of observing the equipment they use, writing filed notes before and after my interviews, and site visits with permission by the participants. During this process, interpretivist researchers like myself allow participants to represent their own truths given the interpretivist assumption that people construct their own "preferences and prejudices" (Schutt, 2018,

p. 92), while also articulating their own "views, feelings and perspectives" (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007, p. 81). In this case, it was paramount that I maintained a position of respect and appreciation into the multiple and diverse worldviews of my participants (Schutt, 2018). In other words, I acknowledged that multiple realities and interpretations of situations exist from one participant to another (Schutt, 2018).

I was thoughtful to acknowledge that the interpretation of two black male cleaners had the potential to generate opposing perspectives regarding how their occupation impacts their lives. I was also mindful that in selecting an interpretivism as a meta-theoretical paradigm implied certain limitations for this study. For one, this approach left room that I as the researcher could unknowingly impose my influences during an observation or an interview (Al Riyami, 2015). For example, the men could start performing or altering certain behaviours from their routine because they know they are being watched. However, I attempted to build rapport first by spending time with them before and after the interview getting to know them personally. This included asking questions about their personal lives outside work to establish trust. Moreover, I also adhered to the University's guidelines of ethical procedures, including allowing opportunity for questions regarding the purpose of the research, securing informed written consent, as well as maintaining confidentiality and anonymity at all times (Lopez-Dicastillo & Belinxon, 2014).

4.3. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH: QUALITATIVE APPROACH

I selected a qualitative methodological research approach to conduct the study. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research represents a meaning-centred approach pursues data collection and analysis via naturalistic as well as inductive reasoning. Qualitative research is a method of inquiry that considers study aims, which present understandings through its methods about social life through in-depth reporting (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). This entails that meaning is derived through participants' social and cultural contexts, with detailed observations following from a comprehensive appreciation of the person-in-environment (Creswell, 2013). A qualitative approach values participants' subjective understanding in providing rich, detailed data to a phenomenon under inquiry (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the primary phenomenon under investigation was the lived experiences of black male cleaners within academic institutions. Qualitative research methodology had

assumptions that are in line with the interpretive paradigm stance in this study (Yavuz, 2012). This includes the assertion that any given time, an individual, constructs meaning from multiple frames of reference, and that there is no single reality (Kielmann et al., 2012; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Qualitative methodology also acknowledges the role of the researcher in the research process (Creswell, 2013). Given my presence in the research, I found qualitative methodology suitable as it accepted the co-generation of knowledge between the researcher and participants (Creswell, 2013). This implied that the interaction of the researcher and participant becomes part and parcel of the research. I found qualitative research methodology to be a flexible approach which allowed me to position my participants and myself as shared co-authors in the research process (Schoeman, 2011). Furthermore, observing my participants demonstrate how they utilise their cleaning tools allowed me to be an active observer as the tasks they partake happened naturally (Hancock et al., 2009; Kielmann et al., 2012; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). As a qualitative researcher, I adopted an emic-approach, which requires an awareness of one's own preconceived ideas or hypothesis not imposing on the research (Hancock et al., 2009). An emic approach also focuses on reporting reality from the point of view of the participants (Kielmann et al., 2012).

I found this approach suitable as participants' accounting remained the closest description of their lived experiences (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). These accounts produced words, stories, and rich accounts of their life worlds (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Patton and Cochran (2002) advised that qualitative research was suitable for questions like "How", "What", "Why", rather than "How many" or "How much". I found these considerations as important guidelines in qualitative research as they create an open-ended conversation in the co-generation of data (Creswell, 2013). By opting for a qualitative research methodology, I was able to interact with men to gain a deeper understanding and access to their reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This approach provided me with an interpretive lens in reporting their actions and behaviours constructed from their own frame of reference (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). From this position, the men were viewed as the central authorities of their reality (Creswell, 2007). This position was maintained throughout the course of the study. This implied that I remained thoughtful in imposing my own preconceived ideas unto the lived

experiences. This process was adopted to facilitate the discovery of new insight and knowledge to be forged from the participant's own experiences (Creswell, 2007).

These insights were used to form rich descriptions and interpretations into the emerging themes. I looked for similarities and contradictions in the findings and documented field notes and my observations as triangulated datasets (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Furthermore, as a qualitative researcher, I dedicated effort in making sure the findings represented the participants' lived experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). In this case, I found the qualitative approach as suitable because it provided me with the opportunity for an in-depth enquiry at gaining a richer description of their lived experiences. However, a potential limitation I noticed about qualitative methodology was the possibility of relying on my own frame of reference (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). This required I take a deeper awareness of my own assumptions. I became aware of the need to constantly introspect on myself as part of the research process. I also remained cognisant in identifying any biases I might have held about my participant's characteristics (Palaganas et al., 2017). The research strategy I employed to counter this bias was to enter the research with a researcher diary to record my own subjective views. This was followed by a consultation with my supervisor who is an expert in the subject field.

As an established research methodology, I found qualitative research to present with several central characteristics I found in line with my own study. I have noted these characteristics in terms of the various tools I utilized to conceptualize my qualitative research design, data collection, data analysis, and reporting my findings. Table 4.1 presents the central characteristics of these qualitative research characteristics and how these characteristics were followed in my study.

Table 4.1: Central characteristics of qualitative research

Characteristic of qualitative research:	How the characteristic became evident in my research study:
Qualitative research is naturalistic in that the researcher studies a phenomenon without taking it out from its natural setting (Punch, 2005).	In this study, I visited the men on site making field notes, while they constructed their lived experiences of cleaning in a higher academic institution.
Qualitative research produces data which is concerned with words rather than with numbers (Denscombe, 1998).	I conducted individual interviews with the interviwees, which were transcribed into written transcripts from the audio-recordings.
Results are reported in the form of thick and rich descriptions (Merriam, 2002).	The lived experiences of black male cleaners were interpreted with quotes from the participant's remarks, followed by an informed discussion of findings and interpretations.
The inclusion of thick description implies a descriptive rather than explanatory research approach (Denscombe, 1998).	I described the embedded meaning and patterns within these lived experiences based on their constructed gender identity in a predominantly female work environment.

4.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology represents a set of strategies proposed by the researcher to investigate a phenomenon in an orderly manner (Rajasekar et al., 2013). The following section presents a detailed outline of the research design, the employed procedures utilised to sample, recruit participants, as well as locate the research site. In addition, I also discuss the methods of data collection, analysis, rigor, reflexivity, and ethical considerations observed within this study.

4.4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design refers to a plan of action, stating the methods and procedures utilized to collect and analyse data to answer the research question(s) (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). According to Hartley (2004, p. 326), a research design refers to the "the logical steps which will be taken to link the research question(s) and issues to data collection,

analysis and interpretation in a coherent way". A research design follows from the nature of study type (descriptive, exploratory, correlation) (Creswell, 2013). Research designs also differ depending on methodological approaches, including quantitative research methodologies, such as true experiment and quasi-experiment, to qualitative methodologies like case studies and ethnographical studies (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). However, a research design cannot be divorced from the study's paradigmatic lenses (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). In this study, I utilised a multiple case study design with an interpretive paradigmatic lens to explore the lived experiences of black male cleaners working at a higher academic institution in Johannesburg.

3.4.1.1 Multiple case study design

Beverland and Lindgreen (2010, p. 57) define a case study design as "an exploration of a bounded system (bounded by time and place) or a case (multiple cases) through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context". Case studies are widely used in social and life sciences to closely observe and document the state, changes, and developments of a subject of study referred to as a case within its surroundings (Yin, 2013). A case study design remains a flexible study design as cases may range from just a single body, but can include social entities, events, movements (Yin, 2013). The utility of a case study design follows from its ability to yield knowledge and insight into a subject and its relationship to its surroundings (Crowe et al., 2011). Yin (2009, p. 4) notes, "case studies can be used to explain, describe or explore events or phenomena in the everyday contexts in which they occur." Case studies remain invaluable designs to gather unique insights, shared experiences, as well as cultural worldviews of participants (Schoeman, 2011). In selecting a case study design, the interest mainly lies with the individual cases than in the method in which it is applied in the study (Stake, 1995). Stacks (2013) identified under the generalized category of case study designs the four sub-division types of case study designs, depending on the intended outcome of the research:

- *Illustrative case studies*. These are mainly descriptive designs relying on one or two events to provide details regarding an existing situation. The primarily goal is to draw attention to unfamiliar situations, which provide insight and a common language for readers to address that situation.

- *Exploratory (or pilot) case studies*. These serve as preliminary studies before launching larger studies. The main goal here is to identify the questions and types of measurements to use for the larger case study.
- *Cumulative case studies*. This type of case study design combines sources of data from several sites visited at different times. The goal here is to yield more generable results based on past studies.
- *Critical instance case studies*. In this type of design, there is less interest in generalization of results, despite visiting one or more sites. The goal here is to establish more validity in answering cause and effect questions.

For this study, I opted for a multiple, illustrative case study design. As highlighted in the literature review, there is a dearth of knowledge around black male cleaners working in higher academic institutions. Their lived experiences may differ in the places they clean given that there are different departments in one academic institution. The number of years at the university may also shape their lived experiences. Their lived experiences may also be shaped by pre and post events following student and worker movements, such as the #FeesMustFall and #OutsourcingMustFall. I acknowledged that there would be multiple cases of participants chosen to reflect the range of the men's lived experiences. Following Stacks' (2013) outline of types of case study designs, I chose the illustrative case study design because it would provide an opportunity to describe the limited information we have about the lived and shared experiences of the men in this context. I concurred with Starman (2013) who stated that case study designs would provide an appropriate data collection method as comprehensive detail can be generated regarding one or more aspects of a unique phenomenon. Furthermore, each participant would be selected because of their unique characteristics as well as surrounding circumstances (Stacks, 2013).

I selected this design as it would ensure that the selected cases would provide thick descriptions of their experiences (Schoeman, 2011). This design allowed for a flexible approach to create interaction during the interview and cases selected (Schoeman, 2011). This approach remained useful in positioning the selected cases and myself as the researcher as shared co-authors of the research process (Schoeman, 2011). However, a challenge that was noted with case study designs was the potential for

researcher bias (Starman, 2013). As the researcher often possesses wide knowledge and techniques of analysis in the field, the interpretations of the research may largely represent those of the researcher (Starman, 2013). Hancock and Algozzine (2006) suggested the researcher to actively seek a process of self-reflection throughout the study, identifying any biases or assumptions presenting from the situation and characteristics around the participants. In this study, I countered this limitation by immersing myself in the participants' settings, while spending more time in their environments to reflect on their individual responses. In addition, I attempted to stay aware of any researcher bias by recording any arising biases with my supervisor, who stands as an expert in the subject field.

4.4.2 SAMPLING

A participant sample of 15 black male cleaners (working age 32-60) were recruited from a higher education institution in Johannesburg. The final selection into the study depended on those who voluntarily expressed interest to be part of the study. Participant recruitment happened until data and theoretical saturation of findings was reached (Mouton & Babbie, 2001).

The selection criteria were that: (a) participants must identify as black male cleaners (as most cleaners are mostly black), and (b) participants should clean areas such as staff and student toilets, lecture halls, gyms, auditoriums, and sports fields. This selection criteria was used to screen participants prior to the interview and captured in a demographic section of the interview guide (Appendix A: Interview schedule). Participants were accessed through the Cleaning Service office at the referred higher academic institution where I introduced myself and the purpose of the study. Participants were told that the study is not commissioned by the University's Management system. This implied that participants were not expected to speak in their capacity as employees of the university, but from their own experiences of working at the University. Participants were selected through their either availability, and through word-of-mouth. In this case, a combination of purposive and snowball sampling strategies was utilised to recruit participants.

Purposive sampling refers to selecting participants based on pre-defined characteristics, availability, and time (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). The advantage of this

method is that it provided more control that I was able to recruit the relevant participants based on the selection criteria (Schoeman, 2011). Cleaning staff were available most times during the day, working in day and night shift. In this study, I recruited the men based on both their availability during day and night shifts. A disadvantage was possibility that I might have missed other opportunities to select participants based on their available times (Schoeman, 2011).

Snowball sampling involves asking secured participants for referrals of other men around the higher academic institution who might be interested in participating in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). This process entailed asking for contact details of any willing participants and reaching them to see if they would voluntarily participate in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). An advantage of snowball sampling included that hard to reach participants (e.g., those working the night shift) could be recruited through people they trust, increasing rapport for the study (Schoeman, 2011). A disadvantage of snowball sampling was that the recruitment of such participants largely depended on the secured participant's referral (Schoeman, 2011). After my interviews with some of the men, I asked them to ask on my behalf of any men who might be interested in participating in the study. I then asked these men to contact me through the given contact information. To ensure that participants did not feel coerced in participating in the study, I explicitly stated to the secured participants that participation is voluntary and that there were no negative consequences to declining at any time of the study.

3.4.2.1 Sample and site

I only identified participants from one higher academic institution in Johannesburg, SA. The higher academic institution is situated within a metropolitan city with people of diverse socioeconomic, language and cultural backgrounds. The higher academic institution can be characterized as white-English, given its previous classification and segregation during the apartheid era for whites. The main medium of instruction of the higher academic institution is English. During the segregation under the apartheid laws, the area around the higher academic institution was designated for white-only settlement. However, over time, due to urbanization, there has been a large migration of people from other population groups, including black, Indian, Coloured and Asian people, now residing around the area. Post-1994, there has been a large increase in

socio-economic problems, including infrastructural backlogs, youth unemployment, substance abuse and poverty around the surrounding cities.

There are still large areas of affluence around the city, occupied by middle-class citizens. This remains in line with the former President Thabo Mbeki's proclamation that SA has become a 'Two Nation' state with wide socio-economic inequality amongst its people (Alexander, 2001; Ansell, 2004; Marais, 2011). The city attracts various nationalities and businesses into the area seeking job opportunities as well as entrepreneurial initiatives. Students and staff members present from all racial and cultural backgrounds. There are various suburbs and a central business area nearby where students and staff members can get hold of public transport. As stated above, during the year of 2015, the higher academic institution became a contested space for student and working uprising in movements, such as the #FeesMustFall as well as #OutsourcingMustFall movements. The higher academic institution has been actively involved in employer-employee negotiations with workers and unions to provide a working agreement for cleaning staff to be absorbed as permanent employees.

Indeed, this will be a potential limitation of the study wherein all the recruited participants were accessed from one higher academic institution (it would have been interesting to identify men from other universities in the country). However, this decision was based on the availability of participants, as well as navigating different ethical protocols from other higher academic institutions. Future research can approach more than one academic institution to observe any differences in findings.

4.4.3 DATA COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

After securing participants, I screened them according to the selection criteria. Participants were selected from various buildings around the higher academic institution. Individual interviews were audio-recorded and conducted in English as well as any other language preferred by the participants. Interviews were held in a time and place that was private, safe, and convenient for the interviewees. Site visits during a time suggested by the participant were kindly requested for observation. No participant was pulled during working hours. Before the interview commenced, I provided detailed information about the aim and purpose of the study to clarify that they are aware of the nature of the study. Next, I explicitly explained to them the participant information

sheets as well as the informed consent form (Appendix B and C). The instructions and content in these documents were fully read to the participants in a language that they preferred. Participants were advised of the potential risks (the study may trigger recollection of positive and negative events) as well as the rewards (participants could see the opportunity as a journey to rediscover the life-long goals and contribution to the higher academic institution).

During in-take meeting, participants were informed of the voluntary nature of participation, and that I am not conducting the study under the University's Management system. To ensure participants felt comfortable throughout the interview, I advised them that they could stop or decline to participate at any time during the interview or visit with no negative consequences to follow. To obtain express consent, participants were informed that written informed consent is required before commencement of any interview. To make sure participants understood what was expected of them, I allocated time before the interviews for questions to be asked about any content within the provided documents. Once I was certain that participants understood voluntariness to participate in the study (I checked by asking if there is anything they do not understand), I set a convenient time and place to conduct the interview, which mostly happened in private rooms assigned to cleaners.

3.4.3.1 Semi-structured individual interviews

To generate data, I opted for semi-structured interviews, guided by an interview schedule (see Appendix A). I found the semi-structured interview approach with open-ended questions allowed for more flexibility for the participants to guide the data collection process, contributing to the richness of the data generated (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). Based on Nieuwenhuis (2007), Hancock et al., (2007), and Denscombe's (1998) assertion, I chose semi-structured interviews as they provided room for follow-up questions, which enabled me to probe for clarity, cementing meaning of participants' accounts. Facilitating a conversation through semi-structured interviews also allowed participants the opportunity to reflect about their forgotten lived experiences (Denscombe, 1998; Hancock et al., 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This allowed participants to attribute greater meaning to their lived experiences as more elaboration and meaning was provided to the events around their own experiences (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). An advantaged to this approach was that it allowed participants to be

assurance that they are the experts to their own meaning-making (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). A disadvantage of individual semi-structured interviews I encountered was the questionable trustworthiness of the events recalled by the participants (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). Where I suspected participants were not certain about certain details of an event, I asked questions for further clarity.

However, since I followed an interpretive paradigm, the motivation was not to arrive at truth or accuracy in these details, but rather present a self-reported representation of the events, people, and emotions surrounding their lived experiences (Creswell, 2013). This was ensured by attentively listening to the verbal and non-verbal cues during the entire interview (Green et al., 2007). As recommended by Green et al. (2007), the observation of non-verbal movement and gestures during the interview, such as laughs, pauses, facial expressions and tone of voice, forms a deeper appreciation of the verbal responses. This way, Potter and Hepburn (2005) maintain that a more holistic understanding of the reported responses is acquired beyond the written transcripts, which translates into data immersion.

The individual interviews were also suitable in this case because they created an intimate space for the men to share their experiences, given the nature and sensitivity of the topic. To address this, I was able to phrase certain questions to be inviting, while observing whether participants were uncomfortable with certain questions (Green et al., 2007). I also noted that by making participants comfortable with me, participants' personal feelings, opinions, and perceptions around these issues could be further explored (Green et al., 2007). These responses were recorded in the words of the participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Interviews remained suitable in this case as any contradictions or ambiguities can be clarified during the interview (Babbie & Mouton, 2011).

Furthermore, given that I am also a black male who speaks most South African languages, I found I quickly developed high rapport and response rate in securing interviews (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). I found that being able to speak my participants' languages allowed me to bridge any misunderstandings given that English was mostly their secondary or third spoken language. Interviews were also held outside of working hours so as not to single out or pull participants out of work. Each participant was

interviewed individually, with interviews ranging from 1 to 2 hours each. Those who could manage having a follow-up interview were called for a second interview. Only 8 of the men agreed to a second, follow-up interview. I attempted to hold the interviews in a time and venue closest to the participant, such as the change and storage area assigned to cleaners. Following the guidance of the interview schedule (Appendix A), the interview consisted of a range of questions around the men's lived experiences. Each individual interview was audio-recorded and transcribed into written transcripts.

3.4.3.2 Field notes

Field notes were incorporated to support the observations to various sites occupied by the men. Given the nature of the study, this may include notes about the structural setting, such as the building overview, organization of rooms, tables, and chairs, eating habits, observed communication, behaviours, rituals, dress, expression and artefacts (Schoeman, 2011). In this study, I recorded my initial impressions of my encounters with the black male cleaners. I noted how I initially interacted with my participants, their encounters with other participants, work routines, attitudes towards their work, the areas they clean, as well as who they usually frequented with in the areas that they cleaned (Schoeman, 2011). Field notes were recorded as detailed summaries of site observations as well as feelings, such as surprises, defences, or contradictions, observed during the interview (Emerson et al., 2001). These included my own experiences, interactions with participants, and encounters between multiple participants (Emerson et al., 2001). These notes were not recorded for the purpose of analysis but were to be utilized to supplement the raw data from interviews and observations. The advantage of field notes were that they allowed me to record rich details of specific incidents and interactions, which occurred during visits and interview sessions. This allowed for verbal and non-verbal behaviour to be recorded without 'taking it out' of its context, (Creswell, 2013; Lofland et al., 2005; Mulhall, 2003). The disadvantage I observed was that I could not record everything that took place as it happened, meaning I that I might have lost some invaluable information (Tessier, 2012). Besides this being common amongst all research, I took Hamo and Blum-Kalka's (2004) suggestion to use an audio recording device to record my thoughts at the end of each data collection event. This allowed me to go back and trace my thoughts of the actual event.

4.4.4. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis forms a paramount part of the research process, wherein the research findings are analysed by looking for key concepts, themes, patterns, and discourses generated from the data (Flick, 2013; Green et al., 2007; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). The data analysis process is aimed at uncovering meaning and understanding from the lived experiences of participants in their natural setting (Green et al., 2007). There are several methods available for researchers to utilize in gathering insight into the generated data (Liamputtong, 2009). The method of data analysis is chosen purposefully to uncover rich insight behind the lived experiences, as well as the ways in which these are shaped (Liamputtong, 2009). The process of data analysis does not happen in a vacuum; but is informed by the paradigmatic and conceptual lenses in relation to the research aims (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). In this study, an interpretive paradigm, conceptual framework, and thematic analysis informed the data analysis process. However, during the carrying out of this study, I became aware that in qualitative research, data-analysis happens in a continuous, reiterative process, which may begin during data collection itself (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). That is, data immersion occurs at any time during the generation of data, as the researcher is the co-creator in the data generation process (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Appendix D contains the diagrammatical outline of data analysis I used for this process, while Appendix E shows the steps for data preparation and transcription protocol followed.

Data immersion refers to listening and re-reading audio and written interview data to closely familiarize oneself with the data (Green et al., 2007). Immersion allows the researcher to take notes, combing and integrating links, which may not be discernible at the first time of reading the data (Green et al., 2007). For this study, I purposefully selected an inductive qualitative thematic analysis to organize and represent meaning in an organized manner (Avdi & Georgaca, 2007). The method was suitable as it acknowledged that emerging patterns and themes are data-, researcher-, and theoretically-driven based on the combination of the research questions, the selected theoretical lens, as well as the researcher's epistemological position (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). According to Theron (2017), a thematic analysis represents a thorough, systematic, and meaning-centred process of making sense of qualitative data. I found this method useful as it offered an in-depth and interpretative

approach in identifying patterns, which provided meaningful responses to research questions (Theron, 2017).

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis represents a data-analysis method for identifying and reviewing the classification of codes and deriving of themes. Ibrahim (2012) maintains attention to accuracy and nuances is necessary when conducting a thematic analysis given that the researcher must go through large amounts of data as well as make assessments of the frequency of patterns and any embedded meaning. I knew that conducting a thorough thematic analysis would provide sufficient explanations of the reported accounts, actions, thoughts as constructed by my participants (Ibrahim, 2012). This draws from the premise that an in-depth interview enables the participants to provide a constellation of perspectives of involved actors and events, which informed the constructed account (Ibrahim, 2012). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a thematic analysis is preferable for studies interested in discovering people’s experience of their realities, perceptions, and construction of their life experiences.

I found that this method suitable for preparing, sifting, and organizing the large datasets I collected, such as field notes and interview transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I realised that the flexibility of a thematic analysis allowed me to highlight a list of properties, which define the form of thematic analysis to followed in answering the proposed research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This would build a record for the reader to trace and replicate the finding of the research, while also assessing the rigor and credibility of the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This involved answering the question through a theoretically- and data-driven procedure supporting the codes and themes in relation to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I found that there are various approaches to conducting a thematic analysis, wherein more than one approach could be used depending on the proposed research question(s) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Over the years, the various approaches to conducting a thematic analysis identified by multiple researchers can be summarized into six different approaches below (Babbie & Mouton, 2011; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Saldana, 2009):

- An inductive way – the derived codes and themes are guided by the content of the data;

- A deductive way – the derived codes and themes are guided by the existing concepts or ideas;
- A semantic way – the derived codes and themes mirror the explicit content of the data;
- A latent way – the derived codes and themes relay concepts and assumptions underpinning the data;
- A realist or essentialist way – the approach mainly relays an assumed reality evident in the data;
- A constructionist way – the approach relays how a certain reality is created by the data.

The main research question of the study centres on the overall lived experiences of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution. The secondary research questions extend on the primary research question in exploring a racialised, gendered, and classed analysis of black male cleaners who find themselves in a historically, female, and low-paying occupation. These questions remain broad and will have to be inductively driven by emerging themes without myself imposing on the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then again, there is a deductive process to be followed here where the conceptual framework, presents with their own concepts and ideas of subjectivity and positioning. The themes that emerged were latent themes. As such, the derived themes reflect a careful analysis of the data, which relay concepts and implicit assumptions underlying the data informing the semantic themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following an interpretive paradigm, the thematic analysis also described the participant's individual and social life worlds, which were informed by their sociocultural environment (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this case, a thematic analysis was therefore suitable for this study as the research questions proposed centred around the construction of their lived experiences.

Based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidance, I observed their six steps to follow when conducting a thematic analysis. I noted that there was no general, logical sequence to these steps; I could go back and forth the steps if needed (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). In phase one, I started by familiarizing myself with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved getting to know my dataset, reading and re-reading the dataset piece by piece (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Braun and Clarke (2006) advised

that researchers need to actively read and immerse oneself in the data while noting any first noteworthy details (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I found this phase was repetitive and followed it until underlying patterns and meaning started to emerge (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This phase started while transcribing the data into written transcripts.

In the second phase, I familiarized myself with the data, while generating initial codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A code is any piece of the data which answers the research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Codes represent the start of organizing the data systematically (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Codes are generated with a holistic familiarization with the entire dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following phase two, the third phase was to search for preliminary themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase is followed by sorting codes and searching for potential themes. In this case, I started grouping certain codes which were arranged to form preliminary themes (Nowell et al., 2017).

In phase four, I conducted a review of the potential themes to make sure they reflected an authentic representation of the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This entailed a process of collapsing overlapping themes into distinct themes (Nowell et al., 2017). Preliminary themes were converted into categories to demonstrate two aspects represented by a general theme (Nowell et al., 2017). In phase five, I started to create names for the identified themes and derived categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Lastly, I concluded the process by writing up the findings and discussion chapter (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process entailed representing the research findings in a logical and substantiated manner in relation to the proposed research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The strength of thematic analysis was its ability to explore, organize, and the ability to synthesis different perspectives of my participants' lived experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The method was flexible in organizing large amounts of data in a meaningful manner, with themes and interpretations supported by data quoted (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This technique was valuable as it assisted in demonstrating any differences and similarities across the participants lived experiences. This enabled me to generate new insight in the concepts and implicit assumptions which emerged from the different datasets (Braun & Clarke, 2006). On the other hand, a disadvantage I

identified using the method was the possibility that the interpretations could be influenced by my own personal inferences (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). I was careful in recording these biases from misconstruing the findings, and therefore compromising the trustworthiness of the findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). As such, I have allocated a reflexivity section in Chapter 5 to engage with these issues in relation to data collection and analysis.

4.4.5. RIGOUR AND CREDIBILITY

Scientific rigour entails employing quality criteria to establish the validity in the findings and audit of the research process (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Validity refers to the accuracy represented of participants' accounts (Creswell & Miller, 2000). A set of quality criteria has been established by Lincoln and Guba (1985), which consists of the following: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. The following section details these quality criteria, setting out the strategies used to observe these quality criteria.

The **credibility** quality criterion is interested in the confidence and trustworthiness of the reported research findings (Anney, 2014; Holloway & Wheeler, 2002; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). Researchers need to ensure that the findings represent an accurate reflection of the participant's accounts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To maintain credibility, I followed four measures to ensure the credibility in representing the study findings. This included spending prolonged time and engagement in the field. I conducted peer debriefing with my supervisor who is an expert in the field. Besides peer review, I attempted to provide a persistent and accurate observation in the field. Finally, I employed member checking by asking the participants to read, clarify, and modify the written transcripts (Babbie & Moutan, 2011). This procedure allowed participants to ask questions otherwise not asked during the interview, clarify any inaccuracies, and validate the findings (Babbie & Moutan, 2011). All changes, questions, and clarifications from the member-checking were be recorded and integrated into the original dataset.

The **transferability** quality criterion relates to the extent which the observed findings can be applied to a similar socioeconomic and cultural context (Anney, 2014). Recommended strategies that are suggested which were followed to ensure

transferability included providing rich and thick description of the research site, the participants, and their engagement in the research, as well as themes and interpretations to allow the reader to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Another suggestion by Anney (2014) was to utilize purpose sampling in recruiting participants, which ensured that specific characteristics in participants can be recorded and made available upon request. In this study, I utilised purposive sampling to recruit participants.

The **dependability** quality criterion relates to the consistency in results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and ensures that the results can "stand the test of time" (Bitsch, 2005, p. 86). A strategy suggested by Creswell and Miller (2000) that was used to ensure dependability was presenting the reader with an audit trail. This record of evidence entailed providing a rich and detailed description of the steps followed during the research process (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). An audit trail was recorded during each component of the research process in the form of a field notes in a researcher diary, detailing the steps followed in sampling, data collection, analysis, and write-up. Another method suggested by Creswell and Miller (2000) was engaging in triangulation and researcher reflexivity. Triangulation refers to a methodological process of finding consistencies across multiple data sources (research participants) as well as methods (interviews, observations from site visits and filed notes) (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This method was integrated in the process of conducing the thematic analysis across each participant's transcript, as well as visiting the filed notes across the methods of data collection.

The **confirmability** quality criterion refers to the research findings not being influenced by the researcher's own goals (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mertens, 1998). A recommended strategy to ensure confirmability was a confirmability audit, wherein an external reviewer (Creswell & Miller, 2000) reads the research and its findings. In this case, the examination process will involve at least three external examiners reviewing this dissertation. A strategy that I utilized was to rely on a reflexivity diary (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). As noted above, I made use of field notes to record my own biases and assumptions. Creswell and Miller (2000) also advised on researchers making use of peer debriefing. This entailed a process of consulting with a senior expert in the field, wherein the senior expert provides critical feedback of their research outcomes

(Creswell & Miller, 2000). As stated earlier, I made sure to consult with my supervisor, a senior expert in the research methodology and topic under investigation.

4.4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The highest standard of ethical consideration should be upheld in any type of research (Banister, 2007). A comprehensive definition of ethical behaviour was provided by Lichtman (2012, p. 54) as "ethical behaviour represents a set of moral principles, rules, or standards governing a person or a profession". There are various social and psychological boards worldwide and nationally which provide guidelines in research to protect participants and the researcher (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012). In qualitative research, there are specific guidelines, which are set out for me to follow regarding informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, and respect for participants during the research process (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012; Sanjari et al., 2014; Shaw, 2008). Ethical clearance (non-medical) to conduct the study was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand's Research Ethics Committee (protocol number: H19/05/30). Upon gaining approved for ethical clearance, data collection for the study commenced. Allan (2011) has set out an outline of ethical principles I followed that govern social and psychological research within numerous contexts. The next section provides an overview of these principles and measures that I followed to ethical consideration to be upheld.

3.4.7.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

Once ethical clearance was obtained, I informed participants of the nature of the study and given adequate information of the nature of their participation in the study (Allan, 2011). Informed consent relates to the process of sharing details of the focus of the study, contact details of who the researchers are, a summary of the entire research process, and discussion of the potential risks and benefits of the study (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012; Mackenzie et al., 2007). This information was communicated in a manner and language which is accessible and understandable by the participants. A participant information sheet was given to potential participants via email and in some cases face-to-face contact, which detailed the nature of the study, including the researcher's contact information (Appendix B). Participation within this study was also explicitly communicated as voluntary, with participants allowed to decline participation at any time during the study. Participants were also given the opportunity

to ask questions for clarity (Allan, 2011). Participants were informed that they can withdraw from participation or refuse to answer any questions at any stage during the interview, without any negative consequences to follow.

As the interview intake, I highlighted potential risks and benefits of the study, including the study possibly triggering recollection of negative events encountered around cleaning within the academic institution. A potential benefit was that participants could see the opportunity to discover their contribution to the higher academic institution. Once the participants were informed of the purpose, their rights as participants, potential risks, and benefits, I gave them the responsibility to provide time to participant to think about whether they wish to participate (Richards & Schwartz, 2002). In the case of an interest expressed to be part of the research, I read to the participants the written informed consent form to sign (Appendix C). This form stipulates that the interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed into written transcripts for research purposes, including the submission of this research dissertation for examination and any future publications. Their responses would be used as evidence in the final write-up of the dissertation and future publications. Before permission could be obtained, participants were asked if they understood the conditions around informed consent. All informed consent forms were thereafter signed.

3.4.7.2 Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality

Privacy relates to the right against personal intrusion (Allan, 2011). This includes disclosing personal details without participants' permission. During the informed consent process, it is the researcher's responsibility to ask the participants whether their identities may be known in any personally-identifying or publishable material (Gerriero & Dallari, 2008). This process can be circumvented by entering into an agreement of anonymity and confidentiality (Allan, 2011). Within this study, participant's anonymity could not be guaranteed because participants referred their colleagues to me. Yet, confidentiality was upheld by making sure that the none of the responses in the data generated could be linked back to the participants' personal identity (Allan, 2011; Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011; Richards & Schwartz, 2002).

I did not use the names of the men; but rather provided them with the option of using a preferred pseudonym. Confidentiality was also ensured by stating that the

research findings will be written as group aggregates, rather than identifying participant's names (Banegas & Villacanas de Castro, 2015; Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011; Richards & Schwartz, 2002). Participants were therefore advised that no personal-identifying information would be included in the dissertation or any future publications (Allan, 2011). My supervisor and I will be the only people who have access to the audio-recordings and written transcripts. The interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy and transcribed into written transcripts. These audio-recordings and written transcripts have been stored in a password-protected computer (Allan, 2011). After I have analysed and written my report, these audio-recordings will be destroyed after 5 years in storage. However, the participants will be given the written transcripts of their individual interview as well as the final research dissertation upon its examination should they request this option (Allan, 2011).

3.4.7.3. Non-maleficence

Non-maleficence refers to the researcher's responsibility against any physical, emotional, and psychological harm towards the research participants (Allan, 2011). It is the researcher's responsibility that caution is exercised across all stages in the research process to ensure that minimum harm is incurred by the participants or the observed community (Avasthi et al., 2013). This includes proactively identifying any potential risks or negative consequences that may be experienced by participants (Sim, 2010). This for example may include being aware of any expectations like financial incentives that participants may be expected upon participation (Sim, 2010). The researcher should always aim to preserve the welfare of participants (Adu-Gyamfi & Okech, 2010; Fouka & Mantzorou, 2011; Meddings & Haith-Cooper, 2008). This process can be safeguarded by first considering the design of the research (Scott & Garner, 2013).

A poorly research design increases the opportunity of harm against participants. In a carefully designed research study, the researcher considerably is aware of the ethical considerations and possible risks involved in conducting their research (Duncan, Drew, Hodgson & Sawyer, 2009). For example, in this study, a protocol of distress was set up to address any potential harm that may arise, as well as how to handle any distress in a confidential and professional manner (Duncan et al., 2009). Then again, the researcher cannot anticipate any unforeseeable events that may indirectly cause harm

to his/her participants (Ridley, 2009). The potential risks of the study have been suggested above. To ensure non-maleficence, I provided participants with the nearest access to three of the nearest and free counselling centres and their contact details in the informed consent form, also discussed prior to each individual interviews.

3.4.7.4. Beneficence

The ethical consideration of beneficence relates to the researcher acting in the best interest of the participants and the community involved (Allan, 2011). The study has direct benefits to the participants as well as the rest of the cleaning staff. This study allowed for the men working at the higher academic institution to reflect on the positive as well as negative experiences, which have motivated them to persist and make changes within their occupation. As Potter and Hepburn (2008) states, interviews provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on how far they have come, reconstructing new narratives of themselves in relation to their past self. The knowledge and lived experiences shared by the participants allows for greater understanding of the racialised, classed and gendered nature of their occupation. This can further contribute to conceptualization of new theory. In addition, the study has potential to also contribute to transformation policy and intervention strategies to improve the employee relations between cleaners, academic staff, and students (Githaiga et al., 2017; Mahomed & Matthews, 2015; Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016).

4.4.7 REFLEXIVITY

Researcher reflexivity refers to the researcher's awareness of his/her own theoretical assumptions, values, and influences in relation to the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Palaganas, et al., 2017). The process entails the researcher openly sharing and reflecting on his/her own beliefs, previous experiences, biases, and any preconceived ideas upon entering the research. This process allows the researcher to understand his or her own position and how biases and assumptions can be alleviated to strengthen rigor and credibility. This process ensures that the unit of analysis goes hand in hand with the theoretical/conceptual framework and methods utilized. Once the decision-making around this process is finalised, the researcher can be aware of his/her own biases. This can involve decision taken in matters where the rules are not so explicit, such as extracting themes in a thematic analysis, which are

informed by implicit concepts and assumptions underlying the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Palaganas, et al., 2017).

