The Experiences and Challenges of Women Teachers' Lives

Submitted for the Degree of PhD in Education

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September 2013

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ABSTRACT

This study explores women teachers' lives to understand their experiences of teaching in South Africa today. Accountability and a culture of performativity have to come to dominate schooling in South Africa. Since then, teachers have decreased discretion and autonomy over their work. This study examines the claim that educational reforms and initiatives have changed the nature of teachers' work. This is a qualitative study drawing on autobiographies, journal entries and interviews. This study which was conducted with four women teachers from secondary schools, provides a commentary on their past experiences with the intention of exploring their identity formation, and how it frames the enactment of their personal and professional identities. The study analyses the ways in which women teachers experience the new mode of regulation which has changed the nature of professionalism and teacher identity. It examines the expansion of teachers' roles and responsibilities and their negotiating a balance between work and family.

The findings show that the women teachers bring into schools experiences gleaned from their personal history. A prominent feature in the narratives is the women teachers' struggle to find a balance between the demands of home and school in the light of the new mode of teacher regulation. This thesis contributes to South African research on women teachers and their negotiation of the relationship between work and home.

Keywords:

Expanded role	performativity	regulation	home-school
Intensification	accountability	demands	identities

DECLARATION

I, Selma Nagan, declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of PhD in education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, School of Education. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Signed by:

_____

Selma Nagan

30th of September 2013
Johannesburg

DEDICATION

To:

My late son Reuel Leslie Nagan

My son Abner Ben Nagan and his wife Cindy Nagan

My husband, Leslie Nagan

My grandsons Luke Reuel Nagan and Jude Abner Nagan

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CGE	Commission of Gender Equality
DOE	Department of Education
GET	Gender Equality Task team
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management Systems
JMS	Joint Monitoring Committee
NSE	Norms and Standards for Educators
OSW	Office on the Status of Women
SACE	South African Council for Educators
WBI	Women's Budget Initiative

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Aim of the Study

In researching women teachers' lives, my aim is to understand their experiences of teaching in South Africa, today. Drawing on life history narratives, I wish to examine their experiences of role expansion in view of the recent changes imposed by current policy, such as innovation overload; intensification of work – multiple demands compounded by increasing demands for external and internal accountability. Specifically, my study investigates the teachers' lived experiences in the school and in the home in view of the changed mode of teacher regulation. I wish to establish why these women became teachers, and how their role has expanded as a result of the introduction of the seven roles of educators and the IQMS (Integrated Quality Management Systems). I wish to determine how they deal with the new pressures created by the extended role; in what emotional ways they experience the new mode of regulation, and the factors that encourage them to remain in teaching. The objective of this study, therefore, is to gain an understanding of the complexities experienced by women teachers in terms of the demands placed upon them by the new mode of control.

The central research question of this study is: In what ways do women teachers (henceforth, the teachers), with their specific subjectivity and past personal and social experiences, negotiate their role and identity in view of the expansion of their role?

The following critical questions are explored in relation to the central question of the study:

1. In what ways do past personal and social experiences frame the teachers' perceptions of themselves, the work situation and their career aspirations?

2. How have the teachers' roles been transformed?

3. How do the teachers experience the new mode of teacher regulation?

4. What are the teachers' strategies as they try to navigate a balance between their home and work responsibilities?

1.2 Rationale

During a time of enormous change that is mainly driven by technology, globalization and marketisation, we forget that change is about people – their ideas, their fears and insecurities, and their capacity to work together for a different future. 'The novelty of the epidemic of reform is that it simply does not change what people, as educators, scholars and researchers do, it changes who they are' (Ball 2003:215).

Inevitably, reflections on my own experience as a teacher have generated the themes for this study. My reflections on the process of teaching arise from my wondering about my own experiences behind the classroom door, the choices I have made, and the many school-related conversations I have shared with my colleagues. That I have taken school home with me, is hardly news. 'My notions of teaching are much involved with notions of human relationship, intersubjectivity, the pursuit of various kinds of meaning, and the sense of untapped possibility - of what might be, what ought to be, what is not yet' (Greene 2001:82). Since the early 1970s, the feelings of 'invisibility, nobodiness, and voicelessness' have defined my approach to the act of teaching as have the ideas of human rights, civil rights and the quest for social justice (p. 82). Attending to these voices is a matter of trying to imagine "the familiar hearts of strangers" (Ozick 1989:283). I have long since realized 'that those I hope to move to learn are not – and do not have to be - versions of my middle class self' (Greene 2001:82). I am confronted every day by the extraordinary. I, too, like so many other female teachers, struggle with current reform agendas both complex and uncertain, demanding and time-consuming. That I walk the tight-rope of home and school has always been a harsh reality.

A quick look backwards reminds me of first-hand experience of gender, race and class discrimination; of the thwarting of career prospects and the consequent marches and 'chalk-downs' as a zealous SADTU member. The question is, what has changed.

Recurring themes in the literature on educational change in South Africa point to, inter alia: devolution of responsibility to schools; increased principal power; an intensification of teachers' and principals' work; role expansion; and new career structures based upon performance management (Booyse & Swanepoel 2004; Chisholm 1999; Fleisch 2002; Morrow 2007; Shalem 2003; Shalem & Hoadley 2009; Weber 2005, 2007). The Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE) give an indication of the different roles of a teacher. By determining and defining teachers' roles and responsibilities, workloads and human resource in general, the state has been able to exert a strong influence on what it means to be an teacher and has put in place new measures of accountability which have direct implications for teacher regulation (De Clercq 2008; Shalem 2003; Weber 2007).

Together with the NSE, has been the implementation in 2004 of the IQMS, a performance measurement tool holding schools and teachers to account. International discourses about accountability, managerialism, and the market have influenced the ways in which the state currently is assessing teachers' work (Weber 2007:288). Weber (2005:67) states that the IQMS ignores the role of institutional politics at school level, i.e., how authority and power are exercised, mediated, managed and contested. Schooling must respond to the workplace with calls for accountability resulting in competition that stresses 'performativity'. Performativity, for Ball (2003), together with managerialism and the market, is one of the key elements of the education reform package. Ball (p.216) argues that performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). It requires that teachers respond to targets, indicators and evaluations and, to be able to do this, they have to set aside 'personal beliefs and commitments and live an existence of calculation' (Ball

2003:215). Teachers are valued for their productivity alone. As Bernstein (1996:169) states 'contract replaces covenant'.

Ball (2003:226) claims that the 'policy technologies of market, management and performativity leave no space for an autonomous or collective ethical self'. As such, they have potentially major consequences for the nature of teaching and learning and for the inner life of the teacher. It is a framework in which questions of who we are and what we would like to become emerge. We can argue that the policy technologies of education reform are not simply vehicles for the technical and structural change of organizations but are also mechanisms for reforming teachers and for changing what it means to be a teacher. The technologies of reform produce new kinds of teacher subjects. Education reform changes one's 'social identity' (Bernstein 1996:73); it brings about change in our subjective existence and our relations with one another (Rose 1989:ix). This is the 'struggle over the teacher's soul' (Ball 2003:217).

This study examines the following claims in light of education reforms in South Africa which have led to significant changes in work conditions of teachers and considers Marketisation and New Managerialism as an explanation for such changes. While the former incorporates market principles and criteria to improve economic returns and efficiency of educational services, a defining characteristic of the latter is a regime of managerial discipline and control of work practices and the accountability of teachers. An audit culture comprising competitive league tables and an appraisal system erodes professional autonomy and trust. An outcome has been the intensification of work, an expansion of teacher roles and responsibilities, and the construction of new worker identities. My study investigates how women teachers cope with the pressures created by the extended role; in what emotional ways they experience the new mode of regulation, and how they balance work and home.

1.3 RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA: GENDER AND THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY – 1994 TO THE PRESENT

1.3.1 Introduction

South Africa's transition to democracy has highlighted the role of the state in tackling gender inequalities in education. Initiatives at national and provincial level have focused on the establishment of mechanisms to institutionalize gender concerns. Gender equity is seen as an integral part of the social and transformation process to the extent that a Women's National Coalition (WNC) was formed in 1992 across the divides of race, class and ideology. Their objective was to inject a gender perspective into discussions and negotiations about South Africa's Constitution (Meintjies 2005:73). The WNC drove a women's agenda which saw a remarkable increase in women's political representation after 1994 (Meintjies 2005). Hames, Koen, Handley, & Albertyn (2005:3) maintain that, 'since attaining democracy, South Africa has made substantial achievements in women empowerment and the advancement towards gender equality'. However, the struggle is not yet over, since, in practice, there is evidence of continuing gender conflict and resistance despite changes in the law.

The purpose of section 1.3.2 is to outline some of the policies and programmes that the government has put in place to achieve gender equality in South Africa. A brief historical overview highlights the developments that have occurred in policies to address gender inequalities. Section 1.3.3 discusses gender equity in education. This is followed by a description of research studies on gender relations in education in South Africa (in section 1.3.4). It includes an examination of research studies that document the professional and personal experiences of teachers/women teachers in the South African context.

1.3.2 Gender Equity in South Africa

Women's rights to equality in all sectors of society, (social, political and economic) have been encoded in the Constitution and the legislative frameworks based on it (Hames et al 2005; Tshoaedi 2002). The South African approach to achieving gender equality after 1994 draws on the strategy of gender mainstreaming (Hames et al 2005:3) taking the form of demanding the presence of women in a 'critical mass', established internationally as 30 percent (Meintjies 2009:74). Putting in place structural mechanisms to deal with inequity and the government's ratification of the 'Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)', are some of the victories which can be celebrated (Hames et al 2005:5). The 1996 Constitution provides for a Commission on Gender Equality which is responsible for advocating and overseeing the advancement of gender equality in the public and private spheres.

The Commission on Gender Equality

The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), which was established through Section 187 of the Constitution, in 1996, prepared the 'Framework for Transforming Gender Relations in South Africa' in 2000. The CGE is mainly responsible for monitoring, evaluating and upholding the constitutional principle of gender equality in the public and private domains. It works alongside the Human Rights Commission and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to monitor gender equity. The establishment of Gender Focal Points or Gender Equity Units in all government departments was approved by Cabinet in May 1996. Their responsibilities included policy review, strategy development, co-ordination of gender training, monitoring and evaluation and establishment of mechanisms for liaison with civil society. However, these structures have not been as effective as envisaged in the design of the machinery (Hames et al 2005). The second important body to be established as part of the gender machinery was the Office on the Status of Women.

The Office on the Status of Women

The Office on the Status of Women (OSW) was established in 1997. After the 1999 election, the OSW moved to the presidency into a new ministry which promoted the interests of women, youth and the disabled. 'This institution was part of the civil service and its mandate was to develop public gender policy and promote gender mainstreaming in government' (Meintjies 2005:84). The Gender Policy Framework was finalized by the OSW in 2000. However, the task of the OSW to ensure that government departments mainstreamed gender into their functions became a site of struggle. While the state had a commitment to gender equality and gender equity it did not make budgetary provisions for implementation. Besides, departments were not accountable to the OSW. According to Meintjies (2005:85), 'the issue of cross-cutting responsibilities was never resolved and, in many respects, the OSW remained something of a lame duck'. The third institution established in promoting gender equality was the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC).

Joint Monitoring Committee

This Committee manages the overseeing of government legislation, ensuring that each piece of legislation has been analysed for its gender implications (Meintjies 2009). The committee played a significant role in promoting the idea of a women's budget. The Women's Budget Initiative (WBI) analyses the impact of the National Budget on women. The Committee has functioned fairly effectively in lobbying public response on key policy issues and in calling government departments and ministries to account. However, the JMC'S effectiveness has since weakened.

Meintjies (2009:93) claims that the 'struggle for gender equality is not only about empowering women but also about changing gender power relations in society; it is about providing space for women, but it is also about changing ideas about who should make decisions, and about the roles traditionally assigned to women and men'. Institutional culture is as vital as the structural aspects of policy development. It suggests that a

broader and deeper understanding of gender constructions and gender power relations is needed.

The next section examines the discourse of gender equity as constructed through the statements of the Gender Equity Task Team (1997), the first official body to be appointed in South Africa to address these issues. The next section briefly discuss its contribution.

1.3.3 Gender Equity in Education

Commitment to gender equity in Education was expressed through the establishment of the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) in 1996. In October 1997, the report of GETT was published (Wolpe, Quinlan & Martinez 1997). GETT began its work in 1996, within the context of considerable support for gender equity in education from the National Ministry of Education to various national and regional women's organisations across political spectrums. But the research base regarding gender and education in South Africa that GETT had to draw on was not extensive (Chisholm & Unterhalter 1999). There are gaps in analysis and a lack of information in important areas.

The report of the GETT (Wolpe et al 1997) provides an authoritative and comprehensive account on gender equity in education. The report includes policy proposals to tackle sexism, sexual harassment and sexual violence in the education system. The document makes it clear that, historically, gender issues have tended to take second place to issues surrounding race and ethnicity in the struggle against apartheid. As with racism, the school environment needs to change in order to combat gender discrimination so that schools function in keeping with the post-apartheid ideology of education. Although the main recommendations are for the institution of an extensive gender machinery, there is agreement on the importance of addressing girls and women's subordination through confronting deeply held beliefs and practices (Wolpe et al 1997). The report notes that it is 'only very recently that work on gender and education has been undertaken in South Africa, and regrets the lack of networks in this area, necessitating the use of three visiting

consultants from the United Kingdom and Australia' (Harber 2000:37). Despite these limitations, a start has been made to address gender equity in South African education.

In sum, 'after 1994, the establishment of these national committees for women meant that the state came to be viewed as the site through which equality for women would be created' (Ruiters 2008:58). These measures indicate an opportunity for women to become involved in the public sphere. Legislation seems strong, but what is not so strong is bringing about significant societal change. There has been change, but progress has been slow. 'Successful equity policies require multiple levels of action, bottom-up and top-down activism, as well as political will' (Blackmore 2011:65).

What follows examines the research carried out during different periods on gender relations within the education sphere in South Africa.

1.3.4 Research in Education

Studies on gender relations within education in South Africa (Mager 1993; Chisholm 1990a/b; Hughes 1990) were concerned with gender regimes within state educational institutions and with gendered constructions of segregated institutional practices, rules and rituals (Chisholm & Unterhalter 1999). An attempt was made to unravel the many layers of gendered experiences of women in educational institutions, in order to understand the growth of powerful networks of female solidarity; of political consciousness and resistance to autocratic controls (Chisholm 1009a; Chisholm and Unterhalter 1999).

In the early 1990s, research in education became geared toward the process of transition. With the prospect of change, research on gender became focused on establishing patterns of gender equality. This research relied heavily on official statistics to determine gendered trends regarding access to education, credentials, and labour market position (Budlender 1993; Truscott 1993; Badsha & Kotecha 1994; Kotecha 1994). The neglect of

women's voices in research on teaching is well known. Coffey & Delamont (2000:65) note that, for a 'profession comprising predominantly women we know surprisingly little about women educators' daily lives, experiences, and the meanings they attach to their teaching. In what follows, I present a few narrative studies on the experiences of teachers/women teachers in South Africa that have contributed to making visible their personal, professional and political lives. These narratives include Mahlase's (1997) *Women teachers under apartheid;* Unterhalter's (1999) *Gender, race, and different lives: Autobiographies and the analysis of educational change;* Chisholm's (1999) paper on *The democratisation of schools and the politics of teachers' work in South Africa;* Van Deventer and van der Westhuizen's (2000) *A shift in the way female educators perceive intrinsic barriers to promotion;* Smit's (2006) *Primary school teachers' experiences of education policy change in South Africa,* and Knowles et al's (2009) *Educators' lived experiences of motherhood and teaching.*

Mahlase's (1997) *Women teachers under apartheid* explores the historical, political, economic and social structures that have shaped the position and careers of black women teachers within the apartheid social formation. The investigation shows how teachers' work was constrained by a multiplicity of structural and material controls. State control was experienced through management of schools and of the curriculum. The study also shows how women used public and private strategies to cope with the structural and ideological constraints they faced. For example, teacher unionism and community and cultural strategies; private strategies including pedagogic styles, and resourcing learning and classroom discipline. Teachers presented themselves as figures of authority or as experts; despite limited means, they employed a variety of resources, and employed traditional and authoritarian discipline strategies. Mahlase (1997) uses a life history method as well as documentary and statistical evidence for her study. This study provides valuable insights for my research topic, in that it reiterates the tension experienced by women teachers in having to negotiate the private/public split based on social expectations of women's behaviour. Of equal importance are the institutional barriers that women teachers experience and the strategies they adopt as counter-responses.

‘By the end of the 1990s, the feminization of teaching was evident in all school phases and at all levels of the education hierarchy in South Africa’ (Unterhalter 1999:243). Unterhalter (1999) analyses the autobiographies of two South African women teachers, Magona and De Villiers, concerned with education transformation. The women were from different race and class backgrounds. De Villiers, the white teacher from an upper-middle class background, taught English in a secondary school in Soweto from 1984-1985. Her account of her time, there, is partly an explicit working out of ideas regarding race and how white and black teachers might work together. Magona, the black teacher, taught at a primary school in a Cape Town township from 1966. Both teachers taught black children under apartheid. Gender discrimination was a feature of their work conditions. Both teachers comment on the bureaucracy of the Department of Education and Training which was responsible for the education of black children until 1996.

Unterhalter (1999:243) points out that ‘an emerging literature on women teachers’ autobiographies attempts to unpack the shifting meanings women themselves give to their work and their construction of professional identities’. Utilising the two autobiographies for understanding teachers’ constructions of their identity, she examines the following questions. First, what can be learned about gendered relations in South African schools? In this, Unterhalter examines ways in which women view their work as teachers and how questions of race and class mark these perceptions. Second, how can a ‘reading of these autobiographies help us to understand contemporary education policy change with regard to gender and education’ (p.244)? Both discourses have been mirrored in education policy since 1994. For Magona, gender confirms her race and class subordination, but for De Villiers, race and class superiority eclipse her gender subordination which, Unterhaler believes, reflects the slow implementation of gender equity policies in education in the 1990s (p.253). In relation to the new curriculum, Magona’s view is that teachers’ knowledge must be organized as a series of formal training steps, while De Villiers’ view is that teachers should utilize extensive cultural capital. The readings uncover how systems of meaning about gender have been formed in

South Africa. Of particular significance for my study are the shifting constructions of identity and subjectivity, and the meanings women give to their work as teachers. The participants in my study testify to the impact of Apartheid on their identities and ideologies, and how schooling contributes to overcoming race, class and gender injustices partly through the work of committed teachers. The teachers give different portrayals of gender regimes in their schools and express their opposition to any kind of discrimination they may either experience or witness. Some of the silence regarding gender equity is now being addressed.

Chisholm's (1999) paper on *The Democratisation of schools and the politics of Teachers' work in South Africa* uses the results of a qualitative study on teacher appraisal with the teachers' unions and a study focused on seven schools historically divided by race. The paper examines 'how teachers seek to alter relations of authority within schools', and how 'authority relations in the school interact with new managerial state initiatives' (p.111). 'It examines the conditions of teachers' work under Apartheid, the challenge to these by teacher unions and the struggles in schools over relations of authority and teachers' work in the crucial transitional years of 1990-1997'(p.111). At the same time that the teacher unions challenged bureaucratic and authoritarian controls over teachers' work, 'new forms of control over teachers' work were finding their way into education policies at the very moment of its transition' (p.116). This study's analysis of how organizational control was changing and being restructured in the post-apartheid period is relevant to my study. The insights from this study are significant for my research, which examines how new forms of management constitute new forms of control over teachers' work. Bowe, Ball & Gold (1992:53) emphasise that far from releasing people from the burdens of bureaucracy, the processes of marketisation 'increase the internal administrative load', resulting in overload and stress for teachers. My study focuses on how teachers cope with the new mode of teacher regulation.

Although teaching has traditionally been regarded as the ideal profession for women, it is usually in the position of class, or subject teacher, and not in the role of principal. Van

Deventer & van der Westhuizen's (2000) empirical investigation, *A shift in the way female educators perceive intrinsic barriers to promotion* used questionnaires and statistical data to discuss barriers to promotion experienced by female educators. From the results of the survey, they report that a shift has taken place with regard to female educators' perceptions of their under-representation in management posts. The shift, they conclude, could be attributed to the ANC government which, since 1994, has recognized women in general, and professional women in particular. The study reports that gender and racial/ethnic discrimination are being phased out (p.240). Of relevance to my study is the claim that 'women are in the process of making a paradigm shift with regard to their place in society, and that female educators are motivated and have professional aspirations that are not necessarily focused on promotion, but rather on achievement – their own and that of their learners' (p.240).

Perumal's (2005) *Enacting Feminisms in Academia: In search of critical feminist pedagogies of praxis* comprising autobiographical and biographical narratives explores how the social variables of race, class, gender, politics, religion, etc. have influenced the participants' feminist and language identity formation, and how these inform their teaching of English from a feminist perspective. Taking the view that the personal is political and potentially pedagogical, the study provides a commentary on the participants' childhood and early adulthood. My study explores participants' early identity formation and whether these experiences influence how they frame interpersonal relations with students and colleagues and the enactment of their teaching identities.

Smit's (2006) PhD study on *Primary school teachers' experiences of education policy change in South Africa* focuses on teachers' perspectives, experiences and understandings of education policy change. This is a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and open-ended questionnaires. Teachers' emotional responses dominate the inquiry as a major issue in education policy change. Their responses show there are many obstacles to policy implementation. A problem is the issue of discipline viewed in the light of new education policy for corporal punishment. Another finding is

that teachers struggle to cope with curriculum policy change and outcomes-based education. The study highlights similar themes and concerns raised by the participants in my study. My research focuses on women teachers in secondary schools. The women teachers describe their work as exhausting and draining, and this, in turn, reflects on how they manage the work-home dichotomy. They also describe the uncertainties they experienced with policy implementation owing to the lack of adequate support.

It seems that a necessary precondition for policy implementation is understanding how teachers mediate meaning and act with regard to education policy change.

An M Ed study by Knowles, Nieuwenhuis & Smit (2009), is a narrative analysis of *Educators' lived experiences of motherhood and teaching*, and is based on the life-stories of four white female educators. Knowles et al employ an interpretive perspective to analyse their data. They explore how the 'assumptions, cultural values and beliefs of these mother-educators shape the subjective construction and harmonization of the multiple roles of mother and educator' (p.333). The findings show that the female educators often find themselves faced with 'conflicting and complementary dimensions of the multiple roles of mother and professional' (p.333). They experience ambivalence and discomfort concerning their attempts to balance their roles successfully. These 'mother-educators, therefore, have to negotiate new meaning in terms of their own perceived multiple role expectations so as to enable them to experience success both as home-makers and professionals' (p.333). The study highlights that support by the state, school principals and fathers is needed.

The difference in my study lies in the method of analysis employed. I have used thematic analysis and discourse analysis to interpret the data (see section 5.5 for a detailed discussion). My inquiry addresses the theme of balancing work and home. Negotiating this terrain gives rise to conflict since the major responsibility of childcare and domestic chores lies with the women who also happen to be teachers. The evidence suggests that, when school creeps into home, it results in feelings of dissatisfaction, guilt and stress.

Women teachers question whether they are good mothers/wives/partners. The women in my study experience the lack of time most keenly because of the intensification of work.

Narrative studies of women teachers provide a first-hand account of their personal and professional lives. The studies referred to in the above discussion reflect some of the themes in which narrative studies have engaged, as an attempt to examine the lives of teachers in general, and women teachers, specifically. They are a sample of some of the narratives through which teachers' lives are depicted. Most of these narratives address issues that are relevant to the questions that I have raised for my study. My study attempts to investigate teachers' lived experiences in the school and in the home in view of the changed mode of teacher regulation and role expansion. It looks at teachers' career perceptions and promotion prospects and why women remain in teaching. It asks how teachers cope with the demands of multiple roles and how they negotiate their identities in view of the expansion of their professional role. My study highlights the agency of teachers who confront, challenge and change their personal and professional spaces and aims to contribute to this under-researched area by documenting the experiences and challenges of South African teachers in a period of intense educational change. By presenting teachers' own views of their work, I am hoping to gain a complex and nuanced understanding of how education policy changes impact on teachers' daily lives. I discuss further the significance of my study.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study endeavours to contribute to existing research by reinforcing the gendered nature of teaching and the formation of gendered identities during a period of overwhelming educational reform. It explores the meaning of teacher identity as it comes to be constituted through social interactions, performances and daily negotiations within and between school and home. In sociologically broader terms, the study examines the interplay between structure and agency, and the shifting constructions of identity and subjectivity. It looks at how teachers try to negotiate a balance between school and home.

Subjectivity is viewed in a two-fold sense, that of being a subject and that of being subject to. 'The concept of subjectivity implies that self-identity, like society and culture, is fractured, multiple, contradictory, contextual and regulated by social norms and is produced, negotiated and reshaped by discursive practices' (Zembylas 2003:113). In adopting a poststructuralist framework and using the work of Butler, this study aims to show how women teachers participate in this process by adopting and/or resisting dominant discourses. Butler (1997a) posits a performative politics in which she imagines discourses taking on new meanings and circulating in contexts from which they have been barred or in which they have been rendered unintelligible, as performative subjects engage a deconstructive politics that intervenes and unsettles hegemonic meanings (Youdell 2006:512). Resistance is possible if power is seen not as repressive but productive. Thus, maintaining that power is accompanied by resistance, and suggesting that both power and resistance together define agency, a focus of this study becomes women teachers' agency as a framework for understanding how these teachers author themselves to do things differently within restructured education systems. Butler's performative politics offers a conceptual tool for thinking how this might be done.

In this study I also use Christopher Day's construct of teachers' professional life phases. This analytical process helped me understand the teachers' professional and personal life histories which had a significantly positive but also negative impact on their commitment and perceived effectiveness.

1.5 Chapter Outline

Chapter One explains my rationale for the study and states the aims and research problem. I provide an outline of some of the policies that the government has put in place to achieve gender equality in South Africa and sketch school restructuring in the South African context. I, then, give a commentary on research on women teachers that

document their personal and professional experiences. In this study I aim to understand women teachers' experiences of teaching in South Africa today.

Chapter Two comprises a literature review of the debates that are central to my study. I examine policies that have led to the transformation of teachers' work with specific reference to their impact on teacher regulation. I provide a brief historical overview of teacher-state relations and the reasons for state control of teachers. I examine the ways in which managerialism and markets in education have changed the context and purposes of education. I consider the implications of these changes for the professionalism of teachers and recognise that the effects of such policies have reduced professional accountability to a form of managerial control. I note how increased control leads to intensification of teachers' work and a significant extension of their teaching role. I explain how teachers generate performances of their work in order to satisfy accountability demands. I reflect on the new notions of time and how teachers perceive and experience time. I conclude with how teachers respond to educational reform demands.

Chapter Three focuses on women and teaching. I review the debates on the feminisation of teaching. I argue that far from schools being increasingly 'feminised', there are strong indicators that in terms of educational policy making they are becoming re-masculinised in ways that are commensurate with new managerialist ideologies. I give particular consideration to the notion of teaching as a natural extension of women's traditional roles in the home. I aim to understand the reasons why some women aspire to senior positions while others choose to remain in the classroom. I consider the implications of the expanded role for women teachers and how this may lead to conflict in balancing home and school. I conclude with a discussion on the notion of balance.

Chapter Four gives an overview of the different meanings ascribed to the concept 'identity'. I attempt to explain Butler's ideas about performativity. I focus on the performative influences of race, class and gender identity, bearing in mind that the

process of subject formation and the ways in which women experience their lives are marked by race, class and gender and the individual's articulation of self or agency. I examine the implications of agency for gender subject formation. I attempt to link Butler's analysis to daily life in school. I describe teachers' professional life phases using the framework as given by Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington & Gu (2007:69) as well as critical influences (Day & Gu 2010:52) that impact on women teachers' lives. My aim is to examine how women teachers construct definitions of themselves as teachers and, as such, illustrate the tensions they experience as they negotiate competing discourses of work, home and a female self during a time of intense educational reform.

Chapter Five describes the research design of this study. I explain the methodology of the study, detailing how the sample was selected, the data gathered, analysed and interpreted and reliability and validity issues handled.

In **Chapters Six, Seven and Eight,** I analyse the findings. I discuss these in terms of the four claims in the conceptual framework. Chapter Six provides a commentary on the participants' childhood and early adulthood, with the intention of exploring the potential of a retrospective gaze of their identity formation, in terms of how they frame interpersonal relations with students and colleagues, and the enactment of teaching identities. The first theme in Chapter Six focuses on women teachers' socialization into teaching. I discuss how gender, race, class and cultural background influence the way the teachers experience their professional identities.

Chapter Seven analyses critical influences on teachers' professional lives. I focus on key influencing factors as arising at the two levels outlined by Day and Gu (2010:52), with adjustments in the sequencing and the addition of a sub-theme:

1. Personal relationships and health – related issues
2. Practice settings
3. Professional ideals and ambitions

I introduce the four key sub-themes and the sub-sub themes in this section. I have added to this outline a fifth sub-theme which seemed to be of significance when analyzing the narratives. Influencing factors had a positive or negative impact on their motivation, commitment, resilience and perceived effectiveness and, therefore, on pupil learning. The chapter reveals that it is the combination of influences and their intensity that matter. The women teachers' ability to manage these was critical to how they taught.

Chapter Eight explores how women teachers balance private and professional lives. The analysis shows that balance takes different and nuanced forms at different times of their lives. Their experiences exemplify the sacrifices women make to fulfil work and home obligations. This research demonstrates that women teachers manage through conflictual balancing to reconcile work and home lives. The following sub-themes were discernible across responses: the notion of time; negotiating the public/private split; teaching as a good fit for women, and balancing home and school.

Chapter Nine discusses the findings in terms of the claims that were made.

Chapter Ten concludes with recommendations, and identifying implications for teachers as a result of policy reforms. I discuss the limitations of my study. I also recommend some steps for policy developments and make suggestions for further research. I end with a personal reflection.

1.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter explains my rationale for the study and states the aims and research problem. I provide an outline of government policies to achieve gender equality in South Africa. I also sketch school restructuring in the South African context, gave a commentary on research on women teachers, and explained the significance of my study. The next chapter presents salient debates that are central to my study. I examine policies

that have led to the transformation of teachers' work with specific reference to teacher regulation and the ideology of managerialism and markets in education.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TRANSFORMATION OF TEACHERS' WORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at how teachers and teaching have changed in recent years. There is extensive international literature on teachers' work, including Acker (1992), Apple (1986), Connell (1985), Easthope & Easthope (2000), Fullan (1991), Hargreaves (1994), Helsby (1999), Lawn (1990), Ozga & Lawn (1988), Poppleton (2000), Seddon (1997) and Valli & Beuse (2007). Weber (2007:294) states that with the exception of a few studies (e.g. Chisholm 1999; 2005; Carrim 2002; Booyse & Swanepoel 2004; Morrow 2007; Shalem 1992) there is no scholarly tradition of comprehending teaching as work in South Africa. All these authors point to the demands made upon teachers. More recent writings internationally (amongst others, Ballet & Kelchtermans 2008; Calderhead 2001; Easthope & Easthope 2000; Poppleton & Williamson 2004), suggest that these demands are increasing.

Over more than a decade, educational systems and practices worldwide have experienced an almost unprecedented level of reform (Calderhead 2001; Sleegers, Geijsel & van den Berg 2002). Despite some differences of emphasis between nations, the general pattern is consistent. These reforms have directly or indirectly had an effect on the working lives of teachers, and have influenced, in varying degrees, their classroom practices (Calderhead 2001). The debates on the impact of educational reform and restructuring also occupy South African educational literature. This literature has drawn attention to the impact of post-apartheid curriculum, assessment and teacher policy change on teachers' working lives (Barasa & Mattson 1998; Bisschoff & Mathye 2009; Booyse & Swanepoel 2004; Chisholm & Unterhalter 1999; Cereseto 2009; Chisholm, Hoadley, wa Kivulu, Brookes, Prinsloo, Kgobe, Mosia, Narsee & Rule 2005; Christie 2008; De Clercq 2008; Fleisch

2002; Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson & Pillay 2000; Jansen 1998; Morrow 2007; Schulze & Steyn 2007; Shalem & Hoadley 2009; Weber 2005; Weber 2007).

My study on *The experiences and challenges of women teachers' lives* aims to contribute to existing literature through a nuanced understanding of education policy change from women teachers' perspectives in terms of their experiences. I argue that more informed choices regarding policy change concerning teacher regulation could be made if empirical evidence is taken into account in the context of policy production.

In the past few years, school restructuring has presented the most visible face of educational change at the highest levels of policy and in many individual efforts to bring about school change (Hargreaves 1997:1297). What counts as teachers' work is being reshaped. How it has been reshaped is the focus of the next section.

2.1.1 School Restructuring

International literature on teachers' work addresses the nature and form of teacher regulation and accountability, the reorganization of teachers' collective and individual power, and the consequences for teachers' working lives (Calderhead 2001; Gerwitz 2002; Reid 2003; Seddon 1997; Valli & Beuse 2007; Vongalis-Macrow 2007). Restructuring is reported to include a variety of components, such as the decentralisation of authority and decision-making to site level; a redesigned curriculum and instruction policy; more diverse and differentiated roles for teachers, and broadened systems of accountability (Fink & Stoll 1996; Hargreaves 1994). Most of the reforms pertinent to my study fall into three main categories. The first category consists of reforms relating to the marketisation of schools; the second category is the school curriculum, and the third category concerns accountability.

Restructuring in South Africa has been characterised by downsizing; decentralisation which has involved the marketisation of schooling (Chisholm 1997; Weber 2007); the

publication of test scores informing the public of a school's performance; a mandated national curriculum and system of testing; school accountability; and a performance appraisal system for teachers (De Clercq 2008; Weber 2007). This has resulted in a massive shift in the nature of teachers' work referred to as a 'process of intensification' (Hargreaves 1994). There is an escalation of pressures - excessive regulation, an increase in workload, an expansion of roles and a blurring of work-home boundaries. Butler (1993:7 in Fataar 2006:643) points out that when analyzing the politics of actors in policy networks, it is preferable to understand their subject positions and the ways they go about advancing specific interests in the 'contingent and strategic location within a specific discursive domain'.

An outline is traced of some of the major policy initiatives that contextualise teaching in post-apartheid South Africa.

Chisholm (2009:29) explains that 'teacher labour markets in South Africa are controlled through a system of post-provisioning and teacher-deployment, with the aim of achieving greater equity and meeting demand'. From 1996, restructuring saw the redeployment and rationalisation of teachers. Pupil to teacher ratios provided the rationale for redeployment of teachers from areas of over-supply to areas of under-supply. This structural adjustment policy was concerned with reduction of public expenditure. However, the policy was eventually abandoned because it was not achieving its intended purpose of a redistribution of teachers and improvement in equity and quality (Chisholm 2009; Weber 2007). 'In 1998, the Education Labour Relations Council reached a new and more flexible agreement on post provisioning, rationalisation, redeployment and transfers of teachers: school-based rightsizing committees were abolished, and procedures were modified for the appointment of teachers' (Chisholm 2009:9).

The dominant model of school governance in South Africa, up to 1994, concentrated power at the provincial and national levels in state ministries of education. Governance was understood and practised as administration through a large bureaucracy. 'The

challenges facing the post-1994 bureaucracy were of many kinds: apart from implementing new policies, it had to reconstitute itself, overcome the apartheid legacy, and assume new responsibilities while delivering more efficiently to a wider public and coping with the new constellation of social and economic forces' (De Clercq 2011:172). Education governance arrangements enshrined in the 1996 Constitution made both national and provincial departments shared powers. 'The former is responsible for developing policy frameworks, norms and standards and monitoring policy implementation and quality, while the latter has policy-making powers and is responsible for policy implementation and service delivery' (p.172). The provinces delegate some of their administrative authority to districts. The districts manage policy implementation and are expected to provide professional support to schools.

Educational decentralisation of school finance and governance in South Africa has been justified on the grounds of equity and redress. The general view is that decentralisation redistributes, shares and extends power and enhances participation by removing centralised control over educational decision-making (Sayed 2002). Despite the intention to establish a uniform system of governance and funding norms, schools have experienced decentralisation in different ways, reflecting their historical and material conditions. The devolution of financial control to schools and the opening up of an educational market in which schools compete against one another for students and, therefore, funding, has been widely perceived as a means of offering efficiency and improvement in the quality of education (Sayed 2002; Tikly & Mabogoane 1997; Woolman & Fleisch 2006).

Shalem & Hoadley (2009:6) explain that overviews of the ways in which education markets function suggest that, rather than leading to enhanced parental choice, frequently lead to stratification of schools in which the successful schools are the ones that have the power of choice over their student intake. The South African Schools Act enables SGBs to charge fees and thereby creates incentives to admit as many full fee-paying students as the school can accommodate. Power over individual school admissions policies vests

within the SGB of the individual school (Woolman & Fleisch 2006). Depending on their fee policy, some SGBs are able to recruit extra teachers from the best available teachers rather than from a redeployment list. This influences teacher supply since better qualified and scarce-skilled teachers move to SGB posts. 'Teachers move because of better schooling conditions and incentives attached to SGB posts' (Shalem & Hoadley 2009:10).

Hartley (1994:139) has argued that the consequences of financial devolution for headteachers are to make them complicit in delivering predetermined policy. He comments:

> The surface impression is that devolved school management is all about local control and the quest for quality. At root, however, it is a new mode of regulation, a new discourse, whereby government retains strategic control of teaching, curriculum and assessment whilst it devolves to headteachers…the tactics for implementing that strategy. (139)

Seen against this broad backdrop, questions are raised as to whether decentralisation has achieved the goals of equity and redress.

In South Africa the second area in which reform efforts have focused is the school curriculum. The introduction of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and its implementation has been highly problematic. C2005 was expected to replace old educational practices and to overcome social inequalities (Blignault 2008:101). The reforms called for by C2005, however, posed dramatic changes to classroom practices with teachers having to teach a complex and ambiguous curriculum. The trend has been toward increasing the demands on teachers and toward establishing targets or levels of attainment for students. The achievement of these targets is used as a measure of teacher or school effectiveness,

thereby increasing bureaucratic demands and controls on teachers' work (Shalem & Hoadley 2009).

A third area of reform concerns accountability. Together with the shift to OBE (Outcomes-based Education), the South African government introduced new measures of accountability which have direct implications for teacher regulation. Through a network of regulatory policies the government provides systemic means to assess whether schools are achieving nationally mandated learning outcomes. These policies, produced since 1997, include the Norms and Standards for Educators; the South African Council on Education, and the Manual for Developmental Appraisal and Duties and Responsibilities of Educators. Together, these documents define employer requirements, define professional conduct, provide frameworks for professional development and appraisal, and specify the duties and responsibilities of educators (Barasa & Mattson 1998:47).

The legislation pertaining to teachers' roles and competences is described in The New Norms and Standards for Educators. The (NSE) 'conceptualises teachers as highly skilled and knowledgeable, independent yet accountable professionals, with the space to exercise professional judgment' (Cereseto 2009:11). However, this view does not match the realities of the existing teaching force (Morrow 2007). Many teachers do not have the knowledge and skill to match the demands of the curriculum. According to Taylor (2008:7), it would seem that 'South African teachers have not transcended the dependency culture fostered by authoritarian regimes'. This being the case, many teachers are not equipped to have the autonomous and confident identity necessary for the conception of professionalism as described in the NSE. Jansen (2003a:119) is critical of policy documents that contain 'powerful images of the idealised teacher' conveyed 'through drastic role changes for the teacher without addressing the practitioner directly'. As a result, the demands for new expertise lead to a sense of being deskilled. 'While the intention of the policy is to re-professionalise teachers, making teacher professionalism more in keeping with what is perceived as the needs of a new era, the effect has been to de-professionalise them' (Whitty 2002:66). The deprofessionalisation of teaching occurs

when the professional status of teachers is being eroded. 'It is linked to changes in teachers' working conditions, to increasing regimes of control and surveillance which teachers experience, and to the decline in the respect and trust accorded to teachers' (Mahony & Hextall 2000:103). Teachers feel overburdened by the new demands for which they have neither the professional experience nor the support, leaving them overworked and demoralised (Chisholm et al 2005).

The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) complements the NSE and is aimed at enhancing and monitoring the performance of schools and teachers. The IQMS combines Developmental and Performance Measurement aspects. The developmental aspect demands that teachers align their teaching and assessment practices with the requirements of OBE while the performance measurement aspect is based on managerial forms of control. The accountability aspect undermines teachers' professional autonomy and causes anxiety, stress and defensiveness (Bartlett 2000; De Clercq 2008; Monyatsi, Steyn & Kamper 2006). Jansen (2004:64) draws a distinction between 'coercive autonomy', used to refuse any form of quality intervention, and 'substantive autonomy', the vital but broader intellectual engagement of teachers and students in the classroom. Given the problems that exist in many South African schools, it is evident that accountability needs to be prioritised. The concern is that negative experiences of inspections during Apartheid impact the intended aim and ethos of current policies of accountability (De Clercq 2008; Jansen 2004; Shalem & Hoadley 2009). The tensions created by the IQMS 'undermine the developmental aspects, while the accountability aspects are subverted through a compliance approach to the implementation of the system' (Biputh & McKenna 2010:290). This view supports the contention by Harvey & Newton (2004:151 in Biputh & McKenna 2010:286) that the 'rhetoric and documentary preambles in many countries refer to quality evaluation as a process of improvement, yet all the emphases are on accountability, compliance and, in some cases, control of the sector'. Codd (1996:14) in describing the New Zealand experience, states that 'contractual compliance may ensure that minimal levels of performance are maintained,

and managerial competence can improve efficiency, but educational excellence derives from personal initiative and professional autonomy'.

A further intervention in governing the work of teachers was the launch of the South African Council on Education (SACE), (DoE 2000a), a statutory body specifically charged with regulating the teaching profession. 'The main objectives of SACE are to enhance and improve the quality and standards of the teaching profession through the promotion and development of the teaching profession; the registration of teachers as one way of maintaining standards of practice; and the establishment and maintenance of a code of professional ethics for educators that will govern the behaviour of every teacher' (Jansen 2004:55). Criteria for entry into the profession through registration can be determined by the Council. A component of the SACE mandate is the Code of Conduct which carries with it disciplinary measures to be taken against teachers registered under the Council, acting inappropriately within the profession (p.55). This would be the first time, since the apartheid inspection system, that there would be 'direct intervention to regulate teachers' behaviour' (p.56). According to Jansen (2004), the overall intention of the policy is positive.

A regulative measure introduced to enhance the instructional environment in our schools is Systemic Evaluation (DoE 2001b). Poorly performing schools are placed on notice that they are under official surveillance. Public evaluation in the form of teacher national awards for quality teaching and leadership was instituted (DoE 2001b). The public discourse of the 'quality teacher' was, thereby, individualised.

After the release on the Educator Workload Report (Chisholm et al 2005), the Education Ministry announced in January 2010 a five-year plan to improve teaching and learning via short-term interventions aimed at providing immediate relief and focus for teachers (DoE 2/2010).

Teachers in South Africa have had to cope with significant changes in their working lives as a result of a restructuring of education. These policies are strongly regulatory and have resulted in the intensification of teachers' work. I summarize briefly how these policies have impacted on teachers' work. In essence, OBE represents a major change in teachers' work status, identities and demands. Teachers' classroom practices and methods of assessment have changed. The NSE determines and defines teachers' roles and responsibilities and workloads and, by so doing, 'the state has been able to exert a strong influence on what it means to be an educator within the public school system and put in place the symbolic and regulatory elements of a policy aimed at creating an ideal educator' (Parker 2003:31), whom Weber (2007:288) calls the 'compliant technician'. Writing from an Australian perspective, (Brennan 2009:355) points out that 'the contrast between the ideal teacher of the neo-liberal, human-capital approach and teachers' lived realities is significant'. This model thus has a context: it is connected with the growth of a market-oriented political and cultural order. New accountability requirements, as embodied in the IQMS, create additional pressures and burdens because teachers are expected to work in a climate of increased surveillance and competitiveness. Competition between schools means that teachers have to produce better results since test scores provide a basis for parental choice. All these elements combine to constrain teachers in their teaching work and act as 'disciplinary mechanisms for transforming teacher subjectivities' (Gewirtz 2002:21). There is little autonomy in their work of a largely women's workforce away from the 'gaze' of the state in their work (Brennan 2009:354).

Having considered some of the policies that have been introduced in educational reform efforts, I explore teachers' perceptions regarding the regulation of their work and what they experience as meaningful or constraining. This leads me to the next section which traces how teachers' responsibilities have become more extensive and their roles more diffuse.

2.1.2 Teacher Roles

Teaching has always been intense, but over the last twenty years teachers' workload has become a contentious issue. Gewirtz (1997:224) claims that 'what is different in this age of market forces and managerialism is the pattern and texture of intensification – the nature of the tasks that are absorbing increased quantities of teacher time and emotional labour'. The two main schools of thought can be divided into the new accountability literature and the intensification literature. According to Chisholm et al (2005:28), the 'intensification thesis argues that new forms of accountability intensify and increase workload; whereas the accountability literature focuses on the need for internal and external coherence within and between schools in order to ensure greater social accountability'. These schools of thought are relevant to the South African context. They suggest that accountability requirements intensify work, but also that schools will vary greatly in how they respond to them. 'There can be different kinds of misalignments between internal and external expectations' (Chisholm et al 2005:35). Schools most in need of improvement through the new accountability mechanisms are least able to respond to them because of incoherent internal accountability systems.

That there has been an expansion of teachers' work roles and responsibilities is widely documented in international literature (Bartlett 2004; Easthope & Easthope 2000; Esteve 2000). Calderhead (2001); Esteve (2000); and Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington & Gu (2007), describe an expansion of teachers' roles based on teachers' leadership and management responsibilities, the integration of children with special needs into ordinary classrooms, and involvement in new and extended pastoral care and behaviour management systems in secondary schools. 'Teachers steward many aspects of the school, including responsibilities such as the school's assessment systems, pedagogical practices and curriculum development' (Bartlett 2004:567). Research studies indicate that teachers lack sufficient time to attend to their responsibilities, working in the evenings, weekends and holidays is a regular feature of teachers' work lives and is perceived as necessary to keep up (Bartlett 2004; Day et al 2007; Helsby 1999). Calderhead (2001:79)

reports that ‘large-scale reform efforts have led to a substantial increase in stress levels experienced by teachers, which, in turn, has resulted in increasing levels of illness, burnout, and early departures from the profession’.

The research on teacher workload conducted in the South African context reveals clear disenchantment in teachers concerning the perception of broadened expectations brought about by policy changes, new roles and responsibilities, larger class sizes, distribution of learning areas per teacher and accountability requirements (Chisholm et al 2005). These variables are associated with burnout, occupational commitment and a sense of being deskilled. Morrow states that:

> Teachers have increasingly, through exhaustion, despair or perhaps dwindling conviction, given up trying to improve the quality of their teaching; they have increasingly come to see themselves as embrangled in situations over which they have no control, and have lost an understanding of themselves as professional agents whose responsibility it is to act as best they can in the situations in which they find themselves. In effect, they have adopted the stance of dependent victims, deferring responsibility to others or forces beyond their control, and have lost sight of themselves as agents with a professional responsibility to contribute actively to the improvement of the quality of education. (2007:210)

It is believed that not only organisational factors but also economic inequalities, have made teachers’ work burdensome (Chisholm et al 2005; De Clercq 2008; Morrow 2007; Shalem & Hoadley 2009). In contexts of poverty, children are the most vulnerable and, school attendance and academic achievement is affected, whereas teachers who teach children from an advantaged economic environment spend less effort in achieving ‘the aims of the curriculum’ (Shalem & Hoadley 2009:5,7).

The achievement of equity was a central component of attempts by the post-apartheid South African government to restructure education. These efforts have faced significant challenges. In the next section, I examine the relationship between teachers and the state i.e. the nature of control and its purposes in relation to the state.

2.2 Teachers' Work: Teacher-State Relations

The discussion that follows proceeds to disentangle the regime of regulation. 'Understanding of the present modes of regulation can only be understood by clarifying the historical and political conditions which have shaped them, because, while teachers' work has always been controlled, the extent waxes and wanes with the tides of social, economic and political paradigms' (Lawn & Ozga 1986 in Price et al 2012:89).

Mahony and Hextall (2000:84) assert that 'teaching falls within a web of social, economic, cultural, political and, in some cases, religious expectations, demands and cross-currents'. 'Thus, the management of the education system by the state is based upon a contested and dynamic process of struggle between competing interests and changing priorities' (Helsby 1999:22). It has always been impossible to separate the notion of professional from the legitimating and regulative activities of the state (Mahony & Hextall 2000). In Dale's terms (1982), professionals have always worked in positions of 'regulated autonomy' vis-à-vis the state. Reid (2003:567) points out that 'the centrality of the notion of control derives from the idea that, in order for Capitalist economic systems to function effectively, and a profit to be made, some form of control must be exercised over workers in order to maximize their work effort and obtain the desired work behaviours'. 'It is the changing relationship between teachers and the state that lies at the heart of educational reforms' (Helsby 199:21). Therefore, my analysis of teachers' work explains the relationship between teachers and the state and the changing nature of teachers' work. In this section I give a brief historical review of the changing relationship between teachers and the state in England. The themes have applicability to the South African context. The section that follows identifies the focus and purpose of controlling

teachers' work. An account is then provided of the processes through which the mode of regulation is changing and the tensions implicit in concepts of professionalism as a result of neo-liberal governance.

2.2.1 Change of mode of control: A brief historical review

Control over teachers is not new. Ozga (2000) claims that the history of teaching has been a history of struggle against the control of both the state and capital over teachers' practices – a control which developed from direct personal rule, through bureaucratic indirect rule in the 1920s, to the regime of technical control after 1944 (see also Shalem 1990). Teachers' labour became bureaucratized. Teaching became a defined occupational field, comprising specific tasks, controlled by administrative measures and accountable to the state and to parents.

Historical research in the UK indicates that, in teaching, in the twentieth century, professionalism became the crux of teacher regulation based on a political balancing act between the state and teachers. Ozga emphasizes the point that in order to understand the use of professionalism it cannot be treated as a static or neutral category but must be grasped

> in its historical and political context, to appreciate its function as a form of occupational control and to consider its capacity for the concealment of differentiation in and stratification of the workforce. (1995:21)

In the first period, the 1920s, restrictions on teacher autonomy were removed, and 'indirect rule' was used to move teachers away from the labour movement. In the second period, after 1944, there was 'licensed autonomy' (Dale 1989) 'as a result of an occupational trade-off that provided limited autonomy for teachers within a framework of largely tacit regulation' (Seddon 1997:233). What provoked 'licensed autonomy' was the strength of organized teachers. Ozga (2000:18) points out that the 'mode of control of the

teachers, and thus the model of the teacher that policymakers endorsed, was not entirely the product of policymakers'. She argues that it was teachers themselves who, by their 'actions, set some parameters for the design of the occupation that predominated throughout the 1960s and 1970s' (p.18). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the fundamental relationship between teachers and employers was that of inequality of power, i.e. 'indirect rule', although this relationship was often concealed by the rhetoric of partnership, linked to service professionalism (Lawn & Ozga 1986; Shalem 1990). 'It was only with the threat of economic crisis, in the late 1970s, and associated anxiety about social instability that the centre began to move away from indirect rule' (Ozga 2000:18). Gewirtz (2002:1) refers to the period from the 'mid-1940s to the mid -1980s as a welfarist settlement'. Work was governed by two modes of coordination i.e., 'bureaucratic administration and professionalism or bureau-professionalism' (p.2).

This overview suggests that the strategies adopted by the state to control the teaching force alternate between direct rule, leading to militancy and resistance, and indirect rule, leading to increased professionalization and autonomy. It is possible to identify a historical period of 'indirect rule' in England from about 1925 to 1980 (Lawn 1996). Indirect rule combined an apparent decentralization of power with strategic co-ordination from the centre. 'Under this strategy teachers were won over by appeals to their 'professionalism' and by the granting of a degree of independence over their day- to-day work and, thus, were co-opted into achieving state purposes' (Helsby 1999:21).

The shift in the locus of control to new managerialism in the late 1980s has entailed an intensification and regulation of teachers' work. The increase in the technical elements of teachers' work has meant that professional autonomy and judgment are further reduced. (I return to discuss New Managerialism in 2.3).

From the above discussion we see how indirect rule, partnership and professionalism, and more recently new managerialism have been used to manage and change teachers. In the

light of this discussion, the next section determines the nature and purpose of controlling teachers.

2.2.3 Why are State Teachers Controlled?

In examining the relationship between the state and its teachers, Reid (2003) mentions three reasons why the state needs to control teachers. The first reason is that once 'the state has purchased the labour of a teacher it has to extract labour from that commodity' (p.567). Education becomes a commodity to be bought and sold, the teacher becomes a provider of that commodity and the student a client. The second motivation for control relates to 'reducing production costs and supporting capital accumulation' (Reid 2003:567). Since state activities are funded from taxation and pose a threat to capital accumulation, the state is under pressure to reduce the cost of public service activities while still meeting the demands of capital and community (p.567). One way of meeting these demands is by lowering labour costs by devaluing the work of teachers whilst requiring them to do more with the same or fewer resources. A way of achieving this is by reorganizing work practices, and/or demanding more from teachers. Thus, attempts to reduce state expenditure on education will be accompanied by control strategies. 'The third crucial reason for state control is that employers have a vested interest in ensuring that the school system produces workers with appropriate work ethics and skills to survive in a competitive global market' (p.568).

Education systems are run as bureaucracies and this creates grounds for contestation between various affected parties (Dale 1989:40). Ozga (2000:1) refers to this as 'contested terrain' for her 'understanding of policy is that it is struggled over, not delivered in tablets of stone to a grateful or quiescent population'. Curriculum decisions result from these competing pressures which the state tries to resolve by organizing compromises referred to as an 'educational settlement' which usually is 'tilted in favour of dominant groups' (Reid 2003:570). The national curriculum is the dominant

framework of teachers' work. The state, then, has to ensure that teachers implement the preferred curriculum and control strategies have to be devised.

Reid (2003:570) argues that if the 'national curriculum is the dominant framework of teachers' work, it follows that teachers are key to the successful implementation of the curriculum'. However, one has to take account of the differential effort required of different teachers as well as ideological contestation about the nature of curriculum. According to Reid, employers tend to prefer a work-oriented curriculum, while teachers prefer a broader curriculum, a type that addresses the 'whole child'. Thus, if the educational settlement is to be followed, 'the state must ensure that teachers work in particular ways and for specific ends i.e., teachers must be controlled' (p.570). Whitty (2002) points out that the state has 'tightened its control over the curriculum in terms of what is taught and how this has to be assessed' (p.102). Whitty further maintains that 'central regulation of the curriculum is not only geared towards standardizing performance criteria in order to facilitate professional accountability and consumer choice within the education marketplace; it is also about creating, or recreating, forms of national identity' (p.102). The new system of governance provides parents with information to hold schools to account and to choose schools based on performance.

Thus, the purpose of controlling teachers can be revealed through analyzing the prevailing educational settlement and the social, political, economic and cultural factors that have influenced it. Embedded in each educational settlement are systems and strategies of control to ensure that teachers implement policy imperatives (Reid 2003). Such controls vary across times and contexts and have different effects. That 'control strategies exist does not mean that they work' (p.570). Teachers respond differently to controls - both passive and active.

The next section focuses on Marketisation and New Managerialism as powerful mechanisms of control over the construction of teacher identity and the nature of teachers' work. Market relationships and managerialism have reshaped the bureau-

professional regimes which characterized the public services during the era of the welfare-state settlement. To achieve the goals of any governmental change project, it is necessary not only to 'assemble the economic and social forces to realize it' but also to create appropriate 'powers and institutional arrangements' (Clarke et al 2007 in Beck 2008:127). The focus is on the management of teachers as being decisive for the implementation of education policies.

2.3 The Current Mode of Control: Marketisation and New Managerialism and the Management of Teachers

2.3.1 Introduction

In her provocative analysis Gerwitz (2000) argues that one of the key rationales underpinning reforms was that market forces and more efficient management techniques would help raise the standards in schools. Marketisation and new managerialism have been two key elements in school restructuring. Chan (2004), claims that these changes are also relevant to the Asia-Pacific region. She maintains that while marketisation 'aims to incorporate market principles and criteria to improve the economic returns and efficiency of educational services, new managerialism aims to enhance the effective control of work practices and the accountability of educational workers' (p.491). Hatcher (1994), who presents a UK perspective, states that new managerialism is the product of a 'specific combination of state regulation and quasi-market relationships' (pp.45-46). The adoption of neoliberal policies seem to suggest that the marketisation of education has become a global trend and as Codd (2005:197) declares, 'education under neoliberalism has been commodified in the form of human capital'. Neoliberal reforms involve reducing the size of the central bureaucracy and extending the schools' decision-making power in the administration of school affairs thus converting schools into self-managing units competing with one another for students and resources. These reforms which establish the key elements of the market model for the provision of education focus on

decentralization, parental choice, governance, curriculum, management and accountability.

With the reduction in the state financial provision for education, most of the educational financing comes from the parents to schools. This makes schools more responsive to the demands of the marketplace. In their study of the influence of marketisation in Hong Kong and the mainland, Chan and Mok (2001), emphasize that when 'school funding is directly related to student enrolments, the educational market will heighten competition among schools' (p.25). The market, therefore, is being used as a disciplinary mechanism for, by seeking out inefficiency and by rewarding successful schools, the market will eliminate the poor schools (Ball 1990a:66). The new system of governance will provide parents with information to hold schools to account, to appeal and register complaints. Central to the adoption of a market-oriented approach to restructuring education is the empowerment of parents and students through choices in education, so that they can exert pressure to 'produce greater responsiveness and academic effectiveness' (Chubb & Moe 1992:10-11 in Chan & Mok 2001:25). The policy of decentralisation reflects the idea of school-based management through the deregulation and devolution of financial control to schools allowing school governing bodies greater flexibility in employing teachers. Ball (1993:3) argues that 'markets in education provide the possibility for the pursuit of class advantage and generate a differentiated and stratified system of schooling'.

In this respect, 'market relationships are becoming the organizing principle of the school system such that they are able to provide a new basis for school management' (Hatcher 1994:42). The state's control is particularly evident in the case of quasi-markets. 'Parental choice and school competition are seen as ways of achieving reform and raising standards while at the same time reducing state intervention into education planning' (Ball 1993:3). Furthermore, the state is 'intensely interested in what schools produce – the future workers and citizens – and has substantially increased its powers to control the production process – the national curriculum and national testing' (Hatcher 1994:45). Therefore, state regulation and market relationships are intertwined. 'The state intervenes

directly in the work process, which has fundamental implications for management at school level' (p.45).

'Choice' and 'competition' have intensified teachers' work in terms of reports, statistics and other forms of performance data. (Gewirtz 2002), points out that in the UK, more energy and resources are spent on marketing, with a particular focus on selecting students who are more able. 'Less able' children and those for whom English is their second language are more expensive to educate' (Gewirtz 2002:50). Excluding students who are likely to perform badly is the most cost-effective means for oversubscribed schools to improve their results. 'An increasingly competitive climate with a focus on output and heightened forms of surveillance means that teachers feel that they are under growing pressure to perform and conform' (Gewirtz 1997:224). The English experience has been that teachers are expected to 'buy into the pervasive vision of entrepreneurial and competitive individualism within a framework of tight fiscal control' (Helsby 1999:11-12). Thus the competition engendered is that of a quasi-market which is 'steered by the government and which sets the rules of exchange and decides the nature of the product' (Hartley 1997a:138). Within the new neoliberal discourse, 'value is attached to efficiency, cost-effectiveness, ambition, competition and scientific rationality, thereby displacing traditional feminine qualities such as caring, nurturing, loyalty and co-operation' (Helsby 1999:36).

In the South African context, Soudien, Jacklin and Hoadley (2001) state that 'issues of equity and redress in schooling play themselves out primarily through school choice and admission processes within parameters set up through policy-led restructuring of the school system' (p.82). Schools are given the right to set fees, thereby encouraging consumer choice. Schools have to, therefore, position themselves in the market so as to attract more able students and whose parents can afford to pay fees. Parents and students 'seek access to what they consider to be the best-quality schools that they can afford' (p.83). School choice has also changed enrolment patterns in schools. Previously, school

choice had ‘specific implications in terms of race’ (p.84), but this has changed since 1994 when schools were opened to all races.

Fleisch and Woolman (2006:2) claim that behind ‘programmes to entice students to schools lay the notion that generating competition within the public school system or between public schools and private schools would produce better schools and better students’. Tikly and Mabogoane (1997) pursue the argument that ‘markets increase parental choice and parental involvement in education’ (p.166). Soudien et al (2001) contend that the choice of schools is ‘largely informed by the material environments which constitute and constrain the lives and opportunities of families’ (p.85).

In this context, I turn now to examining the consequences for education in terms of how the state has sought to gain greater and more direct control of public education.

2.3.2 The Regulation of Work: New Managerialism

Brehony and Deem (2005) in the UK, explain that ‘New Managerialism, an ideological construction derived from practices once used by the private sector, may be understood as a set of values, ideas and practices that are aimed at reforming the management’ of schools (p.396). The regulatory processes vested in national curricula, national standards, and national testing permit the state to maintain steerage at a distance over the aims and processes of education (Robertson 2000). (Gewirtz 2002) believes that market policy demands the ‘realignment of school practices to performance criteria set by the state and managerialism is the device which has evolved to effect this realignment’ (p.6). To assure ‘quality control’, in education various evaluative measurements have been used to maximize output and to compare educational products (Chan 2004; Chan & Mok 2001; Codd 2005;). An ‘audit culture’ (Power 1997), comprising measures such as internal monitoring; target-setting and external reporting is gradually installed (Beck 2008; Chan 2004; Codd 2005; Gewirtz 2002). ‘Quality has become a powerful metaphor for new forms of managerial control’ (Codd 2005:200). In this process, teachers are ‘discursively

repositioned as non-experts' (Robertson 1996:30) whilst institutional power and authority lies with headteachers and deputies. Helsby (1999:37) argues that 'what has been devolved is administrative responsibility rather than managerial power'. School managers, like classroom teachers, are 'subject to external appraisal of their performance' and are held accountable for student outcomes (p.37). These changes can be viewed as part of a political strategy to regain central control over public services.

Managerialism creates particular images of schooling and of the role of teachers and school managers within it. With the introduction of individualized techniques, performance indicators and competitiveness, some have expressed concern about the erosion of professional autonomy and trust (Codd 2005; Hargreaves 1994; Helsby 1999; Woods, Jeffrey, Troman & Boyle 1997). Educational institutions are expected to operate like economic enterprises, thus encouraging new sets of values. Studies have questioned the desirability of replacing ethics with economic efficiency as the guiding principle of education (Ball 1994; Gewirtz 2002; Helsby 1999).

Within the discourse of managerialism, quality has been linked to accountability through a process of 'quality assurance' or what was more commonly referred to as 'school inspection'. Quality assurance was emphasized at a time when schools were expected to shift their focus from educational processes to outputs and learning outcomes. 'Accountability includes four major ideas: the school as the basic unit for the delivery of education, hence teachers and administrators are held to account; schools are accountable for student performance; student performance is evaluated against externally set standards as mandated by states and localities; and evaluation of school performance' (Elmore 2007:134). The term accountability constructs teachers as being in need of external regulation. A feature of recent educational reforms has been the increase in accountability mechanisms such as teacher appraisal, new recording and reporting requirements, national testing, and publication of examination results. Taken together, these factors 'constitute interventions which not only reshape the nature of teaching but also fundamentally restructure the lines of power, responsibility and accountability'

(Mahony & Hextall 2000:89). External accountability demands have had an impact on teacher professionalism creating tensions between autonomy and compliance and intensifying teachers' work.

The most widely used measures of the success of school reforms are the results of standardized achievement tests. The next section explores the effects of the intense pressure to standardize curricula, teaching and evaluation, with particular focus on their impact on teacher regulation.

2.3.2.1 Standards and Performativity

In order to improve educational quality and hold schools more accountable for their practice, the state imposed standardised controls to monitor learning and teaching. These controls were set forth as 'reforms' (McNeil 2000:4). Helsby (1999:99), consequently, contends that the mantra of 'raising standards' has meant that 'most teachers have had to cope with significant changes in their working lives as a result of a general restructuring of education systems, and have come under increasing pressures' to raise the bar for achievement. In accountability systems, test scores are used as indirect measures of teachers' work, principals' performance and the overall quality of the school. Teachers' performance is measured through their students' examination results, their capacity to meet centrally imposed standards and a whole range of performance indicators and measurable outcomes (Ball 1999:20; Beck 2008).

Standardized controls lead to the deskilling of teachers, the intensification of their work and the loss of autonomy and respect. With increasing moves towards national standardization of curriculum and testing, teachers in Hargreaves' study (2010:149) reported 'sinking professional motivation and lost classroom creativity'. Ball (1998, 2001a,b in Ranson 2007:207) captures how the 'rituals and routines of performance surveillance bite deeply into the attitudes, practices and identities of state professionals'. 'Performativity (i.e., what is produced, observed, measured) works from the outside in,

through regulations, controls and pressures, but also from the inside out colonizing lives and producing new subjectivities, disciplined by targets, indicators, and performance measuremen, (Ranson 2007:207). 'The discourse of performativity undermines teacher autonomy and generates an intensification of the labour process of teaching, a refocusing – and narrowing – of pedagogic activity, and a shift in who or what is valued in schools' (Gewirtz 2000:89). When performativity is accommodated, teacher agency and professionalism are at risk.

In the next section I discuss changes in organizational culture as a result of market relationships and new managerialism. To install the new management regime in schools requires not only new powers for management but also a new organizational culture. 'The struggle to create this new school culture takes place on the terrain of ideologies of teachers' professionalism' (Hatcher 1994:55). We see how 'the construction through legislation of a coercive ensemble of legislative measures dramatically curtailed teachers' autonomy and capacity to define their own conceptions of professionalism, marginalizing them from influence over policy and rendering them increasingly accountable to central government and its agencies' (Beck 2008:123).

2.3.2.2 A New Organisational Culture in Schools

With educational restructuring two quite distinct forms of reculturing is evident. The one is the imposition of a new technical-rational, business-oriented culture upon schools fostered by the state under the key concepts of 'choice', 'accountability' and 'quality'. The other is the promotion of a culture of change and improvement based upon appeals to teacher autonomy and teacher professionalism. The new management of education requires a new professionalism. Various reform initiatives have sought to change the old individualistic culture of teaching to collaboration and collegiality through which teachers develop new skills by sharing professional knowledge.

Hargreaves (1994) believes that collaboration can facilitate the development of professional confidence and autonomy through exposure to different points of view in a supportive context, or it may take the form of 'contrived collegiality'(p.208). Hargreaves also points out that collegiality is a way of co-opting teachers to fulfilling administrative purposes and securing effective implementation of external mandates (p.195). Reculturing in its negative form is a way of managing school cultures so that teachers comply with structural goals and purposes. Helsby (1999:30) argues that 'both structural and cultural changes will do little to improve schooling unless they take into account the importance of the active agency of teachers in constructing the reality of educational practice on a daily basis'. 'Structural' changes refer to the 'organizational arrangements, the distribution of authority and power and the modes of sanction and regulation' (Ranson 2007:201), while cultural changes refer to 'new management styles designed to give renewed emphasis to customer orientation, innovation, enterprise and competitive edge' (Hatcher 1994:42).

According to Nixon, Martin, McKeown and Ranson (1997:12) the 'new organizational culture symbolizes a shift away from 'professionalism' as the ideology of service and specialist expertise'. It also suggests a shift away from 'professionalisation' where the status of the occupation is at stake towards 'professionality' which focuses on the quality of practice in contexts that require radically altered relations of power and control (p.12). Autonomy has given way to accountability, prompting some researchers (Apple 1986; Beck 2008; Hargreaves 1994; Hoyle 1995; Lawn 1996; Ozga 1995; Whitty 2002) to argue that de-professionalisation, rather than re-professionalisation has been the outcome of the new organisation. The shift towards nationally imposed curriculum and assessment where teachers' work can become increasingly routinised and deskilled is a case in point (Easthope & Easthope 2000). Neoliberal policies with their emphasis on markets, consumers, choice and accountability inserted a new mode of control thus destabilizing professionalism (Beck 2008; Seddon 1997). Beck (2008:137), in his research on re-professionalisation or de-professionalisation of teachers in England, calls this 'governmental professionalism'. 'The main elements of its strategy and tactics have

become increasingly evident: particularly the attempts to 'interpellate' (Althusser 1971) teachers as 'responsible' professionals, alongside the deployment of resources of the state to prescribe the forms that this 'legitimate' professionalism is allowed to take' (Beck (2008:137). This can be seen as a strategy of deprofessionalisation.' Underpinning the whole edifice is a set of assumptions about a restricted and homogeneous form of professionalism' (Ozga 2000:23).

Ozga suggests that current reforms have reinforced a restricted model of professionalism (p.24). Changes in control over pace and process that were previously connected to expertise and knowledge have contributed to the diminished autonomy of teachers. This is echoed by Whitty (2002:68) when he claims that 'partly the struggle between the teaching profession and the state over the nature of teachers' professionality is a struggle between 'restricted' and 'extended' professionality,' a distinction established by Hoyle (1974 in Whitty 2002:68). A model of the 'restricted' professional is one who relies upon experience and intuition, and is guided by a narrow, classroom-based perspective. The model of 'extended' professionality reflects a much wider vision of what education involves. These teachers evaluate their work because they understand teaching to be a rational activity open to improvement.

In the next section I examine how state initiatives have drastically increased teachers' workloads.

2.4 The Reconstruction of Teachers' Work: The Experience of Intensification of Teaching

Work intensifies as pressure for efficiency mounts. Therefore, 'teachers are experiencing a loss of autonomy and an accelerated intensification of activity and stress' (Gewirtz 2002:88). There is a clear separation between policy formulation and execution: a diminution of teacher control over decisions about the ultimate goals and objectives of their work, and pressure on teachers to become increasingly preoccupied with the

technical aspects of meeting aims and targets set elsewhere (Gitlin 2001). Teachers have been caught in the 'trap of conscientiousness', doing their best to meet prescribed targets but compromising the quality of learning and their own health (Woods, Jeffrey & Troman 1997:7).

In reviewing the intensification thesis, it was found that, firstly, 'individual teachers can themselves be sources for the increased pressure' as they impose their own standards on their work (Ballet & Kelchtermans (2008:48). Secondly, the 'steering' impact of external policies on teachers is not always straightforward – 'external demands are always filtered, interpreted and negotiated and are mediated by local autonomy and the professionalism of school teams' (p.48). They state further that the 'intensification impact is strongly mediated by the cultural and structural characteristics of the school as an organization and by processes of interpretation, that is sense-making, by individual teachers' (p.48). Thirdly, the impact of intensification is experienced differently among different teachers (Hargreaves 1992; Easthope & Easthope 2000). 'Not all teachers experience it as negative or inhibiting'; therefore, it would be more appropriate to use the concept 'experience of intensification' (Ballet & Keltchtermans 2008:48).

A characteristic of the experience of intensification is that teachers' identity and value systems are at stake (p.48). Teachers try to cope with the new demands to maintain their social recognition as competent teachers and colleagues, this being central to their professional identity (Keltchtermans 1996). Commitment to the expanded teaching role has given rise to the extended professional. Gitlin (2001) suggests that the 'decisions that teachers make are based on their attempt to contain the threat of intensification' (p.227). 'Such a self-regulatory process shapes decisions in the areas of planning, grading and classroom management' and puts into place a defensive form of teaching (p.227). When teachers cannot respond adequately to the demands for change their sense of competency and skill' is threatened, resulting in the 'loss of self-esteem and identity as a teacher' (Ballet & Keltchtermans 2008:48). Apple (1986), Densmore (1987) and Hargreaves (1992) claim that intensification is voluntarily supported by many teachers and

misrecognised as professionalism. The willingness to innovate as a cultural norm seems to act as both a support in dealing with pressure, and as an intensifying factor, thereby increasing the workload.