However, a researcher diary can be a useful tool for the researcher to actively engage in this data analysis process (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Palaganas, et al., 2017). As stated earlier, I created an audit trail which demonstrated how themes were derived and interpreted (Theron, 2017). This is to make sure that the research process and findings are valid, and a consistent process of analysis was followed (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Palaganas, et al., 2017). This entailed all the steps followed during data collection and analysis was richly detailed for other researchers to follow and produce similar findings. The steps taken were detailed in the data analysis section of this report. These steps were taken to guide the researcher during data analysis process. Furthermore, during the process of data analysis, I utilised field notes to record steps I followed to ensure that the process is reliable and consistent.

As noted earlier, I am a 29-year-old black male Lecturer at the University of Pretoria who holds a Masters degree in Social and Psychological Research from University of the Witwatersrand. I have never worked as a cleaner in my life and my research included interviewing black men who are cleaners. As I conducted this study, I was aware of the ethical implication of being an outsider and insider at the same time. On the one hand, as an alumnus of the University of the Witwatersrand, I was familiar with the ‘inside’ environment, university structures, and some of the workers on campus. On the other hand, I was also aware that I do not espouse the knowledge and experiences of the men, which as an ‘outsider’ in this case, might be taken for granted.

I was aware that my age, race, and occupational status would influence the responses of my participants. Given the age ranges of my participants (18 to 65 years), I went into the study fearing that I might encounter barriers in understanding the different experiences especially from the older generation. I also was aware that my occupation as a Lecturer, should it be asked, could create a power imbalance where participants felt that I am asking questions on behalf of the University’s Management system. I also feared the differences in our academic backgrounds would position me as a person of authority.

But, as I conducted the study, I realised I had many attributes which would bridge some of the fears and barriers I had anticipated. I am a young, black male who can speak a variety of South African languages, including the dominant languages of isiZulu and SeSotho. I stood in a privileged position regarding my Blackness and Zulu ethnicity (most of the participants were also Zulu. Being a black male myself opened the opportunity of being relatable to my participants I noticed in the general statements they thought I could relate to in relation to being male.

For example, I did not understand the undermining of cleaning as a job was as cleaning at a higher academic institution still offered more job security, better wages, and multiple benefits than say a cashier, dishwasher, or grocery packer. As I noted in Chapter 2, according to the latest salary negotiations, salaries of outsourced cleaners, landscapers, and security guards were increased from R4,500 in January 2016, to R6,000 from June to December 2016, and a further increase at R7,860 (cost to company) in 2017 (University of the Witwatersrand, 2017b). Cleaners also have a medical aid, pension, and subsidy plan for their children to study at the higher academic institution - all benefits which are partly paid for by the referred higher academic institution (University of the Witwatersrand, 2017b).

If the need for money is the same, one wonders why there are not more black male cleaners. This implies that it is possibly not the job itself that draws most men away from cleaning. In fact, even if cleaning were to be transformed (e.g., by adding more money, reducing the hours, and multiplying the benefits), most men (as the black male cleaners in this study seem to imply) would be dissuaded from entering cleaning as a career. This clearly implies that there is a close relationship between masculinity and material properties such as having lots of money (Kiguwa, 2006; Langa, 2020; Ratele et al., 2010).

What I also observed in almost all the interviews was that the men kept on asking what I would do with the information that I am gathering. Besides stating that the results would help in answering how black male cleaners understand cleaning, I sensed that the questioned implied how would the research benefit them from an occupational viewpoint. At first, I imagined that this question might have to do with

the fact that the black male cleaners in this study are always looking for an opportunity to exit their current occupation. I figured that they had not completely given up on wanting a better life. But their personal circumstances meant that they had few options to actualise their dreams. Or more closely related, they had come to rely on the higher academic institution to create opportunities for them as they had given most of their lives working for it. This was especially when one of the men pointed a finger at the higher academic institution as not creating the conditions for him to further his education.

At the same time, I noticed that the men in this study had come to feel invisible given how they responded to why somebody would take the time to not only investigate their lives, but also who they were at work. As another black male, perhaps I represented a beacon of hope that would change their working conditions. (At certain times though, I was denied interviews because some black male cleaners were scared to talk to me, fearing that I would report back their grievances to Management). But those who did agree to participate in the study, did not mind to be contacted for a follow-up interview. The fear might have been because they felt that their own stories of how they came to be where they are remained untold. That is, it is easy to assume, as with other men in non-traditional occupations, that they lacked the career ambition to make something out of themselves.

Also in my observations, I sensed that their hoped futures revolved around wishful thinking at times. For example, some of them indicated that they wanted to be supervisors but were not taking the appropriate steps towards fulfilling the minimum requirements. One of the black male cleaners in this study had a Grade 12 and could study with the university, but even after 10 years did not make an attempt to register with the university. Instead, what I heard was more an entitlement for promotion based on their years of service. But then again, the university has its own admission requirements and perhaps previous attempts were made with no success. At other times, I sensed ambivalence and hesitation about why some had failed to plan for a future that was not guaranteed. This could be explained because during the conducting of the interviews, the unknown facts about Covid-19 created an unknown situation where they were unsure whether they would still be able employed. This situation created immense anxiety because worldwide, majority of the working-class employees were being

retrenched, while others lost their lives. This indeed made planning about the future based on uncertainty.

To alleviate the power imbalances, I attentive in observing the implications of studying the people you work with. I thereby sampled out of my academic department building. My education in the field of psychology enabled me to read body language and respond in a manner that reassured warmth to my participants. I found this aided them to be more open without feeling judged by a non-empathetic figure.

I was also aware of the complexities of memory and their implications for trustworthiness. I have studied at the higher academic institution for two years and witnessed the changes following both student and workers' movements on campus. I was therefore familiar with these experiences form the outside and could immediately understand the context in which they took place. But then again, I was aware that my own observations were my own experiences. Tracking these biases in my researcher diary assisted me in reflecting which ideas where my won versus what came from the participants.

4.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a detailed overview and explanation of my research design and methodology. The chapter presented an outline of the paradigmatic perspective, methodological paradigm, as well as the data collection techniques that were followed in conducting the study. In addition, the chapter presented a discussion on sampling, data collection, as well as how I analyzed the data generated. Finally, the chapter outlined the ethical considerations underpinning how I went about conducting the study. The next chapter presents the findings and their discussion.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 presents the findings derived from interviews and thematic analysis of the written transcripts. The findings are presented with the discussion of the derived themes. The study proposed to explore the lived experiences of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution in Johannesburg, SA. In addition to their lived experiences, the study wished to understand how these men make meaning of these experiences and positioning at work and outside their work environment. Moreover, the study wished to further uncover how these black male cleaners construct their identity in a predominantly racialised, classed, and gendered occupation.

First, the chapter recaps on the theoretical framework utilized to analyse the findings of this study. This includes British psychoanalyst Stephen Frosh's psychosocial framework with a particular focus particular focus on masculinity studies, American gender theorist, Judith Butler's notion of performativity and precarity, as well as French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus. Then, the chapter presents a synopsis of each participant. The synopsis will entail a background into the lifeworld of each of the participants, as well as the observations noted from their interviews. From there on, the findings that emerged from the thematic analysis will be presented.

In this study, three broad themes emerged in relation to the proposed research questions. The first broad theme that emerged from the thematic analysis was, *'Claiming cleaning as a masculine occupation: "Women do not have our strength; we have the manpower"'*. The second broad theme that emerged through analysing the data was, *'Problematising cleaning as a professional and private activity: "I love my job … No, men should not be cleaning toilets"'*. The third broad theme presenting from the data was, *'Acknowledging cleaning as a means to an end: "So, laughing at me or taking me somehow can't put bread on the table"'*.

5.2 RECAP OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As mentioned earlier, the findings were analysed using the key concepts and theoretical foundations of the following theorists: Stephen Frosh's psychosocial framework with a

particular focus on masculinity studies, Judith Butler's notion of performativity and precarity, as well as Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus. Table 5.1 summarises the key points of the conceptual framework.

	Frosh's psychosocial framework with a particular focus on masculinity studies	**Butler's notion of performativity and precarity**	**Bourdieu's theory of habitus**
Starting point:	Psycho-dynamic, social, and cultural lens to masculinity studies	Racial, gendered/sexual, and class vulnerability = precarity + precarious conditions + precariousness	Embodiment of habits, tastes, and practices between an agent and his fields
Emphasis:	Emphasises intrapsychic (feelings), social (practices), and cultural aspects (traditions) associated with masculinity	Certain individuals remain more prone to a) precarity (being poor, marginalised, and alienated), b) precarious conditions (exposure to injury, violence, exploitation), as well as c) being in a heightened state of precariousness (anxious, insecure, uncertain about one's future)	Emphasises (non)conformity, habitus-doxic relationship, new/alternative embodiments

Table 5.1 Summary of the conceptual framework

5.3 SYNOPSIS

The study included 15 black male cleaners. The men had been working for the higher academic institution from 2 to 20 years. The men resided mostly in the southern and central areas of Johannesburg, including Soweto township and the Johannesburg Central area. Out of the 12 men, 3 were married, and the rest were unmarried but living with a partner at the time of the study. Below, Table 5.2 presents all the participants' characteristics.

Preferred name	Age	Marital status/living arrangements	Level of education	Ethnicity	Number of years working for institution
"Moses"	58	Married, 3 children	Grade 8	Zulu	20 years
"Eddie"	60	Married, 2 children	Grade 8	Sotho	17 years
"Christopher"	51	Married, 2 children	Grade 8	Zulu	12 years
"Musa"	45	Married, 3 children	Grade 8	Zulu	11 years
"Themba"	33	Single, no children	Grade 12	Zulu	11 years
"Sechaba"	33	Living with partner, 3 children	Grade 12	Venda	9 years
"Zweli"	39	Married, 2 children	Grade 11	Zulu	9 years
"Donald"	42	Living with partner, 2 children	Grade 12	Zulu	8 years
"Fezile"	43	Lives alone, 3 children	Grade 8	Zulu	7 years
"Victor"	45	Married, 2 children	Grade 10	Xhosa	6 years
"Johannes"	48	Married, 2 children	Grade 7	Pedi	5 years

"Kgosi"	32	Living with partner, 2 children	Grade 10	Tswana	3 years
"Kabelo"	34	Living with partner, 2 children	Grade 9	Pedi	3 years
"Xoli"	37	Living alone, 3 children	Grade 11	Xhosa	3 years
"Prosper"	42	Living with partner, 2 children	Grade 10	Zulu	2 years

Table 5.2 Participants' characteristics

The following section presents a brief background of each participant, while discussing prominent aspects that emerged from the men's description of their lived experiences in relation to the research questions.

Participant 1: Moses

At the time of his interview, Moses was a 58-year-old Zulu, black male cleaner with the longest tenure of working for the university as he *"started in 2001."* He was employed 20-years ago at the higher academic institution during the sub-contracting, outsourcing period: *"I came at the time they were looking for workers. The people who was working under Wits, they did leave, and us Supercare, we came and took over. The people who was working here was [Building Care]. When Building Care moved out, is the time they take us like a contract, Supercare contract in 2001."* He stated that he lives in *"Lufere is near Protea Glen"*, an area in the south of Johannesburg. His highest level of education was Grade 8, *"Before it was Standard 6, Form-1. I did that long time ago."*

Moses seemed the most disgruntled out of all the male participants. His main concern about working for the higher academic institution was *"you can't get a promotion"*, working the same job not getting enough men to carry on. As he explained: *"And then when I tell them...like when I got longer years working like that, why can't they change us, and give us sometimes another job. I don't know how. And then the new one, must carry on. No, they don't want like that. If you know the job, it is you who must just work."*

Moses sounded resentful during the interview because of the uneven workload assigned to the few male cleaners as compared to the female cleaners: *"And the carpeting, we (male cleaners) do the carpet. The ladies sometimes, they should say thanks. They thank the lady that is working in the offices. But us we're coming to clean their carpet and what what. ...already, they (female cleaners) are gone that time. From the 15th. Leaving! We are gonna do those carpets like that."*

Moses' other concern were how male cleaners were assigned more random tasks than their female co-workers: *"But during the day, I am alone. And then when the time comes, they say Great Hall, I must leave my job, go to Great Hall. They say, "Leave that, there's carpeting this side. ... But the other thing is, when you go to the Great Hall, they want us to all sweep. You find that during graduation, there is a lot of rubbish coming out there. After the cleaning, they move those ladies. I must take this rubbish again to throw away with a dustbin."*

His explanation of why male cleaners were assigned more work was that, *"I think those ones said a woman can't work like a man to push that machine the whole day. Because I pushed it three days to get that place clean."* Moses believed this assumption, emphatically stating that, *"The work that I am doing, I think a lady can't do it."*

Over the years, he has been considering leaving cleaning for a role involving less contact with toxic chemicals: *"Yes, leaving the cleaning because of health also. When I work a long time with those chemicals, also there is somewhere they affect me and all those things. Now we should, I don't know, the way I think, we should now check and say, no these people are working long with this. Let's change them and put the new one. I don't know where we can fit them."*

As he got older, Moses has been concerned about getting injured while operating the cleaning machinery: *"Like now, December like this, we are going to participate with the cleaning because we are working for the students. They (supervisors) are gonna take us and do the carpeting. And then those carpeting they never take us to the school of carpeting. And then, when I am working with that machine doing the carpet – I did ask them the question: "When this machine can hurt me, when you go to the doctor, what are you going to say? I am falling under the machine*

operator, or what happened?" They say, "You are working a cleaner's job. Part and parcel of the job."

When asked how he feels when others look down on him for being a cleaner, Moses stated that *"I just leave them, and say they don't know."* When I asked him how he coped with the job, Moses stated that prayer and a positive mindset kept him going: *"I just take my prayer and do it. ... Because also the Lord doesn't like if somebody laughs at another one. To say, "Ey, you are a cleaner what, what, what.""*

Participant 2: Eddie

At the time of his interview, Eddie was a 60-year-old Sotho, black male cleaner with a tenure of 17 years working for the higher education institution *"since 2004."* His job description included the following: *"I clean the ground floor and men's toilets. I also wash the windows all around the building. The ladies clean female toilets and the offices."* He explained that he took cleaning as a job due to socio-economic circumstances, such as poverty and the high unemployment rate: *"Cleaning used to be women's job. So, we are doing it because we are suffering, we need jobs. That is why in South Africa you'd find a woman driving a bus. Previously they wouldn't be bus drivers. Women are driving trains. Those are men's jobs. These days women drive busses."* According to Eddie, people still look down on cleaners because, *"We use mops, we clean toilets. They look down on us. We are not regarded as people who do meaningful work. If a person knows where you work, he'd be making fun of you to his friends; that look at him, he cleans toilets."*

Eddie was mostly composed during his interview. As the oldest of all the participants, he recalled having good relationships with the staff in his building, *"In 2004, I was working at Medical Campus. I worked there for 9 years. ... I was cleaning the passage in that section, washed the windows and men's toilets. I worked well with the medical lecturers that side; cleaning for them. It was good."* Yet he did not enjoy working under the previous conditions of sub-contracting, *"I was working under contract, and it was hard because they were oppressing us. We were watched a lot. You always had to be working, you had no chance [to rest]. And at that time, there was apartheid in the university. It was mainly white. And as contract workers, we were looked down upon. We were not treated as people working for the university. Those*

who were employed by the university were not mistreated. But as contract workers, it was hard for us."

When I asked about his working relationship with his female colleague, Eddie described how unfair their work distribution was, with the men taking on more strenuous labour than their female co-workers, yet still receiving the same salary. As he puts it: *"That is what was said in a meeting this week. They were telling the women that as of that day, the contract did not state that only men must move the desks, while you are sitting down. You have to move desks yourselves. Because during spring cleaning, you call the males to help with the desks. It is not their duty. That issue was addressed in the meeting. They were told that as from that day, you had to ask him, if he doesn't want to, he doesn't."*

According to Eddie, men were not allowed to clean staff offices, *"No, we are not allowed to clean the offices,"* but that *"Women are the only ones who clean the offices."* The reasons for this was that, *"Maybe they think we would steal. But women do steal as well. Maybe they think a woman cleans better than a man because they also clean at home. Cleaning is actually for women. They move tables around when they clean. But I wouldn't be moving things around when cleaning the office. Women have experience cleaning offices, and we don't."*

When I asked him about entering or cleaning female-only toilets, Eddie stated, *"Yes, you are not supposed to enter female toilets as a man. A lady must do it. You only clean male toilets."* Asked about the procedures he would take if he was requested to enter a female-only toilet, he responded, *"I have to go in, but I have to make sure that when I go in, I lock the door. When a lady comes, she then finds it because I am busy cleaning."* But, *"if a lady needs to use a toilet, I have to go out and stand outside. When she's done, I continue with my work."*

When Eddie was asked to describe his relationships with students, Eddie angrily noted, *"The students who come here are unruly, they make noise, they climb on top of the tables, they climb chairs. Some are not here to study. They just came to play with their girlfriends. The university says you must never move the furniture, but they do it. And you can never do anything to them. When you tell them they'll say, "Wat se jy?" ("What are you saying?") They would then be laughing."*

While cleaning toilets, Eddie stated he would be interrupted by students, forcing him to witness students relieving themselves while had to wait outside, *"Sometimes you'd find that you are cleaning, and a student just goes in. And that is why I say the students are not the same. Black students are understanding when you tell them to use another toilet as you are busy cleaning. But whites get irritable when you ask them to use another toilet. They insist on using the toilet. So, I have to let them go in and then I'll wait for them outside to finish."*

What upset Eddie was the lack of bathroom etiquette, such as students leaving toilets unflushed because there are cleaners for that, *"You find that they don't flush. A person uses a toilet, and leave it like that. You have to flush for him. He went in, used the toilet, didn't flush and left. You can't just leave it like that, you have to flush and clean it. It is a must that you do that because you are a cleaner. So that no one would come there and turn back because it is dirty. You are a cleaner, you must make sure it is clean. That person is gone, he left it like that."*

According to Eddie, students could justify these behaviours because, *"He doesn't care. The cleaner will learn because we are paying. Most of them. ... So, we are killed by this thing that they pay. You can't tell him anything. And you must also understand that the university would not blame the student. They blame you as a cleaner. They say a student is a client. He is their client. For each and every mistake, you are the wrong one."*

Eddie believed this because cleaners are not protected even students are in the wrong, *"And they just call you and tell you that a student has a problem with you. And when you explain to them, even if they see you are right, they just have to blame you."* In his experience, this became apparent when a student lost their keys or personal items, *"If he doesn't find it (lost keys or laptop), you are wrong. You know where it is because you are the one who cleans here."*

Participant 3: Christopher

Christopher was a 51-year-old Zulu, black male cleaner working for the higher education institution for 12 years, *"I am old, I started cleaning in here 2009."* Christopher was open in sharing his abusive childhood, *"I'm from Umlazi in KZN. I lived with my extended family until I had to find work. I was abused as a child. I was denied food. I was beaten by my aunts. They never wanted to see me sitting doing*

nothing. Maybe it's something my parents did. I wanted out of that house so bad. I left my schooling at Grade 10…now you call it? I never wanted to do anything that doesn't involve working with people. I love people, even when I was not loved by my family. That is the problem when you're an orphan. I had 4 children with my wife. But the 2 have since died. But I am well-liked and respected by my clients and supervisor. They look up to me."

Christopher was warm and inviting. He stated that he works with another male and 8 other female cleaners, *"We work with 8 ladies this side. They are young. They come from this area."* According to Christopher, there was a demand for more men, *"Ahhh…yes, we do want more men here. The ladies…they struggle to do some of the jobs here. We need more men to help us. More men must apply."* I asked him what exactly women 'cannot do', *"A woman cannot carry containers, trolleys, pressure machine, office desk, refuse bins. Even if she is strong, she will not last. She is not meant to carry those heavy things. I remember when we started last year…they said they will not carry heavy boxes. They called us men."*

Given the shortage of men, I asked whether they and the other male cleaners recruit other men, to which he indicated, *"We do tell them that they should apply for jobs when they open. I'll say, "Gents, come this side, they have openings." One or two will apply but not everyone is interested in being a cleaner, you see. I think they are afraid of what will other people say. … Young and old, but young people are scared to be seen here. When you get old, you want to feed the family…no one will just give you money."*

Regarding the subject of men not being allowed to clean offices, Christopher indicated, *"We are black, and they are white. You cannot expect them to forget that. When they see you, already they think you will rob them. How can I rob you in the office? They have cameras there. I am not stupid. You just see that, and you tell yourself that it's life."* I then asked if he had experience racism personally with students and with other university staff, *"Jah…you see, the students do not care. They will show you that we pay your salary. Even the black ones, but the white ones do. I say to the other men, we are still in the old South Africa. The blacks are not treated like people. You*

will see someone leaving his mess for you to clean up. They are not children like primary. They just want to show you. They will say, "The cleaner is there."

As for his relationship with other workers, Christopher noted having good negotiation skills, which helped build a constructive relationship with his seniors: *"For me, my supervisor and I have an agreement, if we fight, we sit down and tell each other what went wrong. He is young. He's a '74. You know, sometimes young people do not see us older people. … You have to be firm and tell him that you want to do this. When he starts to put his rules on you, you should then tell him to talk to you nicely."*

I finally asked him whether he had wanted to pursue anything else with his life, which he responded, *"There is no choice. We don't want to be cleaners. You can't get educated where I come from. The government was against us getting education. You were lucky to get educated."* This prompted me to ask other questions, including his plans for the future. Christopher was sure that he would not be taking up any other jobs in the future, but work towards being a supervisor, *"I think I can be a supervisor. I'm too old to start something from scratch. You will not get good jobs when you are old. I will let them pay me my pension when I'm ready to rest. I have a few more years, but when the time comes, I will start my life from there."*

Participant 4: Musa

Musa was a 45-year-old Zulu, black male cleaner at the time of the study. He has been working for the higher education institution as a cleaner for 11 years as he *"started working here at the university in 2010. I started in Main Campus in 2010. … It was still a contract. In 2011, I shifted and came here. I came to Medical Campus in 2011. It was still under contract. Until in 2016 during the strike."* His current living situation included, *"I have children, but they are back at home. I stay with my wife here in CBD where we rent a room."* His daily working routine included attending to the following, "*…I start by cleaning the class. Afterwards, I then come to the change room to change and then have tea, and then go to clean the toilets."*

He expressed being the only male figure in his building, *"In my building, I am the only man."* Musa was very clear about what men and women say they can and cannot do, *"Like packing stock, women cannot pack stock. There are 25 litre chemical containers. They can never carry such containers. Men are the only ones who can*

operate the buffing machines. If a woman can operate that machine, no matter how strong she is, the next day she would just menstruate. So obviously, that machine can only be operated by men." I better understood some of his views about 'men and women's work' given his own upbringing wherein, *"I grew up knowing that a man does men's work. …Working outside. Fixes the fence, and when there is a car, he helps fix the car. And a woman does women's work: cleaning, cooking, does the washing and take care of the children. That is women's work. In some households, not at my home."*

Musa had a number of objections with how uneven the workload was distributed across male and female cleaners: *"We need to shift the desks. So, the females do not want to shift the desks, they say it's the men's work. … [If] we get paid the same money, why should I move desks for you, and you just sit down and relax?"* Musa therefore saw men carrying more intense labour than their female colleagues because, *"If there are chairs and tables, take the chairs out and I'll take the tables out. If it's the desks, I know you won't be able to take them out, so I'll take them out and pack them next to the door for you, and you must push them to a corner. But they just want to wait for me finish taking the desks out and then they come and clean the floors. Even on the day when we have to put them back, actually they are not always there when we put the desks back. If she was not there, she would tell me the desks were placed this and that way."*

Musa indicated that they were not allowed to clean private offices, *"When we got here, we found that women are the ones who clean the offices. We do not clean the offices. We only go to the offices when there is something heavy they need [our] help with."* Looking for reasons why men are not allowed to clean, Musa suggested that *"Some people in the offices do not trust males. When they see you in the building, they become distrustful. As you walk in the passage, they close their doors."* I asked him how he copes with this, *"I do not care whether you close the door or not, because I wasn't coming to your office. I'll go wherever I am going and then leave. I do not care whether you close the door or not. I do not care about whatever you think."*

I also explored his relationships with students, to which he explained, *"When it comes to students, ey – actually most students do not respect what we do. They do not respect our work. Most students. A person would just go in the toilet, unroll the tissue, and then leave it on the floor. He does not flush it away. He does not even ask you...*

You find that he person already has attitude. He gives you attitude. If he finds you cleaning, he just steps on wet surface, relieves himself and then leave. So, students are not the same." He indicated that he is scared to talk back at students as this resulted in one cleaner being suspended, *"There is nothing I can do. Because there was once a situation where one of the ladies prevented a student from going into a toilet as she was cleaning. That child reported her, and it was a huge issue. So, it was like the cleaners were preventing students from using the toilets. So that is why I reached a decision that I would not stop anyone from entering the toilet when I am cleaning. … She went to a hearing. She was not dismissed but was warned that she should no longer do it."*

I asked him if he ever was required to clean a female toilet, which he stated, "*No, I haven't gone into the ladies' toilet."* I then asked what happens when a female co-worker goes on leave and they needed a substitute in her position, which he responded *"…they send another female to clean."* I asked Musa what he would do if he was forced to clean a female-only toilet, to which he responded, *"Eish! It would be a problem because if the students find me there alone, they would not say I am cleaning. They would say we found a man in a female's toilet."* I asked what process would be followed if a man had to enter a female-only toilet, to which he indicated, *"They'd report that we found a man in female's toilet. Even if they could explain that we found a man cleaning female's toilet, it would not be accepted that a man should clean female toilet. It won't happen. Unless if they send someone."*

In fact, *"Culture does not allow"* because, *"It would seem like I am [pursuing my own interests]. I am going after them because there is something I want. Because when I go in, I wouldn't be knowing that there is someone or not in the toilet. I go in with a mop or scrubbing cloth, she'd then complain that I followed her to the toilet. I'll now be in trouble, because we are not allowed to go into female toilets."*

Participant 5: Themba

At the time of his interview, Themba was a 33-year-old Zulu, black male cleaner with a tenure of 11 years working for the higher education institution as *"It was in 2010 when I started with Supercare here."* Themba noted he had been with the institution *"Since from Supercare, Ikhweza, and the university [under insourcing], I started from 2016 here in the university."* In terms of his living arrangements, *"I am staying alone with my grandparents"* and *"I do not have any relationship."* Regarding his place of residence, Themba noted, *"...I am living in Soweto."* His highest level of education

was, *"I have my matric."* His job description included, *"I am cleaning some bathrooms."*

Themba spoke in an assertive manner throughout the interview, particularly of what the female cleaners say they 'cannot do', *"Because females – one thing about females is growing so fast. When she is getting older, she cannot carry some hard things. But we do. Like carpets, they can clean the offices, but they cannot clean the carpet, they cannot put the polish on the floors, they cannot hold the machine."* According to Themba, female cleaners were assigned *"the lighter work"* as hard labour *"would be heavy for them."* Themba was assured that by law, hard labour was mainly assigned to male cleaners as *"females never carry some hard things. That is why they call us male workers. We must do that job. They will never carry some polish, all the things, the chemicals, all these things. When there is delivery. When the stock comes in, they will never come - the ladies. It's the law."*

Themba was strongly convinced that there is a difference in the work done by male cleaners versus that of female cleaners, "*Ya, there's a difference, because females, they do not take some stock, some toilet papers from the West Campus. It's us males. They are not holding the machine; they are not cleaning the carpet. It's us. They are calling us."* In other words, the work assigned to male and female cleaners was uneven as the men *"[were] doing the manpower."* This increased workload was further compounded in that, in his building, *"It's me alone."* Themba concluded that, *"Ya, we want more men."*

Besides his discontentment about the ratio of male-to-female staff, Themba was also not happy about the condescending attitudes from students and staff, indicating, *"Some people, they are cursing us about cleaning."* To this he added, *"If you see him here in Wits, even when I am seeing him in the township, he will argue about...he will talk about the things that you do at work. He will tell his friends, "This one is a cleaner." But I am cleaning his office; I am even cleaning his toilets."* But for Themba, he saw his job as an opportunity to provide for himself and his family's livelihood: *"Me, I appreciate it because it's the job, it's the duty that I have now [rather than] to stay in the township, on the corners."*

While *"some people - they are hiding that thing (job title)",* for Themba, *"They know, my family. My mother was a supervisor here. She left with Supercare when the contract was leaving."* His job allowed him to perform an important aspect of providing, *"They are okay [after disclosing that he is a cleaner], because I am providing them with the food."* Even to the women he would be dating, Themba added, *"...they'll never have a problem. Even I will tell them, they will never have a problem because I'll tell them one thing surely: when I am going to the bank, the bank would never give me the water and the mop. They will give me the money, the cash. The cash is not like the cleaning."*

Participant 6: Sechaba

Sechaba was a 33-year-old Venda, black male cleaner working for the higher education institution for 9 years. He described himself as a caring individual who always wished to become a paramedic: *"When I grew up, not that I am a proud person, but I am a compassionate person. When I grew up, I wanted to be a paramedic – the ambulances."* His demeanour during the interview was the most calm and unguarded of all the other men. Sechaba lived with his partner of 7 years, together with their 3 children under age 12, including 2 boys and 1 girl.

With no parents, his grandmother hoped he would get a job within the security industry: *"My situation at home was not good. When I passed matric, I didn't pass well. I do not have parents actually. So, when I passed, I couldn't study further. I was raised by my grandmother. My grandmother said the only money she could help me with is for getting a security guard qualification. I worked as a security guard. In her opinion, this was supposed to be my first step, and then I can find myself going forward."*

Sechaba stated entered cleaning because he could not get a job as a security guard: *"I passed my qualification as a security guard. After that I went to Eastern Cape where I worked in construction. When I came back, I couldn't get a job in security. I looked for a job for almost a year, but I didn't find a job in security. I then got a job in a cleaning company, Supercare. They then brought me here."*

Sechaba described a typical day of work as having limited time to complete all his work tasks: *"I start working at 06:00 on daily basis, and I knock off at 14:30. When I come in, I start with the toilets. From 2nd floor, 3rd floor, and 4th floor. After that, I go to the lecture theatre. There is a lecture theatre in the basement. They have to be*

clean very early in the morning. After that, I would then go elsewhere – I run against time because all the places need to be ready. The library opens at 08:00. I would then go to the third floor and hoover it. Even though I do not finish, because I am running against time, I hoover, and I clean the tables. After that, when they come in at 08:00, I then mop the stairs from 4th floor to ground-floor. And then when they come in, I go and clean the offices. I can only work in the offices when the staff members are present. We are not allowed to hoover when learners are present."

Sechaba was shocked that he would be hired as a male cleaner: *"Okay, when I grew up, I knew that the cleaning work is for women. I was shocked when I went job searching at Supercare. They had a workshop outside – they are the ones who brought me here. I did not come straight here looking for work. So, I was shocked when they said you are going to clean. Ha! How? So, when we grew up, we knew that the cleaning work is for women."*

According to his upbringing, men were not expected to carry a mop or broom: *"I am Venda. When I grew up, they'd say you boys must herd cattle, round up goats, work in the fields. The girls must clean and cook. The boys must find the food ready when they come back from herding cattle. Girls must cook, clean and fetch wood – the dishes must be clean. That is how I grew up. We never knew that a man can use a mop or sweep. Sometimes they decorate floors with cow-dung – it was done by women. Even right now, it is done by women."*

Sechaba nonetheless acknowledged how times have changed in terms of changing gender roles, especially in the workplace: *"So I was shocked that a man has to clean. How come? Okay! Times are no longer the same. Why do I say that? We grew up women not skilled in building, but right now they are doing construction work. We grew up women, for instance, not allowed to drive trucks, busses. As I leave right now, I'll find a ReaVaya bus driven by a woman…as well as Metrobus. We grew up knowing that men are the ones working underground in the mines. But these days, women work in the mines, women drive trucks, women do construction work."*

Yet according to Sechaba, despite a working contract stipulating equal work, male cleaners were made to do more than their female cleaners: *"The contract says we need to do the same job. But when we get to the buildings we work in, it changes. They say it's heavy and so on. So, you now have to step in, and operate the machine. When*

stock comes, I've never seen a woman go to offload stock. The supervisors always call us men to offload stock. But the contract says we do 50/50."

Participant 7: Zweli

At the time of his interview, Zweli was a 39-year-old, Zulu black male cleaner working for the higher education institution for 9 years. His job as a cleaner started was under the outsourcing period, *"I can say I started to work for Wits in 2012 when we used to work under contract. Ey brah, it was painful."*

Through my engagement with Zweli, I quickly noticed that he was a proud family man, *"I'm from eMondle. I'm from the rurals. I have a big family. We visit all the time with my wife and children. I grew up with my father actually. He always wanted sons. He was a farmer. But when he died, I had to take care of the family. I left for the city. I couldn't find work there. I moved this side. You know, jobs are not available in the rurals. I went to find work. I did not mind whatever work. Just needed money for my brothers and sisters. I worked as a mechanic until I found other jobs."* Zweli spoke fondly about supporting his wife and children, *"When I started working, I knew that I needed to take care of my girlfriend. She is my wife now. I paid lobola. I have a boy and a girl. We started dating when I was in secondary school. She allowed me to walk her to school and I realised that if I don't approach her, she will be taken by the guys in my hood."*

I asked Zweli about his ordinary day to which he stated, *"You arrive here at 06h30. You drink tea or coffee. We start as early as 07h00. Clients need to get here before you. You have to make sure you are on time. You know your cleaning spots. Me, I clean the toilets, empty bins, put tissues in the toilets, mop."* I asked him whether there was a distinguish in workloads between him and his female colleagues: *"Ah, the females, they'll do the dishes. They'll make the tea for the lecturers. They cannot move the cleaning machines. They tell us we must do the window offices."* From talking to the other men, I wanted to confirm if he also knows why men are not allowed to clean private staff offices, *"We cannot clean the office. Offices will be done by females. They don't want us there. I'm not sure why we cannot work there. The women say they clean the offices. But I know sometimes they think we can steal. Laptops, cell phones, money in the offices. I don't know."*

During his interview, Zweli highlighted a few challenges in navigating his workload: *"The problem is that you need to just drop this and that when they need you - and you cannot say no. Boss, I need to finish this and that, he says you have to go there. You are men, you have to offload stock. Tissues, cleaning containers, everyday something."* I enquired if he had any 'special work' that him and the other men performed, which he indicated, *"We do spring cleaning with other gents during closing time. We clean the window office with stepladder. We use the heavy machine to clean carpet. We strip the old carpet with the cutters. It is me and the other gents. We break old tiles. We use the big bins. The women will sit and pay attention."*

When I asked about the ratio of male-to-female cleaners, Zweli indicated a shortage of men in his building, *"We are 2 men and there is 8 females where I work. … Eish we need at least 2 other brothers."* When I asked why there was a shortage of men, Zweli pointed out, *"Men will not apply. You say, "Gents, come, come, let's apply together", but they will say, "You apply, we will find other jobs." I don't know why some will not apply. I think maybe they are scared. Maybe they are scared of what people will think. You never know. Some might feel that the job is female and their friends will see them."*

In terms of his relationships with students, Zweli shared that he maintained he was more patient: *"With students, you have to be patient with them. They are always in rush and come into the toilet and don't flush. Even when you put a sign, someone wants to just come in and you have to wait for them to finish. You cannot shout at them as you are told that you cannot anger the clients. The client is the student. She pays our salaries. … But I have seen it with students, they do not think because they believe you are their helper. They will frustrate you if you let them. They will play games and you will be the one who is angered if you behave like them."*

When we spoke about his relationships with his female colleagues, Zweli indicated, *"We work together well but you know women…they cannot do anything without asking for help. They'll will say they're fine, but you know that they lie and use you when they know you can't say no. She will say, "You can help me if you want." Next thing she will leave everything to you. They'll make you do something you don't want those people."*

Participant 8: Donald

Donald was a 42-years old Zulu, black male cleaner, working for the higher education institution as a cleaner for 8 years at the time of the interview. He indicated, *"I start work at 11:00"* and knock off *"Just before 19:00."* Looking back on his dreams, he reflected on his aspirations to be a teacher, "*I wanted to become a teacher, and teach the children."* However, because of family circumstances, he could not fulfil his ambitions, *"Actually, when you grow up, you wish to become something, but then it never happens due to the situation at home."* While working under the subcontracting model, Donald bitterly indicated, *"It used to be hard in the beginning when we were still under contract. ... But right now, we no longer talk about contract. It is no longer the same as in the beginning. We were enslaved."*

Listening to Donald, I sensed that he had numerous grievances about his working conditions. In terms of his experiences with students, Donald sharply indicated, *"They (students) do not have respect."* He was adamant that all students behaved this way both *"Male and female students."* For example, *"When you want to wipe off the table he'd (student) would say, "Can't you see I am still eating?!""* Because of this, *"You can't lift the tray and wipe the table. There is no respect."* Donald had also observed these behaviours not only from students but from academic staff as well, *"Some people are inconsiderate, they just undermine your work. especially the students mainly .... The staff as well! ... Because some of the female cleaners complain, they'll tell you the things they come across. They would even leave their sanitary pads lying around."*

His was quick to point out that *"...some of them (students) just want to sit and not leave at night. When we are supposed to close, they would just be sitting there. So, when we leave, you'd find that the tables are dirty, and then we will get complaints. They'd be the ones complaining that we haven't cleaned."* Donald further added that certain students can get you into trouble, indicating that, *"When they find one table unclean, they would complain that the [entire] Dining Hall is never cleaned and so on. But they complain at the office [and not to you]."*

He later clarified, "*It's mainly women, and you can bet on them, because a woman can be in a good mood when she leaves and the next day she'd be in a different mood. You can never be certain about them."* As for his female co-workers, *"They are also like that. As I tell you, they are all like that, they have on and offs. We are just*

patient with them." In certain instances, their female colleagues would want to ascertain that men should not be working as cleaners, stating statements such as, "*As a man, you should be working in the street."*

According to Donald, these distinctions were valid as they speak to an established sexual division of labour, *"...we can say cleaning work is for women. There's other women job that needs men."* According to Donald, men should take up masculine work, *"For instance, we [men] are being made to carry chemicals…. Yes, the heavy chemicals. So, we move them from one place to another. ... No, they [females] don't carry chemicals. Women do not carry chemicals. We are the ones who handle them. We move chemicals because they can't move them as women."*

To this he added, *"I do not think it's right for me to clean the toilet. There are people who [are supposed] to clean the toilet."* When asked what he referred to as 'women's work', Donald indicated that 'women's work' included roles "*Such as cleaning their toilets, as well as washing dishes. Washing dishes is meant for women. … Males can never clean offices. But you would be called to clean the blinds and so on."* His reasons were that *"It's because I do not like to do it (cleaning toilets)."*

Donald also emphasised the uneven work at equal pay between male and female cleaners, indicating that, *"[It is not] 50/50 in a sense that as we get the same pay, we should do the same type of work. Theirs (females) is lighter. ... It is lighter. Ours is heavier. We are made to carry things we are not supposed to carry. And we get affected in the long run."* In fact, *"Men have a lot of work – the women complain always."* This was seen as a form of exploitation of men in that, *"we get paid the same"* while *"the money is little."*

He later contradicted himself by saying *"There is no work labelled women's work for a man, you must take up any work. There are some tasks that have to be done by women though."* And that, *"We can never say cleaning is for certain people. This job is just the same as you cleaning your own place. You can never say you won't clean at home, and that a woman must do the cleaning. It's just the same as cleaning at home."* These responses were revealed when I asked him whether he cleaned at home, *"Yes, I do the washing. I do everything. I's not meant for certain people."*

Participant 9: Fezile

At the time of his interview, Fezile was a 43-years old Zulu, black male cleaner, working for the higher education institution as a cleaner for 7 years. He indicated that, *"I stared in 2014, in March, on the 17th."* He resided in the East Rand, more specifically, *"…in Tembisa,"* but born in another province, *"I am from Natal, we then moved to Ermelo."* He explained that his job description has been changing but general in nature: *"At the moment, I cannot say I have a specific area I work in. Because sometimes you get moved to another place without any reason known to yourself. When I got here at the campus, I used to sweep outside the buildings. … I was just sweeping outside the buildings, next to the entrances and so on. I was then moved; I don't know why they changed me. … When you get used to a spot, and you build up a routine, then you get changed, and you have to get used to a new place."* But overall, Fezile indicated that his job description consisted of the following tasks: *"I clean the toilets upstairs. And there is also a class. … One lecture hall, and I also clean a passage. I wipe the steel rails and empty the dustbins. And there is another toilet at the offices which I clean."*

I asked him about the male-to-female cleaner ratio, which he told me, *"I think we are 8 [males]. … I think [female cleaners], they are around 30",* and *"They (female cleaners) are many yes."* When I asked Fezile why he has never raised the shortage of men with his supervisor, he indicated, *"You know my brother, they can also see that, but you'll never know [why are they not doing anything about it]. It is not easy for me to say, "Hey we are few, what are you doing about it?" It is not easy. They must see it themselves."*

When I asked Fezile if he or the other men were allowed to clean female toilets, Fezile responded, *"No, we do not clean female toilets".* But he distinguished what male cleaners do at the institution stating, *"We are the ones who empty the dustbins, they (female cleaners) do not do it. They just empty the into the bin and I take it out to a [refuse collection point]. The men clean carpets, sweep the surroundings outside. We clean the windows [in multiple-story buildings]."* As for the female cleaners, *"They clean the offices. They also work inside, some of them clean the toilets. Some scrub he floors, and so on."* When I asked him why men are not allowed to clean offices, Fezile responded, *"There are ever so many things. In my opinion, it could be because the task*

is not suitable for males, or they are not trustworthy. Maybe the females are more trustworthy than males."

Fezile noted that he experienced arrest based on false accusation by a student. *"Then, there was the issue of the classes. As you've asked me about the issue of the students. There are times whereas human beings we look down on each other. And when you are at a level higher than the next person, you undermine them. I was cleaning a class and we were supposed to have finished cleaning classes at a certain time so that lessons can start. I arrived in the morning and cleaned the class. I was running out of time, so I decided to leave the back of the class because I had finished cleaning the front part. I just picked litter up, and I didn't sweep. Just asked me what happened? I went to another place to clean. The following day, I arrived and cleaned. At around twelve, <mentions line manager's name>, the manager came. I was cleaning the windows. She told me that I am wanted. "They want me?" "Yes!" "Who wants me?" "Just drop what you are doing, you are wanted." She took me to the office. I just followed her. I didn't know what was happening. We got to the offices, and it was the first time I entered there. They were viewing camera footage where I was sweeping. That person asked me, "Is this you?" and I said, "Yes." I then asked myself what was happening. The footage got to a point where I packed my stuff and left. He then asked me why didn't I get to the back. I said I was running out of time as I saw students standing at the door. I needed to leave. He then said I am lying, there was money that got lost. R1500.00. It was in a wallet, I am the one who took it. I cried like a child my brother! "How did I take that money?" He said, "As you were collecting litter, you swept it onto the dustpan." She was aggressive as she was talking to me. So that thing happened the previous day – at that time you have your wallet with R1500.00. You go home and you come back the next day. You are not even aware that you lost a wallet? And there are students and security guards who frequent this place. She didn't want to hear my side of the story. That is what happened. I never took any money. Why didn't the person not complain the previous day?"*

On the day of his arrest, Fezile was disheartened that he did not receive support from his immediate supervisor, *"So, it was a supervisor from elsewhere and the manager – they are the ones who summoned me to admin. But my immediate supervisor did not know what was happening. He only heard after I was arrested. So, I was locked up. At the police station, the police asked me what was I doing there? I explained what*

happened. They said there is no such thing. Is there evidence? I said I don't know! I was awake the whole night."

According to Fezile, all these events left an unfavourable impression of his work and the students: *"Yes. I was crying. It was sad. Even today when I pass that classroom, I get flashbacks. I ended up disliking everyone around me. .... I do not even trust the manager and the supervisor. … Everyone! Because I was thinking about how I got treated. I was always searched. What did I do? What did I steal? I did not trust these people anymore. Even right now, when I get called, I always ask myself, why are they calling me? That thing comes back. ... Because I realized that we are not safe. And there were lots of things I learnt that many people end up in jail for things they didn't do. Sometimes, people look down on you. And the other thing is that I am a quiet person. I always want people to be happy. So, I do not know if they took me for a fool or what - I don't know. Even today, that thing still comes back. ... That's how my journey has been. There were other things that disturbed me as well. It was just a lot of things. It felt like I lost my worth as a human being."*

After all these incidents, *"It was difficult, because after being released I had to go back there. I recalled everything: that I was always searched, someone died in my toilets, I am now being arrested. That was the time when they moved me from that side."* Fezile indicated that they moved him because, *"They realized that I was affected psychologically."* I asked if they offered him counselling after this incident, which he responded, *"I never received any counselling, and even today, that thing still bothers me here. I do not trust the supervisor and the manager."* He spoke about being re-traumatized by the police following further investigation about the dead male body, *"So, I came here, and the investigators kept on coming to ask questions. So that took me back again, and I asked myself what was happening. Because in the last instance, they came with a photo. They asked me if I knew the person, and I said I didn't."*

He mentioned that working under the precarious conditions of outsourcing, he was silenced from speaking out, *"The rule was that you can never have an opinion, when you are instructed to do something, you have to do it, you don't question anything. If you question things, you are seen as unruly. You then have to go and stay home. That is how we were oppressed."* He expressed a loss of hope and job satisfaction, *"I experienced hardships, so much that it was hard to wake up in the morning. I would*

just get angry waking up in the morning. It's not nice waking up and going to work with a heavy heart. The manager is treating you badly, you trust no one at work."

This was because of injustices he experienced, such as being prematurely accused of not doing his job, *"But when there is a mistake, they blame me. There was an instance where I was scolded for an unclean place. I applied for one day leave because I needed to go home. So, when I came back on a Monday, they came fuming at me. The manager - he came at me fuming. "What is it Sir?" "How come you left without cleaning?" ... "No, but I am not the one cleaning there." He said, "You are the one who cleans there. And you left without cleaning! Why?" "No, I am not the one cleaning there." So, I was always scared if I needed to go, because I didn't know what would happen when I am away. It's very hard."*

Participant 10: Victor

Victor was a 45-years old Xhosa, black male cleaner, working for the higher education institution as a cleaner for 6 years "*since 2015."* He recalls his first employment at the higher academic institution, *"The company, Wits service. Ya, Wits' service. I just go there and give them my CV, they call me, they interviewed me, and I pass interview, I start to work."* He opened up about his general job description, *"I am cleaning basement, some offices, sometimes I help to remover. It's like general worker. I am like a general worker. When they ask me to do something, and then I do that. If they ask me to remove some chairs, tables, I remove. If they ask me to clean floor, some walls, yes I clean."* When asked to comment on his relationships with students and academic staff, Victor acknowledged, *"It's good, very good. Nothing wrong. My students, they like me, I like them. Greetings and smile. They give me smile and greetings. My staff. … It's like my friends, ya. ... Like family."*

One of the interview questions I asked Victor was how he felt being a male cleaner, *"Ya. It's not nice to be a cleaner. It's because there are no other jobs. There are no other jobs. There's no jobs, so that is why I came here to be a cleaner - because of the lack of jobs."* But as I interrogated him further about his job, Victor became emotional, indicating that, *"I feel bad, it's not nice, I am not feeling nice, I am not feeling very well."* Victor felt mocked by other men working around the higher academic institution, *"Because when they see you, maybe you are sweeping the floor, or maybe you walk around with a bucket of water, they took you somehow. Maybe they see you like you are not normal."* Victor indicated that he coped with these negative

experiences by focusing on the reasons why he comes to work: *"It was affecting me before. But now, I just do my job and leave many things. ... I focus on my job, and I leave many things. Because I know how to put bread on the table. So, laughing at me or taking me somehow can't put bread on the table."*

In terms of the male-to-female ratio, Victor stated that, *"Yes, [there is] too [much] men than women."* When I asked him why, Victor responded, *"Because it is East and West [Campus]"* and because of *"Manpower, because, you see Wits is big. So that is why they are looking for too many men than women."* Victor was convinced of the demand of men, *"Sometimes, you see, the women can't remove some tables and chairs, they only know how to sweep and how to mop. ... So that is why they like men for manpower."*

When I asked Victor whether he liked his job, Victor responded that, *"I enjoy my job."* However, a few questions later, he contradicted himself by saying, *"…it is not good to be a cleaner when you are a man."* Instead, Victor felt that *"They (management) were supposed to take some women to be cleaners, men, security. Just like that."* Again, Victor, was not consistent in his statement as he himself stated he willingly offers to clean at home – perhaps given the home is a close, private space, *"I clean my house. ... I used to tell my wife to sit down and watch me cleaning. … Remove some beds, cleaning floor, the windows."*

When I asked him if his wife and 3 children knew about his job as a cleaner, Victor admitted, *"Yes. They used to come here and watch me when I am busy working. They used to visit."* In fact, Victor reassured me that his family was proud of him indicating, "*They feel happy. They just feel happy because end of the month they get money for grocery."* Regarding his future goals, Victor saw a future at the higher academic institution by claiming, *"To be a supervisor, to me it's part of my dreams."* His reasoning behind becoming a supervisor was mainly to earn more money as well as higher job status, *"I like to be a supervisor, because when you be a supervisor, even the money will go up",* while adding *"Ya, it will be more than to cleaner."* He considered other alternatives that the higher academic institution can take to upscale their cleaners stating, *"They can try to teach us another jobs inside the campus."* For example, *"Maybe to take us to be security guard. A man from cleaner to be a security. Maybe it's something better than to be a cleaner for a long time."*

Participant 11: Johannes

From his interview, Johannes was a 48-years old Pedi, black male cleaner working for the higher education institution *"As a cleaner, under university, I'm 5 years now."* He started working for the institution under the outsourcing period indicating that, *"As a cleaner, I started as a cleaner from Supercare."* He spoke in a reserved manner initially responding enough to answer a question. But later he opened up to me indicating that, *"…I am living somewhere – the place they call it Coronation. …it's a squatter camp. That is where I live. And I use a bus [to come to work]. From Helen Joseph, I walk from my place at the squatter camp, to Helen Joseph, I take a bus."* Johannes saw himself as a doing anything to support his family, *"I never saw myself seating down actually. I was trying all my best to see how I can feed my family."* Johannes explained that he had years of experience working in the manufacturing industry, *"I was doing – doing fitting for equipment. … You see those machine for the baby who come before their time",* which is called an *"Incubator"* He added, *"We were modifying those machines."*

I wanted to find out how he ended up cleaning and his educational background. Johannes explained, *"I dropped out in Standard 5 (Grade 7). I did pass Standard 5, I didn't go to Standard 6 (Grade 8). That's where I dropped [out] because my uncle he was not working anymore, he was old and he said to me, "You can see that now I am coming to stay at home [due to retirement], I don't know what's going to happen." I said, "Let me start. I don't know where to start but let me start." That's where I started to look for a job now. Going here and going there. … Since I am from those other jobs that I did before, I feel much better because at least I've got something benefitting that I get in life. At least my family they can have something even if I can pass away. Better than those other jobs that I was doing. It was just a salary, but nothing else. So, if you can see, it is different from that. So, I must say I am enjoying because according to my standard and my education, I think this is [the] only [job I could get]."*

I was interested whether gender played a role in his preference for job occupation, *"I must say the incubator, that is a man's job."* His reasons for this was that, *"Because I was just modifying there, I was working with a spanner. And then the oil, and then we were using the compressor to test those modifying bottles. So that they can be ready there, so that I can tell my boss, this and this are ready; these are not good enough. Because if the compressor, if you press – it's blowing them, there is a*

small ball inside - it must blow that ball to come on top there. If it doesn't come there, then it means something is not good with it. You put it aside."

I wanted to clarity whether he considered cleaning as 'women's work', to which he responded, *"We end up seeing our mothers – our [parents] doing the cleaning. And once they tell us, "I am having a mop, I am the woman who should do mopping." So, we end up growing with that, knowing that cleaning is a thing that a woman can do, but not a man. Because of the situation now, I end up knowing I have nothing to do, but I have to do what a woman do now, because of the poverty."* He was clear that doing 'women's work' did not sit well with him, *"But we, as men we feel like it (doing 'women's work') takes your dignity as a man, even if you don't have a choice to change it. But you feel like it takes your dignity away as a man. But just because of the law of University, you can't change it, you will have to follow it, and do it."*

I asked Johannes if he felt the work was distributed evenly between him and his colleagues. He explained, *"As a man, I am trying all my best to take things easier even if some of my colleagues they don't see them accordingly. Because here and there, they feel like, now and then we have to go and pick up the chemical from West Campus. Now and then, we have to pick up the toilet paper from West Campus. What are the women do[ing]?"* I asked Johannes if he thought the work was distributed fairly, to which he indicated, *"It's a bit hard because when it comes somewhere, the university – it says, there is no such a thing that says this is only for the man. There is no such a thing that says this is only for the women. You do the same job - all of you. But when it comes to our supervisor and our manager, we say, "Ag shame, she is a woman, she can't pick up a 20 litre of liquid soap. Shame!" She is a woman, she can't pick up the machine that you can do as a woman.""*

I asked Johannes how the other men felt about this, which he responded, *"Like I am saying, if those other men they could be the same like I, they could understand how I understand. Because a woman I feel like she is a woman. You know from your wife she can't pick up heavy things. But why do you want them here at work to pick up the heavy things? But now most of them they say, "There is woman who's working with the pick and shovel by the mines. Why they can't do [it too]? There is a woman who is driving the buses, there is woman who is driving the train. There is a woman who is working on the road constructions.""*

On the other hand, Johannes told me was happy with his relationships with students, *"...so far, I think I am the best. I don't know if somebody else here can say no. But up until this stage, where I am standing, I think I am communicating very good with the students, the clients. I don't talk very roughly with [them]."* But Johannes was concerned that some students could be racist, *"So some of them, it's because of racism sometimes. ...because we, the blacks, we can understand very fast when a person says [I am cleaning, can you please go and use another one]."* Much like the other men in this study, Johannes found it disrespectful when somebody passes an area he has been working on but it is still wet, *"...they don't even worry about the sign that you put there - they just go. But it is not most of us African people] who are doing that. I must say, it is some of our senior, our white people, who are doing that. He can even see that this is really racism. He can even tell you that I can't go so far, whereas the toilet is here. He just uses it. ... So that is how they are – some of them, the whites. That's how they are treating us sometimes. And you end up feeling unnoticed."*

For Johannes, having to wait and listen to somebody while they relieved themselves was disturbing as, *"...for somebody who is coming to the toilet while I am busy, and say, "I am pressed and I wanna [sit in the toilet now]." You have to drop everything and go and stand by the door. Because you wait for the person. That person, he is the one, he is the person who is falling into the people who are taking away your dignity. He doesn't feel like you are a person enough, you need to listen to what he says."* Johannes was one of the few male cleaners who stated he is sometimes instructed to clean female toilets, *"Sometimes, if our supervisor, they don't have enough temps – they are sending you to go and do female bathrooms. Because they say, "It's instructions that they get from the University that says no one is better than the other. I can do the female; you can do the male. So, there is nothing different." They are following the instruction that they get from the University."*

The pressure to clean female-only toilets as a male figure was particularly troubling to him since, *"That is the only thing that you think once you enter a female toilet, what if I saw something like this (bloody pad) laying around? What am I gonna do? That is the thing that comes to your mind."* Johannes also was troubled by the case of female students using male-only bathrooms without checking with him first, *"It did*

happen several times to me. And I said, but – okay, sometimes she is walking out. I say, "But this is a male bathroom." She says, "Oh, sorry! But I was pressed." But she is going already. Even if I can say no, but she is done, she is going." This encounter with female students resulted in him engaging in self-depreciating thoughts, leading him to question his own self-worth, *"That is how you are going to [feel]. Sometimes you feel like, "Wow! For being [a] cleaner! Sometimes, it breaks you spirits. So sometimes I keep on asking myself, "Why did I become a cleaner?" Then my answer is, "Okay, but I am not educated. That's why I have to [be here]."*

Participant 12: Kgosi

At the time of his interview, Kgosi was a 32-year-old Tswana, black male cleaner. He had been working for the higher education institution as a cleaner for 3 years now. His living situation consisted of, *"I have a wife and a child"* and *"I am not married."* His educational background was that he dropped out of school in *"Grade 10."* His daily tasks consisted of *"I empty the dustbins. That is the first thing. After that, I clean the stoep outside. After that you check the balconies, whether they are clean or not. If they are dirty, then I clean them. I clean balconies at <Res 1>, <Res 2>, <Res 3>."* His problem so far whilst working for the institution was that *"…there are fewer [men working here]. It is mostly women."* The reasons for this were that *"There are lots of offices. So, they do not allow men to work in offices. That is why there are more women."* However, this became a problem *"Because even if a lady can be away for two days, those offices would not be cleaned for two days. I am not allowed to enter the offices."* I asked him why men were not allowed to clean offices, to which he responded, *"I do not care. Maybe they think we'd do wrong things or steal, or whatever."* But *"With women they don't care, she would just clean the office and then go and sit outside. She doesn't care."*

Talking to Kgosi about being distrusted to clean offices, I sensed that this made him a bit agitated. But what was interesting was how he approached a situation where he would have to clean such offices, *"It is better if you go in when there is someone inside. When there is no one, you feel uneasy entering an office - that I have to go into that office. When you look around you find that there is a R100.00 note placed openly. When I see it, I would get scared and wonder why would that person leave money like that. I would then leave quickly. When I leave, I have to go and find that person as to*

what does he have to say because he left money openly. Because he would then say that person took my money, I left so much money."

In his mind, Kgosi believed, "*…they check us a lot. And I think if I could stand at the door and say, "I'd like to clean the office", the person would say, "Just wait two minutes, I will call you just now." I don't know what is she doing that whole time. She does not come out quickly. Maybe she is busy checking her things – and thereafter she would say it's okay. But then after that you'd see that this person is uneasy, she keeps on checking her things. But you would never steal anything as a worker. You are here to work, not to steal."*

Throughout our conversation, I picked up, like the other men I talked to before, that Kgosi was also fed up about his heavy workload: *"What worries me is that my areas are always dirty. If an inspector could come, they'd find that the areas of the person I stood in for are clean, whilst mine are dirty. They'd say I am not cleaning."* What also became apparent was that his relationship with his direct supervisor was not cooperative as he insisted, *"My supervisor would not defend me and say I instructed him to work elsewhere. That is what discourages me. And you might think I have less work, but it is a lot. I work in five residences alone."* When he questioned his supervisor about his load work, his supervisor's response was that he is a man and must do the work, *"They say it's men's work, that is why they do not want women there."*

But what is 'men's work' seemed to be more than 'women's work' as *"There is a lot of work for men. Even when they want you to go get stock, they would come and take me. I'd be doing my work and they would take me and say we must go get the stock. I think they need to have their own people who'd be specifically hired to deal with the stock. They would take stock everywhere it is needed."* But the ratio of men was fewer than that of women, *"If they want us to be equal, men must be the same as women. There are more women. I can tell you about this building. There are 11 women, and we are only two men. Just in this building alone."*

According to Kgosi, this situation created conditions for the exploitation of men *"Because there are more women, a problem is when we fetch stock, a truck unloads, and we have to take the stock to the store-room. It's just me and that guy I was talking about. When we finish taking the stock upstairs, then the ladies want the stock. They do*

not help us to pack the stock in the lift, so we can take it upstairs. We are the only ones who pack the stock. And then we also have to fetch it from the storeroom."

I asked Kgosi if he cleans at home, which he indicated he does not since *"...she is not working, she has time. When I knock off at 16:00, and I get home 17:30. If the house is not cleaned, I would just keep quiet, I do not ask anything. Because she knows why she didn't clean. And she knows that as she stays behind at home, when I get home, everything should be fine. ... That is the rule, she knows. There is nothing else she does that keeps her busy. She has to keep busy by cleaning. The cleaning at home is not the same as the one I do here. She can clean the whole place for 2 hours or 30 minutes."*

However, he expressed his willingness to help in case his partner became sick, *"Yes, if she is ill, I would help because it is not her own doing that she is ill. She would be sick, so I'd have to help here and there."* Despite being the vocal of all the participants, he was the most inconsistent in terms of gender stereotyping. For example, when I asked how he felt about using a mop, he responded, *"When I use a mop, I do not care who is supposed to use it. There is no school to learn mopping. You just tell yourself that I need to handle it this way. Just like women do."*

Participant 13: Kabelo

Kabelo was a 34-year-old Pedi, black male cleaner working for the higher education institution for 3 years. He started working at *"Wits during the beginning of 2018".* We talked about his educational background, *"I didn't like school, so I told them I am going to get money. I started working young. I left that time when it was Standard 5 (Grade 9)."* His daily routine consisted of, *"Every day, I wake up early to get here before the students. We can drink our morning tea. But we start working from 06h30 with the toilets. They tell you to make sure that their place is perfect. Staff and students cannot complain about your work. They are the clients; we must take them like our clients."* His work history included working in factory work, *"I used to work for a factory with tyres. We made tyres. We distribute and supply. The job was actually nice. The boss was an old white man. But times were tough, we lost jobs."* After losing his job in the factory industry, *"I needed a job that time. I was let go by the factory in my city home. I needed money. You cannot live without money in this world. You need to put food on the table. Cleaning, garbage collecting, picking up rubbish, that's money."*

Kabelo talked a lot about his mother who continued to play a significant role of support him after he lost his job: *"My mom wanted me to work with her at home. She bakes. I did not like being in the kitchen. Imagine spending the entire day cooking those things. It's fine, for women. My girlfriend, 2 children are this side. We sat and we said we will both find jobs. I have a friend who works here. He told me they are looking for people. They needed 1 guy in this building, and one on the other side. I applied. They called me, and I signed the contract."*

Kabelo and I talked about the ratio of male-to-female cleaners within his building. *"We are 2 [men] here. The women are 10. We need more guys. …manpower, especially for the December time."* Part of the reason for the demand of men came from some of the heavy work they were called to do, stating *"We deep-clean, we move out the desks to the lecture halls. The old laddies cannot move these heavy desks. They cannot stand that long. They complain about this and that sometimes. They would faint if they did our work. They are not going to manage. We paint when the supervisor wants us to. We work as a team. We have to scrub."*

I explored his relationships with the female workers, to which he responded, *"We work well with the mamas (older women). They are just like our mothers. We help them when they get too tired. They cannot lift the big stuff. They will not move desks. We come in and we have to assist. They move chairs…ah they'll refuse to move the desks. They'll call you when you pass and ask you, "Can you come back to move the desks for me." You feel sorry when she will ask, she cannot do it by herself. So, you help her, she is just an old lady."* In my probing about his working environment, I could sense that he felt that their work was not evenly distributed, *"I notice that women want us men to do everything. They'll tell you, "My son, you are the man, come help me move the tables and chairs so I can mop." But you will not see them when you need their help. Maybe they think we're young and have too much strength. But we work a lot and need to work together - 50/50."*

Like the other men, Kabelo was also told to not clean in private offices, *"When I came here, my friend said you will not clean in the office. Only women clean there. You will be said you steal if they find you there. We work with the lecture halls and the toilets. I am not sure myself if they suspect us where we are. I don't know, I do my job."* In terms of his working relationships with students and academic staff, Kabelo

indicated that the students tended to be not sympathetic to cleaners, *"The staff in the office is not bad. The students are another thing. They will insist to go in when you clean. You have to stand and watch. I don't care sometimes. I'm here to work. I can't complain. I am working this job. Me, I get my salary."* In dealing with uncooperative students, Kabelo indicated that he instead chooses to ignore them and not allow the situation to change him, *"You will think about what somebody says and does to you but the hurt, it will break you. You need to move on. Money is the focus."*

Participant 14: Xoli

Xoli was a 37-year-old Xhosa, black male cleaner working for the higher education institution in 2018, *"I came here 3 years ago".* Xoli grew up in poverty and always wanted to leave his place of origin to find better opportunities in more a cosmopolitan city, *"I am from Eastern Cape. I lived in Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape my whole life. I never really liked the place because it was just dry. I wanted to work this side. They'd said we should come this side. There's jobs this side. There is so much poverty that side. The people need jobs. You will struggle to find work because we dropped out in Standard 9 (Grade 11). So, I have 3 children now, I have to be a man, I need to support them."*

His day started early due to living far away from work: *"I wake up at 04h30. I have to take a bus to work. The bus gets me to the taxi rank. I live a far from the campus. And sometimes, they (public transport) strike. You can't be late. You will stress. You need to be early. I get here at 06h30. I will not take tea sometimes. I get straight to the work. I clean my spots. I do the bathrooms. I clean toilets. I take the bins. I will make sure I leave the toilet clean when I'm done. Then, fast, I clean the lecture halls for the morning classes. You work around time. You need to make sure the customer is working in a clean environment."*

I asked him about his encounters with staff and students over the years, to which he responded, *"There hasn't been much trouble with the students thus far. I, in fact, have been here for 3 years and I have not encountered any problems so far. But the students pay our wages. That's why they (other cleaners) can't complain. When they complain, because they say, "You eat because of him." ... We do get those students mostly who do not flush or leave a toilet without cleaning it. It's actually something you get used to."*

I asked how many other men he worked with, to which he responded, *"There's 2 guys and 13 ladies. There are men needed here. We are in demand. We can do so much with them."* I wanted to confirm if Xoli he also was told to not clean private offices: *"You cannot go in there as a man. They always suspect that you are a black, and you will steal something. You cannot be trusted like the women. We stay away, unless they ask us to move something. We can move them printers and big screens."*

I wanted to know what his friends and family said to Xoli when he disclosed that he was a cleaner. Xoli stated, *"Other men say we are doing women's work. "Why do you feel happy cleaning toilets? You shout at those children every day." They say we earn peanuts for nothing. I remember the other guy in my area. I told him, "I clean at <mentions name of academic institution>", he laughed. He told his friends that I use a mop and toilet brush." It was as if I smelled like shit."*

After talking to the other men, I wanted to find out if Xoli had any similar problems with his female co-workers: *"There are women who choose to help us out. Most of them will not even ask if you need help. We are told we are men, and therefore they cannot carry the desks and heavy equipment like when we use the machines. They say they cannot wash the windows with the ladder. They will tell you, "I'm a woman, you do man things and I will do female things." They are just lazy. They expect us to always do their work. I am sure we are supposed to work together, and we are paid the same, but they will not assist us."*

Like the other when who once cleaned a female-only, Xoli was open in admitting that *"I have cleaned a female toilet. You go in and do your thing. Like at home, you need to respect women's sanitary pads and that stuff. You ask another lady to check in there. The females must not see you first. We have to help when she's not in."*

Participant 15: Prosper

From the time of his interview, Prosper was a 42-years old Zulu, black male cleaner, working for the higher education institution as a cleaner just over a year as he stated, *"I started last year on the first of September, 2019."* Based on his job description, *"On a daily basis, I clean toilets"* and *"I start work at 07h00."* He spoke about spending hours travelling to work, *"I stay far. And by 06h10, already we are here. At 06h15, we drink tea, and then by 07h00, we start working."* This required waking up early to make

sure he arrived at work on time, *“Actually I wake up at 03h45. And then before 05h00, me and my friend take a taxi because I stay in Grasmere.”*

He was detailed in describing his entire job description, which started over a year ago, *“I clean three toilets. I do the mopping, I check, and I clean the balcony as well. I do the sweeping, and then I empty the bins. I then go and check the staircases. I clean them from where we are standing until to the ground floor. And then I check to make sure that everything is okay; I check if there is enough tissue in the toilets. If there isn’t, I then replenish.”* Prosper was also happy to tell me about how staff working in offices were pleased and trusted him to clean their offices, *“Sometimes the Head of the School would say, “Prosper, I need someone to help”, and I’d say, “I am available.” I’d fetch my equipment and then dust her office. She’d thanked me, and then I pack up my equipment and leave.”*

Prosper noted working alongside more females than male cleaners, *“We are two men. It’s me and the other guy. There are about five women.”* His reason for helping were that *“We help because they no longer have the strength to operate the machine.”* Prosper noted those instances where male cleaners had to clean female toilets, *“We do not clean female toilets - unless if there are no women available.”* To this, he responded that he did not mind cleaning female-only toilets, *“With me, from back home, I am used to doing chores.”* He described his upbringing as helping him to be prepared for his current job of working as a cleaner, *“I was actually raised by my father. I only got to know my mother when I was about 35 years. He actually died in 2003. He said, “I do not want you to depend on people, you have to do things on your own. You have hands. So, on weekends, when my wife does laundry, I would clean and do the dishes. The children would help. I would clean, and when I am done, I'd help her with the washing. She’ll rinse, and then I hang them on the line. And when my friends pass, they'll pass remarks and then I’ll say I am helping my wife.”*

Despite his contradicting views towards women, Prosper saw himself as holding egalitarian values when it came to gender roles. This was revealed during a conversation I had with him about how some men had been bewitched to be submissive to women according to African beliefs: *“They say it looks like Prosper’s food has been ‘spiced’.” And I say it’s fine if they’ve spiced my food, but I am not like that. As people, you have to help each other out. It doesn’t have to be like she is unemployed, and you*

are, then she has to bring you food all the time. She irons for you even when you didn't go to work on weekends. You want her to bring you food all the time. You have to tell her that, "Today, I am cooking." And then she'll say, "I'll do something else.""

5.4 OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS

To answer the proposed research questions, the study yielded three broad themes, each with their own sub-themes. Below, Figure 5.1 presents the interrelationships of the three broad study themes.

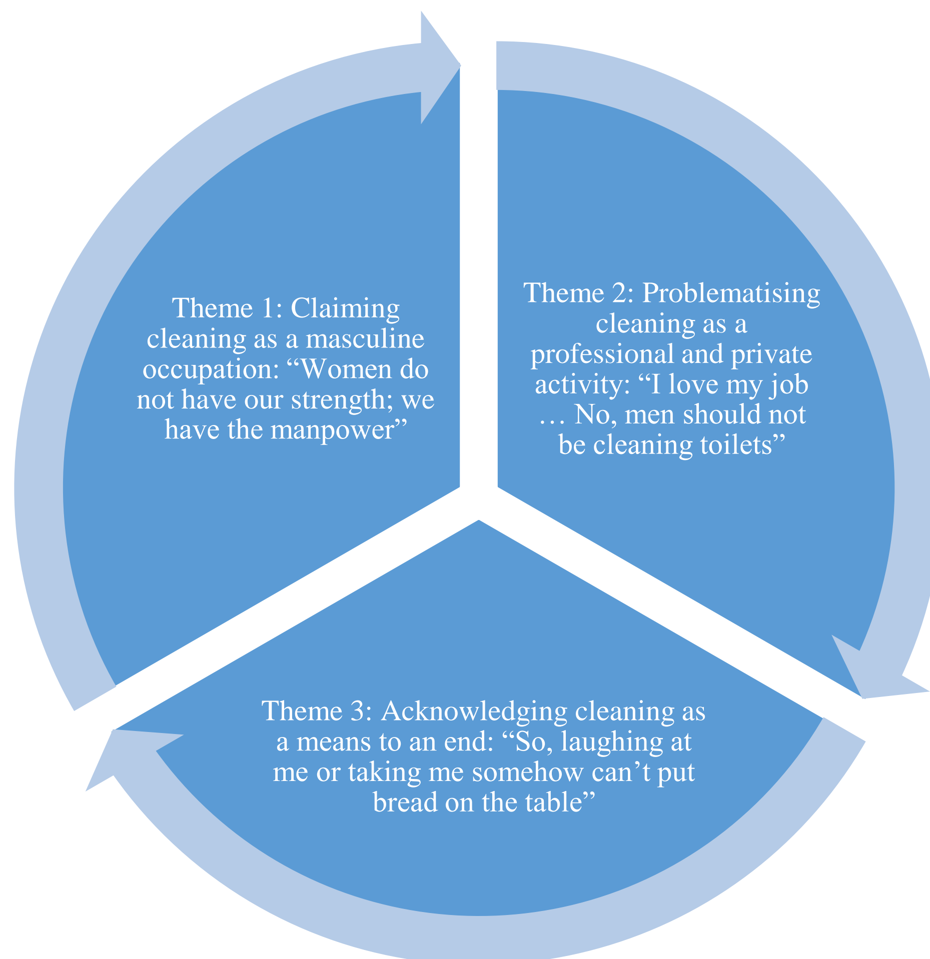


Figure 4.1: Interrelationships of the broad study themes

Figure 5.1 shows how men the men seek to cover their woundedness by their work dynamics by claiming that men are indispensable to the cleaning industry (Theme 1). As the data will show, these men find themselves undermined, exploited, and with no gateway of voicing the injustices they encounter within their work roles, including how they are treated in terms of male-to-female work allocation, how they are not

trusted to clean private offices, as well as the student-to-cleaner hierarchy. But the evidence shows that these men may to some extent enjoy their jobs (Theme 2), although culture and tradition influence how these men experience their work. Nevertheless, the men end up reconciling how in a climate of severe poverty and joblessness, their jobs enable them to provide (Theme 3), which out of this desperation has kept them in this line of work.