In addition, teachers' work is increasingly colonizing their time at home. 'Time has always been a tyranny for teachers, who often feel they are racing against the clock, with insufficient time to plan, prepare, reflect more deeply, or think ahead' (Hargreaves & Shirley 2009:2508). Of all the complaints teachers have about the difficulties of reform, none is more frequent than 'not enough time'. The next section explores time as a factor in analyzing work.

2.4.1 The new notions of time

Societal notions of 'time' are being re-constructed (Williams, Pocock & Skinner 2008:737). Work is no longer dominated by the time oriented schedules of the industrial era when production occurred within a stipulated time frame managed by the employer (p.737). Instead, we see a restructuring of time on task schedules in which time must accommodate work tasks. Work is no longer governed by 'clock time', but by work tasks; it ignores industrialized conventions of a prescribed number of hours. 'While the flexibility this allows is welcomed by some, for others it has resulted in an expansion of working hours and an inability to coordinate and manage the multiplicity of times that govern their various life spheres' (p.745).

Williams et al (2008:738) assert that 'temporal boundaries between work and other activity have become blurred and individuals have to simultaneously manage their work and other aspects of their lives within various conceptions of time'. For workers with family, time may be constructed differently in the different life spheres i.e. the time needs of work, children and partners. Maher, Lindsay and Franzway (2008:547) argue that 'time is critical in both the domain of paid work and the domain of family life, and the growth in women's paid work is posing particular challenges for contemporary families'.

The new employment relationship manifests itself in the loss of boundary control between work and home. As a result, feelings of time pressure are expected to increase.

2.4.1.1 Time and Time Pressure

Time pressure is firstly a conflict between the amount of time available in one domain and the amounts required in other domains. Time pressure, a feeling of constantly running out of time or being pressed for time has become a problem in our society and it is likely only to increase in scope and impact. 'The feeling of being stressed and rushed through role overload and multiple tasking has become part of modern life' (van der Lippe & Peters 2007:4). It is not surprising that time appears to be central in work-home issues. The extent to which employees are being held responsible for meeting profit or production targets and managing their own workloads is expected to be important for time allocation purposes i.e., competing claims arising from work and home domains (p. 5). There are two contrasting views of whether autonomy increases time pressure. On the one hand, Hochschild (1997) argues that in autonomously-oriented organizational forms, workers are forced to spend more time at work than with their family. On the other hand, Berg et al (2003 in van der Lippe & Peters 2007:5) stress that 'new organizational forms facilitate the combination of work and care by more family-friendly practices which result in fewer time conflicts'.

As there are only so many hours in a day, 'time use can only be intensified through multiple tasking, capital-intensive consumption or more intense experiences' (p.3). There are, however, differences in time allocation patterns between men and women. Employed women are mainly responsible for domestic duties and women's time use is more dependent on the family situation than men's (van der Lippe & Peters 2007). The consensus is that women have been required to manage the time deficit inside working families. First, time use studies show that women spend less time on domestic duties than on child care activities (Gershuny 2000). Second, 'care time has different rhythms and constraints from labour market time' (Maher, Lindsay & Franzway 2008:549). 'Care for

little children has multiple time dimensions, is continual and non-negotiable and some care needs are governed by externally fixed time schedules leading to fixed time pressures. e.g. school and childcare' (p.549). The consequences are feelings of stress, time pressure, burnout and work-home interference as partners negotiate competing responsibilities.

Hargreaves (1994:95) mentions that 'time is a fundamental dimension through which teachers' work is constructed'. Teachers and those who administer and supervise them interpret the use of time differently, which suggests that time is a social construct that is often contested. 'Through the prism of time' we see how women teachers 'construct the nature of their work at the same time as they are constrained by it'(p.95). Hargreaves distinguishes between four interrelated social dimensions of time particularly as they apply to teachers' work; they are technical-rational time, micropolitical time, phenomenological time and socio-political time (p.96).

Technical-Rational Time

Time, in such a view, is an objective variable, an instrumental, organizational condition that can be managerially manipulated to facilitate the implementation of educational changes (p.96). Campbell (1985 in Hargreaves 1994:) has identified four kinds of time used to carry out and support school-based curriculum development. These were group time, for collaborative planning, conducted after school; snatched time of rushed consultation with colleagues during the school day; personal time out of school for individual reading, planning and attendance of courses; and other contact time (or preparation time) where teachers are scheduled away from class (p.97).

Micropolitical Time

'The micropolitical significance of time scheduling in schools is apparent within the curriculum, when higher status or academic subjects receive more generous time

allocations and more favourable scheduling slots' (p.98). These subjects are more likely to be made compulsory.

Phenomenological Time

It is where time is subjective and is at 'variance with the ordered linear schedules of objective time' (p.100). In the context of reform, teachers experience pressure and anxiety because time demands become excessive. Teachers experience guilt and frustration because the new programme takes longer to implement and less efficiently than the deadlines imposed by administration. The administrative tendency in the definition and control of time is rooted in a monochronic and male world of market relations, increasing productivity and the exertion of control and surveillance (p.101). The polychronic perspective with its emphasis on personal relationships creates barriers to implementation, resistance to change (pp.103-104).

Sociopolitical Time

It is the way in which particular forms of time come to be administratively dominant. It is a central element in the administrative control of teachers' work and of the curriculum implementation process. Two elements are important: separation and colonization.

Separation

This refers to the 'separation of interest, responsibility and associated time perspective between the administrator and the teacher' (p.107). Teachers have to deal with multiple changes while still coping with the constraints of classroom life. Therefore administrative timelines for change seem unrealistic. Since the teacher experiences the classroom polychronically the 'tendency is to simplify change or to slow it down' (p.108). The administrator then becomes more inclined to quicken the pace, tighten timelines or impose another innovation. All of this results in the intensification of teachers' work.

Colonisation

'Is the process where administrators take up or 'colonize' teachers' time with their own purposes' (p.109). It becomes noticeable where the 'back regions' (staffrooms) of teachers' working lives are taken over by administrative purposes turning them into public, formal 'front regions'(p.109). In this way the 'time and space' that was used for relaxation and to help teachers restore and reconstruct themselves for the next set of 'performances' becomes a 'domain' of administrative surveillance and bureaucratic control (p.109).

The above discussion points to an increase of time demands in the private realm as well as the workplace (Epstein 2004). This discussion suggests that teachers feel torn between work and family not only because their households increasingly juggle competing responsibilities, but also because job expectations and parenting standards have stepped up (Jacobs & Gerson 2004). For my study, the analysis of time is relevant for understanding the time pressures experienced by women teachers as they try to navigate a balance between their home and work responsibilities.

This takes me to the next section which captures the tensions of teachers' responses to the intensification of their work. 'Teachers function in a context nested within the power structures of their school, their local authority and the state' (Stevenson 2007:227). Teachers are not passive recipients of policy reform, but they 'shape it and reshape it as they seek to assert agency over the process of policy implementation' (p.227). Teachers' work is, therefore, 'not static and uncontested but is the outcome of an ebb-and-flow struggle shaped by both individual and collective responses' (p. 227).

2.5 Teachers' Responses: Compliance, Subversion and Resistance

Imposed structural changes to the education system would seem to suggest a change of role from semi-professional to managed employee (Helsby 1999:172). Marketisation and

managerialism place pressures upon teachers to conform to external requirements. They feel insecure with the demands of increased accountability. However, teachers do have some choice over how they respond to policy initiatives, although their reactions may be different. Agency is exercised through action and not purely on the basis of positive belief. If an individual believes s/he can effect change, s/he is most likely to find the most appropriate way of doing so. Some teachers may experience 'strong feelings of disempowerment and therefore adopt a passive approach to what is asked of them, others may refuse to view policy texts as operational prescriptions and, instead, see them as possible courses of action to be considered and amended as appropriate' (p. 173).

A factor in determining teachers' responses to imposed reforms is the level of their 'professional confidence', i.e., 'teachers who have a strong belief in their capacity and authority to make decisions about their work' (p.173). If a problem arises, they act immediately to solve the problem rather than wait for an instruction or deferring to others. To be able to do this the teacher needs to feel 'in control' of the work situation. Teachers who are professionally confident are not overwhelmed by excessive demands; they are able to manage their workload rather than be driven by them. 'Instead of crisis management, corner-cutting, and ill-considered coping strategies, they are able to reflect upon, and make conscious choices between alternative courses of action and can feel that they are doing a good job' (p.173).

Teachers filter the policies of change through their existing professional ideologies, perspectives and identities (Woods et al 1997), forcing them to respond in some way, 'whether by enthusiastic compliance, subversion or outright resistance' (Gewirtz 2002:7). In such an environment, it is hardly likely that teachers will engage in much reflective discussion 'resulting in the substitution of intellectual activity with cultures of compliance' (Hardy 2010:72).

League tables of students' assessment results and formal appraisals and inspections have been used to encourage competition amongst staff and in some instances principals have

used the ‘divide and rule’ strategy to ensure compliance with school policies (Helsby 1999:40). Differentiated rewards for additional duties stimulate competition among teachers, and ‘encourage conformity and compliance with managerial priorities in order to secure career advancement’ (p.44). A danger is that schools will strive to organize and present themselves as compliant, but with a degree of ‘fabrication’ – manipulating their performance to tell a positive story (Ball 2000). Alexander (2004) contends that a culture of compliance reinforces policies and practices, good or bad, but cannot test them. What is at stake is an ‘endeavour to create a compliant profession that nevertheless, at least in some ways, increasingly ‘governs itself’ in the desired ways, through acceptance of, and involvement, in the institutional frameworks that have been brought into being’ (Beck 2008:138).

Strategies that depend on the teachers’ ability to adapt and implement reform invite the teachers’ engagement rather than their resistance. Helsby (1999:30) argues that high degrees of collegiality and commitment to fundamental principles make it more likely that teachers will be active in constructing their own educational practices; and what Hardy (2010:72-73) refers to as collective interrogation of teaching standards leading to greater teacher involvement rather than just passive compliance with reforms. However, adaptations are not always indications of responsive teaching. Teachers may translate the new innovation into more familiar terms and maintain control over the curriculum, for example, by adapting materials because of lack of time and teaching to the test.

‘Agency is often equated with positive practices of change, although agency in practice can also be used to maintain the status quo and resist change’ (Robinson 2012:233). Since teachers have largely been left out of policy decisions, they have resisted often ill-designed and poorly implemented reforms. It is not just the content of the reforms which puts pressure on teachers but also ‘the sheer cumulative impact of multiple, complex, non-negotiable innovations on teachers’ time, energy, motivation, opportunities to reflect, and their very capacity to cope’ (Hargreaves 1994:6). Such pressures and the limits placed on their involvement in making the decision to change cause resistance. In his

study of teachers, Apple (1986) documents that teachers subtly changed the pre-specified objectives because they could not see their relevance. They tried to resist the intensification by firstly, 'trying to find some space during the school day for slower-paced activities; and secondly by calling a halt temporarily to the frequent pre- and post-tests and worksheets and having discussions with students on topics of their own choosing' (p.44). In this way teachers tried to resist control of their work. While technical controls could possibly lead to unionization, within the school, most resistances that occur will be, of necessity, on an individual not a collective level.

There are the more subtle forms of resistance in terms of negative and uncooperative attitudes; the lack of willing acceptance of authority; frequent absences and a policy of non-volunteering. Stealing extra minutes at the beginning and end of breaks and using delaying or deferring tactics during lessons have also been identified (Woods 1984). Apple (1995:144) suggests that 'resistances may be specific in terms of race, gender and class since the formation of ideologies is produced by concrete actors and embodied in lived experiences that may resist, alter or mediate these social messages'. Women teachers, in the face of pressures, either negotiate or resist, and create meanings of their own.

Writing in the South African context, (Jacklin 2000), observes that teachers respond in complex ways 'adopting some policies and identities and not others, as well as more open resistance or contestation of official meanings and practices' (p. 17). It was believed that the policy/practice disjuncture would impede transformation. When changes are forced on teachers, they will resist and even refute them. 'The manager who is not attuned to these possibilities within his/her staff may try to use his/her power to coerce the staff into doing what needs to be done and in this way create pockets of resistance, particularly passive resistance that leads to inertia' (Nieuwenhuis 2008:280). Harley et al (2000:302) assert that the 'risk of resistance to change seems so great that policy might ultimately disempower teachers'. Chisholm (1999) asserts that there has been significant teacher resistance to South Africa's internal structural adjustment to assert more democratic

forms. She highlights the fact that the 'policy processes are not simply imposed on South African schools, but in some cases collide head-on with teachers who recognize and resist their implications, and in others are negotiated into new forms consistent with more democratic school organizational forms' (1999:125); for example, the attempt by teachers and their unions to negotiate teacher appraisal along more democratic lines. However, implementation is subverted through a ritualistic compliance to policy regulations (Biputh & McKenna 2010; Cereseto 2009; De Clercq 2008; Harley et al 2000; Weber 2007).

Samoff contends that:

> As schools became principal terrains for struggle, teachers faced difficult choices. Some teachers joined the activists at high personal risk, while some took advantage of the intermittent disruptions and school closures to do little work. Others sought to labour on, trying to maintain their mission and protect their jobs by avoiding politics. (2008:xi)

2.6 Chapter Summary

The discussion in this chapter argues that the introduction of market mechanisms involves a shift in values and the emergence of a new moral environment, i.e., from a service ethic towards a sense of competitive self-interest (Ball 1992; Day & Qing Gu 2010; Gewirtz 2002; Helsby 1999). Ethical dilemmas and value conflicts arise because the market functions as a system of incentives and disincentives (Gewirtz 2002). There is pressure on individuals to be motivated by self-interest – activated in relation to either institutional or personal rewards (Gewirtz 2000; Helsby 1999). The process of marketisation places contradictory demands on teachers and principals who may increasingly have to choose between investing their energies in 'image management' in

response to external demands or in meeting the educational and social needs of their students (Ball 1994).

Much in the international literature has relevance to South Africa. South Africa's transition has taken place in the context of global changes which, in the educational terrain, have seen the promotion of marketised forms of education and a resuscitation of human capital theory in which the role of teachers in the school system is reconceptualised in narrow terms as producers of human capital for 'economic growth' and competitiveness (Chisholm 1997). Chisholm (1997) claims that the changes are similar to the strategies of 'fast capitalism' occurring in other educational contexts where the ideology and political rhetoric of the market takes precedence over public service and social welfare.

This chapter has discussed the transformation of teachers' work in the context of educational reform. It has provided an overview of school restructuring in South Africa and the expansion of teacher roles. It has examined teacher-state relations, and the reasons why state teachers are controlled. It analysed the new mode of control, the regulation and reconstruction of teachers' work and notions of time. It concluded with teachers' strategies to imposed reform. My study focuses on how teachers' roles have been transformed and how they experience the new mode of teacher regulation.

The next chapter focuses specifically on women and teaching. It describes the balancing act between home and school and considers the gender ideologies of teaching embedded in notions such as women's true profession. It concludes with a discussion on the notion of balance.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN AND TEACHING

3.1 Introduction

There is a growing awareness of the connection between teachers' private lives, the personal and biographical aspects of their careers, and how these intersect with and shape their professional identity (Day et al 2007; Goodson 2003). In studying women teachers' lives, it may be possible to provide a description of the relationships between women teachers' school and home lives.

Teaching carries with it a gendered history. 'This global phenomenon is firmly rooted in issues relating to economic development, the position of women in society, cultural definitions of masculinity and the value of children and childcare' (Drudy 2005:309). State intervention in teaching and curriculum is an instance of intervention in the work of a largely female labour force. This section provides a discussion of the feminisation of teaching.

3.1.1 The Feminisation of Teaching

The term 'feminization' is associated with several distinct though overlapping meanings. They vary from a focus on numbers of men and women, to a focus on 'school ethos, teaching strategies and education policy and to perceptions about the effects of these' (Griffiths 2006:399). I have drawn on Griffiths' (2006) analysis in structuring my discussion in this section. Although her analysis is focused on Scotland, it is applicable to the South African context. Griffiths (p.399) identifies 'statistical and cultural/policy factors'. Statistical factors refer to the number of women in teaching while the

cultural/policy meaning of feminization is concerned firstly with a culture associated with women or feminine values, and secondly with managerial policies that lead to an inappropriate culture of masculinity in schools.

Female predominance in school teaching is to be found in most countries throughout the world. Mahlase (1997) points out that the feminization of the teaching profession identified by historical research in Western industrialized societies can also be found in South Africa, but the ideology of apartheid has played a significant part in determining the gendered nature of the teaching profession. In the South African context, women dominate the teaching profession with respect to numbers (Dept. of Education 2006). However, despite this, they have held only a minority of leadership positions - occupying only 17% of secondary principal posts in the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) (Mestry & Schmidt 2012:536). The dominance of female teachers particularly in primary schooling mirrors an important aspect of gender roles in society. The predominance of women teachers is a feature in every province, a gender ratio that has not changed significantly over the past seven years. At primary school level, women teachers account for between 67 and 75% of the teaching force. At the secondary school level female teachers represent approximately half the teaching force (Dept. of Education 2005), but the number of female teachers in Science and Mathematics has not been increasing to any significant degree.

Despite the increasing feminization of the teaching profession, women are still under-represented in management positions in schools in the majority of provinces and, although women predominate in managerial roles in pre-primary and primary schools in the majority of provinces, statistics show that in secondary schools only 38% of principals are females, despite the fact that females might comprise 71% of the teaching profession. Females hold a similarly low percentage of deputy principal posts; but at the level of Head of Department, female teachers are in a slight majority at 51% (Dept. of Education 2005).

Teaching, as a female profession, is not well rewarded financially. Gender, status and pay has always been an issue within the teaching profession. These views are shared by Drudy (2008) in Ireland, and Skelton (2002) in the United Kingdom. Since senior positions are filled by males in a mainly female profession, this raises the question of whether promotion posts are redressing these imbalances. The cultural stereotype that teaching appeals to emotion (a feminine trait) rather than intellect (a masculine trait) is still evident. Drudy (2008:312) states that 'in many western societies there has been an ideological link between women's domestic roles and their commitment to teaching'. 'This domestic ideology proposes that women are 'naturally' more disposed towards nurture than are men (p.312). In a similar vein, Connell (2009), who writes from an Australian perspective, observes that for women, the idea of a good teacher was liable to be blurred with the idea of a good mother (p.215), a view shared by Spencer (1997:805) in the United States, who states that women teachers are regarded as 'cost-effective moral stewards of children in primary schools'.

Almost exclusively, women are clustered in the lower, unpromoted ranks of the teaching profession and in traditional, feminine subjects and school areas (Connell 2009; Delamont & Coffey 1997; Skelton 2002). Women are more likely than men to be teachers of young children (Drudy 2008) or pastoral carers and special needs teachers in secondary schools and their roles frequently involve classroom teaching rather than school management. Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2001: 28) from the UK, state that 'female teachers are associated with and directed into the soft feminine functions of profiling and counselling', which Bolton and Muzio (2008) also from the UK, believe, represents a classic hierarchy in the teaching profession. In the secondary school, when it comes to the allocation of tasks and responsibilities, gender related boundaries are clearly evident when women teachers are expected to take charge of providing refreshments for different occasions; whereas their male counterparts have responsibility for the timetable, discipline, curriculum and staff development (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill 2001).

There are various theories as to why gender divisions operate (Acker 1989). Oram and Cunnison (1989 in Acker 1989) suggest that the status quo suits the interests of men who have little to gain by changing or challenging it. Acker (1989), who writes from a British perspective observes that the 'history of teacher union efforts to equalize women teacher's status with men's is marked by inertia and sometimes open opposition' (p.14). (Casey & Apple 1989), from the US, state that feminist arguments about hierarchies tend to suggest women do not simply lose a competition, but consciously choose to reject such hierarchies as politically oppressive. It is unlikely, however, that rejection of hierarchies is biologically built into women and women's socialization and satisfying experiences of alternative values and forms of organization, together with a kind of 'situational adjustment' – coming to terms with a situation that is unlikely to be changed merely by wishing – provide a more credible explanation (Acker 1989:14). Grant (1989 in Acker 1989) points out that when most secondary school heads are men, the image of how a headteacher looks and behaves is powerfully 'male' and it becomes the norm when selections are made.

So far, I have discussed feminization not only in terms of the proportion of men to women in teaching but also the gendered nature of teaching. The analysis focuses on different contexts, but similar patterns of feminization are reported in other countries. I now turn to the cultural and policy meaning of feminization.

There are two current and contested issues relating to the cultural meaning of feminization. The first relates to the 'moral panics' connected with boys' 'underachievement' and male disaffection from school (Burman 2005; Carrington 2008; Drudy 2008; Griffiths 2006; Skelton 2002). The second relates to the widespread perception that the 'gender gap' in achievement stems from the feminization of teaching and the dearth of suitable male role models in schools especially at primary and elementary level (Carrington 2008:109). However, research evidence does not support this (Lahelma 2000 in Griffiths 2006:401). Boys are not disadvantaged by being taught by women because the traits students see as important are gender neutral. There may well

be gender influences on ways of keeping order, being friendly, and being relaxed, but these appear to be irrelevant to achievement levels (Griffiths 2006:402).

In addressing the second concern Griffiths (p.402) notes that feminist educators argue that, far from the culture of school being feminine, government policy across the world increasingly imposes managerialism on schools (Chan 2004; Connell 2005; Forrester 2005; Griffiths 2006; Mahony et al 2004), which is generally regarded as a masculine culture. According to Priola (2007), who discusses organizational practices in higher education in the UK, 'contemporary market-driven organizations reinforce forms of masculine management in which managers disengage, denying their emotions in order to obtain control over themselves, the others and the environment'(p.23). In similar vein, Chan (2004), whose analysis is based on a case study in Hong Kong, states that 'new notions of managerial competence are increasingly characterized by a masculine orientation, with emphasis on instrumental achievement, competition, aggression and emotional control' (p.492). 'What distinguishes masculine identities is the instrumental pursuit of the control of social relations' (Priola 2007:23). 'An entrepreneurial, managerialist culture strengthens the gendered culture in favour of those prepared to adopt more aggressive approaches to management' (p.23; Chan 2004). Such culture exemplifies what Connell (1987) has termed 'hegemonic masculinity, which works against values that focus upon student need, disadvantage, inclusion and collegial social relationships' (Blackmore 1999 in Mahony et al 2004:138). This process may create greater tensions for those women who want to become managers and want to succeed in masculine organizations.

The claims concerning the masculinist nature of the systems and technologies introduced into schools sit uneasily alongside debates on the feminization of teaching (Skelton 2002). Blackmore (1999) points out that the feminization of teaching is occurring alongside the masculinist nature of the managerial regimes and technologies developed to control teachers' work. Mahony et al (2004:138) argue that 'feminization' denotes the deterioration of work conditions for women and men (labour standards, income and

employment status). 'Masculinisation', on the other hand, denotes a repositioning of professional values within the calculative, hierarchical, competitive and performative frameworks of new managerialism (p.138). Blackmore believes that new managerialism:

> …misconstrues what motivates people to act, change or make choices because it sets up bipolarities between independence and interdependence, rationality and emotionality, self-interest and altruism, which do not reflect the full range or complexities of human behaviours. (1999:164)

Proposing such a view does not imply an essentialist belief concerning male and female difference. What is at stake are the values, ways of being in the world and of relating to others that are traditionally polarized around the binary of 'femininity/masculinity' (Mahony et al 2004:138). Gender regimes are embedded in organizations and 'remade in the daily enactments of professional life', therefore women's and men's subject positions hinge on notions of inequality (p.139). Policy changes appear to facilitate the continual domination of men in important positions, while women are excluded or marginalized or are included in less powerful positions. In reviewing the impact of the new managerialist movements, Newman argues that:

> …organizational cultures have been highlighted as a significant barrier to change. Even in organizations where equal opportunities are well developed, their cultures may be resistant and intractable…Where women face hostile cultures, the pressures are great and an undue amount of energy has to be expended in developing strategies for survival. (1995:11)

In sum, the rise in managerialism as Blackmore (1999) argues presents particular dilemmas for women leaders such as whether to embrace, resist or subvert the forms of masculinity implicit in their roles as managers. 'Some feminized practices are formed in resistance, sometimes explicitly so, to dominant masculine forms' (Griffiths 2006:403).

3.2 Teaching as Women's Work: The Ideology of Nurturance

Acker (1999) distinguishes between 'work' and 'non-work' for teachers. Acker argues that whereas work is understood in terms of constituting payment for labour, non-work is associated with the notion of women teachers doing 'natural', quasi-maternal 'caring' (p.19). Forrester (2005) from the UK, observes that 'caring arguably involves the total investment of the self in one's work, sometimes at a personal cost' (p.274).

In her analysis of public schooling in Argentina, Fischman (2007) states that the prevalent stereotypes of 'women-teacher-caring' and 'men-teacher-discipline' has 'strengthened pastoral and romantic characteristics of teaching by 'naturalising' discursive practices and social mechanisms'(p.365). Patriarchal conceptions of women is reflected in Steedman's (1986) phrase, the 'mother made conscious' which identifies 'notions of female domesticity as the central landscape shaping women's working and material lives' (Acker & Dillabough 2007:300). This 'historical blueprint' has played a 'structuring role in the formation of the labour market' (p.300). The gendered nature of being a teacher is conflated with discourses of caring and mothering. Aspinwall and Drummond (1989:18) suggest that the 'very essence of the primary school world forces female teachers into the stereotypical role of caring mother-figure and blurs the differentiation between mothering and teaching roles'. Thus, the transmission of such discourses is powerful because of their 'naturalizing and normalizing tendencies' (Acker & Dillabough 2007:299). Nias (1989 in Forrester 2005:276) explains the nature of teachers' caring in terms of 'children's dependence' on their teacher and concern by teachers for their children's welfare, social well-being and interests. 'Nurturing' is constructed as an instinctive female attribute and, thus, as an 'innate quality requiring little formal training' (p.273). There is a 'match' of sorts - in care, in devotion, in loss of self for others. It resonates with Steedman's work on teaching in a piece entitled 'Prisonhouses':

> I never left them; they occupied the night times, all my dreams. I was very tired, bone-achingly tired all the time. I was unknowingly, covertly expected to become a mother. And I unknowingly became one, pausing only in the cracks of the night to ask: what is happening to me? (1987:127)

Women teachers become caught, trapped, inside a concept of nurturance. Hargreaves, in describing women teachers in his study, said that they appear to:

> drive themselves with almost merciless enthusiasm and commitment in an attempt to meet the virtually unattainable standards of pedagogical perfection they set themselves. (1994:126)

'Teaching, like mothering, has the expectations of altruism, self-abnegation and repetitive labour' (Grumet 1988:87) characteristic of women's work. Grumet argues that the 'feminization of teaching has both promoted and sabotaged the interests of women in our culture' (p.32). 'There are dangers in accepting the construction of teaching as mother's work as typically conceived in a patriarchal world, as it results in the devaluing of teaching as a profession' (James 2012:172).

'Teachers engage both consciously and unconsciously in 'performing' and 'caring' activities' (Forrester 2005:274). Indeed, as Travers and Cooper (1996:6 in Forrester 2005:274).) claim, 'teachers are required to reconcile the conceivably incompatible roles of 'friend, colleague and helper' with that of 'evaluator, selector and disciplinarian'. A point that can be raised is that 'when the value of teachers' work is reduced to what can be measured and it is subject to greater forms of scrutiny and accountability, then the caring aspects not examined in this way are potentially reduced or neglected' (p.277). Skills connected with caring seem to be regarded as 'natural' and 'feminine' and are often devalued or invisible in organizational plans, thereby contributing to the low esteem in which teaching is held (Vogt 2002). Ball declares:

> Performance has no room for caring … while we may not be expected to care about each other we are expected to 'care' about performances and the performances of the team and the organization and to make our contribution to the construction of convincing institutional spectacles and 'outputs'. (2003:224)

The discussion shows that there appears to be a changing role for women teachers as the school culture shifts from its association with the feminine qualities of mothering and nurturing towards a more masculine culture of management and performance. For my study, the 'performing' and 'caring' aspects of teachers' work are useful constructs to make sense of teachers' current perceptions of their work. The following section relates to how women appear to be redefining professional success in ways which challenge previously male determined constructs.

3.3 Defining Self and Career

Studies have suggested that, while women and men do not differ in the value they put on doing one's best at a job or at doing creative or intellectual work, women put more value than men on 'the importance of making occupational sacrifices for one's family and on the importance of having a job that allows one to help others and do something worthwhile for society' (Eccles 1994:600 in Smulyan 2004:228). According to Acker (1989:12) women teachers were seen as choosing to 'prioritise family over career, thus showing a lack of commitment and impeding teaching's claims to full professionalization'. Yet, research has shown that many women define work commitment as good classroom teaching rather than upward mobility through the system (Biklen 1995; Grant 1989). They, therefore, argue for a reconceptualisation of the meaning of the notion of work commitment to reflect women's perspectives. In her study of women managers, Grant (1989) found that traditional linear conceptions of career progression are not suitable. Their careers have fluctuating patterns influenced by personal choices and home responsibilities. Career aspirations have to be changed not

because of lack of ambition but as an adjustment to personal life choices. Smulyan's study of teachers in the USA, describes the choices women make to incorporate multiple identities:

> women may face difficult choices as they balance professional choices and personal relationships, childbearing choices and early career paths, and the positions they hold within their professional institutions, but they make positive decisions based on viable values and aspirations. (2004:229)

Women's socialization and satisfying experiences of alternative values and a kind of situational adjustment provide an explanation for why women want to remain in the classroom.

Careers have both an individual and a structural dimension. A structural constraint that shapes and limits careers is the gender differentiation in teaching. 'Changing theoretical approaches tend to shift the concept of career away from its vertical imagery towards teaching as a path in life, a series of experiences in coming to terms with situations and making choices subject to constraints' (Acker 1989:9). Two main approaches can be discerned. Studies of the labour process of teaching see organisations as gendered, not gender-neutral (Lawn & Ozga 1981). As Evetts (1989) points out, individual career choices are influenced by the internal labour markets for teachers and gender divisions within the teaching profession. The other approach focuses on ways in which teachers develop and change their perspectives, interpretations and strategies in response to circumstances (Acker 1989; Little 1996; Smith 2011). A variety of situations may shape teachers' careers e.g. sponsorship, colleague relationships, school micropolitics, critical incidents in the classroom, the nature of teaching, and teachers' lives outside school.

Evetts (1994) identified a number of career strategies of women teachers. The single career strategy might be a two-person career. Here, one partner develops a career while

the other works in the household or in an occupation but does not seek promotion. Evetts suggests that it is probably a male rather than a female strategy. Alternatively, the woman remains in paid work and is prepared to move if necessary.

More recent research, using feminist frameworks, has shifted focus to view careers as complex patterns of choices and constraints (Munro 1998; Smith 2011; Smulyan 2004). Women teachers are 'redefining' meanings of 'career and success', thus opening up the 'possibility of self-invention' (Smulyan 2004:230). Smulyan believes that:

> It is in the process of negotiating and balancing these forces that they may begin to contribute to a new set of cultural meanings, problematizing what it means to have a career, to achieve success, and to be a working woman and trying to develop new discourses to explain themselves. (2004:230)

On the basis of this discussion, my study tries to understand how teachers' decisions and choices regarding their career path are framed within the particular contexts of their lives, and how they exercise personal agency.

In the following section, I consider the implications of the expanded role for women teachers. I then discuss how these new work patterns may lead to the erosion of boundaries between work and home.

3.4 Gender and the Expanded Role

Gender is a relevant issue when analysing the intensification of teachers' work. 'Teaching has been seen as easy work that is compatible with family life' (Bartlett 2004:566). Teaching is supposedly a good career for a mother because it allows her to be at home after school with her children; be off work during her children's school vacations and move in and out of the profession with little negative consequences to income, status

and skill. ‘Some women have been attracted to teaching for its presumed compatibility with family life’ (p.567). However, with increased work demands and expectations made on teachers, ‘time and workload pressures are greatest among teachers who are women’ (Easthope & Easthope 2000:50). ‘It may be that teachers, particularly women, who want to teach rather than enter management, are particularly disadvantaged by the recent reforms’ (p.50). Their study of teachers’ workload was conducted in Australia. Bartlett (2004) and Kit-wa Chan (2004) claim that the intensified workload and constant pressures have led to increased occupational stress, tension in the negotiation of the work-family balance and an increase in teacher attrition. Teachers frequently take work home. Bartlett (2001 in Bartlett 2004:576) revealed some evidence that ‘family responsibilities, like caring for a child, make it more difficult to sustain the work-hours and the obligations of fulfilling the expansion of their work role’. In order to manage the time squeeze some women put work before home. Bartlett’s study was based on data collected in the United States.

Kit-wa Chan (2004:504), in her study of primary school women teachers, concludes that the ‘appraisal and evaluative practices have individualised the teaching force and promoted conflict among women teachers’, thus undermining collegiate relationships and the culture of collaboration. ‘By emphasising individual excellence and the comparative performance of teachers, the school divides its staff and erodes traditional feminine qualities such as caring and devotion’ (p.504). When a school is characterised by conflict, teachers appear to view collaboration as a threat to their autonomy and are less likely to collaborate. According to Valli and Beuse (2007), the role expansion of teachers requires collaboration with other teachers. ‘Collaboration can assist teachers in marshalling resources, conserving energy, and understanding requirements and demands, or it can be used to promote the implementation of ‘dubious policy ends’ resulting in the consumption of teachers’ energy and professional ideals’ (p.524).

Although the multiple role expectations and women’s responses to the demands created by the expansion in their roles have been researched in numerous overseas studies, very

little research data exist on female educators' experiences in the South African context (Knowles et al 2009:333; Mahlase 1997; Unterhalter 1999). Based on their research of female educators, Knowles et al (2009) conclude that, although more women teachers achieve professional recognition and success, many find it difficult to reconcile multiple roles, commitments and career breaks. 'Mother-educators need to negotiate new meaning in terms of their own perceived multiple-role expectations so as to enable them to experience success as both homemakers and professionals' (p.333).

Below, I explore women teachers' experiences of the conflicts between career and family and how they negotiate these tensions.

3.5 Balancing career and family

Research demonstrates that 'one of the prominent features in the narratives of women teachers is their struggle to find a balance between the demands of private life and professional work, as well as between sometimes contradictory tasks and expectations in the teacher's role' (Gannerud 2001:65). 'This conflict is exacerbated in that both their parental and professional work are founded on a rationality of responsibility and an ethic of care' (Noddings 1992 in Gannerud 2001:61). Women teachers in Acker's (1992) and Spencer's (1986:13) studies recounted that they were forced into 'triple-shifts' of work consisting of teaching, housework, childcare, then grading papers or doing other school-related work. A 'quadruple-shift' was mentioned by some women teachers taking university courses in addition to work and home roles. Also, Claesson and Brice (1989 in Cinamon & Rich 2005:367) report that 'teachers of young children reveal very stressful aspects of filling family and professional roles concurrently, especially the draining nature of working with schoolchildren and the chronic lack of energy necessary to care for one's own children and to be a good teacher'.

Pajak and Blasé (1986) found that when work spilled over it had a negative effect on women teachers' personal lives. When there was a conflict between personal and

professional lives, it was usually resolved in favour of work demands. Gannerud, however, found that for some women teachers the demands of the home sphere provide an escape from an intensified work day:

> Private duties in families also, at least for some of the teachers, seem to serve as a shelter, as a legitimate means to avoid being burned out, overwhelmed by an undefined and never-ending workload. Teachers without family duties seem both to lack legitimate reasons to avoid extra work tasks and there also seems to be a greater risk of their lives being invaded by their work. (2001:61)

Their narratives show that, 'as a consequence of their professional knowledge about children and their needs', women teachers 'experience great demands on themselves as mothers' (Gannerud 2001:61). Palmer, Rose, Sanders and Randle (2012:1056) in their study of 69 New Zealand teachers, found that 'two-parent families reported lower levels of home/school conflict, while employment hours, task overload, years of teaching service, and teachers' own children's hyperactive behaviour predicted an increase in conflict between home and school'.

Various characteristics of the education systems in different countries and public perceptions of the importance of family and work roles may influence how teachers perceive and experience conflict between work and family. The neoliberal agenda has relevance to South Africa, although, we must take into consideration the details of our Apartheid history.

3.5.1 Balancing Career and Family: South African Studies

In the South African context, Mahlase (1997) indicated that even when the African women teachers in her study handed over domestic responsibilities to domestic helpers, they still had the primary responsibility of handling and organizing most of the domestic

chores and child-rearing. The difficulties of balancing teaching and family commitments become particularly acute when children are very young. Knowles et al (2009) report that the mother-educators found it difficult to balance their multiple roles. These women teachers felt that they were neither completely good mothers nor good professional educators. Moorosi's (2007) study found that after their appointment as principals, some women faced difficulties in striking a balance between work and family and ended up neglecting the family for the sake of career (p.507). A reason for this includes cultural expectations which suggest that women should still perform family chores in the home (Mahlase 1997).

3.6 The Notion of Balance

Women teachers continue to seek balance between professional and private life. I interpret the stories of teachers in this study by drawing on Guest's (2002:258) work-life approach to the notion of balance which entails four models: the segmentation, compensation, instrumental and conflict models. A segmentation model hypothesizes that work and non-work are two distinct domains of life that are lived quite separately and have no influence on each other (p.258). A compensation model proposes that what may be lacking in one sphere, in terms of demands or satisfactions, can be made up in the other. For example, work may be routine and undemanding but this is compensated for by a major role in local community activities outside work (p.258). The third model is an instrumental model whereby activities in one sphere facilitate success in the other. An example is the 'instrumental worker who will seek to maximize earnings, even at the price of undertaking a routine job and working long hours to allow the purchase of a home or a car for a young family' (p.259). 'The final model is a conflict model, which proposes that with high levels of demand in all spheres of life, some difficult choices have to be made; also some conflicts and possibly, a significant overload on an individual occur' (p.259). My interest has been focused mainly on the conflict model, especially in dual-career families and on women in demanding jobs.

The model incorporates the following main issues that need to be addressed in the analysis of work-life balance. Work demands may be too high or too low and the culture of the organization may support balance through appropriate policies and practices. 'Alternatively, it may demand and expect long and irregular hours and be intolerant of time off to deal with family emergencies' (Guest 2002:266). The 'culture of home' refers to the expectations of those in the home environment with regard to commitments and obligations, such as the allocation of family duties and whether these should be contracted out. 'Individual factors affecting perceptions of work-life balance include orientation to work and the extent to which work or home is a central life-interest - such aspects of personality, which include the need for achievement and propensity for work involvement' (p.266). Energy levels, which may be linked to issues of personal control and the ability to cope with pressures of competing demands, need to be considered in the context of high demand. 'Finally, gender will be a factor with higher demands placed on women in the home, while age, life-stage and career-stage issues will influence willingness to tolerate certain kinds of demand at work and at home' (p.266).

The model by Guest (2002) reflects a traditional framework for the analysis of work-life balance. It highlights some of the main issues that will be considered in my analysis of how teachers navigate a balance between their home and work responsibilities.

Sutton (1984) who examined the effects of coping with multiple role demands among elementary school teachers found that teacher stress was related to three factors. These factors are 'role demands (including role ambiguity, role overload and role conflict), instructional problems, and interpersonal relations' (p.9). The strongest effects were for role demands. Role demands are the behaviours expected of a person by virtue of his or her position in the organization. 'These expectations may be set by superiors, co-workers, clients or the focal person' (p.9). 'Role demands become stressful when expectations about a teacher's behaviour are unclear (role ambiguity), when they are excessive (role overload), or when meeting one set of expectations makes meeting other expectations

more difficult (role conflict)' (p.9). Teacher stress has been linked to role ambiguity, role overload and role conflict (Sutton 1984).

The second factor is instructional problems that are sources of stress that arising from the core task of teaching students in a school setting. 'The six problems assessed in this category are difficulties with student discipline and competence, inappropriate procedures for student placement and instruction, and inadequate standardized tests and grading systems' (p.9). Since teachers place great value on effective teaching, instructional problems that hamper teacher effectiveness may be sources of stress.

Interpersonal relations is the third factor examined. The indicators of poor interpersonal relations measured are 'interpersonal conflict among staff members and lack of social support from supervisors and co-workers' (p.9). 'Interpersonal conflict has been identified as a source of teacher stress and social support may be an important predictor of teacher well-being' (pp.9-10).

Involvement in multiple roles can result in some degree of inter-role conflict since the individual will probably experience time constraints or because the level of involvement in the various roles are incompatible. Intra-role conflict arises because powerful others differ, or are thought to differ, in the expectations they hold for persons who occupy a single social position. (Biddle 1997). Reviewing the data on the effects of role conflict on self, Woods et al (2000:50-51) found that teachers fell into four broad categories that roughly accord with dilemmas, tensions and constraints:

- Enhanced teachers. These teachers experience role conflict predominantly as dilemmas and are enriched by their solutions to them. They feel able to employ their creative powers in their teaching and management. However, there are some ambivalent teachers here who find both enrichment and tensions in the reforms.

- Compliant teachers. These experience a mixture of role dilemmas and tensions. Their creativity is deflected from teaching and towards devising strategies to cope. But there is wide variation among them, with some, for example, being positively conformist and seeing the social world as mainly dilemmatic, whereas others are more strategically compliant and/or more disturbed.

- Non-compliant teachers. These also experience role tension and to a somewhat worse degree since they are uncompromising in their values and in their practice.

- Diminished teachers. Role conflict for these is predominantly constraint in effect. They feel devalued and disillusioned and are either leaving the system or 'sinking' beneath it.

Role tensions have their origins in restructuring and are mediated by institutional and personal factors.

By drawing on components of role theory (Sutton 1984) I examine the effects of role demands, instructional problems and interpersonal relations on the well-being of teachers.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed women and teaching. It focused on the feminization of teaching and the changing culture in schools. It considered the ideology of nurturance embedded in notions such as women's true profession. It described how teachers' personal values and aspirations informed their career decisions and examined the implications of role

expansion and its impact on balancing home and school. It concluded with a discussion on the notion of balance.

For my study, I argue in Chapter Four that most women's lives are not linear constructions, but fragmented and characterized by multiple roles. This study describes the struggles teachers experience as they explore the process of negotiating these multiple roles and the choices they make over time to incorporate multiple identities into their lives.

CHAPTER FOUR

IDENTITY

4.1 Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to examine how women teachers actively construct definitions of themselves as teachers, definitions which illustrate the tensions they experience as they negotiate competing discourses of work, home and a female self during a time of intense educational reform.

In developing my position, I draw mainly upon poststructuralist understandings of identity and gendered subjectivities. I draw on the idea that 'identities are multidimensional, hybrid and shifting' to explore how women teachers construct their identities (Faas 2008:38). 'Poststructuralist feminism focuses on the ways in which gender identities and subjectivities are socially constructed, rejecting the categorization of women as a homogeneous group and the view that femininity and femaleness are unitary conceptions' (Priola 2007:22). In such a framework, 'identities are not fixed, static and of a binary nature, but are discursively negotiated and renegotiated' (Faas 2008:38).

The central question of my study is how women teachers, with their specific subjectivities, negotiate their identity in view of the expansion of their role. In this chapter, I outline what identity means and provide an overview of the different meanings ascribed to the concept and investigate the claims for conceiving of identity as essentialist or non-essentialist. I explore Butler's performativity theory and processes of subjectivation. Butler is best known for her suggestion that the subject be understood as

performatively constituted. I examine the relationship between subjectivation and the performative and consider how the performative is implicated in processes of subjectivation - in 'who' the subject is, or might be subjectivated as. 'Butler's description of gender as performativity insists that the reality of gender is not to be found in the feminist account of differently socialized and encultured bodies, but is the result of an illusion sustained by the incessant replication of norms that materialize that which they govern' (Hey 2006:440). 'These are interactive, interpersonal and intra-subjective processes that sustain our lived sense of inhabiting a gendered body and psyche' (p.440). I draw, too, on Day and Gu's (2010) critical influences and professional life phases to provide insight into teachers' professional identities.

4.2 Self, Subjectivity and Identity

Subjectivity includes our sense of self, it involves conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions. 'We experience our subjectivity in a social context where language and culture give meaning to our experience of ourselves and where we adopt an identity' (Woodward 1997:39). The positions which we take up and with which we identify constitute our identities. Discourses to do with ideas of the 'self' use terms such as 'contingency', 'multiplicity' and 'fragmentation'. Chappell, Rhodes, Solomon, Tennant & Yates (2006:28) claim that concepts of the 'self' should not be seen as 'neutral representations of the subject-person but rather as discursive interventions that do important political and cultural work in constructing, maintaining and transforming both individuals and their social world'. Critics of the notion 'identity' argue that conceptions of identity work to obliterate social and political differences, through the discursive construction of sameness (Butler 1993; hooks 1990 in Chappell et al 2006:28). Others emphasise the fragility and constructed nature of self, claiming that the fragile self becomes a continuous reflexive project (Chappell et al 2006; Hall 2000).

This poststructuralist view of self rejects the notion of identity that sees the self as a unified and essential core at the centre of subjectivity (Chappell et al 2006; Lloyd 2005;

Hall 2000). Instead, the argument is that identification is a 'process that imposes itself across difference' (Chappell et al 2006:28). Without discursive work, this process is impossible. This discursive approach to the formation of identity has a number of implications. It suggests that identities consist of multiple processes of identification that are constructed by different, sometimes intersecting discursive practices that make certain identifications possible' (p.28). It also implies that 'identity formation is both a strategic and context-bound process'(p.29).

Judith Butler's work on identity challenges conventional ideas and thinking on subjectivity. Butler's work has been described as 'dense', yet 'challenging and illuminating' (Speer 2005:61). I draw on the papers by Davies (2006), from Australia, who writes on subjectivation within schooling; Youdell (2006) from the UK, who conducted her ethnograhic study on subjectivation in an Australian school and, Harrington (2002), who investigated identity formation among 21 Pakeha (white) New Zealand mothers.

In the next section, I attempt to explain Butler's account of the concept of performativity. That the subject is an effect is the key to Butler's theories of performative identities. I consider the claim that identity is a type of 'doing' that is made manifest at the point of action. I explore the 'process of subjectification/subjectivation or subjection through which one becomes a subject – a process described by Butler in terms of simultaneous mastery and submission' (Davies 2006:425). Butler's analysis has strong implications for the ethics of teaching practice, and, as Davies points out, what 'Butler does not do is link her analysis to daily life in schools – the linking is left to those working in the professions, so that its possible uses in education can be teased out' (p.425).

4.3 The Performative Subject

Butler (1999), who began to question the interplay between social construction and biological essence, argues that gender is performative. This means that 'what we take to

be an internal essence of gender is manufactured through a sustained set of acts, posited through the gendered stylization of the body'(xv). Gender is not an expression of what one is; it is something that one does. At the core of Butler's work is the concept of performativity; that is, the idea that identity does not prefigure action but is constituted through action, discourses or the words we speak and how we behave. The production of a gendered identity relies upon the repetition 'through time' of those acts, gestures, modes of behaviour and so forth that are seen to represent a certain gendered identity' (Lloyd 2005:25). In this regard, gender is inherently imitative, and as Butler puts it, 'a kind of persistent impersonation that passes as the real' (Butler 1990a:x). 'The gendered self has no ontological status apart from the acts which compose it' (pp.139-140). Butler's intention is not to overthrow gender as constructed under the dominant male discourse. She maintains that there can be no absolute repudiation of sexuality which has been culturally constructed.

Butler's theory which initially focused on gender and sexuality, lends itself to an exploration of the processes which are productive of raced and classed subjectivities (Bell 1999; Youdell 2006). Butler brings the questions of 'social and economic justice' (Butler 1995a) together with an analysis of subjectification. 'Class inequalities, which might be thought of as issues of social and economic justice (or injustice), give rise to real social effects, one of the effects of which is classed subjectivities' (Fraser 1999:117). Butler states in an interview with Bell:

> I'm much more interested in how one becomes the condition of the other,
> or how one becomes the unmarked background for the action of the other.
> (in Bell 1999:168)

Another important move within Butler's consideration of how the subject is constituted is her thinking between Althusser's and Foucault's notion of subjection, and that it is brought into play within institutions. 'Institutions improvise, cite and circulate discursive

frames and technologies that render subjects in relations of power' (Youdell 2006:518). Butler asserts that:

> subjectivation … denotes both the becoming of the subject and the process of subjection – one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power, a subjection which implies a radical dependency. Subjection is, literally the making of a subject, the principle of regulation according to which a subject is formulated or produced. Such subjection is a kind of power that not only unilaterally acts on a given individual as a form of domination, but also activates or forms the subject. Hence, subjection is neither simply the domination of a subject nor its production, but designates a certain kind of restriction in production. (1997b:83-84)

Likewise, it is important to remember that with regulation comes particular ways of understanding and being in the world:

> Regulatory power not only acts upon a pre-existing subject but also shapes and forms that subject; moreover, every juridical form of power has its productive effect; and to become subject to a regulation is also to be brought into being as a subject precisely through being regulated. (Butler 2004:41)

For Butler, performative acts are forms of authoritative speech: most performatives, for instance are statements that, 'in the uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a binding power' (1993:225). This 'binding power' involves the 'regulation of identificatory practices' (p.3). To this extent, identity is always an act of exclusion, a point of closure. Since identities are constructed within discourse, they remain subject to complex discursive interplay, strategic repositioning and repetitive regulation.

Butler develops these ideas to detail how subjectivation as an effect of discourse and, specifically, the performative offers political potential (Youdell 2006:518). Butler engages with 'Althusser's (1971) understanding of interpellation – the turn to the hail of authority – to think about how the hail might be understood as a performative and how the performatively constituted subjects might engage in acts of insurrection of which Foucault speaks' (Youdell 2006:518). 'By being subjectivated, the subject can subjectivate another' (p.518). Butler (1997a:29) calls the capacity to name, and so constitute, that results from subjectivation 'discursive agency'.

Butler's ideas have implications for education (Youdell 2006). With this understanding of subjectivation, what it means to be a teacher or a student might be opened up to rethinking. 'The notion of subjectivation, for example, allows us to see how teachers are constituted by prevailing discourses of education, professionalism, the teacher and teacher authority' (p.524). 'Within this discursive frame, teachers are also constituted by their own practices of self' (p.524). When we examine the practices that constitute teachers, we begin to open up the potential of Butler's theory. In so doing, we are able to make sense of the practices and effects of schooling.

Two of Butler's insights with regard to the process of identification and reflexivity are important. Firstly, that 'subjects desire recognition to escape the terror of not-being, and secondly, that recognition and reflexivity are simultaneous' (Harrington 2002:110). To elaborate on the first insight, Harrington (2002) uses Butler's interpretation of Althusser's (1971) understanding of interpellation. In the moment of turning to the hail, 'self-recognition and social recognition become one, i.e., the subject identifies with the social category' (Harrington 2002:110). The subject turns towards the call because 'recognition by authority is essential to social existence'(p.110). It is a process of identification and thus identity formation. It explains how we internalize external socially defined categories. It is being recognized as somebody.

The second point made by Harrington is that 'recognition by authority triggers guilt' (p.111). Butler (1997) argues that this is the origin of reflexivity. Guilt is reflexive since it allows for reflection. This sense of conscience is not self-restricting. Thus, in turning to the call of authority, we are afraid that we do not meet the standards required of us. Butler's (1997) 'analysis of guilt as occurring simultaneously with recognition and as introducing reflexivity, can help us understand that guilt is a vital part of resistance to the regulating effects of identity' (Harrington 2002:125).

Harrington's 'study on agency and social identity of Pakeha (New Zealand) mothers argues that mother-identity, understood as the point of suture between subjectivity and social processes of representation, is formed in processes of mastery, discourses of difference and self–surveillance' (p.109). The discourses of motherhood entail that mothers should make child-care and housework their main responsibility and not do paid work when their children are young. In analyzing housework activity both the concepts of mastery and embodiment are relevant in understanding the construction of the mother identity. According to Butler's (1997) reading of Althusser, the more a practice is mastered the more fully subjection is achieved, because the person embodies certain skills necessary to reproduce the conditions of their subjection. Harrington's (2002:113) interpretation of this is that subjection works through instilling skills that become part of a person's identity. Mastery of such skills entails embodiment in so far as they become automatic sequences of movement and action, viz., 'programmed responses' (p.113). Butler (1997:119) points out that mastering a set of skills is not simply to accept them but to reproduce them as one's own activity.

The discipline of housework standards and routines is vital to a sense of mastery which reveals the relation between discipline, mastery and identity. Self-surveillance of domestic mastery was combined with a perceived surveillance by others. In analyzing the ideology of motherhood, the 'sense of mastery was constructed through a discourse of how intense and impossible the demands of mothering are' (Harrington 2002:117). The participants believed that home responsibilities required 'unique strengths' and that

women's responsibility for child-care was because they 'innately possessed the required qualities' (p.117). The women measured themselves against the discourses of good mothering. Such reflexivity arises from a sense of guilt i.e. self-surveillance, whereby the subject is afraid of not fitting the category of mother.

In citing Harrington's study, my aim is to analyse some of the ways in which the women teachers in my study identify with the category of mother, and whether such identification works through processes of mastery, discourses of difference and self-surveillance. My concern is how Butler's (1997) analysis of guilt, discussed earlier, opens up the possibility for them to question the content of that identity as well as to measure themselves against it, given that they are working mothers. I am also interested in examining similarities and differences in experiences of motherhood.

As we can see, 'Butler's interest lies in how subjection works on and in the psychic life of the subject' (Davies 2006). At the heart of becoming a subject is the ambivalence of mastery and submission, which, paradoxically, take place in the same moment (p.426). So Butler holds that:

> Submission and mastery take place simultaneously, and it is this paradoxical simultaneity that constitutes the ambivalence of subjection. Where one might expect submission to consist in a yielding to an externally imposed dominant order, and to be marked by a loss of control and mastery, it is paradoxically marked by mastery itself - the lived simultaneity of submission as mastery, and mastery as submission is the condition of possibility for the subject itself. (1995a:45-46;1997:2)

In this view, power is understood as forming the subject. 'The subject might resist the powers that dominate and subject it', yet power also provides the condition for her existence (Davies 2006:426). 'The subject does not have an existence outside of, or prior

to, these acts of formation…in becoming that possible subject, however, it reiterates and confirms those conditions that make it, and go on making it possible' (p.426). Therefore, the conditions of possibility are found in discourse, as well as in 'mutually constitutive social acts' (p.426):

> At the most intimate levels, we are social; we are comported toward a 'you'; we are outside ourselves, constituted in cultural norms that precede and exceed us, given over to a set of cultural norms and a field of power that condition us fundamentally. (Butler 2004a:45 in Davies 2006:426)

However, subjects are not 'passively shaped according to a set of discursive practices' (p.426; Lloyd 2005). It is the constitutivity of the subject that enables her to act. 'Butler's subjects have agency, albeit a radically conditioned agency, in which they can reflexively and critically examine their conditions of possibility and in which they can subvert and eclipse the powers that act on them and which they enact' (Davies 2006:426).

> To claim that the subject is constituted is not to claim that it is determined; on the contrary, the constituted character of the subject is the very pre-condition of its agency. For what is it that enables a purposive and significant reconfiguration of cultural and political relations, if not a relation that can be turned against itself, reworked and resisted? (Butler 1995a:46 in Davies 2006:426).

The active practices through which subjects might be able to construct themselves are not invented by the individual himself. According to Foucault (1997a:291 in Davies 2006:426), they are models that are 'proposed, suggested, imposed upon one by one's culture, society or social group'. There is a mutual act of recognition in the formation of the subject through the process of submission and mastery. 'However, Butler observes, the subject disavows its dependence on that Other who recognizes it and, in that act of

recognition, constitutes its existence through the terms in which recognition takes place (Davies 2006:427).

> Subjection consists precisely in this fundamental dependency on a discourse we never chose but that, paradoxically, initiates and sustains our agency. (Butler 1997:2)

In order to understand subjectification, we have to realize that we are both acted upon and we act, with submission relying on domination/mastery, and mastery relying on submission: 'The subject is a reworking of the very discursive practices by which it is worked such that agency is to be found in the resignification opened by discourse' (Butler 1995b:135; 1997a:29). 'Butler uses the notion of the performative, the notion of discourse and the notion of subjectivation to think about the constitution, constraint and political possibility of the subject' (Youdell 2006:525).

In sum, Butler's notion of performativity explains how particular subject-positions are acquired and sustained and how it can be changed. The concept of performativity indicates how practices constitutive of a subject identity are embodied in everyday life, and are the raw material for its own transformation. Next, I look at how the concept of subjection and the processes of becoming a subject could be used in relation to the curriculum. Although the object of my study is not, the curriculum, I draw on this example to exemplify Butler's theory in the context of education.

4.4 Subjection and the curriculum

(Davies 2006), points out that 'studies of syllabi from a Butlerian perspective show how the curriculum might present the terms of submission for students and what students are to become, while at the same time covering over the relations of dominance and submission' (p.429). 'They do so through couching the learning process in terms of a

mastery that the individual student is driven to acquire, driven through his/her own needs and anxieties and desire for self-esteem' (Honan 2002:5 in Davies 2006:429). However, mastery is not available to everyone. Students face the risk of being seen as inappropriate and incompetent

'The syllabus presents itself as liberating students' to become 'active agents who will choose to be active citizens' (p.430). It is, also, a form of government of students. Government does not 'refer only to political structures or to the management of states', but also designates 'the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed' (Foucault 1994 in Davies 2006:429). 'To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others' (Foucault 1994:341 in Davies 2006:429). For example, the syllabus, which is a governmental document, ensures that schools shape students into citizens the country desires. Teachers have the 'responsibility and power to shape students inside a range of possible subjectivities', while students can exercise their 'agency to actively shape themselves through engagement with the syllabus' (Davies 2006:430). It is why teachers 'do not wholly determine who their students are' (p.430). At the same time, teachers are also 'caught in relations of mastery and submission' in 'being and becoming' competent teachers (p.431).

The next section discusses briefly how Butler's ideas could be used to develop more ethical practices within classrooms in schools around reflexive notions of responsibility that contrast with current neo-liberal notions of self and responsibility.

4.5 An ethics of classroom practice

As teachers 'we must understand our own contribution to creating and withholding the conditions of possibility of particular lives' (Davies 2006:435). Teaching is defined as a 'dominant discourse' in which teachers feel that they have the 'authority' to assert their views (p.435). In contrast, Davies asserts that Butler offers the concept of ethical

reflexivity ‘which involves remaining vulnerable in the face of normative constitutive practices’(p.435).

I find that my very formation implicates the other in me, that my own foreignness to myself is, paradoxically, the source of my ethical connections with others. I am not fully known to myself, because part of what I am is the enigmatic traces of others. In this sense, I cannot know myself perfectly or know my ‘difference’ from others in an irreducible way…

> I am wounded and I find that the wound testifies to the fact that I am impressionable, given over to the Other in ways that I cannot fully predict or control. I cannot think the question of responsibility alone, in isolation from the Other; if I do, I have taken myself out of the relational bind that frames the problem of responsibility from the start (Butler 2004a:46).

Davies (2006:436) suggests that this form of responsibility is opposite to the one ‘espoused in the neoliberal forms of government of the globalised world which requires each individual to accept responsibility for self except to participate in acts of surveillance and control’. As discussed in Chapter Two, neoliberalism in education undermines teacher autonomy and sociability and heightens individuality and competitiveness with the purpose of shaping students for the market economy (Gerwitz 2002). In contrast to this ‘end-driven market model of the individual’, Butler argues that our responsibility is to the other (Davies 2006:436). The conditions of possibility we create for our students should afford them a viable life (p.436). Although teachers feel that it is difficult to shift their practices within schools and ‘within the framework of state syllabi, they have been shown to subvert official policy in the interests of what they perceive to be good teaching or what is good for their learners’(p.436). However, it may not be adequate to passively resist innovation, or simply to only engage in good teaching in the privacy of the classroom. According to Davies (2006:436), teachers ‘must take responsibility for examining discursive practices that are taken for granted in schools’.

Teachers must question the conditions of possibility they are creating and maintaining for themselves and their students.

In the next section I explore further the influence of a performance culture and 'caring' in the experiences of teachers in light of Butler's construct of performativity. According to Forrester (2005:274) 'performing' (doing one's best for the inspection regime) and 'caring' (doing one's best for the children) exist side-by-side and teachers wrestle with the demands of both. They are activities that are not stable, but subject to shifting emphases.

4.6 Performance and Performativity in Education

During times of education reform, teacher identity becomes an important focal point. In their investigation into the care practices of school teachers in a primary school in the Western Cape Province in South Africa, Perold, Oswald & Swart (2012) conclude that, the drive for greater efficiency, and increased accountability, has turned teaching and learning into 'performing' (p.117). As discussed in Chapter Two, enforced testing and attaining targets have an impact on the way in which teachers work. Accountability processes regulate teachers' competence and worth. Teachers have to measure up to agreed upon standards. 'Teachers, tend to collaborate and, in many instances, engage in the professional manufacturing' (p.117) of what Forrester (2005), from the UK, calls 'performing activities'(p.271). 'This is evidenced by the specific requirements of increased testing, preparing pupils so as to enhance their performance, the visibility of a school's performance by its league table position, and the requirements that teachers perform during inspections in a way that demonstrates competent teaching' (p.284). These potentially present a site of struggle. As these performative activities draw on beliefs, commitment, service and even love, these struggles are often internalized and can result in the emergence of a new subjectivity/identity (Perold et al 2012:117). Strain (in Perold et al 2012:118) suggests:

> To the extent that teachers' 'selves' are under current performance-led regimes, produced for particular effects, their sense of personal identity is altered through their engagement in enacted fabrications of self and practices. (2009:74)

The above argument can be extended by applying 'Butler's differentiation between performance and performativity' ((Perold et al 2012:118). It is through the repetition of acts that the subject is constituted 'whether these identities concern issues of gender or, as in the case of teachers, issues of care' (p.118). An identity is made manifest at the moment of its enactment. Perold et al (2012:118) argue that 'caring identity manifests similarly by repeated enactment through time'. As discussed in section 4.3, the very constructed nature of identity implies the agency of the subject. 'This refutes the notion that the subject presents as powerless and passive and that alternative identities cannot be constructed' (p.118). Butler makes the distinction between performance, which implies the 'existence of a subject and an audience, and performativity, which does not'(p.118). This distinction is relevant to teachers' identities. The explanation that Strain (2009 in Perold et al 2012:118)) gives is that 'the criteria for the monitoring of teachers' caring performances may be constitutive of their understanding and acting out of caring identities, which can potentially lead to compliance performances'. In other words, teachers may feel compelled to perform for the authorities. However, these performances may not have 'performative or constitutive effects for teachers' caring practices or on their identities' (p.118). The authors further suggest that it is possible to transform teachers' identities, provided that those who have the power and the opportunity to shape those discourses that impact on teachers' work and identities become aware of the constitutive effects of language and enactment' (p.125).

My aim in the next section is to understand how teachers construct their identities.

4.7 Teacher identity

4.7.1 The person within the professional

'Teachers' professional identities – who they are, their self-image, the meanings they attach to themselves and their work and the meanings that are attributed to them by others – are associated with both the subject they teach (particularly secondary school teachers), their relationships with the pupils they teach, their roles and the connections between these, their values and their lives outside school' (Day & Gu 2010:34). Sachs (2003) identifies two contrasting forms of professional identity:

- **Entrepreneurial**, which she identifies with efficient, responsible, accountable teachers who demonstrate compliance to externally imposed imperatives (of consistently high-quality teaching as measured by externally set performance indicators). This identity may be characterized as being individualistic, competitive, controlling and regulative, externally defined, standards led.

- **Activist**, driven by a belief in the importance of mobilizing teachers in the best interests of student learning. In this identity teachers will be primarily concerned with creating and putting into place standards and processes that give students democratic experiences. (in Day & Gu 2010:35)

Sachs (2003) argues that the former is the desired product of performing, while the latter suggests that teaching is related to broad societal values in which teaching and learning go beyond the instrumentalism of current reform agendas.

Kelchtermans (1993:449-450) suggests that the 'professional self, like the personal self, evolves over time and that it consists of five interrelated components'. Following

Kelchtermans (1993:449-450) the first is self-image which is the characterization of oneself as is revealed in self-descriptive statements. Self-descriptions are often based on the general principles that govern teachers' professional behaviour. It also refers to the way teachers think they are perceived by others. The second component is self-esteem which is the evaluation of oneself as a teacher - how good or otherwise as defined by self or others. Students appear to be an important factor, by their school results as well as by the quality of the personal relationship with the teacher. 'Self-esteem can also be defined as the result of balancing the self-image and the implicit professional norms the teacher uses' (p.449). A negative balance will cause demotivation. The third component is job motivation i.e. what makes teachers choose, remain committed to or leave the job. A decrease in job motivation is related to the intensification of teaching and its low social status. The fourth component is task perception i.e. how teachers define their jobs. Teachers formulate their task largely in terms of classroom activities and their professional autonomy in the classroom. Teachers see themselves forced to take over tasks that previously were part of the education by the parents. A final component is the future perspective i.e. teachers' expectations for the future development of their jobs.

Research literature demonstrates that events and experiences in the personal lives of teachers are linked to the performance of their professional roles (Acker 1999; Day & Gu 2010). To understand the new lives of teachers, it is necessary to take account of the person within the professional. Professional identities are not only constructed from technical and emotional aspects of teaching (i.e. classroom management, subject knowledge and pupil test results) and their personal lives, but also 'as the result of an interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, cultural and institutional environment in which they function on a daily basis' (Sleegers & Kelchtermans 1999:579). Day et al (2007:103) point out that 'reforms have an impact upon teacher identities and, because these are both cognitive and emotional create reactions which are both rational and non-rational'. Thus existing identities may become a 'continuing site of struggle' (MacLure 1993:312). Instabilities, be they of a personal, professional or situated nature or a combination of these, create stresses in the fabric of

identity and these need to be managed' (Day et al 2007:103). Instability is not necessarily negative. It can stimulate a re-evaluation of current thinking and practices. Teachers need to be resilient and to be supported during these periods, in order that these may be managed in ways that build or sustain positive identities and existing effectiveness (p.103). Yet, Price, Mansfield and McConney (2012:85), writing in an Australian context, contend that constructs like 'teacher resilience', 'become enshrined in teacher professional standards, as such, they become potentially powerful mechanisms of control over the construction of teacher identity and the nature of teachers' work'.

The next section discusses Day et al's (2007:69) and Day and Gu's (2010:52) analysis of teachers' professional life phases. Their analysis draws on data in a project exploring variations in teachers' lives, work and effectiveness in different phases of their careers. Their study involved 300 primary and secondary teachers in England. They interpret teachers' experiences, identities and professional trajectories, in the light of influences relating to their professional and personal lives. 'The critical influences shaping teachers' professional lives are personal factors (related to their lives outside school, such as family support, personal relationships and health-related issues); policy (related to external policy agendas, such as educational policies and government initiatives and changes); practice settings (related to factors embedded in teachers' workplaces, situated support from management and the staff, teachers' additional roles and responsibilities, promotion, workload and the quality of professional development opportunities); and pupil (related to factors associated with pupils, such as pupil intake characteristics, pupil attitudes and motivations, pupil behaviour and teacher-pupil relationships)' (Day et al 2007:69; Day & Gu 2010:52).

Over a professional life phase, it is the interaction between these factors and the ways in which tensions between these and personal and professional identities are played out and managed, that produces relatively positive or negative outcomes in terms of teachers' motivation, commitment, resilience and perceived effectiveness (Day et al 2007:69).

Such perceived effectiveness may itself influence effectiveness, as measured by pupil attainments.

4.7.1 Professional life phases

Professional life phase refers to the number of years that a teacher has been teaching. In their study (p.69) found that teachers' work and lives spanned six professional life phases: 0-3, 4-7, 8-15, 16-23, 24-30 and 31 years of teaching. On the basis of their perceived identity, motivation, commitment and effectiveness, teachers in their study were further categorized into sub-groups. In my study one teacher belonged to the 4-7 professional life phase, two were in the 8-15 professional life phase, and one in the 16-23 professional life phase. Day et al describe the key characteristics of these professional life phases and they identified sub-groups on the basis of their levels of commitment and motivation. The following descriptions are drawn from Day et al (2007:68-100).

In the professional life phase of 4-7 years, support from management, colleagues and pupils was of importance. Teachers demonstrated a primary concern about their confidence and feelings in being effective. There were frequent references to heavy workload which was seen as reducing teaching effectiveness. Promotion and additional responsibilities played a significant role in teachers' perceived identities, motivation, and sense of effectiveness. Teachers stressed the importance of promotion to their professional identity. It is a period in which teachers, while consolidating their professional identities in their classrooms, also have challenges beyond these. Profession-related factors, i.e., promotion and recognition were shown to have a more influential impact than biographical factors on teachers' sense of effectiveness and career progression. Teachers in sub-group a) were growing and had a strong sense of identity, self-efficacy and perceived effectiveness. Teachers in sub-group b) were coping and managing and sustained a moderate level of identity, efficacy and effectiveness. They had a stronger concern than teachers in sub-group a) over the management of their heavy workloads, and some had shown an inclination to focus on classroom teaching to keep a

balanced work and life. Teachers in sub-group c) were vulnerable/declining. They felt that their identity, efficacy and effectiveness were at risk because of workload and difficult life events. Few mentioned the encouraging impact of promotion. Teachers reported a lack of leadership support, adverse personal events and work-life tensions.

This professional life phase of 8-15 years is a watershed in teacher professional development. Teachers struggled with work-life tensions. Most teachers had additional responsibilities and had to balance the effectiveness of their management role with their teaching role. Heavy workloads impacted on the effectiveness of their teaching. Teachers in sub-group a) had sustained engagement with career advancement in mind, had increased self-efficacy and commitment. Support from management, staff collegiality, rapport with pupils and professional development was a contributing factor in a positive sense of effectiveness. Leadership roles comprised an important part of professional identity. Teachers were experiencing a transitional period within the profession – to climb up the career ladder or to remain in the classroom. They were happy with their work-life balance. Sub-group b) teachers had a sense of detachment and lack of motivation. Teachers gave up management roles because of adverse personal events; decreased motivation and commitment, disillusionment and low self-efficacy.

In the professional life phase of 16-23 years, teachers had additional leadership responsibilities. Heavy workload was a hindrance to their effectiveness. Adverse personal events and additional duties had a stronger impact on their work. Teachers struggled with a negative work-life balance. Three sub-groups were identified on the basis of their management of work-life events. Sub-group a) teachers who had further career advancement and good pupil results experienced increased motivation and commitment. Sub-group b) teachers who experienced sustained motivation, commitment and effectiveness as a result of their agency and determination to improve time management. Sub-group c) teachers whose workload, management of competing tensions and career stagnation had led to decreased motivation, commitment and effectiveness. In addition,

contributory factors were the negative effects of pupil behavior, personal events, policy, leadership and continuing professional development.

Recognising the impact of situated, professional and personal factors is important in understanding how and why teachers do, or do not, sustain their commitment and sense of effectiveness. Following Day et al (2007) I should like to see whether the teachers in my study share similar characteristics and trajectories in different professional life phases.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter attempts to explain Butler's performativity theory. I focused on the performative influences of gender, race and class identity and examined the notion of agency. Butler defines the performative act as one that realizes the wish to be a self-formed identity, in defiance of conventional structuring forces on identity formation that are already given, pre-formed in the interests of the powerful (Strain 2009:79). Given this understanding, I should like to see how performativity works in the lives of teachers in my study. I attempt to link Butler's analysis to daily life in school and home. I then discuss various notions of teacher identity. Sachs (2003) makes a distinction between two contrasting forms of professional identity which I shall use to describe the teachers in my study. The components espoused by Kelchtermans (1993) are useful to explain how teachers perceive their professional selves. I then describe teachers' professional life phases using the framework given by Day et al (2007:69). Following Day et al (2007) and Day and Gu (2010), I have tried to explore teachers' professional life phases and the extent to which these teachers continue to be effective in their workplace, given the tensions they experience in their daily lives.

4.9 A Conceptual Framework for this Study

From the exploration of the literature I identify four conceptual claims which provide the framework for this research study. The data are collected and described, and the findings are analysed and discussed in terms of the claims of this framework.

- Past personal and social experiences frame the teachers' perceptions of themselves, the work situation and their career aspirations.
- Teachers' roles have changed as accountability and performance systems have become an increasingly pervasive factor in their daily work.
- The expansion of teachers' work roles and responsibilities has led to tension in the negotiation of work-family balance.
- The new mode of teacher regulation has led to a tension between autonomy and control, thus changing the nature of teacher professionalism and teacher identity.

So far, I have completed the following. In Chapter 1,explained my rationale for the study and stated the aims and research problem. I provided an outline of government policies to achieve gender equality in South Africa. I sketched school restructuring in the South African context. I gave a commentary on research on women teachers and explained the significance of my study.

In chapter 2, I showed that reform policies have led to the transformation of teachers' work with specific reference to teacher regulation and managerialism and markets in education. I provided an overview of school restructuring in South Africa; the expansion of teacher roles and the intensification of work. I focused on conceptions of professionalism with reference to the tension teachers experience between autonomy and control. I analysed notions of time and concluded with teachers' strategies to imposed reform.

In chapter 3, I discussed women and teaching. I focused on the feminization of teaching and the changing culture in schools. I considered the notion of nurturance embedded in notions such as women's true profession. I described how teachers' personal values and aspirations informed their career decisions. I concluded that an analysis of career trajectories must take into account the multifarious ways in which women exert their agency making conscious choices which may be at odds with hierarchical notions of career. I examined the implications of role expansion and its impact on balancing home and school. I concluded with a discussion on the notion of balance.

In chapter 4, I turned to explain Butler's performativity theory. I attempted to link Butler's analysis to daily life in schools. Recent policies have given rise to a new professionalism among teachers. Sachs (2003) makes a distinction between two contrasting forms of professional identity which I will use to describe the teachers in my study. The components espoused by Kelchtermans (1993) will be used to explain how teachers perceive their professional selves. I then described teachers' professional life phases using the framework as given by Day et al (2007:69). Following Day et al (2007) and Day and Gu (2010), I would like to explore teachers' professional life phases in my study and the extent to which these teachers continue to be effective in their workplace given the tensions they experience in their daily lives.

This chapter concludes by identifying four conceptual claims which provide the framework for the study. In chapter five I show how the conceptual framework assisted me in collecting the data for the study and how the structure used to describe and analyse the findings relies on this conceptual framework.

Chapter 5 describes the methodology I used in collecting and analyzing the data for the study.

CHAPTER 5

FEMINIST RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This section discusses the method of inquiry that is employed in investigating the experiences of black (African, Coloured and Indian) and of white women teachers. It highlights both the theoretical problems and possible ways of working with such problems. Research techniques and ethical issues are outlined.

Perumal (2007:19) points out that while 'feminist research is not a unitary concept, it is identifiable by its preference for qualitative research strategies and processes'. 'Feminist researchers see gender as a basic organizing principle which profoundly shapes/mediates the concrete conditions of our lives and the shaping of our consciousness, skills and institutions as well as in the distribution of power and privilege' (Lather 1991:71). Gender is the variable and power/experience/action the relation under investigation. In such research, 'the subjective, emotional and biographic factors that shape the researcher and researched are acknowledged' (p.19). Thus, the research process is democratized through establishing a 'non-hierarchical, dialogic and mutually educative encounter between the researcher and the researched' (p.19).

Governed by these characteristics in theorizing about feminist research methodology, the issues of voice, reflexivity, difference, and power have become recurring themes. It has been argued that educational research using quantitative measurement treated their research subjects as parts of a numerical aggregate, an historical footnote or unproblematic role incumbent (Goodson 1992). Thus, 'the voices from the research field become disembodied, and sanitized when presented in reports, articles and books'

(Perumal 2007:19). In the context of feminist research, voice is an acknowledgement that women have something to say, not only the marginalized or voiceless but also those who are literate and highly educated. The participants in my study belong in this category in terms of 'educational accomplishments and social positionality' (p.20). However, they are subject to instances of subtle discrimination in their institutions, and in their own way they make their voices heard. 'This becomes apparent when subjectivity is understood as multiple, constituted through class, ethnicity, language, ability, sexual identity age etc.' (p.20).

Another issue at the centre of debates on feminist research methodology is that of reflexivity which involves a process of self-awareness and self-consciousness. Perumal (2007:22) contends that 'reflexivity compels a revelation of self, with its frailties, passions, shortcomings and biases.' 'Self-reflexivity unmasks complex political and ideological agendas hidden in our writing' (Richardson 1998:359). Thus the researcher's role in constructing the narrative and the text cannot be overlooked. Difference is also a key concept in feminist research. Researchers have to take into account 'the gendered, contextual and positional diversity of research participants and researchers where multiple fissures across race, class, ability, sexual identity, age, etc., are analysed' (Reinharz 1992:4).

Social research can be exploitative, and life-history accounts can have a voyeuristic attraction. Because the material is intimate, it means that the potential for harm is greater. Therefore, feminist research methodologies have committed themselves to confronting power dynamics inherent in the research process. In attempting to confront the power, researchers have to exploit research participants as objects of scrutiny and manipulation, but, feminist researchers, in reconstructing women's experience, try to include both the active voice of the subject and the researchers' own dialectical analysis (Acker, Barry & Esseveld 1983). An essential ingredient is a respect for the authenticity and integrity of the narrator's discourse (Casey 1993). At the same time, a 'symbolic interactionist

perspective reminds us that the person being interviewed also has power over what s/he choose to tell' (Measor & Sikes 1992:221).

An important consideration in my study was the significance of encouraging a non-exploitative relationship and the dynamics of a power hierarchy in research, i.e., researchers are in a position of power because of access to knowledge.

5.2 Research Design

5.2.1 Narrative Research

Drawing on the theoretical perspectives that shape feminist research methodology I used narrative research to explore the specifically gendered experiences of women teachers and the way they are compounded by race and class. The study drew from autobiographical essays, journal entries and semi-structured interviews.

In an autobiography the author tries to present her life as directly, naturally and as realistically as possible. 'It offers an appropriate vehicle for exploring the links between private and public knowledges and ways of knowing' (Martin 2003:221). Perumal (2005) warns that 'the autobiography has the potential to be presented sometimes as fabrication and often as evasion, suppression and eradication'. It is a complex interplay between the present self, and the self recalled at various stages of personal history. (p.157). In dealing with the relationship between self-identity and temporality, Francis (2002) argues that our personality develops and changes over time. However, there are certain things about our personality that remain fairly constant, although they may develop over time. Griffiths observes that:

> … the self may be experienced as feeling, acting and being, authentically, in the 'here and now' for a self that is not a result of what has happened in the past – and what is expected in the future. It may be that we may act authentically in the present, but, if so, that authentic, spontaneous,

> immediacy is in fact firmly rooted in time, especially in past social interactions. (1995:176)

Griffiths' (1995:178) 'metaphor of a web of identity allows for the notion of female agency and creativity but not in circumstances of her own making'. 'Just as webs are made in a temporal and social context, so the processes of 'becoming' and agency take place throughout a person's life and leave their traces on future selves' (pp.178-179). 'The notion of invisible bonds provides a powerful image of the structural properties of social relations and a means of considering social practice as it relates to gender relations within and between immediate situations and organizing structures' (Martin 2003:223).

Connell (1987) uses the terms gender order and gender regime to show the links between historically constructed social, cultural and institutional patterns of power relations between men and women and definitions of masculinity and femininity. As such, the association between structure and agency in individual lives depends on the way in which the macropolitics of the gender order shape social practice within gender regimes (family or institutions).

These ideas will be used to analyze how women negotiate a space for themselves in the public and private realm. The focus is on patterns of connection and the multiple meanings and subjective understandings of self and others in time and place (Martin 2003:224). 'It enables us to view the autobiographical practices associated with the notion of 'self' and 'lives' as 'constituted through an other or others in public, as well as private, discourse' (p.224). It also draws attention to the processes of subject formation and identity: 'the ways in which specific people internalize particular social expectations and aspirations' (p.224). It helps us understand how people deal with their ambiguities. Even if gender or skin colour does not affect our inherent abilities, people experience them as important. Francis (2002) refers to this as 'experienced identity' and a 'coherent sense of self'

The stories that teachers tell are reflective of their cultures and ideological selections. The concern is that the autobiography may reinforce existing stereotypes by taking sociological constructs of identity such as race, class and gender and applying them to individuals in the form of expectations (Perumal 2007). These categories which invoke stereotypes do not take historical circumstances into account. This construction is a technology of the self and perpetuates the status quo because the autobiographical markers are based on stereotypes and the conventions of what constitutes an autobiography are historically constructed (Perumal 2005:158). However, Brah (1991:175 in Perumal 2005:158), notes that to 'view social actors in a way that stereotypes them according to their cultures would be to ignore the notion that human subjects are not fixed embodiments of their cultures'. A sense of ourselves as located within unstable discursive practices shows that we inhabit multiple and changing identities which are produced within fluid social relations of race, gender, class and sexuality (Butler 1993; Perumal 2005:158). The story constitutes the life and the self (Goodson, Biesta, Tedder & Adair 2010). The suitability of using narrative research for this study is confirmed by Goodson (1992) who argues for this approach in understanding teachers' work and lives.

The analysis of narrative research is interpretative, and interpretation is always personal, partial, and dynamic. Denzin in Goodson (1992:237) summarises the position thus:

> There is no clear window into the inner life of a person , for any window is always filtered through the glaze of language, signs, and the process of signification. And language, in both its written and spoken forms, is always inherently unstable, in flux, and made up of the traces of other signs and symbolic statements. Hence, there can never be a clear, unambiguous statement of anything, including an intention or a meaning.

As a check on validity this study will make use of 'between method' triangulation and respondent validation/member checking. The between methods approach embraces the notion of convergence between independent measures of the same objective. This takes the form of analyses of the autobiographies, journal entries and individual interviews. Member checking involves taking data back to the informants, discussing with them whether the results are plausible and then incorporating their comments into the research. This facilitates the process of validation, which refers to the trustworthiness of the accounts, and also increases participants' awareness regarding the issues. Member checking is an important validity check and is an ethical handling of the research findings as it allows informants to control the facts which affect them and how these facts are used in the research.

The next section looks at how the sample was selected.

5.3 Research Participants

According to Mouton (2001:166), it is 'appropriate to select the research sample on the basis of the researcher's own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of the research aims'. Further to this, Henning (2004:71) states that 'a researcher needs to select interviewees who can shed optimal light on the issue that s/he is investigating'

Purposive sampling was used to identify and select three black women teachers, and one white woman teacher, between the ages of 25 and 40 as research participants. Cohen and Manion (1994:89), describe 'purposive sampling as samples chosen according to specified needs, that is, researchers identify the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their typicality'. The research participants represent a group discriminated against because of their gender, class (based on the socio economic situation of the household) and/or race. The factors which remained constant were the subjects they taught, their years of teaching experience, and their positions at the school.

My sample originally included four women (3 black and 1 white) secondary school English teachers between the ages of 25 and 40 who were mothers of infants/toddlers/children. I telephoned public schools in the South of Johannesburg and informed the principals of my research study. Consent was given by the principals to visit the school and speak to likely research candidates. However, I was unsuccessful in securing candidates. I contacted, telephonically, two secondary school principals from Lenasia who were my former colleagues. A standard letter explaining the project and requesting an interview was sent to the women teachers.

I found two teachers (1 black and 1 Indian) who were hesitant, but willing to participate in the study. I then contacted, telephonically, a secondary school principal from Eldorado Park and I found the third participant I needed - the coloured woman teacher. I invited a white colleague to be part of my study. My final sample includes Teri, an African English head of department who was unmarried, but had a partner; Fiona, a senior coloured English teacher who was divorced and had two teenage children; Priscilla, a junior and senior Indian English teacher who was married and had two little children and Keri, a white Life Orientation teacher with two little children who was married, but divorced during the course of the study. All but one of the teachers were employed in public schools and taught English to junior and secondary school students.

I introduced myself by giving my personal motivation for engaging in this research topic. The topic resonated with their concerns about school and home. The teachers and I discussed the time frames regarding the data collection process, but it did not always work out as we had scheduled. The autobiographies were completed by the end of January 2010, and the diary entries by the 6th May 2010. The most difficult aspect of this process was to schedule time for the interviews, and appointments were often postponed due to personal and professional circumstances. Two interviews were conducted at schools after school hours – the one was at 15H00 in Lenasia, Gauteng, on the 12th August 2010, and the other was at 14H30 in Eldorado Park, Gauteng, on the 10th August 2010. One interview took place at 15H00 at the home of one of the participants in

Lenasia South, Gauteng, on the 19th August 2010. One interview took place at 10h00 during the school holidays at a private school in the south of Johannesburg, on the 16th August 2010. The interviews lasted approximately 2 hours each.

I sent the participants work for comment at different moments in the research process. I also telephoned them if I was uncertain about any aspect since my concern was to represent them accurately. The transcripts were accepted as is. The analysis chapters were sent to the participants for their feedback to provide evidence of the trustworthiness of my analysis, and to support claims I made in the analysis chapter. Three participants responded telephonically. One participant took ill and did not respond.

The South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) strike over wages began on the 18th August 2010 and ended on the 6th September 2010. Teri is a SADTU member, Priscilla is affiliated to the National Union of Teachers, Fiona is a member of the National Association for Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa, and Keri is a non-union member. The interviews were held before, and during, the collective resistance against low wages. The wage strikes could have prompted the participants to voice their extreme dissatisfaction over pay. By the same token, one cannot deny that teaching is a lowly paid occupation and teachers are constantly complaining about salaries.

The research participants are not representative of a population (e.g., ethnicity, religion, language etc.) and the findings from the interviews cannot be generalized to a population. Readers may be able, however, to extract from a written report elements of findings which they find to be transferable and that may be extended to other settings. Notwithstanding, 'representation' also depends, as Henning argues (2004:71), on the 'quality or craftsmanship of the research product and the researcher's ability to make the text a convincing argument for the validity of the findings'. Sampling is important as part of the process of demarcating the research inquiry. A drawback is the limitations of small-sample research, particularly in making generalizations to a larger population and

the temptation of participants to provide the responses they think are expected or acceptable (Ballantyne 1992). The problem of the small sample can be partly overcome by comparing cases and extracting commonalities.

5.4 Data Collection Techniques

The data collection process included autobiographies, journal entries and individual interviews. These were conducted sequentially.

'A first general principle in data collection is that the inclusion of multiple sources of data collection in a research project is likely to increase the reliability of the observations' (Mouton 1996:156). The underlying assumption is that, because 'various methods complement one another, their respective shortcomings can be balanced out' (p.156). The two main strategies for checking reliability and validity in qualitative material are respondent validation and triangulation. Respondent validation means checking with participants to see if they recognize the validity of the analysis being developed. Denzin (1978 in Mouton 1996:156) coined the term, 'triangulation, to refer to the use of multiple methods of data collection'. It reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Denzin (2000:119) believes that 'objective reality can never be captured'. According to him, triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation. This study, uses the 'within method triangulation' (i.e., systematically attempting to get several types of data on something within one's method). The same research instruments were used to investigate all the research subjects.

In the following sections, I discuss the processes of autobiographical writing, journal entries and interviews for my study. The first tier of the data gathering process was the autobiographies.

5.4.1 Autobiographical Writing

Stanley (1992 in Martin 2003:220) uses the term 'autobiographical I' to place the voice of the author at the centre of the knowledge-production process. Being aware of the ethical and methodological dilemmas associated with autobiographical writing (see section 5.2.1), I, nonetheless, wanted to capture the life stories of these women and portray specifically the intricacies of their experiences. 'In spite of the difficulties which are experienced as a result of using autobiographical enquiry as a research methodology, a link has been established in the minds of teachers and researchers between the telling of stories and the exploration and development of personal and professional voice and identity' (Perumal 2007:25). The participants in my study were presented with guiding questions (Annexure A) when I invited them to write their autobiographical essays in 2010. Requesting participants to write their autobiographies was done with a view to gleaning insight into family background; role models; experiences of schooling as a child/young adult; the factors that have shaped their personal, intellectual and political development; changes in teaching today; and turning points in their lives.

The teachers' personal biographies help me to gain an understanding of the relationships between the everyday realities of teaching and to the teachers' past experiences. The question on *Role models* asks about the influence of other people who were either family or community based. It looks at whether they influence the ways in which participants enact or perceive their multiple roles. The intention in asking about their *Experiences of primary and high school* was to gauge if their experiences as students influence their own practice as teachers. *The influences of early childhood and family life* that shaped personal, intellectual and political development shed light on their personal, intellectual and political formation. (See Annexure F for Autobiographies)

The second tier of data collection was journal entries.

5.4.2 Journal Entries

The teachers were able to capture their lives through the writing of a personal reflective journal over a period of two weeks (see Annexure B for guiding questions). This was set as an exercise to document their experiences as women teachers. The participants were asked to reflect critically on the tensions they experienced as mother, wife/partner and teacher. I asked them to describe in detail the tension, their reaction to it and how they managed the conflict.

Journal/Diary records provide a unique perspective to data collection. There is much less intrusion as it takes place in a natural setting. 'It permits the researcher to delve beneath the surface of events and behaviours to understand the personal meaning that they have for participants and the motivations and thought processes involved' (Ballantyne 1992:359). 'Entries made soon after an event have the advantage of immediacy and reflect thoughts and feelings that may dissipate over time' (p.359). The use of diaries allows the research to be guided and informed by the teachers themselves, rather than being imposed by the researcher. In this way one is able to raise new questions, generate theory and provide illustrations of theory.

The drawbacks are the increased workload placed on teachers that might limit the usefulness of the method; the limitations of small-sample research, particularly in making generalizations to a larger population and the temptation of participants to provide the responses they think are expected or acceptable (Ballantyne 1992). The problem of the small sample can be partly overcome by comparing cases and extracting commonalities. (See Annexure G for Journal Entries)

5.4.3 The Interviews

This study drew on the conventions of the semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews are compatible with feminist ideals in that they provide opportunities for, and also legitimate, women's voices. The interview schedule with open-ended questions was

flexible enough to allow for dialogue as well as responses to questions. It requires according to Lather, (1991:61), self-disclosure, collaboration, reciprocity, and the negotiation of meaning. The face to face interview brings in a personalized element to research. Measor & Sikes (1983:215) state that 'reciprocity is an excellent data gathering technique'.

The main aim of interview data is to bring to our attention what individuals think, feel and do and what they have to say about it in an interview, giving us their subjective reality in formatted discussion, which is guided and managed by an interviewer and later integrated into a research report (Henning 2004:52). 'In this research text, we eventually read an integrated understanding of the subjectivity in which the researcher describes, truthfully, delimited segments of persons' lives' (p.52). As such, the information gathered from the interview, recorded and transcribed, is available for re-examination by other researchers and increases its external reliability.

Kvale's (1996:88) seven stages of the interviewing process as summarized by Babbie (2005:316) provides a useful framework:
Thematising: clarifying the purpose of the interviews; Designing: laying out the process through which you'll accomplish your purpose, including a consideration of the ethical dimension; Interviewing: doing the actual interviews; Transcribing: creating a written text of the interviews; Analyzing: determining the meaning of gathered materials in relation to the purpose of the study; Verifying: checking the reliability and validity of the materials; and finally, Reporting: telling others what you have learned (Kvale 1996:88 summarised by Babbie 2005:316).

The interview schedule was piloted with women teachers at my school. The purpose of the pilot exercise was to carry out a preliminary analysis to check whether the wording and format of questions would present any difficulties to subjects in the main study or when data were analysed. The interview questions were refined during the data instrument development stage (See Appendix C for Interview Questions).

I conducted the interviews with three teachers at their schools after school hours. One interview was conducted at the home of a participant at her request. Interviews lasted from 90 – 120 minutes. Interviews were conducted in July and August 2010. The interview schedule was structured into five categories covering: *Background Information, Education and Career Pattern, Teaching, Domestic and Personal Situation, and General.* The participants were provided with the interview schedule. The category, *Background Information*, elicited responses regarding the number of years the teachers had been teaching and their teaching assignments. The category, *Education and Career Pattern*, covered aspects such as teachers' decision to enter or remain in teaching, teaching as a career for women, and their career trajectories. The aspects included in the category, *Teaching*, were curriculum policy/practices; role expansion/role demands; perceptions of workload and the intensification of work; school appraisals; pupil diversity; management responses to change; discrimination in the workplace; and collegiality and co-operation. The category, *Domestic and Personal Situation*, enquired how teachers coped with the demands of home and school, their support structures at home, stress factors, and conflicts of role and priority. The category, *General*, gave teachers an opportunity to reflect on their future plans. They were invited to add other comments which they deemed important.

All interviews were recorded with the teachers' knowledge and permission. The interviews were transcribed by an expert third party and I checked the transcription. I observed all ethical considerations in this process. The next step in the research process was to return the narratives to the research participants to check the accuracy of data, thereby ensuring respondent validation. Listening to the voices of teachers in my study has the potential to offer an account of grassroots realities.

This study draws on the conventions of the semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews are compatible with feminist ideals in that they provide opportunities for and legitimate women's voices. The interview schedule with open-ended questions was

flexible enough to allow for dialogue as well as responses to questions. It requires according to Lather (1991:61), self-disclosure, collaboration, reciprocity, and the negotiation of meaning. The face to face interview brings in a personalised element to research. Measor & Sikes (1983:215) state that reciprocity is an excellent data gathering technique. (See Appendix H for Interview Transcripts)

5.5 Data Analysis

While I acknowledge that there is no definitive approach to qualitative data analysis, the study draws discursively from a combination of qualitative analytical approaches that combined principles of thematic and discourse analysis. Discourse analysis and Feminist post structuralist discourse analysis (FPDA) was used to complement Thematic analysis as a methodological tool. Word combinations helped to create a discourse.

5.5.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a process used as part of many qualitative methods. This section deals with the theoretical grounding which has informed my data analysis. Different views on qualitative data analyses are cited followed by my own data analysis description. Analysing qualitative data is to make sense of, interpret and theorize the data. This is done by organizing, reducing and describing data (Smit 2006). I used the data to describe and explain the experiences of teachers at a time of educational reform. I analysed the data, keeping in mind the following techniques:

The use of thematic analysis involves three distinct stages: 'Stage 1, deciding on sampling and design issues; Stage 2, developing themes and a code; and Stage 3, validating and using the code' (Boyatzis 1998:38-41). There are three phases of inquiry in thematic analysis: 'recognizing an important moment (seeing) precedes encoding it (seeing it as something), which in turn precedes interpretation)' (p.1). Thematic analysis is thus a 'process for encoding qualitative information where the encoding requires an

explicit ‘code’(p.4). This may include a list of themes, indicators, and qualifications that are related. ‘Coding’ requires putting aside preconceived notions and letting the data and interpretation of it guide analysis (Corbin and Strauss 2008). The idea is not just to take a phrase from ‘raw’ data and use it as a label. Rather, coding requires searching for the right word/s, that best describing conceptually what the researcher believes is indicated by the data (Corbin and Strauss 2008). A researcher can think of ‘coding as mining the data, digging beneath the surface to discover the hidden treasures contained within data’ (p.66).

Once codes are awarded to different units of meaning, the related codes are categorised (Henning 2004). Categorising is the process of grouping concepts at a higher, more abstract, level. ‘The categories are named inductively, using the data as a guide in deciding what a category should be called’ (p.105). Categories begin to show the themes that will be constructed from the data and that will be used in the discussion of the inquiry. A theme is a pattern found in, interprets aspects of the phenomenon (Boyatzis 1998). ‘A theme could be identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the data) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon) and may be initially generated inductively from the raw data or deductively from theory and prior research’ (1998:vii) ‘When a researcher is satisfied that the themes represent a reasonably researched chunk of reality, each theme can be used as the basis for an argument in a discussion around them’ (Henning 2004:107). Thematic analysis allows for the use of different types of information in a systematic manner that increases their accuracy about people, events, situations and organizations.

The ability to use thematic analysis involves a number of competencies (Boyatzis 1998:7-8). One competency is pattern recognition which is the ability to see patterns in random information. The researcher must have an openness and flexibility to see the patterns. Other competencies involved are ‘planning and systems thinking which enables a person to organize observations and identified patterns into a usable system for observation’ (p.8). Knowledge relevant to the field being studied is vital since the researcher has to

recognize what is important, give it meaning and conceptualise the observations (Boyatzis 1998; Henning 2004). ‘Other competencies such as empathy and social objectivity may be crucial and relevant to seeing patterns in a person’s life’ (Boyatzis 1998:8).

The ability to use thematic analysis appears to have four distinct stages in its development (Boyatzis 1998:11):

1. Sensing themes, i.e., to recognize a codable moment.
2. Doing it reliably, i.e., recognizing the codable moment and encoding it consistently.
3. Developing codes.
4. Interpreting the information and themes in the context of a theory or conceptual framework, i.e., contributing to the development of knowledge.

The three major obstacles to using thematic analysis effectively are ‘projection, sampling and mood and style’ (p.12). Projection occurs when one reads into, or attributes to, another person something that is our own characteristic, emotion, value or attitude. Preventing or minimizing projection is helped by ‘developing an explicit code; establishing consistency of judgment; respondent validation, and keeping close to the raw information’ when developing themes and code (p.13). The challenge is to draw the richness of themes from the data without reducing the insights to a trivial level for the sake of consistency of judgment.

Reviewing and testing the appropriateness and adequacy of one’s sampling plan is important (Boyatzis 1998). ‘Preventing or lessening the obstacles and confusion of sampling is helped by reviewing the unit of analysis versus the unit of coding; clarifying the unit of analysis and the unit of coding; examining the sampling of units of analysis and units of coding from multiple perspectives, and by establishing a guide for information collection’ (p.15).

According to Boyatzis, the 'ability to sense themes and develop codes and to apply the codes consistently will be adversely affected by the effect of the data on the researcher, his or her cognitive style, and tendencies toward wanting a clear, correct answer' (p.15). Errors and distractions related to the researcher's mood and style can be prevented or lessened by not being preoccupied when conducting thematic analysis.

A good code is usable in the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the research. According to Boyatzis (1998:31), a good thematic code should have five elements:

1. A label (i.e., a name)
2. A definition of what the theme concerns (i.e., the characteristic or issue constituting the theme)
3. A description of how to know when the theme occurs (i.e., indicators on how to 'flag' the theme)
4. A description of any qualifications or exclusions to the identification of the theme
5. Examples, both positive and negative, to eliminate possible confusion when looking for the theme.

Ideally, developing the label comes last in the writing process or in creating the code. 'The label should be conceptually meaningful to the phenomenon being studied; clear and concise, and close to the data'(p.31).

5.5.1.1 Developing Themes and a Code

In this section, I summarise the above discussion which involves developing a code inductively (Boyatzis (1998:45).

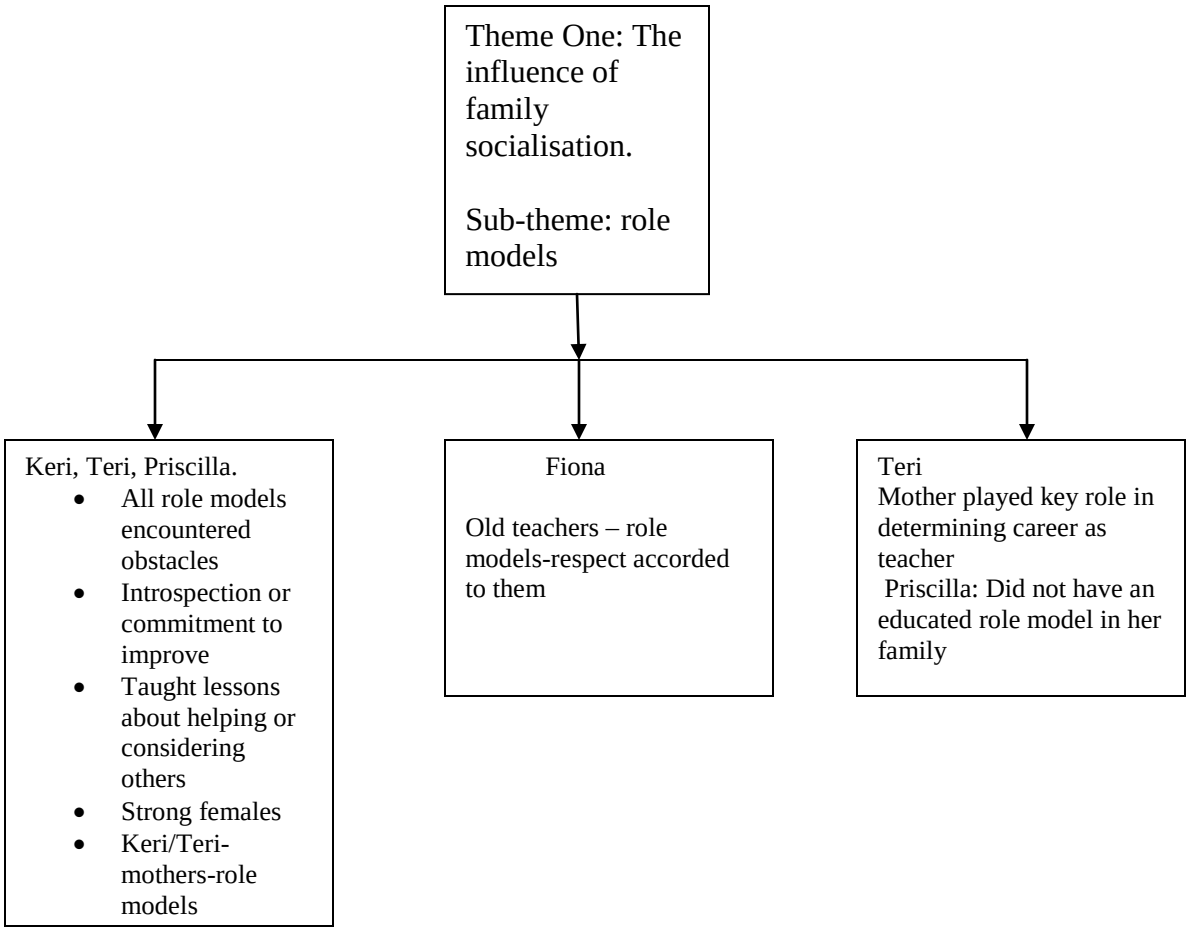
1. reducing the raw data by paraphrasing each piece of data,

2. identifying themes within subsamples by comparing summaries to determine similarities,
3. comparing themes across subsamples,
4. creating a code, and
5. determining the reliability of the code.

The process of developing themes and a code moves the researcher to theory development. 'The strength and power of the data-driven approach is that it uses, as much as possible, the way in which the themes appear in the raw data as the starting point in code development' (p.51). Data-driven codes appear with the words and syntax of data. 'Because a data-driven approach is sensitive to the context of raw data, one is more likely to obtain validity against criteria and construct variables' (p.30). In the next section I describe the formal stages of my data analysis.

I used Boyatzis' (1998:45) framework for developing the codes. This is stage 2 (5.5.1) of the data-driven approach to developing a code. I began by, firstly, reading the four autobiographies, then the journal entries and transcribed interviews. In inductively developing a code, Step 1 (5.5.1.1) required that the data be reduced. I summarized the data and through this process I was consciously processing information. I spent many hours trying to make sense of it. I then made an outline of the summaries. The outlines generated in the summarizing phase provided a convenient place to begin perceiving themes. At this stage of the analysis, I was less concerned with a detailed, precise description of themes. My concern was with finding patterns in the data of the four participants. This process was, to some extent, made easier when I decided to select the themes in conjunction with the groupings of questions in the autobiographies, journal entries and interviews. I also compared data with published literature. Step 3 (5.5.1.1) involved comparing themes. I examined the list of themes to see how they may be related. I then compared the data by grouping similar and contrasting views and expressions onto mind maps. See mind map below:

AN EXAMPLE OF A MIND MAP



To begin Step 4 (5.5.2), which is creating a code, I reviewed the list of themes identified in Step 3. Reading and rereading the data was critical to developing a code. I used open coding by labelling selected segments of texts. I applied this category generating process to each participant's response to the three instruments, making mind maps for each. At times, the participants gave information that was meaningful to them, even if it did not answer the question precisely. Initially, I had twelve mind maps. In each theme, I combined a summary with a descriptive analysis of each participant's narrative, and I identified and commented on issues that the participants themselves portrayed as being significant. I presented a comparative cross-analysis of issues that emerged. The

sequence I used in analyzing the data was based on the participants' professional life phase i.e., the number of years they have been teaching. For example, Keri, 8 years, Teri 10 years, Priscilla 11 years and Fiona 19 years.

The next section examines discourse analysis in terms of its relationship between micro-analytical approaches, which examine the finer detail of linguistic interactions in transcripts, and macro-analytical approaches, which consider how broader social processes work through language.

5.5.2 Feminist Post-Structuralist Discourse Analysis

From both a theoretical and methodological perspective, I find Feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis (FPDA) particularly useful for describing and interpreting women teachers multiple positioning by themselves and others within interconnected and competing discourses. In particular, I examine how the teachers position themselves in terms of their identities. FPDA is defined by Baxter (2003) as a supplementary approach to analyzing intertextualised discourses in spoken interaction and other types of text. FPDA is concerned with the discursive construction of subjectivity. 'A key aspect of FPDA is textual analysis which is the identification and naming of significant discourses within spoken and written texts' (Baxter (2008:250).

5.5.2.1 Intertextuality

Intertextuality involves 'foregrounding the ways in which dominant discourses within any speech context are always inflected and inscribed with traces of other discourses' (Baxter 2003:78). Intertextuality refers to the 'open-ended possibilities generated by all the discursive practices of a culture, as well as utterances in which a text is located' (p.78). So, a text becomes meaningful as a result of 'citations, references, cultural languages and references to other books, other texts and other sentences' (p.78). The principle of intertextuality can be applied to the transcripts of spoken discourse, interview data, observation notes and video-recordings.

The supplementary use of FPDA with Performativity theory allows for detailed textual examination of the discourses that continuously compete with each other in the performance of gender. FPDA in particular provides the methodology for a detailed linguistic analysis of the ways in which members negotiate ambiguous and complex positions for themselves. Baxter (2008:177) suggests four elements which can be used in discourse identification: 'words repeatedly used by participants; commonly emerging themes; links apparent in the interactions between participants; and contradictions apparent in their talk'. Drawing on Baxter (2008), I examined how women teachers are positioned within competing discourses. I used two levels of analysis. The first level is descriptive, and the second level is an interpretative commentary based on the evidence gathered from the first level. When doing the analysis, I searched the data for signs of language and other text that indicate how participants are trying to make sense of their reality and how they act from within certain structures that are embedded in discourse. I highlighted the discourse markers, i.e., specific instances of the use of words and phrases that exemplified the discourse, as well as the symbolic use of language such as metaphors. I checked whether there was a recurring pattern. These examples were then coded as a type of discourse marker. Discourses informed the ways in which the teachers positioned themselves in their day-to-day interactions with others and how they represented the world from particular perspectives. As Butler (1991) has suggested, material realities cannot exist outside the range of discourse. The following significant discourses were identified.

The discourse of patriarchy

Through their use of language, the teachers illustrated the power of gender discourses upon their subjectivities or definitions of the self. Their talk is replete with the labels *daughter; wife; partner; mother* and *teacher* and its association with nurturing, loving and providers of the needs of others. Their gender-defined worlds are created in part by their culture's parenting practices, i.e., their performing roles. I used the labels as

discourse markers to identify gender expressions in their talk about public and private life. The data included references to teaching as acceptable women's work. The discourse defining women as caregivers is tied to the discourse of teaching as appropriate for women. The discourse of patriarchy surfaced in their talk about fathers, brothers, spouses/partners, and teaching and one can see how it frames their identities as women, wives, mothers and teachers. I used these labels as discourse markers to identify how the discourse of patriarchy subjects the participants' talk and how 'resistance becomes a never-ending dance in these spaces of contradiction' (Munro 1998:125). Butler (1990) argues that the way we perceive gender roles lies at the very root of inequality of the sexes.

The discourse of ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to belonging to a particular community, sharing a culture, and possibly a distinct language. The teachers express how their ethnic and gender identities position them differently; for example, *African family; as a black and as a woman; as a Muslim woman; Muslim stronghold; purda; coloured woman; I felt inferior as a black child; Indian perceptions; darkie; the mindset that possesses us women of colour; whites regarded as superior; my desire was to touch a white child's hair.* Words that linked to ethnic identities were used as discourse markers.

The discourse of new managerialism

The discourse of New Managerialism is evident in the data. Teachers describe the intensification of work thus: *curriculum changes; demands; increased assessments; marking and reporting; standardised tests; IQMS; expansion of teacher roles; work overload; accountability; surveillance; scrutiny; pupil ability; meetings; 'compliance'.*

The discourse of authority

The data also point to issues of authority. I used van Leeuwen's (2008:105-109) 'category of authorization, that is, legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom, law, and/or persons in whom institutional authority is vested'. 'Personal authority is vested in people because of their status or role in an institution' (p.106) e.g., management may use this kind of authority to set deadlines and get things done. Teachers have expert or formal authority by virtue of their mastery of their professional knowledge. However, they have very little influence over contextual factors. 'Today, teachers increasingly have to surrender their professional autonomy to management structures' (p.107). There is also 'impersonal authority' evident in words such as *policy; rules; regulations;* and *compulsory.* The 'authority of tradition' is invoked through words such as *custom; tradition; this is what we have always done.* Implicit in the case of the authority of conformity was the phrase: *it is what everybody else is doing.* In the case of role model authority, the teachers followed the examples of role models. 'The fact that role models adopted a certain kind of behaviour, or believed certain things legitimized the actions of the teachers' (p.107).

In addition, Gannerud (2001:64) uses 'positional authority based on the status of ascribed categories such as class, gender, ethnicity and role; relational authority based on socio-emotional relationships with students; and 'voice', which concerns how the participants make themselves heard'. The teachers described the 'low status' of teachers connected with 'meagre salaries' which further subordinated them. My analysis of power considers the role of space in enacting social practices. Descriptions of spaces stress hierarchy, for example, classrooms, staffrooms, and offices.

The discourse of time

I looked at the role of time in teachers' discourse (Hargreaves 1994 – section 2.4.1). In my data, I found different types of time expressions. In time summons (van Leeuwen

2008:106), timing is represented as being imposed through an authoritative summons. Time summons operate with managers disrupting internalized time disciplines and rhythms of work with authoritative deadlines (Hargreaves 1994; van Leeuwen 2008). The teachers described its negative effect on them. They experience increased anxiety about punctuality in terms of meeting deadlines, for instance, *'early', 'on time,' and 'late'.* Their work does not end when the school bell rings (an instrumentalized time summons). Time expressions become recurring, as *schedules,* for example, *daily; weekly and quarterly*. The teachers contrasted their subjective experience of time with clock time where time seemed to flash by in an instant. Their experience of time is realized through the duration of activities. Time management expressions were frequent, for example, *have to make time; too late to cook; no time to rest*. They compared work and home time in which boundaries have become blurred, thus creating friction and conflict. Time was fragmented and multiple and was represented as a sequence of events.

The discourse of home

Images of home were analysed through family and domestic expressions, for example, *child-care; teenage daughters; reduced family time; extended family; problems with spouse; cooked and cleaned; my house suffers.* The conflict that the teachers experienced in managing multiple roles is evident in the expressions, *try to leave work behind; try to focus on my kids – it's difficult; haven't found a balance; work encroaches on my private time; it's challenging; lost my freedom*.

The discourse of performativity

In her use of the notion of language as performative, Butler (1993:12) emphasizes the creativity inherent in language use, especially with regard to 'gender formation and gender identity'. Butler (p.12) has provided insight into the manner in which 'performativity operates in the striving for gender equality'. Performativity provides a useful lens through which cultures may be observed. Sometimes identity is constituted in

performance drawing from tradition. We learn gender positioning by repeated acts from childhood. For example, *regular trips to the library; Sepedi cultural background…I always felt…am obligated to help my family; am a product of my mother; my mother appreciated her duty by waking early; social standards expected from women; left to care for my siblings; cultural and religious values have shaped my values; always involved in the church; she did everything for my dad…given Indian perceptions…not uncommon.* The teachers exercised their agency and demonstrated alternative behaviours other than those prescribed by the dominant culture. Here, where performatives were derived from contra-performances, they became the means to liberation as new subjectivities were created. For example, *purposely live my life contrary to his; I would resist that; I rebel against everything my father believes in; my nature would not allow me to be complacent; no way that segregation can be abided; being the woman that I am, I don't entertain it.*

5.5.3 The final themes

Three main themes were identified: *Socialisation into teaching; Critical influences on teachers' professional lives; and Balancing private and professional lives.* Each theme has a number of sub-themes. In some instances, the sub-themes consist of a number of related themes. Instead of naming them sub-sub-themes, I have called them sub-sets.

5.5.3.1 Theme 1: 'Socialization into teaching.'

Under this theme I discuss how gender, race, class and cultural background are constitutive of the teachers' professional identities. The first theme which is *Socialisation into teaching* considers the socializing forces within women teachers' life histories. It describes the process of socialization as a continuous reconstruction of personal knowledge through the years. Socialising forces are critical factors in how they learn.

Sub-theme 1: *The influence of family socialization on women's decision to enter teaching*, situates the socialization experiences of the teachers within families examining how culturally situated socialisation practices inform and shape their entry into teaching.

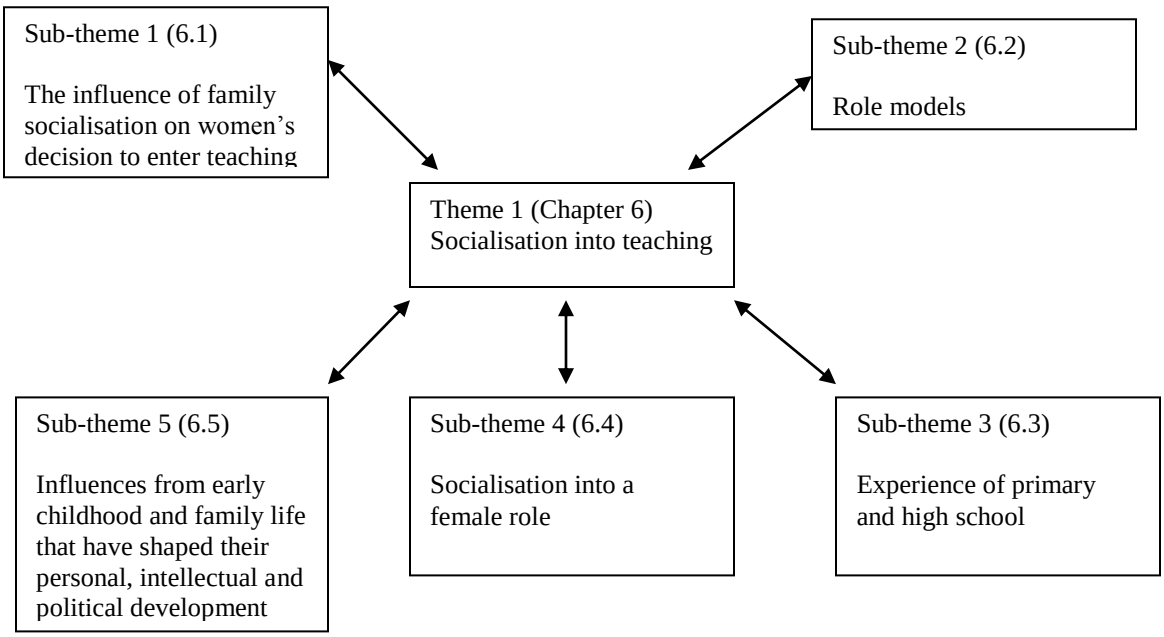
Sub-theme 2: *Role models,* shows how participants were influenced through relationships with their mothers, teachers and other mothers who were either family or community based.

Sub-theme 3: *Experiences of primary and high school*, refers to the socializing force of schools which is considered as a critical factor in how the teachers learn to teach. The first experience of teacher socialization is the 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie 1975) that teachers experience as students while they are in schools.

Sub-theme 4: *Socialisation into a female role*, describes the positive and negative influences of mothers and role models on the ways in which participants enact or perceive their multiple roles. It explains how the teachers' mothers and their role models coped with shifting multiple identities.

Sub-theme 5: *Influences of early childhood and family life that shaped personal, intellectual and political development*, refers to the participants' early personal, intellectual and political formation that developed in accordance with, or in defiance of, family and broader social influences. It explains how the teachers construct meaning between their own histories and their personal and professional lives.

Fig. 1



5.5.3.2 Theme 2: Critical influences on teachers' professional lives

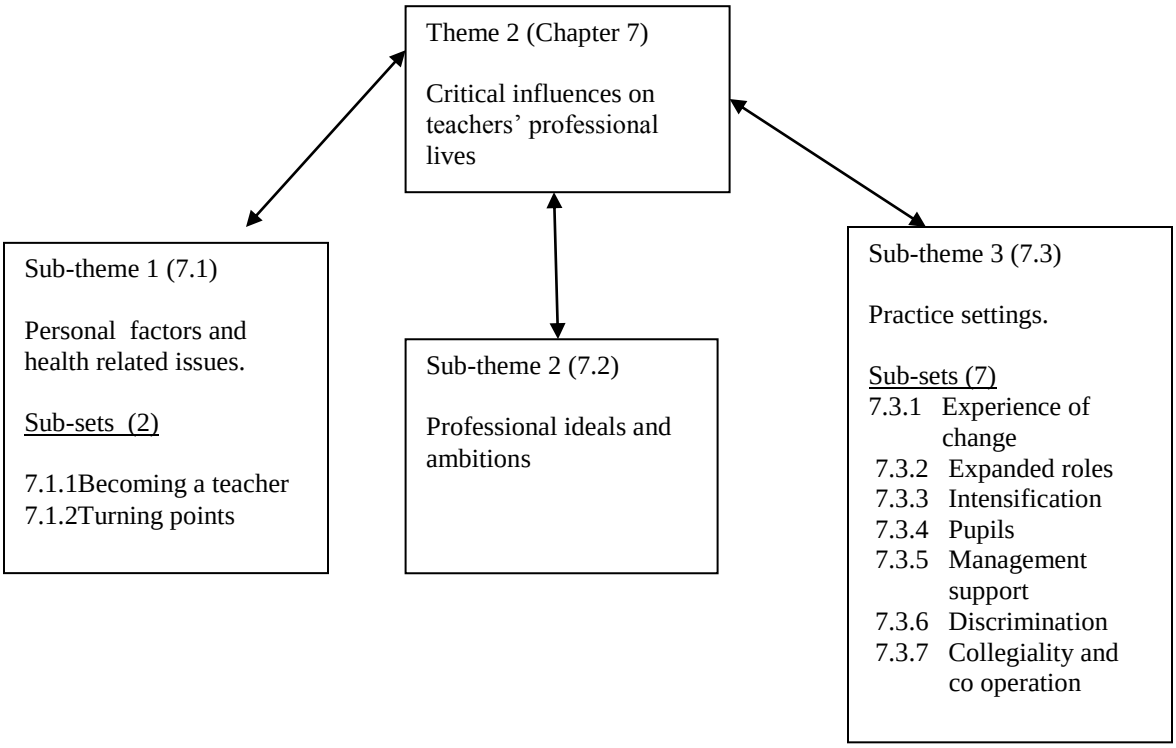
In this theme, I focus on two key influencing factors on teachers' professional lives as outlined by Day and Gu (2010:52), i.e., *Personal factors and health – related issues;* and *Practice settings.* I have added to this outline another sub-theme which seemed to be of significance when analyzing the narratives, i.e., *Teachers' professional ideals and ambitions*.

Sub-theme 1 focuses on personal factors. Under sub-theme 1, Sub-set 1, *Becoming a teacher*, traces how and why the women entered teaching, and the kinds of dilemmas they faced in negotiating their choice in becoming teachers. Sub-set 2, *Turning points,* refers to critical experiences in the teachers' life histories which led to new directions in their lives or a transformation in their identities.

Sub-theme 2: *Teachers' professional ideals and ambitions,* discusses the notion of vocation or calling, which forms the essence of the teachers' professional identity.

Sub-theme 3: *Practice settings*, relates to factors embedded in teachers' workplaces. I identified six sub-sets under *Practice settings.* Sub-set 1, *The Experience of change* analyses the teachers' experiences of policy change and how it impacts on their teaching. Sub-set 2, *Expanded roles* refers to policy changes whereby the expectations made of teachers are expanding. The expanded role includes teachers' leadership and management responsibilities, and the integration of children with special needs into ordinary classrooms and pastoral care. Sub-set 3, *Intensification* refers to teaching today which is much more difficult and presents teachers with new challenges: an escalation of pressures, expectations and controls concerning what they do and how much they should do within the teaching day. Subset 4, *Pupils* relates to factors associated with pupils, such as pupil intake characteristics, pupil attitudes and motivations, pupil behaviour and teacher-pupil relationships. It explains the demands on teachers' time and energy as a result of increasing class sizes; the diversity of the student population; discipline problems, and the need for new curricular and teaching approaches to accommodate a diverse student body. Sub-set 5, *Management support* refers to the pivotal role of headteacher in a school. It explains that the headteachers' relationship with others, their capacity to lead by example and the capacity to embody key values influence the quality of teacher commitment. Sub-set 6, *Discrimination in the workplace* examines the extent to which the teachers experience discriminatory practices and the manner in which they address this conflict. Sub-set 7, *Collegiality and cooperation* explains the interactions between teachers, whether they be formal or informal and their role in supporting teachers in a challenging work context.

Fig 2



5.5.3.3 Theme 3: Home and school

Theme 3 (Fig 3) discusses the main theme of this study which is how teachers balance private and professional lives. The following sub-themes were discernible across responses:

Sub-theme 1, *Teaching: A good fit for women*, examines the common perception that teaching is a good career for women in general, and mothers in particular. To imagine a teacher is to conjure the image of a woman. Teaching is generally understood to be women's work, which has led to the notion of the feminization of teaching.

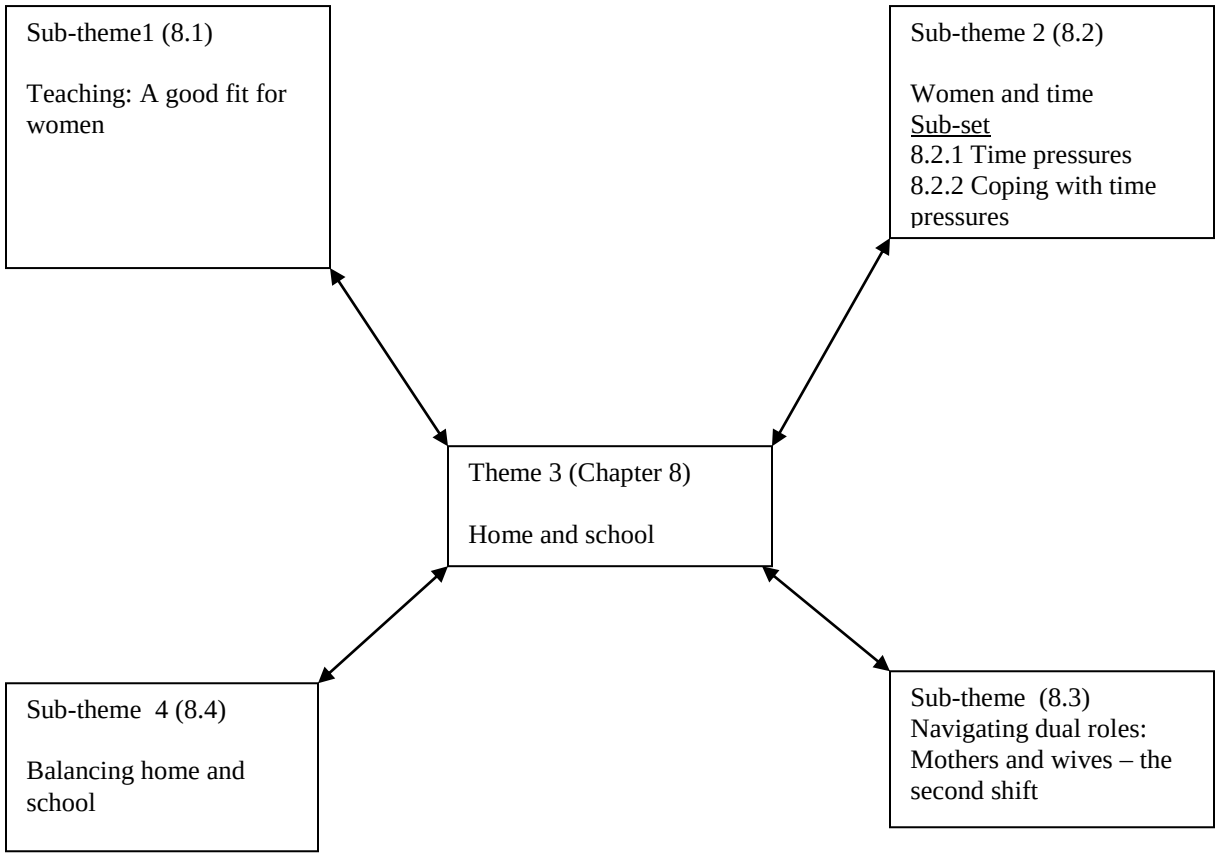
Sub-theme 2: *Women and time* relates to the significance of time in the lives of the teachers. Sub-set 1, *Time pressures* refers to the way the teachers' lives are structured by specific space/time regulations. Sub-set 2, *Coping with time pressures* suggests that the arrangement of time is important in lives that run in

between home and school, and that the teachers devise strategies to cope with time pressures.

Sub-theme 3: *Navigating dual roles: Mothers and wives – the second shift* refers to how the teachers view their primary responsibility as a mother and a wife.

Sub-theme 4: *Balancing home and school* looks at how women balance the demands of home and school.

Fig 3



5.5.4 Notation Key

Since this research is a qualitative study, I needed to balance between transparency and efficiency, and needed to find a method to reduce space yet not to lose the richness of the teachers' reflections. In what follows, I explain how I have referenced the quotations and how to use the Appendices. I have used the following notation key after each quote. This pattern is used consistently throughout. I used:

- letters to indicate the data source viz., A: Autobiographies, JE: Journal Entries, I: Interviews;
- the initial of the participant viz., K: Keri, T: Teri, P: Priscilla, F: Fiona;
- the paragraph number to locate the utterances viz., P1. Journal entries will not have a paragraph number;
- the dates/month/year when data were collected, e.g., JAN2010 for Autobiographies; 18MAR2010 for Journal Entries and 2010 for Interviews, followed by,
- the theme in which it belongs viz., Theme 1 (T1), Theme 2 (T2), Theme (T3); and then,
- the sub-theme using letters.

An e.g. from theme1, sub-theme 2, on *Role models*, demonstrates the notation system: *My mother is by far the most important role model that I have ever had (AK:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* This is how it would read according to the above notation key: A - indicates that it is an autobiography, penned by Keri – K, and that the excerpt can be located in paragraph eight – P8. The autobiographies were written in January 2010 – JAN2010. This specific excerpt is analysed in theme 1 – T1, under the sub-theme role model – RM.

Where the words of teachers are quoted, presented in italic type, no attempt has been made to correct their language usage. The quotations from the various sources that were

used in the analysis can be accessed in Annexure E of the Appendix. I arranged the quotations according to what I used under theme 1 (chapter 6), theme 2 (chapter 7) and theme 3 (chapter 8). Further to this, I have ordered the quotations sequentially. Firstly, according to the participants, viz., Keri, Teri, Priscilla and Fiona, and secondly, according to sub-themes and sub-sets. The quotations in Annexure E have the same notation key as that which appears in the analysis. The original autobiographies can be accessed in Annexure F; the journal entries in Annexure G; transcripts of interviews in Annexure H.

5.6 Ethical Considerations

This section gives an overview of ethical principles and standards. Narrative research deals with intimate material and has its own ethical dilemmas. 'It involves developing relationships and trust to enable the researcher to penetrate several layers of access' (Goodson 1983:213). Ethical and political issues in data collection were considered. These included confidentiality/anonymity of respondents; documents reviewed or reporting on sensitive or controversial issues as well as ownership of the data generated through research. Increasingly, the ethical norms of voluntary participation and no harm to participants had been formalized in the concept of 'informed consent' (Mouton 2001:522). Respondents gave informed consent to participate. They were fully informed about the research in which the autobiographies, journal entries and interviews were going to be used. The respondents were informed that their privacy would be protected . They were made aware of the procedures after recording the interviews. Two techniques that assist in the protection of respondents' identity are those of anonymity and confidentiality. 'A respondent may be considered anonymous when the researcher cannot identify a given response with a given respondent' (Mouton 2001:523). The information respondents give must be kept confidential. A researcher may be able to identify a person's responses but promises not to do so publicly. Social researchers have many ethical obligations to subjects in their study, and they remain accountable for the ethical quality of their study.

5.7 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I focus on the methodology for this study. I discuss the research design, participants, data collection techniques and ethical considerations. I provide a detailed explanation of qualitative data analyzing techniques, i.e., thematic analysis and feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis which I used to analyse the data. I give an example of a mind map which enabled me to compare data and synthesise it into a theme, a sub-theme and/or sub-sets. After the coding process and the identification of categories, themes, sub-themes and sub-sets, I describe what I find in the data in chapters 6,7, and 8. I provide an overview of the themes, sub-themes and sub-sets in figure 1 (representative of theme 1), figure 2 (theme 2) and figure 3 (theme 3). Theme I: *Socialisation into teaching,* is analysed in Chapter 6; Theme 2: *Practice settings,* is analysed in chapter 7; and Theme 3: *Home and school,* is analysed in chapter 8. I compared and triangulated the data gained from the autobiographies, reflexive journal entries and semi-structured interviews, as well as literature text, both theoretical and empirical.

CHAPTER SIX: THEME 1

PORTRAITS OF TEACHERS

The following portraits of the teachers provide a glimpse into their life histories. I turn to their stories on family background, their journey to teaching, the nature of their decision to go into teaching, and how they present their current situation. I end with an assessment on how they are constructing their biographies, and current reflections, and what insight this gives on how they are performing gender.

KERI – MARRIED WITH TWO CHILDREN (NOW DIVORCED)

Keri is a twenty eight year old white female. She has been teaching for eight years in a small non-subsidised private school in the south of Johannesburg. She was married with two sons aged four and two. She separated from her husband during the time of this study. Her divorce has being finalized. At the time of this study, she taught Life Orientation to Grades 10, 11 and 12 students.

Keri was born in South Africa to a South African (English) mother and a Portuguese father. She has lived and is still living in the South of Johannesburg. Her mother has four sons from a previous marriage. The family arrangement was that her two younger stepbrothers live with Keri, her mother and father. Her father had a turbulent relationship with his step-children. Her mother tried hard to smooth things over to maintain a semblance of normality in the family. It seems that they were on a never-ending emotional rollercoaster – ecstatic one moment and distressed the next. Keri was five years old when her father decided to return to Portugal. Her mother, who was a teacher at the time was waiting for her pension payout from the department of education. Keri, her two step-brothers and her mother joined him six months later. They had taken a container with furniture newly bought. Keri had missed her father and was happy to be finally reunited with him. However, family discontent forced them to return two years later

without her father. Not long after, her father returned to South Africa and pleaded with her mother to take him back. Her mother capitulated and he was re-united with them. It was a pattern that was often repeated. While she was growing up they moved house frequently causing Keri to feel unsettled.

Her father who was thirteen years younger than her mother was a salesman and her mother a teacher. He was not educated, but that did not stop him from making disparaging remarks about teaching to her mother. Keri spent time with her father in the afternoons while her mother was at school and accompanied him when he visited his clients. They had a lot of fun together. Her parents eventually divorced in 1994.

While growing up, the family spent Sunday afternoons reading and they made frequent trips to the public library. They were given books as gifts. Going to the movies or watching videos was rare. Keri was raised Christian.

Keri has four stepbrothers, three of whom are teachers. They all studied at the Johannesburg College of Education. Her two stepbrothers married teachers. So, the teaching discourse is prevalent in their family. The eldest, Nicholas, coaches rugby in the UK. and has earned the reputation of being one of the best coaches in the region. He is also the school counsellor. Timothy went into teaching because he was uncertain of what to do. He has only recently started enjoying his work. David is a maths and science teacher in the UK. Of them all, Keri feels, he has made teaching a valuable career in terms of money. She evaluates herself in comparison with his financial status. Keri's mother retired from teaching after 48 years in 2012.

Keri decided that she wanted to be a teacher when she was still little. She loved school and would 'play' school with her stepbrothers, friends and her toys. She enjoyed the times when she was able to spend a day at school with her mother who had been teaching for 47 years at the time of the interview in August 2010. Keri believed that her family circumstances was the impetus for her decision. There was a time in Grade 11 when she

experienced an internal conflict of whether she wanted to teach or not. She was provisionally accepted to do a degree in corporate communications at Varsity College. In Grade 12 she decided, after much reflection that she was not cut out for the corporate world and a psychometric test confirmed her suspicions. Besides, she lost the form she had filled in for Varsity College. As much as she questioned the teacher role and the low status and low pay accorded to it, she had a deep inner conviction that she was meant to teach. Her choice to teach was powerfully influenced by her mother who was a teacher. Her image of self as teacher was appropriated during her childhood and adolescence.

In her matric year a representative from the Johannesburg College of Education talked to the students at her school about a 4 year teaching bursary. The fact that she did not have to pay for her study appealed to her. Her provisional acceptance at the College gave her tremendous peace and she felt assured it was the right choice. Her English teacher was happy that she eventually opted to go into teaching. Her response was that Keri was fulfilling a divine purpose in her life.

Keri does not regret becoming a teacher. Her family and friends know that she was destined to a life in school. There are, however, fleeting moments when she wishes it was different, especially when she sees her friends managing a more lucrative lifestyle. Although Keri had a Higher Diploma in Education for Senior Primary, she taught Life Orientation to senior students i.e., Grades 10,11 and 12. She was coerced into teaching the subject because no one else was available. Soon she realized that teaching teenagers was her passion.

There was a time when Keri resisted the idea of becoming a teacher. The corporate world seemed a very attractive option, and taking on a different identity other than teacher appealed to her. A different choice creates a degree of possibility. At the same time, she claimed that teaching was her calling. Keri both resists and appropriates a gendered discourse. Her home discourse of teaching prepared her for the enactment of the teaching

role and the development of her professional identity. Underpinning her decision to enter teaching was the lack of economic capital.

Early childhood socialization is significant in the way Keri negotiates her personal and professional identities. Class and gender were important organizing principles in her life. Keri does not mention race as significant in her identity, although white privilege was an accepted norm in the late eighties and early nineties. In primary school, she was painfully aware of her working class background and how it marked her as being different. It was a source of humiliation and rejection, and a struggle over identity. Her early learning was that her class identity excluded her and kept her in her place. Walkerdine recognized that:

> They don't just sell you a dream in school, they pin you down with truth. In the classroom the truth of the position is produced, holding you fast and steady, keeping the wanting going. When you have a position to keep up, winning and losing take on an altogether different meaning. (1985:70)

This excerpt conveys the 'feelings associated with power and powerlessness – with wanting' (Hey 2003:323). Present in Keri's narratives is the want/desire to have more. For example, her feelings of self-worth when she was included in the school choir (primary school) and when she was chosen deputy head girl (high school). Her class position limited her access to education after high school, and teaching was a reality of her class and gender position. When she sees that her friends are able to afford a better lifestyle she wishes she earned more. But it is a momentary dis-identification with her teacher identity. When Keri speaks of her ambitions she says she wants more and would like to earn more, but if it did not materialize she would not be unhappy. She does not necessarily see ambition in terms of career progression. Her view when she first started teaching was to come to work, teach, do a couple of extra-murals and go home. Now she wants more for her students and is ambitious for them.

Keri's experience of being woman is a gendered knowledge learnt in the private sphere i.e., the social practices that constituted everyday life in her home. She was exposed to her mother's daily care work, and her personal and professional life, mirrors this traditional gender ideology. An ethic of care defines her teaching and motherhood. Her relationship with students is central to her identity as teacher. Her narrative is about herself in relation to others - to her students, colleagues and family. In her private life, she prioritized her husband's needs which reproduces the gender order. It is the 'internalization of a male hegemony that leads women to devalue their own worth and to assume that the career of a man is more important than their own' (Weiler 1998:89). Keri draws on the discourse of caring and the discourse of mothering to construct her professional identity.

TERI – SINGLE FEMALE

Teri is a thirty five year old single African female born on the 29 October 1975 in a township called White City Jabu, Soweto. She started teaching in 2000. She has been teaching for ten years. She taught for nine years at a secondary school in Katlehong. Her present school is an ex-House- of- Delegates secondary school in the South of Johannesburg. This was her first assignment as head of department of English. She also teaches English to Grades 10 and 11 students.

Teri has 2 sisters and a brother. She describes growing up in a loving family. She had a happy childhood. She saw her father as being a unifying factor. She spent the weekends with her mother and during the week she stayed with her grandparents. She experienced this back and forth movement as a dislocation in her routine. Her grandparents protected her when she was being bullied. She was nurtured by her grandmother who she describes as being well organised. Teri's mother was a teacher and she moved up the rank to deputy principal and then principal. She taught for 41 years. Her father did not have any schooling. She was a very curious child and her questions embarrassed her mother. Her grandmother used to admonish her (the old adage that children must be seen and not

heard – Teri was silenced) and she felt a sense of fear. Teri grew up in a Christian household.

Teri never wanted to be a teacher. She wanted to be a lawyer. It was her mother's decision that Teri should go into teaching. Teri's reluctance drove her mother to register for her. Teri weighed other options such as psychology, the social sciences and even music, but she was refused admission because the faculties were full. Her mother was aware that Teri's first love was music, but she was uncertain of the career prospects. Having struggled financially, she wanted to ensure that Teri had a stable career. Teaching, as far as she was concerned, provided that. Yet, for Teri, singing has a different dimension and she represents herself as a healer. She did attend a school of music, but admits to not liking theory, she prefers singing and performing. Today, Teri sings in a Gospel band. Teri completed her studies at Vista University with English and Psychology as her majors. She enjoyed studying, but teaching was far from her mind. She attempted a job as consultant, but it did not work out.

Besides her parents' financial position, Teri's mother was the driving force in her entering teaching. Teri experienced great dissonance with this decision, but she acquiesced albeit reluctantly since her mother's intention was good. Teri did not want to disappoint her because she paid for her courses at the University of the Witwatersrand. Securing the bursary for a teaching degree at Vista University, alleviated the financial burden. She was also afraid of defying her mother given that she was a strict disciplinarian. There was an underlying reason that Teri's mother was so persistent in securing her daughter's financial stability, and that was quite simply, that she would be taken care of in her old age.

Teri no longer wrestles with her internal conflict, i.e., her ambivalence of her teaching identity. She comes to the conclusion that she wants to teach, and that she has to pursue, rather than abandon her teaching career. But she has grave doubts about whether teaching

teenagers is what she's cut out to do. Teaching them is demanding. Her preference lies in the field of adult education. The position of head of department is challenging and she has to prove her worth. Teri is dissatisfied with her financial status because teaching does not pay. Regardless of the intensity of schoolwork, Teri was contemplating taking on a second job.

It was race, class and gender that constituted Teri's personal and professional identities through 'conflictual processes of negotiation' (Leathwood 2005:405). Her early socialisation plays a significant role in the construction of her race, class and gender identities. In her account of her career decision we see that she is constrained by her class location. She found herself doing a teaching course against her will. She tried to resist her mother's intervention, but to no avail. Besides, money was the deciding factor. It is her reflection on her mother's struggles as a single parent and the sacrifices she made that prompts Teri into accepting her teaching role which is traditionally accepted as women's work. Teaching was 'tending her mother's garden' (Dixson & Dingus 2008:833). Jones (2012:456) believes that 'performing one's own marginalised identities constructed in gender- and class- specific relations can serve as an act of agency to protect one's own mother'.

Her mother's and grandmother's gendered expectations of her were subtle. They modelled appropriate gender practices which she had to emulate. Their scolding her when she was forthright engendered a fear in her. It was the shaping of a self then, which plays out in her present circumstances. She defers to her mother because she is afraid of disappointing her. Present is the element of family and culture. She is obedient to cultural values and expectations. At the same time, she describes her mother as strong and like a man because she makes decisions (being like a man is contrary to possessing feminine qualities). Teri believes that her mother's overprotective/overbearing nature has influenced negatively her sense of her own capabilities. She tries to reinvent herself through making her own decisions.

Teri's narrative reveals that she was profoundly influenced by and involved in the anti-apartheid political movements. It is impossible to dismiss the struggle for an identity. As Fordham says:

> For me, not only is the past neither dead nor past, but it is embedded in the deepest marrow of my bones. Memories lodged so deep within cannot be evaded. Wherever I go, whatever I do, this racialized history envelops me. (2010:9)

Her grandmother used to say that she is right when an argument ensued because she worked for white people. Whites were regarded as superior in her family. Teri felt inferior as a black child and wished to be like people of other colours. Her urge was to touch a white child's hair, and when the opportunity arose in a park, she did so, without the child noticing. With this admission she reinforces her lack of self-esteem and self-worth. Teri is ambivalent about how to assert her teaching self in a multiracial classroom and experiences a tension when discipline problems are not resolved as such. She sees herself as the Other because of her blackness. She feels alienated in her school and experiences her school practices as gendered and racialized. As Osler (1997 in Leathwood 2005:392) notes 'one of the ways in which black teachers learn to survive, and even manage racism, is through a process of negotiating and re-defining their professional identities' (p.56) and by 'managing tensions between their identities as teachers and their identities as black people without denying aspects of themselves and their experience (p.57).

PRISCILLA – MARRIED WITH TWO CHILDREN

Priscilla is a thirty five year old married Indian female with two young children, a boy and a girl aged 2 and 3 respectively. She was born in Lenasia, an Indian township. She still lives in Lenasia. She started teaching in 1998. She has been teaching for eleven years. She spent a year overseas as au pair to two young children. She teaches English Home Language to the grade 12 and grade 8 classes in a large public secondary school in

the South of Johannesburg. This was her second school. She describes her first school located in an underprivileged area as a turning point in her life. She is the co-ordinator for the Grade 12 English, and she teaches English to the Grade 12s and Grade 8s

Priscilla was born in Lenasia Extension 5, Gauteng which she describes as a poor area. She was the youngest of six siblings. They grew up poor. She recollects that they all shared a bedroom. Her father was a pastor and founder of an organization called 'Help the Poor Outreach'. Her father completed standard seven. Thereafter, he completed a 4 year course at Bible school. Priscilla had a very strict Christian upbringing. Her mother was a housewife who may have completed standard 4. Her mother loved reading. One of her primary duties was to control the rather lean household budget, but she managed to provide for them. Mother did everything for her father, but given tradition it was not an uncommon practice in most homes where there was a clear division of labour.

Given the family's financial circumstances and the expectations in her home, Priscilla resigned herself to employment after high school. The tradition was that the girls would work after school and the boys go into further education. The girls had to work to support the family. Her interest lay in the medical field, but she knew that that was a pipedream.

Priscilla seized the opportunity when a teaching bursary was offered to the students in her group. She studied at the Transvaal College of Education and stayed at the residence. Her majors were English and Biology but she never got to teach Biology. She has taught English from her first year of teaching. She took time off during her teaching career and spent a year overseas as au pair to two young children.

Priscilla has absolutely no regrets about her decision to go into teaching. She loves her work and has an affinity with her students. The downside though is the low salary.