5.4.1 THEME 1: CLAIMING CLEANING AS A MASCULINE OCCUPATION: "WOMEN DO NOT HAVE OUR STRENGTH; WE HAVE THE MANPOWER"

Theme 1 explores the lived experiences of men working as cleaners. These include their feelings, thoughts, and experiences of cleaning from a masculine subjectivity. Masculine subjectivity refers to a position that operates entirely from a masculine binary, as seen in men suppressing vulnerable emotion, men displaying physical strength, or the reasons why men want to dominate others in society. Theme 1 locates this subject-positioning from a black male subjectivity. Theme 1 ultimately answers the question of, 'How I see myself versus how others see me?' Below, Table 5.3 shows the emergent sub-themes in Theme 1, including their inclusion criteria:

Theme 1: Claiming cleaning as a masculine occupation	
Sub-themes	**Inclusion criteria**
Sub-theme 1.1: Centering male cleaners in relation to job demands	Data related to the men maintaining that they are in demand in cleaning.
Sub-theme 1.2: Self-representations associated with work related boundaries	Data that is relevant to the men not allowed to clean private offices.
Sub-theme 1.3: Location in hierarchy and issues of respect	Data that is relevant to the men's location in hierarchy and respect as opposed to the students and other university staff.

Table 5.3: Emergent sub-themes in Theme 1, including their inclusion criteria

5.4.1.1 SUB-THEME 1.1: CENTERING BLACK MALE CLEANERS

Sub-theme 1.1 identifies two important aspects about the lived experiences of male cleaners: First, the recognition of their sexual vulnerability by a system that exploits

their labour power to the benefit of the employer, as well as others who take advantage of their 'manpower'. Secondly, as a cover up of these wrongs and unfair practices – a strategy employed by most black working-class men - these men employ various approaches to not only validate their masculinity but also their sense of self-worth by centering themselves in relation to their job demands. To make this clear, I will present these findings and observations according to further sub-headings.

5.4.1.1.1 Unequal ratio of male-to-female cleaners

First, it was observed that the higher academic institution had hired more women than men.

For example, Kgosi stated that *"There are more women. I can tell you about this building: There are 11 women and only two men. Just in this building alone".* This was substantiated by Fezile who indicated that, *"They (female cleaners) are many, yes."* Eddie also added that, *"There are more women. We are just few men.*" Zweli stated that, *"We are 2 men, and there are 8 females where I work. ... Eish, we need at least 2 other brothers."* Kabelo indicated that, *"We are 2 [men] here. The women are 10."* Xoli shared that in his building, *"There's 2 guys and 13 ladies."* Chistopher told me that, *"We work with 8 ladies this side. They are young. They come from this area."* Moses described that in the multi-story building he works at, "*I am alone. One is on top. This guy is down doing the bathrooms. The one who is doing the floors is up on the second floor. There is another one. We're four guys [in 1 building]."* Prosper told me that, *"We are two men. It's me and the other guy. There are about five women."* Musa indicated that, *"In my building, I am the only man."* Sechaba shared that, *"Where I work, we are six general workers. There are two men."* Themba noted that, *"No. It's me alone"* and therefore, *"Ya, we want more men."*

Discussion of unequal ratio of male-to-female cleaners

According to personal communication with a cleaning services operations administrator (2021), it was confirmed that the institution has a total of 726 cleaning staff. From the total of 726 cleaning staff, 559 are said to be female, while 167 were captured as male. That meant that the percentage of female cleaners (77%) was more than double than that of male cleaners (23%). From the literature, it is true that men who perform caring work are said to have been 'hidden from history' (Cross &

Bagilhole, 2006, p. 36) – although this is not a universally shared assumption (Cox, 2006; Sarti, 2016; White & Cones, 2013). The reason for this assumption is natural and proceeds from common sense – female-dominated occupations such as cleaning, social work, and nursing were initially designed with women in mind (Kalemba, 2020; Khunou et al., 2012; Williams, 1993). As Khunou et al.'s (2012) local study point out, as less men (more so black men) enter these professions, no one problematizes why there is a substantial number of women outnumbering men. Over time, Khunou et al. (2012) maintain this bias is naturalised and not questioned. This explains why female cleaners are expected to outnumber male cleaners. Perhaps also the black men who enter these professions lack the needed qualifications as well as face discrimination in terms of race, perceived skills, and hiring (Moss & Tilly, 2001), particularly when it comes to the political and economic strategies designed to keep the black working-class male subgroup at the bottom of society (Curry, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Staples, 1976, 1978, 1982).

5.4.1.1.2 Men who accept and those who decline cleaning opportunities

Next, it became clear that the men entered cleaning for various reasons. What was interesting was that even when cleaning opportunities become available, some men declined these opportunities for reasons imposed unto them by society's expectations, as well as the structural inequalities of the South African landscape.

Eddie, for example, indicated that, *"There are those [men] who'd tell you cleaning is not their kind of work."* But in further talking to Eddie, a married, 60-year-old Sotho male with Grade 8 as his highest level of education, I sensed that his age and growing up in a racialised SA shaped how he thought about employment opportunities given to black South Africans. While Eddie's response might reflect a bias against men doing 'women's work', his context, as the black masculinity scholar Kopano Ratele (2017) suggests, needs to be considered in the broader economic, political, and socio-cultural landscape.

Although Eddie and many of his peers had ambitions of making something of themselves, "*I wanted to be an engineer",* growing up in apartheid SA led him like to enter a lower-class job because of the limited education opportunities offered to blacks, *"We only could go to school up to Standard 6 [Grade 8]",* as well as the pressures put

unto him to support the rest of his family, *"So, then you find that you have to leave school because there is no money."* I could sense Eddie's anger and irritation towards men who decline cleaning opportunities as for Eddie, the apartheid laws pushed black people to make certain choices, *"They'd tell you that I do not do cleaning work, I only do such and such kind of jobs. So, what would you say when a person says that?"*

I mention Eddie's age, level of education, marital status, and ethnicity as these characteristics shape one's performances of race, masculinity, and class (Mfecane, 2016; Mkhize, 2006; Ratele, 2017). In Eddie's case, 'Sotho masculinity' encourages male children to be the heads of households from an earlier age (Mohlaloka et al., 2016; Monyela, 2017; Oxlund, 2012). That is, as much as Eddie might have wanted to become an engineer, given his broader political and socio-economic landscape, his dreams were interrupted to take care of his family as evidenced by his dropping out of school, and finding work to support the rest of his family.

Another older male cleaner, Christopher, a 51-year-old, married, Zulu male holding a Grade 8 as his highest level of education, shared similar sentiments about the structural implications of the apartheid system. For example, Christopher indicated that, *"There was no choice. We don't want to be cleaners."* Like Eddie, I picked some subdued anger from Christopher's response when I asked him about the history of apartheid, *"You [couldn't] get educated where I come from. The [white] government was against us (non-whites)*[9] *getting education. You were lucky to get educated."* I asked Christopher if he ever recruited other men to join the industry, to which he responded:

> We do tell them that they should apply for jobs when they open. I'll say, "Gents, come this side, they have openings." One or two will apply, but not everyone is interested in being a cleaner you see. I think they are afraid of what will other people say.

[9] The term has a fraught history in South Africa, due to its apartheid usage, with its assertion of lack in relation to the term 'white'.

According to the account above, the reasons why some men decline cleaning opportunities is because of social standing (i.e., what others will think). On the other hand, Musa, a 45-year-old, married, Zulu man holding a Grade 8, pointed to age as factor in the decline or take up of cleaning opportunities, *"…it also depends on the age of the person."* In my talking to Musa, I came to understand that age came with various responsibilities, which accumulate as one ages, which further limits one's career mobility. But as I listened attentively to Musa, I also sensed some concealed envy towards the younger generation, especially with the opportunities that they have received following the dismantling of the apartheid system, *"The younger ones would tell you that I do not want a cleaning job."* In fact, Christopher suggested that men evaluated jobs differently as they aged. For example, Christopher pointed out, *"...young people are scared to be seen here. When you get old, you want to feed the family…no one will just give you money."* But because, as Musa proceeded to defend the older generation, *"…the elderly ones, who know what they want, [they] would not mind when you explain the job to them."* These accounts showed that age and being located in apartheid or post-apartheid SA made a difference to taking or declining a position as a male cleaner.

Considering the experiences of other black working-class males elsewhere in the world, such as the US context, this evidence brings us to another consideration. Namely that black working-class men who have fewer educational qualifications end up desperate in taking the fewer jobs available to them, particularly in blue-collar work (Curry, 2017; Gary, 1981; Staples, 1978, 1982). It is possibly this state of precarity which sets them to a limited career track, with fewer opportunities for career mobility based on the prevalent racial discrimination (Moss & Tilly, 2001; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Staples, 1978, 1982). More importantly, it should not be forgotten how economic and political structures such as the past racist South African government (Byrnes, 1996; Clark & Worger, 2013; Moore, 2015), or the US racial inequalities and deliberate economic segregation of black men from job market (Curry, 2017; Gary, 1981; Staples, 1978, 1982). These systematic barriers have been deliberately put in place to advantage and prioritise their white male and female counterparts both in the US and South African context (Byrnes, 1996; Curry, 2017; Moore, 2015). This directly speaks to the older generation of men like Eddie, Christopher, and Musa who endured far more racial

prejudices as evidenced by their subdued anger and envy over the younger generation who are afforded better opportunities than they had.

There were other reasons related to the nature of the job itself for why men declined cleaning opportunities. For example, Prosper, a 42-year-old, unmarried, Zulu man holding a Grade 10, stated that most of the men he approached to apply for cleaning opportunities told him that *"cleaning is for lazy people,"* and *"…it'll make me sleepy."* While initially Prosper acted unbothered by these comments, I sense that he found these views as ignorant and aggravating, *"Because sometimes when you tell people that there is a cleaning post, he'd think I have to use a mop."* To him, cleaning involved more than just carrying a mop or broom. Based on his dismissive remarks, I could tell that Prosper had stopped actively recruiting men into cleaning because the men he had spoken to seem to have held traditional views about the assumptions embedded in what is considered 'women's work', *"How will you get sleepy when using a mop? Why are we not getting sleepy?"* It was clear that Prosper had taken these words to heart because these men suggested that his work dull, boring, and 'puts one to sleep'. I also wondered how this evaluation of his work made him disclose to his family and friends. (I discuss disclosure of one's job to family and friends in 4.4.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: separating cleaning as a job and a chore). More importantly, I wondered if he received the same responses to those outside the family households.

Another male cleaner, Fezile, a 43-year-old, unmarried, Zulu male holding a Grade 8, explained that some men declined cleaning opportunities due to the shame associated with cleaning as a profession, *"Many people undermine cleaning work … because it is seen as women's work."* Another male cleaner, Zweli, a 39-year-old, married, Zulu man holding a Grade 11, shared that the concerns about entering cleaning stemmed from the shame experienced from those in one's surroundings, *"I think maybe they are scared. Maybe they are scared of what people will think. You never know. Some might feel that the job is female and their friends will see them."* To understand this shame, I asked Fezile if he ever experienced this shame to which he calmly explained, *"Here is this man with a mop and he goes in to clean a toilet. It looks like an abomination because it is seen as women's work."* I must explain this reference to 'abomination' from his Zulu context. Fezile's uses the term 'abomination' here because (1) in the Zulu culture, a man is almost never seen cleaning, and (2) it would be a

disgrace for a man his age to be seen carrying a mop or toilet brush. Essentially, Fezile social standing would be reduced if he was to be seen performing this role in his place of origin, which is his ethnic Zulu tribe. But to deflect any woundedness which is brough about this culturally unintelligible phenomenon, he interestingly uses the second-person to avert speaking about how this made him feel. I could sense that he felt emasculated by his work situation, although he could not admit to it.

As a black male myself, growing up during the 1990s in a South African township in Johannesburg, I had come across some of the emasculating comments hurled at men performing what is traditionally considered 'women's work' at the time. I knew from an early age doing that 'women's work' could led to being humiliated or ostracised by other men. But I sensed with not just with Fezile but with the other men that the interview context made it sometimes harder to be open about their emotions. As a norm, men usually do not talk about their feelings with other men. But this was not the case with all of the men I interviewed. Xoli, for example, a 37-year-old, unmarried, Xhosa male who held a Grade 11, bitterly shared that *"I remember the other guy in my area. I told him, "I clean at WITS," and he laughed. He told his friends that I use a mop and toilet brush. It was as if I smelled like shit."* Like Fezile, I noticed that Xoli was vaguely smiling as he shared this experience - perhaps an attempt to veil some sense of disgust and indignation others had of his job of cleaning waste and human excrement and perhaps him. I could tell that these men internalised a sense of disgrace, mockery, and emasculation about their profession and perhaps in how they saw themselves. There was a great deal of sadness and woundedness I felt that they covered up about who this job had made them to be. Both in these interviews, I felt immense sympathy that their identities had become wrapped up in filth, humiliation, and revulsion. I became aware that their job requires a certain level of resolution, strength, tolerance not only to that tasks that they have to perform but the stigma that is associated with the job.

Another participant who contributed to the discussion around the notion of shame and dishonour was Sechaba, a 33-year-old, unmarried, Venda male who held a Grade 12. Sechaba conveyed a conversation his younger brother had with a friend looking for a job. Upon discovering that the job entailed cleaning roads for the municipality, the younger brother's friend declined the job insisting that he cannot clean

municipal roads under the sweltering sun: *"He said, "I did not know what the job entailed. I can't sweep streets in the hot sun.""* But on further interrogation, the friend's underlying reason for declining the job was what would people think of him cleaning public roads, *"I do understand it is for the municipality, but what will people say seeing me sweep the streets?"* Not only was he concerned about what people would think, he later made it clear that his concern was mainly what will women think of him *as a man* sweeping public streets, *"What will the ladies say seeing me sweep the street as a man?"* Based on this reason, the friend decisively concluded that he would rather remain jobless instead of taking any job, especially one involving him sweeping public roads, *"I'd rather not have a job."* From the conversation, I could tell that Sechaba was not only shocked as for him, this was the only available job at the time, but also raised insight to that him that perhaps he should not be proud to be a cleaner. I could tell at that time that Sechaba started questioning whether he was in the right profession himself.

Discussion of men who accept and those who decline cleaning opportunities

Despite the assertion that men (mainly white, educated men) are actively called to enter female-dominated occupations (Robinson et al., 2011), the findings of this study indicate that most black men will choose to decline job opportunities considered as 'women's work'. That is of course they do not have a choice but to take them. Besides the role of age and structural inequalities given SA's racialised past (see Eddie, Christopher, and Musa's comments), the explanations offered by Prosper, Sechaba, and Fezile demonstrated the influence of patriarchy and heteronormativity when it comes to men's job-seeking preferences. Namely that some men look down on jobs which are embedded with aspects of a 'woman's role' in the home (Lupton, 2000; Williams, 1995; Simpson, 2004). For example, Prosper's interactions with men outside the cleaning professions indicated that, doing 'women's work' such as cleaning, is still seen as repetitive, mind-numbing, and underpaid work (Lupton, 2000; Williams, 1995; Simpson, 2004). Sechaba's communication with his brother and his friend also revealed that some men fear the shame and humiliation from others (mostly their female counterparts) of being seen doing 'women's work'. More importantly, emasculation was uncovered following the association by some of the men of their work with embarrassment and disgrace. For example, Fezile reflected on how his Zulu background saw men who clean toilets for a living, especially at his age as an

'abomination'. These findings offer interesting questions for research to be conducted around 'dirty work' whether over time, a cleaner stops seeing cleaning as a 'dirty job', but instead starts seeing themselves as the 'dirty individual'.

5.4.1.1.3 Heavy objects and manpower

One of the frustrations reported by the men was the emotional and physical labour which involved in the carrying of heavy objects. The men felt exploited by the system because a) their female co-workers who outnumber them refused to and b) were told by their supervisors and female counterparts that they possess the 'manpower'[10] to carry these heavy objects.

However, at first, I saw these men as glorifying their own physical strength at the expense of inferiorizing the women they work alongside to. Sechaba, for example, reassured me that women cannot heavy objects, *"Females cannot carry those [chemical containers]. They are carried by men [only]."* Like Sechaba, Musa had a list of tasks which distinguished what men and women can and 'cannot do', *"Like packing stock, women cannot pack stock. There are 25 litre chemical containers. They can never carry such containers."* As Fezile pointed out, the men took over the bulk of the heavy duties, *"We are the ones who empty the dustbins, they (female cleaners) do not do it. They just empty the bin and I take it out. The men clean carpets, sweep outside. We clean the windows [in multi-story buildings]."* To boot, besides the loading and carrying of heavy stock and containers, Musa claimed that women cannot carry certain heavy machinery, *"Men are the only ones who can operate the buffing machines."* According to Musa, to operate the machinery, one would need the associated physical strength of men, *"So obviously, that machine can only be operated by males."* I was sure that the men had learned to takeover these tasks to bolster their own egos, as Kabelo I felt might have suggested, *"The old laddies cannot move those heavy desks. They cannot stand that long. They complain about this and that sometimes. They would faint if they did our work. They are not going to manage."* Another male who led me to this belief was Moses who mentioned that *"The work that I am doing, I think a lady can't do it."* Donald, for example not only indicated that *"theirs (female cleaners) is lighter. Ours*

[10] Although the term 'manpower' recognizes the labour force as consisting of both men and women (Grant, 2020), in this study, the working definition of 'manpower' is primarily used to indicate the supposed strength possessed by men.

is heavier. We are made to carry things we are not supposed to carry." He further added that, *"They (female cleaners) cannot move those tables. They need men to help move those tables"*, and *"We move chemicals because they can't move them as women."* I thought idea of men feeling increasingly relied on for their strength, courage, and resistance suggested that it made them feel integral to the cleaning environment. For example, the black male nurses in Kalemba's (2020, p. 659) study confirmed that their male privilege allowed them to gain authority in a female-dominated environment:

> Sometimes you know, they make me do things which only a man can do, like lifting heavy equipment, or if a doctor is not around, and a woman is giving birth and I am on call assisting with the birth, the women think I am a doctor, and they calm down and trust me. (Bernard, aged 32, midwifery, two years' nursing experience).

But listening to these men go on and on about what they can, and the women cannot do, I thought that they were bragging and utilised the interview to demonstrate a sense of pride and heroism over the machoistic deeds only they could perform. Yet, as I reflected more closely to their testimonies, I noticed that most of them had been unknowingly projecting the amount of disadvantage that their work dynamic had created between them and their female counterparts. Donald, for example, was quick to point out that, *"Men have a lot of work, [while] women complain always."* This was despite that the fact, *"we get paid the same"*. Sechaba complained that *"When stock comes, I've never seen a woman go to offload stock."* Sechaba pointed to the random activities they were forced to take up, which female cleaners refused to perform, *"So, you now have to step in and operate the machine."* This is because *"They (female cleaners) say it's heavy and so on"*. Moses indicated this situation is unfair because, *"The female [workers], for example, they are getting a lot of breaks."* Even while they were on duty, they remained idle instead of working, *"Like now [during the Covid-19 pandemic], there is nobody in the offices, they opened up the lecture theatres, [and] they sit in there."* Moses stated that this reliance on their male counterparts could also be noticed throughout the day, pointing out that, *"If there is one client, they will go and help there, and the rest of the time they will sit."* Zweli noted a similar observation during the intensive cleaning period that, *"We do spring cleaner with other gents during closing time. We clean the window office with stepladder. We use the heavy machine to*

clean carpet. The women will sit and pay attention." After listening to these accounts, it became was clear that the men were saying they are forced to carry heavy chemicals that women do not want to and cannot carry.

Instead of viewing their previous statements as sexist and patriarchal, I started to appreciate the fact that these men could not refusal the lifting of heavy objects or demand equal working conditions as compared to their female counterparts. In fact, the men, as Xoli maintained, had an untenable obligation to carry these heavy objects *"We are told we are men and therefore they (female cleaners) cannot carry the desks and heavy equipment like when we use the machines."* The once heroic sentiment I heard in Musa's declaration, *"It's us. They are calling us!"* made me realise that black men see themselves as not only workers, but as bodies who are expected to sacrifice majority of their life for others, such as leaving their own work to assist their female co-workers and still be expected to not show feelings of weakness or vulnerability. As a result, the men experienced mental, psychological, and physical strain given their psychosocial environmental stressors (e.g., frustration, helplessness, and burnout), which like Eddie blamed it on their female counterparts, *"Even if you ask her: "Why are you not carrying desks?" She would tell you, "I am not as strong as you. You are a man, and I am a woman." So, they got used to it."* In fact, it is subtly implied here that the refusal of these men to lift heavy objects and demand the women to do equal work in that regard would be interpreted as abuse, sexism, and misogyny because men have been socialised and unofficially contracted to take up heavy labour. The frustration had turned into resentment and a cry for help as Eddie pointed out, *"That is what they are used to that every man must be made to carry heavy stuff, and then she would just walk around empty handed."* The reference to 'empty hands' stood out for me because some of the men, for some reason, tended to show me the chemical burns they had incurred to their cracked hands because of working with industrial chemicals. I assumed the effect exposure to these chemical burns had changed their life course in the sense that they would have to wear these injuries as a testimony of their service because their health and safety is secondary to the heavy labour that is required of them. It should also be noted that female cleaners in Bezuidenhout and Fakier's (2006) study also complained about respiratory complications and cracked hands due to long-term exposure to toxic cleaning chemicals. But Musa was keen to ask, *"[If] we get paid the same money, why should I move desks for you (female cleaner), and you just sit down and relax?"* In

other words, as Sechaba mentioned, their workplace had been discriminating against them given that, *"...the contract says we do 50/50. ... But when we get to the buildings we work in, it changes."* (I called it discrimination because I suspected the men lacked the vocabulary to name these unfair labour practices as discrimination).

For example, Themba convinced me that there was a marked difference in how the workload was portioned between male and female workers, *"Ya, there's a difference, because females, they do not take some stock, some toilet papers from the West Campus. It's us males. They (women) are not holding the machine; they are not cleaning the carpet."* Musa angrily stated that there was no regard of how men were meant to carry all the heavy objects, *"We (men) need to shift the desks. So, the females do not want to shift the desks, they say it's the men's work."* Kabelo came to a similar conclusion, indicating that, *"[When we] deep-clean, we move out the desks out the lecture halls. The old laddies cannot move those heavy desks. ... They complain about this and that sometimes."* According to Musa, there was a lack of compromise between male and female cleaners, *"If there are chairs and tables, take the chairs out and I'll take the tables out. ... But they just want to wait for me to finish taking the desks out, and then they come and clean the floors."* But as Musa suggested, there was still no consideration by their female co-workers, *"Even on the day when we have to put them back, actually they are not always there when we put the desks back. If she was there, she would tell me the desks were placed this and that way."* It was clear that the men saw this situation as unfair, especially given that they were not paid more for their uneven workload. Not only was the situation unfair, but the men were also required to carry these heavy objects as Musa claimed, *"[as a man], you have to move desks at such and such a place."* I say this because one of the men, Kgosi, was willing to violating health and safety regulations to benefit the employer *"Because most of the areas I work in do not have doors, I have to go through a window to get to the balcony,"* which according to him, *"the law would not allow it."* It became clear to me as I spoke to Moses, one of the workers who complained that his employer would not compensate him should he be injured on the job that these men were willing to work themselves to death for the benefit of others:

> Like now, December like this, we are going to participate with the cleaning, because we are working for the students. They (supervisors) are going to take

> us and do the carpeting. And then those carpeting, they never take us to the school of carpeting. And then when I am doing the carpet with that machine, I did ask them the question: "When this machine can hurt me, when you go to the doctor, what are you going to say? When I fall under a machine operator, what will happen?" They say, "You are working a cleaner's jobs. Part and parcel of the job.""

In other words, the men felt that they are being exploited and discriminated against in a very real and material way by both the cleaning service management system, as well as much of the female workforce. What was more was that as much as there was feelings of anger, blame, and resentment towards their female co-workers, the men displayed feelings of pity and shame towards them. During our interviews, some of the men demonstrated complex emotions such as a sense of care, responsibility, and paternalism towards their female counterparts because they reminded them of their mothers and wives. For example, Eddie suggested he helps his female co-workers out of pity, *"You think she's a woman, let me just help her."* Like Eddie, Johannes also indicated that he assisted his female co-workers out of sympathy and compassion, stating that, *"Shame! ... You know from your wife - she can't pick up heavy things. But why do you want them here at work to pick up the heavy things?"* He went further to suggest that like himself, other men should see these acts from a point of view of kindness and understanding, indicating that, *"Like I am saying, if those other men they could be the same like me, they could understand how I understand."* Much like Johannes, Kabelo stated that he assisted some of the women because they reminded him of his own mother, *"We work well with the mamas. They are just like our mothers. We help them when they get too tired. ... You feel sorry when she will ask."* While Sechaba maintained that some of the women are unable to carry heavy objects like chemical containers because of their age and frailty, even though their contracts states that they should perform equal tasks, *"Some of the ladies we work with are in their 60s and 50s. If she falls while trying to move the machine, it could be a problem. So let me just help her even though they say we do the same job."* But what was interesting to me was that the men in this study could not see themselves in a similar lens as ageing and mortal bodies. More importantly, the more pertinent academic question is why and who

then gets to benefit from black male cleaner's "manpower[11]." From the men's testimonies, it appears that it is the same system that discriminates, underpays, and exploits their "manpower", while allowing their female counterparts to not carry the same heavy labour imposed on male cleaners.

Discussion of heavy objects and manpower

As mentioned in Chapter 1, John Henryism is a long-term, high demand coping strategy associated with African American males and females to counter psychosocial environmental stressors (James 1994; James et al., 1983; James et al., 1987). For example, James (1994), Carter and Forsyth (2010), and Smith et al. (2020) report how African American boys and men experience increased racial battle fatigue (e.g., anxiety, stress, and hopelessness) following the prolonged experience of racial discrimination, misandry, and gendered racism, which had adverse biopsychosocial health consequences (e.g., high blood pressure, depression, and feeling less like a human being). Particularly in James (1994), Smith et al. (2016), and Smith et al. (2020) studies, John Henryism following protracted experience of racial battle fatigue became more heightened where black men where racial and gendered minorities, especially within white-dominated, hyper-surveillance, and environments they reported feeling 'out of place'. John Henryism and racial battle fatigue, in this case, can be used to explain the ways that these men rationalize what is happening to their bodies, as well as why the pain of moving these objects even at a later age does not bother them or their supervisors. In Moses' case, I could hear a sense of concern about the lack of care and security from his employer following a possible workplace injury. Yet, in the same breadth, Moses was reminded how his life and body had very little importance both as a cleaner and human being. In fact, majority of the men showed that they had very little self-worth in their own lives because of their restricted agency (i.e., they are forced to carry heavy objects and need help), while their female co-workers were allowed to exercise freedom and bodily rights (i.e., they cannot carry heavy objects), and something would be done about their concerns. The men recognise that women are allowed to complain and be protected, especially when there are men present in their environment. The accordingly men respond to this by taking on much of the heavy labour despite having untreated chemical burns on their hands, as well as the constant dismissal of their workplace endangerment by their supervisors as 'part and parcel of

[11] Question posed by external examiner.

the job'. The years of untreated chemical burns and resulting health complications were the least concern for their supervisors. This shows that the men themselves are seen as inhumane objects that can be replaced if needed. Below Figure 5.2 provides a summary of Sub-theme 1.1:

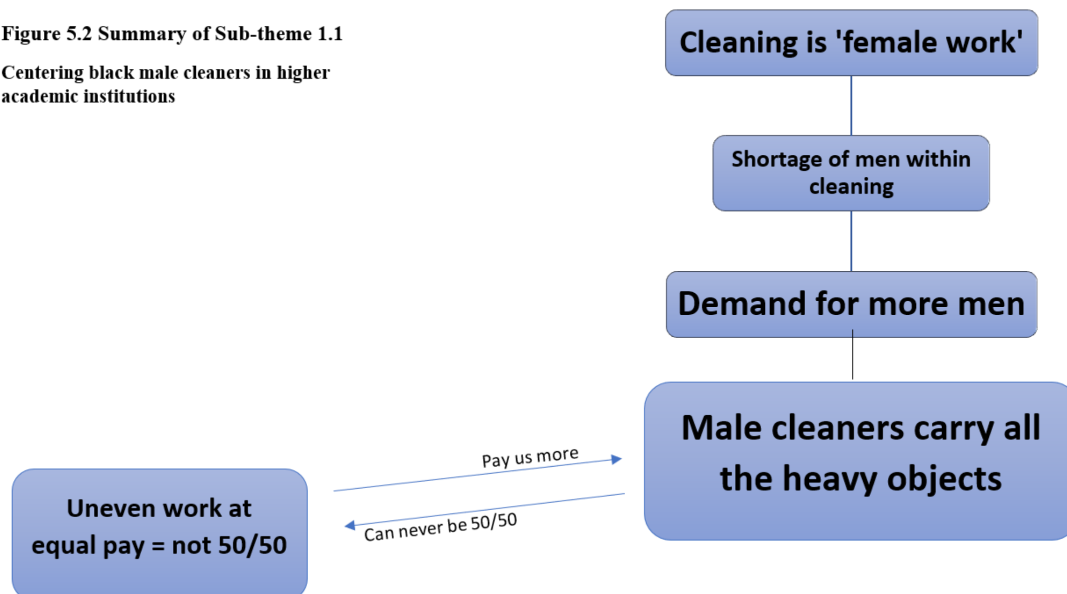


Figure 5.2 Summary of Sub-theme 1.1

Centering black male cleaners in higher academic institutions

Using Frosh's (1993, 1994b, 1997) and his colleagues work (Frosh et al., 2002; Frosh et al., 2003; Pattman et al., 1998), the findings in this sub-theme show how men defend themselves from feelings of exploitation, vulnerability, and their cries for help not being heard. While the men use various defences such as bravado seen in how they divide what they capable of carrying, by listening closely to their testimonies, one identifies feelings of being burdened by the endless responsibility to be the ones who demonstrate strength, courage, and resilience. Even when they do attempt to complain – not that they are heard by either their supervisor or female co-workers – their cries are turned into further subjugation and manipulation of their 'manpower'. One instance of this is one of the men stating that there are 13 women and 2 men, but when the truck comes the 2 men are expected to unload the stock without help from the women, then fetch the stock when the women ask for it. Using Butler's (2009) lens of precarity, we see that this exploitation does not end at the sexual exploitation these men face in finding themselves as a minority in a female-dominated space, but instead the men reflect on their vulnerability as black men who face one of the highest rates of employment given the past racial injustices and failure of the new SA to provide redress

or means of improving their current socio-economic circumstances. Accordingly, these men cannot afford to be unemployed, and therefore see their exploitation as their means for survival. From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of habitus, the findings also show the way these men attempt to cope with these disempowering conditions in their immediate work structure is to assert themselves as men who have to help others (a gendered habitus). However, they do not completely do this out of choice. Rather, they take much of the heavy labour because they recognise that the unequal labour relations reproduced by the gendered division of labour is what their employer relies on to maximally benefit from their manpower (an institutional habitus).

5.4.1.2 SUB-THEME 1.2: SELF-REPRESENTATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH WORK RELATED BOUNDARIES

The sub-theme interrogates the reasons why black men are not allowed to clean staff offices. The men present some interesting thoughts around avoiding suspicion and threat associated with the black male psyche. More importantly, being the knowledge that they are possible 'criminals', the sub-theme presents employed techniques to avoid suspicion by the male cleaners while cleaning private offices. Self-representations associated with work related boundaries

5.4.1.2.1 Men not allowed to clean private offices

In establishing the areas that they were not allowed to clean, many of them claimed that they were not permitted to clean private offices.

Eddie for example stated that, *"No, we are not allowed to clean the offices,"* but *"Women are the only ones who clean the offices."* Zweli indicated that, *"We cannot clean the office. Offices will be done by females. They don't want us there."* Kabelo indicated being warned that, *"When I came here, my friend said you will not clean in the office. Only women clean there."* Xoli added a similar warning, noting that, *"You cannot go in there as a man."* It should be noted however that not all of the men stated that they are not allowed to clean offices as Victor stated that, *"I am cleaning basement, some offices, sometimes I help to remove. It's like a general worker."* Sechaba, on the other hand, stated that, *"Where I work, in the library, I clean offices of three ladies,"* but *"I can only work in the offices when the staff members are present."* Donald suggested a reason for the preference of female cleaners to clean private clean offices,

"Clients prefer women cleaning their offices. They can only allow you to do other things, but not clean the offices, because you also have to wash the dishes." Musa indicated that men were utilised in private offices when there was something heavy to be moved, *"We do not clean the offices. We only go to the offices when there is something heavy [that female cleaners] needed [our] help with".* Prosper inferred that this was due to the men's physical strength, *"No, [men] do clean [private offices]. ... We help because they (female cleaners) no longer have the strength to operate the machine."* This suggested that the cleaning of private offices was a gendered and 'inside' job as Fezile indicated that, *"They (female cleaners) clean the offices. They work inside."* This, according to Kgosi, also explained the reason behind the unequal ratio of male-to-female cleaners, *"There are lots of offices. So, they do not allow men to work in offices. That is why there are more women."* While many were reluctant to identify the reasons why, with further probing, it became clear came that there were in fact underlying reasons associated with being a black male individual.

For example, Kgosi became rattled by the question of why they were not allowed to clean private offices:

> **LINDO:** Why don't they allow men [to clean]?
> **KGOSI:** Because even if a lady can be away for two days, those offices would not be cleaned for two days. I am not allowed to enter the offices.
> **LINDO:** You as a male, or you in particular?
> **KGOSI:** Males are not allowed. Not just me personally. All of us. They do not allow us to clean offices.
> **LINDO:** Why?
> **KGOSI:** I don't know. They do not allow us to clean offices.
> **LINDO:** What do you think could be the reason?
> **KGOSI:** I do not care. Maybe they think we'd do wrong things or steal, or whatever.

Kgosi's response indicated that the men could not be trusted. Zweli's indicated that, *"I'm not sure why we cannot work there. ... But I know sometimes they think we can steal. Laptops, cell phones, money in the offices. I don't know."* Kabelo's explanation was that *"You will be said you steal if they find you there. We work with*

the lecture halls and the toilets. I am not sure myself if they suspect us where we are. I don't know, I do my job." Xoli's belief was that *"They always suspect that you are a black, and you will steal something. You cannot be trusted like the women. We stay away unless they ask us to move something."* According to Fezile, the fidelity of black male cleaners has always been in questioning as implied in the following, *"…in my opinion, it could be because the task is not suitable for males, or they are not trustworthy. Maybe the females are more trustworthy than males."* Musa indicated that black men cannot be trusted to work in private offices unsupervised, *"Some people in the offices do not trust males. When they see you in the building, they become distrustful. As you walk in the passage, they close their doors. … Maybe they think we steal as males."* Eddie also pointed out, *"Maybe they think we would steal. But women do steal as well."* The distrust depicted here showed the gendered and racialised stigma the men had internalised, namely that black males are criminals.

Donald contextualised this distrust to South Africa's racialised history of black men characterised as a threat, *"Because we are men, maybe they think we're criminals. I am just thinking, I can't tell you what the reason is. There is a lot of apartheid."* Christopher's response was aligned to this racial stereotyping, indicating that, *"We are black, and they are white. You cannot expect them to forget that."* In this case, the image of black male cleaners became one associated with fear and criminality as Christopher explained, *"When they see you, already they think you will rob them. How can I rob you in the office? They have cameras there. I am not stupid. You just see that, and you tell yourself that it's life."* This was in fact more prevalent amongst academic female staff members as Kgosi pointed out, *"With women, they don't care. She (female cleaner) would just clean the office and then go and sit outside. She (female academic or admin staff member) doesn't care."* According to Sechaba, the reason behind this racial prejudice was that black men still find themselves in conditions of severe poverty:

> It reminds me, I think three years back at the floor where you found us cleaning. When we wash the carpet, all six of us help because I cannot clean it alone. There was a time when we went into a white, female's office. Afterwards, there was a complaint. She said we stole her water. We never saw any water. A complaint came that we stole water from a white lady's office. We were surprised! We always clean that office. What water? It's bottled water. The

following day, that woman remembered that she put the water in a box. When we clean, we have to pack things up nicely. So, she remembered after a long time that we did not steal the water, she put them safely away. Then she told her senior to tell us that she apologises for thinking we stole her water. "I put it away, but I forgot." As a white person, she thought that we'd take anything because we are suffering.