In looking at Priscilla's life we see the power of race, class and gender in defining her everyday realities. Her working class location is clearly revealed in her choice of career. According to her family history, studying was not an option for the girls. Her narrative

reveals that class and gender acted in complex ways to shape her experience. She resists this patriarchal script and re-writes her life history by studying on a bursary. This was the turning point in her life. Although teaching or any other career for that matter was never on the agenda, she immerses herself in her activist teaching identity. Priscilla grew up in a family where there was a gendered division of labour, and she was influenced by male authority in her home. However, she was able to interrogate these practices, and to oppose it and deviate from it. Priscilla asserts that she did not experience gender discrimination in her school.

Priscilla's narrative reveals a political awakening when she was in high school (1989-1993) during the time of the anti-apartheid struggle. A significant moment for her was Mandela's release from prison. She took part in the student protests against her parents' consent. She positions herself as an onlooker and wishes she could have been more active in the political struggle against apartheid. Her participation, however, gave her a sense of the power she has to effect changes at school level. Her desire to do more has been realised for she confronts racism and discrimination of any kind in her school environment. The black students in her school feel secure and protected by her. In teaching, she found a way of articulating her sense of social responsibility and activism. In her personal involvement she was able to re-define herself.

Priscilla's portrait is shorter than the others. She either did not respond to all the questions, or there was a brevity in her responses.

FIONA – DIVORCED WITH TWO TEENAGE DAUGHTERS

Fiona is a forty year old coloured woman and has been teaching for nineteen years. She is currently teaching English to grade 11 and 12 students in a large public school in the south of Johannesburg. The majority of students come from impoverished home environments: Fiona is a divorced mother of teenage children still living at home. She divorced after six years of marriage and had to survive on her teacher's salary. Adverse personal events led to disenchantment with the teaching profession. Her financial status

and the worry about paying the bills and living at subsistence level made a significant impact on her life. Her monetary problems forced her to move in with her mother:

Fiona was born in Bosmont, Johannesburg in 1970. She still lives in Bosmont. She has 4 sisters. Only 1 sister has completed matric. Her 2 sisters fell pregnant when they were 16 and 19 years old. They are now single parents. Her mother completed standard 8 and went into nursing. She studied further and trained in midwifery and psychiatric nursing. Her father also completed standard 8 and trained as a teacher for one year, but he did not pursue teaching as a career. He is a skilled cabinet maker. She had a happy childhood. Unfortunately, her father was an alcoholic, but he did not abuse them. Her parents eventually divorced. Fiona was brought up in the Muslim faith.

After matric she worked for two years as an assistant bookkeeper. Her German boss influenced her to study further. She went into teaching because there were few options for women in Apartheid South Africa in the late 80s. It was either nursing or teaching. Her parents did not influence her 'choice' of career in any way.

Her first choice would have been university, but that was out of the question because she did not have the capital. She wanted to be a psychologist. She was left no alternative and had to attend a Teachers' College which offered a bursary. After four years she graduated with a Higher Diploma in Education. It was the year when she started college that a four year course was introduced. While teaching she studied part time at the Rand Afrikaans University. She needed two more credits to complete her degree, but after her divorce she was not able to afford the tuition fees.

In the beginning, Fiona did not want to remain in teaching. She bided her time for twelve years just till her children were old enough to fend for themselves. By her own admission, she says, she just did what was expected of her. Yet, Fiona describes herself as an outstanding teacher and her students' matriculation results vouch for this.

In Fiona's life history, it is evident that race, class and gender structured her daily reality. Being working class was an aspect of her subjectivity which she had to negotiate in choosing a career. She enters teaching with contradictory feelings – she simultaneously repudiates and appropriates the teaching identity. Teaching, for Fiona, was also a gendered and scripted 'choice'. In Apartheid South Africa - a patriarchal society - women were constrained by the 'choices' available to them. Still very much a child herself, Fiona was responsible for care-giving to her siblings. In carrying out domestic and maternal duties she was socialized into a gendered identity around mothering and housework. Yet, she perpetuated the discourse of absent mother in her own family.

There was a re-evaluation of her life when she suffered a nervous breakdown in 2006 and had to be hospitalised. The demands of work and her severe financial problems led to burn-out and she resigned from teaching the same year. Before 2006, Fiona was overlooked for promotion in the English department. She was confident of her abilities and qualifications and strongly believed it was a sexist judgment. She resisted the taken-for-granted assumption of male privileging for managerial positions in her school, and confronted the inherent unfairness of it in a grievance hearing. She was then awarded the position of head of department, but her actions alienated her from the rest of the staff and her female colleagues. She could not quite understand that because she felt it was a step-up for gender justice, and that her agency in questioning the status quo set the tone for future appointments in promotional posts. Fiona describes herself as a 'dominant personality' and cannot reconcile with being subservient especially after her marriage to an 'Indian man'. She divorced later. Fiona describes her upbringing as being in a 'traditional Muslim home where there was more equality and women (her mother) were not subservient. There is a rupture with female roles and the image of service and sacrifice. Weiler (1998:71) maintains that as 'women ground themselves in their own subjective experiences and question accepted definitions of gender in a fundamental way, they challenge men to recognize their own gendered position of power in relation to women and the ways in which their own thought reflects male hegemony through male stream thought'.

Fiona attests to the ravages of Apartheid and its legacy of bigotry and injustice. She felt shackled by forced segregation and patriarchy, and the belief that she was less than, and therefore devalued, cannot be erased. There is a yearning in her self-reflection when she asserts that she sees herself as a coloured woman, in a coloured career who did not value herself enough, or have the confidence to move beyond what is the known. Evident is the internal conflict stemming from an internalized understanding that people of colour were inferior.

In writing these portraits, I hoped to gain insight into the lives of the four women teachers. Women are often silenced, and thus erased. The teachers in this study, however, have used the opportunities available to them to talk back to inequity and injustice. They challenge normalized ways of thinking about race, class and gender. hooks points out that:

> Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side, a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes life and new growth possible. It is that act of speech, of 'talking back', that is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject – the liberated voice. (1989:9)

The teachers negotiate multiple realities, their identities shift and are remade within discursive spaces. Bernal et al refer to this as:

> the space in which our language, culture, family and communities support us on our educational journey, and at the same time, it is the space that reifies patriarchy, sexism, heterosexism and racism. It is that space where we uphold and maintain systems of domination while we

> negotiate within them – to rupture them, to change them, to start writing new narratives for our lives. (2009:566)

The first theme which is 'Socialization into teaching' considers the socializing forces within women teachers' life histories. It describes the process of socialization as a continuous reconstruction of personal knowledge through the years. During the course of their upbringing the women teachers are socialized in unique ways. 'They form deeply held – largely unconscious – beliefs about the role of women and the role of teachers' (Clayton & Schoonmaker 2007:250). Socializing forces are critical factors in how they learn. The sub-themes that emerged from the data are: The influence of family socialization on women's decision to enter teaching; Role Models; Experiences of primary and high school; Socialization into a female role and Influences from early childhood and family life that have shaped teachers' personal, intellectual and political development. I use the term, socialization, to describe the first theme, keeping in mind that Butler's concept of performativity 'denotes a reading of gender, not as essence nor socialization, but as the consequence of the performative' (Hey 2006:439).

6.1 The influence of family socialization on women's decision to enter teaching: family educational background (FB-family background)

This sub-theme, 'The influence of family socialization on women's decision to enter into teaching' situates socialization experiences of teachers within families examining how culturally situated socialization practices inform and shape entry into teaching. This section represents an attempt to reflect on the ways in which family influenced the women teachers' decision to enter teaching. When analysing this sub-theme I show that social class is significant and works as an identity and a lifestyle. Through exploring female classed experiences, social class can be seen as not just material conditions but also according to Maguire (2005:4), 'embodied lived experiences and subjectivities.' What I am interested in are the ways in which early classed identities continue to be significant for some women teachers in their professional and lived identities. Ball

(2003:6) asserts that social class is an aspect of identity 'based on modes of being and becoming or escape'. He states further that 'our current sense of who we are may be deeply invested in once having been somewhat different or wanting to be someone else in the future' (p.7).

Class is sometimes used to describe one's status regarding an occupation rather than an attribute of identity. Teachers originally coming from working class backgrounds have been repositioned as middle class by virtue of their education. For working class women, becoming 'educated' is an achievement. For the women in this study, 'growing up working class still articulates with their continuing sense of self and with their work as teachers'(p.15). It is what Kuhn (1995:98 in Maguire 2005:4),) means when she writes that 'class is something beneath your clothes, under your skin, in your reflexes, in your psyche, at the very core of your being'.

It is acknowledged that mothers' encouragement is extremely important to working class women's decisions to study further. Mothers, who are traditionally involved in most aspects of child rearing in most societies, engage in emotional caring to support their child's education. Such 'care can take the form of encouragement, motivation and inspiration and can be reflected in mothers' commitment to, interest in, and involvement with their children's education' (Santoro 2010:419).

The strong influence of mothers on decisions to enter into teaching was most obvious in the narratives of Keri and Teri. Their mothers recognized the potential of education to secure their daughters' future prospects. For them it was also a continuation of family teaching legacies. Both their mothers who were single parents and teachers served as models of how to be in the profession.

Keri sees *teaching as stability - teaching always put food on the table, clothes on our backs - 'always' (IK:P2:2010:T1-ST),* pointing to a sense of an unfailing dependability. Keri believed even then that teaching provided security *so I definitely saw that as*

stability. Her use of the word *'definitely'* shows no ambiguity or questioning. There was an awareness that her mother, though a single parent to her three brothers and herself, was able to attend to their needs on a female teacher's meagre salary. Teaching was not devalued instead it provided them with a much needed sense of financial security. Although Keri was undecided about teaching as a career when she was in high school she opted for teaching because it *was a good sort of fallback.* Her experience of growing up in a family that struggled financially impacted on her decision to enter teaching. Her father who was thirteen years younger than her mother was a salesman. Keri reveals that although her father was a salesman he valued status: *status was everything (AK:P2:JAN2010:T1-T).* Since teaching was viewed as a low status occupation he tended to denigrate it. *He wasn't an educated man and so he had to prove how smart he was which meant putting down my mother and the education system.* This was inexplicable for Keri because she mentions that *he wasn't an educated man.* This would have caused her mother a degree of resentment and a diminishing of self-worth whilst they were still married. The *putting down* has overtones of patriarchal oppression and control, and Keri's mother is positioned as acquiescent – i.e., acceptable femininity.

Keri's mother was a teacher for forty seven years *(IK:P2:2010:T1-T). But over and above* the material benefits that teaching afforded was *her passion for her job, her career – you can't meet that.* Her mother's passion for teaching is unparalleled, almost palpable; she taught for love more than money – *I always saw how much she loved it…we spoke school, we lived school.* Her mother's influence was particularly significant in her eventual decision to enter the profession: *It was her whole life…she influenced me greatly to love education.* Teaching was not just a job for Keri's mother, but an intensely enriching experience, a calling, a life story that she had passed down to her only daughter. It is a story that shares similarities with Teri's mother as we shall see in the excerpt below.

Teri's mother was a teacher for forty one years *(AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-T).* The fact that *she had an educational diploma which she only acquired late in her years* indicates the

value that she attached to education. The language of care is deeply embedded in the following excerpts *(AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-T).* The metaphor of the *pillar* portrays Teri's mother as absolutely unwavering and adjectives such as *dedicated, excellent* and *motivator* reveal aspects of her professional identity. Teri's reference to her mother as a *dedicated worker* tells us that teaching was a labour process in which she was involved. *She gave all her life to serve the school* recognizes personal sacrifice, a troubling metaphor at best. It is reminiscent of Bakhtin (in Casey 1993:xvi) when he asks 'what is it that guarantees the internal connection between the elements of personality? Only the unity of responsibility. For what I have experienced and understood…I answer with my life.' The language of care focuses on nurturing the well-being of others even in the face of one's own trauma. According to James (2010:522), 'caring for others in these ways constitutes responsibilities traditionally ascribed to women, and, particularly, to mothers' such that 'caring meets women's natural need for connections with others'(p.523). However, it does not mean sacrificing self. Gilligan (1998 in James 2010:523) suggests that 'female identity development is about finding that middle ground where both self and others can be 'included'. 'The sense women make of the world is varied and individual'(Belenky et al 1986 in James 2010:523), and we also have to consider the impact of class, race and sexuality in shaping the experiences of women. Teri's mother replaces her own 'needs and desires with the needs and desires of others' (p.522).

Teri's mother understood teaching as presenting opportunities for her own upward class mobility *(IT:P4:2010:T1-T).* Her mother's involvement and investment in her education was expressed in a variety of ways including coercion to consider teaching as a profession and to qualify with a teaching degree often in the face of enormous challenges and barriers. Teri loved music and was contemplating a career in music, but her mother opposed it. Teri tried to resist this definition of herself as being *a continuation of her life being a teacher* and thus had a basis for her own identity and autonomy. Today, besides teaching, Teri is a singer in a band. Teri mentioned that her father did not have any schooling at all and was self-taught. Of her father she says: *My father did not hold any professional career; in his own right he was an intelligent, loving, funny and protective*

father, though stubborn sometimes. Her father's lack of schooling did not constrain him in his role as father. She writes: *My father was a unifying factor (AT:P6:JAN2010:T1-FB).*

Both Keri and Teri emphasized the important role that their mothers played in influencing their decisions in becoming teachers. While Keri's mother allowed her the space to make her own decision about entering teaching, Teri's mother *saw it fit for me to go there, and then she actually registered for me, and then I wanted to deregister (IT:P2:2010:T1- T).* Teri tries to assert some control over her future by wanting to *deregister.* Teri felt tremendous pressure from her mother to take up teaching. What comes to mind is the understanding that 'social relationships are always in process and are constructed by individuals within a web of power and material constraints' (Weiler 1998:38). Her mother was the authority figure and Teri equates this power and decision making with being male: *being a single parent, it's a bit influential…she makes decisions, she's a man (IT;P4:2010:T1-T).* There seems to be a kind of submission or accommodation on Teri's part when she says: *My mom was paying a lot of money before I got a bursary…I should…not…disappoint her*. Teri felt indebted to her mother for sponsoring her education because *I could see her struggle...I should…help her…so it was not necessarily about me.* In the face of conflict and contradictions there is an awakening when she eventually renegotiates her own position in relation to the teaching role in the reflection: *What is my role in life, now, I have to pursue it…in my thirties, I'm getting a realization that it has to be about me.*

Priscilla and Fiona stress that they were not influenced by their parents to enter the profession. Priscilla mentions *limited guidance (AP:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP)* from her parents. Priscilla is well aware of the educational disadvantage her mother has suffered. Although her mother *only completed standard four (AP:P5:JAN2010:T1-T)* she did not let it limit her in any way. In the fifties completing standard four was considered sufficient schooling for an Indian female. Priscilla's mother loved reading and broadened her horizons by delving into books. Besides, she was able to manage the household

expenses on a shoestring budget. However, she recalls that she had to help her mother *with her writing.* Her mother influenced her by her actions – by reading and by bringing up six children on a shoestring budget. Inadvertently, Priscilla had to put her writing skills to practice when she wrote for her mother. So her learning was not just confined to the classroom.

About her father's career, Priscilla says: *if becoming a pastor can be considered a career, then he completed bible school, a four year course…his formal education was possibly standard seven.* Her father was *a pastor and the founder of an organization called 'Help the Poor Outreach' (AP:P2:JAN2010:T1-FB).* Priscilla's father was a pastor but she does not accept that it was a divine calling for him. Some persons have felt called by divine purposes to serve in the church or other religious order. 'A calling entails allegiance to a practice, not just to one's own personal preferences' (Hansen 1995:7). This calling provides a sense of self and personal fulfilment in service to others (Hansen 1995).

Fiona's parents are divorced. Her mother is a trained nurse who completed standard eight. Her mother had a huge responsibility on her hands, having to bring up three children single- handedly. She had to navigate the slippery terrain of being mother, then, a single mother, housewife, nurse and student *(AF:P5:JAN2010:T1-T). She worked very hard (mostly night shift) (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-T). Very hard*, for me, speaks of the exacting nature of her work and the effort she put into it. Nursing demanded nurturing the well-being of others. Being mother also demanded nurturing the well-being of her children. *She saw to our physical needs (basic needs); we did not go hungry and were decently dressed.* As mother, she strove to provide for them. By *upgrading her skills whilst working,* she realized that investment in her own professional development and the financial rewards it would bring would secure her children *(AF:P5:JAN2010:T1-T).* Fiona says of her own decision to enter teaching that *it was one of two or three choices (teaching, nursing) open to us as Coloureds at that time (AF:P3: JAN2010:T1-T).* Coming from a marginalized community Fiona's mother was proactive, driven by the

social disadvantage she and her family suffered. However, the price was steep – conveyed in the phrase *but she was emotionally absent (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-T).*

Fiona's mother must have been so bone weary at the end of a night shift and of trying to juggle all her obligations during her day that she neglected to priortize their emotional needs. She was selfless in other ways, perhaps sacrificing her own emotional health in the face of an alcoholic husband and then a divorce. Fiona's father is an artisan – *a skilled cabinet maker…completed Grade10: (AF:P6:JAN2010:T1-FB).* Her father contemplated a career in teaching but changed his mind after a year's training. She recalls that her childhood *was mostly carefree and happy, marred only with memories of an alcoholic father (who never abused us though) (AF:P2C:JAN2010:T1-FB).*

Despite her parents' formal education and her mother especially, who knew the value of education, Fiona maintains that they were not integral to her decision to become a teacher. Of her siblings she says that *only one other sister out of four has completed matric…two sisters fell pregnant at ages sixteen and nineteen (AF:P9:JAN2010:T1-FB).* I think that Fiona wrestled with this alarming reality in her family circumstances – the absent father and the emotionally absent mother – and the consequences thereof. Fiona's mother modeled the empowered woman, yet her two daughters walked different paths. Fiona says, *ironically without even Matric or a tertiary education like myself they have very good jobs and have tried economically (also as single parents).* In spite of their lack of education they were able to secure good employment and to manage their responsibilities *as single parents.* It seems that Fiona's mother had to tread her way through the emotional chaos in which her daughters found themselves.

Of the four participants' mothers, Priscilla's mother who came from a working class background, was the only one who had limited formal schooling. Priscilla reflects that her parents had different expectations of their daughters from those of their sons. In the past, Indian parents had a vested interest in the education of their sons who, they expected, would support them in their old age, whereas girls would marry into another

family. Priscilla broke out of her 'normal biography' by being the first generation in her family to go to college although her choice was made within limited horizons (Maguire 2005:8). As Priscilla writes, *I think as parents you do better when you know better (AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-FB).*

Three of the four mothers modelled a non-traditional image of women who worked outside the home. The four fathers were largely absent in either encouraging the four participants or in developing their self-esteem. It is clear from Keri and Teri's accounts of their early life that they incorporated familial expectations into their choice of career. Interestingly, the mothers of Keri, Teri and Fiona were all single mothers and had professional careers. Keri's mother, as well as Teri's, fostered a home environment where education was valued. While in high school Keri felt that *money was more important than passion* and decided not to go into teaching *(AK:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* She says: *my mother was not happy but she allowed me to do what I wanted and needed*. When Keri completed her teaching degree she says, *When I graduated it was as if she graduated beside me, her pride was evident and her joy clear (AK:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* While Keri's mother waited in the wings, Teri's mother used a kind of 'tough mothering' (Santoro 2010:424) a particular type of care work. Fiona's mother had formal education, was self-reliant but *emotionally absent;* she did not influence her decision to enter into teaching. Priscilla was well aware of the educational disadvantage her mother had suffered as a young woman, and recalls that her mother did not influence her choice of career as teacher.

Clearly, their career choice was profoundly shaped by the historical circumstances and social position into which they were born.

6.2 Role models (RM-role models)

A role model is not only someone to look up to and emulate, but it is also someone to connect with as a person. This sub-theme on 'Role Models' shows how participants were influenced through relationships with their mothers, teachers and 'othermothers' (Dixson & Dingus 2008: 806), either family or community based. These 'pivotal figures' (Dingus 2008: 607) were sources of resilience, motivation and encouragement. They 'provided counsel and shared wisdom' and were examples of how to create paths around adversity (Dindoffer, Reid & Freed 2011:301). They helped the participants learn how to function in the professional world, as well as how to maintain their families

Keri's mother is her role model *(AK:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Keri's mother is the epitome of the good mother and the ideal teacher. The ideal teacher is determined to fulfil a mission and constantly strives for self-improvement. We can tease out how Keri's gendered and professional identity is shaped by her everyday experiences. Her mother gave her the space of freedom to assimilate her experiences to construct herself. She is positioned as one who actively makes meaning of her own life. Keri attributes her success in balancing her work and home life to her mother. For her the balancing of family and career is less a choice between two conflicting paths and more a process of negotiating multiple roles over a life course. In Chapter Eight, we hear Keri's voice and the ways in which she describes the choices she has made over time to incorporate multiple identities into her life.

Another woman that inspired her was the youth leader in her church – a single mother from a big family *(AK:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Her example was so compelling that Keri became a volunteer worker in the church thus shaping her values and actions. It even inspired her to transform her subject teaching. The investment of the 'othermother', i.e., the other key female figure in her life generated a reserve of emotional capital upon which she has drawn. She taught Keri new ways to behave: *she taught me…how to speak your mind without offending people.*

Besides her mother the other role model for Teri was a female preacher from her church *(AT:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Ester had eight children whom she put through university. We see how she constructed alternatives in a patriarchal system of control. Ester's was a unique response to the oppressive restrictions imposed by apartheid. *She preached in the multi-cultural churches and challenged the stereotypes in the church as a black and as a woman.* By becoming the first black female pastor in her church and owning *a fleet of taxis and even drive a car in the taxi industry* she played a crucial role in being an agent of change. She counteracted accepted patriarchal practices. Teri's use of the words *as a black and as a woman* reminds us that women of colour experience oppression of both gender and race and, more often than not, of class as well. Ester was the activist who took action against oppression and inequity. She voiced her resistance through her persistence and perseverance in remaining true to her own beliefs and values as a woman. She found self-acceptance and confidence after her rape ordeal and was able to project her strength from the pulpit. We realize that racial and gendered identities continue to shape human practices and interactions. Words like *activist, great warrior, challenged the stereotypes, sailed through obstacles, as a black and as a woman* and *conscientised people* speaks of a fearless resistance, a 'resistance born out of survival, a continual displacement of others' attempts to name her realities' (Munro 1998:125). 'In continually becoming, in naming and renaming, in moving back and forth into the margins, she actively subverts dominant relationships' (p.125). Ester awoke in Teri a deep and abiding sociopolitical awareness.

Priscilla's role model is her sister *(AP:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Her sister was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer twelve years ago. She had two young children so she fought it and survived. Two years later she was divorced. She has been a single mother ever since. Priscilla's narrative affirms her sister's worth as a mother and a woman. Despite the debilitating experience of a life threatening illness and the anxiety and insecurity after her divorce, she took the opportunity to empower others and acted with resourcefulness. *She is a counselor and* does fund raising. She has shown remarkable resilience in the face of

adversity. Under negative circumstances, emerge new strengths: *She is a role model because of her strength, generosity and selfless nature* Her *limited education* was not of her choosing.

While teaching might have been seen as a step-up for the working class student, this is no longer the case. Fiona says: *My old school teachers are more or less my role models in the community (AF:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* When Fiona was still a student, teaching was respectable. Fiona believed that *their role as teachers seemed to command a certain respect.* She recalls: *I admired that and thought it would be the same for me.* As Maguire 2005:6) points out, 'teaching has been pilloried for so long that it has lost its status'. Teaching no longer has the same respectability. In addition to dealing with the imposed frameworks of others, Fiona struggles with her own internalized understanding of teaching today. Teachers are role models and they have a powerful influence on students. Fiona thought that she would also *command a certain respect,* as did her old teachers. Sadly, however, she realizes that respect for teachers has diminished – *to some degree there is still some respect for teachers*. Teachers feel downtrodden, not *respecting ourselves anymore as a result of our downgraded status (economically) in the community.* Fiona faced the stark reality that she would not receive the same recognition afforded to her *old school teachers* or even to those in high status careers.

Summary

Implicit in the accounts of Keri, Teri and Priscilla of their role models are the telling of stories of extraordinary women who displayed quiet strength in the face of difficulty. A common thread is that they were single mothers who had strong religious beliefs, a sense of vocation and of community. It highlights the lives of these women as agents of transformation.

Keri inherited her love for teaching from her mother: *Her passion in the classroom made me want to be passionate in my classroom.* Another role model, the youth leader in her

church – a single mother from a big family inspired her to transform her subject teaching and affect social change in the community. Teri's mother *excelled in her calling to be a teacher and was the sole motivator for the learners*. She was a role model not only to Teri but to her colleagues. Another role model was one of the first black woman pastors and owner of a fleet of taxis who modelled for Teri inner strength in the face of obstacles. Priscilla's sister was her role model *because of her strength, generosity and selfless nature.* Fiona saw her teachers as her role models mainly because they *seemed to command a certain respect* and enjoyed some status at that time. Role models act as guides. In the face of extreme vulnerability, Keri's, Teri's and Priscilla's role models developed a variety of ways of coping and maintaining self-esteem by way of preserving their inner selves. They were committed to their work and gained pleasure from it.

6.3 Teachers from primary and high school

Many stories have been told that the reason why many teachers become teachers is out of a sense of mission, for love more than money. It should be no surprise that, in the participants' stories, significant others were mentioned. Teaching is first and foremost about relationships. It is these relationships that are at the heart of teaching and it is through them that teachers find out who they are (Hansen 1995; Nieto 2005:59). As teachers we are entwined in the moment-to-moment lives of children and adolescents. Sometimes we have memorable experiences of school that affirm our own commitment to teaching. The socializing force of schools is considered as a critical factor in how teachers learn to teach in the sub-theme 'Experiences of primary and high school'. The first experience of teacher socialization is the 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie 1975) that teachers experience as their own schooling as students. During this time, they 'form deeply held – largely unconscious – beliefs about the role of teachers (Clayton & Schoonmaker 2007:249). Learning to teach is a 'process of a continuous reconstruction of experience' (Schoonmaker 2002:x in Clayton & Schoonmaker 2007:249).). The analysis shows that based on their own experiences of schooling, the teachers are able to reshape frameworks for understanding their practice.

Keri remembers distinctly her primary school teachers *(AK:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* It was her teachers who fuelled her interest in reading and music and a deep passionate love of learning. They showed her how exciting classes could be. Children observe their teachers, who they are and how they operate. Her teachers created a safe and inviting space where she became more confident and helped her to explore her innate talents. She says her teacher *made me proud of my gift*. At the same time she realizes she was the outsider in: *I was part of the school concert and would sing solos even though those kinds of things were normally left for the elite children*. In using the word *elite*, Keri assigns a particular status marker to them. Her participation in the school concert allowed her admission to an 'insider' club, an affiliation denied her because *those kinds of things were normally left for the elite children*. Her music teacher exposed her to a different type of learning. The experience of listening to the *Boy's Choir* was magical – *I was awestruck and sorry that I was a girl*. Even at a tender age Keri was painfully conscious of her gender and social class and the ways it limited or excluded her.

Keri was aware that she was relegated to being an 'other' and clearly did not find this desirable as evidenced in: *unhappy, I didn't quite fit in, my parents weren't wealthy, I would have to catch the municipal bus.* She acutely felt the gaze of others, locating her as 'different' from them: *I always felt that I was being scrutinized and that I was never good enough.* Her worth was determined by her social class and she felt marginalized by being subjected to 'discriminatory modes of perception, reception and treatment' (Ong 1996:739). It is also important to emphasize that those who have been marginalized need to be perceived as active subjects who challenge oppressive representations and processes in which they are located (Araujo 1999). Regardless of her perceived status at that particular school, Keri became a successful teacher.

Many of the images of teachers are formed during childhood and adolescence. Early childhood experiences are important in the formation of self as teacher. The lessons we learn from them remain with us, and often affect our actions without our conscious

awareness until we subject them to critical reflection (Alsup 2006). Keri's self-disclosure reveals the challenges that teachers and students confront: *One teacher disliked me immensely…I hated her on top of that she was my register teacher…our relationship had a lot to do with my achievement level in her learning area (AKP4:JAN2010:T).* The words *disliked, immensely, hated, on top of that,* indicates the unsettling effect she experiences. Keri foregrounds her positioning as a struggling maths student in *I couldn't do maths at school,* and the effect her teacher's non-responsiveness has had on her. When there is persistent engagement and effort, a student's *I couldn't do Maths* or *'I can't do Maths'* can be replaced by *'Look what I have accomplished'* as Keri points out in the following statement: *I wish that she had encouraged me more; perhaps my mathematical experience in high school would have been better.* Present in this excerpt is a sense of a loss of self in the phrase *I wish that she had encouraged me more.* It is quite natural that a teacher will tend to incline favourably towards students who achieve in his/her subject. Yet, teaching is centred around helping students grow and flourish.

A lesson embodied in the maths teacher's differential treatment of Keri is to learn to teach as if students might undergo change even if the teacher may never actually see or even hear about it (Hansen 1995). This becomes all the more difficult if a teacher dislikes some of them. The fact that Keri's mother taught her different ways of solving maths problems which her teacher *was not sure of* was a threat to her teacher's professional identity. She was the expert but felt inadequate because *she felt that maybe my mom was trying to show her up (AKP3:JAN2010:T).*

During her primary schooling, Keri developed a particular awareness of how discrimination works, however, Keri's experience at high school was different: *High school was really where I came into myself. (AKP4:JAN2010:T).* Keri emphasizes how teacher expectations can influence a student's level of achievement and his/her life chances in subtle ways. She was highly motivated and grew from the positive ethos she experienced in high school. Keri was *well-liked* by her teachers and she describes this period *as a happy one*. That her potential as leader was recognized when she was

appointed deputy head prefect at her school was a great boost to her self-confidence: *My mother was so proud and I felt proud of myself.* In Grade 12 she heard of the four year bursary offered to students who went into teaching. The fact that she would not need to pay for her studies appealed to her.

Despite Keri's initial uncertainty in high school about her career - *it was here that I decided that money was more important than passion* - when she was accepted at the teachers' college she knew that she had found her niche - *the peace I felt after this was great and I knew I had made the right choice (AKP4:JAN2010:T).* It was the kind of peace felt only after having successfully met a challenge to self. When some teachers speak about teaching they do so in terms that has strong spiritual overtones. When Keri made her choice of teaching known, she says: *My English teacher was ecstatic, she said…I was following God's purpose in my life…I've never forgotten those words…she inspired me, I do the same…when I talk to my learners.* Her English teacher taught her the power of encouragement and support which has had a great personal impact on the way she engages with her own students.

Teri recalls: *I attended primary school where my mother was working (AT:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* This early school experience was central in shaping Teri's image of herself as an intellectual. I wondered whether her experience would have been different had she not been a student and her mother a teacher in the primary school she attended. Despite Teri's understanding of herself as smart and curious, there was self-doubt as to whether she could measure up to the standards at the school. She describes this competitive, inner drive to succeed: *What I experienced was excellence all the time, which put pressure on me cause I found myself to always want to compete*. I think that the pressure she experienced was also due to her desire to please her mother and in her early struggle to claim her voice *because I'm an educator's daughter.*

'Women who assert a voice subvert gender norms and are seen as unnatural and problematic' (Munro 1998:93). Teri perceives that if she spoke up she could have

embarrassed her mother who was held in high esteem in the school community. In the absence of a father, Teri's mother was the dominant authority figure in her life and she recalls: *I always wanted to help my mother and I was somehow scared of her and I never wanted to disappoint her…that's the reason I went into teaching (AT:P4:JAN2010T1-:T).* By remaining silent, she negotiates the tension between her own self-image and the gender and cultural expectations of her mother and others at the school. Passing a science test in Grade Six was significant for her. It seems that her being recognized for her intellectual abilities was central to Teri's emerging identity.

Of negative experiences in primary and high schools, Teri writes: *Nothing in particular…influenced me to be a teacher…I…appreciated teachers who connected with us while they delivered the content like my English teacher (AT:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* Teri valued a connection with her teachers when they taught, especially her English teacher. The repetition of *always* emphasizes how important this was for her. She learnt that engaging students in their own learning transforms them and in her own practice she tries to make all her students feel included and supported: *I want the learner at the back of the class to realize his ability, I want to reach out to that learner (JET:18FEB2010:T1-T).* Her own classroom enactments trigger memories of those who had taught her. Hansen (1995:60) believes that teachers need to harbour such images of the possible, to have the conviction that they can in time learn how to reach students. Similarly, Amses, a teacher, reflects:

> I teach because teaching is connection, and connection is definitely a two-way street. Learning unleashes incredible force, and not only am I energized by that, but I want to know *why* it happens and *how* e can consistently create the conditions to make it happen again and again. Teaching challenges me on every level and forces me to concentrate my abilities and energies to see what kinds of incredible outcomes are possible. (2005:39)

In remembering her Maths teacher, Priscilla frames her identity as a Muslim female teacher *(APP4:JAN2010:T).* It is the Muslim female who covers her face with a veil and wears a cloak (the Purda) in reverence to her religious convictions. Being in *Purda* is symbolic of a deep spiritual obedience. By its visibility, the *Purda,* marks her out as 'different' and exposes her to assumptions surrounding stereotypes about Muslim women in traditional dress. The striking contradiction for Priscilla was that her teacher dared to come down to their level. From her perspective, being clothed in 'Purda' signified a tendency to act in a particular way; it was an embodiment of strong religious and cultural values. In her telling, it was almost as if her teacher was breaching the boundaries constructed by the 'Purda' as evidenced in: *She came down to our level - used slang that we could relate to…made herself so approachable (even though she was completely in Purda).* The words *used slang, so approachable* and *even though* emphasize that her teacher worked outside traditional convention and was thus able to address the needs of her students. It may seem that Muslim women in *Purda* are distant and aloof, but Priscilla's narrative indicates otherwise: *What I remember the most, were the many life lessons she taught us…and it does not matter what we choose to do with our lives as long as we choose to make a difference.*

Teaching is connected to the reality we live and, more often than not, the children and adolescents we teach may not remember us by only the content of our subject matter, but like Priscilla, who writes: *What I remember the most were the many life lessons she taught us.* Teaching her students life lessons was a natural way of expressing her sense of social responsibility and a way to assert the possibility of change in the lives of others.

Priscilla recalls a negative school experience: *I always felt very protective of my neighbourhood friends and any teacher who belittled or degraded them, felt my wrath (APP4:JAN2010:T).* Teaching is about power and authority and depending on how we use it our paths can be strewn with casualties. Watching young people grow and find their depth is incredibly satisfying. Teaching is about morality and ethics and we are entrusted with protecting our students. It is why Priscilla was outraged when her friend was

humiliated and demoralized: *I remember my Computer Science educator saying that my friend was only good for one thing and that was walking the streets.* Nieto (2005:10) feels that 'some teachers should never have entered the profession, and some who remain in the classroom, for all intents and purposes, 'left it' years before'. Sometimes, teachers damage students irreparably knowing our students, we are steered away from destructive, harmful attitudes and practices. Amses Bob puts it succinctly:

> The most compelling sense of closure to our brief time together doesn't show up on any tests or score sheets or essay booklets. There's just something in the eyes of each and every one of the kids that tells me that I made a difference. Some kids come right out and say thank you, and that melts me every time. But whether or not a single word is exchanged in parting, that look in their eyes reflects the power and purpose they've created within themselves. I glimpse a little piece of the future as they walk out the door. Deep within my being, I know that my eyes are giving me away too, because I'll emerge far better for the experience. (2005:39)

From the time she was young, Priscilla felt strongly about issues of social justice. Even now, she has a passion for justice and fairness evident in this utterance: *I realize the damage we as educators can do…I am always conscious of what I say...if as a human being I err, apologizing to learners is as natural as air to me (AP:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* She knows the reality of her students' lives all too well and it is why as we shall see in section 7.7 that she fiercely defends them against any form of blatant injustice. Her commitment in doing right by her students is so strong that if she herself has transgressed she will apologize - the inward gaze that takes her into the core of her own practice.

During her primary school years, Fiona was the model student and received validation for her *excellent work: I felt proud when my school teacher in grade 4 would show my books to everyone (AF:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* This recognition by her teacher gave her a sense of

confidence and self-worth: *He kept my book as a showpiece for many years after that*. Unfortunately, the fulfilment she experienced at primary school lasted only a short while.

Teaching is far from easy. But the fact remains that a caring teacher can excite children to learn more. Fiona was a disengaged student and felt that she was short-changed by her teachers. The signs of apathy can be detected in this excerpt: *I found schoolwork and teachers unstimulating, they hardly offered any motivation or guidance (AF:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* Her disappointment in the system is apparent: *When I left school I was clueless as to what I was good at or which direction I should pursue.* But she follows this up with – *I guess they knew that it was only teaching or nursing or IT as our options so they didn't bother.* Her teachers were aware that women and people of colour were excluded from many careers but she did not have the benefit of any career advice, mentoring or support. The conflict that Fiona experienced was that her teachers failed to nurture her curiosity or create meaningful opportunities for learning: *Academically I was an excellent student…I enjoy learning (AF:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* Fiona's rite of passage through high school was hardly memorable. Knowing her family background and her vulnerabilities, I wonder if I could say that her teachers at that time were completing 'another disjointed chapter in her unstable life' (Nieto 2005:48).

In sum, as Hansen contends, and to which the participants in this study can attest:

> Teachers work in public environments, under the scrutiny of their students their peers, their administrators, parents, and other concerned adults. Though much of their work may be conducted within the confines of the classroom, what goes on in there is rarely left at the door. It becomes part of the lives of individual students, part of the life of the school, and often a central part of the life of the teacher. Teachers can play a significant role in what young people learn, in how they learn to learn, in how they come to view learning itself. They can influence young people's personal dispositions toward others, and toward their own futures. Their influence,

> for good or for ill, can extend well beyond the duration of schooling; anyone who remembers teachers they have had can readily attest to this. (1995:9)

I recognize that we are products of our environments and in the following sub-theme, I examine the ways in which the teachers negotiated the interplay of identities as workers, mothers and wives. I want to understand the lives of the participants who are currently navigating some of these issues. Motherhood is a status position accompanied by a litany of expected behaviours that exemplify the role of mother (Landeros 2011:253). Despite the entry of women into the labour force, domestic and childrearing responsibilities remain overwhelmingly female. Mothers are judged, both by themselves and others, by countless contradictory forces in terms of their parenting (p.253).

I draw upon the descriptions of the teachers' mothers to illustrate the flow between private obligations and work or non-work. Openly sharing their experiences, they give us a glimpse into their mothers' lives as workers, mothers and wives. The ability to reflect on these identities may have influenced their own ways of being or
becoming, in the world. While each of the teachers' experience was different, there were some common threads that weaved through and among them, collectively.

6.4 Socialisation into a female role (SFR-socialisation into a female role)

This section focuses our attention on how the participants' mothers managed the different expectations from them as a worker, wife and mother. Keri describes how her mother negotiated these different roles:

How her mother who was single managed the expectations of hereIf as mother, Keri writes: *My mother always put us first; her family was the most important (AK:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* From Keri's account there emerges a strong investment in maternal caring: *it was all about us.* The ideology of intensive mothering requires that

mothers maintain an open-ended emotional availability to children, be on-call permanently, and, moreover, do this in spite of or regardless of the specificity of the contexts in which they are caring (O'Brien 2008:139). Although her mother was compelled to care, she was agentic in how she cared. Keri remembers that: *The first half an hour after she arrived home was hers…no TV or loud music…she needed the short time to wind down.* The reality was that in order to provide care for her children she had to replenish her own resources. *This was just how it was, we didn't dare bug her.* This clearly involves sensitivity to her needs and negotiation in relation to the sharing of time and tasks. Her mother's positioning and availability for performing care work is illustrated by: *she was ready to help us with our homework or anything else.* Keri grew up in a household where *my older brother would see to my lunch* shows a deviation from domestic hierarchy and gender expectations borne out of circumstances that pervaded their lives. As O'Brien (2008:139) points out, caring about, and for, others is far from effortless and natural, and requires significant work on the part of those who care, generally women.

Teaching and motherhood was successfully blended: *handled her time well... always had time for us, her hobbies and her work.* She separated the personal from the professional: *I very seldom saw her working (AK:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* Keri's mother had a strong work ethic and still shows a deep commitment to her work. Keri makes no mention of her mother's role as wife.

Keri's reflection provides an indication of growing up in families characterized by violence *(AK:P2:JAN2010:T1-SFR): My father had a volatile relationship with his step-children.* She depicts her mother as trying to maintain the peace, the suggestion of a specifically female trait: *it always seemed as if my mother was trying to keep everyone happy*. She reveals moments of disconnection where the safe space of home was rendered unsafe: *In my family when we were happy we were really happy and when things were bad they were really bad.*

Teri describes the tensions her mother experienced in the different roles she played *(AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* When describing her mother as wife, she depicts her as not speaking up by using the metaphor of voice: *she stood still*. 'It is mothers more than fathers who are most likely to still their own voices so they may hear and draw out the voices of their children' (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule 1986:167).

Teri's father was abusive to her mother who remained resigned, silent and compliant in the face of the injustices she suffered as a wife *(AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* Her emotional energies and resources were eroded: *the relationship with my father drained her.* Despite his treatment of her, she remained in her marriage because of culturally ingrained definitions of womanhood. *…but being a faithful wife she stood still* indicates that she subsumed her own thoughts and feelings in order to maintain societal expectations. In everyday and professional life women often feel unheard even when they feel they have something important to say. 'Conventional feminine goodness means being voiceless as well as selfless' (p.167). 'Voice has to do with sense of mind, self-worth, and feelings of isolation from or connection to others' (p.18). Later we see a changing concept of the self when Teri's mother decides to separate from her husband to create conditions in which she could raise her children. In doing so, she was able to displace patriarchal norms which regulated her life allowing her to 'envision new alternatives' from the margins (hooks 1990:145 in Munro 1998:74). Her role of wife was a site of struggle in which she negotiated conflicted feelings of both accommodation and resistance because *they still related and she was still committed to the love for my father…When my father died she took it upon herself to bury him.* The recurring use of *still* emphasizes that even though they were separated there was an emotional attachment.

Butler (1990 in Munro 1998:123) has suggested that the 'performance of femininity', in effect, 'functions as a mocking enactment of gender, and thus exposes and subverts the notion of true gender identity'. 'When performance of femininity is equated with compliance to gender norms, the complex ways in which power and resistance circulate remain obscured' (Munro 1998:123). Teri recalls that her mother was a strict, supportive

mother (AT:P7*:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* In the absence of a supportive partner, this image of Teri's mother's caring without economic and emotional capital 'highlights the fragility of a mother's energy to care, but also the willingness of mothers to dig deep into their own emotional resources' (O'Brien 2008:145): *Her concern was…her children being educated and successful…she had financial constraints.* Struggles to survive do not leave sufficient space for fostering one's own emotional well-being, which is vital to doing care. Yet *she just focused on her goal … she conquered self-pity.* The word *conquered* speaks of overcoming insurmountable difficulties. She cared about her children's education believing it to be a key to success in the future. With Teri's father unavailable or unpredictable, the role of breadwinner in the household was reversed. The financial pressures were so great that her mother faced the *humiliation* of owing money to people. Still, Teri's mother protected and nurtured them: *she gave me the best warmth that she could*. There was a sense of obligation deeply embedded in her love for her children – she had a demanding routine of rising early to cope with the demands of caring work and paid work. Teri says *I respect her for that* thereby conveying her sincere gratitude and acknowledgement of the sacrifices made by her mother. Belenky et al (1986:173) point out that women become 'strong and independent because their survival and the survival of their children depend on it'.

Teri admires her mother's inner strength and resilience: *one quality that I embrace about my mother – she is strong and does not give up (AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* Despite the hardships she endured, *she struggled and focused on her goal* of obtaining a teaching diploma albeit late in her years. Although she experienced considerable demands in her personal life she was able to negotiate the tensions between home and school: *She was a dedicated worker even when her personal life was challenging.* Teri depicts her mother as extraordinarily determined as perceived in the repetition of *she just focused on her goal*.

Given her race and class background, Teri's mother wrestled not only with her own personal history, but also with the opposing pressures of her cultural and social worlds. After their divorce both Keri's and Teri's mothers had to contend with living alone with

their children and a renewed emphasis on their role in the family. As single mothers who had to raise children under difficult and solitary conditions, their commitment to teaching did not waver. Accounts of their lives reveal an interweaving of professional and domestic activities. There are striking similarities which bear testimony to the good mother. Keri writes: *my mother worked hard to put food on the table…tried her best…*and Teri who writes: *food was always on the table…she gave me the best warmth that she could (AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* Unsurprisingly, working-class values of determination and stoicism and the need to be self-reliant are displayed in their mothers' lives. Teri was given strong messages that education is a crucial key to female emancipation.

Priscilla was the only participant who grew up in a two parent family. She remembers how her mother, who was not in paid employment and did not have a professional career, managed the different expectations of wife and mother. She depicts the reality of her working class upbringing.

The admiration that Priscilla has for her mother is evident in words such as *exceptional, organized, miracles and amazing abuse (AP:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).* She regards it as a miracle that her mother provided for six children on her husband's meagre salary - *so that we had a car, food, clothes and furniture in our home.* Priscilla describes her parents' household as operating according to a conventional division of labour, with her mother being associated with traditional women's activities of nurturing and maintenance and her father with intellectual and economic concerns. But her mother also took control of the family budget: *She organized our limited finance.* Some mothers may feel unable to disturb the flow of tradition in working class homes and the norms held by husbands may still take precedence in a girl's socialization (Mann 1998:215). However, Priscilla experiences some ambivalence about such cultural norms when she explains the division of labour in her own household as discussed in a later section. Although Priscilla writes: *As a mother, she was amazing,* she reveals that for her mother, *on many occasions, motherhood, under her circumstance, became all too much for her.* The sense that

emerges is that although there was a compulsion to care the demands wore her down and her recourse to disciplining her six children was a *beating: Today, we jest; those beatings would be considered abuse.* Priscilla is particularly sensitive to the very real tensions her mother experienced in negotiating her identity as mother under constraining circumstances and as denying other aspects of her selfhood.

Fiona, the oldest and most experienced teacher participant in the group was raised in a single parent family from a working class background. Her father was an alcoholic and her parents separated. Fiona sees herself with some trepidation as an extension of her mother. Fiona describes how her mother managed her different roles. Her mother had a huge responsibility having to bring up three children single handedly. She had to navigate the slippery terrain of being mother, then, a single mother, housewife, nurse and student. *She worked very hard (mostly night shift). Very hard* emphasizes the exacting nature of her work and the effort she put into it. Nursing demanded nurturing the well-being of others. Being mother demanded nurturing the well-being of her children: *She saw to our physical needs (basic needs); we did not go hungry and were decently dressed.* As mother, she strove to provide for them. However, the price was steep – conveyed in the phrase *but she was emotionally absent*. Fiona's mother had to confront her own reality of an alcoholic husband and then a divorce. Fiona wrestled with this alarming reality in her family circumstances – the absent father and her mother's unavailability and indifference - *At any given time, she hardly knew in which standard at school I was in.* About how her mother managed the expectations of motherhood Fiona writes: *My mother managed like I do (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-SFR).*

Her mother struggled to balance work and home. As we shall see in section 7.2, the data shows that with the ever-increasing demands for more intense involvement in paid work, the issue of time and energy and caring for her children was problematic for Fiona as it was for her mother. In the absence of a supportive partner and in a situation of depleting emotional resources she had grave difficulties in managing work and home.

What emerges from the narratives is that the teachers' mothers were not 'simply defined by ideological constructs of what they should be, but negotiate expectations, both external and internalized in their own consciousness, in the context of material need and desire through competing discourses' (Weiler 1999:46). In this sense the teachers engage in the construction of their own gendered subjectivities. Managing the expectations of being wife, mother and worker 'produced a troubling reflexivity in which difficult feelings emerged and collided' (Thomson and Kehily 2010:244). Three of the teachers described their fathers as fleeing from family life and their children. The phenomenon of fathers abandoning responsibility for the raising of children led to the images of mothers as strong and independent. The tension between societal norms and the creation of their own stories reveals their struggles not only within themselves but with their social world. It reveals the agency they had in shaping their lives despite the roles prescribed for women. 'The alternatives provided spaces that not only rewrote public culture but allowed for women to be embodied through rewriting the cultural norms of femininity' (Munro 1998:121).

6.5 Personal, intellectual and political development (PIPD-personal, intellectual and political development)

In the following sub-theme I consider the influences from early childhood and early family life that have shaped the teachers' personal, intellectual and political development. By doing so, I hope to deepen my understanding of the kinds of environments that nurtured and constrained the personal, intellectual and political development of the teachers.

Keri attributes her personal development to a profoundly religious life *(AK:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* She describes her affiliation to the church in emotive tones. Words such as *belonged, my family, proud, happy and fulfilling* capture a deep connection to the members of her church. She uses the language of kinship – *my family* – and the ideals of inclusivity and reciprocity to describe her relationship with the religious

community. She foregrounds the significance of her early religious socialization: *We were always involved in the church and I always felt as if I belonged there.* The church metaphorically signifies for her a space for self-acceptance and a sense of wholeness and reaffirmation. *They taught me to be proud of who I am, to demonstrate and perfect my talents and to be myself in every possible way.* The positive impact the church has had on her concept of self is significant in the light of the diminished self-esteem she experienced as a child in primary school. She felt then that her worth and lack of elitism was determined by her social class. In reflecting on her religious identity, Keri concludes: *I believe that for any child it's important to have some kind of religious life, it grounds you and develops a set of morals and values.* Keri is of the conviction that all children from different religious, cultural and ethnic traditions should have some religious guidance which encourages one to look inside oneself, in search of one's own meaning, identity and integrity and that influences the way one lives. Keri is able to find authenticity in the construction of her religious identity and has a strong identification with the church.

As for her intellectual development, Keri credits her family for having inherited a love for literature *(AK:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Her mother, a teacher, fostered a home environment where education was valued and opportunities created to develop her children's literacy. Reading provided Keri with intellectual stimulation. That for most of her early life she was surrounded by books either as gifts or borrowed from the library, is evident of her parents' resourcefulness in the context of material disadvantage. This investment of time and money reveals how her mother's commitment to her children's welfare is shaped by a need to equip them with cultural capital. When Keri talks about books, it is clear that her intellectual commitments were serious and pleasurable. Foucault (1998) claims that reading sustains self-practices; it is a way of putting together critical thoughts. Thus, reading becomes an important technology of the female social self. Family members often seem to orient themselves to the world in very similar ways, so much so that for Keri and her four brothers…*regular trips to the library were the norm.* Norms are expressed through routine and repetition. Thus, library trips became a ritual.

Rituals function as 'performatives' by expecting and, thus, invoking particular performances. Butler (1993:12) maintains that performativity is to be understood as arising out of 'the reiteration of a norm or set of norms…which are embedded in authority' (1993:226) so that certain values are deposited within the social discourse as natural and objective. Keri's early socialization continues to shape her own family's life: *I have continued to instill the value of reading in my children.*

In contrast to her personal development, there is a sense of dissociation about her political development *(AK:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Although Keri came from a working class background, being white, positioned her differently. Members of dominant groups occupy 'privileged' positions within political and material practices. Present in Keri's recollection of her childhood experiences and the influence of her parents on her political formation is an ideological tension. She lived within a constraining reality and was insulated from the harsh realities of South Africa. *They never really spoke to me about the political situation in South Africa* reflecting their position within a racial social structure and a seeming secrecy around racist discourse. There seems to be a moral balancing act between familial self-interest and the dominant political discourse at that time. Elsewhere *(AKP2:JAN2010:P),* Keri mentions her liberal, antiracist upbringing: *I hope to pass this on to my two boys but I'm sure it will be easier and a less conscious decision for them.* She is confronted with ambivalences when she alludes to her own inaction while growing up: *and we never really asked (AK:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD). All I ever heard was what was on the news* was the extent of her political understanding. In constructing and presenting a sense of self, she had her political development reinforced through the expectations and assumptions of significant others. A pervasive sense of boundaries and their significance is presented in *we never really spoke; we never really asked;* and *all I ever heard.*

Butler (1993:xii) asserts that individual identity comes about not as a result of the choice of the subject, but rather as the product of discursive practice. Individuals are constituted subjects; they have agency to shape selves as active participants in discourse. Keri did not

assert her agency because of the cost of upsetting the status quo in her family. The detachment prevents the guilt that is associated with the privileged position of being white.

Teri's early socialization gave her a sense of personal identity: *Growing up in an African family with Sepedi cultural background,* entails participation in traditions, rituals and myths *(AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* She takes up a particular subject position which provided a template for cultural expectations: *I always felt that I am obligated to finish school and help my family hence I embrace the principle of Ubuntu.* Teri felt duty-bound to help her family when she completed her schooling. 'Culture and identity are considered to be continuously negotiated and reconstructed as a result of varying places, social processes, socio-historical periods and local contexts' (Gaganakis 2006:362). For example, *'African* can be a usable identity, but Africans also belong to diverse communities with different local customs' (Brown 2001 in Gaganakis 2006:362). 'This situationally specific and context-boundedness of culture and identity stands in contrast to earlier traditionalist views which hold that as children develop, they internalize the characteristics and cultural traditions of their particular family in an inevitable and unproblematic way' (Gaganakis 2006:362). The concept of *Ubuntu* constitutes a value system which is 'inclusive, accommodating and life-giving and stands at the polar end of apartheid culture' (Mzamane 2009:239). Teri reflects: *I have grown personally; I am a loving, caring young woman.* She constructs herself according to a gendered stereotype as *loving and caring,* a nurturing woman who complies with her natural duty. However, this essentialising discourse does not obscure her agency*: who believes that I will always strive to be the best person that I can be (AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* 'In continually becoming, she recognizes and knows herself, to some extent, through her culture's gender codes but she can also critique this coding and read gender as a construction' (Gilmore 1994:20).

Teri writes about her intellectual development *(AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Teri grew up in a single parent household. Her mother, who was a teacher, played a key role in

transmitting a pursuit of academic excellence and Teri had great aspirations to progress further. As Rose (1998) points out the authentic self – the self that has to be realized, is a self-seeking to maximize its own powers. Teri emphasizes her will and determination and yet at the same time and at a very young age Teri questioned the realities she experienced. Teri recalls her childhood: *I was a very driven child though sometimes I would ask why are we not successful in my family as other families.* The sharp distinction made between her family and other families as the 'Other' 'illuminates how class imagery shapes the way she makes sense of the choices her family makes within constraints' (Hebson 2009:34). Teri has constructed an identity in which she defines herself directly against the other more successful families and has internalized the view that their lives are better. The desire to be successful and recognized as such evokes in her a sense of unease and shame. The belief that children who are parented well will have a better chance of upward social mobility does not recognize its classed underpinnings (Duncan 2005).

Teri writes of her political development *(AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Like most people who were disenfranchised by the apartheid regime, Teri's racial consciousness grew directly out of her experiential background: *We grew up being exposed to politics and the way we lived in townships…* She grew up in a significantly political time during the height of Apartheid oppression of blacks. In Teri's narrative, there are early indications of a resistance to, and a strong dis-identification with, a discriminatory system. It is common knowledge that the black youth in South Africa who grew up in the townships were highly politicized and militant. 'Militant' was an extraordinarily assertive phrase in black discourse (Casey 1993:142). The *township,* 'a place-based identity, exemplifies racialised mobilization, being 'of' a place is in part about the authority such status bestows (Keith 2000:521). This authority is 'marked by the conflation of race and belonging' (p.521). In other words, political mobilization is centrally about attempts to re-inscribe subjectivity through appeals to collective experience (Brah 1996:124).

In maintaining a political stance, Teri writes defiantly about segregation which was used by the Apartheid government to racially divide people…*there was no way that segregation can be abided after 1994 (AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* It was against this political backdrop that marked her growing up years that she learnt about opposition to the regime. 'Confrontation and repudiation, 'talking back' was the mode of the moment' (Casey 1993:142). 'Talking back shifted the disenfranchised into in-between spaces of empowerment and powerlessness' (Bernal, Aleman & Garavito 2009:574). By using the plural pronoun *we*, Teri articulates the nation's dream of national unity: *When South Africa experienced its first democratic elections everybody just felt all our problems will be solved and we felt hopeful for the future.* South Africans cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society. But as a nation we are still struggling to negotiate the transition from segregation and apartheid. *Ubuntu* is a doctrine of eternal hope (Mzamane 2009:245): *we felt hopeful for the future.*

Priscilla foregrounds the significant role her father played in her personal and political development *(AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* She stresses that her strictly Christian upbringing guided the initial direction of her personal development. It was a terrain on which she acquired an awareness of her position and became critical of religious conceptions of gender. She scrutinizes the Christian tradition in her family and believes it to be dogmatic and authoritarian: *the orthodox Christian family I come from. I think much of my personal development stems from guilt.* Her religious upbringing is consistently conflictual and she is *obsessed with doing the right thing.* She reflects on the guilt and the nagging suspicions she experiences: *(everything was a sin). I had to learn that sometimes life is not always black and white and have begun to make concessions for those grey areas.* Her experiences shifted her into a 'third space of both tensions and possibilities – an interstitial space highlighting the shades of grey or multifaceted ways of being or becoming in the world' (Villenas 2006:152 in Bernal et al 2009:579).

Priscilla stresses the disjuncture between her earlier religious indoctrination and her present identity *(AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* It was religious discourse that alerted her

to patriarchal domination. She explicitly rejects the religious doctrine which her father propagated i.e. circumscribed codes of feminine behaviour that conform to patriarchal docility and subservience: *I rebel against everything my father believes* – even the central missionary tenet which forbade any tolerance of 'heathen' faiths. Rather than examining the values underpinning apartheid he uncritically accepted it. It was blind obedience to authorities: *he was greatly influenced by the propaganda of the white apartheid government* which entailed the continuing subjugation of black people. Patriarchy has an internal affinity with both church and state. 'Colonial subjects remain colonized internally, psychologically' (Rizvi, Lingard, & Lavia 2006:251), it is why Priscilla comments: *but I purposely live my life contrary to his.* This is a turning point, a transgression of her patriarchal upbringing; her values were not congruent with her father's. A great deal of ideological reconstruction has taken place – a reconstruction in which her interpretations dominate. By not conforming, Priscilla confirms that knowledge is contested ground open to active resistance.

Early family experiences were central in shaping Priscilla's intellectual development *(AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* There is a disjuncture between the values and cultural expectations placed on women in her family and what she believed in: *My parents believed that their sons would one day be the breadwinners in their families so they focused on educating them.* If education was looked upon as an investment, the tendency for parents was to invest in the education of boys for their future roles as breadwinners. Traditionally, it was the women's destiny in her family to work and eventually marry: *My elder sisters had to leave school to support our family and one day their husbands would support them.* Within the context of this narrative the expressive power of *that was the plan* reveals the gendered script in her family as well as the conflict of a working class subjectivity and education. The symbolic violence created by inequality of gender and class gives rise to her resistance: *However, my rebellious nature would not allow me to be complacent*. She resists being the 'daughter of captivity and it is this self from which her authorship proceeds' (Casey 1993:114): *I desperately needed the freedom of staying at the residence of the college.* In leaving home she transforms her resistance into

revolutionary action. Her passionate desire for education empowers her to defy familial and patriarchal structures. She actively diverts, if not halts, 'the process of social reproduction' (Lucey, Melody & Walkerdine 2003:294). The subversive act of escaping produces a new reality and her own liberation – going to university was a way to find herself: *It was there that I truly became aware of the possibilities and that really the sky is the limit for an intellectual female.* Implicit in the metaphoric use of *sky* is a sense of boundlessness, of expanse.

The kind of dissociation which allows Priscilla to succeed is a way of coping with the differences in subject positions and modes of discourse that the two worlds provide'. This kind of split and fragmented subjectivity is necessary to cross the divide' (Lucey et al 2003:296). Priscilla's narrative illustrates that 'identity formation and struggles are about the personal choices people make, the doubts they express, the strategies they devise and the efforts towards self-transformation that they take' (Tett 2000:190).

Priscilla recounts her political development: *as a pastor's daughter, growing up I believed that white people were our saviours – giving us Christianity (AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Conversion to Christianity was part of a process of conquest and dispossession. White people were seen as a superior race. As Bhabha (1994:153) points out, 'colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognisable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite'. The evangelical system of indoctrination/salvation was a belief in religious conversion. Despite the philanthropic intentions of the missionaries she 'inadvertently produces a knowledge of Christianity as a form of social control' (p.154) when she writes: *The white missionaries assisted my father financially and my father spoke of them as 'good people'*. The conversion to Christianity constructs a 'form of colonial subjectivity' (p.154).

For Priscilla political activism that confronts and challenges the status quo was taboo: *(against my parents consent) (AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* But she had the courage to act subversively to racial oppression.*…it was here that I developed my political opinions*:

Her political identity was contested, affirmed and remade within the space of school. The school provided a space to unveil the critical discourse of apartheid. Being able to connect politically with others inculcated a sense of agency. It was within this space that she was given tools for reflection and the possibility of transforming herself and society: *I would walk out of class to attend these sit-ins.* Her involvement moved her to the other side of silence. She stood on the margins of political protest which she felt denied her full contribution to the Apartheid struggle: *I always felt limited as an Indian female as to what I could do as far as being more active in the political changes of our country*. Priscilla is conscious of her particular vulnerability *as an Indian female.* Indian females are perceived as passive, submissive and subordinate. She identifies with the struggle and articulates a deep desire to have played a more radical role like her peers: *my struggle was limited to school hours when so many of my African peers were in the forefront of the violent struggle.* She experiences a sense of guilt and betrayal towards her *African peers* who endangered their lives in the name of freedom. 'The experiences of racial oppression made black women strongly aware of their group identity…as a result, black women have made significant contributions to struggles against racism' (Dill 1983:43). An ideal by which she lives and which she fights for is encapsulated in the statement: *I have no tolerance for racism or discrimination of any kind.* Her coming to consciousness of the contradictions inherent in religious and political discourse in her family became a 'critical vantage point providing the creative potential for resistance' and the emergence of new forms of identity and subjectivity (Munro 1998:34).

Fiona writes about influences from early childhood and early family life that have shaped her personal development *(AF:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Fiona comes from a working class background. Her single mother was a nurse and worked nightshift all the time which affected family roles in her household: *From age 12-18 had to be caregiver to my younger sisters in absence of mother who worked nightshift all the time.* High divorce rates, absent fathers and absent mothers indicate a rejection of traditional forms of family life. The tradition of 'othermothering' amongst black women is a strategy to resist and cope with the conditions under which women labour and to share the responsibility for

child nurturance (Dixson & Dingus 2008). 'Othermothers' can be, but are not confined to blood relatives. Fiona's mother clearly did not have this kind of support. Different material conditions produce different effects in local geographical spaces. Fiona experiences her social and cultural world as complex and fragmented: *As eldest of five sisters I was subjected to immense responsibility from a young age.* Her adolescence was interrupted from age twelve by childcare responsibilities. The words, *I was subjected,* to ravage a sense of self. She feels that the 'adultification' of her childhood has been forced; it was not a chosen role or one into which she grew. Her mother worked nightshift all the time. *So I was basically left to take care of them at night alone.* Embedded in her narrative is the unsettling image of being left at night alone to watch over her four siblings while her mother was at work. The labour market projects an ideal image of the highly qualified, socially mobile and flexible worker, whose primary commitment is not to family but to the job.

Identity premised on early childhood socialisation is evident when Fiona writes that she was *subjected to immense responsibility from a young age to the extent that it affected personal behaviour patterns as it taught such fierce independence that am unable to ask help from anybody.* It is both a survival strategy and a mode of resistance.

Fiona attributes her intellectual development to reading since there was no television: *only this has stimulated intellectual development (AF:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* The word, *only,* emphasises the lack of other resources. Despite the limitations, she invests in what is available. Reading gave her cultural capital. When Fiona names herself *a South African Muslim woman* it becomes a self-definition. Her state of becoming is ascribed to *having grown up in a strong 'Muslim stronghold' community*. 'Muslim women have been required to reflect the religious commitment of the group in their attire and behaviour as well as in most aspects of their lives' (Afshar 1995:129). However, at 'different times and places Muslim women negotiate different arrangements with the patriarchal structures in which they find themselves' (p. 129). The values prescribed at home are preparation for

future roles: *cultural and religious values have shaped my previous values regarding home, children etc.*

Fiona writes: *Politically we grew up feeling inferior and less than as a result of political attitudes and inequities (AF:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* She remembers the glaring injustices of a racialised history – racial oppression, class exploitation and patriarchy. In a white supremacist, male dominated state, she was marked as the deficit 'Other' and her self-esteem dissipated. Feeling positioned as inferior contributes to the ongoing reconstruction of raced, classed and gendered identities. Her account illustrates the psychic costs of her positioning: *This mindset followed me throughout my life and has been difficult to relinquish.*

Summary

Keri and Priscilla attribute their personal development to a strictly Christian upbringing. Keri had a strong identification with the church: *I always felt as if I belonged there.* Priscilla rejects her earlier religious indoctrination. Her father was a pastor: *I love my father dearly and understand him but I purposely live my life contrary to his.* Teri attributes her personal development to *growing up in an African family with Sepedi cultural background.* She *embraces* the tenets of *Ubuntu* and feels *obligated* to *help* her *family.* Fiona was subjected to *immense responsibility from a young age* that it *affected personal behaviour patterns as it taught such fierce independence that am unable to ask help from anybody which* is both a survival strategy and a mode of resistance.

Keri's and Fiona's early learning opportunities came from reading. Keri says: *my family took reading very seriously.* Fiona reflects: *The lack of television left no alternative but to read.* Priscilla speaks of later learning opportunities when she attended a teacher's college.

Keri writes of her early political development: *All I ever heard was what was on the news…my parents never really spoke to me about the political situation in South Africa and we never really asked.* In contrast, Teri recalls *we grew up being exposed to politics and the way we lived in townships there was no way that segregation can be abided after 1994.* Priscilla comments on her political development: *as a pastor's daughter, growing up I believed that white people were our saviours – giving us Christianity…it was only in high school that I fully understood the gravity of the situation when I was exposed to boycotts…it was here that I developed my political opinions.* Fiona writes: *Politically we grew up feeling inferior and less than as a result of political attitudes and inequities…this mindset followed me throughout my life and has been difficult to relinquish.*

In these narratives we see how the personal becomes political. It highlights the transformation of consciousness, to explore one's identity, to affirm and assert the primacy of self.

6.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed Theme One which is women teachers' socialization into teaching. Under this theme I pointed out how gender, race, class and cultural background are constitutive of their professional identities. The sub-theme, 'The influence of family socialization on women's decision to enter teaching' situated the socialization experiences of women teachers within families examining how culturally situated socialization practices informed and shaped entry into teaching. The sub-theme, 'Role Models' showed how participants were influenced through relationships with their mothers, teachers and othermothers either family or community based. The socializing force of schools was considered as a critical factor in how teachers learn to teach in the sub-theme, 'Experiences of primary and high school'. The analysis showed that based on their own experiences of school as students, the teachers are able to reshape frameworks for understanding their practice. The sub-theme, 'Socialization into a female role' reported on the strong, positive and negative influences of mothers and role models on

the ways in which participants enact or perceive their multiple roles. It showed how mothers coped with shifting multiple identities. The last sub-theme in this chapter examined the 'Influences of early childhood and family life that shaped personal, intellectual and political development'. The analysis shed light on their personal, intellectual and political formation that developed in accordance, with or in defiance of, family and broader social influences.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THEME TWO: CRITICAL INFLUENCES ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LIVES

'Across many strands of educational research there is a developing awareness of the connection between teachers' private lives, the personal and biographical aspects of their careers, and how these intersect, with and shape professional thoughts and actions' (Day et al 2007:25-26). Influencing factors can exert a positive or negative impact on teachers' motivation, commitment, resilience and perceived effectiveness and, therefore, on pupil learning. I focus on key influencing factors as arising at four levels outlined by Day and Gu (2010:52): Analysis of women teachers' experiences in their professional lives shows the influence of personal events, policy, practice settings and pupils on their sense of commitment, well-being and capacity to teach to their best.

The first sub-theme focuses on how personal life contexts played an integral part in sustaining or constraining women teachers' commitment, sense of efficacy and well-being. A thread running throughout the four life history narratives were the stories of 'becoming a teacher'. The section that follows traces how and why the women entered teaching and the kinds of dilemmas they faced in negotiating their 'choice' in becoming teachers.

7.1 Personal contexts

7.1.1 Becoming a teacher (BT-becoming a teacher)

The decision to become a teacher may be made consciously after considerable thought and deliberation or as a result of circumstance. The women were committed to education so I expected stories about women who entered teaching with a view to making a

difference. Each teacher struggled in some way with the decision to enter the teaching profession despite the norm that teaching was women's true profession and despite role models at home.

Keri's response to whether teaching was a first option for her was: *When I was younger, definitely (IK:P1:2010:T2-BT).* However, she struggled with her own internalized understanding of teaching as a low status profession: *And then when I turned about sixteen I decided I'd rather be rich, so I decided I wanted to do a career in advertising*. Her use of the word 'rather' indicates a preference; a desire to escape from a cycle of financial insecurity. Elsewhere, Keri writes that *with my parents being divorced we struggled for money and I became increasingly aware of that fact as I became older (AK:P4:JAN2010:T2-BT).* Success, then, was defined in terms of what one earned: *Money seemed more appealing, that life, the nice car, working in an office (IK:P1:2010:T2-BT).* This vision changes and she redefines success in terms of what she valued in teaching: *But now I know that would have been wrong for me.* She also makes the conclusion: So *I think my life decided for me.* For Keri the final decision was influenced by her class background. Class can, therefore, work as a deterrent to teaching for those who want more financial security than teaching provides. She emphasizes her shift in perspective: *and it was just the right thing for me*. Keri's choice was influenced by the bursary that the government offered and the fact that *I wouldn't need to pay for four years of study which really appealed to me (AK:P4:JAN2010:T2-BT).*

Teri recounts the pressure from her mother to take up teaching. Teri suggests that her mother was controlling and demanding, but nonetheless accepts it as necessary training for independence and self-reliance. Despite the assumption that teaching is seen as a natural extension of women's nurturing capacities, Teri writes: *I actually never decided to be a teacher (IT:P1:2010:T2-BT).* The offer of a bursary was a deciding factor: *I was influenced by my parents' lack of finances.* Teri's resistance is evident when she declares *I was not present during the time when I was supposed to register so my mom saw it fit for me to go there, and then she actually registered for me, and then I wanted to*

deregister. The conflict that Teri experienced of taking up an identity as teacher is revealed when she writes: *I was just studying, I was not even thinking about I'm going to be a teacher (IT:P2:2010:T2-BT).*

What is obvious in Teri's narrative of becoming a teacher is the deferral of her decision to enter teaching to her mother: *Part of me made me angry, a bit angry because I'm living my mom's life (IT:P3:2010:T2-BT).* Teri experienced a sense of discomfort in taking up an identity as teacher. 'Instead, her narrative of deferral, in which she, in effect, gives up her agency, is reminiscent of the expectations that women be passive, dutiful daughters' (Munro 1998:113).

The experiences of poverty contributed to Priscilla's choice to enter teaching. She offers details of her life: *I didn't really decide on becoming a teacher (IP:P2:2010:T2-BT).* Her choice was not a conscious process since she writes: *Coming from a relatively poor background, it wasn't an option to study.* She arrived at the decision to teach because: *I got a bursary and I just took it.* She acknowledges familial expectations and pressure and the painful limitation of choice: *That was our future. We had to work to support the family*. It was making sacrifices for her family: *And my elder siblings did that.* When Priscilla sees the possibility for advancement, *I got the opportunity, having a bursary*, and she simply takes it. By doing so, she resists internalized norms in the family and shapes her own path by making an autonomous choice about her life and her career. In retrospect, she says, *I don't regret it at all.*

Fiona chose teaching as a career at a time when women had few other choices. She makes her standpoint very clear: *I did not make a choice to become a teacher.* Given the history of our country, i.e., Apartheid South Africa there were limited opportunities for women and people of colour: *It was one of two or three choices open to us as Coloureds at the time (AF:P3:JAN2010:T2-BT).* Because Fiona had no choice but to enter into teaching she could still construct a self-image as an active subject. The following quote provides a kaleidoscope into our patriarchal past: *I was not interested in teaching as a*

career at all – but it was the time in our country when it was either be a nurse or a teacher (IF:P1:2010:T2-BT). The *either/or* provides a glimpse of the choices women had if they became independent working women. Claiming that, *I was not interested in teaching as a career at all,* suggests her initial disinclination towards teaching. Her choices were also compromised by the grim reality that *there was no money to go to varsity which would have been my first option – I had no choice but to go to a teachers' college which offered a bursary.* 'The historical assumption that teaching is a natural, acceptable and subordinated role for women continues to frame expectations about teachers' (Smulyan 2004:515): *So teaching was just kind of natural*. Invoking the ideology of teaching as women's work, allowed her to resolve conflicting feelings regarding her decision to go into teaching. The words, *And so, it was actually not a choice at all* suggests the conflict she experiences in taking up this subject position. Teaching as women's work is devalued: *The cheapest option was to go to teachers' college.*

Summary

The narratives suggest that the main motive and desire for entering teaching related to class, gender and historic period. In this study, there is no distinct variation in the socio-economic statuses between the black and white participants. The participants report economic disadvantage which led them to choose teaching: Keri states *we struggled for money;* Teri says *I was influenced by my parents' lack of finances;* for Priscilla, *coming from a relatively poor background, it wasn't an option to study, I got a bursary and I just took it* and, for Fiona, *there was no money to go to varsity.* Despite the assumption that teaching is seen as a natural extension of women's nurturing capacities, the narratives suggest that Keri, Teri and Fiona struggled with their decision to enter teaching. Priscilla discloses that the decision to study was not hers to make because of the family's financial circumstances, as well as the belief that boys in her family should have further education. The opportunity arose when she was offered a bursary.

7.1.2 Turning points (TP-turning points)

This section describes the teachers' narratives of how their 'becoming' was especially impacted by critical moments, ones filled with tension and conflict that altered their consciousness. 'The striking impact of *turning points* is a critical, transforming experience that not only points out new directions but also signals some movements in, or transformation of, identity' (Day & Gu 2010:50). These moments are filled with tension and contradictions. Women teachers recalled 'turning points' over their personal life histories which altered their life course. They were times of changing and choosing; they marked shifts in attitude to their work as teachers and saw the emerging of new aspects of the self. The significance of these experiences is clear in the stories told. The analysis shows that these key experiences provoke emotions of distress, unease, doubt and uncertainty, but also that the women are able to transcend their circumstances and have hope, faith, self-confidence and compassion.

Keri reflects that *2010 has been a particularly hard year for* [her] *personally and professionally (AK:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP).* Keri mourned a failed marriage. Her journey was filled with tension and conflict that altered her consciousness. Her students provided sanctuary from the violence of this rejection. Her inner conflict impels her to a more empathetic relationship with her students: *My sensitivity to their needs is definitely deeper because I have had to set aside my own feelings and continue to help them deal with their lives.* Ideas she had not before considered continued to disrupt and unsettle her. Her understandings of herself and her students are reflexive: *My teaching was always about me … but now I've realized that…it's about the children I teach and how I can develop them holistically.* It is an attention oriented to her students' needs which helps her reflect on her own: *Giving to them makes you able to deal with your own issues.* Previously she was in control and secure: *Before, I felt that I was powerful and that I could do anything that I wanted.* Now she is faced with the reality of her vulnerability: *Now I feel that I am powerless…I need the children that I teach to uplift me.*

Keri's divorce cut to the core but it is through this experience that she finds meaning: *being a teacher is very much like being a mother…the children I teach often need to feel that security (AK:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP).* Again we become aware of the significant role mothering plays in her sense making about her work. *No teacher is an island* 'unto himself or herself, notwithstanding the stereotypical image of teachers working behind closed classroom doors' (Hansen 1995:17): *I now realize that…we need one another to actually create a positive and effective learning environment (AK:P10:JAN2010:T2-TP).*

Teri captures the turning point in her life thus: *I believe that most of my changes were created by the books that I have read (AT:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP).* As a vulnerable subject she occupied multiple, clashing subject positions. We glimpse a fractured identity in Teri's utterance: *low self-esteem issues…because of my gender, race, social standards.* 'Self-esteem according to Kelchtermans (1996:308). is an evaluative component', the evolution of self, how good or otherwise as defined by self and others. Teri's lived experience attests to the interplay of different forms of subjectivation and the inequalities attached to it. Teri negotiates her own 'positioning of relative disempowerment' (Ali 2003:272) when she says:. *I have accepted, I am at peace with who I am.* She displays a strength of personal values; an acceptance of self, thus opening up space for agency. This is her turning point.

Butler (1990 in Ali 2003:271) asserts that 'our bodies, the matter of the subject, are undeniable, but the discursive registers, iterative practices and performative gestures which 'materialise' them are open to change and subversion'. This allows us to see that 'the meanings attendant to both femininity and class are unstable and thus potentially transformatory' (Ali 2003:271). Teri is able to negotiate the complexities of her positioning and ultimately reach a point of *acceptance.*

Priscilla's turning point *was when* she *experienced the freedom of college life (AP:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP).* She broke out of her 'normal biography' by being the 'first generation in her family to go to college' (Maguire 2005:8). She was able to 'achieve her

own emancipation from restrictions of class and/or gender' (Mann 1998:218). *My interaction with young adults from different financial, cultural, racial backgrounds and the limited guidance from my parents allowed me to change and develop. Another turning point for me was when I taught at KW. Secondary* School *located in an underprivileged coloured area.* Social inequalities have a place in the making of subjects, and she identifies with this view: *I had a culture shock…one thing I could relate to was the lack of ambition amongst poor communities.* Working there gave her a 'continuing engagement with her class origins – her footprints in her past' (Burn 2001 in Maguire 2005:8). Teaching at that school 'continues to demonstrate the ways in which social class is implicated in her professional contemporary world' (p.9). She feels compelled to change the enduring failure of these young people: *I felt a sense of responsibility to change that*. A significant rite of passage for Priscilla was marriage and children: *I am sure most women would agree the ultimate turning point is marriage and having children.* She is driven by a deep desire to ensure her children's future well-being: *The children I teach now could be those leaders...I am desperate to do the best I can.*

Fiona recalls the turning point in her life *(AF:P7:JAN2010:T2-TP).* 'Anger directed against the external world, but which remains unspeakable, is turned upon the self, turned inwards with its full and destructive force, to produce denigration, feelings of worthlessness, blame and accusation' (Lucey et al 2003:296). Fiona was crushed and retreats from a hostile environment: *In an effort to cope with my personal and work situation I turned to prescription drugs…in 2006, I was hospitalized for extreme exhaustion and anxiety.* Her private sphere was the site of anxieties, fear and numbness: *It was the worst of times for me but ironically was a cathartic experience.* In the face of conflict and debasement she finds self-worth: *I was in an abyss – a very dark place – there was no way to go but up…gradually I crawled out of that very dark space.* However, she is able to overcome the sense of futility that engulfs her by a retouching of the spiritual which restores and replenishes her: *I relinquished my dependence on prescription drugs and looked deep for spiritual guidance.* The words *I relinquished* display a determination to liberate herself from her addiction. Her recovery indicates her

restructuring of her subjectivity, a place where she can heal and find herself again: *I'm in a much better space now and am moving forward with a great degree of faith both personally and professionally.*

Summary

Keri speaks of her anguish when she realized her marriage was failing and then the inevitable divorce. She comes to an awareness that: *my teaching was always about me…now I've realized…it's about the children I teach and how I can develop them holistically.* It is an attention that is oriented to her students' needs which helps her deal with her own vulnerabilities. It is almost as if Keri compensates for the void in her personal life by this sense of attentiveness to her students.

Teri believes that most of her changes were created by the books she read. She had *low self-esteem issues…because of her gender, race, social standards.* She displays an acceptance of self. This is her turning point: *I have accepted, I am at peace with who I am.* She expresses feelings of hopeful anticipation about the sort of self she is seeking. One of Priscilla's turning points was when she *experienced the freedom of college life.* Resisting valued traditions in her household she clutched at the opportunity for formal study. She savoured the autonomy and scope for broadening her horizons. Another turning point for Priscilla was when she taught at KW. Secondary School, located in an underprivileged coloured area: *I had a culture shock.* She felt morally bound to make a difference to their lives. There is an openness to a significant shift in her personal life: *the ultimate turning point is marriage and having children.*

In the face of adversity, Fiona copes differently: *I turned to prescription drugs…in 2006 I was hospitalized for extreme exhaustion and anxiety.* She was divorced and had immense financial woes. She describes this time of turmoil as *the worst of times for me but ironically was a cathartic experience.* She attributes a deep spiritual awakening to her recovery.

7.2 Professional ideals and ambitions (PIA-professional ideals and ambitions)

Eisner (2006:46) acknowledges that the 'satisfactions of teaching extend beyond the academic; indeed, the most lasting contributions come from saving lives, rescuing a child from despair, restoring a sense of hope, soothing discomfort'. We remember these occasions longest because they matter. 'Teaching is a stance taken before the Other, and everything that occurs in the classroom derives from that ethic' (Block 2008:422). The findings show that whilst women teachers desire success in terms of remuneration and status, they may not wish to sacrifice other rewards such as the social relationships enjoyed in classroom teaching. The formal career structure does not serve those who have a firm commitment to classroom teaching. Teachers must have ideals even though these may not be easily attained. The ideals that these teachers cherish is to 'help equip students to think for themselves, to conceive their own ideals and hopes, and to prepare themselves for the task of making tomorrow's world into something other than a tired copy of today's (Hansen 2001:158).

This section discusses whether these teachers were ambitious despite having gone into teaching as a career.

Keri believes that *teaching requires ambition…not just ambition to further yourself to be a head of department (IK:P4:2010:T2-PIA).* Keri understands ambition in broader terms than just advancement up a career ladder. She says: *You need to be ambitious within yourself to give the children the best education that they can possibly get.* Keri has always had high aspirations: *When I started my job, definitely, I was ambitious…I'm still ambitious.* There is an openness regarding future possibilities: *I definitely see myself in management maybe not now, but definitely in the future.* However, if promotion were not within reach she would not be dissatisfied: *I want more, but if I never did more than be in*

my classroom, I wouldn't be unhappy. Income and prestige are not main considerations although: *I want to earn more, have authority…but if I never did that, it wouldn't harm my career.* Keri is confident in her ability regardless of not being in a leadership position: *whether I'm a head of department or not, people will rely on me.*

Teri says: *I would regard myself as an ambitious person (IT:P4:2010:T2-PIA).* She is committed to making a success of her work: *everything that I hold at the particular moment I want to make it work.* She confesses that teaching never appealed to her: *But, with teaching I never thought about it.* Teri reveals a rejection of the teaching profession on entering teaching. She had neither dream nor ambition.

Priscilla reflects on her relationship with her student*s (IP:P4:2010:T2-PIA).* She persists in maximizing their potential, but she has also learnt something about the limits of her capacity: *but I do get frustrated when they don't get it.* She wonders about her effectiveness and her impact on students: *I don't know if that's every teacher, or is it just me.* Teachers often cannot be sure whether their students have understood the work, much less whether their efforts have contributed to students' well-being. Priscilla redefines ambition in terms of her expectations of students: *It's not possible for everyone to have As, but I want them to get it.* Teacher attitudes can have a profound impact on students' educational growth. She is her own final critic when she says: *So I think…a bit ambitious in thinking that I could even…*

Fiona conveys a detachment from her professional role as teacher when she says: *I had absolutely no ambition to further myself in the teaching profession, I had no ambition at all (IF:P4:2010:T2-PIA).* The vehemence in the phrases *absolutely no ambition* and *no ambition at all* emphasize total denial and non-involvement. Fiona became increasingly estranged from her work: *I actually didn't want to stay in teaching very long.* She stayed in teaching because of the potential flexibility of working hours: *I thought while my kids were small I would have time to see to them*. Her aversion to teaching is pervasive and cuts deeply into her sense of satisfaction: *So I taught for ten of those years in a very*

begrudging fashion. She had given up an essential part of herself to pursue a task that provides little professional recognition, social status, remuneration or personal satisfaction (Webb 1992:87): *I despised the conditions...embarrassing to tell people I was a teacher…my classroom's always dusty and dirty, the environment is not pretty.* Fiona is haunted by the worry that she has failed to fulfil her aspirations and is vulnerable to self-doubt and status-panic: *Those factors embarrassed me coupled with the money that we were earning.* She forms a negative teacher identity and does not realize herself through her work: *and so I must be honest, I didn't try my best…I didn't try to do well as a teacher.* She does not inhabit the role fully: *I did what I had to do, I did my job.* Fiona had a hard time negotiating a teaching role. However, her 'painful beginnings' (Huberman 1989:42) ends differently: *And until later, I learnt to look at this thing through different eyes (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Through reflection came a reconstructed self.

When teachers enter the teaching profession, they cherish the notion of wanting to achieve something. Recognising that they are making a positive difference in students' lives affirms their belief that they are called to teach. The teachers in this study re-discover what it is that makes their work personally fulfilling.

Keri reflects on her teaching philosophy *(IK:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* She is guided by images of the kind of people/adults students can become: *I didn't really want to teach children anything except how to be people.* Relating information to everyday life is vital. Keri admits: *I have the privilege to teach a subject where children can be themselves a lot.* She teaches Life Orientation where *it's not so much about the content in my classroom*. She recognizes the influence of *the lessons we learn on the playground…corridors, sports field and in our extra-murals, the interaction.* She desires to influence the lives of her students: *And that's what I want from teaching.* The call to teach is marked by strong emotions toward them and extends beyond the act of teaching: *I want to get to know these children, really know them…be part of them*.

Teaching was not of Teri's own volition. She had absolutely no inner urge to teach, nor to achieve anything personally: *I never had anything.* Her mother coerced her into it: *I went there to work for my mom (IT:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* We see how her past permeates her present. Blind obedience to her mother's dictates was hardly a recipe for initial acceptance and success of her teaching role.

Priscilla enjoys great satisfaction interacting with her students: *I really enjoy being in the classroom (IP:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* She does not link ambition or achievement with a career move and income and status: It *may seem unambitious…I wouldn't want to change that, I wouldn't…not even for the money…not for any reason.* Her values find expression in the classroom rather than being in management: *I feel I can make more changes in individuals, the learners where it counts.* Her professional goals and her personal beliefs seem well integrated. She feels compelled to speak out about prevailing injustices, thereby influencing decisions that affect her professional life: *I'm very outspoken, I make changes even though I'm not in management.* Priscilla says: *if I'm going to make a difference, I'm going to make it in their lives more than the whole academic part.* Her identity as a teacher is closely tied to her ability to relate to her students, many of whom are marginalized. She acknowledges her upbringing in being able to accept the different realities of her students: *my parents, I have to give them that, with the poverty, we had this organization where we helped the poor, they instilled that in me.*

Teaching was a last resort for Fiona, but we see that shifting perceptions reflect a personal change: *I've come to love teaching and maybe not through the path that I wished it was (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Her dedication to her teaching task is apparent: *We come in extra during the holidays, nobody pays you anything for that.* Yet, recognition from significant others for hard work is essential for professional self-esteem: *In fact, sometimes nobody even knows that you're doing it.* Fiona now invests emotionally in teaching: *You just do it for the love of it, to get these children through.* Income and status is no longer Fiona's primary goal, instead it's the fulfilment she derives from her relationships with her students who come from communities with few prospects: *I've*

realized there's a bigger picture…it's not just about the money it's about what contribution you're making to the lives of those children. Fiona no longer feels diminished by her teaching identity and has an evolving sense of self-worth: *And so, once I saw value in that I started to see more value in myself (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).*

In the times in which we teach, it is well-nigh impossible to resurrect the dreams we once cherished when we entered teaching. The teachers speak of their dreams either past or present .

Keri contemplates her dream as a teacher *(IK:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* She positions herself as one who cares for her students and one who is driven by a sense of service: *What I've realized my dream is, is just to be able to touch children's lives.* In doing so, she is able to touch the future. She is wary of sounding *quite sort of clichéd.* As students interact with teachers on a daily basis, it is likely that teachers also shape other aspects of their lives. She sees herself as not only a disciplinarian *in a classroom* but also someone who supports her students where they feel secure enough to say: *please help me or celebrate with me.*

In the beginning, teaching was never more than a means to an end for Teri; the pursuit of external rewards: *I was happy I'm working…I was tired of struggling (IT:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* However, she expresses a measure of agency and autonomy and becomes a more engaged teacher: *Some part of me looked up to my teachers…at high school to say "If I can be like them."* She respects the qualities and attitudes of teachers she esteemed. They made visible the possibilities of what she herself can become: *I realized how teaching needs experience, even when you're from the varsity because you're delivering.* It is more likely that teachers who are tenacious about teaching well will become a force for good in students' lives: *You have to take out that understanding and it was a challenge for me*. Teachers will make mistakes and misjudgments but it will enable them to learn and improve. Teri has had to negotiate and redefine her teaching identity thus leading her to reshape her ways of interacting with students.

Priscilla speaks of her dream for her students *(IP:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* She sets high expectations for them. When teachers have low expectations of some of their students, these students make less academic progress: *I understand that children have different levels…we shouldn't limit them.* She therefore, spends time and effort in teaching them and she wishes to raise their performance: *My dream is to get the child that is failing to a B or an A…that every child passes well.* Priscilla demonstrates a high level of commitment to students who are disadvantaged by the system or whose needs are not properly recognized in the school. This commitment is informed by her own experiences and understanding of racism and engenders strong cohesive bonds with her *black children, my black children, they call me a bit of a racist…I tend to favour the black children.* She feels strongly about issues of justice: *my dream is that they should not be discriminated against.* She wants *total equality in our schools, especially our Indian schools* and, much to her disappointment, her perception is that *it's not that way*. Subtle cues convince her that the school system is working against them and she is opposed to it.

What is particularly striking in Fiona's excerpt is that teaching now induces a strong desire, a source for actualization *(IF:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* Fiona's dream is quite simply: *to be the best that I can be.* She is uncertain about this strange turn of events and acknowledges that she has still to reach her optimum: *I think I'm moving in that direction.* Having *mastered my subject matter* contributes to renewed self-confidence and self-efficacy. She attributes competence in her subject to the school culture: *a good thing about teaching in our schools…you tend to stay in one subject, be good at it…grow in it.* From her initial dispassionate view on teaching she is now open to future possibilities. Her focus is on her relationship with her students, the significance of which manifests in: *I just want to be remembered for the impact I've made on the lives of individuals…that would be my dream.* Her initial teacher identity was a source of tension and contradiction; from a preoccupation with the material benefits of teaching, she now embraces a service commitment.

The satisfactions of teaching become harder to realize and even harder to believe in, in an era of accountability. The teachers reflect on how they view teaching now.

Keri says: *When you first start teaching, you're very naïve (IK:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* She had a particular notion that *you'll have this beautiful classroom with little curtains and kids all sitting quietly in their rows.* The inevitable disappointment follows once she experiences the reality of working in today's schools: *but it doesn't work out like that.* With emerging insight she says, *I want to take something home at the end of the day.* Growth in a student, no matter how small is extremely rewarding for her and she wants to be involved with that child's success: *When that child gets a forty that's been failing the whole term, I want to be part of that.*

Teri feels differently now about teaching *(IT:P4C:2010:T2-PIA).* Her faith is part of her identity. She attests to the struggles of overcoming self-interest and resentment: *I guess part of me was selfish.* She believes that, regardless of your own ambivalence, *sometimes you have to go out of your way to help others.* She realizes that teaching is a daunting prospect: *Now when I wake up we'll have frustration.* She questions the circumstances that constrain her and comes to the conclusion that one cannot settle for half-measures: *if I'm not part of that, definitely I'm not going to feel complete.* Where there was earlier a repudiation of a teacher identity, she now embraces it: *But still, I feel I'm a teacher.*

Teri confronts obstacles daily and could easily lose sight of why she teaches *(JET:18FEB2010:T2-P).* Despite this, she writes: *I want to teach my learners with passion.* Her sense of teaching as a vocation is evident when she writes: *I'm teaching human beings.* It is clear that she is driven by a sense of service and of contributing to transformation in the lives of her students: *I want to serve them.* She values her students and has empathy for them especially the student who wants to remain invisible. She wants that student to realize s/he is capable and worthy: *I want the learner at the back of the class to realize his ability.* She wants to make learning meaningful for her students and to mentor and empower them: *I want to reach out to that learner*: *I want to see him*

developing. The repetitive use of *want* indicates an inner urge for a connectedness with her students.

Despite the many changes in school, Priscilla says that her ideals have not changed: *My dream will always be the same (IP:P4:2010:T2-PIA).* She is able to attach positive meaning to her work and her relationship with her students. It is the care, commitment and support of her students that sustain her.

Fiona speaks of her future in a teaching *position (IF:P4C:2010:T2-PIA).* Most important for Fiona is her investment in her teaching since *in the actual profession there's no dream to strive to be anything.* She was convinced at that time that resigning was an escape from her financial woes but there were far reaching consequences: *I was Head of Department and then with the resignation I lost my position.* She has come to the awareness that *that decision was prompted out of not having a clear head at that time.* Here, she alludes to her nervous breakdown. In retrospect she says: *So I do regret that.* Her promotional prospects seem rather bleak: *it's become more difficult…I would not probably be able to get back that position.*

Summary

The findings show that the teachers are able to manage successfully the complex internal and external influences which threaten to impact negatively on their commitment and capacity to teach to their best. Their attachment to their students and to their teaching forms the essence of their identity. A notion common to their narratives is that of 'vocation' or 'calling'. From the beginning, both Keri and Priscilla embodied a sense of vocation and self-efficacy in their professional identity which provided the foundation for their positive emotions (Day & Gu 2010). When Teri and Fiona entered the teaching profession they experienced a sense of ambivalence about their teacher identity. It affected their level of aspiration in teaching. Teri says: *With teaching I never had anything.* Fiona says: *I must be honest, I didn't try my best…I didn't try to do well as a*

teacher, I did what I had to do, I did my job (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA). Much later came the enactment of a sense of vocation. Now, Teri says: *I feel I'm a teacher* and Fiona comes to the realization that *I've come to love teaching, and maybe not through the path that I wished it was.* It shows a transition, a process of coping with shifting and multiple identities. There are feelings of ownership and a sense of being a teacher. The teachers' sense of vocation provides purpose for their actions, and enables them to manage their experiences and commitment. Their narratives resonate with Hansen's (1995:12) point that a sense of vocation implies a measure of determination, courage and flexibility, qualities that are in turn buoyed by the disposition to regard teaching as something more than a job, to which one has something significant to offer'.

Teachers who remain in the profession work harder but too often, with less reward. 'The satisfactions of this impossibly complex and difficult profession are less and less obvious in this era of accountability and high stakes testing' (Block 2008:416). Thus, we may doubt Block's claim that to 'stand in the classroom is to live in awe and wonder' (p.417). Yet, when teachers reflect on their work, it is most often on the human touch that has been made. 'Despite the lack of public support, despite the steady calumny to which they are subject, the teachers daily engage with the individual and collective products of social and political pasts, and attempts with them somehow to create a viable future' (p.417).

7.3 Practice settings

7.3.1 Experiences of change (C-change)

Consistent with the literature on curriculum reform, the research findings show that the teachers' relationship to the curriculum began to change in significant ways. The difficult and complex conditions under which it had to be implemented were contested. The teachers evaluate the call for change by considering the benefits for their pupils. This sub-theme describes the drastic changes and additional workload with the new curriculum and how the teachers' experience these changes.

Keri's response to curriculum changes defines the problem and the difficulties it creates *(IKP9:2010:T2-C): With new curriculum come new demands.* Her comments illustrate how the demands increasingly constrain and obstruct her in her work as teacher: *It's a document for this…test paper has to be set like that…have to have this many assessments a term…we lose out on the time we spend for children.* Keri has a firm commitment to classroom teaching and to her subject and has little inclination towards administrative work and bureaucracy. She feels that it is a burden and after all the effort *no-one really looks at them.* Besides, *Some people don't do them.* The conflict she experiences is evident in the repetitive phrase *and then, on top of that, on top of that…you've got to teach. And listen. And be with the children…be alive…be creative…make your classroom be inviting and comfortable and feel like home.*

Keri is disconcerted because teaching in these circumstances becomes an organizational and personal challenge, needing much creative thought and determination. Some teachers find themselves teaching badly because they cannot attend to all the extra tasks in the time available. Teachers have to cope with major changes in their classroom work and revisions to curriculum requirements. The increased demands for accountability has led to an increase in record-keeping and new administrative duties and all of this has created additional pressures and burdens. Ball (1994:49) identified an 'increase in technical elements of teachers' work and a reduction in the professional'. There are major shifts in the teaching and planning practices that teachers were asked to employ. Teachers are struggling to implement the curriculum - there is a pervading sense of not being in control of what one teaches.

Classroom practices suggest that the rhetoric often outstripped the reality: *though implementation and the goals that the teacher must reach are unrealistic (ATP10:JAN2010:T2-C).* A number of *implementation* problems became apparent after the introduction of OBE – inadequate training and distribution of teaching materials as well as unfamiliar terminology used in OBE curriculum. It would seem that teachers have lost control of what they teach, how they teach and the determination of the goals of their

teaching. School populations have different needs and create different demands which need to be acknowledged. It's almost as if Teri feels she is at the mercy of external and internal authorities *(ITP6D:2010:T2-C)*: *If the people in charge, or the government…who are planning this… even the school… being realistic about the material that we have and what we are supposed to offer.* The phrase *I don't know* captures her sense of uncertainty and exasperation.

Teri was expected to teach outside her subject specialization: *(ITP4B:2010:T2-C)* It is quite clear that the subject was not in her area of expertise. *With outcome-based education, with the complication of what we are supposed to teach which was a bit unfamiliar.* Easthope and Easthope (2000:50) criticize the notion that 'administratively, teachers are considered equally capable of teaching any subject'. The movement of teachers into subject areas in which they had no expertise meant that they had to rapidly gain some expertise. This change meant that Teri had to develop new knowledge and skills which consumed time and effort in order to survive in the classroom. Hargreaves (1994:109) refers to situations in which 'administrators take up or colonize teachers' time with their own purposes'. Teri's confession, *And I failed so many times,* leaves one with a sense that she felt deprofessionalised and deskilled. Unable to teach adequately the new subject threatens her sense of competency and skill.

Teri acknowledges the value of the curriculum: *the curriculum is rich, it's diverse, it accommodates everybody; I love the interaction, bringing the world into a classroom (ITP9:2010:T2-C).* However, the drastic changes and additional workload the curriculum created caused her to doubt: *I am really questioning this curriculum now. (JET:4MAY2010:T2-C)*

Teri's experience of tension about the curriculum is echoed by Priscilla: *I enjoyed the OBE system, the discussion, the group work; it worked for me, I'm sure it didn't work for many teachers…I liked the pupil interaction and the fact that they had to do more than what I had to do (IPP9:2010:T2-C).*

Priscilla writes that *the educational system is unreliable and educators continue to become demotivated (APP10:JAN2010:T2-C):* 'An unstable, uneven but apparently unstoppable flood of closely inter-related reform ideas is permeating and reorienting education systems' (Ball 2003:215) and to these, teachers respond in different ways. Priscilla recognizes the damaging effects caused by the constant changes in requirements. Some teachers *become demotivated* or disengaged. That the *educational system is unreliable* has a negative impact on professional confidence.

Priscilla is vehement regarding the limits of the imposition of teacher surveillance: *The idea of quality control for educators (IQMS) in my opinion is idealistic as the class visits have become orchestrated and a well rehearsed pony-show (APP10:JAN2010:T2-C).* Priscilla makes this reference when she writes, *class visits have become orchestrated.* Effort is directed towards passing inspections. The developmental value of classroom observation is diminished by teachers' performance which has become a well rehearsed pony-show. Ball (2003:222) feels that 'what is produced is a spectacle, or game-playing, or cynical compliance'. Butler (1990) calls it an 'enacted fantasy' which is there simply to be seen and judged – a fabrication (Ball 2003:222). The lessons under observation are taught to a prescribed routine and do not mirror everyday classroom practices. The result is inauthentic practice.

Fiona believes that education in South Africa has undergone dramatic changes since 1994 impacting heavily on the roles of teachers in classrooms *(AFPAGE1:JAN2010:T2-C).* Teachers who were supposed to implement change were marginalized and alienated in different ways. Therefore, *'resistance*, anger, fear and *confusion* are inevitable and any purposeful attempt to bring about change needs to address this aspect' (Dornbrack 2009:155). Teachers' substantive knowledge about their work, as well as the contexts and conditions in which change is supposed to occur cannot be ignored. Fiona writes: *All these changes to the teaching methodology especially led to confusion and resistance.* Curriculum change requires a change towards more complex and demanding teaching

methodologies. The changes led to internal conflict because Fiona felt that she was not equipped to meet curriculum reform challenges because of inadequate preparation and support. Fiona reminds us of the constraining realities of curriculum implementation: *We were not trained adequately yet were expected to cope.*

Teachers' contexts also determine to a great extent how they will implement reform and revise their practice. Fiona says: *Classroom dynamics also changed considerably – classes became bigger and noisier (AFPAGE1:JAN2010:T2-C).* The emphasis of post-apartheid educational policy in relation to the teaching force focused on the need to increase teacher productivity to improve teacher efficiency. An aspect of teacher efficiency was to lower unit by various measures, including increasing teacher-pupil ratios (Sayed 2002). Democracy brought with it changes in the racial composition of many schools. The majority of students from working class backgrounds now attend former coloured and Indian schools which are generally better resourced than African schools. It is why *classroom dynamics* have changed. The concern with *noisier* classes was raised in the doing of group work. Discipline problems seem to be exacerbated by group work which has become a symbol of OBE. A 'survival strategy' (Woods 1990) that teachers employ is to revert to traditional teaching to establish and maintain control. Fiona writes: *Corporal punishment was outlawed and we as teachers became powerless.* Maintaining discipline before *corporal punishment was outlawed* in schools was a lot easier. In the absence of corporal punishment teachers felt disempowered to institute discipline in schools. In order to achieve control in classrooms effective alternative measures should be embraced

For curriculum reform, the goal is to ensure more than surface adoption and implementation. Fiona's response to curriculum change is: *I've taught the same way as I've always taught…OBE hasn't impacted me…haven't used it (IFP14B:2010:T2-C).* Fiona resists and retreats with head in sand and works around prescriptions and expectations - a case of non-compliance. A telling remark by Fiona is that: *The powers that be might not know that.* As Hoyle and Wallace (2007:19) observe, the irony is that

some teachers present an image to the agencies of accountability that is not wholly congruent with the reality of their daily practices: *Most schools have done that.*

Summary

The findings indicate that some aspects of curriculum changes fit within their belief about teaching, but other aspects conflicted with what they personally desire in their work and what they considered good education. It is not a matter of either accepting or rejecting the demands imposed on them; they actively position themselves in relation to the changes. Keri felt that the work is a burden and *no-one takes the time to look at it* even though the work is demanded of teachers. Besides, some teachers do not comply with the requirements. Teri's perception is that the curriculum is *informal and practical;* but she laments the fact that *the goals the teacher must reach are unrealistic.* Both Teri and Priscilla enjoyed the *pupil interaction.* Priscilla liked *the fact that they had to do more than what I had to do.* She saw her role as guiding and supporting her students' learning processes. She acknowledges the obstacles that teachers encountered: *It worked for me, I'm sure it didn't work for many teachers.* This resonates with Teri's remark: *I am really questioning this curriculum now.* But Priscilla is really unhappy about the IQMS: *The idea of quality control for educators (IQMS) in my opinion is idealistic as the class visits have become orchestrated and a well rehearsed pony-show.* Fiona comments on how *teaching methodology and classroom dynamics changed.* She highlights the fact that *we were not trained adequately yet were expected to cope.* Teri, too, writes of *implementation* problems. Both Teri and Fiona mention how student diversity affects their teaching. All the participants agreed that curriculum changes created additional pressures and burdens.

7.3.2 Expanded roles (ER-expanded roles)

This sub-theme illuminates teachers' conceptions on how the expectations made of them are expanding.

Bartlett (2004:567) states that 'teachers' work is difficult, complex and emotionally draining work entailing long out-of-classroom hours'. The teachers, in my study, report that there has been a steady expansion of their work roles and responsibilities. Consistent with the literature on the expansion of teacher roles, this study finds that an expanded role includes teachers' leadership and management responsibilities, the integration of children with special needs into ordinary classrooms and pastoral care. Bartlett (2004:565) found that if 'schools have integrated the expanded teaching role into the regular structure of a school day teachers are more likely to be engaged and committed'. Schools that have layered the expanded role onto a full teaching schedule are more likely to have teachers who are exhausted and overwhelmed . The nature and extent of organizational support influences how teachers experience role expansion. 'Teachers who embrace the expanded role conception strive to sustain it even in the absence of such support' (p.565).

Keri viewed her role as Prefect Head as important and adding value to school life: *One of the biggest things I do here is I work with prefects, our school leaders (IK:P11a:2010:T2-ER).* She does not find the extra responsibility inhibiting, instead she reacts to it in a proactive way. Besides, it is something *which I love doing.* She believes in her competency and skills as a teacher to be able to shape young leaders: *I really feel that I have the ability to help them to become better at what they do.* Being competent is a central aspect of her professional identity. Further, she says, *I'm involved in the school choir but that's just because I love it;* Keri is willing and enthusiastic about her involvement in the school choir. She uses the word, *love*, to describe her extra duties. It is intriguing that Keri defines her pastoral duties thus: *Definitely the role of mother and disciplinarian.* In her role as teacher, she sees a responsibility to be a *mother and disciplinarian* especially since some of her students do not have adequate parenting at home. Her caring role is largely informed by her familial experience: *children aren't disciplined the way that we used to be.* Keri is aware that mothering may blur the public/private space of classrooms: *It's very difficult to sometimes separate yourself from children on a personal level. I do a lot of charity work (IKP11c:2010:T2-ER).*

Implicit in Teri's comments on her work roles and responsibilities is the imperative to serve teachers and students well, regardless of personal cost *(IT:P6d:2010:T2-ER).* She has to fulfil many managerial responsibilities being Head of Department for English and part of the management team of the school. Besides being responsible for the debating team, Teri also does music. Teri worked extra hours to introduce quality into her debating team, yet 'it is rare that this dedication to duty is recognized or valued' (Esteve 2000:203): *I never even had weekends.* The reward was: *We won, we even went to provincial level, that's where they lost…and they were beginner*s. In order to ensure that her team achieved a high standard *They were at my home, in my space. Sundays from 10h00 – 14h00 (JET:4MAY2010:T2-ER).* It was a personal challenge. Teri feels that her 'teaching is a calling' and being of service to others, 'a profession where one would work and overcome school-related obstacles regardless of their nature' (Gitlin 2001:254): *I didn't even go to church…what I am doing is like church for me.* She is clearly disenchanted because of societal value judgments: *People who think teaching is easy, it's not…It's one of the difficult jobs.* She mentions the multiplicity of teacher roles and competing demands which confront teachers: *Sometimes you're a psychologist, you're a doctor, you are so many things in one body (IT:P18:2010:T2-ER).*

Priscilla acknowledges that her expanded roles are valuable but difficult and time-consuming as provisions are not made in her work schedule *(IP:P11a:2010:T2-ER).* Priscilla's role as counselor has called for extra investments of time: *I've been for courses.* She confesses *I don't think I'm really qualified as a counselor* and airs her doubt about her professional adequacy to do the counselling at the school. However, she averts the feeling of uncertainty and bases her suitability thus: *I'm a good listener, so I think that's one of the positives.* Priscilla did not volunteer, neither did she contest it. She says: *I was chosen to be a counsellor.* She feels a connectedness to her students and this is a source of reassurance for her: *And I think I'm very approachable so, the kids find it easy to talk to me.* 'Even the most avant-garde models of educational leadership, in the form of transformational leadership, define their success partly in terms of their capacity to extract extra effort from the teaching force' (Hargreaves 1994:149). Another

responsibility is the LRC. However, Priscilla's time demands restricts undivided involvement: *I don't give the LRC my full attention.* She does not withdraw until she feels that they have been groomed for the task by her: *but I think I've sort of developed them enough to handle it on their own*. It is as if the words, *I've sort of,* convey a sense of dissatisfaction. She expresses her desire for more commitment: *I would really like to have done more with it, but I can't, because of my other responsibilities*. Another duty is *collecting money or raising funds for somebody (IP:P11c:2010:T2-ER).* Priscilla has to balance these commitments with normal teaching expectations.

Fiona derives personal satisfaction from her expanded work roles *(IF:P11a:2010:T2-ER).* Responsibilities that are integrated into the school day allow her to fulfil her work commitment. Fiona comments on her involvement with the girls' soccer: *we go every Wednesday. And we spend an hour or two on the soccer field.* If expanded roles are integrated into a normal school day, teachers are likely to be engaged and committed (Bartlett 2004). As Fiona says: *that's the extent to which I'm prepared to go.* She is reluctant *to do any extra-curricular activities* outside school hours and believes she should be compensated for it: *I wouldn't want to do any extra-curricular… I think I should be paid for that… I just won't do it if I don't get paid for it.* Yet, Fiona is committed to her role on the *banquet committee.* Her task is *organizing the banquet, but I enjoy doing that.* Fiona is able to sustain the expanded role because she is not overburdened: *we actually have to be on two committees.* Besides, by being given a choice the school made it possible for teachers to fulfil the expectations of that role within regular school hours: *You are given a choice, so you do what you enjoy and you just kind of fit it into the normal day.* She derives satisfaction from contributing to the school: *That's my extra contribution, I do it willingly*.

Fiona volunteered to be the English cluster leader *(IFQ11A:2010:ER).* She works beyond the school day and without financial compensation. Her role pertains to leadership and collaboration: *I find that I have to spend a lot of time having to liaise with other teachers.* Being an experienced English teacher she does not experience any kind of competence

anxiety and may not be able to reconcile with doing less: *I think I'm the best person to do it…I get frustrated if somebody else is doing it. What I'm going to have to do is coordinate a cluster paper for this term. So I don't think that anybody actually knows that you do that:* She has embraced a concept of her role that transcends the boundaries of her own classroom as she concerns herself with the language and literacy of students in her cluster (Bartlett 2004). She does not display any kind of reticence or resistance even if it adds significantly to her workload and time crush: *I volunteered…meetings once a month until about four, five o'clock...report to the language facilitator.* Fiona experiences a sense of satisfaction to her professional commitment: *It just becomes such a part of what I do that I do it without even thinking it's extra work.*

Summary

The data reveal that, in addition to their classroom work, the teachers' work roles have been expanded. They counsel students, organize and supervise extracurricular activities, co-ordinate activities and leadership programmes for the student representative councils, co-ordinate subject cluster meetings, fund raise for charitable organizations and organize the matric ball. Keri was involved in three school activities. She describes her pastoral duties as being *the role of mother and disciplinarian* and her efforts to meet her students' needs. Teri was responsible for the debating as well as supervising sport. Priscilla was given responsibility for three committees. Fiona had a choice of being on two school committees. She also volunteered to be English cluster leader. Fiona was allowed to choose duties, though the other teachers were prescribed duties. Some of the teachers enjoyed the extra responsibilities, especially if the schools integrated the expanded role into the school day. Words and phrases such as *love, like church for me, enjoy, willingly* and *becomes such a part of what I do* highlight their experiences of, and commitment to, their role expansion although it affects their work and home lives.

The enactment of the expanded role causes Priscilla some distress because she cannot give it her undivided attention. Her extra duties are layered on to an already full teaching

day, yet she cannot reconcile with doing less. Interestingly, the teachers set their own boundaries when they experience a mismatch in the form of time and compensation. Priscilla withdrew from mentoring the LRC mainly because of the time-squeeze. She did so when she felt that they were able to function effectively on their own: *I would really like to have done more with it, but I can't, because of my other responsibilities.* Fiona limits the extent to which she is prepared to do extra sport: *So I just won't do it if I don't get paid for it.* Although Teri experiences satisfaction and commitment, she also experiences work-overload and exhaustion. Lacking time during the school day to accommodate the training of the debating team, she does so during the weekends: *They were at my home, in my space.* The teachers attempt to sustain the extra duties so that students can benefit.

7.3.3 Practice settings: Intensification (I-intensification)

The analysis of the teachers' stories shows that teaching today is much more difficult and presents teachers with new challenges: an escalation of pressures, expectations and controls concerning what they do, and how much they should do within the teaching day. They report working longer hours, having increased professional, pastoral and administrative duties and teaching more students and having less time. Accountability demands have a pervasive impact on their daily lives. The effect of assessment changes leads to increased feelings of pressure, and in some cases resistance. Each teacher copes with these changes in her own way. The findings show that the teachers attempt to maintain their professional commitment while adapting to policy demands. They are forced into making choices between competing commitments leading to a decline in their professional commitment. 'It is characteristic of the experience of intensification that teachers' identity and value systems are at stake' (Ballet & Kelchtermans 2008:48). A source of irritation highlighted by the teachers is the dramatic increase in new recording and reporting requirements, which have major implications for the nature and content of their work.

Teaching has always been intense. Keri writes: *The pressure at work is mounting. I have to set another lot of cycle tests (JEK:7MAR2010:T2-I).* The emphasis on formal assessments, on output rather than process eats into teaching time. In order to contain the pressure of extra work she decides: *I won't be able to do it for some classes.* Gewirtz (2002) points to how performativity works in education and how the values embedded in the new managerialism become internalized within schools. Keri echoes this when she says *I hate the fact that I'm losing precious teaching time for useless assessments just so that we can look good as a school on paper.* Keri's comment captures the stress of surveillance and a perceived loss of control: *I am nervous.*

Teri feels that it is not possible for tasks to be well accomplished because of the varied demands being placed on teachers: *And we stop this running around (IT:P6d:2010:T2-I).* She has great difficulty in keeping up and is not happy about the examination-oriented approach to teaching, with less emphasis on responding to the interests of the students and the process of learning and more emphasis on learning outcomes: *We are definitely not doing justice to the kids.* Teri is vehemently opposed to the shift in the culture of teaching: *let us be developmental really.* Teri is adamant that: *I can't be doing creative writing, marking it quickly, doing literature, marking it quickly, doing my control test, no, no, no, no, no.* She is emphatic about protecting what she values and is critical of the narrowing of focus in her work: *I can't be doing that, like it's really a mess*. Teri experiences a loss of autonomy and an accelerated intensification of activity.

Priscilla's sense-making of what it means to teach and what it means to be a teacher is 'subtly but decisively changed in the processes of reform' (Ball 2003:218) and school improvement initiatives *(AP:P10:JAN2010:T2-I).* She experiences her work as becoming more fragmented as she assumes more responsibilities. She must allocate time for *marking;* attend *staff meetings* and *workshops* as part of her professional development; attend to visiting *parents*; make herself available for *matric weekend classes*; organize extracurricular activities for students. Priscilla experiences the intensifying impact of

changes on her working conditions as being *demanding at times and a bit overwhelming.* The *at times* and *a bit* shows us that her experience is not as intense as Teri's.

Fiona states that: *Workload has changed (AF10:JAN2010:T2-I).* Feelings of workload are closely related to issues of accountability and bureaucratic demands. Workload is seen as the leading explanatory factor for her dissatisfaction: *Compared to when I started workload is now four times as much.* Teaching is not what it used to be. Today, teachers have to deal with pressures qualitatively different than before. Fiona feels that: *Content matter (is) pretty much the same:* She may initially have felt a false sense of security that the reforms represented what she was already doing. In some instances, teachers adapt a curriculum; there is selective change implementation based on what teachers consider to be the most beneficial to students.

What distresses all the participants is the paperwork involved which detracts from what they feel are the more important and more valuable aspects of their work. Keri complains of being overburdened: *You're so overwrought with paperwork, and "I can't talk to you right now, because I've got to do this now" (IK:P9:2010:T2-I).* The word, *now,* suggests a sense of urgency. Keri is resentful that her time has been colonized by administrative demands. It is an invasion and she has less time for interaction with students in need: "*this document has to be in by ten o' clock" or whatever.* The words, *or whatever*, say that she is clearly exasperated and angry at the loss of her teaching time and time better spent with her students.

Teri's frustration *(Now I want to cry)* arises from the increased administrative burden that is imposed preventing her from fulfilling her main role as teacher *(IT:P6c:2010:T2-I).* Her discontent is directed towards an administration that fails to consider her working conditions and expanded roles: *No understanding about the debate, they want their marks. When?* Teri comments about leadership in her school: *Have your plan, but know that there should be adjustments in your plan (IT:P8b:2010:T2-I)* to complete work that has been queuing up. Teri feels: *We need to meet deadlines but let our deadlines go hand*

in hand with the delivery. Teri uses the language of new managerialism: *'Delivery,'* a word borrowed from industry and applied to a classroom context, places the teacher as 'intermediary between a body of required knowledge and pupil performance, stripping him or her of the creative and interpretive role that they could play given a degree of latitude, creative diversion and a genuine sense of ownership' (Galton & MacBeath 2008:5). She bemoans the fact that the quality and dynamics of what happens in a classroom are not what they used to be and has a sense of declining standards. She sees herself caught between a highly prescriptive agenda and students who need to be coerced into learning: *We don't have a lot of time to go to class. Let us be realistic about what we have.* 'Compliance stifles creativity and initiative, and consensus can close down creative alternatives' (Surowiecki 2004 in Galton & Macbeath 2008:8). She vividly conveys the frenzied activity of a school day and sees the situation as untenable, almost bizarre: *We can't be running like headless chickens all the time. It's athletics. Run, run, run, run!* More has to be achieved in less time: *And then after school, you stay behind* to complete work that has been queuing up.

Priscilla believes also that much of the paperwork is unnecessary and she resents its *time-consuming* nature *(IP:P9:2010:T2-I).* The paperwork seems to dominate her landscape, and teaching comes off second best. Priscilla sums up the hopelessness she experiences in a context where many students are in need of high levels of learning support: *The paperwork is redundant and time consuming, leaving educators' with less time to focus on problem learners.* She observes that changes in practice subvert what she values – her teaching. Her perception of her identity as professional is at variance with the new identity of technician. Apart from the paperwork taking up inordinate amounts of time, Priscilla finds her teaching suffering: *Where I could have done more with actually teaching, I spent on the paperwork.*

Fiona's words echo this dilemma: *Administrative work, it's a nightmare. It leaves you with little time to actually teach. (IF:P9:2010:T2-I)* In Fiona's case, the pressure to meet deadlines and comply with administrative demands leads to changed and weakened

commitment: *We spend an enormous amount of time on admin and then we teach kind of 'by the way':* Fiona says: *everything is recorded manually, everything is duplicated, triplicated, nothing is put on computer, our schools are far behind in that respect.* When she is under pressure to complete administrative work she plans in ways that would keep students busy while she completes her work during class time: *There's really not much teaching guidance, there's notes.* She admits to not resorting to this solution with matric students: *But with the other grades if I had to do admin I will do it at school rather than at home, because I'm just resentful of that.* She resists and this response helps her sustain her work and minimize work intensity: *And then I'd rather not teach for sometimes a whole week while I'm doing admin.* Fiona is careful, however. Since matric results are used as indirect measures of teachers' work and of the overall quality of the school she says: *With the matriculants I try not to do that too much.* This strategy indirectly challenged the threat of intensification. It is not just Fiona who adopts this self-regulatory practice. She writes: *But, that's what everybody's doing. Government must start realizing that's what's happening.* 'Although strategies to confront the threat of intensification may be successful in curtailing the intensity of work, they are also contradictory, for by using these strategies, teachers make their work more repetitious and alienating as they detach themselves from students' (Gitlin 2001:247).

Summary

Keri sums up cogently what most teachers feel. It is just the paperwork that makes teaching less fulfilling: *I wouldn't change the subject I teach, I wouldn't change the hours I work, nothing. Just the paperwork, if that was different (IK:P9:T2-I).* There is a change in her sense of self. Subject to such excessive paperwork, she wishes as most teachers do, *that it was different.*

The findings are consistent with the literature on curriculum change and the intensification of work. The experience of intensification affects the teachers' identity and value systems. The proliferation of paperwork is viewed by them as unnecessary and

excessive and makes no real contribution to good teaching. The emphasis upon documentation and procedures leads to a sense of deprofessionalisation. They are resentful of the colonizing of their time by administrative demands. It is striking that Keri, Teri and Priscilla all grieve the loss of teaching time. Fiona, however, adapts to the increased workload through reducing her input into the teaching task. Both Keri and Teri are annoyed by management who seem oblivious to their increased workload and make unfair demands on their time. Teri feels there is neither rest nor relaxation and she is running blind because she has to meet school deadlines. She is frustrated that adjustments are not made by the school management. Galton and MacBeath (2008:8) believe that rapid change calls for a quality of leadership, able to 'resist the juggernaut' (Frost 2005 in Galton & MacBeath 2008:8), 'strong enough to maintain an educational vision with moral integrity and intellectual subversion'. The intensification impact as experienced by the teachers can be mediated by the school and demands can be negotiated.

7.3.4 Pupils (P-pupils)

This sub-theme shows that the emotional demands on teachers in this study have become more intense. The students they teach are more vulnerable, uncertain of their values and lack motivation to learn. The teachers report that the demands on their time and energy are increasing as class sizes increase; the student population becomes more diverse and the need for new curricular and teaching approaches increases. They are teaching students of different abilities as a result of mainstreaming 'special needs' students. They have to deal with different social issues and some feel overwhelmed by the demands of their caring roles. The teachers report that they are unable to motivate students. Given unresponsive bureaucracies and unending mandates it is hard to romanticize teaching today. 'Despite difficult conditions, people continue to choose teaching for what may seem to be idealistic reasons: they love working with young people, they consider teaching a calling, they want to share their enthusiasm about learning and they want to shape the future '(Nieto 2005:3).

Keri is full of drive and filled with the desire to nurture transformation among her students: *I give of myself every lesson of every day (AK:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* Nowhere else in her extracts is the teaching act so powerfully portrayed as in: *... and I never want to stop.* 'Teaching may be tougher, more challenging, requiring greater resilience and tolerance, but the satisfaction derived from watching children learn and grow is still its primary reward' (Galton & MacBeath 2008:4). For Keri: *The self-fulfilment is much greater than anything else in my life.* One of the most gratifying aspects of teaching for Keri is seeing her students mature and becoming confident, acknowledge her as their teacher: *My greatest achievements are seeing the impact when children return year after year and I see their success.* Her self-evaluation reminds us that the excellent work that many teachers do is often overlooked, underestimated and invalidated.

In the absence of specialist care and expertise teachers have had to cope with ill-disciplined and troubled children and many have found this to be unsettling and intimidating. Keri writes: *I think my perspective on problem children has changed over the years (AK:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* Finding some emotional stability with troubled young people and establishing some common ground on which to communicate is important for her. *Problem children* feel alienated and excluded and aggressively reject authority figures. Yet, time and again Keri has had to respond in some way to their needs. The challenge was to assess their needs - the genuine from the fabricated: *I've definitely learnt how to sniff out real problems as opposed to children who are attention seekers.* Until all *problem children* are supported in learning it is better to attend to them than it is to give up on them. Changing one's perception of students and of teaching takes time and reflection, as is the case with Keri.

It is only when teachers recognize their responsibility as agents for change that teaching becomes an addictive vocation *(AK:P10:JAN2010:T2-P)*: *It's almost addictive to see someone that you've nurtured succeed and live a better life.* Keri experiences a sense of disquiet and acknowledges the limitations that teachers confront when their enthusiasm, their creativity and their dedication are worn down: *I hope that I never lose this passion*

for young people. Teaching is not only agonizingly difficult work requiring sacrifice and selflessness it is also deeply rewarding: *It's hard to give and see no immediate effect…I've realized the long term effects are more valuable and worth waiting for.*

Keri does not disguise the truth that every school day also involves a balancing act and uneven gains regarding student interest, discipline and effort. She has to deal with students who reject her and other authority figures. She acknowledges that *children don't all like you…don't all do what you ask…they don't behave unless you make them (IK:P8:2010:T2-P).* Yet, teachers have an obligation to 'conduct themselves as if something beneficial may be rubbing off on even the most recalcitrant student' (Hansen 1995:35). She feels pressured to be firm with them and to convince them to engage in meaningful work. Teaching in the face of such obstacles requires 'an inner resilience and a firm conviction in the value and purpose of service as a teacher' (p.69).

Teri finds it difficult to sustain her idealism and commitment and experiences one of the most defeating moments as a teacher: *I'm wondering if I'm a teacher for teenagers (IT:P4c:2010:T2-P).* In the face of perceived failure she says regretfully: *They steal a lot out of you and they give nothing.* She is disillusioned because: *You teach 200 learners. About twenty give back.* She feels she is giving but not receiving. Teri realizes she can have only a limited impact regardless of the time and energy she invests: *You have to push all the time, it's tiring.* Teaching becomes less tiring if students have the inner drive to develop and succeed. Teri feels despondent; there is a fragile balance between sacrifice and a need for her own survival. She says: *You have your life too.* Her teaching is connected to the reality that her students experience. Their teenage realities are fraught with difficulties and they 'exhibit challenging forms of behaviour' (Gewirtz 2002:103): *Sometimes they come sulking, they are drunk…from abusive families…are sad…don't want to learn.* Teri seems overwhelmed with pastoral and learning problems at her school. Despite the pressures she experiences, she makes time for her students: *When you reach out, they get shocked..*

It is not surprising that Teri is despondent. She feels stretched by behavioural concerns: *the discipline in the classroom is not desirable…classes are large. (JET:16FEB2010:T2-P).* Her discontentment further prevents her from achieving her purpose and that is effective teaching and learning: *you communicate that level of frustration to the learners.* Students have a high level of need. They cannot adequately perform all the tasks required of them: *Others can't even write... not supposed to be in mainstream…struggling within this group of learners (IT:P4c:2010:T2-P).* The practical difficulty is engaging appropriately with difference. 'There is a mismatch between her ideological commitments and the culture of the market and this throws up ethical dilemmas' (Gewirtz 2002:49): *You want to try so much to help them…you don't have time, you can't.*

Teri believes that discipline problems emanate from the integration of students from different ethnic backgrounds *(IT:P5:2010:T2-P).* She alludes to shifts in cultural beliefs and values of black students in racially integrated schools. Teri does not accept the existing order of things and comes to the conclusion that she *no longer promotes multi-cultural schools.* She problematises social practices and social structures that frame routines in schools. She states that different cultures communicate differently *because of the kind of leadership that another culture provides, like, for instance communication, discipline styles.* Black students remain confused as to what is socially appropriate: *their thinking starts to be clouded.* 'Resistance occurs when leaders do not see race or difference as an issue' (Blackmore 2010:56). Yet, it is within the confines of a school that a socially just and democratic society can emerge. In section 6.6, Teri articulates her view of racism and inequality: *No way that segregation can be abided after 1994…after the elections...problems will be solved…hopeful for the future (AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Transformation may be possible if leaders have the will to change organizational cultures.

Priscilla bemoans the fact that *the standard at which learners perform seem to drop each year (AP:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* Many questions have arisen about the extremely low

standards of achievement of South African schools and the quality and value of OBE. Priscilla's concern is that many *learners settle for the bare minimum (AP:P10:JAN2010:T2-P)* while Fiona believes that: *acumen and learner attitudes have changed (AF:P10:JAN2010:T2-:P).* What we have to keep in mind is that students arrive at the school gates with different attitudes, motivations and needs. The increasing diversity of students brings its own formidable challenges.

The classroom remains a space in which Priscilla tries to make sense of herself in relation to her students: *It has not changed the fact that I love teaching… interacting with these young adults but I am definitely more stressed and exhausted (AP:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* Women teachers have never stopped caring for their students. Tamboukou (2000:472) claims that the 'tasks of care turn out to be the source of much of the frustration women teachers feel today is expressed as tiredness'. Priscilla's tiredness is reflected in the words *stressed and exhausted, increasingly difficult to function*.

Fiona shares a similar anxiety with Teri who is concerned about slower learners: *I now teach at a slower pace (AF:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* She experiences a struggle in reconciling the pressure to cover the content of a mandated curriculum as compared to the pace in which individual students learn. There are implications for the complexity of programming and preparation*: I have to adjust lessons and questions to lower grade kind of questions.* Meeting complex individual needs and having to maintain standards upsets the flow of teaching and learning. Fiona reminisces about her teaching in days gone by: *as compared to the past*. However, with chronic overload, *huge classes* and the number of classes one has to teach, trying to maintain that commitment in which teacher and student were intrinsically connected is not sustainable: *Huge classes mean I don't interact personally.* It is not just the pressure of intensification but also the impact that it has on her perceptions of her capacity to perform her teaching role. She experiences a sense of disquiet, even detachment: *I hardly know any of their names - as compared with the past when I knew each learner by name.* Making each student feel accepted and valued requires time and effort and is part of a secure pedagogical relationship.

It is not surprising that Teri is despondent. She feels stretched by behavioural concerns, as well as a high level of need of her students *(IT:P4c:2010:T2-P)*. They cannot adequately perform all the tasks required of them: *Others can't even write…not supposed to be in mainstream…they see themselves struggling within this group of learners.* Elsewhere, Fiona mentions that *our school is in the middle of gangland and many learners both male and female belong to gangs (JEF:26FEB2010:P).* Hargreaves (2003:xvi) points out that the world that schools serve is characterized by growing social instability. Like Teri's, Fiona's school intake is mainly working class students, students with behavioural difficulties and second language speakers. What may appear to be that *I.Q. levels…have dropped* may be compounded by these factors. Therefore, it is important that the root causes of educational underachievement be addressed.

Teri and Fiona attest to the morale-eroding effects of everyday disruption of learning. Discipline problems are often deeply rooted and cannot be fixed overnight. Dealing with conflict wears them down, and the time needed to enforce discipline is seen as detracting from teaching. Priscilla states: *Lack of discipline has made it increasingly difficult to function at an optimal level…each year it seems to worsen (AP:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* Teri is frustrated by this lack of discipline *(JET:16FEB2010:T2-P).* The problems are exacerbated by budget cuts which meant an increase in class sizes. Lack of respect for authority is creating new challenges for teachers. They feel that their efforts are counter-productive. Student disengagement is more likely to be perceived as behavioural problems rather than academic or social problems.

Fiona complains that discipline is a major problem since *the ban on corporal punishment (JEF:25FEB2010:T2-P).* Maintaining discipline before corporal punishment was outlawed in schools was a lot easier. In the absence of corporal punishment teachers feel disempowered to institute discipline in schools: *Teachers have no power and most of the other attempts i.e., detention etc to enforce discipline are difficult to manage*. In order to achieve control in classrooms effective alternative measures must be embraced. The stark

reality is that different measures *take time and effort on the part of the educator to enforce many of us have neither.* Teachers have other more pressing issues to contend with so that implementing creative measures to deal with discipline becomes even more burdensome.

Summary

The classroom is a very difficult place and the demands it makes on the teacher are wholly underestimated, if not completely ignored. When teachers despair it is rarely because their understanding of children has failed them, it is because the structures of schooling ignore their needs. The findings show that lack of student motivation and poor student behaviour can induce feelings of stress. Discipline problems are often deeply rooted and cannot be fixed overnight. Dealing with conflict wears them down. Priscilla's cry is that *the lack of discipline of learners has made it increasingly difficult to function at an optimal level…each year it seems to worsen*. Teri is also alarmed by the lack of discipline: *The discipline in the classroom is not desirable.* For Fiona it is undoubtedly *since the ban on corporal punishment that discipline is a major problem.* Keri's experience is not as debilitating as that of the others.

When teachers are not able to form personal and educational relationships with their pupils owing to workload, class sizes and inclusion policies, they experience feelings of guilt. Teri and Priscilla lose heart when students resist or reject learning despite their best efforts. Desegregation and the mainstreaming of students of different needs and abilities have an impact on their work. Teri, Priscilla and Fiona are caught between a highly prescriptive agenda and students who need to be coerced and cajoled into engaging with schoolwork. Students demand more of teachers physically, emotionally and intellectually. As a result, morale is low, relationships conflictual and they are left with little energy to develop appropriate classroom materials and pedagogical practices. However, the teachers show that 'the sense of vocation can be actualized in even the most unpromising conditions' (Hansen 1995:69). Despite working in an aversive context, Priscilla sums up

her feeling thus: *It has not changed the fact that I love teaching and the interacting with these young adult, but I am definitely more stressed and exhausted.*

Success at school is also influenced by socio-economic and discursive environments in which schools are located. Teri's and Fiona's teaching is connected to the reality that their students experience. Their teenage realities are fraught with difficulties and they 'exhibit challenging forms of behaviour' (Gewirtz 2002). Teri says: *Sometimes they come sulking, they are drunk…from abusive families…are sad…don't want to learn…when you reach out, they get shocked* because they may not feel worthy of such attention.

7.3.5 Management support (MS-management support)

In this section, I describe teachers' positive and negative examples of the influence of leadership in a school. There is evidence that school leaders contribute to the professional and personal wellbeing of their staff members.

'The role of headteacher is pivotal in a school, central to any understanding of the micro-politics of schools' (Ball 1987:80) and of school ambience. Evans (1998:61) argues that it is not about skills, rules or procedures but hinges upon the personality of heads and their relationships with others, especially their capacity to lead by example and the capacity to embody key values. The data suggest that some principals 'operate within a framework of compliance with some kind of ideological correctness – trying to pursue equality, and at the same time being influenced by complex subjectivities and loyalties' (Boulton & Coldron 1998:150). The teachers challenge stereotypical assumptions about management style. They provide both positive and negative examples of their influence.

Job satisfaction and commitment may be increased when heads promote autonomy and freedom. Keri says: *I work in a school where there's a lot of flexibility (IK:P12a:2010:T2-MS).* A school's professional climate has an impact on teacher reflectivity mirrored in Keri's excerpt that not all the teachers feel the same about the

flexibility in her school: *Some of my colleagues wouldn't agree with me.* Dissonance between what is espoused and what is demanded may give rise to low morale: *I'm allowed to be myself but it comes at a price.* It seems that the teachers feel constrained rather than supported by school policy and decision-making: *You're given freedom to do X, but 'we want it like this, like that' so there's actually no freedom…I'm still following structure.*

Teri is unhappy that she is excluded from the decision making process at school and is, therefore, not validated and affirmed as Head of Department *(ITQ12:2010:MS).* Teri learns that loyalties co-exist with commitment to authority: *You come in and they've been there*, meaning that as a newcomer into the fold you are the outsider within. Her concern could be linked to her commitment to a management style which is consultative and collaborative. She says: *There are other things that they decide on which is just right.* Teri continues: *"I'm not fighting for equality but let the information be shared equally".* Teri wants to claim her voice, but she says: *With respecting the portfolios they hold, sometimes you decide to be quiet.* She feels underestimated personally and professionally. She has to defer to her principal to protect the relationship, although her interests at the level of practice lie with her colleagues - 'the struggle of who gets authority and keeps authority' (Cammack & Phillips 2002:129): *You have a problem as the manager too…you can't say anything…it's a bit of a contradiction.* She is aware that the legitimacy of management decisions can be challenged by the staff: *I'll be opening up a can of worms.*

Priscilla reveals the need for a supportive climate as necessary strategies for change: *Mr T was old school, anything modern that the learners would want, I am a younger teacher…there was quite a few obstacles (IP:P12c:2010:T2-MS).* She views him as autocratic and reluctant to change his ideas. He did not involve students and younger staff in decision-making: *He had a set way of doing a thing and it worked, but you need to have change.* Priscilla acknowledges that, in contrast, the woman principal supported change initiation and implementation: *With our new principal, she's more open to*

change. Priscilla defers to authority: *I understood that with experience, he knew better*. Her principal had the opportunity to provide the context and conditions to revitalise her sense of self professionally and personally. He was, however, *old school,* and new times require alternative forms of teacher professionalism and teacher identities to develop based upon more participatory relationships.

Leadership that provides challenges and meaningful direction is less likely to constrain teachers' professional development *(IF:P12:2010:T2-MS).* Fiona uses words like *flexible, no stumbling blocks, let you run with it, no resistance,* to describe management's approach to fostering school culture. *When I was running the school newspaper with ideas, they just kind of let you run with it.* In the case of teachers whose level of engagement in their work was low, it is only in matters that impacted directly on teaching that they wanted to be involved: *Many of us feel we kind of do what we came here to do and that is to teach.* Some teachers' visions stop at the classroom door: *Beyond that we're not really interested…in empowering the kids, changing things in society, within the school system.* Fiona's focus was essentially classroom bound, and did not, for the most part, encompass school-wide issues. She acknowledges that she and her colleagues were impervious to prevailing circumstances and situations at her school. Her low level of engagement has influenced and shaped her identity.

Summary

The findings suggest that the leadership effect on the quality of teacher commitment is important. Both Keri and Fiona appreciated the autonomy and freedom given by their heads. However, Keri feels that *freedom came at a price.* Teri provides positive and negative examples of leadership support during her first year as head of department at the school. Her experience went against the grain of democratic leadership. She feels alienated as a member of the management team since she was not part of decision making processes. Similarly, Priscilla's experience reveals that not all heads provide opportunities to allow teachers to develop. Both Teri's and Priscilla's principals held

longstanding positions. Fiona's principal provides opportunities for her to develop. Her narrative reflects that, besides their teaching, the teachers in her school are uninterested *in empowering the kids, changing things in society, within the school system.* It is unsettling that such disengagement occurs in a context where teachers' support can be transformative.

7.3.6 Discrimination in the workplace (D-discrimination)

In some of the teachers' narratives about everyday incidents and events, they describe how they have either experienced or witnessed discriminatory practices in their institutions. Their daily interactions are useful in identifying contexts in which discriminatory practices happen and how teachers cope with them. The teachers reveal episodes in which gender plays a crucial role in judging and discriminating.

Keri feels that the male teachers are more valued much to her chagrin: *I sometimes feel that my male counterparts in the workplace are treated differently to me, almost unfairly (AK:P13:JAN2010:T2-D).* Acker (1994:81) reports that there is evidence of a low regard for women teachers and Keri reinforces this point: *especially in primary schools, male teachers are revered with god-like awe because of their rarity.* Her experience is that her male colleagues are subversive and that there are no repercussions mainly because there are so few of them at her school. They are the protected minority and management wants to ensure the retention of male teachers: *they get away with being slack,* especially that they do not always adhere to the requirements regarding administrative work: *they cruise along when it comes to the formality required in administration.* The perception is that generally women have to work harder than men for equivalent rewards. Otherwise, *the men I work with work as hard as I do.* At her school, more is demanded of the men *in terms of invigilation and sport.*

Teri uses the discourse of patriarchy to describe gender relations at her school *(AT:P13:JAN2010:T2-D): Generally men are recognized as heads…in our school there*

is no difference…men are in the forefront…women are acknowledged. She says: *both genders are treated equally…the distribution of work is equally the same.* In Teri's school, regardless of gender *every individual is expected to protect the mission statement…and serve learners.* Teri reflects on her entry to the school and the support she received from her principal who was willing to assist her with *any problem that* she *faced (IT:P12c:2010:T2-D).* Although she perceives there is gender equality of responsibility, she still feels that when she seeks support from the principal, she acts like a child going to a father. There is, however, evidence of a changing subjectivity and the reinvention of self when she realises: *if I'm going to come to this guy all the time, I'll be like a child going to report to the father.* The word *father* embodies disciplinary power. This does not mean she can be free of such power but it opens up a space where her story can be told differently: *I'm going to lose the point, I'm not going.* Teri is of firm resolve to confront her problems and find her own solutions: *Other issues I had to deal with on my own, others I had to record.*

Teri's experience of racial equality is different *(AT:P14:JAN2010:T2-D).* Teri sees herself as possessing the skills and qualities for the position of Head of Department and thinks that the opposition to her promotion post is not legitimate: *I was discriminated against by educators in my department because of them not succeeding in the management post.* She had to overcome what she saw as mounting obstacles to her successful application. Her perception was that she failed to receive the assurance of support from her black colleagues: *educators of colour had a problem…they lacked co-operation and highlighted that they are well experienced.* In an environment where commitment to equal opportunities is espoused, it was still possible for her to feel isolated and disadvantaged and not worthy of the position: *I was discriminated against because I'm…African, they would insinuate that I was incapable.* Through all of this can be traced a commitment to caring and collaboration in ways of thinking and acting: *I never focused on negativity – I embrace and encourage them…our main focus…being the best educators and serve the learners.*

Teri feels discriminated against by the management team: *There's a level of discrimination (in management) (IT:P12b:JAN2010:T2-D).* Although she is outspoken Teri worries about the hostile lack of support from her colleagues: *Being the woman that I am, I don't entertain it, because I speak my mind.* Fiona similarly makes it clear that if there were gender-biased practices she would make her *voice heard*, thus evoking a sense of agency: *Being a strong woman I would resist that (IF:P12b:JAN2010:T2-D).* Teri identifies a sense of resentment in her *department*, leading to an erosion of her self-esteem: *they were not totally accepting of me, based on the experience they have (IT:P12b:JAN2010:T2-D).* She realizes she might be seen as lacking the skills and experience to function as HOD: *I'm from a junior secondary school.* Her colleagues did not allow her any room for professional growth: *They never gave me a bit of growth…you want to learn.* She is aware that as HOD *you're supposed to lead* but departmental rivalry prevented her from carrying out her role efficiently. The scrutiny made her *feel claustrophobic because you're new, you want to adjust.* She learns that respect and authority are not automatically afforded to status, but are given by colleagues.

Priscilla illustrates why her experiences are different from those of male teachers: *As a female educator I definitely work harder to maintain discipline at the school (AP:P13:JAN2010:T2-D).* Student misbehaviour takes the form of a direct challenge to a teacher's authority and, thereby their professional identity. Priscilla's experience is consistent with the claim that 'classroom management is a gendered engagement' (Oplatka & Atias 2007:56). Male teachers, she says, have a reputation for unquestioned discipline: *I have had to earn, manipulate, convince male learners to respect me…my male counterparts receive it merely with their presence and the fear they instill.* She points out how much gender plays a part in the construction of these constraints: *female educators have contributed in creating these barriers by allowing male educators to handle the discipline at school…it is simply easier.* Priscilla adds that because of these gender stereotypes *female educators who have…leadership roles…are now faced with a mammoth task of instilling that same respect in learners as that of their male counterparts.* Principals adopt leadership styles that are on a par with the social

expectations of each gender. Oplatka and Atias (2007:56) found that 'women principals attached a great significance to caring and emotional understanding, while men principals focused on assertive modes to handle misconduct in school'.

Interestingly, Fiona's response is similar to Priscilla's: *Males seem to naturally command more respect or fear in the classroom situation and this facilitates better discipline (AF:P13:JAN2010:T2-D).* Her use of the word, *naturally*, reveals the expectations of conventional gender roles.

Priscilla says she has *not experienced discrimination but witnessed it (AP:P14:JAN2010:T2-D).* Priscilla challenges racial discrimination and exclusionary practices at the school: *I am constantly forced to confront these subtle forms of discrimination, predominantly racial*. Her use of the word *constantly* tells us that difference is not recognized and that the school has not been truly transformed.

Fiona's experience conveys the micro-processes which work against women's attainment of management positions: *I fought for this position (HOD) and it was given to a male teacher (IF:P12b:2010:T2-D).* She did not lack confidence in her abilities to function as HOD; it was *the main motivating factor*: *I had been the English teacher.* Her action in this situation was controlled by gender – what seems like choice being instead about constraint. She was the most obvious candidate for the position: *I did challenge the traditional structure that prefers males over females.*

Fiona does not work in a gender-hostile climate: *I haven't really experienced discrimination (IF:P12b:2010:T2-D).* The school, in fact, has a reputation for its concern with equality issues: *we are the dominant force at the school here…like family…there's accommodating of ideas.* Fiona thinks that women teachers' care extends beyond the call of duty: *female teachers have more to give and we make our voices heard more.* Women are not afraid of speaking up or displaying overt forms of resistance. Her narrative is replete with positive connotations to describe the women at work: *powerful as women;*

female teachers have more to give; make our voices heard more; dominant force; like family; accommodating. Fiona thinks that with gender equity *we are becoming more powerful as women rather than encountering any kind of opposition.*

Summary

Gender equity issues attracted increasing attention since post-apartheid 1994. Schools which mirrored society's patriarchal ideology had to change to combat gender discrimination.