It was clear that Sechaba and the other men were made to feel untrustworthy and dishonest. I could tell from the irritation and uneasiness from describing themselves as a racially prejudiced group that they felt highly monitored while performing their everyday tasks. Working in this high surveillance environment, it was more interesting how men like Kgosi developed certain strategies to avoid suspicion should he be forced to clean private offices:

KGOSI: … I have to be fast, scrub the floors and then leave the office. Like I told you, we are scared to enter the offices.

Conversation continues...

LINDO: You just go in and out quickly.

KGOSI: [NODS].

Conversation continues...

KGOSI: Yes. It is better if you go in when there is someone inside. When there is no one, you feel uneasy entering an office - that I have to go into that office. When you look around you find that there is a R100.00 note placed openly. When I see it, I would get scared and wonder why would that person leave money like that? I would then leave quickly. When I leave, I have to go and find that person to say because he left money openly. Because he would then say that person took my money, I left so much money.

Discussion of black men and criminality

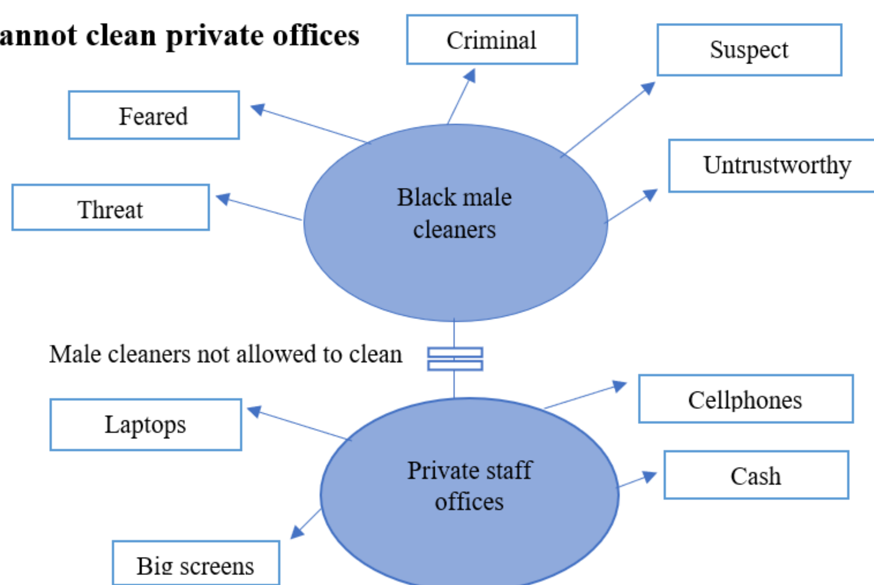
It was clear that the men's self-representations made them avoid working in certain work boundaries. To be characterised as a threat capable of violence meant that the men had to cope with racial stereotyping daily (e.g., "As you walk in the passage, they close their doors"). In Chapter 1, I described the the term racial battle fatigue as the chronic stress following from everyday biased racial microaggressions which negatively affect

the biopsychosocial health of American African males as reported from the stress-related symptoms of fear, anxiety, dehumanization which often suoperscededs their available coping mechanisms (Carter & Forsyth, 2010; Smith et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2020). At times, I could sense that these reactions were subdued with rage and frustration (e.g., "I do not care. Maybe they think we'd do wrong things or steal, or whatever"), while at times sadness and unwantedness (e.g., "she thought that we'd take anything because we are suffering"). There was constant pressure to not act or appear like a criminal. To be singled out for one's race and gender limited one's potential to demonstrate that they can be trustworthy individuals. With such negative stereotyping, it became clear that these men entered private offices worried that they would be suspected of wrongdoing, particularly where was cash, laptops, and other material possessions.

In this study, it appeared that white women displayed most of these microaggressions towards black men. I described this phenomenon by Sidanius and Veniegas (2000) as the subordinate male target hypothesis (SMTH). According to by Sidanius and Veniegas' (2000) theory, the rcial prejudice faced by one such subordinate group as the black men in this study, particulraly at the hands of a dominat group as white educated women would be more repressive than that faced by their female counterparts who find themselves in a similar subordinate group. However, I partly disagree with Sidanius and Veniegas' (2000) argument as black females are also accused of theft from time to time from white, female staff. Yet at the same time, I do concur that the consequences of these claims or suspicions would be far more damning for black male cleaners. As Sechaba pointed out, black men were percived to be predisposed to crime because of their desperate circumstances and lacked the ability to control themselves. It also became clear that racial tensions still form part of these relations, as the men felt typified yet felt the need to outrightly resiists this framing of themeselves as perpetual criminals. Below, Figure 5.3 presents a summary of Sub-theme 1.2.

Figure 5.3 Summary of Sub-theme 1.2

Reasons men cannot clean private offices



From Frosh's (1994) psychosocial framework with a particular focus on masculinity studies, the findings in this sub-theme show the men in this study carry biopsychosocial related symptoms of racial battle fatigue which they need to manage daily, such as worry, panic, and suspicion (Carter & Forsyth, 2010; Smith et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2020). Christopher for speaks of being inferior due to his racial make-up. Drawing on Butler's (1993) notion of performativity and precarity, it was clear that the men recognised, however resisted, this intelligible notion about all black males. A form of precarity that could also be identified here is how the men reported that white, female staff members had more persuasion in getting the men reprimanded. At the mercies of their white, educated female superiors suggests various forms of black misandry to how these men may be constructed such as violent, misogynist, predatory rapists (see Curry, 2018c). Although I did not get the opportunity to explore this, I would have been interested if these men would have felt the need to lower or emasculate themselves in the presence of other black male of higher academic standing. Bourdieu's (1977) theory of habitus becomes an invaluable lens to analyse how the men respond to this racialized, classed, and gendered habitus. The men occupy their environment feeling fearful and agitated that the next felonious incident will be blamed on them. Walking around feeling like a suspected criminal, Kgosi adapted to his environment by avoiding entering private offices unaccompanied or without being checked after cleaning. Since there are no cameras, the only way I can imagine Kgosi can defend themselves is to

wait until a staff member can return to inspect his or her office for any indication of theft. The elaborate mechanisms employed by Kgosi to avoid suspicion may possibly suggest a response to the number of incidents where the men were accused, and at times fired - even where there was no proof. The likelihood of being dismissed not only becomes imagined but a daily possibility. As an on-going loop, Kgosi re-creates an alternative gender habitus of how he is not only expected to behave, but how wishes other black male cleaners to be perceived as not a threat or a criminal.

5.4.1.3 SUB-THEME 1.3: LOCATION IN HIERARCHY AND ISSUES OF RESPECT

This sub-theme presents findings regarding the relationships black male cleaners have with students and other university staff members. The findings suggest that the students and staff members mostly disregarded the existence of cleaners. In this section, I will first present findings based on the men's relationships with students, followed by their experiences with university staff members, as well as their senior managers.

5.4.1.3.1 Relationships with students

While there were few men who were pleased with their relationships with students, most of them immediately pointed out that they did not feel respected.

For example, Victor stated that he got along well with the students, *"It's good, very good. Nothing wrong. My students, they like me, I like them."* While Fezile indicated that students can be spiteful by their lack of toilet etiquette, *"They (students) just spitefully leave it [toilet] unflushed"* with the intention being that *"It means that they do not respect your work."* Even when another toilet close by is available, Johannes indicated that a student's response would be *"He can even tell you that, "I can't go so far", whereas the toilet is here."* Zweli noted a similar point, stating that students believed that cleaners should be treated like helpers, *"But I have seen it with students, they do not think because they believe you are their helper."* Xoli reported seeing similar behaviours, which after 3 years, has gotten used to them, stating that *"We do get those students, mostly who do not flush or leave a toilet without cleaning it. It's actually something you get used to."* Christorpher indicated that students did not acknowledge them as cleaners, *"Jah…you see, the students do not care,"* with Eddie adding that as a cleaner, *"You can't tell him (student) anything. And you must also understand that the University would not blame the student. [Instead], they [would]*

blame you as a cleaner." Sechaba similarly noted, *"When you tell him, "I have a sign," he says, "What does it mean in your opinion?" He said, "It never said I should not pass, it just says the floor is wet."* Donald to believed that students undermined their work, *"Some people are inconsiderate. They just undermine your work."* While Musa believed that this was because students do not value the importance of their work, *"When it comes to students, they actually, most students do not respect what we do."* To most of the men, it became clear that students were demeaning towards them.

For instance, Eddie reported being challenged by a white student who reiterated that he did not have to take orders from him:

> The students who come here are unruly, they make noise, they climb on top of the tables, they climb chairs. Some are not here to study. They just came to play with their girlfriends. Some plug their laptops and do their own things. They do not study. They'd be laughing and others would be hanging their feet on the sofas, they move the tables around, leave them there, and I'd have to take them to the right places. Sometimes, I would ask them that when they are done, they must please take them back where they found them. You are not allowed to move the furniture as you can see the notices. The University says you must never move the furniture, but they do it. And you can never do anything to them. When you tell them they'll say, "Wat se jy?" (From Afrikaans to English translated as "What are you saying?") They would then be laughing. They won't listen to you.

From the above, Eddie's requests were blatantly ignored, followed by derogatory mockery as if his request came from a child. This incident was reminiscent to apartheid SA, where black people where under the hand of the racist, white Afrikaner government. But some of these confrontations with student's behaviours were not only in person-to-person. Sechaba indicated that he became angry when *"...they would use the toilet and not flush. They throw tissues on the floor."* Kgosi stated that he got frustrated when *"They think a toilet is a toilet, they do not even read the sign when they see it."* Sechaba explained that these incidents were not only limited to the bathroom setting, as he recalled a student who ignored a sign, he had set up indicating there was a wet surface, *"It says the floor is wet. So, then it means I have to clean the whole*

staircase from 4th floor to ground." These incidents were not just limited to wet surfaces. Kgosi for example indicated students would leave fresh blood *"... they deliberately leave it (bodily fluids)"* on the toilet seat. While Donald heard that female students would leave used sanitary pads in female-only toilets, *"Because some of the female cleaners complain, they'll tell you the things they come across. They would even leave their sanitary pads lying around."* Fezile reported finding wet towels and shaved hairs, *"He (student) just leaves it (used towel) on the floor. When you get to the handwash basin, you will get hair. Some of them shave there and just leave it messy like that."* Other times, Fezile indicated that he would find other intimate materials, such as used condoms, *"At the Main Campus, I would find things like used condoms as well as shaving razors."* Themba stated that he had seen worse in a gruesome scene where he found faeces on top of a toilet seat, *"Some, his shit is down. Some people they are shitting down."* What was perhaps disturbing for me, and I could tell that some of the men like Zweli were used to was that *"Even when you put a sign, someone wants to just come in and you have to wait for them to finish."* As shocking as all these scenarios were to me, I got the impression that the men had just gotten used to them.

As to how these incidents made them feel, Kabelo reported that *"You just have to stand and watch."* Johannes indicated that he is used to feeling ignored, *"Yes, they don't even worry about the sign that you put there, they just go."* When I asked Zweli regarding how felt about the incidents he witnessed, he indicated that, *"You cannot shout at them as you are told that you cannot anger the clients."* Prosper felt that such incidents were conducted by someone with a deliberate intention because, *"That person tells himself that there are people whose work is to clean up. So, in other words, he feels obliged to mess up, as if we are just getting paid for nothing."* Kgosi claimed that the students have no regard for how they feel because, *"They know you are there,"* and as Christopher pointed out, *"They will say, "The cleaner is there.""* Fezile agreed with this stance indicating that, *"You are a cleaner, so you will not just leave it like that, you will clean this mess up."* For Eddie, the students did not have to care because the students' tuition is what kept them there, *"He (student) doesn't care ... [because the] cleaner will learn [that] we are paying him."* Students could take advantage of this situation as Xoli was told: *"...the students pay our wages. That's why [we] can't complain...because they say, "You eat because of [us].""* Musa likens this to a parent-child relationship where the parent makes all the instructions, *"You become a minor*

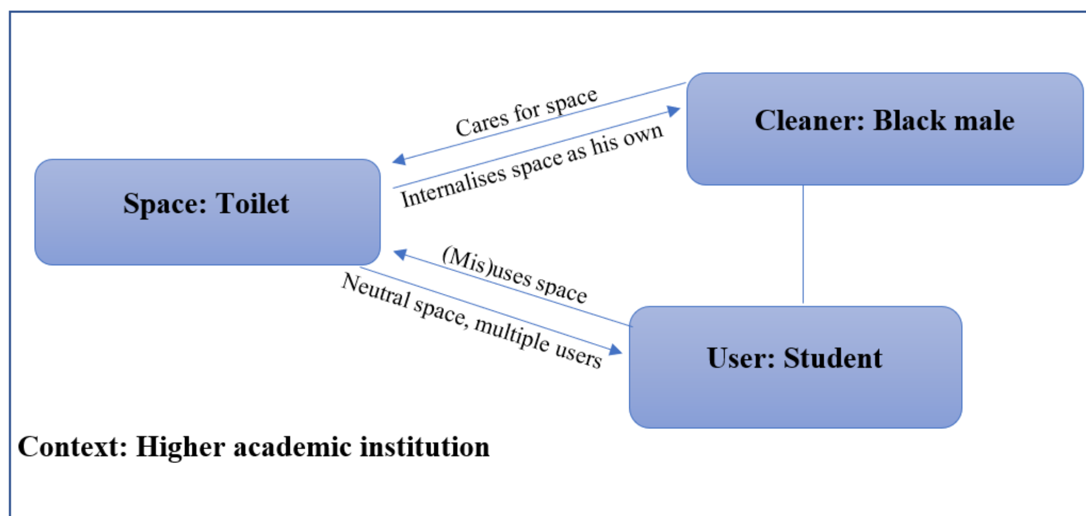
and they become your seniors because they are paying." According to Sechaba, this imbalanced relationship was hampered because cleaners were not afforded the same rights as students *"…[because] a student has more rights than me, he [can get away with disrespecting me, as he/she] is a client who pays my salary."* But even when such behaviours are reported to their supervisors, Fezile indicated that the common response was that *"… [the] customer is always right!"* or *"when you are instructed to do something, you have to do it, you don't question anything."* It was clear that the men felt below the students who took on the position of employer, rather than a student who had come to learn.

When I questioned Sechaba how he coped, he stated that, *"In the beginning, it used to feel bad. Because at times, I would clean the staircase… Others would think this person is cleaning, let us turn back. But others would just ignore the sign and use the stairs."* Musa indicated that, *"It is painful when a person comes and steps on here you cleaned. It shows he doesn't respect your work."* Johannes also shared that, *"Sometimes you feel like, wow! For being [a] cleaner! Sometimes, it breaks your spirits. So sometimes, I keep on asking myself, why did I become a cleaner? Then my answer is, okay, but I am not educated."* Eddie added that, *"You can't tell him anything. And you must also understand that the University would not blame the student. … For each and every mistake, you are the wrong one."* At times, I could see that some of the men felt silenced as Kgosi stated that, *"Because I'd be cleaning here, she wouldn't say, "Uncle, I'd like to pass." She'd just pass. And there is nothing you can tell her because she sees the sign. I will just keep quiet."* Others like Kabelo decided to cope with this situation by distancing himself from his job title, "*I don't care sometimes. I'm here to work. I can't complain. I am working this job. Me, I get my salary."* While some like Fezile adapted by employing a survivalist approach by indicating that, *"You have to go ahead, because you are only doing your work. When this child tells you he pays your salary, there's nothing you can do."* For Fezile stated that one must carry on, *"Even when he messes the toilet you are there to attend to it. If they waste toilet paper and it blocks the toilet, you need to take care of it."* It was clear that the men were belittled by both the students and supervisors. The notion that students are always right clearly indicated that they stood at the lowest position in the hierarchy of respectability.

Discussion of relationships with students

To make sense of these findings, I will discuss the above situation by mapping the involved role-players and conditions hoping to build new knowledge in the process. Below, I have utilised Figure 5.4 to demonstrate the relationship between the cleaner, user, space, and context. The cleaner is a black male, with a low level of education (most men in this study held Grade 8 as their highest level of education). As a result of this limited education, they have fewer employment opportunities. Their jobs as a cleaners carry limited earning potential, fewer chances of career progression, as well as low social status compared to other jobs. These associated characteristics may subject them to racism, mockery, and emasculation from family, friends, and those they encounter daily as evidenced from the findings above. Cleaners are surrounded by users who in most cases involve a younger student (from the ages of 19 and above) who are pursing some undergraduate or postgraduate education. From their cultural backgrounds or in their private households, some men might not have to clean a toilet space. I refer to the toilet space noting that it is not the only space that the men clean. But it is the most space I detected that their personhood was mostly dehumanised. The cleaner, user, and space are situated in a context of a high-status setting, a higher academic institution, which bears its own identity politics.

Figure 5.4 Relationship between the cleaner, user, space, and context



As I have indicated early, the cleaning is dirty job which involves working with waste and bodily excrements (Gershenson & Penner, 2009; Kira, 1976; Molotch & Norén, 2010). But for the men, their employment contracts stipulates that they must clean this space. However, the men do not clean the space for themselves. In fact, the

men might come to personalise the space over time as their own. The men become the custodians of the toilet space. They care and maintain a specific toilet over several years until it becomes their own. They remain accountable for its hygiene and cleanliness. Any filth and unsanitariness are personally viewed as their responsibility by their supervisors. Once the toilet space is misused, say intentionally by a user, the cleaner might feel personally disrespected and undermined as the space demonstrates his care and attention for its upkeep. While it should be acknowledged that the toilet space will become unclean (as its designed purpose), the difference is that the user does not have to intentionally misuse it by not flushing after its use. But some users do not care what happens to the toilet space. In fact, some users misuse the toilet space. Perhaps the reason for this is because a lot of other users utilize the toilet space daily and new users enter the space every year, and it becomes difficult for an individual user to take ownership of its care.

5.4.1.3.2 Relationships with staff and senior managers

Like their relationships with students, few male cleaners reported having positive relationships with university staff and senior managers.

For example, Christopher pointed out that, *"For me, my supervisor and I have an agreement: if we fight, we sit down and tell each other what went wrong."* Sechaba also recalls cleaners being invited to Christmas parties by departmental heads, *"I remember when we were still sub-contracted, when there were Christmas parties, the library would get closed. No one works. But they lock us inside."* However, from most of the responses, men like Zweli reported not reaching reasonable agreements with their supervisors, *"The problem is that you need to just drop this and that when they need you, you cannot say no."* Kgosi indicated that supervisors to impose heavy demands on male cleaners, especially given that they have to cover for their female co-workers, *"What worries me is that my areas are always dirty. If an inspector could come, they'd find that the areas of the person I stood in for are clean, whilst mine are dirty."* Musa reported a similar experience with his supervisor stating that, *"When they call you to the office to pack stock, whatever you are busy with doesn't matter. ...they just instruct me to go to the office."* Johannes added that, *"But because of the pressure that we get from the supervisor, they say, "It's an order. You need to go there. Don't tell us anything."* Themba felt that "*They (supervisors) put so much pressure on us to get many*

things done at same time." But what stressed Kgosi more was that if an inspector should come, *"My supervisor would not defend me… That is what discourages me."* Moses angrily pointed out that supervisors were quick to reprimand them as men without the necessary facts, *"You will find that some of the things they don't ask you. They get cross with you."* Eddie agreed with Moses' response stating that, *"And they (supervisors) just call you and tell you that a student has a problem with you. …they just have to blame you."* It became clear that the negative relationship the men had with their supervisors was caused by the random tasks the men had to pick up, without any consideration for their main tasks.

As for the differences where one had a female supervisor, Kgosi reported having hostile relationship with a senior manager of the opposite sex as well as racial background, *"I just have a problem with a certain Coloured[12] lady."* This relationship became hostile after Kgosi learned that she did not feel that Kgosi should have been the appointed person for the job, *"I can say she is one of the people who never wanted me to work in this building. There's someone else they wanted to work here."* When this cleaner-and-supervisor relationship became uncooperative, Kgosi noticed that she began to constantly monitor his movements, *"She is watching all my movements."* This continuous vigilance came with extreme scrutiny for any lapses in his work, which were reported to Kgosi's supervisor to get him fired, *"Even right now, if I can just sit for two minutes, she'd call the supervisor and tell him that I am sitting down. Just for sitting for two minutes."* Kgosi reported being increasingly concerned about his relationship with this female senior manager because, *"Even when I greet her, she would keep quiet."* To him, the constant monitoring and silence has become uncomfortable because, as he indicated that *"I do not feel good to just keep quiet when I meet her. I do not feel happy when I just keep quiet. And I also get worried when she keeps quiet when I greet her."* When I asked the other men if this relationship would have differed if it were a male supervisor or senior manager, Zweli indicated that, *"Another man won't stress you. Why?"* Kabelo stated that, *"Woman cannot even work with each,"* later indicating that, *"I would rather have a male supervisor."* However, Xoli insisted that, *"…but both can be destroying when they don't like you."* It was clear that most of

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[12] In SA, Coloured denotes persons from mixed racial composition, often originating from white and black parents, but those from both mixed parents can claim their racial identification as Coloured.

the men preferred to work with male supervisors because some female supervisors may fail to remain emotional detached in resolving conflict.

Other problematic relationships the men had were with administrative and senior management staff. For example, Sechaba reported that administrative staff did not getting along with cleaners because, *"... there were tensions between staff and us because they treated us as sub-contractors. They were surprised how can a cleaner buy a car. A car can only be bought by people in Admin or by lecturers."* Fezile reported feeling like a target of racial discrimination by the procedures employed by the University's management system instructing all cleaners to be searched when leaving the University's premises, *"I think [they were targeting me] because someone said they were looking for someone with dreadlocks. Why? He said, "They (University management) wanted to search you to see if you are not taking tissues.""* Fezile spoke about several instances where he was falsely accused by management of stealing office supplies. However, from all his incidents of being falsely accused, I could tell that the one which led him to get arrested was the one which broke him. Fezile was called to the administrative office where surveillance of him cleaning a lecture hall was being viewed, *"They were viewing camera footage where I was sweeping."* As the surveillance was being reviewed, he was asked to identify himself in the images, *"That person asked me, "Is this you?" And I said, "Yes". I then asked myself what was happening. The footage got to a point where I packed my stuff and left."* At this point, Fezile was questioned about his movement during that day, *"He then asked me, "Why didn't I get to the back?" I said, "I was running out of time, as I saw students standing at the door. I needed to leave.""* Without being given an opportunity to explain, he was accused of stealing a student's wallet, *"He then said, "I am lying, there was money that got lost. R1500.00. It was in a wallet - I am the one who took it."* This similar mistreatment at the hands of the University's management system involving unsubstantiated criminal accusations was reported by Sechaba:

> During the #FeesMustFall[13] protests, do you remember? … A small portion of a carpet on the second floor got burned. So, the people were complaining that

[13] The #FeesMustFall was a nationwide student movement, though at various levels of intensity at some higher academic institutions, wherein students campaigned amongst others free education (Pillay, 2016).

the carpet was burnt, and they did not see a person who burned it. One of the white people there said, "What if it's one of the cleaners who burned the carpet? It's not students." It was a white person saying that. It shows that apartheid still exists. Every bad thing is done by us, and not the students. I cannot just burn the library where I work. That is where I make a living. I have to take care of it. What am I going to eat when I destroy it? It took a long time to get settled. I don't think white cleaners would be treated the way we are being treated.

Like the relationships with students, it became clear that the men found the relationships they had with other university staff as characterised by vilification and oppression. Another challenging relationship that the male cleaners identified was with the employed security guards under the same higher academic institution. For example, in my conversation with one of the men, Victor had the following to say about the male security guards: belittling

LINDO: So how do other men who work there, who are not cleaners, see you as a man who clean? How do you think they look at you?

VICTOR: Ya, they took me somehow…you see. They took me somehow, laughing on me.

LINDO: So that thing actually really happens?

VICTOR: Yes, yes. Too much.

LINDO: Do you guys compare each other?

VICTOR: Ya, complaining always. Because when they see you, maybe you are sweeping the floor, or maybe you walk around with a bucket of water, they took you somehow. Maybe they see you like you are not normal.

But Victor was not the only male cleaner who reported rivalry and comparison between them and the male security guards. Eddie, for example, explained that *"The security guards undermine us as cleaners."* In his mind, Eddie felt that this was because, *"They say these are just cleaners."* Sechaba indicated that, *"[they] even weigh the money that you earn a certain amount because you are a cleaner. He earns so much money because he is a security guard."* When the men compared their social status,

security guards could claim a higher position of authority over cleaners as Eddie puts it, *"[because] he works in an office (guard house)."* Fezile felt that the security guards were not afraid to inflict violence on their own people, indicating that, *"I do not know what is it with us blacks, the way we treat each other."* Kgosi felt that male security guards felt emboldened to send you home, "*When you tell security that the card is not working, they'll say, "Go and tell your company to make you a card. If you don't want to work here, you must leave." What kind of treatment is that?"* Eddie stated that these men had become preoccupied with a false sense of power because, *"...if you tell him, "I forgot my card," he says, "Go in, I'll sign you in", because he knows you. Another cruel one, would say, "Go back! ... How did you forget your card?"* Yet again, it became clear that the men did not only feel undermined by individuals of higher level of education, but those who felt that they were better positioned than them in terms of having authority and control of the University space.

Discussion of relationships with staff and senior managers

The findings above suggest that the men not only find themselves in a hierarchal relationship with students, but with supervisors, administrative staff, as well as security guards (see Figure 5.5 below). Within these relationships, there were various features of domination, silencing, and subjugation - all aimed at maintaining power for one group over another. For example, in their relationships with their supervisors, supervisors employed a top-down, authoritarian approach (see comments by Zweli, Kgosi, Musa, Johannes, and Themba) to control, direct, and dictate the cleaners' time and movements. In their relationships with administrative staff, employees within this category could implicate cleaners in criminal incidents without any proof (see Sechaba's comment). In terms of their relationships with male security guards, they were ordered to return home if they did not have their access cards because male security guards utilised their powers as gate-keepers (see comments by Victor, Eddie, and Fezile). This positioning did not only show that anybody could undermine cleaners, but that the embodiment of power was least distributed to cleaners who were the least respected. In Chapter 1, I introduced Sidanius and Pratto's (1999) insightful text titled, "Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression", to explain why such hierarchal relationships exists and remain almost impossible to eliminate amongst social groups within society as explained by the Social Dominance Theory. The theory suggests that the relations of power within these groups, particularly

the hierarchal position maintained by the dominant group, in this case the students and staff members in the institution, will always be maintained as the status quo as benefits those with the major power to dominate others in this situation (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

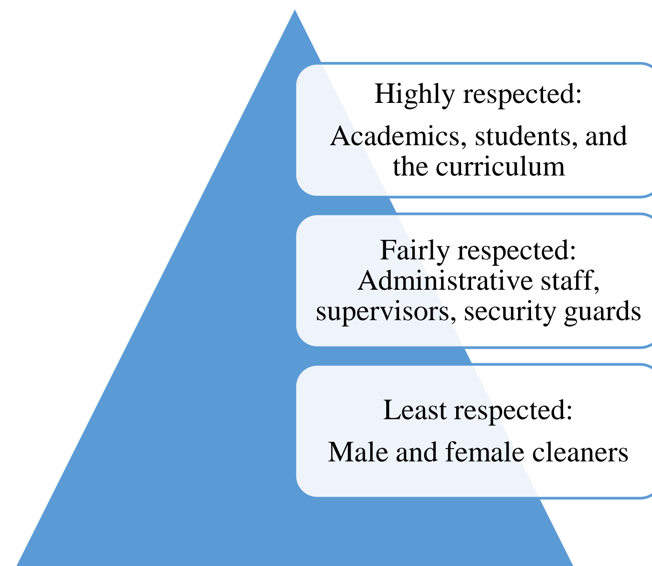
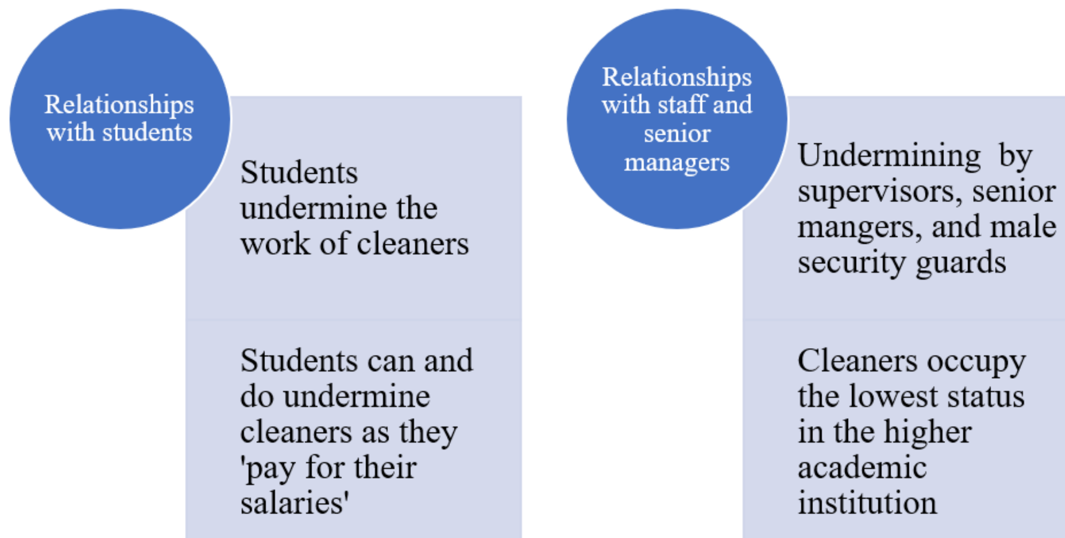


Figure 5.5 Hierarchy of importance at the higher academic institution

At the same time, I believe that there is something to be learned here about the relations of power involving the power of low-status workers such as cleaners. Earlier, I alluded to Foucault's (1998, p. 63) assertion that "power is everywhere" and "comes from everywhere" to refer to how the men claimed their power claimed by lifting heavy objects. But I believe that power can also be claimed from within and outside the cleaners' immediate work environment. For example, during the #FeesMustFall and #InsourcingMustFall protests, universities across the country became a mess and stood at a standstill because the cleaners rejected working under unfair working conditions. Workers demonstrated their frustration by emptying the bins, tearing the bin liners, and throwing garbage on major city roads. The outcome of this was that it created chaos and unrest that the rest of the country sided with the cleaners. In this case, cleaners claimed their power by forcing higher academic institutions to listen to them. Yet, following universities granting cleaners their expressed demands, cleaners had to go back to picking up the same waste and garbage they used to demand better working conditions. As temporal as this power is, it is clear that it can be utilised for collective action. Below, Figure 5.6 summarises the findings of Sub-theme 1.3.

Figure 5.6 Summary of Sub-theme 1.3

Location in hierarchy and issues of respect



Using Frosh's (1993, 1994b, 2019) psychosocial framework particular focus on masculinity studies, the findings in this sub-theme not only show how the men are subjected to emasculation on various levels particularly when it comes to the relationships they have with others in their environment. One for example is the relationship the men characterise with students as modelling a parent-child relationship where they have become the children who depend on the provisions of the students, which in this case the tuition that affords them their salaries. The men report feeling undermined, disrespected, and various tactics used by the students to be taught a lesson. Using Butler's (1993) notion of precarity, one recognises that these bodies are always anonymised (*"They know you are there"*) and indefinitely localised to the toilet space (*"You are a cleaner, so you will not just leave it like that, you will clean this mess up"*). From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of habitus, the men make distinct relations of power and how it is utilise to dominate the other through material and symbolic capital. Students come to be supervisors by virtue of them being the payers of their salaries, which provides them with the power to instruct cleaners to fulfil certain functions. As much the men say they have somewhat gotten used to it, I still believe there are moments of feeling worthless and cast aside. Another way to look at this situation is the agency the men utilise to cope with being emasculated by those who carry economic, social, and cultural capital within this field of environment. One, for example, notices that there is an element of separation to this unwanted body as seen at

times by the men referring to themselves in the second person as cleaners. 'The cleaner' becomes the one who takes on the embodiment of shame and indignity. At the same time, by foregrounding the unwanted aspects of this body, the male cleaners make visible the role and significance of this body (Aguiar, 2005). Next, Theme 2 explores these tensions.

5.4.2 THEME 2: PROBLEMATISING CLEANING AS A PROFESSIONAL AND PRIVATE ACTIVITY: "I LOVE MY JOB … NO, MEN SHOULD NOT BE CLEANING TOILETS"

Theme 2 highlights how the men came to understand the relationship they have with their work as complicated by both internal and external factors, such as the intersections of gender, culture, and work environment. As the antithetical title of the sub-theme implies, the men arrived at an internal conflict when it came to defending two equally opposite truths about how they feel regarding their jobs. Below, Table 5.4 shows inclusion and exclusion criteria utilised in the emergent sub-themes derived in Theme 2:

Theme 2: Problematising cleaning as a professional and private activity: "I love my job … No, men should not be cleaning toilets"	
Sub-themes	**Inclusion criteria**
Sub-theme 2.1: Core beliefs and ideas about being a male cleaner	Data related to core beliefs around cleaning as well as the cultural tensions in relation to cleaning as a man
Sub-theme 2.2: Practical limitations within working spaces	Data that is relevant to the discomfort of the men cleaning female-only toilets.
Sub-theme 2.3: Separating cleaning as a job and a chore	Data that is relevant to the role differentiation the men make in cleaning at work versus cleaning at home.

Table 5.4: Inclusion criteria for emerging sub-themes in Theme 2

5.4.2.1 SUB-THEME 2.1: CORE BELIEFS AND IDEAS ABOUT BEING A MALE CLEANER

To find out how the men felt about their work, I asked them about how their upbringing influenced their notion of gender and work. It became clear that individuals do not come

to these opinions about gender and work on their own. The following discusses these tensions and how the men make distinctions to come to 'men' versus 'women's work'.

5.4.2.1.1 Role modelling and invisibility of male cleaners

From my conversations with the men, it became clear that men and women's roles became established from the role modelling they saw in their childhood.

For example, Donald grew up women getting involved in roles *"Such as cleaning their toilets as well as washing dishes. Washing dishes is meant for women."* Zweli suggested that *"Boys were not cleaners. Girls did the cleaning, sweeping, and cooking."* Sechaba pointed out that cleaning was not one of the roles men involved themselves in, *"We never knew that a man can use a mop or sweep."* Even for Kabelo, who grew up in a female-headed household, he was exempted from doing any cleaning work, suggesting that *"My mom used to do all the cleaning work. She never really allowed me to do any cleaning at home."* Johannes noted that over time, these notions about what is 'women's work' become part of the unquestioned norm, *"So we end up growing...knowing that cleaning is a thing that a woman can do, but not a man."* Musa, stated that *"... [I] grew up knowing that a man does men's work."* According to Musa, 'men's work', particularly around the household included, *"Working outside. Fix[ing] the fence, and when there is a car, he helps fix the car."* Musa considered 'women's work' in the household to involve, *"And a woman does women's work; cleaning, cooking, does the washing and take care of the children. That is women's work."* Christopher, who grew up in a rural setting, stated that men and women were assigned tasks as early as when they were boys and girls, *"In Umlazi, boys used to wake early at 05h00 to care for the family's cattle. It was cold but it was your job as a man."* According to Christopher, where there was land to work, boys become involved in livestock and agriculture, *"We worked with the cattle, ploughed the land, as well as brought in the harvest."* As for 'women's work' within this setting, Christopher pointed out, *"Women would open windows by daybreak. They served the men [tea]... [and] cleaned the yard. They [brought in] firewood for cooking. They served us with bath water."* From this cultural arrangement, it became clear that men held far more privileges than women did.

Based on his cultural influence, I could tell that there was no respectability in men doing any cleaning roles. For example, Donald claimed that "*It's not right for me to clean the toilet."* Musa added that cleaning would bring disrespect to a man's social

standing, *"No, cleaning is not a respectable place for a man."* For this reason, Sechaba recalls that he was shocked that they were hired to clean, *"So I was shocked that a man has to clean. How come?"* Fezile was against the idea of hiring men to clean, *"To me, I say Wits should not hire men to clean"* but instead suggested that *"...they must advertise for men to do construction, plumbing, electrician, forklift standard."* Musa outright rejected the idea of men as cleaners, *"Men should not be cleaners"* because according to him, cleaning is associated to a women's place in the home, *"To be a cleaner is to serve others like women do in the home."* Victor maintained that men were supposed to be 'fit' into masculine and not feminised roles, *"They were supposed to take some women to be cleaners, men, security. Just like that."* Johannes further added that, *"And once they tell us; I am having a mop, I am the woman who should do mopping."* This not only suggested that the men distinguish between masculine and feminine roles, but they believed that certain cleaning equipment became associated a particular gender role, which led them to see themselves as occupying that corresponding gendered body.