Fiona and Priscilla comment on the management of discipline by male colleagues at their schools and how this may reproduce the stereotype of men and women. Priscilla: *I work harder to maintain discipline…my male counterparts receive it with their presence.* Fiona: *Males seem to naturally command more respect or fear.*

The data reveal that not all teachers experience overt gender discriminatory practices. Keri feels that the male teachers in her school are more privileged mainly because they are few in number. Priscilla does not *experience discrimination but witnessed it…I am forced to confront these subtle forms of discrimination, predominantly racial.* Schools are still racialised and Priscilla reminds us of the discrepancy between myth and reality, i.e., what is and what ought to be. Until Fiona lodged a grievance against a male head of department she, too, did not experience any discrimination. Fiona believes that being female worked finally in her favour to being appointed head of department: *I did challenge the traditional structure that prefer males over females…with gender equity we are becoming more powerful as women.*

Teri uses the discourse of patriarchy to describe hierarchical relations in her school: *Generally men are seen and recognized as heads…in our school there is no difference…men…in the forefront…women…acknowledged.* Teri is disillusioned by discriminatory practices at her school and experiences it as gendered and racialised. She

is reminded that regardless of achievement, qualification, or status she remains at the margins. Teri perceived opposition from management. She resists authoritarian practices and searches for new understandings and actions: *…I don't entertain it…I speak my mind…I'm a black South African…insinuate I was incapable. (AT:P14:JAN2010:T2-D).* Teri's response to such discrimination is conciliatory in contrast to *I speak my mind* and is evident of an ethic of commitment and care. Teri experiences institutional isolation and feels excluded from the inner circle and decision-making despite her position as head of department. Her position is judged in light of her race. She implies that she does not receive the benefit of the doubt, and must demonstrate her abilities whatever her position, education or experience. She feels excluded from the supportive network of her department: *With my department they were not totally accepting of me…they never gave me a bit of growth…you want to learn…you're supposed to lead (IT:P12b:2010:T2-D).*

7.3.7 Collegiality and co-operation (CC-collegiality and cooperation)

In the sub-theme on collegiality and co-operation I focus on the key roles that colleagues play in supporting one another in an increasingly complex and challenging work context. Collaboration involves interactions between teachers within, or across, different subjects, status levels or friendship groups. Sometimes, a teacher's job satisfaction and motivation may be severely tested by a lack of collegial support.

Hargreaves (1994:426) observes that the 'new professional is more predisposed towards collegiality and collaboration'. The findings show that collaboration was formal and informal, personal and professional. Teachers collaborate in different ways – giving and receiving assistance, sharing ideas and resources. The teachers found that collaborative associations provided a useful form of support in situations of uncertainty. However, two of the participants experienced a culture of division.

Keri comments on the spontaneity and solidarity that comes from being part of a group *(IK:P14:2010:T2-CC).* This type of working relationship emerges from the teachers themselves and point to the internal dynamics of the way teachers use their autonomy. Keri says: *We enjoy being together…work well together…help one another…stand in the firing line for one another.* Clearly, not all teachers are like-minded, according to Keri as is clear in her comment: *Obviously there are exceptions, there are people who won't co-operate.* Staffroom group dynamics give one a view of the school's collegial climate. Staffrooms foster informal relations that build trust, solidarity and fellow-feeling among teachers. Keri's experience of such staffroom dynamics is evident in her utterance: *The staffroom – we laugh, we joke.* Priscilla also emphasizes this mutually emphatic connection when she recounts: *We vent (IP:P14:2010:T2-CC).* Regular meetings in Keri's school are productive in terms of sharing ideas and gaining support: *Once a week we have a meeting where we air our views (IK:P14:2010:T2-CC).* She describes staff relationships as such: *Every family has its ups and downs, we tend to offend one another…but we're a good team.*

Teri's experience is starkly different *(IT:P12c:2010:T2-CC).* Teachers' working relationships are not spontaneous or voluntary, but rather a form of 'collaborative pretence'. Working together is a matter of compulsion which (Hargreaves 1994:137) calls 'contrived collegiality': *On face value, you're not going to see it…we're laughing…there's a very subtle energy.* Teri speaks of a rupture in staff relations: *we're still struggling with that again…we don't trust because we don't trust ourselves.* We hear a disconnection from self, a self that is at a loss in the phrase: *I don't know.* The teachers at Teri's school mistrust the principal and doubt his integrity and his attempts to create a sense of unity: *The principal said he's open to change…the staff is not trusting that he's changing* because they see an emphasis on impression management and no real change. Interpersonal relationships are far from stable and staff members are suspicious of one another: *We don't trust because we don't trust ourselves*. Such discord when voiced can open the door for increased communication and understanding.

Collaboration secures effective implementation of internal and external demands. Teachers' own motivations and attitudes to collegiality are relevant. Priscilla says: *Everything gets done on time…checked so often… it's monitored…someone reminds you and makes sure that the work gets done (IP:P14:2010:T2-CC).* It becomes the collective responsibility of teachers to ensure *a very smooth running school.* The shift is from direct, to more participative, forms of control. The reality is that *even if you're not co-operative, you have to be.* Teachers use collegial approaches to their work as well as forms of covert resistance against prescriptions from the head. Priscilla disrupts the notion of *a very smooth running school*: *Mr T always said he doesn't like corridor talking, but it happens.* Resistances are not publicly voiced to the principal but are expressed in casual hallway and staffroom conversations. There is collective engagement as teachers at the school interrogate institutional norms: *Dress code, discipline, our duties, we just break it apart. Other than school matters,* the teachers connect through mutual understanding and empathy: *It's also very cathartic…we vent, we'll have teachers crying in the staffroom…other teachers have a solution.*

Evident in Teri's and Fiona's excerpts is Hargreaves (1994:193) view that 'much of the way that teachers work together is in almost unnoticed and brief, frequent informal encounters, constitutive of the very way that the teacher's working life operates in the school'. Teri says: *We talk so often might not be formal where we're having meetings, but we update each other, especially my grade 12 teacher. (IT:P14:2010:T2-CC).* Fiona says: *We talk everyday…with your colleagues concerning the work…a lot of interaction within the subject (IF:P14:2010:T2-CC).*

Both Teri and Fiona speak of how collaborative cultures rest on human relations. Teri perceives that teachers are divided into separate, isolated racial groups: *I'll talk to people that I feel like talking to, it doesn't matter they're yellow, they're red (IT:P12c:2010:T2-CC).* Fiona who teaches in what was once a predominantly coloured school is perturbed by the rise of dissident voices: *With the influx of black teachers to our schools is this resistance to guidance…we've had three issues where they refuse to co-operate*

(IF:P14:2010:T2-CC). The words, *our schools*, speak of what were once apartheid schools. Resistance works in opposition to learning and limits the potential for growth. She is concerned that being resistant to improving one's work may lead to a lowering of standards: *That's never happened before…our standard has been consistent.* Collaboration offers us the space to build expertise. Fiona's experience is that at her school generally feedback and comparison create opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own practice and to reformulate it more critically: *We've been willing to learn from each other…it's just assisting and aiding*.

Summary

Teachers' working relationships are a form of 'collaborative pretence', in which there is 'an avoidance of a public outworking of beliefs and values about teaching and particular lived ideologies' (Smyth 1991:329). Collaborative work relations may not be a scheduled activity. The findings suggest that teachers like and benefit from working in informal collaborative cultures. The participants report that they learn from each other, sharing and developing their expertise together. From Teri's and Fiona's cases we see that collaborative cultures are not 'cozy, complacent and politically quiescent' (Hargreaves 1994:195). Cultural dynamics contribute to the disharmony. At Priscilla's school, teachers use collegial approaches to their work as well as forms of covert resistance against prescriptions from the head, evident in*: Mr T always said he doesn't like corridor talking, but it happens.* Fractured relationships at Teri's school compromise their ability to challenge existing practices. Keri and Priscilla attest to the spontaneity and solidarity they experience. Keri says: *We'll stand in the firing line for one another,* while at Priscilla's school, staff meetings are discussed in detail: *Dress code, discipline, our duties, we just break it apart.*

7.4 Chapter summary

In this chapter I described critical influences on teachers' professional lives. I focused on some key influencing factors outlined by Day and Gu (2010:52).

1. Personal Contexts and health-related issues
2. Professional Ideals and Ambitions
3. Practice Settings

The first sub-theme focused on personal life contexts. In the sub-set, *Becoming a teacher*, I examined the reasons why the women chose teaching as a career. I found that the main motive for entering teaching was related to class, gender and historic period. The next sub-set, *Turning points,* examined critical experiences in the teachers' life histories. The teachers recalled turning points which altered their life course.

The second sub-theme, *Professional ideals and ambitions*, described the ideals and ambitions that the teachers cherished even though they may be difficult to realize. It was evident that teaching was a vocation or calling.

The third sub-theme 'Practice settings' related to factors embedded in the teachers' workplaces. The first sub-set, *Experience of change*, analysed the teachers' experiences of curriculum change and how it affected their teaching. I found that some aspects of curriculum change fit within their belief about teaching, while other aspects conflicted with what they desired in their work. The second sub-set, *Expanded roles*, examined how the expansion of work roles and responsibilities affected their home and school lives. Following from this, the third sub-set, *Intensification*, considered the escalation of

pressures, expectations and controls concerning the teachers' work. It was found that the teachers are resentful of the colonising of their time by administrative demands.

The fourth sub-set, *Pupils,* related to factors associated with pupils, such as pupil intake characteristics, pupil attitudes and motivations, pupil behaviour and teacher-pupil relationships. Desegregation and the mainstreaming of students of different needs and abilities created its own particular set of problems. The students' lack of motivation and indiscipline left teachers feeling frustrated and over-stressed. These tensions impacted on teaching. However, the teachers did not lose sight of their sense of vocation.

Management support was the fifth sub-set under Practice Settings. This section examined the role of management within the prevailing policy environment. It emphasized that the role and sense of identity and purpose of school managers was being redefined. What was conveyed was that the leadership effect on the quality of teacher commitment is important. Further to this, ineffective decision making structures in schools exacerbated internal relations.

The sixth sub-set was *Discrimination in the workplace.* It examined the extent of discriminatory practices and how the teachers coped. Not all the teachers experienced overt discrimination, and those who did, confronted such practices.

Collegiality and cooperation is the seventh sub-set. This section showed that collaboration was not necessarily scheduled activities and that the teachers benefited from working in informal collaborative cultures. In some instances, cultural dynamics contributed to disharmony and ineffective working relationships.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THEME THREE: HOME AND SCHOOL

Three of the teachers in my study are mothers, two being single parents. One of the participants lives with her partner. Their quest for meaning in their working lives has been complicated and enriched by the multiple responsibilities of work and family. As we shall see 'women's teaching work, professional and personal lives and roles remain contradictory, ambiguous and challenging' (Prentice 1999:37).

8.1 Teaching: A good fit for women (f-Fit)

Teaching has been perceived as an attractive occupation for women because they can combine work and home with a minimum of conflict. This section discusses whether the teachers see teaching as a good fit for women.

Women's desire to become teachers stems from a belief that teaching would allow them to accommodate their family obligations. Not all the participants felt that teaching as a career choice fit in with their roles as mothers, wives or partners. They acknowledge the demands of teaching which prevent them from spending time with their families. It seems that conventional wisdom concerning what constitutes masculinity and femininity, mothering and fathering, still have a strong influence upon all aspects of school life and upon teachers' perceptions and experiences of their work.

Keri thinks that *thirty years ago, it was an excellent career for women, because there weren't the demands that there are today (IK:P6A:2010:T3-F).* This perception may be linked to notions of job flexibility, suitability of a teaching job in conjunction with meeting family life and childcare responsibilities. *Teaching isn't what it used to be:* Not because the impulse to teach has diminished but because the pressures are qualitatively

different from former times. Keri speaks of the imposition of new managerial discourses and the demands of performativity: *I think about how teachers work now, in terms of paperwork…assessments…dress professionally…behave in a certain way, it's almost very corporate in its way.* The notion of teaching as a gendered profession is well-known: *But I think it's a good fit for women who want to have families.* Keri is convinced that even though teaching has been perceived as women's work, *women shouldn't go into teaching because they're women.* Rather, the decision to teach must come from a place of knowing and desiring: *They should go into teaching because that's what they want to do.*

'Teaching, as women's work', is seen as not only instructing children in school subjects, but nurturing the spirit and character of families and communities (James 2010:522). Teri believes that *teaching for women is good…we have a lot to do in terms of gaining confidence, being prepared at all times and passionate about teaching itself (IT:P6A:2010:T3-F).* James (p.523) points out that there are 'dangers in accepting the construction of teaching as women's work as it is typically conceived in a patriarchal world as it results in the devaluing of teaching as a profession'. Teri feels that we need to invest fully in our practices. In alluding to women's *gaining confidence* Teri may be implying that since feminised professional work is devalued women's 'claims to professionalism has become fragile and threatened' (Murray 2006:391). The notion of teaching as a natural extension of women's traditional roles in the home is implicit in the following extract: *As women, being naturals we're good. We nurture.* Her perception is that working with and relating to children in a nurturing manner is seen as being natural for women.

Priscilla feels, too, that despite assumptions about women's natural tendency toward care work, teaching should not be ascribed to women: *I don't think it should be a profession for women (IP:P6A:2010:T3-F).* Moreover, secondary school teaching is like swimming upstream: *Teaching in a high school is very stressful.* She points out that there are tensions in women's efforts to negotiate their roles as mothers and teachers. *And if it's a good profession for women and we're going to go home and be with the children, I don't*

think we can say that. Priscilla's experiences do not fit harmoniously with the idea that teaching is compatible with motherhood. She finds that negotiating public and private life leaves her feeling stressed, exhausted and guilty as a mother, wife and teacher: *when I go home, I'm still stressed…I probably have the time, but I don't have the energy to give my children and…my husband that attention.*

Fiona also holds the view that teaching is *a good career if you're planning to start a family (IF:P6A:2010:T3-F).* Bartlett (2004:566) makes the point that teaching is supposedly a good career for a mother for its presumed compatibility with home life. She compares the hours a woman has to work *in the private sector* with those of teachers. The advantage is that although she has to complete work at home she is able to be with her children: *So, at least I can do my schoolwork at home, while supervising my kids.*

Although Teri and Fiona feel that teaching is a good fit for women, they counteract this belief by emphasizing their financial strain. Low salaries constitute a threat to their lifestyle and personal accomplishment. It results in an inability to manage financial pressures. It leads to dissatisfaction and a subtle erosion of commitment to their work. It is why some teachers embark on second jobs. The teachers point to a mismatch between salaries and the demands of teaching.

Teri says: *The money part of it…my career, it's not giving us enough (IT:P17:2010:T3-F).* Teri voices her discontent that excessive work demands are not congruent with her income: *with the load of work that we have, if it was paying I would save for a holiday.* The frightening consequence of not earning an adequate salary is diminished commitment to the teaching task and to the detriment of students: *if we were earning okay, I would really focus and give it my all.* The dilemma for her is that it limits her lifestyle and she has to constantly balance her choices: *you find yourself split…it doesn't satisfy you materially, if you buy a car, you can't get a house.* The desperation that it engenders is that: *You're always looking at other avenues…you don't need that.* She believes in not only sacrificing oneself to one's job but in fair remuneration as well: *It's*

okay to give, but it's okay again to receive. The implications are far reaching so long as salary fails to alleviate the frustration she experiences of being financially constrained: *I've thought about another job…Part-time, if it's not something that I love, let it be.* Fiona says*: the money issues that exacerbated everything else (IF:P11:2010:T3-F). Meagre salaries mean that we're not paying bills…it's going to impact on everything in your life.* Fiona's financial constraints influenced her lifestyle to a great degree. She tutored to rake in extra money to come by which often left her exhausted to cope with the daily demands of teaching.

Summary

The teachers' comments make reference to the pervasive belief that women enter teaching because it offers the flexibility of time that fit well with family obligations. It is believed that work conditions such as a short workday and holidays enable teachers to meet their work, and home obligations without major disruptions. Therefore, it is an ideal job for women who want to devote time to their families. However, the results of this study tell a more complicated story. Keri is of the opinion that: *thirty years ago, it was an excellent career for women, because there weren't the demands that there are today (IK:P6A:2010:T3-F).* Despite the demands of teaching, she capitulates: *But I think it's a good fit for women who want to have families.* In contrast, Priscilla says quite vehemently: *I don't think we can say that (IP:P6A:2010:T3-F).* Priscilla's experience was that she could not blend the roles harmoniously. Teri invokes the discourse of teaching as acceptable women's work. The history of the teaching profession contains this discourse: *As women, being naturals we're good. We nurture. (IT:P6A:2010:T3-F).* The discourse defining women as caregivers is associated with the assertion that women were born to teach. By invoking it, Teri perpetuates the notion that teaching is a gendered space. The discourse of teaching as women's work has implications for the teachers as it controls their identities as teachers.

The teachers' anxiety concerning their professional competence is heightened by a value system that lists self-esteem with salary and social standing. Teri and Fiona are bitter about inadequate salaries because they cannot meet their financial commitments. Fiona speaks of the constant struggle *that money wasn't enough to just afford you peace of mind, when it comes to doing what you need to.* Teri complains that teacher salaries are incompatible with excessive work demands. She feels forced to embark on a second job to supplement her income. She associates her lower commitment with unfair remuneration. The low status accorded to teaching is linked to low salaries.

8.2 Women and time

Hargreaves (1994:15) maintains that 'one of the most basic, constitutive features of teachers' work is that of time'. Time determines the rhythm of work. A complaint of many teachers is the shortage of time. Women have been described as 'time-poor' (Edwards 1993:64 in Tamboukou 2000:471). This sub-theme considers the significance of time restrictions in the lives of these teachers and the way their lives are structured by specific space/time regulations.

8.2.1 Time pressures (TP: time pressures)

Pressure, anxiety and lack of time are effects that teachers mention which are consonant with stringent demands, increased accountability, more responsibilities and increased amounts of paperwork. Participants wrote of one activity after another giving a frenetic sense of how compressed their time was. Keri writes: *What a hectic day! I am so exhausted and marks are due soon…this week has been so busy (JEK:12FEB2010:T3-TP).*

Teri reflects on the quality of her work as a result of being increasingly controlled by a mandated curriculum: *I want to be on time and organized with everything – I do – but really our curriculum does not give that opportunity (JET:16FEB2010:T3- TP).* To comply with administrative demands she finds herself cutting corners to save time. She

experiences a sense of having betrayed a personal standard: *deadlines to be met, work…to be done in the classroom…it needs time to complete work but I find myself rushing.*

Yet again, Priscilla echoes the voices of Keri and Teri. Time seems to fly. Her inner sense of time is at variance with clock time: *Everything seems to be rushed and against the clock (JEP:8MAR2010:T3-TP).* She confides her doubts to keep up and the pervasive fear that administrative demands will not be met: *Sat for half an hour trying to organize my marking that is due...if it takes this long to organize…how long will it take to actually do.* The lack of time has significant implications for her: *My admin and marking is piling up…I am worried if I can handle it (JEP:9MAR2010:T3:TP).*

The intensification of teachers' work has led to an increase in assessment tasks and the lengthening of the working day. Fiona says: *Assessment tasks are much more… more marking means that my home time is infringed upon (JEF:26FEB2010:T3-TP).* Fiona laments the arduous task of marking: *On average I have about 200 to 250 tasks per week to mark…each task takes about 10-15 minutes to assess…this is almost physically impossible.* With simultaneous demands and scarcity of time, there comes resistance. There is overt yet superficial compliance with subject demands: *I have resorted to 'superficial' marking, especially of writing tasks, essays etc...I read only the 1st and last paragraphs then skim through the rest.* Fiona experiences an intense sense of loss in that work leaves no time for a private life: *no time to rest, no time for fun, no time for friends, hardly any time for family anymore...this isn't living – this is existing only (JEF:27/28FEB2010:T3-TP).*

All four participants express similar concerns as they try to cope with the increase in curriculum and assessment demands. They experience time in a way that conflicts with the administrator's innovation schedules. To the teacher, the time expectations built into the innovation seem excessive. We see that teachers' lives are highly structured by specific space/time regulations. Time for these teachers is a scarce resource. 'The emergence of time as a regulator of activities in school, may provide a basic socialization

into subordination to time in other institutional contexts' (Ball et al 1984 in Tamboukou 2000:473). The organization of time in schools affects how women teachers structure both their private and public lives. 'The question of the expenditure of time is not simply quantitative; it is strictly structured by the time requirements of others' lives' (Edwards 1993:64 in Tamboukou 2000:473). Tamboukou makes the point that:

> Women feel obliged to conform to specific time arrangements, since time does not belong to them. They are expected to offer time rather than 'have' it. The giving of time relates the female self to others' lives. It is a symbol of caring. (2000:473)

In striving to negotiate time arrangements, Keri gives voice to her concerns: *Miguel (her spouse) is stressing about school…I will help him…but I have to find time... I must make time for Miguel (JEK:14FEB2010:T3-TP).* Women are reported to feel guilty about how they decide to allocate their time, about the responsibility of time combinations, 'of piecing together and coordinating the fragmented nature and strands of the demands of life' (Edwards 1993:73 in Tamboukou 2000:473).

Teri writes of her discontent with a chronic and persistent workload and a highly regulated and time-defined workday. She is caught in a time-bind and experiences a conflictual state of being: *I find I'm working all the time (JET:4MAY2010:T3-TP).* Besides work obligations, the apportioning of Teri's time includes care-giving to her mother: *With all this I have to see to my mum's well-being. I go to her some weekdays and Fridays certainly and cook for her.*

'Time is not simply gendered but constitutes public and private structures in different ways for different groups of women' (Holmes 2002:40). Tamboukou (2000:473) maintains that time is an important 'disciplinary technology in the lives of individuals and space/time is indeed of vital importance in the structuring of individual lives and attitudes'. The findings of this study align with much of the research mentioned in the

literature review (see chapter 3). For the two mothers in this study, domestic roles were difficult. Fiona who has teenage daughters found it easier to balance these roles. Teri who is single is part-time caregiver to her mother. Although she did not have the responsibilities of a husband and children her duties as daughter required time and attention. She finds it difficult to sustain a relationship with her partner. The participants complain about the lack of time for partners, children, family and friends. Keri and Teri come into conflict with their partners who feel neglected. The teachers find the struggle to manage and reconcile multiple roles stressful and exhausting and this limits their energy for schoolwork and, in the case of mothers, for effective parenting.

8.2.2 Coping with time pressures

This section mentions some of the time pressures the teachers experience. It foregrounds the teachers' experiences of trying to balance the time demands of home and school.

Keri's comment illustrates the personal dilemmas and sacrifices that she had to deal with while she was married: *I don't have the energy to do the work that I brought home, it will have to wait. I must make school lunches and then relax until Miguel gets here so that we can spend some time together (JEK:15FEB2010:T3-TP).* In confronting the time demands and pressures of work and home, Keri makes a personal choice that school *will have to wait,* thus making family a priority.

While she was married there was a great demand on her time and she seemed to hurry back and forth between her schoolwork and her home responsibilities: *I'd come home quickly and work, quickly throw supper together, feed him…keep him happy and then get back to what I do (IK:P10:2010:T3-TP).* Her time was not hers to claim and the admonishment is all too clear: *"Are you married to me, or that school?"* 'For male teachers, the consequences of teaching as work being linked with gendered, familial roles, are quite different and, in some respects, not as limiting' (Sikes 1998:89): *I was married to a teacher so school formed a huge part of our life.* Keri realized the

predicament she faced: *And it was a real wake-up call for me and so I don't take work home at all.* It is the norm to take work home, it is what teachers do. Similarly, Teri's experience is that schoolwork impinges on her private time to the extent that she becomes oblivious of her boyfriend's presence: *I do work at home…my boyfriend sometimes stops me to say, "I'm here."* She experiences increasing pressure from her partner which leads her to the conclusion that: *If you don't give yourself that time, you're not a happy woman (IT:P10:2010:T3-TP).* Keri feels constrained by her husband's expectations and is forced to adapt by extending her workday: *It used to be part of my life…you'll often see me in my classroom, that extra hour or two (IK:P10:2010:T3-TP).*

Keri learnt to separate school from home. By being able to do so, she was able to cope better when her marriage fell apart: *Once I step out of this gate in the afternoon I am no longer a teacher, I'm 'mom'… that's really important… as a single mom I really don't have time to work at home.* Priscilla, on the other hand, is cognizant of the work/home divide and recognizes the need to separate work from her personal life, but is not able to: *I try, when I leave at, say three o' clock, I try to say…this is my children's time."* Keri's role as single mother is demanding and exhausting work: *By the time my two children are in bed it's eight o' clock and I'm tired.* Given her responsibilities she says: *I don't want to sit up all night marking books.* She tries to manage multiple situations by sacrificing her free time in school. This leaves her little time to unwind: *I'd rather work in my breaks, my free periods, after school.* Keri is adamant that, *If you see me taking work home you must know that I have absolutely no choice.* At one level, she admits to a conscious decision not to spend time on school-related work in the evenings, yet she says: *I do research on the internet….I might set my papers at home…I might do that kind of thing (IK:P10:2010:T3-TP).* The repetition of the word, *might,* indicates a noncommittal. Her 'private duties seem to serve as a shelter, as a legitimate means to avoid being burned out, overwhelmed by an undefined and never-ending workload' (Gannerud 2001:61).

For both Teri and Priscilla work is all consuming. Teri says that work *does encroach on my private time…you're always thinking about that (work) (IT:P10:2010:T3-TP).*

Priscilla says: *all the time, all the time.* School responsibilities encroaches on her private time, and work is always on her mind: *weekends are not, totally, my own…I mark, I'm prepping… if there's a learner that's not responding to something, I'm thinking about it constantly (IP:P10:2010:T3-TP).* Teri speaks of the stress and anxiety she feels toward teaching: *So you want to get it over and done.* She experiences an endless cycle between home and school: *When you're just over it, something comes up…I'm not happy now…I'm thinking work already (IT:P10:2010:T3-TP).* Teri is overwhelmed by the pace and responsibilities of teaching. There is sometimes a resistance to face another school day, and a way in which she can restore herself is by not entering the school gate: *Sometimes, when I wake up I feel like absenting myself from work because I feel it stills my joy (JET:4MAY2010:T3-TP).*

Priscilla's concern for students who are not performing permeates her thoughts and she seeks alternatives to reach them: *If there's a learner that's not responding to something, I'm thinking about it constantly.* Priscilla is reflexive about her practice and we see how home and school is intertwined: *all the time…I can't, I can't really separate myself.* School dominates her waking moments: *But while I'm busy with them or cooking, I'm still thinking about something that happened, what I got to do…all the time.* Priscilla repeats the phrase *all the time* emphasizing the conflict that arises when she tries to fulfill both roles. Phrases such as, *thinking constantly* and *always thinking, (IP:P10:2010:T3-TP)* show that the teacher role is salient in their personal identity.

Priscilla reflects on her need for having time to spend with her spouse: She writes: *I am looking forward to our holiday at the end of this month, hopefully Siva and I can spend some time together (JEP:11MAR2010:T3-TP).* Implied in the utterance is that time is a rare commodity in Priscilla's life and she needs to escape from the accelerated pace in school to enjoy quality of life.

A way in which Priscilla curtails friction between work and home is by putting her needs aside: *I put myself last (IF:P11C:2010:T3-TP).* The expectation is that *if I can do*

everything else, then I can sort myself out later. Everything else would be a reference to work and home demands which takes priority in her life. Consistent with the literature that teachers usually resolved conflict between work and family demands in favour of the former, she says: *I've begun to put my children after school.* She feels guilt and unease but she justifies the compromise: *I know it's bad…this is my job…I feel I can make it up to them…I can't do it when it comes to school.* Managing multiple responsibilities is complicated, however, she attributes high importance to her work role: *If the matric marks are due, and Ethan wants to go to the movies, I need to do what's more important.* The teacher role is uppermost: *I have to prioritise*. Priscilla reduces the conflict between work and home by prioritizing demands usually in favour of work. The pressures of her work role make it difficult to meet the demands of family responsibilities.

Fiona says that *in the past* work *did encroach terribly* on home but she has reached a point in her teaching life where it is possible to say: *I am learning to cut off (IF:P10:2010:T3-TP).* She has had to supplement her income for most of her working life, which has robbed her of personal time: *I have the added dynamics of teaching extra private tuition, so I have very little time to have any private time.* Unlike in the past, she is now able to manage her work environment: *But I've learnt to manage my time more effectively*. Having twenty three years of teaching experience behind her she has become proficient in routines in and out of school: *But right now I've learnt to balance it…I take a manageable amount of work home…I do the rest of…at school.* The demands and challenges of teaching today may have taken their toll on the motivation and commitment to teach at her best: *On Wednesdays so that's marking day…I don't teach…I now mark on a Wednesday to be honest with you.* Fiona admits to the subversiveness of this act as a coping strategy: *I know nobody should know that but that's the only way I could cope. I use time now at school, because to me it's only fair.* She justifies her decision: *I cannot continue to have it encroach so much on my private life that I find I'm missing out*. The change is dramatic. Earlier on in her career, she was so absorbed by schoolwork and her dire financial state that she rarely socialized.

Fiona writes: *All in all Friday is my best day. It's the only day I allow for 'me' time. I do my weekly shopping and rest and read in the afternoon (JEF:26FEB2010:T3-TP).* Fiona has intentionally allowed Fridays to be a day when she has time to herself. She tends her own emotional, social and physical well-being.

Summary

The findings show that managing work and home is demanding and complicated and full of friction. Keri, Teri and Priscilla confess that school encroaches on their private time. Keri, however, had *a wake-up call* when her husband gave her an ultimatum. It meant that she had to prioritize and complete schoolwork during her free times, the breaks and in the afternoons. School fills Teri's waking thoughts and just as in Keri's case her partner reminds her of his presence. It is almost as if school demands spiral out of control for her. Priscilla strives to give time and energy to her family role but is far less successful than Keri in leaving work behind: *I try, when I leave at, say three o' clock, I try to say… this is my children's time."* For Keri it is a vital coping strategy that: *Once I step out of this gate in the afternoon I am no longer a teacher, I'm 'mom'.* Priscilla, like Teri, realizes the need to separate work from home but finds that school occupies her mind *all the time, all the time* while she is busy with her domestic duties. Teri says: *You're always thinking about that work*. Fiona is eventually able to say that she is *learning to cut off.* Her professional experience and the independence of her children play a role in the level of work and home conflict: *But right now I've learnt to balance it.* She develops her own coping strategy however undesirable it may seem. She completes most of her administrative work or her marking during teaching time, which the other three teachers don't do.

8.3 Navigating dual roles: Mothers and wives – The second shift (DR-dual roles)

The data show that the 'women teachers move between two worlds: the private and the public, two spheres that remain separated, at the same time that they interact and impinge upon each other, creating crises, conflicts and dilemmas in women's lives' (Tamboukou

2000:470). What is apparent is the difficulty that the teachers face in attempting to 'fashion a self that transcends restrictions and limitations of both the private and public spheres' (p. 470). Women are labeled as 'belonging subjects, usually wives, mothers, partners, sisters or daughters' (p.470). The extracts in this section give voice to everyday frustrations which mediate their life experiences. The participants speak of their experiences as wives, mothers, partner and daughter.

The private space of the classroom has promoted the cultivation and expression of women's 'natural' inclinations: being with children and caring for others (p.467). Keri says: *I think though that sometimes I bring my job home, I worry about my learners and this puts strain on my family life (AK:P10:2010:T3-DR).* She grapples consciously with the realization of the constraints imposed by the pedagogical model of mothering: *I am learning to leave things behind but it is a daily choice I make*. Priscilla speaks of this fundamental dilemma: *I really try to leave my work at school and focus totally on my kids when I'm at home…after an exhausting, draining day it's difficult.* Her dedication to her work leaves her little time and energy to spend with her family. She is quite conscious that work and family might conflict; she anticipates that she may have to develop priorities and make choices in order to do so: *I really try to leave my work at school.* 'To leave work behind is to leave care behind, and with it the needs and interests of children, and this is hard for teachers to do' (Hargreaves 1994:148). They see their shifting and multiple identities as processes that involve constant decision-making. Keri writes: *The fact that my husband is in education does make things easier because he often empathises with me.* Unlike Keri who invests her work with personal conviction and finds teaching enticing, *his view on teaching is different; to him it's just a job (AK:P10:2010:T3-DR).* Absent in the meaning of *job* is the person who performs the activity.

Priscilla desires to be home with her children: *My kids are young (AP:P10:2010:T3-DR).* Yet, she struggles to incorporate family life: *what could be a fun bonding time becomes another task.* Her husband, an ex-teacher provides a source of support, allowing professional and personal concerns to be appropriately balanced within the home sphere:

My husband, thankfully, is very understanding and not demanding at all. In the time and space of a school day she moves in and out of personal and public spheres: *However, there are times when I question whether I am a good wife and if I spend enough time with him.* In the home, time is rarely demarcated between work and the personal. Time is structured around the needs of others. She feels guilty about how she decides to allocate her time. Priscilla reflects: *I question whether I am a good wife:* This self-censure is a performative part of femininity that leaves her with a sense of inadequacy. *It may not affect him but it affects my self-image.* Priscilla seems caught, unable, in a sense to construct a coherent self that allows her to be both a professional and a woman.

Fiona discusses the problem of pay with great emotion, money being the measure of her self-worth. Single women with children who do not receive child support from their spouses have a hard time managing expenses. Fiona's extracts are infused with the difficulties of her financial conditions. She says: *my measly income hardly suffices*. The adjective *measly* describes how poorly paid teachers are. Fiona laments that little is left for necessities and she can hardly come by. The harsh reality for Fiona is captured in this utterance: *I am left with only R700/800 for food, petrol, electricity, etc*. The effects of her low salary are particularly crucial when she writes: *It's almost laughable – it's a crime – I'm dehumanized as a result of it.* There is a sense of a loss of dignity and self-worth. She resents her circumstances and tries to escape from the situation by teaching on a Saturday and tutoring privately to earn *the extra income I need desperately to survive (JEF:26FEB10:T3-DR).* Clearly, the teaching profession is not providing her with financial stability. Understanding Fiona's balancing act becomes even more difficult when one considers the demands of her *normal* work. Needless to say, the juggling act comes at a price*: I was right – the Saturday job is exhausting. I came home and slept from about 4-11pm. Didn't see my children until Sunday afternoon*. Fiona is not in the favourable position of employing domestic help; it is why she *cooked and cleaned up on Sunday morning and did the week's washing (laundry) on Sunday afternoon (JEF:28FEB2010:T3:DR).*

The image of the woman teacher seems strongly bound to her maternal qualities, real or potential. Just because it is 'natural', women teachers are usually expected to conform to the model of mothering. Women teachers continue to be considered ideal as caring and love-giving and to represent themselves as such. Keri says: *I never run out of compassion and love (AK:P10:2010:T3-DR).* Teaching rekindles her beliefs and enhances her practice: *It's almost as if the more I give, the more I can give, it rejuvenates and recharges me.* The challenge is to assess her student's needs - the genuine from the fabricated: *I've definitely learnt how to sniff out real problems as opposed to…attention seekers.* As she has grown in experience and confidence, she has discovered that in the face of the unpredictable: *Not much fazes me and so I'm able to deal with my two boys with sympathy and affection.* Tamboukou (2000:467) points out that while working in the 'enclosed space of classrooms, women teachers continually move around private and public subject positions'. This is clear when Keri writes of how teaching influenced her role as mother: *Teaching has taught me that.*

Teachers now have to deal with pressures different from those of former years. Hargreaves (1994:95) statement that 'time is the enemy of freedom' is captured succinctly by Teri when she says: *It's challenging because I have lost my freedom(AK:P10:2010:T3-DR).* She is so swamped by the stringent demands of school upon her life that they threaten to overwhelm the self. She finds difficulty in disengaging when she moves between school and home evident in the utterance: *Work is on my mind with everything that I do at home.* Task commitments become time-consuming for Teri to the extent that she feels that: *It's impossible to work and finish your school work at school.* The increased time pressure she experiences in her work seems to devour her whole existence: *I always have to take my work home.* The constant blurring of the boundaries between *work* and *home* emphasises the amount of work in which she is expected to engage out of school time. Teri is clearly struggling under the weight of work demands which take up more time than she is capable of giving.

Priscilla speaks about the lesson preparations that she has to complete at home: *I have just completed all my prep's for the coming week.* She realizes that, despite the admin, she still loves teaching: *I must admit that I am enjoying the actual teaching process but I hate the admin involved (JEP:10MAR2010:T3-DR).* Her main concern is that her students understand the content she teaches and this swallows up her time: *I spend all period ensuring that the kids grasp each concept…no time to do anything else in school.* Fiona comments on teaching as exhausting work. In anticipation of her heavy work schedule Fiona writes: *Have to get some Vit. B6 and a multivitamin to keep my energy levels high. (JEF:4MAR2010:T3:DR).* Her entrapment is reflected in the statement: *no rest this Friday…have to catch up with some marking…yet another weekend of work, work.* Such anxiety is damaging to her professional self-esteem. Her working conditions place serious limitations on her lifestyle and engender feelings of insecurity and self-protection and she alienates herself from family and friends: *My family and friends are so used to housing an 'absent' friend they don't even bother to plan things with me anymore.*

But the psychic rewards of teaching for Priscilla are central in sustaining her sense of self; her sense of value and worth in her work: *I truly enjoy teaching and this always gives me hope.* She confesses to her personal drive which *is a necessary evil*: *I do not regret becoming a teacher…the pressure seems to be instigated by my own need to ensure that everything is perfect and by the book (JEP:12MAR2010:T3-DR).* Priscilla is the source of much of the pressure she experiences. 'Women teachers can become locked in the remorseless pursuit of personal and professional perfectionism that the double burden of work and home places upon them' (Hargreaves 1994:150).

For the mothers in this research, domestic roles are difficult. The combined roles of mother and teacher create feelings of considerable anguish. In some cases, caring responsibilities often force them to assign lower priority to their careers.

Making the transition to motherhood was not easy. Keri feels constrained by her traditional mothering responsibilities which add to the complexity of organizing her own

life: *Some days I wish I didn't have my children so that I could be more focused on my career (IK:P15:2010:T3-DR).* That she could even desire this creates a sense of disbelief and betrayal of her maternal role: *If my children heard me say that they'd probably be terrified and horrified and shocked.* She says though: *I don't regret having my children but I think that if I didn't have them, I could be better at my job.* She maintains that if she were not preoccupied with the pressure of childcare, her professional practice would be better. Priscilla recollects wistfully her experiences before she married: *When I was single and I was a teacher, it was fun.* She describes teaching as *fun* a word rarely used to describe teaching these days. There were opportunities to be creative and resourceful: *I could really get involved with the children; do more with them (IP:P15:2010:T3-DR).*

Keri comes to the realization that the skills and understandings which can accrue from being a mother impact on her role as teacher and vice versa: *Becoming a mother made me a better teacher and becoming a teacher made me a better mother (IK:P11C:2010:T3-DR).*

Teri who does not have any children finds juggling school and family life particularly problematic: *You need to manage your life…I might not have kids, but I've got a family* who *makes demands again (IT:P15:2010:T3-DR).* Her anxiety is integrating work priorities with family issues: *Sometimes, you've got a lot of work, but your family has this that you need to take care of.* Another significant difficulty for her is the emotional investment in a relationship: *having a relationship is…a lot of work.* She finds herself caught in the private/public split, the split between nurturance and autonomy (Lather 1987) and her challenge is to maintain a balance: *You make it a point he's happy…you're listening, you can't work when he's there…it simply says you're not present.* The demands of a relationship are particularly restricting: *So you work better when you are alone.* Teri undergoes a conscious struggle to understand the choices and constraints of women's lives: *being a woman so many things are expected of you.* And then the stark proclamation: *I am a woman,* a life dedicated to service and sacrifice; *this gender, being*

a woman, which profoundly shapes and mediates her life and which cannot be ignored: *it's just tiring.*

Priscilla says: *For me, it's made it more difficult (IT:P15:2010:T3-DR).* Life and teaching are no longer so simple for Priscilla. Uppermost in her mind are arrangements for childcare: *I'm going for a parent's meeting, where am I going to leave the children?* She would rather be contemplating her professional authority: *"What can I tell the parents?* She feels guilt in relation to conflicting demands. Priscilla is aware that parental involvement is of great value. She also recognizes that parenting can be difficult and she would like to be more prepared to help parents with their problems. *How can I make a difference in them?* She speaks of the practical difficulties she encounters and how it limits her: *how can I manage this, how can I schedule this into my life…to find babysitters or even to get my husband to do it, it's a problem.* It is women who carry the major responsibility within the home and having children does inevitably change one's way of life: *It's become more difficult having children.* She believes that *single…or…unmarried teachers in the staff will find it better*.

The reality of a double day for Fiona is that *if you speak to most female teachers they'll tell you that just being home earlier for your children is a benefit (IF:P11C:2010:T3-DR).* There is undeniably an appreciation of a scheduled workday which accommodates the demands of private and working life: *It's as simple as it is.* She articulates the view that children have some supervision when they arrive home after school and they are not left to their own devices: *We don't have latchkey kids that have to come home to no parents, we're there at least.* It is often the mothers who are most engaged in their children: *So regardless of we're dog tired when we get home, but at least we're there physically.* Teachers have the flexibility to complete work at home which means that the spheres of private and professional life merge and women teachers can be at home with their children: *that is one of the pro's of teaching.* The repetition of *we're there at least, but at least we're there* implies an inherent conflict that the parental role based on responsibility and care has been somewhat neglected*: I also feel I've been emotionally*

absent. 'A teacher's role as mother is influenced by her professional knowledge about children and their needs and her professional experiences of the conditions of life of many children' (Gannerud 2001:61). Despite her professional knowledge she refers to her own situation when she says: *A teacher neglects her own children.* She recalls her past dilemmas: *I've experienced the full gamut of being a single mother and teacher.*

Summary

The discourses of femininity and motherhood remain strong frameworks within which they position themselves. It is quite evident from the data that the teachers find difficulty in switching off and on when they move between home and school. School seems to devour their entire existence. Keri is, however, *learning to leave things behind* but it is a daily choice she makes. The selves that are inscribed in the writings seem to be selves in a continuous interaction with 'others'. Keri's response to her experience as teacher has been different from that of the others. Whereas the others were concerned about increased demands she described mainly her mother-teacher role. Priscilla mentioned her *love for teaching* and that *teaching gave her hope* although the workload bothered her. Both Keri and Priscilla speak about the psychic rewards of teaching. Caring tasks turn out to be a source of much of the frustration that Teri, Priscilla and Fiona experience and expressed as tiredness or exhaustion. Tamboukou (2000:472) states that 'tiredness is a phenomenon directly and historically associated to the teaching profession'. The findings show that they confront increasing demands and pressures, but the inability to restore themselves can become uncontrollable. How time is organized in school affects the way they structure both their private and public lives.

Keri and Priscilla both feel that having children puts them under great pressure and contributes to feelings of inadequacy and stress. Organising and maintaining childcare is problematic for Priscilla if she has school commitments. Despite Teri's not having children, she experiences different demands from her family and partner. Keri's narrative shows that experiences from private and public spheres are intertwined and used in both

areas.. Priscilla feels that being tired robs her of giving her family her full attention. Teri alludes to how gender is an organizing principle of our lives. She considers her fate of *being a woman,* and the expectations of being a woman. Fiona emphasizes her past dilemmas of performing the roles of mother and teacher: *I've experienced the full gamut of being a single mother and teacher.* It is the conflict between motherhood and teaching that Keri and Priscilla are currently experiencing. Priscilla's coping mechanism is to prioritise in favour of work, and in this way, is able to maintain balance.

8.4 Balancing professional and private life

At the heart of the narratives is the pursuit of balance in public and private lives. While there are similarities there are also differences in their experiences. Generally, the women teachers have to accommodate shifting demands and conditions. The findings show that the balancing process of work and home is a complex juggling act which leaves them feeling stressed and guilty as wives, mothers, partners and daughter.

Keri's reflection is: I *don't always manage it but I'm getting better (IK:P16:2010:T3-B).* She tries to separate work and home but the boundaries are always blurred: *School is school, home is home.* Keri's dilemma is that she finds it hard to integrate work and home, especially since teaching demands an investment of self: *it's very hard to balance…especially in a career that demands a lot out of you personally*. Her commitment is to serve her students well: *When I get in front of my classroom every day I give of myself, my privacy, my life, my experience.* She admits that *it's very hard and I don't always get it right.* Her life has become a balancing act; maintaining the equilibrium between home and school gets all the more difficult: *Some days I go home with the weight of the world on my shoulders…sometimes I come to school with the weight of the world on my shoulders).*

Teri's response indicates all too clearly her discontent of how school imposes restrictions on her life and a feeling of being trapped within the enclosed space of the classroom: *My*

house suffers…too late to cook healthy food…cannot go to the gym…so bent on school…can't think of anything else…partner gets frustrated (JET:16APR2010T:3-B). 'The tension of teaching affects women's social relations with others, the way they are outside the 'greedy' educational institutions, their everyday attitudes and behaviour' (Tamboukou 2000:472): *You are lonely because of work…in a corner – an emotional hostage.* Work demands were increasingly impinging upon her personal and social life: *It takes a toll on my social life.* The pace of Teri's working life inhibits her from finding spaces for manoeuvre: *my life is reading, planning or being occupied about what I'll do next.* It is not very difficult for a self to be crushed under the demands of work: *I cannot sustain a relationship because I'm choosing work over having a boyfriend because it's what pays.* Teri has also to provide care-giving to her mother: *I go to her some weekdays and Friday certainly and cook for her.* Teri drives the point home that it is also single women who have additional responsibilities: *For a single person people do not acknowledge your responsibilities (JET:4MAY2010:T3-B).*

It's almost as if Teri is panic-stricken by the frenzied demands of work and home and she tries hard to keep pace: *It's hectic.* Trying to find a balance comes at a price: *Sometimes you find yourself balancing but with the balance you have to wake up early.* The sacrifices take their toll on her well-being: *There's always an extension, you cannot just be comfortable.* Teri wonders about the notion of balancing competing commitments and sums it up thus: *Moving from here to there, there to there (IT:P16:2010:T3-B),* implying a sense of being propelled but not at one's own discretion. The reality that confronts Priscilla is: *I haven't really found a balance yet, but holidays if I set aside for my children, that's time for my children.* She negotiates boundaries between work and home and remains steadfast in her decision to spend time with her children. Taking time out from her school activities during holidays alleviates the feeling of guilt she experiences of not being able to spend more time with them on school days: *I don't care what comes up, what's due, if I have to go away…I don't take anything with me.* She has a way of separating these dual roles: *That time is for my children…other than that it's difficult to balance…things need to get done in school.* She acknowledges the difficulty she has at

other times to balance childcare and work because work comes with its own demands. The emphasis on *time for my children (IP:P16:2010:T3-B)* indicates a troublesome issue for Priscilla, i.e., finding the balance between work and home.

For Fiona, the oldest participant, being able to find a balance comes with experience in the field: *It used to be difficult for me to do all the juggling, now I'm just finding my balance (IF:P16:2010:T3-B).* The conflicts of working and childcare are more extreme for single mothers. Childcare was primarily her responsibility. The continued negotiation between work and home was not without emotional consequences. However, she succeeds eventually: *I'm really finding my balance.* Fiona speaks of how teaching has intensified and how boundaries between work and home merge: *Teaching is worse in terms of time constraints, in terms of marking...it takes a tremendous amount of hours…after school.* Fiona does what many teachers do. She takes work home: *my boot, that's my library is always full of books and marking… I take it out as I need to.* Hargreaves (1994:148) mentions teachers who take 'piles of work home only to return the next day with them mostly unmarked; they carry them home yet again next evening, and the next, and the next – like Pilgrim's burden, these are the symbolic burdens of guilt that teachers carry around with them'. Fiona holds the view that teachers entering teaching will find the teaching task impossible: *the younger teacher will not be able to balance things, would not be able to cope.*

Summary

Fiona is the only participant who said that she is really finding her balance and being able to manage competing tensions. That said she is the oldest participant in the study and has teenage children. So, childcare is not as intense in her present circumstances as it is for Keri and Priscilla. Keri feels that she gets the balance right, sometimes, and she is *getting better* at it. Priscilla hasn't *really found a balance yet. She* is able to leave work behind during her holidays, making certain that nothing stands in the way of time spent with her children. During school times she is unable to separate work from home, successfully.

Teri feels that there are times when there is a sense of balance, but the balancing act means that one has to make sacrifices to achieve this.

8.5 Chapter Summary

The analysis shows that the balancing process of home with school is complex and leaves the teachers feeling stressed and guilty as wives, mothers, partner and daughter. The discourses of femininity and motherhood remain strong frameworks within which the teachers position themselves. The teachers fear that they do not meet all the demands of being the 'good' mother, wife, partner and daughter. Dedication to work precludes having the time and energy to balance other roles. This reflexivity arises from a sense of guilt i.e. self-surveillance (Butler 1997), that they have transgressed gender norms. Butler argues that gender is a regulated set of performances. The teachers examine themselves performing and constructing their identities within these norms. The image of the woman teacher seems bound to her maternal qualities, and women teachers are expected to conform to the model of mothering. Caring within teaching evokes connotations of service, of vocation and being a 'natural' teacher. The discourse of care frames the teachers professional identities. Fiona recalls her past dilemmas: *I've experienced the full gamut of being a single mother and teacher.* Fiona positions herself within the competing discourses of motherhood and teaching. These discourses reappear in the tensions she experienced between having a career and family. When the teachers describe the demands of schooling, there is a 'conscious recognition of some of the structurally and discursively produced meanings and actions they perform around their professional identities' (Smulyan 2004:238). Seeing that identity is a 'continuous process of negotiation – juggling – reflects how these teachers come to define themselves both personally and professionally' (p.238).

CHAPTER NINE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The multiple and sometimes contradictory positions taken up in the narratives preclude a single interpretation of the life histories of the four women teachers. As Munro states:

> A single interpretation of a life history is not only impossible, but undesirable, and to suggest that I can provide some final interpretation of these life history narratives would be an act of violence. (1998:108)

'The quest to articulate, reclaim and celebrate the myriad forms of female experience is simultaneously a personal act and a political protest against the historical silencing and marginalization of women' (Baxter 2003:18). This study has attempted to contribute to this move by engaging four women teachers in a critical reflection on their practice and, in so doing, to add their under-represented voices to the feminist conversation.

9.1 **Claim 1**: Past personal and social experiences frame the teachers' perceptions of themselves, the work situation and their career aspirations.

In understanding teaching, it is crucial to know about teachers' personal and professional lives. Drawing on autobiographical narratives, the study has identified social variables that shape the participants' identities. In Chapter Six, I have presented an analysis of each participant's narrative. This chapter focused on family influences, and on experiences from childhood and early adulthood, to explore the ways race, class, gender, culture, religion and politics have shaped their identity formation. How they described their experiences reflects the ways in which they construct their feminine identities which are not static but are 'historically and spatially situated and evolving' (Tett 2000:183). In reviewing the insights that have emerged from this chapter, I emphasize that early

socialisation had a strong influence on teachers' choice of practice and, more broadly, on their perspectives of life. Social-class background influenced their attitudes, values and behaviour in later life. Their identities are framed by the discourses of patriarchy, ethnicity and performativity (see 5.5.2).

The teachers grew up in segregated townships characterized by council housing and a high incidence of poverty. Keri lived in a 'white' area but says *my parents weren't wealthy (AK:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* Teri says of her mother's financial situation: *I could see her struggle (IT:P3:2010:T1-ST).* Priscilla reflects: *It is clear we were poor (AP:P2C:JAN2010:T1-M).* Fiona recounts: *We did not go hungry and were decently dressed (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-FR.)* Besides Fiona, who enjoyed some kind of socio-economic privilege, a fracture that they experienced was their working class economic status associated with a lack of material wealth and elitism. They felt stigmatized and undervalued because their parents lacked the means to live in ways that bring recognition and self-respect: Keri writes: *I was never good enough (AK:P3:JAN2010:T1-T);* Teri writes of her mother: *She had financial constraints, she stood the humiliation of always owing people money (AT:P7:JAN2010:T1-FR).* Priscilla writes: *As a child I felt there was something wrong with me and often I felt angry at my parents for not providing for me (AP:P2C:JAN2010:T1-FB).* To provide for her family Fiona's mother, a nurse, *worked very hard (mostly night shift) (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-T).* We see how personal history shapes current consciousness. As Butler (1993) states class is one of the ways in which subjects come into being, one of the modalities through which subjectivities are constructed.

Teaching as a vocation involves a sense of service to others. Keri writes: *I think my perspective on problem children has changed over the years (AK:P10:JAN2010:T2-P).* It is the teachers' concern for the welfare of the poorer, more marginalized group of students that their moral commitment to education manifests itself. Teri says: *When you reach out, they get shocked (IT:P4C:2010:T2-P).* The students she teaches are accustomed to neglect and abuse and Teri tries to strengthen fragile learner identities.

When Priscilla first started teaching at a school in an underprivileged area, she notes: *one thing I could relate to was the lack of ambition amongst poor communities…I felt a sense of responsibility to change that (AP:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP).* Priscilla identifies with the lack of aspiration of her students and feels compelled to improve their life chances by instilling in them a commitment to learning. Giving private tuition is a way for Fiona to offset her poor pay. Yet, Fiona who teaches in an economically disadvantaged area gives extra classes to her own students during holidays without charge. Fiona says: *they have so little out there…if they don't make it here, what are the prospects (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA)?* Teachers would attest to Reay's (2001:334) claim that 'education is not about the valorization of working classness but its erasure; education as escape.'

The life histories of these women teachers are grounded in particular social relationships and it is within such a context that they develop a sense of self and understanding of others. Women teachers spoke of role models and their narratives are about strength, support and sacrifice. With the exception of Fiona who mentions her old teachers as role models, the others were single mothers with strong religious beliefs, a sense of vocation and a sense of community. They remained true to their beliefs and values as women. Both Keri and Teri spoke of their mothers as their role models. Another woman that inspired Keri was the youth leader in her church: *because of all the time I spent with her I was exposed to community work and it made me love it (AK:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Keri is involved with the charity work at her school. The other role model for Teri was a preacher from her church who taught her ways of being black in a white world and being female in a patriarchal society: *she challenged the stereotypes in the church as a black and as a woman (AT:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Priscilla's sister who *had a limited education* was her role model: *She educates women on the risks, precautions and treatment of cancer…I may educate individuals to become successful but she educates to save lives (AP:P8:JAN2010:T1-RM).* Her sister helps with fund raising for a cancer organization. Priscilla is involved in the charity drives at school. The ways in which they act as adults is associated with the way they grew up.

These role models were unwilling to accept political labels and they worked for social change. Despite their adversities, they engaged in empowering and life-altering work. They were transformative agents. 'Through such practices these women become more fully human: they come into being as coherent selves at the same time as they come into cohesive community with others' (Casey 1993:160). The teachers see themselves as empowered professionals with the ability to perform meaningful work in their schools and communities. The notion of giving back or helping others in their communities ranks high among their successes. 'Whether the teachers have developed their 'listening heart' as a result of their own childhood experiences; or their own humiliating experiences as teachers, because of a perceived disparity between their own privilege and the deprivation of others, they do hear the voices of those in subordinate social positions'(Casey 1993:161).

Learning to teach is a layered process of socialization with the experience of schooling as a student coming first. When the teachers recalled their former teachers, the memories opened up their perspectives on their relationships with their own teachers. There were 'teachers who were admired, teachers who hurt their students' feelings, and teachers who either constrained students or provided possibilities for them' Uitto and Estola (2009:527). The teachers' memories are examples of their own teachers' use of power towards them. These memories challenge the stereotypic image of female teachers being carers. The teachers gender was not relevant, but what his/her practice was like, and what kind of emotions they evoked. They recalled how they felt during a 'particular event towards their teacher' (p.527). 'Some of these emotions were retrospective, but some were also interpreted in the present context from the perspective of themselves now as teachers' (p.527). While recalling their teachers, they were also exploring their own practices as teachers. They reflected on who they are as teachers, and who they want to be as teachers. Keri remembers her primary school experiences with a sense of nostalgia. She describes one of the female teachers as being *wonderful*, and comments on the teacher's contribution to her growth: *She taught me to love reading and learning and fine tuned my singing talent (AK:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* Keri continues the tradition of reading

with her own children. In contrast, Keri believed that her math teacher *disliked* her *immensely*, and Keri *hated her*. She feels that if her teacher *encouraged* her *more* her *mathematical experience in high school would have been better (AK:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* This memory calls into question established norms that women are carers and nurturers. This negative experience contributed to her desire to make learning enjoyable for children. Teri's story is a little different. What stands out for her is that *I was somehow unable to express myself out loud because I'm an educator's daughter (AT:P3:JAN2010:T1-T).* This memory reflects the discipline and obedience expected of her. Her mother's presence in the school set rules and restrictions and shows the way she comes to understand how to behave in certain situations. Her wariness resulted in compliance with socially sanctioned norms of behaviour. Today, Teri's commitment to her students' voices is connected to her own experiences in which her voice had been silenced. She continues to claim her voice by engaging in discussions with the senior management team. Fiona describes her sense of pride when her primary school teacher, a male, kept her books as a model of excellent work. This memory emphasizes the meaning of this simple act for her and the significance of acknowledgment and nurturance from a male teacher. Priscilla is silent about her primary school experiences.

Keri, Teri and Priscilla write of positive experiences in high school which they try to emulate in their own classrooms. Keri was highly motivated in high school, was *well-liked* by her teachers and describes this period *as a happy one (AK:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* Teri writes that *I appreciated teachers who connected with us, like my English teacher (AT:).* In her own practice, Teri tries to engage students in their own learning: *I want the learner at the back of the class to realize his ability.* Priscilla remembers that *I was totally impressed with the manner in which she got us to learn; taught us many life lessons; how we must choose to make a difference (AP:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* Her teacher reinforced her convictions of social responsibility as we see in section 7.1.2 *(AP:P12:JAN2010:T2-TP).* Priscilla expresses her awakening to social injustice when she believed her friend to have been treated unfairly by a male teacher who said that *she was only good for one thing and that was walking the streets (AP:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* This is

an example of a teacher's use of power and authority in disciplining and confining students. Priscilla has strong beliefs regarding what is right and what is wrong and she seems to be taking a position as to what comprises the 'good': *apologizing to learners is as natural as air to me (AP:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* Because of these events, Priscilla develops a strong sense of personal agency. Fiona proffers a dispassionate description of her teachers as *unstimulating, they hardly offered any motivation or guidance, but despite that I excelled (AF:P4:JAN2010:T1-T).* Teaching was a temporary assignment for Fiona. She says, *I taught for ten of those years in a begrudging fashion (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Fiona recollects her former teachers as being uninspiring. The disclosure of a feeling of resentment of her job in this extract illustrates her own response to the teaching act. She also says: *I've never been inclined to make a significant contribution (IF:P12:2010:T2-MS).* In the later phase of her career, Fiona comes to embrace fully her professional identity as a teacher. In confronting and re-evaluating her initial despair about teaching, she comes to a new understanding of the self.

We see, then, that situations in which a teacher holds back or fails to connect with a student become moments that seem to define the relationship with the teacher. There are examples of the transfer of the practices of caring and responsibility from former teachers. These memories demonstrate the significance of teachers in a child's or young adult's life.

Narratives embed identities, and consistent positionings that are repeated create a sense of self. This might be similar to Butler's (1993) performativity, i.e., habitual ways of talking and being. The interior spaces of family interaction especially mother-daughter relations provide an interesting perspective on the changes and continuities within these roles. Their life experiences of their own mothers became known through their mothers' multiple responsibilities as wife, mother and worker. The norms and values held by mothers became the 'crucial socializing touchstone' (Mann 1998:224) against which the teachers pitch their sense of self. The values of determination and stoicism are displayed in their mothers' lives and, as their daughters, they align themselves with those qualities.

Mothers were described as active agents in the family's history. They made things happen, made decisions, and one mother furthered her education. Three mothers divorced their husbands.

The teachers see their mothers as being powerful and in control (see 6.5). Keri writes: *My mother put us first…I do not remember my mother struggling to manage her career and her home (AK:P2:JAN2010:T1-FR).* Teri writes: *She separated from him to raise me and my siblings; as a worker she is strong and does not give up…dedicated…as a mother she was strict, supportive, protective (AT:P2:JAN2010:T1-FR).* Priscilla writes: *as a mother she was amazing…exceptional at multi-tasking…as a wife she did everything for my dad (AP:P7:JAN2010:T1-FR).* Fiona writes: *My mother managed like I do…I am a product of my mother…our lives at different points seem to run parallel (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-FR).*

There are similarities and differences in mothers' and daughters' experiences with work and family. However, one must take into account the social context in which individuals are living their lives. Keri, Teri and Priscilla admit to finding it difficult to manage a balance between work and family. Fiona found it difficult in the beginning, but is now able to find some balance. Keri's and Teri's mothers instilled the necessity of education as a means of securing their future. Keri and Teri were left in no doubt that women need to be self-reliant as their mothers were. Teri writes: *I'm a continuation of her life being a teacher (IT:P4:2010:T1-T).* Priscilla's mother provided her with a frame of reference to make choices in her own life. Her mother may have felt unable to disturb the flow of tradition - the norms held in their family still took precedence in daughters' socialization, but, Priscilla was able to voice other realities beyond a feminine domesticity. At an early age, Fiona became more mature and independent because of adult responsibilities within the family. Her mother turned to her for support. Such parenting emphasizes the agenda of mother and daughter as women. Fiona describes her mother as being *emotionally absent (AF:P7:JAN2010:T1-FR)* and sees herself as an absent mother. In contrast, Teri reflects on the conflict between nurturance and autonomy and how it can be associated with a tendency to develop dependency: *In my thirties…I'm still battling with the*

decisions that I'm supposed to make because of the protection that parents give (IT:P4:2010:T1-T).

The fathers in this study, besides Priscilla's father, were represented as absent from, or marginal in family life, thus reframing female coping freed from beliefs in the male as breadwinner. From the above discussion we see that mothers had a great impact on the socialization of their daughters. As illustrated by the data, much of the work of mothering involves negotiating and repeating the discourses of patriarchy, ethnicity and performativity. 'The everyday practices of mothers can become performative of raced, classed and gendered normativity, i.e., practices which serve to enact and reinforce sets of regulatory norms' (Butler 1993:2).

In section 6.6, I considered the influences from early childhood and early family life that have shaped the teachers' personal, intellectual and political development. I wanted to look at how these experiences framed the teachers' perceptions of themselves and the complex interplay of forms of subjectivation (Butler 1997).

Keri and Priscilla attribute their personal development to a strictly Christian upbringing. Patriarchal power comes to be installed in our very subjectivities, a process Butler (1997) refers to as subjectivation. However, Priscilla exercises her agency by rejecting her earlier religious indoctrination. Her father was a pastor: *I love my father dearly and understand him but I purposely live my life contrary to his (AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD.* Teri attributes her personal development to *growing up in an African family with Sepedi cultural background (AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD)* . She *embraces* the tenets of *Ubuntu* and feels *obligated* to *help* her *family.* In keeping with her cultural geography, the desire to be the 'right kind of girl' overcomes other considerations. The institutions we maintain inevitably shape our lives in complex ways. Fiona was subjected to *immense responsibility from a young age* that it *affected personal behaviour patterns as it taught such fierce independence that am unable to ask help from anybody (AF:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD). From age 12,* she was forced to learn adult ways of being.

Being a child herself, she had to cope with caring for her siblings. Becoming fiercely independent and unable to ask for help are both a survival strategy and a mode of resistance.

The teachers' reflections of their political development are framed largely within the political and socio-economic climate that shaped apartheid South Africa. 'A retrospective gaze of the teachers' backgrounds has provided a historical context against which to understand why and how they negotiate pedagogic relations in terms of the discourses of race/ethnicity, class and patriarchy in the ways in which they do' (Perumal 2007:336). Hall's (1988:29 in Perumal 2007:336) contention is that the 'narratives we tell and retell in our classrooms are both reflective and constitutive of who we are'. As the teachers learn about the implications and consequences of their identity markers, consciousness-raising events/episodes may motivate them to align themselves to certain struggles (see 6.6). For Keri, who is white, apartheid softened the dynamics of oppression in comparison to the other teachers. In contrast, Teri recalls *growing up in a township and being exposed to politics (AT:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Priscilla comments on her political development: *In high school I understood the gravity of the situation when I was exposed to boycotts…it was here that I developed my political opinion (AP:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* Fiona writes: *We grew up feeling inferior and less than as a result of political attitudes and inequities…this mindset has been difficult to relinquish (AF:P11:JAN2010:T1-PIPD).* In examining their own experiences of marginality, be it race, class or gender, the teachers agitate for social transformation. Keri says: *Just to be able to touch children's lives.* Teri says: *You have to go out of your way to help others (IF:P4C:2010:T2-PIA).* Priscilla fights for *total equality in our schools (IP:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* Fiona decides that *you do it to get these* children *through…I realize that they have so little out there, if they don't make it here, what are the prospects? (IF:P4C:2010:T2-PIA).*

Teachers' daily interactions are useful in identifying contexts in which discriminatory practices take place and how teachers cope with them. Fiona and Priscilla comment on

the management of discipline by male colleagues at their schools and how this may perpetuate the stereotype of men and women rather than challenge it. **The data shows that not all teachers experience overt discriminatory practices.** Keri feels that the male teachers in her school are more privileged mainly because they are few in number. Besides, teaching is regarded as female work and female teachers are associated with and directed into, soft feminine functions (Haywood & Mac Ghaill 2001), which represents a classic hierarchy in the teaching profession (Bolton & Muzio 2008) (see 3.1.1). Schools are still racialised and Priscilla reminds us of the discrepancy between myth and reality i.e. what is and what ought to be. 'Ambitions for racial equality often represent ideals within which genuine understanding of racism is lacking. Racism distorts social relations so critical in schooling' (Blackmore 2010:56). Until Fiona lodged a grievance against a male head of department she too did not experience any discrimination. Fiona believes that being female worked finally in her favour to being appointed head of department. She dismantles the notion of women being invisible and silenced: *with gender equity we are becoming more powerful as women (AP:P14:2010:T2-D).* Gender equity has given women a platform to voice their disagreements with discriminatory practices.

Teri uses the discourse of patriarchy to describe hierarchical relations in her school. That men manage and women teach supports tradition and therefore patriarchy. Teri is disillusioned by discriminatory practices at her school, experiencing them as gendered and racialised. She is reminded that regardless of achievement, qualification, or status she remains at the margins. Teri perceives resistance from management. She resists authoritative practices and searches for new understandings and actions. Teri negotiates this tension without overtly challenging the status quo, in contrast to her utterance, *I speak my mind (AT:P14:JAN2010:T2-D).* Her response is conciliatory and is evident of an ethic of commitment and care. Her own feelings of insecurity may have impacted on her ability to deal differently with this conflict. In her childhood world she witnessed her mother and her grandmother speak with force *(AT:P2:JAN2010:FB)* (see portraits-Teri-chapter 6). However, her mother would retreat into silence in the presence of an abusive husband. *My grandmother reprimanded me to keep quiet hence there was a level of fear*

in me (AT:P2:JAN2010:FB). hooks (1989:129) asserts that 'talk is the mark of freeing, of making one subject'. Teri says: *I read one book…it was talking about the patriarchal society…I could see myself in that (IT:P3:2010:T2-D).* Yet again, here is something about the status of women negotiating their own positioning of relative disempowerment.

Teri experiences institutional isolation and feels excluded from the inner circle and decision-making, despite her position as head of department. Her position is judged in light of her race. She implies that she does not receive the benefit of the doubt, and must demonstrate her abilities whatever her position, education or experience. She feels excluded from the supportive network of her department: *you want to learn…you're supposed to lead (IT:P12B:2010:T2-D).* It seems that Teri does not have a strong, developed identity as a leader. Being younger, less experienced and coming from a junior secondary school background, the odds seem stacked against her. However, Teri is a firm proponent of Ubuntu, an African philosophy of teamwork and collaboration that has the power to reshape our workplaces, our relationships with our colleagues and our personal lives.

In sum, the very act of recreating the past is an attempt to discover and re-invent the self. In this respect, self-narration is a way of exploring how reconstructions of the past shape and construct the person in the present. A retrospective gaze of the teachers' backgrounds has provided a context against which to understand how they negotiate social and pedagogic relations, today, in terms of early socialization in the family and in the wider environment. The teachers reflected on their changing identity constructions in terms of race, class, gender and religious positionalities. 'Life in patriarchal societies imposed its own set of gendered prescriptions and restrictions on teachers and, when gender was coupled with race, the combination produced a different set of dynamics' (Perumal 2007:335). In as much as teachers situate themselves 'within the constructs of race, class, gender, ethnicity, etc., they also refuse to be confined to those locations or to be expected to endorse value systems that are associated with these positionalities, especially if such practices are discriminatory' (p.337).

9.2 Claim 2: Teachers' roles have changed as accountability and performance systems have become an increasingly pervasive factor in their daily work.

Consistent with the findings in the literature reviewed, the evidence in my study suggests that reforms have reconfigured the nature of teaching and learning. 'A critical mass of discontent has been building up amongst the teachers as they cope with government inspired change and with new forms of management and supervision of their work' (Walsh 2006:101). The teachers testify to an overall tendency towards an intensification of teaching and an increase in central control over their work.

This study shows (see 7.3.1) that implementing change is a complex, difficult and painful process. It involves negative emotions such as uncertainty, anxiety and hesitance. The process of implementing change strikes at the core of beliefs and conceptions of education, creating doubts about purpose, sense of competence, and self-concept. The teachers' frustrations come to a head. What emerges from the excerpts is that implementation must be carefully planned, since teachers are the ultimate implementers of reforms. The teachers were continually working towards an understanding of the requirements of OBE, questioning its goals and trying to align them with present practices. Teri and Priscilla evaluated the choices open to them. They highlighted positive aspects of OBE, and worked creatively, adopting and adapting the requirements. Teri, however, had a change of heart. From the initial period of complying or adapting, she voiced the constraints she experienced. For Teri, change was acceptable, but, she could not reconcile with the demands of requirements and drastic changes in practice.

Within the context of curriculum reform, the goal is to ensure more than surface adoption and implementation. Fiona says: *I've taught the same way as I've always taught…OBE hasn't impacted me…haven't used it…powers that be might not know that…we've implemented in terms of paperwork for the department. (IF:P14B:2010:T3-C).* Fiona resists the implementation of new practices and works around prescriptions and

expectations. She teaches as she always taught because she is comfortable with the familiar, and more so, it requires less effort. The fabrication reveals conscious resistance to, and subversion of imposed teaching practices. The irony is that some schools and teachers present an image to the department that is not wholly congruent with the reality of their daily practices. 'What the state fails to acknowledge is the agency of teachers collectively and individually' (Sachs 2003:385) to comply, resist, adapt or adopt policy reforms. Butler (2004a) offers the concept of ethical reflexivity and argues that our responsibility is to 'the other'. As teachers we must understand our own contribution to creating and withholding the conditions of possibility of particular lives.

The implementation of C2005 intensified teachers' workload and changed classroom practices. Keri states quite succinctly: *With new curriculum come new demands (IK:P9:2010:T2-C).* Fiona found that large classes and group work impeded classroom discipline, while Teri and Priscilla enjoyed the interaction that group work afforded. Fiona adds that the abolition of corporal punishment left teachers feeling disempowered to institute discipline in schools. Fiona believes that alternative means of disciplining students require time and effort, making it even more burdensome. 'Formal procedures, documentation and case-meetings all impinge upon teachers' time and often, in the short term, divert teachers from teaching' (Hoyle & Wallace 2007:16). 'The picture' at the beginning is not 'uniformly bleak' (p.15). Although, Priscilla and Teri derived to an extent a degree of satisfaction from some aspects of curriculum change, there was generally a feeling of demoralization and alienation. Woods et al (1997) apply the term 'diminished teachers' to those who feel devalued or disillusioned. Besides Fiona who disengaged, the others were just getting by. They made an effort to do their best, in recognition of the fact that the unrealistic expectations that were imposed necessitated compromise.

My study portrays teachers as working harder because of accountability measures. The sheer number of tasks has increased with heightened expectations from district and state policies. Teacher roles have changed through expanded responsibilities outside the

classroom and have intensified work within the classroom. Although I sometimes use the term teacher roles in the singular, it is still viewed as a multidimensional construct. As Teri says: *Sometimes you're a psychologist, sometimes a doctor, you are so many things in one body (IT:P18:2010:T2-ER).* The teachers share a commitment to the expanded teaching role, but their experiences of it vary.

Fiona was allowed to choose duties, while Keri, Teri and Priscilla were prescribed responsibilities. Keri, Teri and Fiona mentioned personal satisfaction in the enactment of their expanded work roles. An enabling factor for Fiona was that the school integrated the additional role into the school day. Role expansion creates a situation in which teachers have difficulty discerning where their commitments and responsibilities should end. Lacking time during the school day, Teri worked at weekends with her students to practise for the debate for which she was not compensated. Here is depicted the construction of a teacher in the female role of self-sacrifice. Priscilla found it difficult to give all her duties the same attention since these duties were layered on to an already full teaching day. She decided to relinquish some of the responsibility of the Learner Representative Council to her students only when she felt they were ready to cope on their own. I found that teachers who embrace the expanded role conception strive to sustain it even in the absence of organizational support. 'Lack of material supports for the expanded role from the school, in the form of time and compensation, signals a more narrow and traditional conception of the teacher role' (Bartlett 2004:572). Administrative demands added significantly to Teri's workload. Teri had to teach a subject in which she had no expertise resulting in extra work to bring herself up to scratch. The teachers generally sought to accommodate their expanded role. Where the adoption of the role and supports for it are uneven, the teachers attempting to sustain it are vulnerable to overwork and its related stresses. Besides, they may not reconcile themselves to doing less.

Consistent with the literature, my findings reveal that managerialism, linked to external control, led to intensification of teachers' work (see 2.4; 7.3.5). The teachers appeared to be confronted by a situation whereby they experienced greater responsibility for their

work but less control over the manner in which their work was conducted, clearly contributing to an increasing workload. Teachers' personal beliefs mediated the impact of what happened in their work. The literature proposes that administrative requirements of assessment, recording and reporting, de-professionalise teachers and make them feel de-skilled. A particular school may be judged more on documents produced than on observations made. The teachers' comments (see 7.3.3) indicated that they were overwhelmed by the press of everyday school experiences aimed at satisfying accountability demands which detracted from the core task of teaching. Unable to adequately respond threatens their sense of competence and skill resulting in the loss of self-esteem and identity as a teacher. The teachers try to cope with the demands to maintain their professional identity as competent. Keri and Fiona adjust their practices, to minimize work intensity. Keri is torn between living up to her work ideal and buckling under the strain so she decides...*won't be able to do tests for some classes (JEK:7MAR2010:T2-I).* Fiona says: *I'd rather not teach for sometimes a whole week while I'm doing admin…that's what everybody's doing (IF:P9:2010:T2-I).* A lack of material support in the form of time for new responsibilities (Bartlett 2004) results in teachers initiating self-regulatory practices to contain the threat of intensification (Gitlin 2001:248). Bartlett (2004:572) believes that a 'mismatch between teachers' role conception and an organisation's role conception, as manifested in its material supports, creates incongruous conditions that can have significant consequences for teachers' work'. Ballet et al (2006:218), in questioning the meaning of teachers' passive or resistant attitudes, interpret an apparently obedient attitude as an intentional strategy to survive professionally. 'In such a case the strategy is not one of passive compliance, but rather an 'active' response in which the teacher takes the space for deliberate agency' (p.218).

Teachers work in schools with specific cultures and structures. 'These school characteristics mediate the impact of intensification, because they determine the organizational space for interpretation and negotiation' (Ballet et al 2006:214). The possibility for the teachers to negotiate internal and external demands is not unlimited.

As Hargreaves claims:

> Emotions are dynamic parts of ourselves, and whether they are positive or negative, all organizations including schools are full of them. (1998:559)

In the teachers' comments one can see how the 'intensification of teaching brings feelings of vulnerability, powerlessness, frustration, anger and fear' (Kelchtermans 2005:307). With intensification and growing workload, the teachers experience 'negative feelings of stress, insecurity and guilt' (Ballet et al 2006:218). Keri and Teri were dissatisfied with management for making unfair demands on their time. Keri's response when interrupted by a student in need was:*…"this document has to be in by ten o' clock" (IK:P9:2010:T2-I).* Keri feels guilty that she is not doing justice to her student's needs. In the task perception of many teachers an aspect of 'care' derived from a moral and emotional commitment takes a crucial role (Ballet et al 2006:214). Since teachers feel a sense of obligation to meet all demands properly, the experience of being under pressure intensifies. Teri is frustrated that there is *no understanding about the debate, they want their marks (IT:P6C:2010:T2-I)…there should be adjustments in your plan (IT:P8B:2010:T2-I).* Co-deciding about work organization is a critical factor in maintaining teacher morale and self-esteem, and in minimizing role conflict. As schools attempt to cope with a demanding policy environment, principals play a central role. The positions and actions of a principal can act as a buffer between external demands and teachers, although they, too, face intensification with the emphasis on management tasks.

Teachers enter teaching with a sense of vocation and with a passion to give their best to the growth of their pupils. For some, these become eroded with time, changing external and internal working conditions and contexts and unanticipated events. 'In schools, the business of restructuring is messily human and personal; despair and disenchantment lead directly to uninspired teaching and spoilt student life-chances' (Goodson 2007:138).

‘Teachers lose their sense of purpose and well-being that is so intimately connected with their professional identities, self-efficacy and agency, their belief that they can and do make a difference to the progress and achievement of learners’ (Day et al 2010:39). For the teachers, work satisfaction and enjoyment is derived from interacting with students (see 7.3.4).

Teri, Priscilla and Fiona commented on lack of pupil motivation, large classes and indiscipline and feelings of stress which these induce. There was a general perception amongst the teachers that the problems of student disaffection grow daily, and indiscipline has increased and become more threatening (see 7.3.4). They believe that there are many social factors that have contributed to this state of affairs. Fiona’s sense is that it*…maybe just changing times, changing dynamics, changing society…we need to move into a more technological era with the kids…they don’t see us as all-knowing and all-seeing (IF:P8:2010:T2-P).* She feels that ‘today’s teachers must get a grasp of the knowledge society’ in which their pupils live (Hargreaves 2003:xvii). Teachers were at one time respected intellectuals, but now, there is a loss of trust in teachers’ professional integrity.

Teri alluded to shifts in cultural beliefs and values of black students in racially integrated schools. Students bring different sorts of cultural capital, i.e., different kinds of knowledge, dispositions, linguistic codes, skills and attitudes. Teri stated that different cultures communicate and discipline differently, and black students remain confused as to what is socially appropriate. Students are constrained by institutional practices through their inability to incorporate and validate multiplicity. Yet, it is also within the confines of a school that a socially just and democratic society can emerge. Teri: *The discipline in the classroom is not desirable, classes are large (JET:16FEB2010:P); I no longer promote multi-cultural schools…their thinking starts to be clouded, because of the kind of leadership that another culture provides, like communication…discipline styles (IT:P5:2010:T2-P).* Trying to maintain that commitment where teacher and student are intrinsically connected was not sustainable for Teri and Fiona. Responding to the unique

needs of students intensifies teachers' work. Students demand more of teachers. The material and socio-economic contexts within which schools operate have a differential effect on what teachers can do. Teri and Fiona perceived a decline in the creativity of their teaching. They felt under pressure to focus on the needs of particular students.

The satisfactions of teaching come with great cost, effort and care. What it means to care in schools has been formalized and prescribed in different policy documents. These struggles are often internalized and can result in the emergence of a new subjectivity. The pastoral role holds implications for teachers' care practices in schools (see 4.6). The acting-out of caring identities can potentially lead to compliance performances.

Working conditions in schools demonstrate the ambivalent role of context. Work contexts can restrict or broaden professional learning and development opportunities which impact positively on teaching practices. Keri felt constrained by decision-making structures in her school. There is a semblance of consultative decision-making. Teri, a fledgling in the school, was excluded from the decision-making process and was, therefore, not validated and affirmed as Head of Department. Her experience goes against the grain of democratic leadership. Priscilla's experience reveals that not all heads provide opportunities for professional growth. She described her principal as being *old school* indicating that his work identity had been formed in a previous era *(IP:P12C:2010:T2-MS).* This tension represents a conflict of discourse and a conflict of identity in which he has to manipulate his way through the uncertainty and insecurity of contemporary managerial life. Fiona's experience was different. Management provided a context where it was safe to take decisions. Ballet et al (2006:215) believe that the 'existence of consultative structures within the school induces more job satisfaction, since it enhances the experience of shared commitment among teachers'.

The experiences of Keri, Teri and Priscilla show that not all school leaders provide opportunities to develop creativity or enhance teachers' sense of agency and autonomy. Being able to do this requires school leaders to 'reconstitute and shift dominant gendered

and organizational ways of being' (Whitehead 2012:212). Principals, themselves, are especially vulnerable within the new work culture. 'In problematising the notion of rational/grounded man, the principal is exposed as grounded only in the moments and practices of gendered discursive signification' (Butler 1990 in Whitehead 2012:201). To be seen as competent they must constantly be aware of how they speak and act.

Teachers' comments revealed that good collegial relationships among school teams constituted an important working condition for teachers. Teachers believed that such relationships were important in building shared values and norms. A sense of trust and connectedness resulted in spontaneous collaboration and helps teachers to cope with the impact of reform demands. Helsby (1999:85) argues that 'high degrees of collegiality and commitment to fundamental principles make it more likely that teachers will be active in constructing their own educational practices'. Scheduled meetings in Keri's school were productive in terms of sharing ideas and gaining support to implement changes. In Priscilla's school, it became the collective responsibility of teachers to ensure that demands were met. Feelings of trust among teachers in her school allowed them to interrogate institutional norms in their private spaces regardless of the principal's dislike of these. In section 7.3.7, Priscilla described her principal as being *old school* yet *with experience he knew better* (*IP:P12C:2010:T2-MS).* She felt directed by the principal's decisions and regretted the limitation in initiating changes. Being able to be reflexive, and making choices that change or maintain routines, provides a sense of ownership and a professional identity.

'Although teachers valued professional collaboration and, to some extent, saw the reform movement as providing opportunities for working together, their preference was for collaboration that emerges naturally within schools' (Hoyle & Wallace 2007:16). From the teachers' accounts, we deduce that collaborative relations were not always scheduled activities. Teachers worked together in brief, informal encounters. The following comments from Teri and Fiona reveal that staff relationships can also be conflictual. Besides the Grade 12 teacher and teachers she chooses to interact with, working together

with other staff members is a form of 'contrived collegiality' (Hargreaves 1994:135). Cultural dynamics contribute to the disharmony (see 7.3.7). Interpersonal relationships are far from stable and staff members are suspicious of the principal. They see an emphasis on 'impression management' (Ball & Goodson 1992:16), rather than a response to problems in a contextually appropriate manner. The discourse of performativity, the 'quest for efficiency and instrumental achievement', carries a 'message of masculinity' (Whitehead 2012:212). Teri emphasizes that trust can be a key enabling factor in promoting collaborative cultures.

In section 7.3.7 Teri described how she felt sidelined by her principal by not involving her fully in decision-making processes. From her comments we deduce that the leadership effect on the cultivation of collaborative cultures is an integral part of the change process. It supports teachers as activists with control over the direction of their work (Day et al 2010). What Fiona found is that *with the influx of black teachers to our schools there is this resistance to guidance (IFQ14:2010:CC).* The words, *our schools,* signify a time gone by, i.e., a reference to apartheid designated schools. The black teachers may feel that others in authority doubt their competence and become defensive – construed as resistant behaviours. It is a strategic response to authority, i.e., we will not be told what to do. Performativity, in this instance, is the extent to which teachers act through, and are acted upon, by language and other performative acts (Butler 1997).

The above discussion shows how teachers' working conditions have changed as a result of reform that seek to articulate new visions and targets. As discussed in section 2.3, managerialism is preoccupied with the notion of quality, in other words, new forms of managerial control. Thus, in the pursuit of quality, teachers are to be appraised against standards of performance. Priscilla constructs school inspections as a 'regulated system of performances' (Butler (1997). In gender studies, Butler (1997) argues that gender is performative, or a masquerade, i.e., a regulated set of performances. Burnard and White (2008:674) make the point that 'teaching can also be construed as a regulated set of performances'. The interest in Butler's conception of performativity relates to the

argument that while the 'performance' of pedagogy is socially constructed, increasingly, through competence standards, the state has developed a narrow and reductionist version of what it means to be a 'good' teacher (p.674). Performativity is not a singular act specifically, but arises out of the 'reiteration of a norm or a set of norms' (Butler 1993:12), embedded in authority. What is stated becomes unquestionable, and has therefore to be maintained i.e. particular performances are expected from teachers. Through, for example, 'a sense of collegiality and collaboration and the leadership style of the principal, the school may mediate or filter the impact of the willingness to innovate' (Ballet & Kelchtermans 2008:64). A compliant workplace dominated by the pressures of intensification, militates against more 'substantive collaborative practices' (Hardy 2010:81). From the above accounts it is clear that teachers' experiences of these changes and demands vary. Teachers cope with these changes through 'interpretation and negotiation' (p.216).

9.3 Claim 3*:* The expansion of teachers' work roles and responsibilities has led to tension in the negotiation of work-family balance.

My findings show that the teachers' experience of combining home and school is distinctive. They found it difficult to negotiate home and school. As in Thomson and Kehily's (2011:244)) study of women teachers, the teachers in my study, presented a counter-narrative to the conventionally held view that home and school can be successfully blended'. Motherhood gave rise to a 'renegotiation of personal and professional boundaries' (p.244). Their orientations vary depending on age and levels of personal investment in their career. The framework for work-life balance by Guest (2002:258-259) and Sutton (1984:9) (see 3.6) was used as a guide to assess how teachers perceive and experience conflict between home and school. The analysis points to the potentially troubling ways in which teaching and mothering identities are intertwined.

'Being balanced means approaching each role with an approximately equal level of attention, time, involvement and commitment' (Lagerstrom et al 2010:166). Although

differences existed among teachers in the way intensification was experienced, one aspect of its impact on teachers' work lives was stressed: a permanent lack of time. This constant preoccupation with work that continued after school hours results in far-reaching consequences on personal life (Ballet et al 2006:216). Keri and Priscilla felt that having children put them under great pressure and contributed to feelings of inadequacy and stress. Organising and maintaining childcare was problematic for Priscilla if she had school commitments. Despite Teri's not having children she experienced different demands from her family and partner: *Being close-knit and saving the situation all the time, you have to attend to what they say (IT:P15:2010:T3: C).* It is an identity that is morally responsive to particular others. The continuous narrating and performing of this identity oriented towards the concept of Ubuntu learnt during childhood, continues over the course of a lifetime. Professional women are still subject to traditional family and community expectations of domestic tasks.

The findings show that managing work and home is demanding and complicated and full of friction. Keri, Teri and Priscilla confessed that school encroached on their private time. Keri, however, had *a wake-up call* when her husband gave her an ultimatum *(IK:P10:2010:T3-T).* It meant that she had to prioritise and complete schoolwork during her free times, the breaks and in the afternoons. School filled Teri's waking thoughts and just as in Keri's case, her partner reminds her of his presence. Priscilla strove to give time and energy to her family role but was far less successful than Keri in leaving work behind: *I try, when I leave at, say three o' clock, I try to say…"this is my children's time" (IP:P10:2010:T3-T).* For Keri it is a vital coping strategy that, *Once I step out of this gate in the afternoon I am no longer a teacher, I'm 'mom' (IK:P10:2010:T3-T).* Her struggle to contain the tensions of spending time with her two young children, preserve her marriage, and sustain her expanded role and commitment to teaching, led to overwork – during breaks and free periods. As much as she tries, Keri cannot escape the trap of nurturance: *I bring my job home…I worry about my learners (AK:P10:JAN2010:T3-B).* Priscilla, like Teri, realized the need to separate work from home but found that school occupied her mind *all the time, all the time (IP:P10:2010:T3-T),* while she was busy with

her domestic duties. In Teri's words: *You're always thinking about that work (IT:P10:2010:T3-T).* Fiona was eventually able to say that she was *learning to cut off.* Her professional experience and independence of her children play a role in the level of work and home conflict: *But right now I've learnt to balance it (IF:P10:2010:T3-T).* She developed her own coping strategy, however undesirable it may seem. While students do independent work, she uses teaching time to complete most of her administrative work, or does 'superficial' marking of essays during teaching time, which Keri, Teri and Priscilla do not do (see 8.1). Gitlin (2001:254) calls this a form of 'defensive teaching' which teachers use, to contain the threat of intensification.

Priscilla prioritized school over home: *I need to do what is more important (IP:P112010:T3-C).* The teacher role was uppermost. Priscilla admitted: *I question whether I'm a good wife…affects my self-image (AP:P10JAN2010:T3-HS).*

Thus, it is clear that teachers were not all able to blend work and home role, and being a teacher and a mother of young children was not all convenient. Fiona was the only teacher who said that she was really finding her balance and being able to manage competing tensions. However, teacher experience co-varies with increasing age and independence of children. Having gained years of experience, Fiona was more able to develop strategies to prevent her home life from interfering with her work. Teachers in the early stage of their career are especially vulnerable to experiencing home/school conflict. Keri felt that she gets the balance right sometimes and she was *getting better* at it *(IK:P16:2010:T3-B).* Priscilla hasn't *really found a balance yet (IP:P16:2010:T3-B).* Teri felt that there were times when she experienced a sense of balance, but there were additional sacrifices to achieve this. Fiona made the point *that the younger teacher will not be able to balance things, would not be able to cope (IF:P16:2010:T3-B).* The tension is that the younger teacher is concerned with surviving professionally, and may also be relatively inexperienced in raising children.

It is evident from the data that the teachers found difficulty in switching off and on when they moved between home and school. Keri was, however, *learning to leave things behind (AK:P10:JAN2010:T3-B),* but it was a daily choice she made. The selves that are inscribed in the narratives seem to be selves in a continuous interaction with 'others'. These 'others' - husbands, partner, mother and children - are 'involved in the place the teachers occupy in the world, they intervene in the ways they 'negotiate themselves' and take decisions regarding their lives (Tamboukou 2000:472). What women signify has been taken for granted for too long and this is reflected in the evaluations of women teachers as they become fixed, normalized and immobilized as carers and nurturers (Butler 1992). When Keri described her experience as teacher it was different from the others. Whereas the others were concerned about increased teaching demands, she describes mainly her mother-teacher role: *I never run out of compassion and love (AK:P10:JAN2010:T3-B).* Priscilla mentioned her *love for teaching* and that *teaching gave her hope (JEP:12MAR2010),* although the workload bothered her. Having *hope* signifies a sense of agency. Both Keri and Priscilla spoke about the psychic rewards of teaching. Caring tasks turned out to be a source of much of the frustration that Teri, Priscilla and Fiona experienced, expressed as tiredness or exhaustion. The findings showed that the teachers confronted increasing demands and pressures, but the inability to restore themselves could become uncontrollable. How time was organized in school affected the way they structured both their private and public lives.

A feature in the narratives is that not all the teachers were in accord with the traditional stance that teaching is compatible with their role as mothers (see 3.4). Keri, Teri and Fiona seemed to feel that teaching is a good fit for women who want to have families. Fiona's experience was that despite being exhausted from work demands, what was important at that time was her physical presence at home with her children when they were growing up, although she admitted to being 'emotionally absent'. Priscilla opposed the view that teaching offers women a good fit – *I don't think we can say that (IP:P6A:2010:T3-F).* The assumption that women teachers are free in the afternoons to be with their children is deceptive. Priscilla felt that being tired and stressed after a school

day robbed her of giving her family her full attention. Despite the notion that working with children is seen as natural for women, Keri's view that *women shouldn't go into teaching because they're women (IK:P6A:2010:T3-F)* was echoed by Priscilla: *I don't think it should be a profession for women (IP:P6A:2010:T3-F).* In contrast, Teri says: *Teaching for women is good…as women, being naturals we're good. We nurture (IT:P6A:2010:T3-F).* The idea of the teacher as mother is pervasive and serves as the organizing metaphor for women's work as teachers (Sikes 1998:88). Particularly limiting are those assumptions and expectations which devalue mothering and women's work with children, and those which equate it with 'natural', instinctual behaviour and with self-sacrifice and 'vocation' (p.88). 'These assumptions and expectations work to put women/mothers in weak political, social and economic positions' (p.88).

Keri's narrative showed a connection between rearing children and educating. She believes that the knowledge, skills and understandings which accrue from the experience of motherhood impacted upon her professional self and vice versa: *Becoming a mother made me a better teacher and becoming a teacher made me a better mother (IK:P11C:2010:T3-C).* Teri alluded to how gender is an organizing principle of women's lives. She considered her fate of *being a woman,* and the expectations of being a woman. Teri demonstrated gendered views of culture and practice (see 7.3.6): *I am a woman (IT:P15:2010:T3-C).* All women one way or another continue to be hailed as subjects - as mothers, wives and workers. Gender is subjectively lived, it is part of social structure and involves differential and sometimes discriminatory treatment. As subjects we are continually reproduced through repetition of gendered discourses; we perform identities that are prescribed by hegemonic discourses (Butler 1993). The teachers perform daily such identities. Fiona recalled her past dilemmas and pointed to the notion that family related demands might be more easily shared in two-parent households: *I've experienced the full gamut of being a single mother and teacher.* It is this conflict of motherhood and teaching that Keri and Priscilla are currently experiencing. Priscilla's coping mechanism was to prioritise in favour of work, and in this way, was able to maintain balance. She gave up family time to sustain her professional identity. However, she has been plagued

by a troubling reflexivity: *I question whether I'm a good wife…affects my self-image (AP:P10JAN2010:T3-HS)* - an active process of being subjected and choosing to be subjected to the discourse of patriarchy and performativity.

In sum, the findings suggest that role demands, instructional problems and interpersonal relations are factors which impact on how teachers navigate a balance between their home and school responsibilities. The strongest effects were from role demands. There is evidence that family responsibilities make it more difficult to sustain the work-hours and identity of the expanded role. The discourses of motherhood are that mothers should make caring for their children their main responsibility, and not do paid work when their children are young (see 4.3). In analyzing the ideology of motherhood, the sense of mastery is constructed through a discourse of how intense the demands of mothering are. This reflexivity arises from a sense of guilt, i.e., self-surveillance (Butler 1997), whereby the teachers examine themselves in fear of not fitting the category of mother.

9.4 Claim 4*:* The new mode of teacher regulation has led to a tension between autonomy and control, thus changing the nature of teacher professionalism and teacher identity.

As discussed in section 2.3, the neo-liberal agenda and control mechanisms have gained a grip on schooling (Connell 2009). Specifically, neoliberalism distrusts teachers (p.217); therefore, schools must make themselves auditable. Teachers have been positioned to become 'skilled technicians' rather than fully functioning professionals driven by initiative, self-knowledge and professional autonomy (Codd 2005:200). Weber (2007:288) refers to the teacher as 'compliant technician'. These descriptions indicate the changed discourse of professionalism, accountability and standards. Hoyle and John (1995:19) suggest that three central issues are involved in being a professional, i.e., knowledge, autonomy and responsibility.

Although there is widespread tension and dissatisfaction, the teachers in this study display an 'activist identity' (Sachs 2001:156) (see 4.7.1). They see themselves as agents of change, rather than the victims of new reform strategies, although they experience their work as constraining, with little opportunity to exercise their professional judgment. Keri says: *When that child gets a forty that's been failing…I want to be part of that (IK:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* Teri says: *Some part of me looked up to my teachers…if I can be like them (IT:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* What is important for Priscilla is *to get the child that is failing to a B or an A (IP:P4B:2010:T2-PIA)…I make changes even though I'm not in management (IP:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Fiona says: to *be the best that I can be…the impact I've made on individual lives (IF:P4B:2010:T2-PIA)…we come in extra during the holidays…nobody pays you for that (IT:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Teri, Priscilla and Fiona teach in schools serving working-class communities and, especially, the most marginalized. This fact determines their everyday reality of teaching. To do this well, requires endless effort and initiative, since current assessments are largely constructed around academically engaged students.

From the teachers' comments, it is clear, that the psychic rewards of teaching are central to sustaining their sense of self, and a sense of value and worth in their work at a time when their professional judgment comes under attack. Emotion work is vital to the teachers' professional self-image; they see themselves as providing support for their students, despite the current pressure of teaching arising from centralized monitoring mechanisms. Managerialism and accountability focus essentially on the information aspects of knowledge and, in doing so, neglect judgment, which is central to professionalism. As Connell argues, this may 'improve a school's competitive position in the league tables, but it is difficult to believe that it will result in better education for the children' (2009:221). 'Teaching is, by definition, a journey of hope based on a set of ideals - that I, as teacher, can and will make a difference to the learning and the lives of the students I teach – despite an awareness of obstacles to motivation and commitment, and policy factors over which I have no control' (Day & Gu 2010:191).

For passionate teachers, professional accountability is about far more than meeting external demands. An ethic of care is not part of the central concerns of policy demands where the teacher is positioned as a key part of the delivery system, stressing mainly the technical aspects of teacher professionalism. When the teachers reflected on their work it was most often to the human touch that they turned. The teachers emphasised their relationships with their students. Keri says: *I want to be that person to whom they can say, "I've got a problem, please help me (IK:P4B:2010:T2-PIA).* Teri says: *I want to reach out to that learner (JET:18FEB2010:T2-P).* Priscilla reflects: *If I'm going to make a difference, I'm going to make it in their lives (IP:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Fiona realises: *You do it for the love of it…not just about the money…it's about what contribution you're making to the lives of those children (IF:P4A:2010:T2-PIA).* Notions of care are embedded in discourses of teaching. For the teachers in this study, caring is seen as an integral part of teaching and, therefore, an important aspect of their professional identity. However, caring should not be defined as an exclusive mother-activity. 'Defining a caring teacher as committed to teaching and to professional relationships with students would allow one to value this important aspect of teaching without perpetuating patriarchal discourses which link caring to femininity' (Vogt 2002:262). Caring tasks require a significant investment of self, resulting in an increase in pressure.

As schools attempt to cope with change, principals play a central role in supporting teacher agency so that teachers might retain their professional identity and avoid the despair that accompanies loss of control. 'There is a case for temperate leadership and management such as would be characterized by a reduction of managerial activity' (Hoyle & Wallace 2007:19). The primary focus should be the 'support of teachers by absorbing the stress, and by an emphasis on incremental, local improvement' (p.19) (see 7.3.5 and discussion under Claim 2).

'Current conceptions of teaching as a profession involve expectations of compliance and performance and make little allowance for what it means to be a professional' (Burnard and White 2008:675). The discourse of performativity has changed the nature of

teachers' work. As such, they become mechanisms of control over the construction of teacher identity. 'In reviewing the data on the effects of role conflict on self, (Woods et al 2000:50-51) (see 3.6), it is evident that the teachers do not fall into discrete categories'. The general category of non-compliance includes a range of responses, from attempts to apply policy, defiant rejection of the reforms to disengagement. Fiona distanced herself from implementing the curriculum policy because of the sheer effort involved in transforming her practice. The data shows that with the introduction of OBE, the teachers felt devalued and disillusioned mainly because they recognized the disjunctions between policy and practice, but, only temporarily (see 7.3.1 and discussion under Claim 2). Teri and Priscilla made a positive attempt to adapt the imperatives of policy to the needs of their students, because they sought to sustain their professional values. The teachers did not slavishly adhere to expectations. These 'enhanced teachers', displayed an ironic response. They found both enrichment and tensions in the reforms. They made an effort to do their best, realizing that compromise was necessary.

The discourse of new managerialism has imposed increased levels of surveillance and an intensification and deskilling of teachers' work. They felt they were being externally controlled and they experienced accountability as in opposition to autonomy (Whitty 2002). The intensification of teachers' work that is associated with multiple roles and responsibilities, and the growing administrative requirements of assessment recording and reporting, de-professionalise teachers and make them feel deskilled (see 7.3.2; 7.3.3 and discussion under Claim 2). Ozga (2002:24) suggests that 'current reforms have reinforced a restricted model of professionalism'. The teachers' lose their confidence in their ability to exercise professional judgment. The new professionalism mandated by the state is what Sachs (2001) describes as managerial professionalism. Burnard and White (2008:675) feel that the teaching profession should reclaim education and focus on transformative and activist professionalism. The teachers' narratives point to what is suitable, i.e., a 'democratic professionalism' (Sachs 2001:157; Whitty 2006:14), i.e., an emphasis on collaborative, cooperative action between teachers and other stakeholders. A democratic professionalism assumes that teachers are skilled and knowledgeable and,

therefore, able to exercise professional judgment. 'Democratic schools and an activist identity are concerned to reduce or eliminate exploitation, inequality and oppression' (Sachs 2001:157). This identity emanates from the tenets of 'equity and social justice' and permits a 'transformative attitude towards the future'(p.157). 'In times of rapid change, identity is negotiated, open, shifting, ambiguous, the result of culturally available meanings and the enactment of those meanings in everyday situations' (p.154). For teachers, this is 'mediated by their experiences in and outside of schools as well as their beliefs about what it means to be a teacher' (p.154).

The notion of teachers' professional life phases by Day et al (2007:69) and Day and Gu (2010:70,87,89) enabled me to analyse and interpret teachers' experiences, identities and professional trajectories. 'Professional life phase' refers to the number of years that a teacher has been teaching. The findings in my study show that Keri, who was in the professional life phase 4-7, years according to Day et al's (2007:69) typology (see 4.7.1), shares similarities with the teachers in their study. Keri has a strong sense of identity, self-efficacy and perceived effectiveness, which correlates with Day et al's (2007:69) teachers in sub-group a). From her initial *baptism of fire (IK:P3:2010:T2-PIA)* in the early years of teaching, it is apparent that she has benefited from her experience in the classroom which has contributed to her growing sense of professional identity. The difference is that Keri did not stress the importance of promotion to her professional identity (see 7.2): *I'm still ambitious…maybe not now…in the future…if I never did more than be in my classroom, I wouldn't be unhappy…would want to earn more (IK:P4:2010:T2-PIA).* A detrimental impact on her sense of self was her divorce.

Teri and Priscilla belonged in the professional life phase 8-15 years, sub-group a). The similarity for Priscilla would be that staff collegiality and rapport with pupils is a contributing factor to her sense of efficacy. The similarity in Teri's case is that she was settling into a head of department position and experiencing a change in identity. The difference would be that Teri reported a lack of support from leadership and colleagues. Priscilla had already decided the direction of her professional identity. She wanted to

remain in the classroom: *It may seem unambitious…but I wouldn't want to change that...if I have to be ambitious I'd get out of teaching completely (IP:P4A:2010:PIA)* (see 7.2). Priscilla made a subtle allusion to teaching as a low-status profession in terms of financial remuneration. Teri and Priscilla did not mention professional development as a contributing factor in their sense of effectiveness. Fiona belonged in the professional life phase 16-23 years, sub-group c). In common with the previous two professional life phases, a similarity is that excessive paperwork and heavy workload were seen as hindrances to their effectiveness. In contrast with Day et al's (2007) cohort of teachers, Fiona was no longer struggling with a negative work-life balance: *it used to be difficult, now I'm just finding my balance* (see 8.5) *(IF:P16:2010:T3-B).* Recognising the impact of situated, professional and personal factors gives us an understanding of how and why teachers do, or do not, sustain their commitment and sense of effectiveness.

With an understanding of Butler's (1997) notion of subjectivation, what it means to be a teacher might be opened up to rethinking. It allows us to see how teachers are constituted by prevailing discourses of education, professionalism, the teacher and teacher authority. Within this discursive frame, teachers are also constituted by their own practices of self. By interrogating and rendering visible the subjectivating practices that constitute teachers to particular subjectivities and educational trajectories we uncover the potential of Butler's theory (Youdell 2006:526). In so doing, we can make sense of the practices and effects of schooling.

The discourses of home and school continue to shape the teachers' identities. The expansion of the teaching role has influenced how the teachers negotiate the tensions between home and school. Their identities as spouse, partner and mother are in a continual state of flux. The teachers act to separate the personal from the professional, but with little success. The analysis points to the potentially troubling ways in which teaching and mothering identities are intertwined, producing a complex relationship between home and school identities.

9.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter 'illuminates how discourses and subjectivities buttress and box our individual and collective identities as teachers' (Cammack & Phillips 2002:124). The teachers' early history and identity is drawn into focus as we think about who they are and what they do. Their early history illustrates the power of the discourses of patriarchy, ethnicity, class and performativity upon their definitions of self (see 5.5.2.1). Their identities as teacher, wife/partner and mother are framed by the above discourses. The discourse of teaching as a calling and the discourse defining women as caregivers was present throughout the data. The discourse of teaching as women's work did not preclude the presence of patriarchy in several aspects of schooling. Present in their comments about teaching, today, is the discourse of new managerialism and how the intensification of teaching has influenced the nature of home-school balance. The teachers grapple with home and school time expectations. Furthermore, the issue of identity has been raised with regard to time norms. When the teachers engage in identity-affirming activities, they perceive less conflict. Time is interpreted, manipulated, and perceived in ways that expedite or impede the teachers' lives.

Finally, the study highlighted how Butler's ideas on performativity worked in the lives of the four women teachers. Using her insights, I have tried to make the connections explicit. Butler's writing draws our attention to the ways in which discourse enables us to see how gender is constituted through utterances and other performative acts. Evident in the data is that the teachers act through and are acted upon by language and other performative acts (Butler 1997:8). The data showed that the teachers in learning the 'right' way to perform, also question dominant discourses which lead them to explore other possibilities, thus opening up space for agency. The data revealed that the ways in which the teachers experience their lives are in relation to race, class and gender, to others, and to 'institutions and practices located in time and space'(Nelson 1999:349). This framing allowed a thoughtful use of the theory of performativity to view identity as

performative. Keeping in mind that theoretical tools of analysis may have different implications in different contexts, I believe that the data confirm Butler's theorizations.

The study of South African women teachers is under-researched especially within the nexus of home and school. This study has made a contribution to South African research on women teachers, gender, and work and home.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are five sections in this concluding chapter. First, I reflect on what I consider the significance of the research findings for practice. I then discuss the implications of my study, I identify key limitations of this inquiry, as well as posing new possibilities and lines of inquiry. I end with some personal reflections.

10.1 Reflecting on the significance of the findings for educational practice

Looking back at the claims in chapter 9, the following main insight will remain with me. The teachers bring into schools experiences gleaned through their biographical history, which they draw on to deal with their present realities and that 'they speak from their multiple positionings and other ways of knowing' (Mirza 2009:3). Who we are, informs our interactions with people, ideas and the culture of institutions. The teachers' narratives are embedded in their experiences of race, class, gender and ethnic identities. The evidence provided by this study illustrates how teachers are constrained by, but also resist, pervading patterns of patriarchy that dominate their lives. In chapter 6, I identified the teachers' socialization into teaching, as well as gender socialization that results in the inequality of the sexes. I acknowledge that socializing forces are critical factors in our life histories.

Reflecting on the data I have presented, I learned that these women became teachers not because teaching was perceived as women's true profession, but by default (Ch.7). They did not wish to be teachers. 'To enter into a profession that is not only devalued, but that suggests women do not have agency, is to participate in a form of self-erasure' (Munro 1998:112). They, however, reassert their agency in the telling of how they became teachers. 'To take up an identity as a teacher, without erasing one's self, requires a

complex negotiation' (p.112). Negotiation is a form of agency. Despite their initial resistance, their teaching identities evolve over time and they stay in teaching because they find personal fulfilment.

The evidence in this study illustrates that reforms have reconfigured the nature of teaching and learning (Ch.7). Teachers experience change as difficult, as making them feel insecure and vulnerable. They work harder because of accountability measures and expanded responsibilities. The autonomous professional trusted to take decisions in the best interests of students is displaced by the image of teachers in need of regulation. Reforms threaten to turn teaching into a profession 'attractive only to the compliant and docile' (Goodson 2007:144). 'By pushing too far, they threaten to turn our schools into places of uniformity and barrenness – hardly a site on which standards will rise and educational inspiration flourish' (p.144). Yet, despite the intensity of their work and constant public surveillance and criticism, the teachers in this study maintain an ethos of care for, and connectedness to, their students, cherishing the desire to actively bring about social change in their lives. hooks (1994:207) describes the classroom as a 'location of possibility'- it is where these teachers are most fully present. The teachers situate themselves in their own specific histories and take decisions based on their particular tradition. The struggle between competing discourses continued as the teachers tried to make sense of successive new requirements and translated them into practice. Even when they seemed to comply, they were reflective and relied upon their professional judgment to make changes to their practices. 'Strong collegial relationships enabled them to negotiate their professional agency' (Robinson 2012:244). The teachers in this study did, indeed, manage to assert a professional interpretation of their role.

In the neo-liberal policy context in which they find themselves, the home and school experiences of the teachers described in this study (Ch.8), share similarities with research studies discussed in the literature review (see 3.4; 3.5). One of the prominent features in their narratives is the struggle to negotiate a balance between the demands of home and those of school, especially in the light of new expectations from teachers. They find it

difficult to successfully blend home and school. The choices they make are not a simple reflection of a preference towards either home or school. The teachers have strong orientations towards both areas. The analysis suggests a dynamic process of home-school balance with teachers' needs changing across life phases. The intensification of work has had the most impact on home-school balance leaving teachers in time-poor households. By questioning the discourses of patriarchy, ethnicity and performativity, it became possible for the teachers to open up new ways of reflexively thinking about the social construction of their experiences of teaching. These factors influence the teachers' conceptions of self since identity formation and struggles are about the personal choices the teachers make. The findings show that the teachers' experiences were 'compromised by traditional value systems and structural arrangements within the school' (Moorosi 2010:560). Some participants attesed to continued male domination in a largely female profession. Gender has been a determining factor in shaping life histories and subjective experiences.

What will remain with me are the compelling stories of the turning points experienced by the teachers and the inner conflict between personal and professional. The stories convey how their sense of self was compromised by personal history, social context and the demands of teaching. Despite adverse circumstances, their moral responsibility towards their students made them resilient. They were able to make 'their stories simultaneously vulnerable and 'safe' for the telling' (Kehily 1995:27).

10.2 Implications

Several implications for practice arise from these findings into women teachers' experiences and challenges.

Recognising that discourses of patriarchy, ethnicity and performativity structure the position of women at any one time, will promote an understanding of women's social disadvantage. Thus, rather than maintaining patterns and processes of inequality and discrimination, which structure, and are reflected in, women's lives, the culture of the

school and gender equity issues should be examined. Monitoring gender equity issues may help to eradicate discriminatory practices in schools. Although 'policy is quite advanced', 'gendered attitudes, cultural and social norms behind these policies' need to be interrogated (Moorosi 2010:560). 'Policies are a starting point to eradicate insidious social practices' (p.560). In South Africa, where the emphasis is on accountability and performance, studies on women teachers' lives are rare. By understanding that women teachers struggle to develop constructions of self and career that are unique to them as individuals, engaging in dialogue can help demystify power relationships and allow opportunities for redressing the imbalances. Teacher education programmes can include the deconstruction of discourses that shape women teachers' experiences.

Teaching conditions do affect teachers' emotions, their perceptions of self-efficacy and their commitment either to remain or leave the teaching profession. Teachers' salary structure and the lack of remuneration is a further reason why teachers leave teaching. 'Some of the workplace factors are class size, space, resources, time for planning and preparation, administrative support, certainty about their ability to influence and achieve educational goals, respect and recognition and collegiality' (Bascia & Rottmann 2011:798). According to Chisholm et al (2005:185), 'class sizes need to be reduced where they are far in excess of norms'. 'Administrative support to schools needs to be improved so that teachers are relieved of some of the administrative requirements of various policies and departmental information requirements' (p.186). Policy-makers need to pay attention to the importance of teaching conditions and to better understand their role in educational reform.

Women's circumstances change, and they negotiate and re-negotiate boundaries between home and school. Workplace cultures often conflate the difficulties of managing dual roles, and teachers resolve home and school balance on a personal level. Reconciling home and school remains problematic in practical terms. If leaders develop an empathetic understanding to teachers' work and family needs and demonstrate it in their managerial

style and in organizational policy, it will help to reduce the stress and anxiety that women teachers experience.

Principals play a mediating role in how teachers experience contextual and individual factors e.g. individual characteristics of students, time limits, the intensification of teaching and the expansion of roles. A recommendation made by Chisholm et al (2005:185) is that 'instructional time must be protected, so that those issues identified as eroding teaching time do not undermine teachers' responsibility to teach; the core work of teaching needs to be emphasized'. School leaders have the opportunity to bring about effective changes in teacher capacity. A collaborative decision-making context can increase teacher efficacy which translates into different thinking about students, teaching and school reform. It would influence their sense of professionalism and their sense of agency. For teachers to continue to be committed, they need to work in environments that are less bureaucratically managerial, and less reliant on measures of performativity and this depends on supportive leadership.

A further implication is supporting and encouraging networks in schools which can be crucial to the personal and professional development of teachers. Principals have the responsibility to examine the formal and informal ways in which mentoring takes place in their institutions, e.g., pairing novices with experienced teachers.

Restructuring policies should consider the creation of a balance between the bureaucratization of schools and the professional autonomy of teachers. 'Reviewing the policies that impact directly on teachers' daily work, such as curriculum, assessment, and regulation of pupil discipline, will eliminate aspects of uncertainty and complexity that hinder teachers in their work' (Cereseto 2009:197). Providing expert support for teachers, specifically relating to curriculum and assessment interpretation and implementation would narrow the gap between reform ideas and their enactment at the classroom level. In order to improve teachers' instructional capacity, internal and external school systems

of support should be established, especially the provision of subject experts who work directly with teachers in their schools and classrooms.

Implementing programs to develop a culture of professional agency in principals, teachers and officials throughout the system, using outside intervention and support would enhance professional confidence. The need to develop effective internal accountability systems is to ensure that external accountability requirements are met. If districts are well-capacitated much of the support to teachers can be devolved to them. Application of work-health intervention in schools is uncommon (Cinamon & Rich 2005). 'School administrators are invited to address the blending of work and family roles to realise better teachers and teaching performance' (p.99). This idea requires 'educational officials to accept some responsibility for teachers' mental health which has been a low educational priority' (p.99).

10.3 Limitations of the research

The limitations are those characteristics of design, methodology and my role as researcher (see chapter 5). These can be regarded as the application of interpretations of the data, the constraints on generalisability and utility of findings that are the result of the design, or methods that establish internal and external validity. One limitation of this study is the sample size of teachers, i.e., four female teachers. This implies that my particular findings are neither representative of all schools in Gauteng, nor that my themes are typical of all women teachers. Furthermore, I do not claim to have identified all the possible themes of women teachers' experiences and challenges. Having made explicit the limitation of a small sample, I feel, however, that the data generated from the autobiographies, journal entries and semi-structured interviews enabled me to construct an in-depth description and analysis. I believe the findings provide some insights into women teachers' personal and professional lives; their experience of the intensification of teaching (which is a global phenomenon); and their attempts to navigate a balance

between home and school. It furthers our understanding of the conflicts they experience as women, as mothers and as teachers.

What I now think is a limitation in my study is that I did not elaborate on the dimension of spirituality. The teachers alluded to their spiritual growth, from which they drew, to navigate the challenges they faced. Spirituality is not confined to a religion, 'it pertains to connecting to the spirit within us and accessing it as a tool or strategy of resistance' (Castillo-Montoya & Torres-Guzman 2012:543). In a climate of performativity, 'concerns of care, connectedness are devalued' (Apple & Jungck 1996:26). 'Teachers as spiritual beings long to experience connectedness and a sense of personal wholeness and meaning in their lives, including their professional lives' (de Klerk-Luttig 2008:508).

Another limitation may be the way I worked with theory. I incorporated concepts from several theorists and used them as frameworks to guide me in presenting a clear and nuanced picture on women teachers' home and school lives. My intention was solely to build a coherent conceptual frame and argument. However, I realized, albeit too deep into my research progress, that I could have safely excluded some theorists (e.g. Sutton 1986 & Guest 2002 – see 3.6), although I was convinced in the beginning, that they spoke to my work on the notion of balance.

The frameworks from Sutton (1984) and Guest (2002) were used as guides to assess how women teachers perceive and experience conflict. I acknowledged that they were 'traditional' frameworks. Sutton's (1984) study explored job stress among a sample of primary and secondary teachers in the US. As Sutton emphasises, stress can have adverse effects on a teacher's psychological and physical well-being. Guest's (2002) study of conflict and interference between work and home provided a useful starting point on the study of work and home balance. Guest (2002) acknowledges that 'we need to broaden our conceptual frameworks to incorporate a fuller understanding of life outside work' (p.277). However, I believe that the exploratory use of these frameworks did not

undermine the study's contention that women teachers navigate, daily, gendered environments.

While analyzing the data in chapter 7 on the critical influences relating to teachers' professional and personal lives, I thought that I should have left out some influencing factors as outlined by Day et al 2007 and Day & Gu 2010. But, then, I would have presented an incomplete picture of what mattered to the participants.

When I embarked on this study, I was venturing into foreign academic territory. Using Butler's theory of performativity opened up new ways of conceptualizing identity, even though her readings are complex and controversial. There were times when I believed I was not utilizing her concepts fully. It is why I drew heavily on other authorities (Hall 1996; Davies 2006; Hey 2006; Youdell 2006; Nayak & Kehily 2006), since their interpretations are aware of the difficulty to deconstruct her ideas. Just when I thought I got the gist of her philosophy in *Gender Trouble* (1990), she reflects in her work *Undoing Gender* (2004:207) 'When I wrote this text (Gender Trouble), I was several years younger than I am today'. And so she reconsiders her theory of sexual difference and her theory of heterosexuality. Butler views the aim of fixing explanations as doomed because of the re/signifying (performative) power of language (Hey 2006:441). Davies captures my feelings in her conversation with Butler: 'Your writing enters, again and again, the impossible space of contradiction, that space we have learned too well to shy away from' (2008:11). Truly, my breakthrough moments came when I was able to link her theory with teachers' everyday lives. My concern was that it did not seem quite adequate.

I have theorised gendered subject formation to explain women's oppression, and have illustrated how power relations function in subtle and insidious ways. I have recognised that one's experience of gender is inseparable from one's experience of race, class and sexuality. The data in my study show how these social identities and oppressions combine in different ways and are contextualised e.g. class is always contextualised in terms of race, gender, sexuality, disability etc. In this way, I have been committed to

addressing the multiple inequalities that women encounter, especially since Butler (2004:186), makes the point that 'the regulation of gender has always been part of the work of heterosexist normativity and to insist upon a radical separation of gender and sexuality is to miss the opportunity to analyse that particular operation of homophobic power'. My position may have 'prioritized' race, gender and class as the 'identificatory site of political mobilization at the expense of sexuality'(1993:116), (although sexuality is mentioned in my study on pp.84,104,107,153). This could be a limitation in my study although my intention was not to erase sexuality as a marginalised identity. With hindsight, a greater emphasis on sexuality may have contributed to a more complete picture of women's identities.

Using both thematic analysis and discourse analysis gave me the space for a varied interpretation of the data. I was interested in the analysis of language and how to approach an utterance or a text. Using discourse analysis helped me to understand the role of language in the creation of social identities that are linked to gender, specifically the emphasis on gender performance. It gave me insight into analyzing concepts such as agency and power relations and how we 'do' gender in talk. Using both types of analyses opened up the possibility of exploring both spoken and written texts.

Having now come to the end of this study, I am able to see more clearly what could have been done differently.

10.4 Suggestions for further research

For future research, this study allows for a wide range of re-examination of women teachers' home and school lives. It would be useful to deepen the understanding of certain ideas and concepts that emerge from this study by varying the sample e.g, one could work with women teachers from private, public schools or with rural schools. Another sample is a comparison across different types of teachers, e.g., union-activists or unmarried women teachers. A sample could include student teachers who are mothers to

investigate how they navigate dual roles in pre-service teacher education. What prevents these students from completing their studies or from achieving as well as they might be? Further research in this area could offer teacher educators with ideas on how to limit the impact of these difficulties for students. A comparison between on-campus students with dependent children and those studying by distance might also be another useful area of research. The aim would be to investigate the similarities and differences between the different groups on how they manage their identities within the different modes of study. Another area of focus could be full-time teachers with family and study commitments. A sample could include teachers from a middle class background and a sample from a working class background and how these become articulated with subject positions and how social difference mediates their lives.

A further study could apply the notion of 'performativity' in women teachers' lives more fully to demonstrate its enduring potential. Butler is a complex theorist who offers far more than has been experimented with in this study.

It would also be useful to explore the characteristics and principles of new forms of professionalism and teacher identity as they emerged from this study, and what would be necessary for teachers to develop these characteristics and commit to these principles. It would be useful to extend the case study to women leaders at schools to explore how managerialist discourse has changed the way in which they manage. The extension of the present study can contribute to the development of a deeper understanding of how teachers grow professionally during reform.

10.5 Conclusion: My Personal Reflections

Being involved in this study, the teachers had the opportunity to be engaged in the process of quilting a narrative of 'other ways of knowing'. Quilting is the art of stitching together pieces of cloth, fragments of memory, linking the past to the present and making

it whole (Flannery 2001 in Mirza 2009:2). Casey (1993) reflects on her life history study with women teachers and she concludes that:

> New social languages for valuing education are presented in these narratives; and new worldviews, grounded in innovative educational and political projects, are revealed. As they tell the story of their own lives, these women are meaning-makers; they are authors of whole new volumes of social text. It is in all these senses that the women in this study have become 'authors'- in the creation and recreation of social meaning through their educational, political, and narrative practices. (p.165)

I, too, believe that the teachers in my study have become 'authors of their own lives', just as I am of my own. Butler contends that 'life histories are histories of becoming, and categories can sometimes act to freeze that process of becoming' (McInnes 2008:111).

Indeed, my own experiences as a woman teacher may have provided the impetus for this project on women teachers' lives. My study of the life histories of these teachers has given me the privilege to reflect upon my own teaching, and to 'explore the social grounding of my own ideas' (Casey 1993:10). In writing their histories, I have been forced to confront my own and to explore the complexities of my own lived experiences, and the tensions which can develop between my personal and my professional identity.

The sole purpose of my contemplating this research project and embarking on this road less/well travelled was to honour my late son's wish that I accompany him on his academic quest. It seems fitting that having used Butler's notion of identity formation that I borrow from her, having no 'ready vocabulary' myself, to convey my inner turmoil - 'what claims us at such moments, such that we are not masters of ourselves' (2004:21). Butler's work entitled *Precarious life – The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, was written after September 11, 2001. My son, just 21, lost his life on September 9, 2001- a

date branded into my memory. Many were the times during this research process that I felt I was not master of myself. There were doubts and uncertainties and the desire to relinquish something that was asked of me. But then, would I have been true to myself or to the echoes of a request from the past?

> Perhaps mourning has to do with agreeing to undergo a transformation. There is losing as we know, but there is also the transformative effect of loss, and this latter cannot be charted or planned. I think one is hit by waves, and that one starts out the day with an aim, a project, a plan, and one finds oneself foiled. One finds oneself fallen. One is exhausted but does not know why. Something is larger than one's own deliberate plan, one's own project, one's own knowing and choosing. (Butler 2004:21)

And yet, in my perversity, I clung to the belief that if I immersed myself in uncharted waters, I would be safe, my sanity would be intact, time would be taken care of, and others' stories would be told…only to be reminded time and again…that there was a 'before' and an 'after'.

> Who "am" I, without you? On one level I think I have lost "you" only to discover that "I" have gone missing as well. (p.21)

This is the alpha and the omega of my work. At the close of my pilgrims journey, the 'cap' is yours to don. As Butler says 'I am gripped and undone…my narrative falters as it must' (p.23). I certainly wish I could have told another story. Perhaps of conquering an academic pursuit and the sought-after sweet taste of success. Undeniably, I have walked paths strewn with new discoveries and exciting possibilities. I kept company with Butler, Day, Hargreaves and a myriad others. I visited 'places' (theories) I had no intention to visit. I had to dig deep to unravel both marvels and mysteries. My participants became my bedfellows. I knew them not only by name. Their stories became my story.

At the close of my pilgrims journey, the ‘cap’ is yours to don.

What else do I disclose? In ‘giving an account of myself, something is sacrificed, lost, or at least spent or given up at the moment’ in which I make myself into an ‘object of possible knowledge’ (Butler 2005:120). The assertion also holds true for my participants. Butler postulates further that the ‘forms of rationality by which we make ourselves intelligible, by which we know ourselves and offer ourselves to others, are established historically, and at a price’ (p.121). My narrative is not withheld.

From childhood, I was aware of my race, class and gendered position. Papa went to work and mama stayed home – cooking, cleaning, dressmaking and looking after my siblings and me- all seven of us. My sisters would help to mop and dust, my two brothers had to attend soccer training for their weekend matches. Papa would return in the afternoon, get served his usual cup of tea and hide behind the newspaper for what seemed an eternity. During the course of this ritual, we maintained a hushed silence, played outside, had our sibling fights if we had to, but not within earshot of Papa or else we were admonished quite soundly either by mama or my eldest sister. After this respite, Papa would check on our homework, test marks, books that we were reading (comics were banned in my home) and the biblical texts that we had to learn. Mama would have to, every so now and again, read off our misdemeanors. Needless to say, we were thoroughly disciplined if we transgressed. Strangely enough for me, reading the newspaper is something in which I still indulge. I inherited my love for reading from my parents and older sisters.

Ours was an English-only household though my parents communicated in the vernacular when topics were taboo. My parents regarded English as linguistic capital, a passport, if you may, to brighter educational prospects, especially in Apartheid South Africa. I would, however, have loved to speak fluently the language of my origin. I realized much later the influence of colonialism/Christianity in constituting the colonized Other. My parents emphasized the value of education and all but two of my siblings pursued

vocational/tertiary education. Looking back, I wonder how my parents managed financially. Suffice to say that I went into teaching because of a teaching bursary.

What I recollect vividly are my parents assisting so zealously in the church. Even though they had so many mouths to feed there was always some to give to the destitute. I always wondered at the respect shown my parents. To me they were my parents – it was as simple and as complex as that. It was in my senior years in high school that I was able to piece together the kinds of humanitarian work they did. In my junior years in high school, I remember especially a part-time helper in my home. Mama and 'Maka' (a name coined by my youngest sister) would work together – washing, sweeping, vacuuming, ironing-while they chatted endlessly. My parents were fluent in Zulu. Every year for the time she was in my parents' employ, my father would take her to Inanda (Kwa-Zulu, Natal) to attend a weekend church gathering. We all went for the ride in my father's van/bakkie. (I grew up in Pinetown, Natal).

On the 31st May (it was a public holiday, first Union Day and later Republic Day) for as long as I can remember, my father would take my younger sister and I to watch the Comrades runners coming up the straight. It was, back then, a sea of only white male bodies - our education of a racialized history. My sister, many years later, ran the Comrades to the absolute joy of my parents.

Our teenage proclivities caused my parents undue consternation. Growing up there were various do's and don'ts. Profanities, cigarettes, alcohol, wearing jeans and make-up for my sisters and I were expressly forbidden – Butler calls this 'bodily forms of regulation' (1993:3), or the powers of regulation (2004:57), or 'the precepts by which we are compelled to act or speak; the norms that govern us' (2004:207). Remember this was in the 60's. And dare we cross the line! Some of us did, to our own detriment, such was my father's wrath.

Something that does not to this day escape me, is that while at the Springfield Teacher's College (1970-1972) during the height of Anti – apartheid protests, I had the support of my father. He indulged me in my political awakening and encouraged me to attend the student meetings at the Bolton Hall in Durban (days after the death of Ahmed Timol). My mother was far too concerned about my safety and my involvement in sit-ins, student boycotts, protest marches and vociferous singing of freedom songs. Our suspensions from college albeit temporary, upset her altogether stable environment. It was around this time that I came to learn by chance, that my father after passing his standard six, taught at a school in Esperanza, a town along the south coast of Kwa-Zulu Natal. This was in the 1930s. He was then approached to start an elementary mission school for the Indian community in the south coast town of Beneva. Given that he had a standard six education it was a daring enterprise. He taught the three Rs at an elementary level. That little mission school spawned two high school principals who did not forget their humble beginnings. I understood then my father's involvement in our school lives. To my surprise, after much delving into my family background, my sons' nanny declared that my father had taught her. It was the only education she was allowed to have.

After college, came teaching in 1973. It was here that I experienced patriarchal oppression and gender discrimination first hand. School practices served to marginalize females and ensure our continued subordination. In 1976 came marriage; 1978 and 1980 saw the birth of our two sons. A new chapter in my life unfolds with the birth of my two grandsons in 2010 and 2013. Forty years later in 2013, I am still teaching. Much has changed, and much has remained the same.

A story told has no tidy endings. Visions change, once any story is told; ways of seeing are altered (Steedman 1986:22). I offer my story, I make my voice heard. In this spirit, I close this work, only to open for all its readers all the educational and political possibilities it may inspire (Casey 1993:166).

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ANNEXURE A

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Guideline questions for autobiographical essays

1.1 Where were you born?

1.2 Please describe 2-3 significant memories about your childhood (in your family, with childhood friends, as a child in South Africa).

1.3 Please describe 2-3 positive experiences in primary and in high school that you think have influenced your professional choice of becoming a teacher.

1.4 Please describe 2-3 negative experiences in primary and in high school that you think have influenced your professional choice of becoming a teacher.

1.5 Did your mother hold a career (professional and other)? What education did your mother have?

1.6 Did your father hold a career (professional and other)? What education did your father have?

1.7 In your opinion, to what extent did your mother manage the different expectations from her (as worker, as a wife, as a mother)?

1.8 Please write about 2 people that have been role models in your community in terms of the way you see your role as a woman (mother, wife, citizen) and as a teacher in South Africa.

1.9 Are your siblings' career patterns/education similar to yours?

1.10 What stands out for you in your professional life as a teacher over the past few

years?

What has changed?

How has it affected your experience as a teacher?

How has it affected your experience as a woman (wife and mother)?

1.11 What influences from early childhood and early family life do you think have shaped your personal, political and intellectual development? When you write about these experiences think of your cultural background, your gender identity or race and how have they impacted the above dimensions in your development?

1.12 Is the way you see yourself now different from the way you saw yourself in the past? What led to the changes? Have there been other turning points?

1.13 In what ways is your experience as a teacher in your school today different from the experiences of male teachers in your school?

1.14 Do you experience any form of discrimination in your work?

1.15 Do you or did you belong to any consciousness-raising group/s?

How has this affected your interpersonal relationships with family, friends and colleagues?

Thank you for your participation.

ANNEXURE B

PERSONAL REFLECTIVE JOURNALS

Dear Participant

A reflective journal includes a record of your experiences, ideas, fears, mistakes, confusions, breakthroughs and problems.
Please keep a two-week journal detailing and describing your experiences as mother, wife and a teacher.

Please complete a journal entry immediately after you have experienced any kind of conflict or tension associated with your personal and professional life that is strong enough for you to notice/ that has affected you. Please describe:

What happened to cause the tension?

What was your reaction?

How did you manage the conflict?

Please describe your experience of this tension or conflict in detail and share your thoughts.

Thank you for your participation.

ANNEXURE C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Dear Participant

It would be useful to me if you could participate in this study, which sets out to explore the relationships between aspects of women teachers' lives and work experience. My main focus lies in your experiences of school change and how it impacts on your personal and professional life.

There are no right or wrong answers and wherever possible please give an example to convey your experience.

Your responses will be kept both anonymous and strictly confidential.

Selma.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 How long have you been a teacher? How long at this school?

1.2 Describe your current teaching assignment.

2. EDUCATION AND CAREER PATTERN

2.1 How did you decide to teach?

Did your parents influence you?

2.2 Was teaching a first career option? If not, what were the other career choices?

2.3 People come to teaching by different pathways. What type of teacher preparation have you had?

2.4 Were you fairly ambitious when you went into teaching as a career?

- What did you want to achieve?
- What was your 'dream' as a teacher?
- Do you still feel the same?

2.5 Have there been obstacles to your chosen career development? If yes, could you describe them and say what strategies you used to overcome them.

2.5 What do you feel presently about the idea of teaching as a career for women?

2.6 Does teaching offer you a 'good fit' as a career?

2.7 How long do you plan to stay in teaching? Will family influence your plans?

2.8 If planning to leave teaching, what would it take to keep you in teaching longer?

2.8 Do you have/had mentors? If yes, how did they assist you?

3. TEACHING

3.1 Has teaching been what you expected? If not, why not? What did you expect when you entered into the profession?

3.2 If you could change your teaching assignment in any way, how would you change it?

3.3 Describe the challenges you face with the current educational changes?

*Please give me an example of a positive experience you had of school change.

*Please give me an example of a negative experience you had of school

change.

3.4 Does your professional time encroach on your private time? If yes, is there a cut-off point?

*How many hours do you spend a day on your various teaching activities?

*How many of these do you spend at school and how many do you spend at home, outside formal school hours?

3.5 I understand that your role is to teach. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have?

*Which of these responsibilities do you find particularly challenging or difficult and why?

*How do you feel about the demands made upon you? Think about other aspects of your life (as a wife, mother, friend, member of a community etc.) and reflect on how you experience these in relation to your career as a teacher.

3.6 What aspects of your work do you feel you have the power to change and what aspects do you feel powerless about? Why? Give examples.

3.7 How does the structure of the institution affect your power to effect change? Are there contradictions?

3.8 Have you encountered a lot of opposition, especially as a woman? If so, could you please elaborate.

3.9 Principals respond differently to staff members trying to effect change. I am interested in understanding how you see your principal in terms of your influence on change or what role would you say he or she plays.

3.10 Does anyone monitor what you're teaching? If so, who and how?

3.11 Are teachers in your school collegial and co-operative? Can you tell me how often you talk with other teachers, in what kinds of situations, and what you talk about?

3.12 Do you feel able to talk about any concerns with regard to the changes and its impact on you (with colleagues; management)?

4. DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL SITUATION

4.1 Would you like to say anything about support in your life?

4.2 What effect do you think having children (or not) and/or being a carer has on a woman's career? If you would like to say anything about your own situation please do.

4.3 How have you managed to cope with balancing your career and private life?

4.4 Do you want to say something about the stress factors in your life, and if any, how do you deal with them?

4.5 Do you regard your job as equal in status to your spouse's work? What contribution does your income make to the family budget?

4.6 Where do conflicts of role and priority occur?

4.7 Do you think we are living in a changing world where men and women are increasingly regarded as equal in terms of family?

6 GENERAL

6.4 What are your plans for the future?

6.5 Are there any other questions that I should have asked you, that would

have thrown some light on these issues we are interested in – i.e. women teachers' lives?

Thank you for your participation.

ANNEXURE D

RESPONDENT VALIDATION LETTER

Dear Participants

I would like to once again express my sincere thanks for your participation in this study. At salient points in the research process, I have attempted to keep you informed about my progress with the study. In this the final stage of the research I would once again appreciate your help in ensuring that the process remains transparent and true to the spirit of your contributions. To this end, I am returning the analytical chapters, which are based on your autobiographical essays, interviews and journal. In the first round of the validation process, I sent copies of transcripts for you to check the accuracy of data representation. For those who participated in that process, I have based the analysis on the amended transcripts. In this, the final respondent validation process I would appreciate your completing Parts A & B below:

A. Confirm that I have not misunderstood or misrepresented you in my analytical representation and interpretation. I would appreciate if you would kindly identify and correct instances where I may have interpreted the data erroneously. Please record your responses per chapter, and provide the page reference(s).

B. I would appreciate if you would comment in a few lines on the following:

* What are your responses of the research process? Did you find it democratic/undemocratic?
* What were the positive aspects of participating in the study?
* What were the negative aspects of participating in the study?
* Any other comments you would like to make.

Unless there are significant changes to the analysis, your responses to Parts A & B will be recoded in Chapters 6,7 and 8 of the study. Kindly e-mail or fax your amended response. My sincere thanks.

DATA FROM AUTOBIOGRAPHIES, JOURNAL ENTRIES AND INTERVIEWS

CHAPTER SIX: SOCIALISATION INTO TEACHING

IK:P2

My mum has been teaching for forty seven years. So, there was always education going on around me. In terms of her being a single parent, teaching always put food on the table, clothes on our backs, so I definitely saw that as stability, but over and above that, her passion for her job, her career – you can't meet that. I always saw how much she loved it. It was her whole life…she influenced me greatly to love education. School was always part of my life … we spoke school, we lived school (IKP2:2010:FB).

AK:P2

To my father, status was everything. He wasn't an educated man and so he had to prove how smart he was all the time, which meant putting my mother and the education system down all the time (AKP2:JAN2010:FB).

AT:P7

She gave all her life to serve the school. She was the pillar of the school. She acted as a principal at the primary school.. She was a dedicated worker even when her personal life was challenging. She was an excellent music teacher and a sole motivator for the learners. Her co-workers still come to see her for support and motivation. She couldn't afford to buy a house but that did not define her – she still excelled in her calling of being a teacher (ATP7:JAN2010:FB).

IP:P4

My mum was not going to risk not sending us to school and listening to me with my music, something that she's not sure of. She wanted to be sure of something else. Part of it made me angry, a bit angry because I felt I'm living m
I'm a continuation of her life being a teacher. (ITP4:2010:FB)

A:P5

My mother did not have a professional career. She may have only completed standard four. As a teenager I helped my mother with her writing, however, she is an avid reader and a wizard with a budget (APP5:JAN2010:FB).

AP:P2

My father was a pastor and the founder of an organization called 'Help the poor outreach. I can admire my father, even though I do not think it was a divine calling for him. I admire his resourcefulness, I admire the fact that he used this opportunity to feed and care for his own family. I remember when factories, outlets etc. would donate food and clothing to the organization - it was such a wonderful time in our home – no need for sharing, no begging and no hiding, just indulging (APP2:JAN2010:FB).

AP:P7

My mother was exceptional at multi-tasking. She organized our limited finance so that we had a car, food, clothes and furniture in our home – I can only imagine the miracles she performed on a pastor's 'salary'. As a wife, she did everything for my dad; however, given the period and their 'Indian' perceptions, it was not uncommon. As a mother, she was amazing. I suspect, however, that on many occasions motherhood, under her circumstance, became all too much for her

(APP7:JAN2010:FB).

AP:P11

I think as parents you do better when you know better. My parents believed that their sons would one day be the breadwinners of their families so they focused on educating them. My elder sisters had to leave school to support our family and one day their husbands would support them, that was the plan. As the youngest I did not have any educated role model in my family (APP11:JAN2010:STFB).

AF:P5

At that time she subsequently upgraded her skills whilst working.
She trained in midwifery and psychiatric nursing (AFP5:JAN2010:FB).

AF:P7

She was a single mother for a long time. She worked very hard
(mostly night shift) as a nurse. She saw to our physical needs (basic needs);
we did not go hungry and were decently dressed. But she was emotionally absent.
At any given time she hardly knew in which standard at school I was
in (AFP7:JAN2010:STFB).

AF:P6

My father is an artisan – skilled cabinet maker. Also only completed JC (Junior Certificate) (Grade 8). Trained as a teacher for one year but did not pursue this Option (AFP6:JAN2010:STFB)

AK:P8

My mother is by far the most important role model that I have ever had. She is the reason that I am able to effectively manage my home and my job. She taught me without realizing it, how important it is for a woman to be in control of her own destiny. Her passion in the classroom made me want to be passionate in my classroom. Her advice over the years has proved invaluable. And her strength even in adversity, made me realize that a woman can do the things that she wants to do but that the things she needs to do must be done first. When I graduated it was

as if she graduated beside me, her pride was evident and her joy clear. Maybe that's why so many of her children are educators today – four out of five is a pretty good score (AKP8:JAN2010:RM).

AK:P8

When I was growing up she was my second mother. Her advice, sympathy and reprimand were always given at the right time and accompanied by nothing except love. Over the years she's taught me how to make a little food go a long way, how to speak your mind without offending people and that it's okay to be comfortable with who you are. Because of all the time I spent with her I was exposed to community work and it made me love it. Even now as a Life Orientation educator I try to instill that passion in my learners. (AKP8:JAN2010:RM)

AT:P8

She died in 2009 when she was 90 still strong, focused, independent, intelligent. She had a fleet of taxis, she is one of the first black women to be a pastor, to even drive a car in the taxi industry. She was my friend and she instilled strength. When she was young, she was raped but she was a free soul because she was able to share that with me. She preached in the multi-cultural churches and challenged the stereotypes in the church as a black and as a woman. She was an activist and a very great warrior. She sailed through her obstacles during the Apartheid era and during the democratic era. She conscientised people about her position as a woman in a diverse society. (ATP8:JAN2010:RM)

AP:P8

She had a limited education but is wise beyond her years. She refused to have her experience with her battle against cancer be futile so she educates women on the risk, precautions and treatment of cancer. She is a counselor and fund raises for an organization called 'Reach for Recovery'. She's a role model because of her strength, generosity and selfless nature. I may educate individuals to become successful but she educates to save lives. (APP8:JAN2010:RM)

AF:P8

My old school teachers are more or less my role models. Their role as teachers

seemed to command a certain respect. I admired that and thought it would be the same for me. To some degree there is still some respect for teachers – I think it's more a case now of us not respecting ourselves anymore as a result of our downgraded status (economically) in the community. (AFP8:JAN2010:RM)

AK:P3

In grade 4 I had a wonderful teacher. I remember her reading to us at the end of each school day. Each day she read a few pages from Roald Dahl's Matilda. I still love that book and have bought it for my boys to read. She taught me to love reading and learning, she always made everything we did fun. Her music teacher nurtured her singing talent. She was a fantastic music teacher and she knew how to get the best out of me. She made me proud of my gift and fine tuned my talent. It wasn't enough to just sing in her choir, you had to feel passionate about it. I was part of the concert and would sing solo's even though those kinds of things were normally left for the elite children. I had never heard of the Drakensberg Boys' Choir until she introduced me to them and even arranged for them to visit our school. I was awestruck and sorry that I was a girl. (AKP3:JAN2010:T)

AK:P3

At the same school I was also very unhappy, I didn't quite fit in because my parents weren't wealthy and my father was very protective of me. I was never really allowed to spend time at friends and do extracurricular activities although he allowed me to do choir, I don't think even he would have denied me that. In 1994 I was in grade 7 and my parents were separated and in the process of divorce. It was hard for me, most children were dropped at school and fetched and I would have to catch the municipal bus plus we no longer lived in the area. I always felt like I was being scrutinized and that I was never good enough. One particular teacher disliked me immensely. I hated her and on top of that she was my register teacher. I think our relationship had a lot to do with my achievement level in her learning area. I went to that school for one of my teaching practices and she was still there. She remembered me and said that she always knew that I would follow teaching. I wish that she had encouraged me more; perhaps my mathematical experience in high school would have been better. (AKP3:JAN2010:T)

AK:P4

High school was where I really came into myself, but it was here that I decided money was more important than passion. With my parents being divorced we struggled for money and I became increasingly aware of the fact as I became older. I remember my English teacher telling me to never turn my back on my own ability and to allow myself to be who I truly was. My nature has always been one where I speak my mind and I am not afraid to stand up for what I believe in. This made me very well liked by my teachers which made my high school career a happy one (AKP4:JAN2010:T).