From my conversations with the men, it also became clear that because of where some of them grew up, there was no visibility of male cleaners. For example, Fezile, who originated from a rural settlement, was convinced that a male cleaner was a 'city man', *"It started here. Because when we were growing up, they (men) were working in the firms, welding, or digging up holes. It's only here that I saw males using mops, cleaning toilets and so on."* Part of this invisibility of male cleaners is that the men's culture kept them preoccupied from picking up any roles associated with femininity. For instance, Eddie suggested how his generation differed from today's generation in that boys were given manly responsibilities from an early age, *"You were given responsibility as a man (male child) to take charge. You cannot wake up at 12h00 like the young ones today. We didn't play until our chores were finished."* Themba saw his own childhood in the townships as gripped with inculcating of masculine character, *"We knew that men must work hard labour because you are a man, they cannot be soft on you."* Fezile also reflected on his own upbringing in a rural area, indicating that discipline and punishment were part of the building blocks which informed the socialisation of boys into men, *"We knew that we would be severely disciplined if we went to school without making sure that the cattle were not feed."* According to Zweli, these arduous tasks were designed for boys to build up courage, *"Boys are tested. You*

need to guard the sheep day and night. Some will have a baby at 02h00. You need to be there. ...you need to face it." Xoli added that despite these adverse conditions, the tough conditions would eventually be rewarding as a man, *"In those farms [back home], there is none of these machines you have in the city. Boys worked the fields barefoot. It's hard, but you learned how to be a man"* In other words, as Moses puts it, these early lessons about being a man would eventually prepare a man to choose an occupation where he can demonstrate courage, strength, and resilience, *"So, a man must experience hardships, things should not be easy for him. ... You have to be tough, and not cry."* As a result, when one is socialised around this conception of gender, work, and culture, it becomes permissible that men like Sechaba lived most of their childhood years without ever encountering a male cleaner:

> Where I grew up, they'd say "You boys must herd cattle, round up goats, work in the fields. The girls must clean and cook. The boys must find the food ready when they come back from herding cattle. Girls must cook, clean and fetch wood. The dishes must be clean." That is how I grew up. [But we] never knew that a man can use a mop or sweep.

According to the above, it is clear how culture not only genders labour, but also positions men and women as suitable for certain kinds of work. From this backdrop, it is not hard to imagine how men may internally feel conflicted between their job description as cleaners versus who they are as men. Zweli for example indicated that, *"I love my job"* but later indicated that, *"...no, men should not be cleaning toilets."* Victor also shared that, *"I enjoy my job,"* but later contradicted his previous statement stating that, *"...it is not good to be a cleaner when you are a man."* Prosper indicated that cleaning is *"...not men's work"* but that times have changed because now *"...men today are seen doing baking, social work and cleaning."* Kabelo shared the opposite logic when it came to differentiating a man and women's place in the home, indicating that, *"My mom wanted me to work with her at home. She bakes. I did not like being in the kitchen. Imagine spending the entire day cooking those things. It's fine - for women."* Donald outright admitted that men should not be cleaners *"For men to be cleaners is not right"* because an occupation has a lot to do with a man's pride and dignity, *"Your dignity ... people just look down on you for that."* Xoli on the other hand noted that, *"I do not mind the job ... you can get used to it really"* but later indicated that *"I just wish they would pay us more".* Christopher shared that he enjoyed his job

because of the respect his given from others, *"But I am well liked and respected by my clients and supervisor. They look up to me,"* but in a later instance indicated that if he were given the choice, he would not have become a male cleaner, *"No, if I were to choose, I don't think I would want to be a cleaner."*

Part of this tension is that most of these notions about gender remain prevalent even though the men might find themselves doing and perhaps enjoying 'women's work'. For example, Kgosi pointed out that men used to be found outside doing work like gardening *"When we were growing up back home, they'd always say garden-boy. I never heard them saying garden-mama. It is always garden-boy. Even if you tell a person that you work in a garden they will agree."* Kgosi suggested these roles were never questioned, but rather naturalised that nobody would ask why men took up such roles, *"They'd never ask you, "Why are you working in a garden?" But if a woman says she works in a garden, they'd start asking, "How come? How come you work in a garden?""* For this reason, it made sense why men like Sechaba were not only actively encouraged by others to leave the cleaning profession, but had also convinced himself that he does not belong within this non-traditional job for a man:

> There are people around campus who'd come to me and say, "Sechaba, you're still young for this job. This job is for elderly women. Why don't you go to school? Why don't you study further? This work is for women. Why don't you apply for a security job or another job?" I tell them that, "It's not like I love doing this job. I do apply." I think I've been to four or five interviews since I came here. I want to get out of the situation I am in. I don't want to die here cleaning actually. I apply and then I fail the interviews. Some people do feel sympathetic that this job is not good. But because I am in this situation, I am patient, and I do my job well. But I do want to get out of the cleaning industry.

Discussion of feminized versus masculinized roles

As findings of this study show the gendering of domestic roles implied that the men do not simply 'checkout' their gender outside the institution's gates (Williams, 1993). Instead, the men relied on these assumptions to evaluate how their work roles position them in the work environment. One way the men in this study avoided being emasculated for doing (and perhaps enjoying) what was traditionally considered 'women's work' was through distancing themselves. According to other studies following men in non-traditional occupations, distancing was a common strategy

employed by men to maintain part of their masculine identity. For example, in his study with black male nurses, Kalemba (2020, p. 659) noted that, “They (male nurses) do so by distancing themselves from practices such as bathing and feeding patients and by specializing in fields of nursing that allow them to display stereotypical masculine behaviours.” To prevent “domesticating masculinity” (Bartolomei, 2010, p. 102), these men were pushed into partaking in masculine roles, such as shepherding to instil characteristics such as command, leadership, and authority (see Chistopher, Xoli, and Sechaba’s comments). Since it was a shock to see man mop or sweep (see Sechaba’s comments), it was suggested that the idea of a male clear seems somewhat unnatural (see Donald’s comment) and unbefitting (see Musa’s comment). But this contrary to what we know from previous studies which suggest that domestic work such as cleaning has not always been heavily feminised or absent of male bodies (Kilkey, 2010; Moya 2007; Bartolomei 2010). Figure 5.7 presents a summary of Sub-theme 2.1.

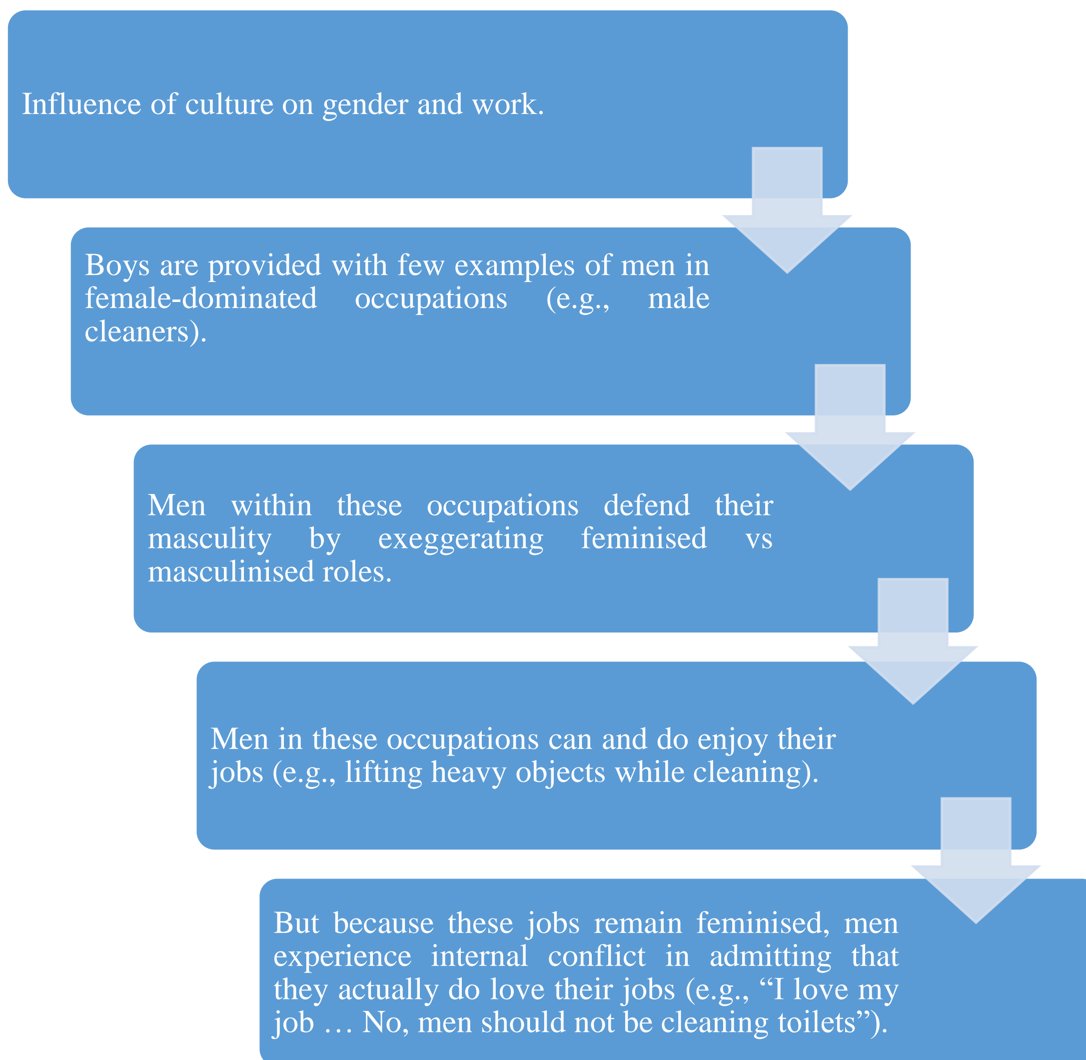


Figure 5.7 Summary of Sub-theme 2.1

Using Frosh's (1992, 1994b, 1997) psychosocial framework particular focus on masculinity studies, the men's testimonies show that they experienced cognitive dissonance in evaluating whether they enjoyed their work. It is my suspicion here that this conflict may have revolved around the title of cleaner, especially given the entire scope of what they do. That is, the men perform varied, technical, and physically-demanding tasks, such as operating heavy machinery. But from an outsider's perspective, the job description of cleaner may be seen as an over-simplified role which is dull and unchallenging. Although none of the men came out as gay or involved in a same-sex relationship, there might have been a fear that they would be considered as gay. From Butler's (2009) notion of performativity, in certain parts of the world, the idea of a male cleaner might be an unintelligible notion. But it should also be noted that it is intelligible to find a man cleaning a male toilet. What is argued here is that for these

men, who come from various ethnic backgrounds which may have never come across another male cleaner, the ideas which inform their job roles still originate from this gendered influence of culture. From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of habitus, various forms of gendered habitus are employed (e.g., repeated cultural gendered norms which dictate what men can and cannot do) to mask what perhaps might be a heterodoxy as evidenced in black men 'behaving differently' (Walker, 2005, p.5), or in Moolman's (2013, p. 93) words, 'masculinities in transition'. While some of these men thoughtlessly entertained the idea that they might find personal enjoyment and fulfilment doing what was considered 'women's work', the majority were steadfast in perpetuating the status that men and women were feminized and masculinized to perform certain functions, reproducing gendered systems of labour The next sub-theme explores how these men can be agents of social change based on how they approach being ordered to clean female-only toilets.

5.4.2.2 SUB-THEME 2.2: PRACTICAL LIMITATIONS WITHIN WORKING SPACES

This sub-theme presents findings of how black male cleaners required to participate in the cleaning of female-only toilets (within specific conditions) enter (i.e., if there are any processes that should be followed), experience (private and intimate female spaces), and cope (perform their masculinity) within these spaces.

5.4.2.2.1 Men cleaning female-only toilets

Despite their own personal reservations, some men offered to while others forced to clean female-only toilets.

For example, Victor explained that *"Males can clean female toilets, and females can clean male toilets."* Sechaba however stated that this does not happen regularly but *"When she is not there"* because at the end of the day, *"We are here for the students."* Prosper added that he offers to clean female-only toilets when his female co-worker is unavailable, *"My colleague might not be here, and I see the toilet is dirty, I would quickly clean it up, because students need to use it."* Other male cleaners like Christopher indicated that they would only clean female-only toilet on the exception that there is a shortage of women, *"I only clean male toilets, not female toilets. Unless if there is a shortage, I would stand in during that time and do the work."* Fezile stated that men clean female-only toilets due to female cleaners being absent due to sickness,

"My brother...the only time I've seen male clean female toilets is when she is sick, she cannot be at work." Musa maintained that the only time he entered a female-only toilet was to fix any mechanical or plumbing problems, *"The only time I'd go into the female toilets is when there is something I need to fix."* While for Kgosi, the request to clean a female-only toilet would met with resistance, *"I have not cleaned a female toilet since I have been here. ... I do not think I would respond well if they asked me to do that."* Zweli indicated that he would only clean a female-only toilet if his female co-worker were on maternity leave, *"I can only clean a female toilet if the lady is pregnant. She will tell us she is pregnant and having the baby."* Donald stated that he would refuse to clean a female-only toilet given the number of women they work with, *"They must not ask me that because I will refuse. There are so many women at Wits."* There was some hesitance and qualifying as to why men would clean female-only toilets which implied that there was some discomfort in entering these spaces.

For some, the request to clean female-only toilets was loaded with elements of force, coercion, and ordering. For male cleaners like Moses, their longer tenures under the outsourcing period meant that they had to perform this task or risk losing their job, *"They used to make us clean those, you know with Supercare. No, you did not have a choice."* During these instances, Eddie noted that that this message was conveyed as a request with no option to decline, *"It was from the office, you were not consulted, you were instructed that you now have to go and clean."* Christopher stated that there was no room for negation as any counter-arguing was interpreted as challenging the university's management system, *"In those days, when you argued with the supervisor, it meant that you argued with management."* According to Themba, this commanding was rather presented as an ultimatum, *"They did not respect us as men. They told us we were under their pay and will do what they say."* Victor spoke of being obligated to clean a female-only toilet, *"It was crushing. You could not tell him otherwise. He said, "This is part of the job, you are cleaner. This is the job, take it or leave it.""* Johannes expressed that this request was explicitly stated as a command, *"But because of the pressure that we get from the supervisor, they say: "It's an order. You need to go there! Don't tell us anything! You have to do it! Even if you don't want.""* Kabelo noted that these requests would often be delivered in a condescending tone, *"You do feel like a child when they tell you to do something like that. We are forced at times, even if it's something you are not used to ... you have to do it."* Xoli he knew he had limited choices

than to say no, *"I couldn't imagine that that is what I would be doing. But I had to do it because this is part of my job."* Fezile stated also stated that as cleaners, they were compelled to take perform what their supervisors requested of them: *"If it were me, I'm sure it would be hard. ... This job ... we are uneducated, so that is why they undermine us. When you supervisor says, "You have to do it", you will do it."* Because of their limited educational background, it was clear that the men had limited options to negotiate out of certain roles which were outside of their comfort.

For those who either were hesitant to clean female-only toilets, there were certain reasons why they felt uncomfortable about in entering these spaces. For example, Kgosi imagined the disturbing reaction he would receive walking into a female-only toilet to find female students naked or changing, *"My brah, it's a toilet full of female students. You enter there, she is naked or changing, the screaming (laughs)."* Kabelo thought of another possibility of men abusing their power as informed by one of the recent cases of the entrapment, murder, and burning of a female university student, Uyinene Mrwetyana, by a male post office attendant: *"I'm not saying that it will happen. But you know moes us guys... What if we have one of those guys like the Unene case. .... The guy just takes those girls and boom!"* Donald claimed that because some male security guards have been fired in the past for engaging in consensual relationships with female students, he is more cautious about avoiding contact with female students, *"We have a problem here. The girls will like the security guys. ... I remember few years ago, the one security was caught and reported at Cleaning Services. ... That's why I'm saying I'm not going there."* Victor questioned how he would be protected in the case where a female student falsely accused him of deliberately walking into a female-only bathroom, *"My worry is that how will they say she is wrong. She ignored the sign.... that is my worry."* Themba regarded the culture of female students referring to their basic human rights as one of the problems that men felt hesitant to go into female-only toilets, *"They know their rights. They will say, "What was he doing in there? He was searching for young girls."* Musa thought about how men are closely guarded from entering private female spaces, *"They will say you were there at a time you were not supposed to. Even when you say you were sent by management. You need to argue with them that you were sent to fix a certain problem."* For Johannes it was the discomfort of being seen walking out of a female-only toilet, *"After I was done ... It was these two girls. ... They just stared at me. [I could see] they*

think I was weird or did something [there]." The men clearly felt embarrassed being seen in these spaces because of the idea of being seen as perverts or having ulterior motives in entering these spaces.

The cleaning of female-only toilets followed a particular protocol which did not differ that much from typical toilet etiquette. For example, Christopher indicated that before he can enter a female-only toilet, he must knock first to ascertain no one is inside, *"You knock first and ask if there is anyone."* For Prosper, the importance of checking if there are no users is key to not startling clients, *"You will check if there is someone in there ... make sure you do not interrupt the client."* Instead of approaching a female-only toilet as a male, Moses relied on another female cleaner to check on his behalf if there are any users inside, *"You ask another lady to check in there. The females must not see you first."* According to Zweli, in the case that there was somebody, he would have to wait outside until the user was finished, *"If there is someone, you wait for them, and when they are done you go in and clean up."* After surveying and waiting for users to exit the toilet, male cleaners like Sechaba stated that the next step was to set up their cleaning placards, *"I first begin by checking who is inside before I set up the yellow sign that you see there."* When it came to the actual process of cleaning female-only toilets, it became noticeable that the male cleaners in this study go into female-sexed toilets expecting to either find or confirm a stereotype about feminine hygiene. For example, Xoli suggested that one would find female hygiene products like sanitary pads laying around, *"Sometimes they just put it (used sanitary pads) anywhere. Because they know it's only a female who is going to come there. And not a male."* Fezile indicated that most men who fear cleaning female-only only toilets are afraid to see female hygiene products used and disposed of within the vicinity, *"They (men) refuse to see blood and pads."* Victor added that this scenario would differ from the setting one would find at home, *"But you will see what you also see at home."* This situation worried men like Johannes who impressed upon me how culturally there were things that men should not see, *"Sometimes there's things that we are not supposed to see as males."* There was something dirty and shocking about the potential of seeing used or bloody women's hygiene products.

When it came to the emotional responses of the men cleaning female-only toilets, some of the men displayed a sense of downplaying and going with the flow, while others were unrestrained and forthcoming. For example, despite Xoli reassuring

me that he was obligated to clean female-only toilets, his response to performing this dreaded task was indifference, *"I have cleaned a female toilet before. You go in and do your thing."* Sechaba shared this same sense of general apathy, indicating that there was nothing he could about this situation, stating that, *"There is nothing you can do because you have to work for your children. You have to."* Prosper's response gave me the impression that he had given in to the situation without any resistance, *"There is nothing I'd do, I'll just clean as a man; work is work!"* Kabelo's indicated, like Sechaba and Prosper, that he had undergone a process of convincing himself that he was working for his children, *"I would just work, because I have to work for my children. I will work, there is nothing I'd do."* Victor indicated that the scenario did not sit well with him, *"I don't feel okay, because that is something that I am not used to."* Themba stressed that this situation was perceived as disrespectful to any male person to do, stating that *"You are just disrespected ... that's all!"* Eddie similarly added that the experience undermined his personal dignity, *"I feel like I am disrespecting my dignity when it comes to my supervisor telling me to go and do female bathroom."* Moses indicated that the situation was heart-breaking, *"For men, those things break your heart."* While Johannes shared that the situation not only violated his cultural traditions, but also was discouraging for a man of his age to be forced to work in such environments, *"Because if you can remember nicely; things like that they've got [bodily fluids] somewhere, somehow there is blood. And that is something that will discourage your spirit."* From these conversations, it became clear that there was something emasculating about cleaning female-only toilets.

Discussion of men cleaning female-only toilets

What the findings of this sub-theme show is that the act of men cleaning female gendered toilets still generates socio-cultural and symbolic assumptions about gender (Bartolomei, 2010; Gershenson & Penner, 2009; Kilkey, 2010). To me, the preoccupation with scattered feminine hygiene products suggested some of the men felt that they would get adulterated with filth, impurity, and uncleanliness by coming into contact with women's most intimate articles. In Leviticus 15, versus 19-24, the writer of the book stated the following about women's menstrual discharge:

> When a woman has her regular flow of blood, the impurity of her monthly period will last seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean till

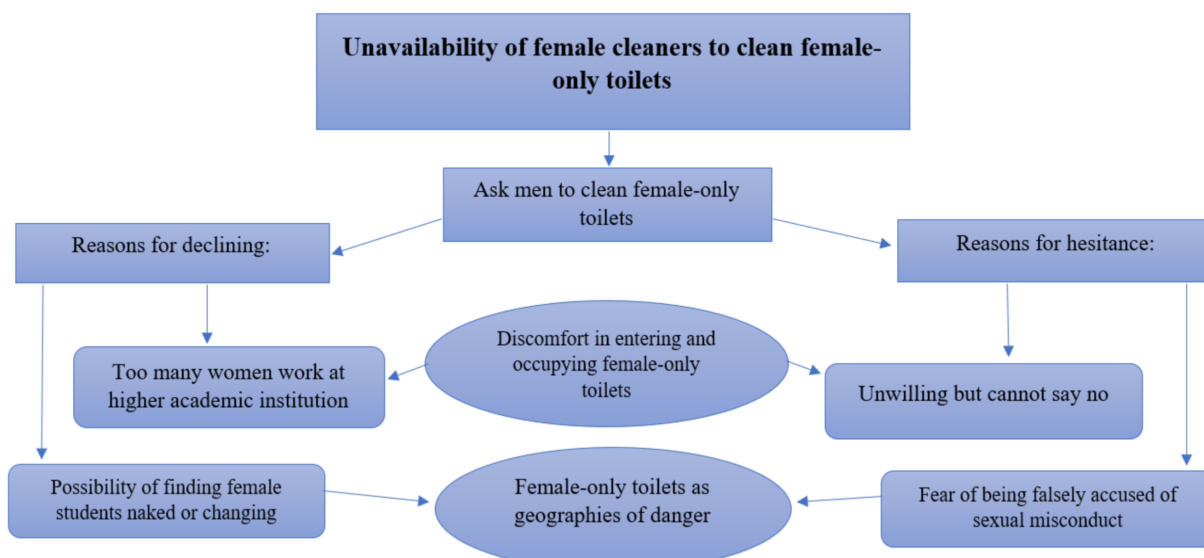
> evening. Anything she lies on during her period will be unclean, and anything she sits on will be unclean. Whoever touches her bed must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. Whoever touches anything she sits on must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be unclean till evening. Whether it is the bed or anything she was sitting on, when anyone touches it, he will be unclean till evening. If a man lies with her and her monthly flow touches him, he will be unclean for seven days; any bed he lies on will be unclean.

As culturally inclined men, I wondered if some of these men relied on these discourses to conflate the female-sexed body and female-only toilets as sources of unholy adulteration, indecency, and uncleanliness (see Xoli, Victor, and Johannes' comments). Yet if men think that cleaning a female-only toilet was degrading, the opposite begs the question if then cleaning a male-only toilet is more honourable instead. The reference to gender-based violence suggested that some men come to see female-only toilets as geographies of danger (Mitchell, 2009). I am intrigued if the aspect of endangerment about female-only toilet would have been removed if the men had to clean gender-neutral toilets. But what was clear was how some of the men wanted to dissociate themselves with the cleaning female-only toilets. For instance, to make sure that I understood how discrete and isolated they cleaned female-only toilets, the men kept on repeating how occasional it was to clean female-only toilets (see Christopher, Zweli, and Xoli's comments). This further reinforced the idea that even though they performed the task within specific occasions, it was still a compromise for them and their respectability. Below, Figure 5.8 presents a summary of Sub-theme 2.2.

Figure 5.8

Summary of Sub-theme 2.2

Practical limitations within working spaces



Using Frosh's (1997, 1994b, 1992) psychosocial framework and masculinity studies, the findings in this sub-theme show how alienation becomes a common defence mechanism to cope with the unwanted and emasculating features in their line of work. To extrapolate from Karl Marx's (1844/1964) theory of alienation, alienation from exploitative labour systems leads workers to lose their agency to determine their own life choices and destiny. This is because subjects (here male cleaners) become come to see themselves as things or containers of labour, devoid of any psychological, emotional, and social properties. At home, they might be leaders capable of instructing their wives and children to clean the household toilet. But at work, they must submit to performing a dehumanising job description until they can be human again at home. In this case, the men talk about the discomfort of having to clean a female toilet using words such as 'unclean' to describe a state of being shocked that a man would be subjected to various bodily fluids excreted by women. This experience not only becomes emasculating but also makes one from a religious point of view 'unclean'. Yet Butler's (1993) notion of performativity urges me to have a deeper conversation here. The same facilities in a male toilet are found in a female toilet. The men clean the similar but not all the same bodily fluids in a male toilet. If such conditions of a male and female toilet remain similar (i.e., the distinction here appears the naming of one facility for male or female use), then the problem might not be forced to clean female-only toilets, but perhaps the subjection to being under women's service. But then again,

one should not forget that these men are forced at times to perform such unwanted and undesirable functions as highlighted earlier. From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of habitus, it was interesting how the spoke of themselves as cleaning female-only toilets in a process-like manner. They described their jobs from a structured manner, alluding that there are procedures to follow in what they were doing, and that not just anyone can do what they do (an institutional habitus). I wondered if the elaborate explanation that their job required rules and protocols was a way to reassure me and perhaps them that their work was important.

5.4.2.3 SUB-THEME 2.3: SEPARATING CLEANING AS A JOB AND A CHORE

The following sub-theme presents findings of whether black male cleaners also clean at home. The sub-theme explores critical questions around the possibility of "domesticating masculinity" (Bartolomei, 2010, p. 102), wherein they would clean as a job but not as a chore at home.

5.4.2.3.1 Men cleaning at home

Before I could make sense of this role differentiation, I first wanted to find out if the men had disclosed to their family and friends if they worked as cleaners.

Prosper indicated that disclosure to his family and friends happened voluntarily, *"Yes, they (family and friends) know that I am a cleaner. I told them when I applied and got the job that I clean at Wits."* Zweli stated his family is aware that he works as a cleaner for a living, *"My family knows that I do cleaning for a living."* Victor indicated he was far more open about his job description, as on a few occasions, his wife and children were invited to watch him perform his job, *"They (wife and children) used to come here and watch me when I am busy working."* Sechaba also indicated that, *"My wife and children know that I clean at Wits."* Moses stated that he shared the news with his family and friends, *"I told my family and friends that I am doing cleaning and they did not mind."* Kgosi indicated that, *"I am not afraid to tell people that I am a cleaner."* When I first asked Christopher whether he had disclosed his job to his family and friends, he initially indicated that, *"I am an honest person, Lindo. And I'll always be honest, I tell them (family and friends) where I work. They know me by my uniform."* But there was something in how he said this that to me as he later indicated that he had disclosed to *"The ones I live with full time."* This personalised disclosure to close friends and family was what Donald advocated, qualifying that it is not everyone's

business to know where you work, *"I don't think that everyone needs to know. You work where you work, sometimes it's not everyone's business."* Based on the undermining they experienced from students, I was surprised that so many of the men had decided to disclose what they did for a living to their family and friends.

What was also surprising was the mixed reactions by family and friends to some of these disclosures. Kgosi, for example, stated that multiple family and friends questioned him about doing 'women's work', *"But when you say, "I mop and I scrub the floors", they say, "How come? Are there no women there?" I say, "There are - we share the work." But right now, they understand ... I told them."* Eddie noted that for his family, any work was work, *"They did not mind. For us, because we were poor, any work was work."* Like Eddie, Musa's family also did not have a problem with him being a cleaner as his job enabled him to help other people, *"They did not have a problem, because I told them I am going to look for work. They were happy about it. And the thing is, I work to help a lot of other people."* Kabelo started off by telling his mom who would make it okay to tell the rest of the family, *"I told her that this is what I will be doing. She said, "Okay, are you going to tell the rest if the family?" I said, "No, but I was hoping that you can help me telling them."* Themba, decided to tell his family that he was a cleaner when he was ready for any reaction, indicating that, *"I was prepared for whatever when I told them. I told them that I was a cleaner, and they did not mind."* Xoli, on the other hand, received much berating comments after telling a couple of friends and acquaintances that he is a male cleaner, *"Other men say we are doing women's work. "Why do you feel happy cleaning toilets? [So], you shout at those children every day?""* But this was not the only time he was embarrassed for disclosing his job description to other men. As indicated earlier, after Xoli had opened to another male acquaintance, the acquaintance not only laughed at him, but told other men to join in the derision, *"I remember the other guy in my area. I told him, "I clean at Wits", he laughed. He told his friends that I used toilet brush." It was as if I smelled like shit."* Fezile spoke about a similar response when he disclosed to a former girlfriend, *"She laughed ... because I don't think she has ever dated a cleaner before. ... So, me and her did not last because she dated guys with money."* While the responses to disclosing were mixed, it was evident that the process of disclosing should be considered carefully, especially with friends and women partners.

Returning to cleaning at work versus at home, Victor indicated he is involved household chores *"I do clean",* and there was no discrimination whether it was *"inside the house, or outside the house."* Johannes claimed that he is also actively involved in household chores and did not mind doing these, *"I am also involved in cleaning, washing, cooking and tidying the house - and I do not mind"* because *"We grew up cleaning at home. I don't see, or I don't have a problem to clean a house or toilets."* Sechaba noted that he had picked up a lot of what his partner does around the house, and when she is gone, he knows what to do, *"Right now, I have a wife. But when she is not around, because I learnt what she does, I do it."* Xoli indicated that when his partner is away, such as attending social gatherings, he steps in to perform the household chores she would normally do, *"So, when she's gone to church or wherever, I need to make sure that everything is the way she does it."* Prosper stated he willingly performed all household chores, including the of scrubbing toilets, *"When she is not here, I have to wash the dishes, clean the house, do the laundry, scrub the toilets, and pack up nicely."* Zweli indicated that he was involved in domestic work at home because he loved his wife, *"I used to tell my wife to sit down and watch me do the cleaning. I do this because she is my wife, and not my domestic worker."* Fezile also shared he is involved in all household chores, *"I clean even when I do have a woman",* as this was inculcated from early childhood, *"...when I was still in school, we used to ... wash our dishes as soon as we finished eating. ... You h[ad] to wash [your own] clothes. Your room [had] be clean."* It was clear that some men had come to egalitarian norms when it came to seeing gender roles at home.

However, for some men, there was complete or partial separation of cleaning as job and cleaning as a chore at home. For example, Donald explained that he leaves cleaning when he leaves from work, *"When I knock off work, I knock off from all cleaning."* Moses indicated that cleaning at home was intended for his wife, *"Only for the job. I don't clean at home; my wife does that."* Eddie also stated his wife does all the cooking and cleaning at home, *"No, I don't clean at home because my wife cooks and cleans for me."* Christopher stated that he does not perform any cleaning duties at home, as 'someone' is there to do it, *"I don't clean [at home]. Here, I clean because that is [my] job. At home, there is someone who is supposed to do that."* Musa indicated that he partly contributed to the cleaning households during the weekends, *"During the week, I don't because I am working. So, I only clean on weekends."* The reason for this

was that he is usually tired from work and wants to take the 'load off', *"I would not get back and just clean because I am tired. I am trying to take the load off."* Musa did indicate though that he does help his wife in preparing meals, indicating that, *"During the week, I only cook. When my wife comes, she just finishes off and then dishes up."* Kabelo stated from any early age, he was discouraged from taking any cleaning chores at home, *"Even when we were growing up, we knew that women were cleaning. When you clean as a man, they would not say you clean well, they'd say you tried."* Kgosi believed that it is a well-known fact that women are supposed to do all the household chores, *"Even if you go anywhere, there is no man who'd do the chores whilst a woman just sits. There is none, no matter where you go."* Themba indicated that even when he attempted to take up some of the household chores, he was dissuaded by his woman partner, who stated that cleaning and other household chores are woman's role, *"I did try to wash her t-shirts and she said, "No, that can never happen. I am the one who has to do washing for you." "Even when you you're sick?" She said, "Yes, I will do it.""* It became clear that gender ideology still informs much of what men and women should and should not do particularly around the private household.

However, another phenomenon which mediated the reasons why men decided to clean or not cleaning at home was the belief that a man who cleans at home is a man who has been bewitched by his female partner. For example, while Sechaba was not concerned that *he* would be considered as bewitching him, his female partner was the one who was more with how the community would view *her* by allowing him to take on some of the traditional female roles in the household:

> Back at home, my child's mother knocks off at 18h00 and I knock off at 14h00. So, when she gets home it's dark. My neighbours are even surprised. I would get home, clean the house, wash the dishes publicly without stress. And then, I'd cook. So, when she gets home the food would be ready. She also feels ashamed. I remember yesterday, I took a kettle to get water to make tea. She said, "Why do you have to make tea yourself? What would people say?" I said, "Why?" She said, "They'd think I bewitched you. You're busy cooking, they'll think I bewitched you." I said, "No, you are from work, you are exhausted. Just imagine you come from work tired, and I am just watching TV. You have to start cleaning the house, cook, and iron." She doesn't mind. Around 21h00,

> she'd say, "Let me iron all your week's clothes." I'd say, "I knock off early, I will iron them." She'd say, "No you are not supposed to iron." So, they are still holding to the ways they were raised in, that as a man, I am not supposed to wash dishes. The only thing that I am unable to do is wash her clothes.

As noted above, the beliefs around bewitchment amongst men who clean are a socio-cultural construction intended to keep men away from traditional woman's roles at home. Prosper suggests this happens through some supernatural forces, such as women mixing a concoction of a love potion in men's food:

> They say it looks like Prosper's food has been 'spiced'. And I say, it's fine if they've spiced my food, but I am not like that. As people, we have to help each other out. It doesn't have to be like she is unemployed, and you are not, then she has to bring you food all the time. She irons for you even when you didn't go to work on weekends, and you want her to bring you food all the time? You have to tell her that, "Today I am cooking." And then she'll say, "I'll do something else."

While some of the men were not concerned about being bewitched by their wives, men like Eddie did believe in this form of spiritual intervention, stating that woman would perform such spells to entrap their partner to make him submissive to her every whim:

> And there are others who do give their husbands 'korobela' (love potion used by woman on a man to make him love more loving and keep him submissive). There are some naughty women, they want to control you. You must surrender to anything she says. They go to the 'inyanga' (traditional healer) because they want you to be meek and look at them alone. So, I need something. They do it for you. She would never tell you that I gave you 'muthi' (love potion). She gives you 'muthi' and you just agree to anything. You do everything she tells you. And a man is not supposed to do that, there must be situations where he stands his ground.

Discussion of black men cleaning at home

From the findings of this sub-theme, majority of the men reported telling their family and friends that they were cleaners. Many of these men also indicated that they

willingly perform household chores at home. It is worth questioning whether those who opted out of cleaning at home were not persuaded by cultured and gendered practice of lobola, as most who indicated that they do not clean were married. According to Makama (2020, p. v), ‘lobola’ refers to “a practice that centres around the transference of wealth from the groom or a groom’s family to the bride’s family towards the formalisation of marriage.” While lobola was (and is) mainly intended as a practice that would bring together two families together through marriage, lobola especially in patriarchal societies, has been used as a practice by men to objectify women as valuable property initially owned by their fathers and brothers”, and subsequently transferred as their husbands (Kalule-Sabiti et al., 2007, p. 2).

Another explanation for this might be that men justify paid domestic work as employment, but unpaid domestic work as a woman’s responsibility. As noted by one of the female cleaners in Bartolomei’s (2010, p. 94) study:

> Men don’t give any help either in the workplace or at home. Even if they are cooks, they refuse to cook for their own family and refuse to do anything unpaid. They think that a man’s job is only a job for a wage (A.T., thirty-five years old, female cleaner).

The findings of this sub-theme also show the possibility of some black male cleaners espousing egalitarian norms when it came to the sharing of household chores (see Sechaba, Prosper, Xoli, Victor, Johannes, Zweli, and Fezile’s comments). For these men, there was no divide of who they are at home and at work. It appears that these men saw cleaning in the context of love and not seeing their female partners as subordinate to them. Contrary to Morrell and Jewkes’ (2011) study exploring the relationship between men who engage in care work and commitment to gender equity, ‘care’ transferred into being both a functional and emotional activity which allowed these men to promote gender equity in their own private households (see Sechaba, Prosper, Xoli, Victor, Johannes, Zweli, and Fezile’s comments). However, there is still concern that men who performed household chores were suspected to be bewitched by their female partners. Below, Figure 5.9 presents a summary of Sub-theme 2.3.

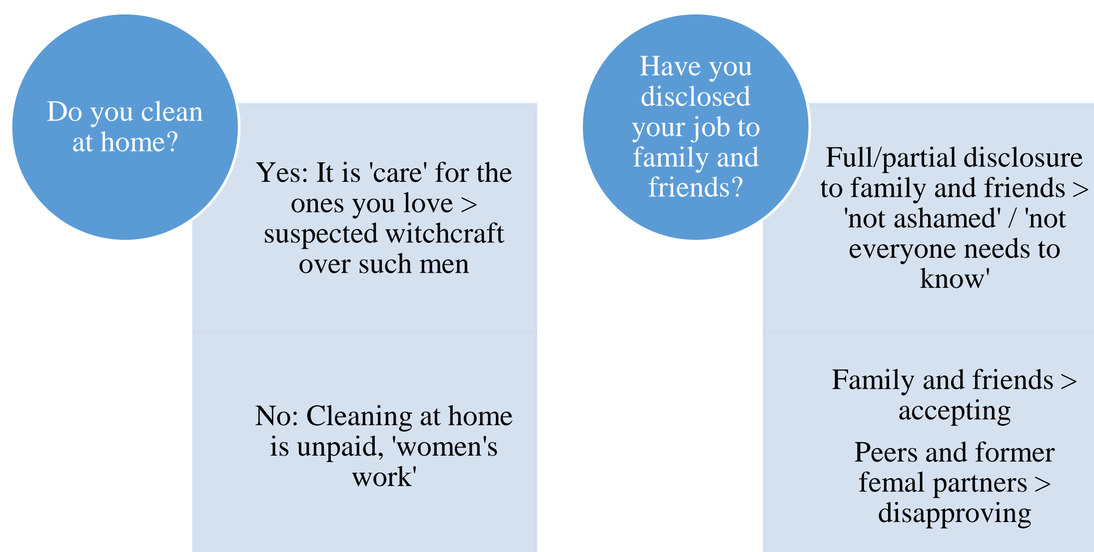


Figure 5.9 Summary of Sub-theme 2.3

Using Frosh's (1995, 1994a, 1993) psychosocial framework and masculinity studies, the findings in this sub-theme show how the demonstration of love and care remains intertwined with gender ideology as evidenced by how the men separate cleaning as a job and household chore. Some of the men stated that they do not mind contributing to household chores. In fact, this became a way to demonstrate that they cared about their partners' feelings. Some reflected that while growing, such men were considered bewitched by their female partners. But surprisingly, some of the men were not dissuaded at all by this belief. In fact, it appeared that these acceptance of male responsibility for household chores also led to full disclosure to one's family and friends of what they do for work. While others who seemed to hold more traditional values about who should perform household chores demonstrated partial disclosure of what they did for work. From Butler's (2009) notion of performativity, a possible explanation for this can be found in how dominant socio-cultural practices like the gendering of labour still shape how men see what is paid versus unpaid labour. Because men could attain a source of income from cleaning as well as contribute to their familial and patriarchal duties, cleaning becomes more valued a as job than as a household chore for men. For women, cleaning was expected of them, presumably as this was one of the expectations which come with paying lobola. But practices like lobola do not only become pertinent to men as they negotiate their masculinity. The African belief that men who enjoy doing 'women's work' at home have somehow been bewitched as was

evidenced here also show it influenced how women perceived themselves. From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of habitus, the findings of this sub-theme also showed how men negotiate who they are at home versus who they are at work (agent-structure divide of individual agency). At work, they are expected to follow orders without expressing how they feel about doing certain functions. Yet when they get home, they are offered the opportunity for agency to determine their course of action. One wonders if perhaps these field distinctions and who they can were maintained by the men to regain sense of importance to counteract feelings of inadequacy as evidence in the world field environment.

5.4.3 THEME 3: ACKNOWLEDGING CLEANING AS A MEANS TO AN END: "SO, LAUGHING AT ME OR TAKING ME SOMEHOW CAN'T PUT BREAD ON THE TABLE"

Theme 3 discusses the early career choices that they men had before entering cleaning. The theme then engages with how they have managed to utilise their jobs into their ability to provide. The theme ends by asking what futures the men have inside and outside the higher academic institution. Below, Table 5.5 shows inclusion criteria utilised in the emergent sub-themes derived in Theme 3:

Theme 3: Acknowledging cleaning as a means to an end: "So, laughing at me or taking me somehow can't put bread on the table"	
Sub-themes	**Inclusion criteria**
Sub-theme 3.1: Pre-occupational aspirations prior to entering cleaning	Data related to the men's early career choices and some of the factors which affected these from coming to fruition.
Sub-theme 3.2: Cleaning occupation facilitating the ability to provide	Data that is relevant to the men reframing cleaning to enabling them with the ability to provide.
Sub-theme 3.3: Future cleaning and non-cleaning aspirations	Data that is relevant to how the men see their future inside and outside the cleaning occupation.

Table 5.5: Inclusion criteria for emerging sub-themes in Theme 3

5.4.3.1 SUB-THEME 3.1: PRE-OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS PRIOR TO ENTERING CLEANING

The men were asked to contemplate on the dreams and aspirations they had before taking on cleaning as an occupation. By asking this question, the men were taken back to who and what they wanted to become while growing up.

5.4.3.1.1 Early career choices and political, socioeconomic circumstances

The dream to be a cleaner was not the ideal career for any of the men. Yet these early career choices were affected by adverse political, socioeconomic circumstances.

For example, Fezile had a passion to either be a soccer player or coach others into the sport, stating that, *"I wanted to be a soccer player. I was playing soccer. Even at school, I was playing soccer. … I had a skill; I could teach a person who didn't know how to play soccer."* Donald expressed that he had an interest in becoming a teacher to contribute to the next generation, *"I wanted to become a teacher and teach the children.*" Christopher indicated that he wanted to pursue a career in the mining sciences, indicating that *"When we grew up, we used to hear of the stories of the people in the mines. So, I have always been interested in what they did."* Eddie added that he enjoyed the construction and operation of trains, *"I wanted to be an engineer for MetroRail. I wanted to fix and work with trains."* Johannes indicated that he wanted to become a truck driver to traveling and enjoy new environments, *"I wanted to drive trucks like the ones you see in the shops, driving from coast to coast."* Zweli expressed that he wanted to work in the manufacture and selling of cars, *"I would say working for a dealership like Mercedes Benz because back in the day, they used to respect you if you had an uncle who drove one."* Kabelo stated that he wanted to become a businessman operating a franchise of business chains, *"For me, I'd say being a businessman making money, and owning businesses like Shoprite, Checkers, and PicknPay."* Xoli was never settled in what he wanted to become; instead, he allowed himself to explore different career interests, *"I have never really enjoyed one thing. When I was young, I enjoyed carpeting, then teaching, and then I wanted to be a social worker."* The men showed various interests when considering a career that they wished to pursue, building on what they saw from role models and what was socially approved at the time.

Victor mentioned that he wished to pursue a career where he would work with his hands, yet only as a supervisor, *"I would have been happy doing something like*

cleaning or construction but as a supervisor." Sechaba wanted to use his compassion to be able to provide care for others, such as in emergency medicine, *"When I grew up, not that I am a proud person, but I am a compassionate person. When I grew up, I wanted to be a paramedic – the ambulances."* Themba reflected on the school subjects he enjoyed, including accounting and economics, and how these would have led him to a success career in the financial accounting or management sciences, *"I was good in accounting and economics. I could have become an accountant or a manger for a company when I finished my matric."* Moses expressed that he had an interest of working under or manage his grandfather's fleet of taxis, stating that *"My grandfather had many taxis, so I wanted to do that when I grew up."* Musa, like Donald stated that he wanted to teach, with history and world politics as his favourite subjects, *"I would say for me, I would have been a schoolteacher because I enjoyed learning about history and world politics."* But Kgosi remarked that he had not given that much thought to his future:

> To tell you, I was just going to school because I had to go. I never had plans of what I wanted to become when I passed. I just told myself that I am going to find a job even if I didn't go to school. …the problem was that I did not understand even when the teachers were teaching. That was my problem. I wanted to become educated, but the problem is that we are not born the same.

Upon follow up of these career choices, I discovered that many of the men's pre-occupational aspirations were thwarted by poverty and high employment in the country. Fezile, for example, indicated that he failed to pursue his dreams because of family circumstances, such as the loss of his father, *"When my father passed away, I had to take over most of his responsibilities."* Moses stated that due to personal circumstances at home, he could not pursue his dream career, "*Actually, when you grow up you wish to become something, but then it never happens due to the situation at home."* Johannes added that due to poverty, he had to take cleaning to survive, *"But since there was poverty, that is whereby it puts a man on a difficult life so that he can end up seeing himself doing what is so called cleaning."* For Eddie, his upbringings, which had no breadwinners, led him to drop out of school and find work, *"So, then you find that you have to leave school because there is no money."* Besides the lack of breadwinners, Zweli indicated that the unavailability of jobs resulted in him taking any

available job opportunities, *"Right now, we work as cleaners because there are no jobs. You just take any job. When they say cleaning, you take it."* Prosper stated that due to dire circumstances, he was forced to take any available opportunity to survive, *"It's the situation really, you cannot stay at home and watch your family starve. The situation forces you to take action."* For Musa and his generation, there were limited choices for him and other black men in selecting the job of their choice growing up, *"When you think about it, when we were growing up, we had fewer options to pick what we wanted. So many of us became cleaners."* The men suggest that poverty and limited job opportunities were the major factors that held them back, leaving them with limited choices but find other means to survive.

With the poverty, joblessness, and a lack of education to enter more job opportunities, cleaning become the readily available way to provide for oneself and their family. Victor, for example, stated that, *"It's not nice being a cleaner. It's because there are no other jobs. There are no other jobs. There's no jobs, so that is why I came here to be a cleaner, because of the lack of jobs."* The pressure of financial circumstances leaves one with few options but to take what is available as Kabelo explained that "*The thing is, you know a situation puts you in a corner whereby you don't have a choice, you end up taking anything that comes up your way."* Kgosi noted that because of the high rates of unemployment, he ended up feeling happy to secure any form of employment, stating that *"But it's just that there are no jobs, you'd be happy that at least I am being paid. Because just sitting at home is not good."* It should be noted that even when men like Eddie attempted to train as apprentices, he was retrenched and could not find any available jobs *"And I was not born as a cleaner. ... I went to the course for making [motor vehicle] spare parts. But I lost my job, and I had no choice but to take this job."* Sechaba also acknowledged all the attempts he had made to go back to what he initially wanted to pursue as a career but was discouraged by the University's management system:

> When I went to the paramedic institution, they said if you want to become a paramedic, you need to get a fire-fighting certificate. It was going to take 4 weeks. I then approached management at work and told them I needed to do the course, then they said, "You will have to take unpaid leave." So, I said "I will do the fire-fighting course, and then I'll do a paramedic one." Then they said,

"That course is no longer offered." .... So, that is where I got discouraged, because the university would not let me study full-time.

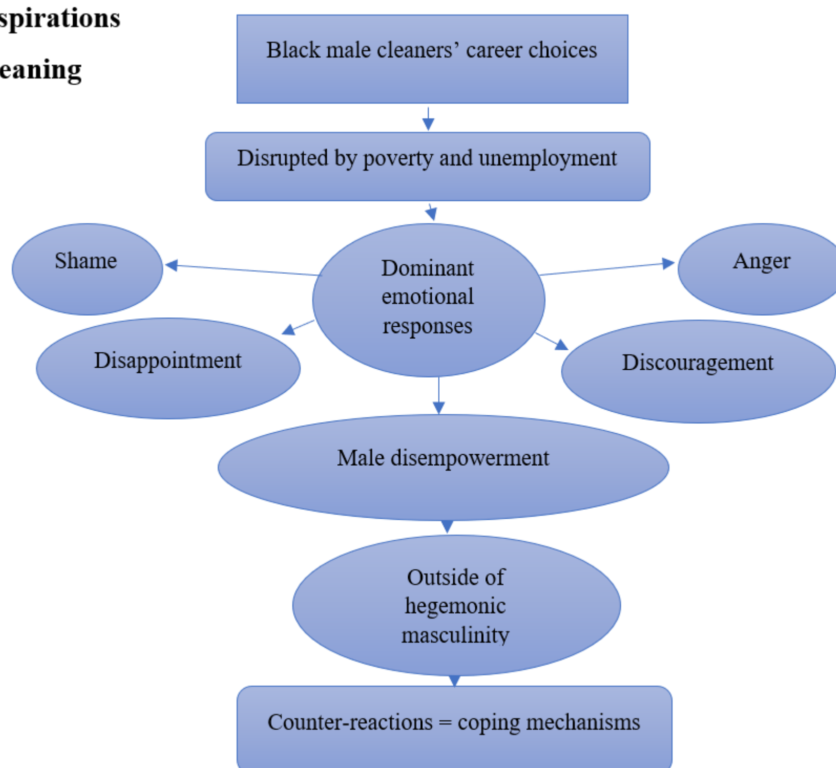
Discussion of early career choices and political, socioeconomic circumstances

By far, the career choices of most black South Africans during the apartheid era were adversely affected by the Bantu Education system. According to Byrnes (1996), it is believed that the intended effect of this system was to guarantee that black people ended up in non-professional and non-skilled fields. Yet following the enactment of new the dispensation, SA become a democratic state. But the findings of this sub-theme show that the promises of democracy have not been realised as the men are still doing what the apartheid system has done to their parents and grandparents. The other lens that we should not forget to see this reality is that the men work in a space that is known for the realisation of one's aspirations. This environment offers the opportunity to share in the fruits of democratic. The men get to see black male lecturers and students living and participating in this new SA. These lecturers and students come into the higher academic institution to study to be engineers, teachers, and managing directors - the occupations they saw themselves pursuing, but currently feel stuck and unable to exercise the same opportunities in cleaning positions.

For example, for one of the men with a matric, Themba who was 33-years old, single, with no children, and had a tenure of 10 years, the hope of working for the higher academic institution might have been to save to afford tuition to study further his studies in the career path that he envisioned for himself. This is especially because a higher academic institution is a space of realising one's dreams. It is a future-oriented space that promises a better life if one works hard and takes advantage of the available opportunities. But for him, he might feel that so many opportunities are passing him by while he cleans for others who are passing by and living the dreams he had if he was given the same opportunities. This because Themba and the other male cleaners clean in a specific space. In other words, we should ask what is the symbolic value of the space that they clean. Because the space they clean is different for somebody cleaning at a shopping centre or government institution. This space is a future-making space. This space shapes how they think about their own dreams, future, and opportunities while they clean for others who are actively pursuing their dreams. Below, Figure 5.10 presents a summary of Sub-theme 3.1.

Figure 5.10 Summary of Sub-theme 3.1

Pre-occupational aspirations prior to entering cleaning



Using Frosh and his colleagues' work (Frosh et al., 2003; Frosh et al., 2002; Pattman et al., 1998) psychosocial framework's particular focus on masculinity studies, the findings of this sub-theme show how anger, shame, disappointment, discouragement, and disempowerment become dominant emotional responses to the men's realities of feeling stuck in an unwanted job. But hidden these feelings of being stuck are the more underlying feelings of being robbed of the promises of a better future. This feeling of generalised helplessness becomes directed to those who have failed to remove the obstacles to overcoming poverty and severe unemployment for already struggling and deprived black men. This is because there is an undeniable pain within poverty and unemployment which deprives men who can barely afford to make ends meet from fulfilling their familial responsibilities as breadwinners and leaders of households. Bringing in Butler's (2009) notion of precarity, Silberschmidt (2005) suggests that black men remain severely affected by poverty and unemployment, especially where there is a simultaneous socioeconomic empowerment of women. This is because, as Silberschmidt (2005, p. 189) puts it, "The possibility that men could be disempowered is not entertained." According to Silberschmidt (2005), these disempowered men further draw away from society as they become overcome by

feelings of rejection, alienation, and lack of self-worth. From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of habitus, a gendered habitus emerges which almost instructs the men that feeling stuck in an unwanted job was a better compromise than being unemployed. In an effort to maintain a sense of being manly despite the severe conditions of vulnerability, the men use various alternate schemas to achieve what is acceptable masculine identity, such as compromise and sacrifice.

5.4.3.2 SUB-THEME 3.2: CLEANING OCCUPATION FACILITATING THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE

This sub-theme how the men learned to become dependent on their work. Yet in spite cleaning not being their preferred career choice, the men reconciled this conflict with the resolution that their jobs still enable them to provide - a legitimate and acceptable way of performing masculinity.

5.4.3.2.1 The ability to provide

For many of the male cleaners in this study, it became apparent that they felt stuck, and dependent on their jobs. However, through time, the men managed to reframe the conflict of being cleaners with the realisation that their jobs enabled them to provide.

For example, Moses, who held the longest tenure of 19-years stated that when he asked his supervisor for a different role, he was told that he was employed as a cleaner and it will remain that way:

> And when I tell them...like when I got longer years working like that, why can't they change us and give us sometimes another job? I don't know how. And then the new one must carry on. No, they don't want like that. If you know the job, it is you who must just do the work.

Over time, it was suggested by Christopher that to cope with feeling stuck, *"You get used to everything!"* as *"You end up not seeing it the way they see it. Because it is your work."* Zweli indicated that there is no other reaction than to feel grateful that at least you have a job, *"There is nothing you can think – it's your job. There is a belief that you came here looking for work – so just think I am working, even if it's bad."* Sechaba also acknowledged this inability to do anything about one's situation,

indicating that *"I got used to it. Then after that, I realised that a job is a job, why should I feel ashamed of myself?"* Johannes admitted that the job is something he got used to, but is still bothered by the unpleasant interactions he still has with students, *"The job is something you can get used to over time - the cleaning of toilets and so on. But you never get used to some of the interactions you have with disrespectful people."* Xoli stated that he felt demoralised as a man being unable to do anything about his situation, *"It's painful for any man. ... You do not feel like you can do anything about it - even if you wanted to."* Victor indicated that he finally had to focus on the idea that he had job and that is what gets him paid, *"There is no other way, whether things are good or bad, you are a cleaner and this is the job you are paid to do."* It became clear that the men had learnt to cope with the despair over their situation by accepting that they had to work to support themselves and their families.

While some of the men were preoccupied with feelings of hopelessness and despondency, Themba was quick to adopt a survivalist mechanism indicating that *"You can never get used to it. But this is your job - you accept that and move on".* Donald was adamant that part of getting used to the job was instead of complaining, the other men should that there is somebody at home who is desperately looking for their jobs, *"You cannot just complain forever. This is a job, and someone is sitting at home looking for your job. You must just get used it, or you stay home where it's worse."* Prosper sympathised with some men indicating that some men did not belong in cleaning, *"Some men do not belong in this job. We are all here with different gifts. Imagine you were meant to be a president, but you are now cleaning?"* Kabelo stated that despite feeling disappointed, it was important to stay focused on the job, *"I feel bad, it's not nice. I am not feeling nice. I am not feeling very well,"* but now, *"...I just do my job and leave many things."* Eddie learned to cope by adopting a state of gratitude, indicating that *"Most people (cleaners) are happy because they have jobs. They do not care what it involves."* This was confirmed by Kgosi who declared that he was in fact happy to clean but this was because he had no education to seek any other option:

> **LINDO:** But does the fact that you are a man affect the way you perceive this job?
> **KGOSI:** No, it doesn't affect the way I see the job. I get happy when I am cleaning. I get happy.

LINDO: Okay.

KGOSI: Seriously. If I can't get happy there is no other work that I can get, because I did not go to school. That is why I am happy cleaning, that at least I have a job.

Yet the conflict of not having a job that one wants was resolved in the men realising that cleaning still offered the ability to put food on the table. For example, Zweli expressed that he had great joy given that his job enabled him to fulfil his patriarchal responsibilities:

> There is nothing that makes me happy than something that puts bread on the table for my children. Nothing! … Even if I don't like it, but as long as there is food on the table for my children, I don't have a problem. I must say, I am happy.

Even with the little money that he earned, Moses indicated that he saw cleaning giving him the means to provide, *"Money can never be more, because there are debts, and you have to provide for the household and so on."* Much like Zweli, Christopher also indicated that cleaning enabled him to take better care of his family, *"I am able to take care of the family. When I go home, I am able to take them something."* Johannes reflected on all the changes he had managed to accomplish since being employed as a cleaner, *"My life has changed because now I have my own place. I was staying with friends, staying far in the location. Now I bought my flat around town."* Themba indicated that having the ability to provide gave him a sense of pride over his life, *"You feel well, because when you wake up to go to work, you know what you are supposed to do. You know what your job is."* Kgosi was able to reconcile his reality given that the money he received in bank notes did not differ than that of anybody, *"Money is not labelled; it only has its own markings. So, the money is not written that it's from a cleaner. It would just be written on your pay-slip, and no one would see your pay-slip."* Donald noted that this money is the same means used by other workers to provide, *"But at the end of the day, money is money. Money is not labelled. ... And I clean the toilets because I do not want my children to starve."* It became clear that the men saw sacrifice as an important feature of being a provider.

Prosper indicated that this was the expense that all men had to make, *"You cannot as a man stay home when you see that your children and family are starving. As a man, you wake up and do your best to make sure they do not suffer."* Eddie was given the same advice by father, stating that *"My father said to me, "When it gets hard, you must remember that you need to provide. ... Those people will not give you money to support your family.""* Sechaba indicated that unlike being unemployed, cleaning enabled him to provide for his wife and children, *"Just because I am cleaner does not mean that I cannot take care of my wife and children. Society just thinks because we are cleaners, we are nothing. ... But some of us are breadwinners."* Fezile pointed out that being a provider has nothing much to do with how much one earns, but a 'real' man shows himself by honouring his responsibilities, *"I don't think it's really about how much you earn. If you cannot take care of your responsibilities, then you are not a real man."* Victor therefore indicated that he had no problem with anyone laughing at him because he was able to put food on the table, *"Because I know how to put bread on the table. So, laughing at me or taking [to] me somehow can't put bread on the table."* It was clear that the ability to provide enabled the men to feel more dignity and respect as performing what is required of them as men.

Discussion of the ability to provide

The findings in this sub-theme show that the worst thing that can happen to a man is not to have money that comes from having a job. As some of the men have alluded in the synopsis and certain parts of this study, they themselves might have been unemployed at some point, and that event made them appreciate finding any job with more gratitude. You still can go to work and make a better living than most men waiting for a call back or a pickup at a construction site or outside a shopping centre. This is because poverty and unemployment strips men off their identity and social standing at home, especially when it comes to how they are regarded by their wives and children. Although I did not ask this, but as their children grow older, they will be asked to explain who they are and what do they do for a living. Cleaning might not be the most desired job for most men, but it comes with a guaranteed salary, which helps them maintain a social status that is certainly better than being unemployed. When these men go off to work, nobody has to know what they do for a living when they are not wearing their uniforms.

But besides at times feeling stuck (see Moses, Zweli, and Prosper's comments) and helpless (see Christopher, Zweli, and Xoli's comment), some of the black male cleaners in this study came to adopt certain rationalisations to cope with their work (see Figure 4.31). One of these justifications was the lessening of the situation by just getting used to it (see Christopher, Sechaba, Johannes, Victor, Themba, and Donalds's comments). This was equivalent to the vague and unemotive response, such as *this is just a job*. At times, I got the impression that some of the men had learned to convince themselves that they were happy (see Kgosi's comment), that they cannot complain (see Donald's comment), or that they had to accept their situation (see Themba's comment) because they were lucky to have a job. These justifications resemble Qayum and Ray's (2010) study around the Kolkata's culture in Southern Asia of male servants' compromises with dependent work. Much like the findings in this study, Qayum and Ray's (2010) showed that by male servants reaching a compromise that their work was "simply work", or a job "you get used to", made "lowly or undesirable tasks become ordinary work" (Qayum & Ray, 2010, p. 121). Below, Figure 5.11 provides a summary of Sub-theme 3.2.

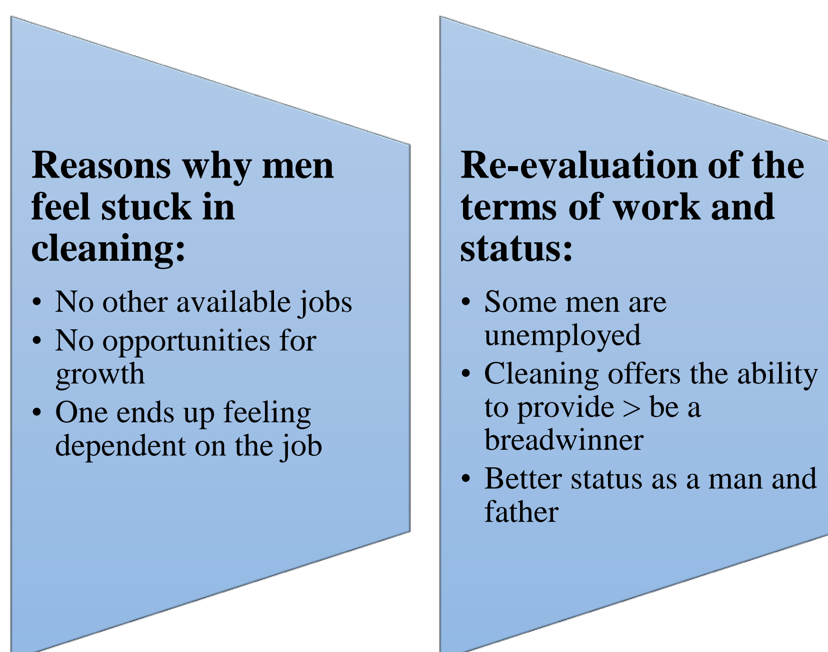


Figure 5.11 Summary of Sub-theme 3.2

Using Frosh's (1993, 1994b, 1997) psychosocial framework particular focus on masculinity studies, the findings in this sub-theme show that despite their failed career aspirations, the men could still celebrate themselves for showing commitment to

providing for their families. The men's re-evaluation of the terms and status of their work brought into the foreground a sense of being grateful that one has a job. Or in other words, the men did not see themselves as "failed patriarchs" (Qayum & Ray, 2010, p. 111). From Butler's (1993) notion of performativity, these men could still maintain an intelligible masculine identity. These men could encourage themselves as still fulfilling what is expected of them as sole or co-breadwinners. As Bartolomei (2010, p. 102) puts it, such men – in some instances as single wage earners – can be regarded as "responsible husbands and fathers in charge of maintaining their family and of assuring a positive developmental impact on their children." In fact, from Bourdieu's (2001) theory of habitus, one can say that these men identified with another gendered habitus or type of masculinity Kumar (cited in Qayum & Ray, 2010, p. 113) termed as "utopian patriarchalism" wherein:

> When they envision what they would wish for their [wives and children], especially [in securing financial stability for their families' livelihood], it is almost always a functioning, idealized patriarchal family—what Radha Kumar (1993, 125) has called "utopian patriarchalism"—where good husbands cherish and provide for their wives and children.

Taking on the values of "utopian patriarchalism", such as commitment husbandly duties like providing and caring for the wellbeing of one's family, allowed the men to still hold onto forms of acceptable masculinity in other aspects of their lives. For example, many of the men in this study were married through customary marriage by contributing lobola.

5.4.3.3 SUB-THEME 3.3: FUTURE CLEANING AND NON-CLEANING ASPIRATIONS

This sub-theme discusses the future aspirations of the men inside and outside the higher academic institution. While most indicated the desire to get a promotion to a better position, other men wanted to move outside of cleaning, starting their own businesses and other such non-cleaning aspirations.

5.4.3.3.1 Future plans inside and outside the higher academic institution

Given their active years of service, some of the black male cleaners saw a future inside the higher academic institution.

For example, Themba's dream was to be promoted to a supervisor, *"To be a supervisor, to me it's part of my dreams."* Donald stated that he would make a suitable supervisor given his experience on the job, *"I think I'd be a good supervisor because I know everything there is about this job."* Prosper indicated that being a supervisor meant far more than just earning a superior title, suggesting that *"I'd like to be a supervisor, because when you become a supervisor, even the money will go up."* However, Sechaba suggested that becoming a supervisor was not as easy as one might think:

> ... I do want to apply when positions of supervisor become available. But now my problem is that when there are short courses here in the university, they do not tell us in cleaning. In facilities, especially landscaping, they do tell them when there are courses. But we never get told. And since I've been here, I've never heard that there are people in cleaning who attended a course. And these courses are important because when there is an advertised post, they demand the certificates obtained from the courses, yet we have not been to those courses. That is our problem. … those posts are actually in relation to the work we do. But they must nominate people to attend those 2–3-day courses, and then they get certificates.

Zweli advised others in his position that cleaning at a higher academic institution has its own advantages, such as studying at no cost:

> I once said to one guy that I do understand you undermine this job, but you must take it as a first step. Wits can give you an opportunity to study. So immediately when you get there - even if they do not give you an opportunity to study - you can work and start saving money to study.

Instead of pursuing the supervisor route, Victor felt that it would be better for men to be moved to another division much more suitable for men, such as being transferred to security services:

> **LINDO:** So, what should be done about it (the future of black male cleaners)?
>
> **VICTOR:** They can try to teach us other jobs inside the campus.
>
> **LINDO:** Okay. Like what?

VICTOR: Maybe to take us to be security guards. A man from cleaner to be a security. Maybe it's something better than to be a cleaner for a long time.

While the other men like spoke about promotion, upscaling their education, or moving to a different division, Kgosi indicated that he had did no such aspirations:

There are some guys who said we need to go back to school. There are classes at Wits Plus[14]. But I told them that I am happy here, I can't go back to school. I said I can't leave this place. ... It shows that I am happy. Because if I was not happy, I would have gone to school.

Based on his extensive history on the job, Moses indicated that he saw himself fitting in the role of a labour union representative, *"I would really like to be a shop steward in a Union like Cosatu (a trade union federation)."* Christopher proposed that if he had a viable plan, he would advise the men to save and start their own businesses, *"If you have a plan. You can change your life with this job. You can save money to start a business or whatever."* Eddie, who was 60-year-old at the time of the interview, stated that he wants to amass enough money to retire soon:

My plan now is to save money and then go and rest. I want to rest because I've already built a house. As I am working right now, I am just working to do touch-ups, the garage, and boys' room. Then, I will save money and then just sit and rest. My body needs to rest. I do not want to think about a business or work again. No, I must sit now.

Johannes also indicated that his plans were to save enough money for the future:

LINDO: Okay. What is your plan going forward? For you and your family? What do you want to do going forward?

JOHANNES: To tell you, I've done everything. I just want to gather more money. I have a few things to do, and then save money afterwards.

Kabelo stated that he wishes to follow his entrepreneurial drive, indicating that *"I want to run a business",* but needed some assistance to fulfil this aspiration, suggesting that *"I just want to study to acquire people communication skills, and then venture into business."* Xoli stated that he thought about setting up a farming or

[14] Wits Plus is a sub-division in the University which offers evening classes.

agricultural enterprise indicating that, *"I would like to set up a farm or agricultural land where I sell would various things, like meats and fruit and veggies."* Unlike the other men above, Fezile indicated that he would like to pursue his calling to be a traditional healer:

> I think my calling [as a traditional healer] is the main thing. And being a supervisor would take time. This calling needs me. This job is not so much in my long-term plans than the calling. I am a supervisor in my own calling.

Discussion of future plans inside and outside the higher academic institution

The findings in this sub-theme show that the men had come to plan their futures in a certain direction. For example, instead of focusing on the here and now, the men's plans appeared to be self-oriented. Instead of taking their children's needs first (e.g., planning a trust for their children's education), the men prioritised their own career growth. Despite facing major setbacks and obstacles already created by their socioeconomic status, the findings seem to suggest that the men are pre-occupied with some imagined future either inside or outside cleaning. As much as these men may entered 'women's work' due to socio-economic circumstances, they seem to still want to escape to non-traditional work to grab hold of something that is more masculine, respectable, and of better status, such as being a union leader, a supervisor, or security guard. However, at times, I did feel that this pre-occupation was more of wishful thinking because many of them were still subjected to similar conditions which made them become cleaners. Most of the men had low levels of education (majority held Grade 10 and less as their highest level of education). Some of them could not find or suggested that they were not identified by senior managers to be mentored into more high levels of seniority. But some of them identified promising futures outside of cleaning, such as following a calling to traditionally heal people. Below, Figure 5.12 presents a summary of Sub-theme 3.3.

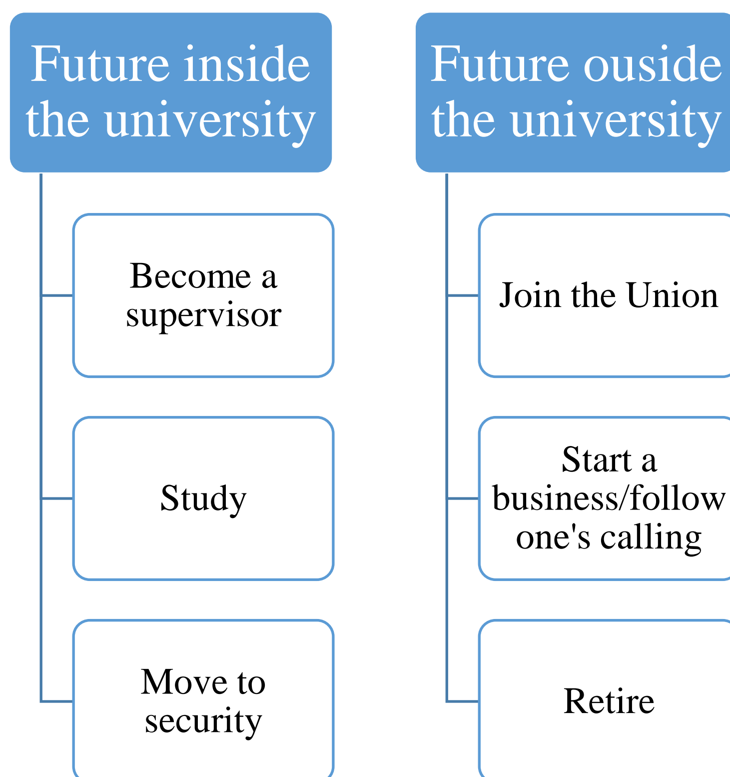


Figure 5.12 Summary of Sub-theme 3.3

Using Frosh's (1993, 1994b, 2019) psychosocial framework particular focus on masculinity studies, the findings of this sub-theme show that the men's futures remain forged towards actualising the self. The men felt pressure to either make a name for themselves (e.g., by becoming supervisors), or fight against workplace injustices based on the experience of being on the receiving end of unfair working conditions (e.g., by joining the Union). Using Butler's (2009) notion of performativity, when I closely looked at their future goals and aspirations, most of them revolved around the affirmation of what is expected and most intelligible to most men. Instead of showing a progressive loss of masculinity, the men framed their futures in a way that reaffirms real and symbolic manliness. That is, they could not say that they will not progress or that you will still find me here in a couple of years' time. Otherwise, this might further imply that one is happy being seen as a woman - doing 'women's work'. From Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1990) theoretical framework of habitus, these findings show how the men saw the logic of progression as the ultimate embodiment of masculinity. The men have relied on their work and social environments to determine how they should measure themselves. Certainly, the desire to progress to be a supervisor follows from the discomfort of being seen in a lower position as a man. While these futures are

treated as the epitome of managing what is acceptable masculinity (i.e., being on top), they are also indicate another desire to escapes one's daily reality of being undermined by others who have received or acquired better opportunities in life of self-actualisation.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter reported on the study findings in relation to the proposed research questions. The chapter showed three main themes emerged with their own sub-themes. The chapter also presented a discussion of these study findings, utilising the conceptual framework of Stephen Frosh's psychosocial framework particular focus masculinity studies, Judith Butler's notion of performativity and precarity, as well as Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus. The next section considers the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings and discussion of these findings.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the summary of findings, implications, limitations, and suggestions for future studies in relation to the study.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following section will discuss in-depth the three main themes and sub-themes derived from the thematic analysis, using the proposed theoretical framework. Before I can summarise these findings, the following were the main and secondary research questions I proposed to answer through doing this research:

Main research question:

1. What are the lived experiences in relation to personal and social identity of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution in Johannesburg?

Secondary research questions:

2. How do black male cleaners construct their racialised, gendered, and classed identities in a predominantly black, lower-class, and female occupation?
3. How do black male cleaners perform their race, masculinity, and class, as men at work and at home, while working in a high-status setting, at the same time occupying a low-status job?

Below, Figure 6.1 presents an indication of the relation between each theme and the research questions above.

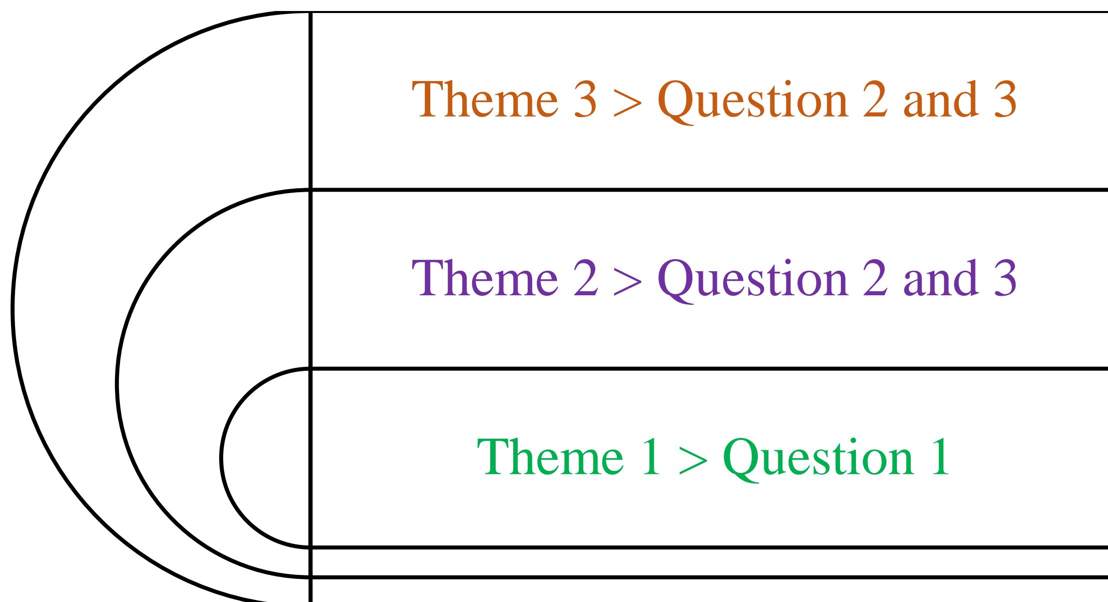


Figure 6.1 Relation of each theme with the research questions

6.2.1 Theme 1: Claiming cleaning as a masculine occupation: "Women do not have our strength; we have the manpower"

Theme 1 uncovered the understandings and lived experiences of cleaning in a higher academic institution from the black male cleaners' point of view. Using the accounts of the black male cleaners in this study, **Sub-theme 1.1 (Centering black male cleaners)** underscored that the men feel forced to carry most of the heavy labour that they female co-workers proclaim they cannot. the demand for men in the cleaning profession. The cleaning services system was characterised as unfair and exploitative towards the male cleaners as contractually, they are supposed to perform equal tasks under the same wages. But because the men remain vulnerable to the system which offers them a salary every month, they are forced to be subjected to the precarious conditions as set by their employers. As Figure 6.1 shows, Theme 1 presents some interesting findings to a question which has not been previously asked within existing research.

For example, in **Sub-theme 1.2 (Self-representations associated with work related boundaries),** the findings in this sub-theme suggest that the men felt that their presence in the cleaning of private offices was associated with danger and criminality – a position popularised in the media but that they themselves firmly rejected. This brought forth a question if they felt that black male psyche can be trusted to clean private offices. For those who were allowed (or in some cases requested) to clean private offices, the findings suggested that the men employed various timed and

behavioural techniques to avoid suspicion while cleaning private offices (e.g., waiting for a staff member to return and check if anything is missing). This led me to question if the men also trusted themselves to be alone in these offices.

Furthermore, in **Sub-theme 1.3 (Location in hierarchy and issues of respect),** it was found that working for a higher academic institution also meant that the men were surrounded by students and academic staff who carry certain perceptions of cleaners. Acknowledging the existing hierarchy of respect held by academics and students above cleaners, the men in this study felt that students in particular reproduced relations of power over cleaners in their daily interactions by undermining these men. For example, students used various subject-positions, such as noting that they pay cleaners' salary, to distinguish themselves in relation to cleaners. This form of subjugation - from students as young to be their children – led to the black male cleaners in study feeling denied of their dignity and feeling disrespected. The relations of power reflected here suggested that was far less important than the students who were much valued and respected because of their tuition.

6.2.2 Theme 2: Problematising cleaning as a professional and personal activity: "I love my job … No, men should not be cleaning toilets"

Theme 2 unpacked the complexities of entering cleaning - a predominantly black, lower-class, and female occupation Ally, 2011; Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Ngcobo, 2004) - with multiple racialised, gendered, and classed identities as a black male cleaner. **Sub-theme 2.1 (Core beliefs and ideas about being a male cleaner)** showed that cleaning was loaded with various ideologies about gender, culture, and employment. For example, one of the findings in this sub-theme was how the men in this study reported how cleaning was traditionally relegated to their mothers and female siblings. That is, socialisation happened from a sexualised division of labour wherein boys became forbidden from feminised work like cleaning. From this heteropatriarchal position, 'male and women's work' could be distinguished. This implied that it would be taboo - and in fact shameful - to see a man carrying a broom or toilet brush at home or as part of their job description. These distinctions in turn led black male cleaners to see occupations as gendered institutions, wherein occupational sex segregation could be justified based on the relationship of gender, work, and culture.

Following from the above, **Sub-theme 2.2 (Practical limitations within working spaces)** further interrogated a discourse reproduced by the men in this study stating that culturally, men or in this case black men are traditionally not expected to clean. As men who already are employed to clean toilets, I engaged those who said they clean (or were forced to clean) female-only toilets, how it felt for them as men to clean in these private, feminised spaces. The findings in this sub-theme suggested that the cleaning of female-only toilets led the black male cleaners in this study to feel appalled, disgusted, and 'unclean'. These emotions allude to emasculation in its pervasive form as cleaning a female-only toilet implied one is not only subordinate but subservient to women's orders.

Sub-theme 2.3 (Separating cleaning as a job and a chore), on the other hand, related to the question as to whether these men not only disclosed what they do to family and friends, but whether as cleaners at work, they also perform cleaning duties at home. Majority of the men in this study were forthcoming to their family and friends, while most of them reported not at home. But as Figure 5.1 shows, an interesting finding in Theme 2 was that despite these men having certain reservations about certain aspects of their work (e.g., being forced to clean female-only toilets), many of them enjoyed their jobs. This was because as the findings in Theme 1 suggest, certain aspects of cleaning allowed them to perform crucial aspects of being a man, such as the carrying of heavy objects.

6.2.3 Theme 3: Acknowledging cleaning as a means to an end: "So, laughing at me or taking me somehow can't put bread on the table"

Theme 3 located how these men got into and cope with being a black male cleaner. In **Sub-theme 3.1 (Pre-occupational aspirations prior to entering cleaning),** the history into the career choices of the black male cleaners was investigated. Given the harsh realities of growing up during the anti-black, apartheid government, translated to black persons, such as the men in this study, not receiving quality education. This meant that few black persons could pursue careers which required a tertiary qualification, such as becoming an engineer, teacher, or an accountant. But with widespread poverty and unemployment, the findings in this sub-theme suggest that the men in this study had few career options to choose from. These limited career choices led the men to enter cleaning with diminished hopes and dreams. This 'dead-end' career juncture becomes even more worthy to investigate as we consider that the men in this study find

themselves in a high-status setting, such as a higher academic institution - while they occupy a low-status job as cleaners. These are also men who are expected to head and remain in control of their households – implying that these men were forced to remain in unwanted and dependant work. The study suggests that the University could create further training and educational opportunities for the men to feel supported in their work environments.

In **Sub-theme 3.2 (Cleaning occupation facilitating the ability to provide),** the psychology of coping with this form of employment was investigated, and in so doing uncovered how these feelings and positions influence the men's performances of masculinity and class. As the title of the main theme suggested, the men in this study suggested that despite others viewing their work as stigmatised work, at the end of the day, their wages allowed them to provide. Taken from this viewpoint, the men in this study were able to manage and perform acceptable forms of masculinity and class – even though they aspired to do and become more than the position they currently find themselves in. Going forward, **Sub-theme 3.3 (Future cleaning and non-cleaning aspirations)** explored the men's futures inside and outside the referred higher academic institution. While most who intended to stay inside the university suggested that they would like to become a supervisor, some wished to be moved into a security guard position. Those thinking about exiting the university expressed interest in retiring, starting a business, or setting up a cattle or agricultural farm. When one closely observed the intentions behind these imagined futures, they implied that the men desired to one day find themselves in a more male-oriented position, carrying a social standing of power, authority, and respect.

Based on the findings of this study, occupations, such as cleaning appear to take on gendered characteristics as evidenced by the gendered roles men and women are expected to play even in a female-dominated occupation like cleaning (Shen-Miller & Smiler, 2015; Williams, 1993; Wright, 2016). That is, as much cleaning implies a 'woman's share' within the sexualised division of labour in the home, and in this case the work environment, the men in this study challenged this assumption by suggesting that not all roles in cleaning are designed with women in mind. But the men forged a work identity that align with their masculine identity by segregating what men and women can and cannot do to ensure that there is gender conformity at work (Hegewisch

et al., 2010; Herring, 2016; Torre, 2018). Yet this situation is not as simplistic as men entering ‘men’s work’, and women entering ‘women work’.

Theme 1 showed that men enter ‘women’s work’ with their own misogynistic assumptions of bias, privilege, and sexism. But this sexism is not something men just introduce themselves to the work environment. Instead, it is gendered customs, practices, and norms about employment which sustain workplace inequality (Campuzano, 2019; Gross, 2015; McDonald, 2013). While most ‘women work’ (e.g., nursing, social work, and teaching) have not been transformed from being less prestigious, low-paying, and independent jobs (Kalema, 2020; Khunou et al., 2012; Peterson, 2014), ‘men’s work’ (e.g., being a lawyer, medical doctor, or pilot) continues to be more respectable, high-earning, because they are associated with pressure and decision-making ability (Campbell, 2012; Rebus, 2014; Van Wyk, 2021). ‘Women’s work’ therefore becomes less attractive, which explains why men not only degrade but remain less likely to enter or stay within female-dominated occupations (Hegewisch et al., 2010; Herring, 2016; Torre, 2018). However, a new finding of this study was that the men in this study did not espouse to this view. Even though they were aware that they performed stigmatised work, the men responded by emphasising how heteropatriarchal traits (e.g., manpower) is needed in the cleaning industry – a female-dominated environment.

Theme 2 suggested that for some men, crossing-over to female-dominated jobs might not necessarily be a problem for them – particularly where they can still exert power and control, such as when being relied on for the carrying of heavy objects. However, cleaning does not take place within a vacuum; that is, this authority does entirely rest within the command of black male cleaners. These men are forced to perform tasks which conflict with gender ideology associated with the male body. More importantly, as occupations can be seen as gendered institutions, men’s private households also function as gendered settings wherein cleaning as an occupation versus cleaning at home may not necessarily be the same thing. Cleaning may therefore need to first be de-feminized in the domestic sphere as un-paid and un-masculine work, to allow men who perform cleaning at work to be seen as more acceptable. As men and women’s roles are changing in society as well as the work environment, Theme 3 shows that more black men may well enter cleaning in future due to poverty and high

unemployment. But since cleaning provides men with certain means and status (i.e., being a breadwinner), these men can still hold unto acceptable forms of masculinity.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following section presents some of the literature-related, methodological, and theoretical study limitations.

6.3.1 Literature-related limitations: Lack of available local studies on black male cleaners

As indicated in Chapter 1 and 2, there has not been much local studies conducted to understand how black men working in a black, lower-class, female-dominated occupations perform masculinity and class. The limited work around cleaning, more especially cleaning within higher academic institutions, has been mostly around the experiences of women and how they have been mistreated within this context (Bezuidenhout & Fakier, 2006; Githaiga et al., 2017; Ngcobo, 2004). This made the development of this study that much more difficult to conceptualise. I had to rely on international research as well as studies in other areas such as men crossing over to do 'women's work' more generally.

6.3.2 Methodological limitations: Participant recruitment, recall memory

One of the methodological limitations of this study was in recruiting male cleaners to participate in this study. Despite repeatedly reassuring them that the study would not identify them in any submitted or published work, some of them felt that participating in the study would risk them their jobs. This showed how precarious they felt their positions were as well as how they may be punished for being critical. Some interviews were shorter than others, and in some cases, the cleaners I spoke to were not available for a follow-up interview. I would call them and would not get a further response. I was often left questioning if I had overlooked something, or they felt uncomfortable based on what they previously shared. However, given what they have told me in this study, namely that that they have a heavy load work with few male cleaners employed by the higher academic institution, perhaps this explains why I could not find more men to interview.

I also wonder if the recent Covid-19 pandemic affected the recruitment as the global pandemic produced fears of the unknown. Many people lost their jobs through retrenchment. I wonder if the men might have been influenced by these fears of not

only getting infected but perhaps if they believed I was a representative from Management (as some of them did), that they could lose their jobs in talking to me. Another methodological limitation worth noting was the recalling of old events. I sometimes wondered if they actually do recall specific events. One way I overcame this was the member-ship check (returning the interview transcripts to participants for clarification) as well as allowing the black male cleaners to contact me for a follow-up interview if they needed to clarify anything they had said. I was also able to overcome any language issues by speaking the language of my participants.

6.3.3 Theoretical limitations: Using Western theories in an African context

With their origins in the Global North, there are critiques within black male studies, to cite Browne and Nash's (2012, p. 7) concern also in employing queer thinking to the Global South that, "often leave unrecognized the situatedness of scholars from the global north who become international, transcendent and adopted", leaving those from elsewhere bound to their location. Within this geography of black male thinking and theorizing, scholars such as Ratele (2017), Mfecane (2016), and Connell (2005, 2007) remain critically to locally produced research that tends to rely on a theoretical framing that originates within the Global North. These local and international scholars raise concern in the ways in which theories from the Global North, such as Connell's (1995, 2000, 2001) concept of hegemonic masculinity have predominately become the lens to which locally generated data in the Global South is read and analysed. Ratele (2017, pp. 20-21), for example, makes a convincing argument that there is a need for theorising of findings to situate psychologies of boys, men and masculinities within a particular cultural and local context:

> …there is a need for, shall we say, consciousness raising to enable those of us working in or drawn to the area of boys, and men and masculinities to understand how we are situated or are situating ourselves with regard to Africa, to psychology, and to boys, men and masculinities. … There is a great deal of work to do to not only build African psychologies, not just African psychologies of boys, men and masculinities. This work would entail many empirical studies but also ongoing conceptual work to put Africa firmly into the centre of psychology, and not to be content with the model of (western) psychology in Africa.

I agree broadly with Ratele (2017) and others' (Mfecane, 2016; Connell 2005, 2007) concern of local scholars' reliance on theories from the Global North. I also agree with Francis' (2021, p. 1575) contention who suggests the benefits of queer theorizing in the South African context] that,

> We are, however, beyond the point of simply noting the importance of local context. The challenge, I would argue, is to point out how theoretically we can better understand the local context and, at the same time, not only trouble but contribute to global theory in the process. Cognizant of the [above] critique, what then is the suitability of [not only importing but contributing to theorizing that is of Western origin] for research [around black male studies]? (Own emphasis added).

As I stated earlier, my review of local studies conducted on black males showed an over-reliance to disproved and outdated claims, such as those made by hooks (2004), which adopted a violent, rape-prone, and compensatory approach to the study of black males. However, a survey and review of existing and contemporary social and scientific research found elsewhere, such as Curry's (2017, 2021, 2022), Stapler (1978, 1982, 2006), and many others' corpus (Al'Uqdah et al., Caetano et al., Harnois, Hines, Hammond et al., Jr., Simien, Smith et al.) showed that much of local and other studies relying on hooks' claims are problematic in how we theorize and perceive the conditions which affect black male life and death.

After re-reading this literature and listening closely to the testimonies of the men being interviewed, I found that each of these theoretical apparatuses were useful in bringing out the psychological dimensions of the men's experiences. For example, the discussion on the findings of the lived experiences of black male cleaners as participants is a strong presentation that highlights several intersecting issues of vulnerability. To my mind, what seems to come to the fore here is not just the intricacies of being gendered but also other layers of vulnerability that lend voice to Butler's notion of precarity to begin with (e.g., black men as victims, economically and sexually exploited because of their vulnerability), as well as feelings of precariousness (e.g., facing racial battle fatigue daily, feeling less like a human, yet still expected to provide and protect others). The work of Curry, Smith et al., Jr., Sidanius and Pratto, Stapler

and more come to mind and have been cited to provide useful evidence to support this theoretical analysis.

Part of what also came to the fore here was that already precarious and vulnerable bodies experienced further embodied precarity when added and intersecting layers of gender, class, and race emerge. For example, anxieties around accusations of theft of property, students' disrespect of workers, scapegoating by managers et cetera. In other words, it is not just about these being men but about theorizing other underlying issues of how we have not understood about the lives and wellbeing of black males. For instance, Frosh's psychosocial framing of masculinity studies provides us with a psychodynamic lens to tap into conscious/subconscious thoughts and feelings (e.g., desires, frustrations, anxieties, defences, issues of depression, self-esteem, dehumanization, mental health problems, and John Henryism) which the men might not have the vocabulary to name. The literature around John Henryism, linking black working-class men's high-coping strategies with psychosocial and environmental stressors, have been reviewed and cited such as Sherman James' seminal studies on John Henryism; Jr.'s work on the sexual politics of black men; as well as Staples work around the economic exploitation of black working-class men.

Previous studies focused on women due to their gendered prevalence in cleaning services (a gendered habitus). The phenomenon of masculinisation can here be taken to refer to men increasingly entering jobs that were previously regarded as 'women's work' on the basis of a reworking of gender assumptions (an institutional habitus). Because it homes in on men, it fills a gap in knowledge of black working-class men's experiences, and it creates new knowledge about men and gendered power relations. In the process, this research and particular application of Bourdieu's habitus lens gives voice to a group which is frequently unheard due to South Africa's vast class disparities. This allows for important findings that bridge the structure-agency divide, the intersection of the gendered and institutional habitus, and the potential meaning for the creation of the 'self'.

6.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Theme 1 demonstrates that as much as the men remain a gender minority within a female-dominated work environment such as cleaning, the findings shows that their role and importance needs to be acknowledged as women – more precisely black women – have been predominately seen as the main role-players in the profession.

Granted this transformation remains a product of the internal structuring of job allocation from within, but the real-world implication is that from the students who belittle, undermine, and ridicule cleaners on a regular occasion – perhaps more so male cleaners – as well as other individuals outside the university premises, cleaning remains stigmatised work for men doing ‘women’s work’. In other words, despite the finding contributing to our conceptual understanding of gendered work politics and the changing roles of men doing ‘women’s work’, the immediate implication of this finding is that it can only benefit black male cleaners’ evaluation of themselves. In re-valuating their position as performing a dirty job involving removing other people’s waste and excrements, perhaps these men have reconciled that at the end of the day, somebody must do this job.

On the hand, the implications for policy and practice for men working themselves to death even within their late years to benefit others in the process —- carries potential not only for bargaining for better health and safety conditions, but for re-negotiation of salary and other benefits. As the findings in Theme 1 suggest, the demand for male labour power, or manpower, comes from the men carrying heavy objects like chemical containers which both their supervisors and female co-workers state their female counterparts cannot or will not carry. Granted these conversations take place within the walls and corridors of lecture halls, auditoriums, and storage rooms, another practical implication here is that the men can advocate for equal working conditions as stipulated in their contractual working agreements. As their contracts stipulate a generic work description without the distinction of gender roles, the men can even contest their uneven work demands with organisations such as the Gender Commission or the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Out of Theme 2, the major finding was the conflict experienced by black male cleaners whether it was okay to enjoy cleaning (or not). There are already negative assumptions of men who claim to enjoy cleaning. But some of the men in this study showed progressive attitudes that a man can in fact enjoy cleaning. The implication for theory is that these men can develop – if not born with - care as an emotional as well as a functional response. This suggests that after spending sums of time doing any form of ‘women’s work’, men can come to not only enjoy and encourage other men to be equally interested in what is known as ‘women’s work’. What this turn of events demonstrates is that despite the clash of culture, gender, and work dynamics present in

their line of work, there is hope that these men may have come, to some extent, questioning dominant socio-cultural norms about what they can and cannot do as black men. Perhaps a change in these attitudes might encourage more men to enter cleaning in future.

Out of Theme 3, the major finding was that despite not 'fitting' into the most dominant forms of masculinity and class, the job did fulfil a meaningful role in the men's lives. That is, their job allowed them to escape the social and psychological impact of poverty and unemployment and build an identity which they could draw pride and strength from as being able to contribute to their own and families' livelihoods and futures. As this mostly rests on financial and the advancement into promotion, a policy and practice suggestion would be to intensify educational and management programmes which can prepare black male cleaners who meet certain requirements to be for trained and mentored into being assistant managers or supervisors.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE POLICY AND RESEARCH

A suggestion for policy and practice is to re-work the work roles between male and female cleaners to be fair, if not be remunerated differently based on their work roles. Otherwise, it would be wise to provide black male cleaners with additional support to manage these uneven work demands. Another suggestion would be to re-define the job title of cleaner to be a more gender-neutral title such as administrator or technician. A future study can further be conducted to explore the career trajectory of those who partook in the mentorship of these programmes. But as not all the men were interested in furthering their education or promotion, the referred higher academic institution can also establish seed funding for those interested in starting their own businesses as an extension of corporate social investments. Another future study could utilise these initiatives as course material or foci of postgraduate research amongst the University's students. This study was conducted in a historically White, middle-class higher academic institution in Johannesburg. There is a need to for future studies to explore if similar findings in other local institutions with similar or different histories and socio-economic characteristics would differ.

6.6 CONCLUSION

Prior to this research, there were limited studies conducted in the South African context to shed light on the lived experiences of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution. This was particularly the case where the performances of race,

masculinity, and class were concerned. This study showed that men who entered cleaning wanted to change the narrative that cleaning is not only ‘women’s work’ but it is not easy for men because they feel exploited by the system and female co-workers. However, the findings also suggest that as cleaning is the only job they have now, it can be rewarding because it provide for their families.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Section A

Biographic Information

1. Age
2. Age of child
3. Duration of fatherhood
4. Ethnicity
5. Living arrangements
6. Relationship status
7. Level of education
8. Employment status

Section B

Research Focused Questions

9. How long have you worked as a cleaner?
10. When did you start working as a cleaner at Wits?
11. Did you dream of having a particular profession than cleaning?
12. Have you ever worked as a cleaner in another institute or organization before?
12. What was the experience compared to working at Wits?
13. Can you describe any activities that you enjoy doing in your job?
14. Does your family know about your job?
15. How does your family feel about your job?
16. How does your job as cleaner affect your life at home?
17. How does this job role affect your role in the family?
18. How does your job as a cleaner affect your life in general?
19. How do the students at Wits regard you as a cleaner?
20. How do the academics at Wits regard you as a cleaner?
21. What is your relationship with other cleaners at Wits?
22. Can you tell me more about the working conditions within the Outsourcing period?

22. Can you tell me more about the working conditions within the Insourcing policy?
23. Are you satisfied with the current working conditions?
24. Can you tell me about any type of support you receive now from the university?
25. Would you like to tell me anything else?
26. Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

"The Lived Experiences of Black Male Cleaners in Higher Educational Institutions"

Dear Sir,

My name is Lindokuhle Ubisi and I am doing a study about black male cleaners in higher educational institutions. I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand and am doing this research for my Doctoral degree in the field of Psychology by Dissertation. I am interested in the lived experiences of black male cleaners in higher educational institutions. I would like to invite you to tell me how you perceive the role of being a black male cleaner within an academic institution such as the University of the Witwatersrand.

Participation involves a one-hour interview that will be in English.

With permission interviews will be taped (audio- recorded) to make sure that the information is recorded in a detailed and truthful way. Participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time prior to the write up of the final report with no negative consequences. You do not have to answer any question if you feel uncomfortable doing so. Only the researcher and the research supervisor will be able to listen to the taped interview or read the written copy of the interview.

The written copy will be kept as a private document on a computer that is password protected. Only the researcher and the research supervisor will know this password. All information provided would be confidential, anonymity cannot be granted due to the interview that will be conducted by the researcher. Information that may identify will not be included in the written copy of the interview or any other part of this study. The researcher will provide you with a written copy of your interview within three weeks after the interview so that you are able to ask any further questions or elaborate on any particular aspect related to your interview. You will be able to access the written results of this study following examination of the final report; it will be available in the public academic domain. The information gathered by interviews from participants may form part of journal publications. Anyone who has been treated for or diagnosed with any psychiatric or psychological illness, or are taking or recovering from dependence on any mood altering medicine such as anti-depressants, alcohol or illegal drugs, will not be allowed to participate in this study. If you need counselling following participation in this study, you can contact Lifeline on 011 422-4242.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please feel free to contact me (details to follow). Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely

Lindokuhle Ubisi
0742394315
lindoubisi@gmail.com

Supervisor: Malose Langa
0117174536
Malose.Langa@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT

PSYCHOLOGY
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Informed Consent for Participation in interviews, audio-recording of interviews, and use of direct quotations in write up.

"The Lived Experiences of Black Male Cleaners in Higher Educational Institutions"

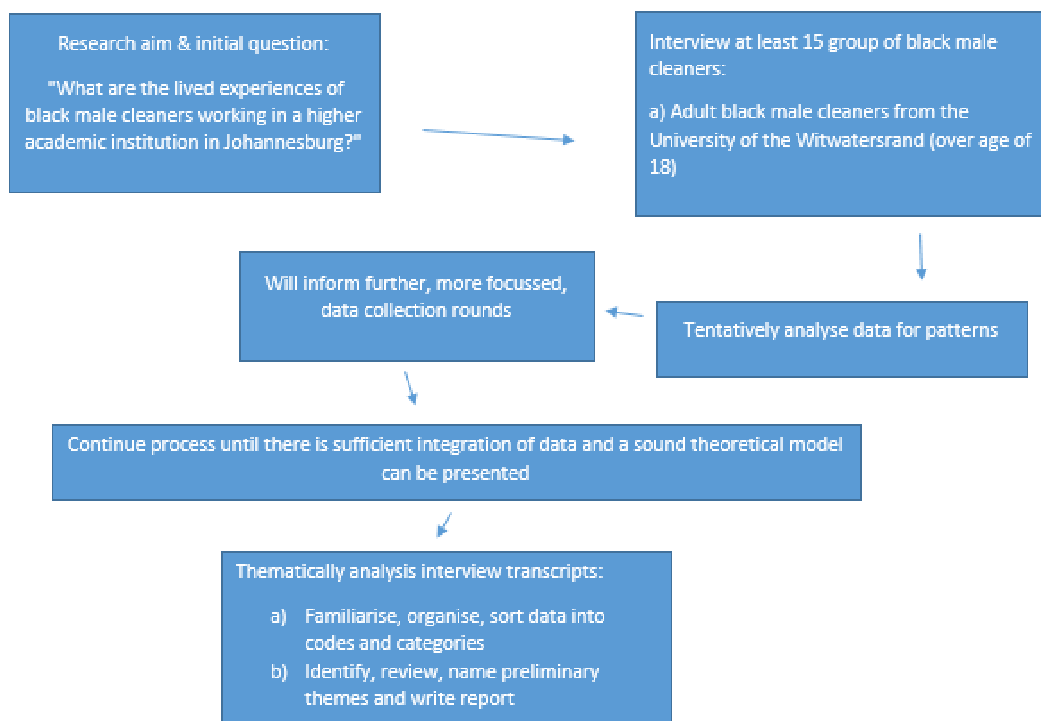
I hereby confirm that I am participating out of my own free will.

	YES	NO
I give my permission for the interview to be taped (audio-recorded) to make sure that the information is recorded and written in a detailed and truthful way.		
I give permission for direct quotations from the interview to be included in the write up of the research report should the researcher wish to include them.		
I am aware that I may stop the interview at any point and that I may withdraw at any time prior to the write up of the final report with no negative consequences.		
I understand that only the researcher and the supervisor will be able to see the written copy of the interview.		
I understand that no information that may identify me will be included in the written copy of the interview and that another name will be used to protect my identity.		
I am aware that I may choose not to answer any question I feel uncomfortable with and that I may ask any questions I need to.		
I understand that I will be provided with the written copy of my interview and will be able to access the results of this study after the thesis has been examined.		

I consent to voluntary participation in this study:
Participant Name and Surname: ____
Participant Signature: ____
Date: ____

Interviewer:
Interviewer Name and Surname: ____
Interviewer Signature: ____
Date: ____

APPENDIX D: DIAGRAMMATICAL OUTLINE OF DATA ANALYSIS



SEE BELOW EXAMPLE USING JOHANNES' INTERVIEW

Data analysis: Codes and categories from interview transcripts

The Performances of Masculinity and Class among Black Male Cleaners at a Higher Academic Institution in Johannesburg

Main research question:

1. What are the lived experiences of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution?

Secondary research questions:

2. How do black male cleaners make meaning of these experiences at work and outside the work environment?
3. How do black male cleaners construct their gender identity in a predominantly female occupation?

"Johannes" (48-years old, working for the higher education institution as a cleaner for 4 years)

Quotes	Codes	Categorisation of codes	Answers question
I: So with your current job, do you feel that you like it; do you enjoy it, as you would have enjoyed the other jobs? Yes. Since I am, from those other jobs that I did before, I feel much better, because at least I've got something benefitting that I got in life. At least my family they can have something even if I can passed away. Better than those other jobs that I was doing. … So I must say I am enjoying, because according to my standard and my education the benefit that I got is I can go for – they were making it four months before, but what they call it paternity [leave]. Yes. So I can go – when my wife is going for birth. Then I can stay there. But now it is no longer 4 months, it's two months. They cut it because they were saying; we	Perks associated with the job: • Paternity leave • Pension fund	• Expresses gratitude of having a job with benefits	Q2 Meaning-making

men we are misusing [that]. So now they cut it. At least it's something. And those // the money that they're putting on the side for us, which is.../ R: At least it's better, because they're taking +R1000.00 a month from your salary. So it's up to you. Because we are different with the percentages. It starts from 55% to 80% to 100%. So it's up to you, you can schedule, you can check your age – how far is your age to go to pension. Then you can lift up to go to 80% from 55%. Because you can at least calculate – I am left with three years to go to pension, let me lift my percentage so that at least when I go to pension, at least I've got a lot for my family. But at the same time you need some cash for leaving. But you can't carry a lot because tax is also catching us.			
I: So as a cleaner do you think that you have a good relationship with the students and other people around? When you're cleaning the bathrooms? R: Ya, ya, ya, up to so far, I think I am the best. I think definitely I am doing // I don't know if somebody else he can say, no, but up until on this stage where I am standing, I think I am communicating very good with the students, the clients. I don't talk very roughly with [them].	Relations with students: • Attempts to manage cordial relations with students	• Maintains friendly relationship with students	Q1 Lived experiences
I: Do they relate well to you? R: Ya. There is some who are giving me that... **I: Attitude?** R: Yes, that bad attitude. But you can't put five people into one pot with three people. **I: Of course.** R: Yes. **I: But do you think this attitude is related to you being a man who is a cleaner?** R: Not really. It's because of some frustration of a person from where he comes from. But it's not because of – But here and there, like I am saying, you can't put the four people...[INTERJECTION BY INTERVIEWER] **I: Of course, I agree.**	Relations with students: • Some students display negative attitudes. However, one cannot regard all these students as the same	• Not all students display negative attitudes towards cleaners	Q1 Lived experiences

Data analysis: Categories and preliminary themes

The Performances of Masculinity and Class among Black Male Cleaners at a Higher Academic Institution in Johannesburg

Main research question:

1. What are the lived experiences of black male cleaners working in a higher academic institution in Johannesburg?

Secondary research questions:

2. How do black male cleaners make meaning of these experiences at work and outside the work environment?
3. How do black male cleaners construct their gender identity in a predominantly female occupation?

Johannes' interview				
Categories	**Broad categories**	**Clustered/related categories**	**Preliminary themes**	**Answers question**
• Expresses gratitude of having a job with benefits	Gratitude of being gainfully employed	- Gratitude of being gainfully employed - Cleaning allows one to survive	Cleaning puts food on the table	Q2 Meaning-making
• Maintains friendly relationship with students • Not all students display negative attitudes towards cleaners • Possibility of racism in negative attitudes	Relationships with staff and students	- Men cleaning female toilets - Differentiating between male versus female roles - Supervisors perpetuating traditional gender roles	Male cleaners positioning themselves in cleaning/ Re-production of gender roles	Q2 Meaning-making & Q3 Gender minority

• White and senior staff show more negative attitudes				
• Discomfort in males cleaning female toilets • Cultural norms around privacy in male and female bathrooms	Men cleaning female toilets	- Relationships with staff and students - Unpleasant experiences about the job - Managing students and staff interrupting the cleaning process	Managing work stressors	Q1 Lived experinces & Q2 Meaning-making
• Jobs considered male • Tasks and tools making male work • Socio-economic factors such as poverty and unavailability of jobs "force" men to be cleaners • Why cleaning is considered women's work? • Mop associated with women in the home • Role of traditional stereotypes	Differentiating between male versus female roles			
• Job satisfaction based on ability to maintain one's own and family's livelihood	Cleaning allows one to survive			
• Complaints from students	Unpleasant experiences about the job			
• Role assignment according to gender norms				

APPENDIX E: DATA PREPARATION & TRANSCRIPTION PROTOCO

Formatting of Transcript:

General Instructions

The transcriber should transcribe all individual interviews using Microsoft Word on the following formatting:

1. Times New Roman, 12 size, 1.5 line spacing
2. Default margins
3. All text shall begin at the left-hand margin (no indents)
4. Entire document shall be left justified

Labelling Transcripts

Individual interview transcript should include the following labelling information at the top of the document:

Example:

Participant Number: Marital Status: Age:

Cultural group (Home Language): Highest level of education:

Saving of Audio-Recordings & Transcripts

The transcriber should indicate the participant number allocated as the label for mp4 file that will be saved on the provided flash drive in folder labelled 'AUDIO' and the same will be done for the relevant transcript, which will be saved on the same drive in a folder labelled 'TRANSCRIPT'.

Documenting Comments

Comments or questions by the interviewer should be presented in plain text and any comments or responses from participants should be presented in italics.

Content:

Audiotapes should be transcribed verbatim (recorded word for word, exactly as said), including any nonverbal or background sounds (laughter, sighs, etc.) and typed in plain (nonitalicised) text that is square bracketed [...].

Interviews should be presented as raw transcripts thus, transcripts will reflects everything as it occurred including profanity, slang, grammatical errors, or misuse of words or concepts.

Non-English words should be translated an typed in square brackets.

Filler words (uhm, ummm, ja, huh, ah, etc.) must also be transcribed.

Indistinct Information

The transcriber must identify parts of the interview that are indistinct or inaudible on the audio-recording by typing [inaudible] in the relevant portions of the interview.

Silences and Pauses

Should there be any pauses during the interview, whether interviewer nor participant are speaking, the transcriber must note this in square brackets and indicate duration of pause as being either brief or long.

Trailing of Thought

In the participants do not finish their sentence or a sentence trails off, the transcriber must use three ellipses to indicate this on the transcript.

Sensitive Information

If a participants says their name or refers to another private person, the transcriber should replace this information with a pseudonym indicate this with a superscripted asterisk i.e. *

Quality Control

The transcriber must proofread all transcripts against the audio-recordings and make any necessary corrections accordingly.

APPENDIX F: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Ubisi

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H19/05/30**
PROJECT TITLE	Exploring performances of masculinity and class among Black Male Cleaners at a Higher Education Institution
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mr L Ubisi
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Human and Community Development/
DATE CONSIDERED	24 May 2019
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	05 September 2022

DATE 06 September 2019 **CHAIRPERSON**
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Prof M Langa

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

____________________ ____/____/____
Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX G: TURN-IT-IN REPORT