AT:P3

I attended primary school where my mother was working, what I experienced was excellence all the time, which put pressure on me cause I found myself to always want to compete. I was somehow unable to express myself out loud because I'm an educator's daughter. When I passed my science test in grade 6 with all those I was competing with, that was significant. (ATP3:JAN2010:T)

AP:P4

In high school, I was largely influenced by my mathematics educator. I was totally impressed with the manner in which she got us to learn. She came down to our level – used slang that we could relate to and made herself so approachable (even though she was completely in Purda) (APP4:JAN2010:T).

AP:P4

I always felt very protective of my neighbourhood friends and any teacher who belittled or degraded them, felt my wrath. I remember my Computer Science educator saying that my friend was only good for one thing and that was walking the streets. I went crazy. I realize the damage we as educators can do, and I am always conscious of what I say and if as a human being I err, apologizing to learners is as natural as air to me (APP4:JAN2010:T).

AF.P3

I felt especially proud when my school teacher in grade 4 would show my books to everyone as a display of excellent work. He kept my book as a showpiece for many

years after that. Academically I was an excellent student but I found schoolwork and teachers unstimulating, they hardly offered any motivation or guidance and when I left school I was completely 'clueless' as to what I was good at or which direction I should pursue – I guess they knew that it was only teaching or nursing or IT as our options so they didn't bother (AF3:JAN2010:T).

AF:P4

School was a boring, unstimulating experience but despite that I excelled. I realized then that 'academia' in itself was stimulating for me. I enjoy learning. (AFP4:JAN2010:T).

AK:P7

My mother always put us first; her family was the most important. She worked hard to put food on the table and to dress us and she always tried her best to give us the special luxuries that we needed. I do not remember my mother struggling to manage her career and her home; I very seldom saw her working. When she got home in the afternoons it was all about us and what we needed. I do remember that the first half an hour after she arrived home was hers. There was no TV or loud music; she'd say that she'd had noise all day at school and that she needed the short time to wind down. This was just how it was, we didn't dare bug her. My older brother would see to my lunch and by the time we were done she was ready to help us with our homework or anything else. She always had time for us, her hobbies and her work. I think she handled her time well. Even now after so many years in the profession she is always ahead with her work and well organized. I guess practice makes perfect. (AKP7:JAN2010:SFR)

AK:P2

My father had a volatile relationship with his step-children and looking in on the situation it always seemed as if my mother was trying to keep everyone happy. In my family when we were happy we were really happy and when things were bad they were really bad (AKP2:JAN2010:SFR).

AT:P7

As a wife life was challenging for my mother, but being a faithful wife she

stood still through my father losing his jobs, fights and lack of respect for her. I think what made her hold on to her marriage is the social standards that are expected from women in general. Later in her life she realized that the relationship with my father drained her. She separated from him to raise me and my siblings though they still related and she was still committed to the love for my father. When my father died she took it upon herself to bury him (ATP7:JAN2010:SFR).

AT:P7

As a mother she was quite a strict, supportive, protective mother. Her major concern was to see her children being educated and successful. She had financial constraints she stood the humiliation of always owing people but she just focused on her goal. She appreciated her duty by waking early in the morning to prepare food for us and food was always on the table. She conquered self-pity and gave me the best warmth that she could, I respect her for that. (ATP7:JAN2010:SFR)

AP:P7

My mother was exceptional at multi-tasking. She organized our limited finance so that we had a car, food, clothes and furniture in our home – I can only imagine the miracles she performed on a pastor's 'salary'. As a wife, she did everything for my dad; however, given the period and their 'Indian' perceptions, it was not uncommon. As a mother she was amazing. I suspect, however, that on many occasions motherhood, under her circumstance, became all too much for her. Today, we jest; those beatings would be considered abuse. (APP7:JAN2010:SFR)

AF:P7

My mother managed like I do. She too, was a single mother for a long time. She worked very hard (mostly night shift) as a nurse. She saw to our physical needs; we did not go hungry and were decently dressed. But she was emotionally absent. At any given time she hardly knew in which standard at school I was in. I truly am a product of my mother and in a very uncanny way our lives at different points seem to run parallel (AFP7:JAN2010:SFR).

AK.P11

We were always involved in the church and I always felt as if I belonged there. I consider those people my family. They taught me to be proud of who I am, to demonstrate and perfect my talents and to be myself in every possible way. I spent many happy and fulfilling days and nights at the church with my friends. I believe that for any child it's important to have some kind of religious life, it grounds you and develops a set of morals and values. (AKP11:JAN2010:PIPD)

AK:P11

My family took reading and education very seriously. Most Sunday afternoons were spent reading and relaxing. We didn't really go to the movies or hire video's. Books were always given as gifts and regular trips to the library were the norm. I have continued to instill the value of reading in my children (AKP11:JAN2010:PIPD).

AK:P11

As a family we never really spoke much about politics as far as I can remember. All I ever heard was what was on the news. My parents never really spoke to me about the political situation in South Africa and we never really asked. (AKP11:JAN2010:PIPD)

AT:P11

Growing up in an African family with Sepedi cultural background I always felt that I am obligated to finish school and help my family hence I embrace the principle of Ubuntu. I have grown personally; I am a loving, caring young woman who believes that I will always strive to be the best person that I can be (ATP11: JAN2010:PIPD).

AT:P11

Growing up in a family where my mother is the pillar and a role model in her own right influenced me to be very ambitious. I was a driven child though sometimes I would ask why are we not successful in my family as other families.

(ATP11:JAN2010:PIPD)

AT:P11

We grew up being exposed to politics and the way we lived in townships there was no way that segregation can be abided after 1994. When South Africa experienced its first democratic elections everybody just felt all our problems will be solved and we felt hopeful for the future (ATP11:JAN2010:PIPD).

AP:P11

My personal development has been largely influenced by the orthodox Christian family I come from. I think much of my personal development stems from guilt (everything was a sin). I am therefore always conscious of what is right and wrong to a fault at times. At times I am obsessed with doing the right thing. I had to learn that sometimes life is not always black and white and have begun to make concessions for those grey areas. My father played an important part in my development to say the least. He is 75 years old and our perceptions on life in general are so different. I rebel against everything my father believes. He is 'old school' – as far as religion is concerned he is less tolerant of other religions, according to his interpretation of the Bible, woman should be subservient to their husbands and then there is the fact that he was greatly influenced by the propaganda of the white apartheid government. I love my father dearly and understand him but I purposely live my life contrary to his. (APP11: JAN2010:PIPD)

AP:P11

I think as parents you do better when you know better. My parents believed that their sons would one day be the breadwinners in their families so they focused on educating them. My elder sisters had to leave school to support our family and one day their husbands would support them, that was the plan. As the youngest I did not have any educated female as role models and so getting a job when I completed my matric was the extent of my options.* However, my rebellious nature would not allow me to be complacent with that and … I desperately needed the freedom of staying at the residence of the college. It was there that I truly became aware of the possibilities and that really the sky

is the limit for an intellectual female. (APP11:JAN2010:PIPD)

AP:P11
My political development: as a pastor's daughter, growing up I believed that white people were our saviours – giving us Christianity. The white missionaries assisted my father financially and my father spoke of them as 'good people'. However, it was only in high school that I fully understood the gravity of the situation when I was exposed to boycotts. I would walk out of class to attend these sit-ins (against my parents consent) and it was here that I developed my political opinions. I always felt limited as an Indian female as to what I could do as far as being more active in the political changes of our country – my struggle was limited to school hours when so many of my African peers were in the forefront of the violent struggle. I have no tolerance for racism or discrimination of any kind (APP11:JAN2010:PIPD).

AF:P11
As eldest of five sisters I was subjected to immense responsibility from a young age. From age 12-18 had to be caregiver to my younger sisters in absence of mother who worked nightshift all the time. So I was basically left to take care of them at night alone. Affected personal behaviour patterns as it taught such fierce independence that am unable to ask help from anybody (AFP11:JAN2010:PIPD).

AF:P11
The lack of television left no alternative but to read and only this has stimulated intellectual development. As a South African Muslim woman and having grown up in a strong 'Muslim stronghold' community - cultural and religious values have shaped my previous values regarding home, children etc. (AFP11:JAN2010:PIPD).

AF:P11
Politically we grew up feeling inferior and less than as a result of political attitudes and inequities. This mindset followed me throughout my life and has been difficult to relinquish (AFPII:JAN2010:PIPD).

IK:P1

When I was younger, definitely. And then when I turned about sixteen I decided I'd rather be rich, so I decided I wanted to do a career in advertising. But I would say it was my first choice, I sort of went through a stage where I did'nt want to do it. Money seemed more appealing, that life, the nice car, working in an office. But now I know that would have been wrong for me. So I think my life decided for me, and it was just the right thing for me (IKP1:2010:BT).

AK:P4

A person came from the College of Education to talk to our class about attending the college, they also spoke about the bursary that the government offered and the fact that I wouldn't need to pay for four years of study which really appealed to me (AKP4:JAN2010:BT)

IT:P1

I actually never decided to be a teacher. I was influenced by my parents' lack of finances. I was not present during the time when I was supposed to register. So my mom saw it fit for me to go there, and then she actually registered for me, and then I wanted to deregister (ITP1:2010:BT)*.

IT:P2

I was just studying, I was not even thinking about I'm going to be a teacher (ITP2:2010:BT).

IT:P3

But with teaching, as I'm saying, I never thought about it. Instead, part of me made me angry, a bit angry because I'm living my mom's life. I'm a continuation of her life, being a teacher (ITP3:2010:BT).

IP:P2

I didn't really decide on becoming a teacher. Coming from a relatively poor background, it wasn't an option to study. I got a bursary and I just took it. My intention was to work, because that's what we do. That was our future. We had to work to support the family. And my elder siblings did that. I got the

opportunity, having a bursary, I don't regret it at all (IPP2:2010:BT).

AF:P3
I did not make a choice to become a teacher. It was one of two or three choices open to us as Coloureds at the time (AF3:JAN2010:BT).

IF:P1
I was not interested in teaching as a career at all – but it was the time in our country when it was either be a nurse or a teacher. …there was no money to go to varsity which would have been my first option – I had no choice but to go to a teachers' college which offered a bursary. It was teaching and nursing. So teaching was just kind of natural. And so it was actually not a choice at all. The cheapest option was to go to teachers college where you got a bursary (IFP1:2010:BT).

AK:P12
It has definitely changed the way I approach my teaching and the way I relate to the children I teach. My sensitivity to their needs is definitely deeper because I have had to set aside my own feelings and continue to help them deal with their lives. My teaching was always about me and the way that I dealt with things, but now I've realized that it's not about me at all, it's about the children I teach and how I can develop them holistically. When I was training I heard lecturers say that but I never knew what they meant until now. Teaching is all about self-sacrifice and giving more than you set out to. Giving to them makes you able to deal with your own issues. In February 2010 I thought my life was over and that because my marriage was falling apart that my career as a teacher was over but I have since realized that it has only begun. Before I felt that I was powerful and that I could do anything that I wanted. Now I feel that I am power-less but that's ok because I need the children that I teach to uplift me so that I can give back to them with my whole heart. As a woman I realize that being a teacher is very much like being a mother and that the children I teach often need to feel that security. My life as an educator still has a long way to go but I don't think that I will ever leave this journey and the development and personal growth that I will achieve will be the most valuable gem that I will

ever find (AKP12:JAN2010:TP).

AK:P2
If I think back I wanted to do things on my own, I now realize that no teacher is an island and that we need one another to actually create a positive and effective learning environment for the children we teach (AKP10:JAN2010:TP).

AT:P12
Reading has always been my passion. I believe that most of my changes were created by the books that I have read. I always had low self-esteem issues when I was growing up because of my gender, race, social standards which were expected from me. I have accepted, I am at peace with who I am, I'm looking at life optimistically and I believe that life is a journey and we have to take it easy to ultimately achieve everything that we have been dreaming about (ATP12:JAN2010:TP).

AP:P12
My interaction with young adults from different financial, cultural, racial backgrounds and the limited guidance from my parents allowed me to change and to develop. Another turning point for me was when I taught at KW. Secondary School, located in an underprivileged coloured area. I had a culture shock but the one thing I could relate to was the lack of ambition amongst poor communities and I felt a sense of responsibility to change that. I am sure most women would agree the ultimate turning point is marriage and having children. My main focus is my children. The changes I make now are for selfish reasons. I want my children to live in a world free of indifference, racism, discrimination and violence.
I want my children to have role models, leaders they can look up to because they are morally healthy. The children I teach now could be those leaders so I am desperate to do the best I can do (APP12:JAN2010:TP).

AF:P6
In an effort to cope with my personal and work situation I turned to prescription drugs. It led to not so much a downward spiral, as I thought I had it under control – what it led to was 'stagnation' in all aspects of my life. Coupled with

stiff dependence on prescription drugs this led to the inevitable 'crash'! So in 2006 I was hospitalized for extreme exhaustion and anxiety. It was the worst of times for me but ironically was a cathartic experience. I was in an abyss – a very dark place – and there was no way to go but up and so gradually I crawled out of that very dark space. I relinquished my dependence on prescription drugs and looked deep for spiritual guidance. I'm in a much better space now and am moving forward with a great degree of faith both personally and professionally (AFP6:JAN2010:TP).

AF:P7

I did make a huge error of judgment whilst still recovering.
In order to escape from financial debt I resigned from teaching in 2006 and used the pension payout to pay off some debt and to purchase necessities such as a fridge, washing machine, beds etc. With nowhere to go, no other experience to enter the private sector and still doubting my own abilities I went back into teaching straight thereafter (AFP7:JAN2010:TP).

IK:P17

I think the biggest stress for me this year was my marriage. And working with my husband. When you don't work with your spouse, as most people don't, when you're having a tough day, you can come to work and set it aside, or talk openly, without affecting that person and other people's opinion of that person. The biggest stress factor was keeping my private life private, because it's not private. It's actually very public, in terms of what I'm going through, because of my colleagues (IKP17:2010:P).

IT:P17

The money part of it. I think my career, it's not giving us enough. Sometimes I say, with the load of work that we have, if it was paying I would save for a holiday. If we were earning okay, I would really focus and give it my all. Sometimes you find yourself split, because it doesn't satisfy you materially, so if you buy a car, you can't get a house. If you buy a house you can't get a car. It's stressing. You're always looking at other avenues. And you don't

need that. It's okay to give, but it's okay again to receive. I've thought about another job. Part-time, if it's not something that I love, let it be (ITP17:2010:P).

IP:P11

I put myself last. I say, "If I can do everything else, then I can sort myself out later." The whole stress thing is, I've begun to put my children after school. I've put schoolwork and getting things done first, and then my children will get what's left. And I know it's bad, but this is my job and I feel I can make it up to them, but I can't do it when it comes to school. So it's stressful because then I have to find time to be with my children. That's how I sort out my stress level. What's immediate? What do I need to do first? If the matric marks are due, and Ethan wants to go to the movies, I need to do what's more important. I know that's more important, but I have to prioritise (IPP11:2010:).

IF:P11

The stress factors were mainly the money issues that exacerbated everything else, because we're not paying your bills, then you're going to be stressed, I mean it's going to impact on everything in your life. The main thing was just that money wasn't enough to just afford you peace of mind, when it comes to doing what you need to. So the stress factors were mainly monetary issues (IFP11:2010:HS).

CHAPTER SEVEN

IK:P9

With new curriculum come new demands. It's a document for this and the test paper has to be set like that and we have to have this many assessments a term and sometimes we lose out on the time that we spend for children. We have to have a weekly forecast and a phase planner and a term plan and an assessment plan and no-one really looks at them, let's be honest. Some people don't do them

and then, on top of that, on top of that, you've got to teach. And listen. And be with the children, and be alive, and be creative, and make your classroom be inviting and comfortable and feel like home (IKP9:2010:C).

AT:P10
The curriculum has changed. It is practical because it relates with what learners are experiencing. We take informal education to the classroom, though implementation and the goals that the teacher must reach are unrealistic (ATP10:30JAN2010:C).

IT:P6D
If the people who are in charge, or the government, I don't know, who are planning this and even to lower levels like the school, if they can stand being realistic about the material that we have and what we are supposed to offer. By material I mean learners. (ITP6D:2010:I)

IT:P4B
With the outcome-based education, with the complication of what we are supposed to teach, which was a bit unfamiliar because I did English and Psych but I found myself teaching Technology. And I failed so many times (ITP4B:2010:C).

AP:P10
The educational system is unreliable and educators continue to become demotivated. The idea of quality control for educators (IQMS) in my opinion is idealistic as the class visits have become orchestrated and a well rehearsed pony-show (APP10:30JAN2010:C).

IF:P14B
By all intents and purposes it's (OBE) excellent. I've taught the same way that I've always taught. OBE hasn't impacted me because I haven't used it. I've gone about things the same way. From what I hear most schools have done that. We've implemented in terms of paperwork that we need for the department (IFP14B:2010:C).

AF:PAGE1

After 1994 (and democracy) brought huge changes to education. All these changes to the teaching methodology especially led to confusion and resistance. We were not trained adequately yet were expected to cope. Classroom dynamics also changed considerably – classes became bigger and noisier. Corporal punishment was outlawed and we as teachers became powerless (AFPAGE1:30JAN2010:C).

IT:P5

What I've realized is I no longer promote the multi-cultural schools. Coming to multi-cultural schools their thinking starts to be clouded, because of the kind of leadership another culture provides like communication. I will be shouting, they hear me, you will be speaking calmly, they don't (ITP5:2010:C)

(JEK:7MAR2010:I).

The pressure at work is mounting. I have to set another lot of cycle tests and I won't be able to do it for some classes. I hate the fact that I'm losing precious teaching time for useless assessments just so that we can look good as a school on paper. Di discussed my class visit and IQMS with me today. I am nervous (JEK:7MAR2010:I).

IT:P6D

During the apartheid time you would find a teacher only focusing on essay writing, building up all the skills for a term. You're reading one book for a term. Something like that, let us be developmental really. And we stop this running around. I can't be doing creative writing, marking it quickly, doing literature, marking it quickly, doing my control test, no, no, no, no, no. I can't be doing that, like it's really a mess. We are definitely not doing justice to the kids. (ITP6D:2010:I)

Teaching can be demanding at times and a bit overwhelming with the marking, workshops and meetings to attend, parent consultations, matric week-end classes, sport events and fund-raising initiatives (AP10:30JAN2010:I).

Workload has changed. Content matter pretty much the same. Methodology

different. Compared to when I started workload is now four times as much (AF10:30JAN2010:I).

You're so overwrought with paperwork, and "I can't talk to you right now, because I've got to do this now." "But, Miss, I'm having a …" "You need to wait, come at first break, because at first break I'll have five minutes for you, because this document has to be in by ten o' clock," or whatever. I wouldn't change the subject I teach, I wouldn't change the hours I work, nothing. Just the paperwork, if that was different (IK9:2010:I).

I have to go to my colleague and fix my file. Everything has to be in order. (ITQ10:2010:I). I'm supposed to submit marks. No understanding about the debate, they want their marks. When? Now I want to cry, I was asking myself, "Okay, must I stop this debate for me to submit?" What are you submitting? (IT6C:I).

Have your plan, but know that there should be adjustments in your plan. We need to meet deadlines. But let our deadlines go hand in hand with the delivery. For instance, much as we have our athletics, we don't have a lot of time to go to class. Let us be realistic about what we have. We can't be running like headless chickens all the time. It's athletics. Run, run, run, run! And then after school, you stay behind (IT8B:2010:I).

The paperwork is redundant and time consuming, leaving educators' with less time to focus on problem learners (AP10:30JAN2010:I). Where I could have done more with actually teaching, I spent on the paperwork (IP9:2010:I).

Admin has just become a nightmare. You get to teach in between the admin. Everything is recorded manually, everything is duplicated, triplicated, nothing is put on computer, our schools are far behind in that respect. We spend an enormous amount of time on admin and then we teach kind of 'by the way'. With the matriculants I try not to do that too much. But with the other grades if I had to do admin I will do it at school rather than at home, because I'm just resentful of that. And then I'd rather not teach for sometimes a whole week

while I'm doing admin. That's what everybody's doing. Government must start realizing that's what's happening. There's really not much teaching guidance, there's notes. Administrative work, it's a nightmare. It leaves you with little time to actually teach (IF9:2010:I).

One of the biggest things I do here is I work with prefects, our school leaders which I love doing because I really feel that I have the ability to help them to become better at what they do. I'm involved in the school choir but that's just because I love it. Definitely the role of mother and disciplinarian. I think in the society we're living in now, children aren't disciplined the way that we used to be. I'm still reasonably young; I'm twenty eight. It's hard not to worry about the children I teach. It's very difficult to sometimes separate yourself from children on a personal level (IK11A:2010:ER). I do a lot of charity work (IK11C:2010:ER).

I'm Head of Department for English. I manage the department. I give support. I'm in the management team of the school. I participate in debate, I do music (IT11A2010:ER). I was debating last term. It was interesting for me to research. I would stay in the computer room with those kids. I never even had weekends. I was working. They would come to my house Friday and then I'll say: "Let me just have Saturday to do my ironing, my washing." At school I couldn't (my classes overlapped with lunch) ground them. We won, we even went to provincial level, that's where they lost…and they were beginners (IT6D:2010:ER).

They were at my home, in my space. Sundays from 10h00 – 14h00. I didn't even go to church. What I am doing is like church for me (JET:4MAY2010:ER).

People who think teaching is easy, it's not. It's one of the difficult jobs. Sometimes you're a psychologist, you're a doctor, you are so many things in one body (IT18:2010:ER).

I am a counselor at the school. I've been for courses. I don't think I'm really qualified as a counselor, but I'm a good listener, so I think that's one of the positives and why I was chosen to be a counselor. And I think I'm very

approachable so, the kids find it easy to talk to me. I'm busy with the Learner Representative Council (LRC). I don't give the LRC my full attention but I think I've sort of developed them enough to handle it on their own, but I would really like to have done more with it, but I can't, because of my other responsibilities. (IP11A:2010:ER).

I'm collecting money or raising funds for somebody. A teacher will tell me, you know, that this organization wants to raise money for this child that's sick and it becomes my responsibility (IP11C:2010:ER).

We do help with girls' soccer. So we go every Wednesday. And we spend an hour or two on the soccer field and that's the extent to which I'm prepared to go. I wouldn't want to do any extra-curricular because I think I should be paid for that. In the private schools teachers get an extra stipend. So I just won't do it if I don't get paid for it. I'm on the banquet committee this year, so I'm organizing the banquet, but I enjoy doing that. So we actually have to be on two committees. You are given a choice, so you do what you enjoy and you just kind of fit it into the normal day. That's my extra contribution, I do it willingly. I'm cluster leader for English for grade 12's. I find that I have to spend a lot of time having to liaise with other teachers. I do it because I think I'm the best person to do it and I get frustrated if somebody else is doing it. What I'm going to have to do is coordinate a cluster paper for this term. So I don't think that anybody actually knows that you do that. I just do it because I volunteered to be a cluster leader. We have meetings once a month until about four, five o'clock. And then I have to report to the language facilitator about what's happening, and so I do put in that extra time. It just becomes such a part of what I do that I do it without even thinking it's extra work (IF11A:2010:ER).

I sometimes feel that my male counterparts in the workplace are treated differently to me, almost unfairly. Somehow all across the teaching profession, especially in primary schools, male teachers are revered with god-like awe because of their rarity. And they get away with being slack. But, for the most part the men I work with also work as hard as I do although they do cruise along when it comes to the formality required in administration. In many cases because

there are fewer of them they are expected to do more in terms of invigilation and sport (AK13:JAN2010:D).

Generally men are seen and recognized as heads, so in our school there is no difference that men are in the forefront and women are acknowledged. Though, our management acknowledges women equally to men. There is no amount of difference; both genders are treated equally and even the distribution of work is equally the same. Every individual is expected to protect the mission statement of the school and serve learners by teaching them (AT13:JAN2010:D).

Discrimination is experienced mostly everywhere. With me I was discriminated by educators in my department because of them not succeeding in the management post which was advertised. Mostly educators of colour had a problem where they lacked co-operation and highlighted that they are well experienced. I was discriminated against because I'm a black South African, they would insinuate that I was incapable. I never focused on negativity – I embrace them and encourage them that our main focus should always be on us being the best educators and serve the learners (AT14:JAN2010:D).

There's a level of discrimination (in management). Being the woman that I am, I don't entertain it, because I speak my mind. With my department, they were not totally accepting of me, based on the experience they have. I'm from a junior secondary school. They never gave me a bit of growth. It puts you in a can where you feel claustrophobic because you're new, you want to adjust. At the same time you want to learn, you're supposed to lead (IT12B:2010:D).

As a female educator I definitely work harder to maintain discipline at the school. I have had to earn, manipulate, convince and shamefully guilt male learners to respect me, whereas, my male counterparts receive it merely with their presence and the fear they instill. I do believe female educators have contributed in creating these barriers by allowing male educators to handle the discipline at school as it is simply easier. Female educators who have earned and taken up leadership roles in schools are now faced with a mammoth task of instilling that same respect in learners as their male counterparts

(AP13:JAN2010:D).

I would not say experienced but witnessed. I am constantly forced to confront these subtle forms of discrimination, predominantly racial (AP14:JAN2010:D).

Males seem to naturally command more respect or fear in the classroom situation and this facilitates better discipline (AF13:JAN2010:D).

I haven't really experienced discrimination. When I got the Head of Department position I was favoured. That was one of the factors that contributed to me getting that position. So I think with gender equity we are becoming more powerful as women rather than encountering any kind of opposition. I think that female teachers have more to give and we make our voices heard more. In fact, we are the dominant force at the school here. We're almost like family, so there's accommodating of ideas. Being a strong woman I would resist that. I think I was one of the only women in this district to have a ruling overturned. I fought for this position (HOD) and it was given to a male teacher. I had been in the English position, the English teacher. It was the main motivating factor for me getting the position. I did challenge the traditional structure that prefer males over females to get this position (IF12B:2010:D).
So I think with gender equity we are becoming more powerful as women rather than encountering any kind of opposition (IF12B:2010:D).

I work in a school where there's a lot of flexibility. Some of my colleagues wouldn't agree with me. I'm allowed to be myself but it comes at a price. You're given freedom within a school, that opportunity to do X. But 'we want it like this, like that' so there's actually no freedom. I'm still following structure.
You get told 'whatever you need, you can have'. But when you need it, you can't always have it. That's definitely a contradiction. Because we're a smaller school resources are limited (IK12A:2010:MS).

You find your deputy, your principal, they've been in a school for twenty five years. You come in and they've been there. There are other things that they decide on which is just right. You say: "I'm not fighting for equality but let the

information be shared equally." With respecting the portfolios they hold, sometimes you decide to be quiet. The principal comes to the meeting and says: "Who has a problem?" You have a problem as the manager too. But if it's addressed in the staff meeting you can't say anything because it's a bit of a contradiction. When you go back you lay this issue on the table, they''ll be saying, "But we asked in the meeting." "I can't say in the meeting. I'm saving you, because I'll be opening up a can of worms." "But you signed, that simply says you acknowledged." "Yes, I'll acknowledge what you're giving me, but we never agreed upon this." (IT12:2010:MS)

My principal was very supportive as I came in. He supported me all the way. "Any problem that you face, come." I even felt if I'm going to come to this guy all the time, I'm going to lose the point, I'm not going, I'll be like a child going to report to the father. Other issues I had to deal with on my own, others I had to record (IT12C:2010MS).

Mr T he was old school, so anything modern, anything that the learners would want, also I am a younger teacher, I would want to implement there was quite a few obstacles. He had a set way of doing a thing and it worked, but you need to have change. With our new principal, she's more open to change. I understood where he was coming from. I understood that with experience, he knew better (IP12C:2010:MS).

They're quite flexible. There've been no stumbling blocks. I've never been inclined to make a significant contribution, sadly I must say that. When I was running the school newspaper with ideas, they just kind of let you run with it. There's been no resistance about any changes. Many of us feel we kind of do what we came here to do and that is to teach. Beyond that we're not really interested… in empowering the kids, changing things in society, within the school system (IF12:2010:MS).

Mostly we enjoy being together and we work well together, we'll help one another. We'll stand in the firing line for one another. Obviously there are exceptions, there are people who won't co-operate. The staffroom – we laugh,

we joke. Once a week we have a meeting where we air our views. Every family has it's ups and downs, we tend to offend one another. But I think we're a good team (IK14:2010:CC).

We talk so often, it might not be formal where we're having meetings, but we update each other, especially my grade 12 teacher (IT14:2010:CC). I'll talk to people that I feel like talking to, it doesn't matter they're yellow, they're red. So, I think we're still struggling with that again. On the face value, you're not going to see it. We're laughing. There's a very subtle energy. The principal said once he's open to change. The staff is not trusting that he's changing. We don't trust because we don't trust ourselves, I don't know (IT12C:2010:CC).

It's a very smooth running school. Everything gets done because it's being checked so often. It gets done on time, because it's being monitored and some-one reminds you and makes sure that the work gets done. So, even if you're not co-operative, you have to be. Mr T always said he doesn't like corridor talking, but it happens. We normally discuss what happened in the meeting. Dress code, discipline, our duties, we just break it apart. It's also very cathartic, because when we have opportunities to talk about something other than school we take it. We vent, we'll have teachers crying in the staffroom, and there'll be so many other teachers that have a solution (IP14:2010:CC).

We talk everyday. You talk with your colleagues concerning the work, there's a lot of interaction within the subject itself and how we can assist each other. It's just assisting and aiding. We don't socialize outside of school hours. What I've found with the influx of black teachers to our schools is this resistance to guidance. We've had three issues where they refuse to co-operate. And eventually the HOD had to do it. That's never happened before. I think our standard has been consistent. We've been willing to learn from each other (IF14:2010:CC).

I give of myself every lesson of every day and I never want to stop. My greatest achievements are seeing the impact when children return year after

year and I see their success. That is what I want, it's hard to give and see no immediate effect but I've realized that the long term effects are normally more valuable and worth waiting for. I think my perspective on problem children has changed over the years. I've definitely learnt how to sniff out real problems as opposed to children who are attention seekers. It's almost addictive to see someone that you've nurtured succeed and live a better life. The self-fulfilment is much greater than anything else in my life. I hope that I never lose this passion for young people. (AK10:30JAN2010:P)

Children don't all like you. They don't all do what you ask. They don't behave unless you make them. Generally it's hard work. People who are not in teaching think it's so easy. "I could look after the kids all day." "No, you couldn't." "It's hard work, you know." (IK8P:2010:P).

I want to teach my learners with passion. I want to serve them. I'm teaching human beings. I want the learner at the back of the class to realize his ability. I want to reach out to that learner. I want to see him developing (JET:18FEB2010:P).

I'm wondering if I'm a teacher for teenagers. They steal a lot out of you and they give nothing. You teach 200 learners. About twenty give back. You have to push all the time, it's tiring. You have your life too. Sometimes they come sulking, they are drunk, they're from abusive families. Sometimes they are sad. Sometimes they just don't want to learn. When you reach out, they get shocked. "Who are you? How can you reach out? I'm like this, I've accepted myself." You go back to them as individuals, "You are somebody, you are more than that." Where do you get the time to say that? Others they can't even write, they are not supposed to be in the mainstream. They see themselves struggling within this group of learners. You want to try so much to help them. You don't have time, you can't (IT4C:2010:P).

The discipline in the classroom is not desirable. Classes are large and at the same time you communicate that level of frustration to the learners (JET:16FEB2010:P).

The standard at which learners perform seem to drop each year and learners settle for the bare minimum. Motivating and encouraging learners has become exhausting. The lack of discipline of learners has made it increasingly difficult to function at an optimal level and each year it seems to worsen. It has not changed the fact that I love teaching and the interacting with these young adults but I am definitely more stressed and exhausted. (AP10:30JAN2010:P)

Acumen and learner attitudes have changed. I.Q. levels seem to have dropped. I now teach at a slower pace. I have to adjust lessons and questions to lower grade kind of questions. Huge classes mean I don't interact personally, I hardly know any of their names -as compared with the past when I knew each learner by name. (AF10:30JAN2010:P)

Discipline is a major problem since the ban on corporal punishment. Teachers have no power and most of the other attempts i.e. detention etc to enforce discipline are difficult to manage and so most teachers have given up. Other forms of discipline take time and effort on the part of the educator to enforce many of us have neither. (JEF:25FEB2010:P)

Teaching requires ambition, and not just ambition to further yourself to be a head of department or something. I just think you need to be ambitious within yourself to give the children the best education that they can possibly get. When I started my job, definitely, I was ambitious, and I'm still ambitious. And I definitely see myself in management. Maybe not now, but definitely in the future. I want more, but if I never do, did more than be in my classroom, I wouldn't be unhappy. As long as I kept on working to the hardest I can possibly work, I would be satisfied. Obviously we all have to want more. I would want to earn more, have the authority…But if I never did that, it wouldn't harm my career. Because I think that naturally I'm a leader. And so whether I'm a head of department or not, people will rely on me (IK4:2010:PIA).

I would regard myself as an ambitious person. Everything that I hold at the

particular moment I want to make it work. But, with teaching I never thought about it (IT4:2010:PIA).

I think I'm good with the kids, socially but I do get frustrated when they don't get it, you know? I don't know if that's every teacher, or is it just me. It's not possible for everyone to have A's, but I want them to get it. So I think a bit ambitious in thinking that I could even…(IP4:2010:PIA).

I had absolutely no ambition to further myself in the teaching profession, I had no ambition at all (IF4:2010:PIA).

I didn't really want to teach children anything except how to be people. I have the privilege to teach a subject where children can be themselves a lot. And so it's not so much about the content in my classroom. I think it's much more important – the lessons we learn on the playground and on the corridors, and, you know, on the sports field and in our extra-murals, the interaction. And that's what I want from teaching. I want to get to know these children, but really know them and be part of them (IK4A:2010:PIA).

I never had anything. I went there to work for my mom. (IT4A:2010:PIA)

I really enjoy being in the classroom. It may seem unambitious or things like that but I wouldn't want to change that, I wouldn't. Not even for the money. Not even for any reason. I feel I can make more changes in individuals, the learners where it counts. I'm very outspoken, I make changes even though I'm not in management. I do that. But being in the classroom is where I want to be. If I have to be ambitious I'm going to get out of teaching, completely.
I took a job at KW school because I wanted to make a difference. And I know it's sort of a cliché. I think my parents, I have to give them that, with the poverty, with helping the poor, we had this organization where we helped the poor, that they instilled that in me. And I felt if I'm going to make a difference, I'm going to make it in their lives more than the whole academic part (IP4A:2010:PIA).

I actually didn't want to stay in teaching very long. I thought while my kids were small I would have time to see to them. So I taught for ten of those years in a very begrudging fashion. I despised the conditions I was working under. It was almost embarrassing to tell people I was a teacher. I mean my classroom's always dusty and dirty, the environment is just not pretty, shall I say. Those factors embarrassed me coupled with the money that we were earning. And until later, I learnt to look at this thing through different eyes. I was resentful of my conditions, I was resentful of what I was earning and so I must be honest, I didn't try my best. I didn't try to do well as a teacher, I did what I had to do, I did my job (IF4A:2010:PIA).

I've come to love teaching and maybe not through the path that I wished it was. And I do think I'm committed. We come in extra during the holidays, nobody pays you anything for that. In fact, sometimes nobody even knows that you're doing it. You just do it for the love of it, to get these children through. You realize that they have so little out there that if they don't make it here what are the prospects? You think about the community and how few opportunities there are for these children. There's a sense of needing to help, contributing to society in that way. I've realized there's a bigger picture. It's not just about the money, it's about what contribution you're making to the lives of those children. And so, once I saw value in that I started to see more value in myself (IF4A:2010:PIA).

What I've realized my dream is, is just to be able to touch children's lives. I know that sounds quite sort of clichéd. I don't just want to be the person in a classroom saying "Why haven't you done your homework?" I want to be that person to whom they can say, "I've got a problem, please help me, um I'm having a good day, celebrate with me." (IK4B:2010:PIA)

I was happy I'm working. I was tired of struggling. Some part of me looked up to my teachers who taught me at high school to say "If I can be like them." Now I can't deliver that. But at the same time I realized how teaching needs experience, even when you're from the varsity because you're delivering. You have to take out that understanding and it was a challenge for me

(IT4B:2010:PIA).

I understand that children have different levels but I feel like we shouldn't limit them. My dream is to get the child that is failing to a B or an A. My dream is that every child passes well. My dream is that my black children, and I'm going to say my black children, because they call me a bit of a racist, and it's weird because I tend to favour the black children. I think my dream is that they should not be discriminated against and I want total equality in our schools, especially our Indian schools and it's not that way (IP4B:2010:PIA).

I think just to be the best that I can be. I think I'm moving in that direction. I think that I've mastered my subject matter and that's a good thing about teaching in our schools because you tend to stay in one subject, be good at it and then you just grow in it. I just want to be remembered for the impact I've made on the lives of individuals, that would be my dream (IF4B:2010:PIA).

I'm more ambitious now. When you first start teaching, you're very naïve. You have these ideas you'll have this beautiful classroom with little curtains and kids all sitting quietly in their rows, but it doesn't work out like that. I want to take something home at the end of the day. When that child gets a forty that's been failing the whole term, I want to be part of that (IK4B:2010:PIA).

Not really. I'm growing up now. I'm a very spiritual person. I feel it was grounding me in a way. I guess part of me was selfish. Sometimes you have to go out of your way to help others. Now when I wake up we'll have frustration. You have to prepare not to disappoint others but not to disappoint yourself again because if I'm not part of that, definitely I'm not going to feel complete. But still, I feel I'm a teacher (IT4C:2010:PIA).

Further than that in the actual profession there's no dream to strive to be anything. I was Head of Department and then with the resignation I lost my position. That decision was also prompted out of not having a clear head at

that time. So I do regret that because I see now that it's become more difficult that I would not probably be able to get back that position (IF4C:2010:PIA).

CHAPTER EIGHT

What a hectic day! I am so exhausted and marks are due soon…this week has been so busy (JEK12FEB2010:HST).

I want to be on time and organized with everything – I do – but really our curriculum does not give that opportunity…deadlines to be met, work…to be done in the classroom…it needs time to complete work but I find myself rushing (JET:16FEB2010:HST).

Everything seems to be rushed and against the clock (JEP:8MAR2010:T). Sat for half an hour trying to organize my marking that is due...if it takes this long to organize…how long will it take to actually do. My admin and marking is piling up…I am worried if I can handle it (JEP:9MAR2010:T).

Assessment tasks are much more… more marking means that my home time is infringed upon. On average I have about 200 to 250 tasks per week to mark…each task takes about 10-15 minutes to assess…this is almost physically impossible. I have resorted to 'superficial' marking, especially of writing tasks, essays etc...I read only the 1st and last paragraphs then skim through the rest (JEF:26FEB2010:T). No

time to rest, no time for fun, no time for friends, hardly any time for family anymore...this isn't living – this is existing only (JEF:27/28FEB2010:T).

Miguel is stressing about school…I will help him…but I have to find time... I must make time for Miguel (JEK:14FEB2010:HST). Miguel is at the gym as he is every night at this time. I don't have the energy to do the work that I brought home, it will have to wait. I must make school lunches and then relax until Miguel gets here so that we can spend some time together (JEK:15FEB2010:HST). I don't have the energy to do the work I brought home, it will have to wait.

> Sometimes when I wake up I feel like absenting myself from work because I feel it stills my joy. I find I'm working all the time (JET:4MAY2010:HST). With all this I have to see to my mum's well-being. I go to her some weekdays and Fridays certainly and cook for her (JET:4MAY2010:HST).

I am looking forward to our holiday at the end of this month, hopefully Siva and I can spend some time together (JEP:11MAR2010:HST).
All in all Friday is my best day. It's the only day I allow for 'me' time. I do my weekly shopping and rest and read in the afternoon (JEF:26FEB2010:HST).

> I was married to a teacher so school formed a huge part of our life. The first year we were married, I used to take work home every day. Every day I'd have a bag of books or projects, or, you know, things that needed to be filled in, or whatever. And I'd come home, quickly and work, and then quickly throw supper together and feed him and keep him happy and then get back to what I do. And he said to me one day, "Are you married to me, or that school?" And it was a real wake-up call for me and so I don't take work home at all. It used to be part of my life but you'll often see me here in my classroom, rather that extra hour or two. Once I step out of this gate in the afternoon I am no longer a teacher, I'm 'mom' and that's really important and especially now as a single mom I really don't have time to work at home. By the time my two children are in bed it's eight o' clock and I'm tired. I don't want to sit up all night marking books. So I'd rather work in my breaks, my free periods, after school. If you see me taking work home you must know that I have absolutely no choice. I do research on

the internet. I might set my papers at home. I might do that kind of thing (IKQ10:2010:HST).

I do work at home. My boyfriend sometimes stops me to say, "I'm here." It does encroach on my private time. If you don't give yourself that time, you're not a happy woman. You're always thinking about that (work). So you want to get it over and done. When you're just over it, something comes up. I'm not happy now. I'm thinking work already (IT10:2010:HST).

All the time, all the time. I mean weekends are not, totally, my own. I mean I mark or I'm prepping, or I'm finding if there's a learner that's not responding to something, I'm thinking about it constantly. So, all the time. I can't, I can't really separate myself. I try, when I leave at, say three o' clock, I try to say, "Okay, this is my children's time." But, while I'm busy with them, or cooking, I'm still thinking about something that happened, what I got to do, so yeah, all the time (IP10:2010:HST).

I am learning to cut off. For me, I have the added dynamics of teaching extra private tuition, so I have very little time left in the week to actually have any private time. But I've learn't to manage my time more effectively. In the past it did encroach terribly. But right now I've learnt to balance it. So I would say that I take a manageable amount of work home and then I do the rest of it at school. On Wednesdays so that's marking day. So I don't teach. I now mark on a Wednesday to be honest with you. I know nobody should know that but that's the only way I could cope. I use time now at school, because to me it's only fair. I cannot continue to have it encroach so much on my private life that I find that I'm missing out (IF10:2010:HST).

I think though that sometimes I bring my job home, I worry about my learners and this puts strain on my family life. I am learning to leave things behind but it is a daily choice I make. The fact that my husband is in education does make things easier because he often empathises with me. His view on teaching is different; to him it's just a job. (AK10:30JAN2010:HS)

It takes a toll on my social life - my life is reading, planning or being occupied about what I'll do next (AT10:30JAN2010:HS). I have to be positive about life and take care of my family. That's too much. I am so exhausted when I get home. I sleep! I can't even wake up. My house suffers, I can't clean, it becomes too late to cook healthy food and I cannot go to the gym. My personal life suffers. It's a struggle. It's not nice to be lonely. My relationship suffers because I'm not managing my heavy schedule and demands made on me. I'm so bent on school that I can't think of anything else and my partner gets frustrated. You are lonely because of work. You are put in a corner – an emotional hostage. I cannot sustain a relationship because I'm choosing work over having a boyfriend because it's what pays (JET16APR2010:HS). With all of this I have to see to my mum's well-being. I go to her some weekdays and Friday certainly and cook for her. People feel that only women with families have responsibilities. For a single person people do not acknowledge your responsibilities (JET:4MAY2010:HS).

I really try to leave my work at school and focus totally on my kids when I'm at home but after an exhausting, draining day it's difficult. My kids are young and what could be a fun bonding time becomes another task. My husband, thankfully, is very understanding and not demanding at all. However there are times when I question whether I am a good wife and if I spend enough time with him. It may not affect him but it affects my self-image (AP10:30JAN2010:HS).

As a single mother with two daughters my measly income hardly suffices. After all expenses are paid at the end of the month I am left with only R700/800 for food, petrol, electricity, etc. It's almost laughable – it's a crime – I'm dehumanized as a result of it. So I have to juggle my 'normal' work with teaching on a Saturday from 8-2.30 and then thrice a week I teach privately. This brings in the extra income I need desperately to survive (JEF:26FEB10:HS).

I was right – the Saturday job is exhausting. I came home and slept from about 4-11pm. Didn't see my children until Sunday afternoon. Cooked and cleaned up on Sunday morning and did the week's washing (laundry) on Sunday afternoon (JEF:28FEB10:HS).

I used to worry that giving so much at school meant that I wouldn't have any left for home, but that's not true. I never run out of compassion and love although I am able to give more at home in many cases. It's almost as if the more I give, the more I can give, it rejuvenates and recharges me (AK10:30JAN2010:HS) I've definitely learnt how to sniff out real problems as opposed to children who are attention seekers. In a way, this has made me a better mother. Not much fazes me and so I'm able to deal with my two boys with sympathy and affection. Teaching has taught me that. (AK10:30JAN2010:HS)

It's challenging because I have lost my freedom. Work is on my mind with everything that I do at home. It's impossible to work and finish your school work at school. I always have to take my work home (AT10:30JAN2010:HS).

I have just completed all my prep's for the coming week. I must admit that I am enjoying the actual teaching process but I hate the admin involved. I spend all period ensuring that the kids grasp each concept but this leaves me with no time to do anything else in school (JEP:10MAR2010:HS). I am still exhausted after each day. By the time school's out I am spent (JEP:11MAR2010:HS).

I truly enjoy teaching and this always gives me hope. I do not regret becoming a teacher but the pressure seems to be instigated by my own need to ensure that everything is perfect and by the book. This for me, however, is a necessary evil (JEP:12MAR2010:HS).

Have to get some Vit. B6 and a multivitamin to keep my energy levels high. Have cluster meetings next week and that means no rest this Friday as I have to catch up with some marking. This means yet another weekend of work, work. My family and friends are so used to housing an 'absent' friend they don't even bother to plan things with me anymore (JEF:4MAR10:HS).

I think, thirty years ago, it was an excellent career for women, because there weren't the demands that there are today. Teaching isn't what it used to be. I think about how teachers work now, in terms of paperwork, the requirements in terms of assessments, what's needed, to dress professionally, you have to behave

in a certain way, it's almost very corporate in its way. But I think it's a good fit for women who want to have families. Women shouldn't go into teaching because they're women. They should go into teaching because that's what they want to do (IK6A:2010:HS).

Teaching for women is good, but I still feel we have a lot to do in terms of ourselves again, gaining confidence, being prepared at all times and passionate about teaching itself. They should see themselves in you. As women, being naturals we're good. We nurture (IT6A:2010:HSF).

I don't think it should be a profession for women. Teaching in a high school is very stressful. And if it's a good profession for women and we're going to go home and be with the children, I don't think we can say that. Because when I go home I'm still stressed. I don't have the time, I probably have the time, but I don't have the energy to fully give my children that attention they need and to give my husband that attention. Most of the time I'm exhausted (IP6A:2010:HSF).

I still think it's a good career if you're planning to start a family. People in the private sector go to work, they get up at five, they're home at seven. So, at least I can do my schoolwork at home, while supervising my kids (IF6A:2010:HSF).

Some days I wish I didn't have my children so that I could be more focused on my career. If my children heard me say that they'd probably be terrified and horrified and shocked. I don't regret having my children but I think that if I didn't have them, I could be better at my job. But having them has made me better at my job. Your children are never at the back of your mind (IK15:2010:HSC). Becoming a mother made me a better teacher and becoming a teacher made me a better mother (IK11C:2010:HSC).

You need to manage your life. I might not have kids, but I've got a family. So, your family makes demands again. And being close-knit and saving the situation all the time, you have to attend to what they say. Sometimes,

you've got a lot of work, but your family has this that you need to take care of. Your personal life, generally, having a relationship is just such a lot of work. You make it a point that he's happy, you're there, you're listening, you can't work when he's there because it simply says you're just not present, you're with your work again. So you work better when you are alone. And being a woman so many things are expected of you. I am a woman. So, generally, this gender, being a woman, it's just tiring (IT15:2010:HSC).

For me, it's made it more difficult. When I was single and I was a teacher, it was fun. I could really get involved with the children; do more with them. Now, I have to say to myself, I'm going for a parent's meeting, where am I going to leave the children? Not, "What can I tell the parents? How can I make a difference in them? I'm concentrating more of how can I manage this, how can I schedule this into my life with my children. Parents' meetings are always on a Saturday so to find babysitters or even to get my husband to do it, it's a problem. It's become more difficult having children. I think the single teachers or the unmarried teachers in the staff will find it better, it's better for them (IP15:2010:HSC).

I think if you speak to most female teachers they'll tell you that just being home earlier for your children is a benefit. It's as simple as it is. We don't have latchkey kids that have to come home to no parents, we're there at least. So regardless of we're dog tired when we get home, but at least we're there physically. We do admit that that is one of the pro's of teaching (IF15:2010:HSC).

A teacher neglects their own children. I feel like my mother was emotionally absent, I also feel I've been emotionally absent. I think I've experienced the full gamut of being a single mother and teacher (IF11C:2010:HSC).

I don't always manage it but I'm getting better. School is school, home is home. But it's very hard to balance it especially if you're in a career that demands a lot out of you, personally. When I get in front of my classroom every day I give of myself, my privacy, my life, my experience. It's very hard and I don't always get it right. Some days I go home with the weight of the world on my shoulders.

Sometimes I come to school with the weight of the world on my shoulders (IK16:2010:HSB).

It's hectic. Sometimes you find yourself balancing but with the balance you have to wake up early. There's always an extension, you cannot just be comfortable. Moving from here to there, there to there (IT16:2010:HSB).

I haven't really found a balance yet, but holidays if I set aside for my children, that's time for my children. I don't care what comes up, what's due, if I have to go away to Durban, I don't take anything with me. That time is for my children. Other than that it's difficult to balance it because things need to get done in school and I need to get things done with my kids (IP16:2010:HSB).

It used to be difficult for me to do all the juggling, now I'm just finding my balance. I'm really finding my balance. Teaching is worse in terms of time constraints, in terms of marking. With the portfolio marking it takes a tremendous amount of hours to mark after school hours. So my boot, that's my library is always full of books and marking and I take it out as I need to. I can honestly say that the younger teacher will not be able to balance things, would not be able to cope (IF16:2010:HSB).

CLIENT: Selma
QUALITY OF AUDIO: Good
DURATION: 105.41 mins
NATURE OF TRANSCRIPTION: Interview

Key: I Interviewer
K Respondent - Kerry
s.l. sounds like

I Morning, Kerry.

K Morning.

I And, uh, thank you for coming to this interview. Shall we start with, uh, the schedule? We'd work from question to question to question.

K Okay.

I That's the interview, uh, I would be going according to that interview schedule.

K Okay.

I Let's look at, uh, background information. And if we're looking at the first question it says how long have you been a teacher? How long at this school and describe your current teaching assignment?

K Um, I qualified in 2003, so this is my seventh year as a fully qualified teacher, but I've been teaching for eight years. And I've been at this school for eight years. And I've taught a number of subjects, but at the moment I'm teaching in the FET mainly, Life Orientation. Um, but I also teach Arts and Culture to grade nine and art, and Life Orientation to grade nine.

I How did you decide on becoming a teacher?

K Um, uh, you know, my mum is a teacher, and she's been teaching, this is her 47th year in the teaching profession. So, there was always education going on around me, and my, I've got five siblings and four of my five siblings are educators and married to educators. So I would definitely say that I just decided, I didn't really decide. I think my life decided for me, and it was just the right thing for me. I, I did dec-, I did want to do something

else, and, um, and it just didn't work out the way I thought it would. So, I, yeah, I just, uh, I just decided to give teaching a go, and I thought it would be a good sort of fallback, but in the end I, I, you know, I decided it was what I wanted to do. From the time I was little, I would say, I always sort of played teacher, I always wanted to be a teacher, so I don't know if I decided. I think it was just in me, you know, always, to do that.

I Okay. You said that your mother was a teacher for 47 years.

K Yes.

I Did she influence you in any way?

K Definitely. I mean, I mean, firstly in terms of her being a single parent, I mean, teaching always put food on the table, clothes on our backs, so I definitely saw that as stability, but over and above that, her passion, um, for her job, her, her, her career, was, you know, you can't meet that. So I always saw how much she loved it. It was her whole life, and so, yeah, I would definitely say that she influenced me, greatly, to love education. I mean, being in a school was always part of my life. I, I don't know if you know what I mean, like it was always, school was part of life. It wasn't just I went there in the morning and came home in the afternoon, it was everything. It was our whole life. We spoke school, we lived school, you know?

I Was teaching then the first career option for you?

K No, not, look when I was younger, definitely. And then when I turned about 16 I decided I'd rather be rich, so I decided I wanted to do a career in advertising. Um, I'm quite a, I'm very creative and that and I applied at Varsity College to do a degree in corporate communications for, for PR work, which I probably would have been quite good at. Um, I went, I got accepted and all of that, and then I had this form that I had to fill in and I lost the form. And I, I kind of, I believe in fate, and I sort of thought, "Well, maybe I should just look at whatever." And then a lady came to our school in my matric year, from the College of Education and she was just speaking about it, and I just thought, you know, "Really, what I want to be is a wife and a mother and, and, you know, have a family and have time for my children." Um, obviously I didn't know anything about education because it's hard work [laughter]. Um, and I, I kind of thought, "Ag, I'll just go for an interview." And they accepted me. So it was, it was a first choice, but it, not as I got older. But I would say it is a first, it was my first choice, but I sort of went through a stage where I didn't want to do it. I, I, I, money seemed more appealing, sort of that life, the nice car, working in an office, sort of. But now I know that that would have been wrong for me. So it was a first,

you could say it was a first choice. I mean, I was forever teaching my dolls and stuff. Yeah, so that …

I Do you regret it? In any way?

K Becoming a teacher?

I Yeah.

K Um, no. Well, first I'll say no, because I think that it's where I'm supposed to be, and anybody who knows me, sort of as a colleague or as a friend, knows that this is where I'm supposed to be. But I do some days regret it. Some days I look at, you know, friends and family who live a more lucrative life and I wish that I could live better, in terms of my finances, but money is not really something that's important to me, so I don't regret it for long, you know, maybe for a minute when I see that lady with a nice expensive handbag then I think, "Well I wish I could buy that and not have to save for it", but no, I don't regret it. I mean, I'm very happy with my choice of career and, yeah, I love it. So …

I People come to teaching by different pathways, Kerry. What type of teacher preparation have you had?

K Uh, what do you mean?

I In terms of your, um, college path, university path?

K Oh, um, well I did my matric and then I went to the College of Education and I did a Higher Diploma in Education for Senior Primary and yeah, I didn't study more than that. I could have done my honours, I can still do it if I want to. Um, I just, I got married straight out of varsity, so I never kind of did it. But that was how I became a teacher. I didn't, yeah, I didn't do like a learnership. I did it sort of the normal way. I have a professional diploma.

I Do you think that you're adequately prepared at College for what, uh, for what you experience in school?

K Um, at first I'll say yes, because I think that what College prepares you for is the day-to-day of teaching, um, in terms of getting up at a specific time, following the, you know, the routine, um, they teach you skills and that, but I think what really prepares you is school experience. Um, but, so that's very important, six weeks a year. And that six weeks a year by no means prepares you for your first year of teaching. It's like a baptism of fire, but I think it's a mistake for teachers not to do a professional diploma. I think that

if you're really serious about becoming a teacher you should go and study for the four years. Because, I think if you need the four years to live and enjoy yourself and sort of have the freedom, because once you're in the schooling system, it's very much a rat race. And I think that people who aren't in the career don't understand that. You work very hard. Even though you have your holidays you need them. So, I would say that I think I was well prepared enough, but I don't think in practical terms I was well prepared enough. I was prepared enough in terms of knowledge and the skills, but the application and that, that only comes once you're in the classroom. And it takes several years. I mean, like I said, this is my eighth year here and I'm only now, and probably the last three years, really learning about classroom management properly. Not learning, I've, in a way I'm kind of learning, I'm almost mastering it now, whereas my first couple of years of teaching it's kind of you dip your foot in the water, you check if it's okay. If it's okay you go a little bit further. If it's not you step out and you wait. So, I think, I think it's a mistake for teachers to do an internship. I think that you should go for the four years and do your teacher's diploma and follow that routine, because it does prepare you for the school system. You know, the knowledge that you will need in terms of curriculum and that kind of stuff, that's increasing, that's, that's hugely beneficial.

I **Do you think you were fairly ambitious when you went into teaching as a career?**

K Um, I think I'm still very ambitious, um, but that's my nature. Um, I think that, if you're not ambitious, then you're not going to meet the requirements. Because teaching requires ambition, and not just ambition to further yourself, um, like to be a head of department, or, or something. I just think you need to be ambitious within yourself to give the children the best education that they can possibly get. Because if you're not really keen on your job and wanting better and that, then they're not going to work as hard as they could, and it's not, it's going to spill, it's going to have a domino effect, where you're going to have children who are not working. So I would say that I, when I started my job, definitely, I was ambitious, and I'm still ambitious. And I definitely see myself in management. Maybe not now, but definitely in the future. Um, and I know that I would be capable of it, um, but obviously, that's because of the invaluable lessons that I've had in the last eight years. Um, I did. I was working, you know, closely with parents and children, sort of, in that way for a while, and I enjoyed it. So I am ambitious. I want more, but if I never do, did more than be in my classroom, I wouldn't be unhappy. I would, you know, as long as I kept on working it to my, to the hardest that I can possibly work, I would be satisfied. Obviously we all have to want more. I would want more. I would want to earn more, and sort of, um, I don't know, have the, the authority. But if I never did that, it wouldn't, it wouldn't harm my career. Because I, I think

that, naturally, I'm a leader. And so, whether I'm a head of department or not, people will rely on me. I, I don't know.

I What did you want to achieve when you went into teaching?

K You know, I, I wanted to, I didn't want to really teach children anything, except how to be people. And it's not so much about the content in my classroom. And I really have the privilege to teach a subject where, um, where children can be themselves a lot. So, I really have the benefit of being able to teach children more than, than just things. So, for me, one of the objectives of my career wasn't really, it wasn't like that always. It was only once I started teaching that I realised I wanted that. Because I think when you're a student, and you're young, you don't really know what you want. But once I got into the classroom, I realised that what I want, is to develop people that are going to be successful. I want, you know, it would be wonderful if one day someone would stand up and say: "You know, thank you to my teacher, for helping me to know that I could do this, to, for giving me that". So one of the objectives, I'd definitely say, for my career, is that I wanted to equip children, not necessarily teach them anything. Because, I think, although Maths and English and those kind of things are valuable, I think it's much more important, the lessons we learn on the playground, and on the corridors, and, you know, on the sports field, and in our extra-murals, you know, the interaction. And that's what I want from teaching. I, I want to get to know these children, but really know them and be part of them, you know?

I I'm sure you've had children come back to you, some students come back to you to say, "Thank you for helping me along the way." Like you said, you would like, at some point, to hear someone, some child say, "Thank you to my teacher." Have you not had that experience?

K I have, um the first year that I taught matrics, which is the first year I had a matric group, was in 2008. And I taught those children from the time they were, um, about twelve. And I was very, very close to that class as a whole. But there was one child in that class who had, um, ADD. And he really connect, we really had a good connection, him and I. And, um, I mean, if he was misbehaving, I dealt with him and, and whatever. And I was so worried about him when he left matric, because I thought, "What's going to happen to him?" I mean, he's going to go off to university and there's going to be nobody there to say, "Have you done your homework?" and "Calm down" and "Don't lose your temper." And he came to visit me here, the other day, and he's just turned into such a wonderful young man, and he just said to me, "You know, everything I ever learnt in your class, I use it every day. You know, how to calm myself down, how to listen to people, how to look at people, how to be tolerant, all those things that I've learnt in your class. I use them everyday, and I'm so grateful for you. You've touched my life in such a way." And it was such a like, it was so good to hear that, because, often, you

know, I mean, I look at my mom, she'd been teaching for 47 years. And sometimes you walk, she walks past a child that she taught, and they pretend they didn't even see her. You know, you get children like that. So I think very few children really do say thank you, and really do become part of your life. But those that do are then, are the ones that you, that have really mattered. I don't think it's possible to be part of every child's life, and some children don't allow, um, you in. And I also think that, in terms of, um, personalities, you don't always get along with every single child you teach. I mean, there's some children that you tolerate, um, and there's some children that you adore, and that adore you and there's that connection, and you, they'll do anything for you, and, and whatever. So it's so amazing to me when a child does come back, and say, "You really, what I learnt in your class really meant something to me", or "Thank you for always listening to me", and we think, sometimes, that children aren't grateful, but they really are. And, I mean, I still have students from years and years and years, who send me an sms, or pop into my class, and, you know, "You were wonderful, and I loved being in your class, and we've had so much, such a good time in your class, but you were strict. And I was scared of you, but I'm not so scared of you now", and, and, you know, it's nice to, to have that. I, I, there, there, there are specific children, but I would say that all the children that I've had a hand on, personally, which has been a handful. Although I'm involved with all the children I teach, there's really a handful of children that I've really gotten to know, sort of, on a personal level, those children will, do come back. They do form part of, you know, your life and, and that kind of thing.

I What was your dream as a teacher, Kerry?

K I didn't really have one, but I would say, definitely, what I've realised my dream is, is just to be able to, to touch children's lives. I know that sounds like, quite, sort of, clichéd, but really, I want to be able to be part of a child's life. I don't just want to be that person in a classroom saying, "Why haven't you done your homework?" I want to be that person that they can say, "I've got a problem, please help me", um, "I'm having a good day, celebrate with me", um, you know, "I'm having, this child's picking on me. Please, would you be my friend?" You know, that kind of thing. So, definitely, my dream as a teacher would be to carry that forward. I, I'd like to not teach so much, as to be involved with children on a one-on-one level. If I, if I could have a job where I did that, where I spoke to children one-on-one, and got to know each child, that would be my dream, I would say, you know?

I I do know that you're involved, to an extent, with the counselling at the school, and, um, haven't you not, have you not, um, explored that avenue fully?

K I have thought about it. Um, but, obviously, in terms of, you know, um, being a working mother, um and, um, when I was married there weren't always finances and stuff like that to officially get involved in something like that. So, I never really

thought about it seriously. Although, I know that that's where I need to be, and possibly within the next few years I will, uh, further myself, in terms of studies for that. So, I have thought about that. I would love to be involved with, I think it would be heart breaking, though, to do like therapy with children. I don't know if I could do that, sort of, on a full-time level. You, you know, like helping a child with a learning problem, and perhaps that would be emotionally draining, but I think I would love to do it, as much as I could cope with. If I, if I could afford not to earn money, if I, if I lived in a world where I did, money wasn't an option, I would definitely do that on a free level. I would definitely go from school to school, and help children like that. But like, obviously now, I need to be in a classroom. I need to get my paycheque at the end of the month, but if I didn't need to do that, I would pursue it more vigilantly.

I And you do hope that at some point in your life, that you would be, uh, doing what you really want to do.

K Yeah.

I Um, if the question, it, uh, C goes back onto asking, do you still feel the same about your ambition? Do you still feel as ambitious now, as then?

K I would say I'm more ambitious now, because I know what's out there. You know, when you first start teaching, you're very naïve. You, you sort of have these ideas that you'll have this beautiful classroom with little curtains and kids all sitting quietly in their rows, but it doesn't work out like that. I'm much more ambitious now, than I, when I started teaching. You know, my nature, I'm not a person, I don't like to really plan things too far in advance. I'm a very, I'm quite good at going with the flow. So, I would definitely say that, when I started teaching, I kind of just went with what was happening. I didn't really know what to expect, how to expect it, you know, who was what and what, what I could really do with teaching. Um, so I definitely, I don't feel the same. I feel more ambitious now. I want more than I wanted before. Before, all I wanted was to come to work, teach, do a couple of extra-murals, go home. Now, I want much more than that. I, I want to take something home at the end of the day. I want to feel like I've achieved something at the end of the day. When that child gets a forty, that's been failing the whole term, I want to be part of that. I want much more, you know, when people talk about ambition, you often think about career progression. That's not, when I think about, I'm not ambitious in that way. I am ambitious in that way, but that's not what's most important. I'm more ambitious with my time and the children that I teach, and, and that. That's how I'm ambitious. I want much more out of teaching. You know?

I I really do hope that you will, um, the feelings that you have will remain with you. It seems like you're quite, uh, committed to your teaching, and quite

passionate about it. Going on to, uh, question 5: have there been obstacles to your chosen career development? If yes, could you describe them, and say what strategies you used to overcome them?

K Well, the biggest obstacle, I would say, to developing myself in terms of where I want to go, educationally, which is counselling and therapy, and that kind of thing, I would definitely say that finances are probably the biggest issue. Um, as you know, teachers do not earn, especially in government schools, sometimes it's not even a living wage, I mean in, you know, in terms of feeding, putting food, and transport, and whatever. And I was married to a teacher, so you know, we had a very, we lived comfortably, but tight. And I really did always put his desires to further himself, and to study differently, first. So I think the biggest obstacle is myself. I'm the biggest obstacle, in terms of developing myself, in terms of my career, because I always put others first and other people's needs first. I'm not really selfish, uh, all people are selfish, but I'm not really selfish in terms of that kind of thing. I don't mind if someone goes first, I'm the lady who will let you go ahead of me at the till, if you've only got two items and I've got a trolley. So, I always kind of put his desires first, and his needs, but it was my choice. So, I'm the obstacle to doing better, because I always, kind of, "But what if we need the money for this?" or, "What if, you know, what if you want to do that?", or "What if the kids get sick?", and, "How will, when will I find time?" So you're always making excuses. So I'm my biggest obstacle, and the only way to overcome that, is to just be selfish and say: "Now I'm going to go for it." You know? So I haven't overcome that yet. I plan to, within the next year or so, to further myself in terms of my studies. But I'm, I'm only learning to do that now that I'm on my own, um, I'm only learning that now. And when you're in a situation, you don't realise that you're doing it to yourself. But I definitely know that I'm the reason I didn't do the things that I needed to do. I can't blame another, I, I could, but I won't, because it would be pointless, because I'm the source of that.

I What do you feel, presently, about the idea of teaching as a career for women?

K I think that it's a very good career for women, but I don't think that women need to think about it the way they used to. I think, thirty years ago, it was an excellent career for women, because there weren't the demands that there are today. Um, teaching isn't what it used to be. I mean, I think about how teachers work now, in terms of paperwork, the requirements in terms of assessments, what's needed, you know, to dress professionally, you have to behave in a certain way, it's almost very corporate in its way. Um, but I think that definitely it's a good fit for women who want to have families, because in the corporate world, there's no leeway. But in teaching, for example now, as much as I work very hard, if my children are sick I can, there is a support system in teaching, for women. So, um, it's, it's a good career for a woman, but you can't go into it because you're a woman. I think, you know, my grandfather said his children, his daughters wanted to be a teacher,

wanted to be a nurse, because those are the jobs that women do. Men didn't become teachers, they became engineers, and we're in a different realm now, in terms of gender stereotyping and equality and that kind of thing. I think that women shouldn't go into teaching because they're women. They should go into teaching, because that's what they want to do. But I think, uh, being in teaching, as a woman, it's a good career. Because you have the opportunity to still have your family, to still have some time, and to still, kind of, be in a more relaxed, kind of, environment. There are a lot of women in teaching, because obviously the motherly role that teaching kind of encompasses, you know, that holistic role that this person, this nurturing person who cares for you, and women tend to, sort of, in society, for that role. But I think teaching is a good job for women, but you shouldn't do it because you are a woman.

I I think that's important. How long do you plan to stay in teaching career?

K Well, I plan to teach until I die in the classroom. I, I don't really see myself, um, doing anything else, except working with young people. When I started teaching, I taught younger children. But now, I really, I really like teaching young adults, and teenagers and that. So I really see myself doing that for as long as I can. If I had an opportunity to, kind of, get involved in the school, like I said before, in terms of counselling and that kind of thing, I'd do that rather, but I think I'll forever be in the schooling system. I, I plan to, I plan to do it for as long as I can, as long as my body and my mind, even if my body won't allow it, as long as my mind will allow it. I mean, I look at my mother, she'd been teaching for 47 years, I don't think she's going to stop anytime soon. Some days it looks like she's about to stop, because she's had enough, she's tired and whatever. But I don't, I think, you know, I think good teachers die in their classrooms. I think you can't, you know, you know what I mean? I think you teach until you can't anymore, you know?

I It's strange that you should say that, because it's what I always say, that, um, so long as I am able to have that interaction with students, I'd want to be there.

K Yeah. Even if it's just on a, you know, coming in once a week to listen to them read. I, I'd definitely want to do it for as long as I can. As long as I can.

I And you're pretty young, to even think of so much later.

K Yeah. I've got a good, another forty years to go, I think. [Laughter] To teach until I'm sixty eight, then I'll be fine. They'll probably toss me out, but it's fine. [Laughter]

I Will family influence your plans in any way?

K Well, yeah, I think that, um, right now, no. I think that I'm doing, kind of, making decisions for myself, um, with my family in the back, knowing, trying to do what's right for them. Um, but I wouldn't be afraid to take a risk, if it was a calculated risk. I mean, I don't know if you get a calculated risk [laughter], like a well thought out risk, that this is the risk, but go for it anyway. Um, but probably, in the future, you know, as my children get older, obviously it would be more difficult. Right now, at the age that they are now, they're not really in a schooling system, they're in a crèche, or whatever. It would be easy for me to move jobs or to move provinces, or even move countries. So, I wouldn't really have to consider them, in terms of their education, but I think that once they are at school, that would definitely influence my choice, you know, and where I want to be educationally, well, you know, if I was going to move jobs, or take a risk, or move on, or whatever. But right now, as they're young, I, I'm not really, I, I don't want to say I'm not considering them, because I am considering them, but I'm considering what I need more. Because, once they're in school, I'm kind of more tied down. So before they're at, you know, within the formal schooling system, um, I think I would still say that I'm thinking more of what I need to do, and trying to get myself into a place, where I'd be happy for fifteen years, twenty years. Because, I mean, my kids, my eldest son will be at school, and his brother will follow three years after that, we're looking at 15 years that they need that stability of not moving too much, and sort of, that kind of thing.

I If planning to leave teaching, what would it take to keep you in teaching longer? Given everything that you've said, it doesn't seem that you plan to leave.

K The only way, possibly I would leave teaching if, if I was in a position to be a stay at home mom. Um, if I didn't teach, I'd like to be at home. Um, so the, the only way I would stay in teaching, would definitely be, um, I suppose, it wouldn't be money. But it would be teaching my dream subject. That would be what would keep me, if, if say, I had an opportunity to, say, um, leave teaching, like, then perhaps, if they said to me, stay, what would make me stay, I would say don't let me do my dream job. Let me do what I love. You know? Yeah, so, definitely, for me, it wouldn't ever be a money issue, but it would definitely be being able to, you know if I left, say, say, um, for example, I had the opportunity to stay at home full time. And then, somebody said to me, like five years down the line: "Come back", I would be, I'd like to be able to do it just because I enjoyed it. Do what I really enjoyed, perhaps work on a part time level, that would be what would keep me in educ-. I think, even if I, you know, even if I was say a stay at home mom, because that's the only reason I'd leave teaching, I would still be involved in the school. In the governing body, or, or that kind of thing. My children's school, so I'd always be involved in education in some way.

I And that's quite commendable, Kerry, because sometimes when you want to leave teaching, you want to divorce yourself completely, from everything to do with teaching, but, um, …

K But don't you think that that's sometimes when people go into teaching for the wrong reason.

I Yes.

K Perhaps, because there's no other option, or they need a job, or their parents forced them. With me, it's different. I chose it as my, because that's what I wanted.

I Yes.

K So, perhaps, that's why I feel that way. You know?

I And I think it would give you an opportunity to, to, to remain in contact with whatever is happening around you, in education, if ever you come to the point when you have to leave.

K Yeah.

I Okay? We're looking at question seven, where it says: do you have, or had mentors? If yes, how did they assist you?

K Well, I've got two mentors, I've mentioned my mom. I, I really feel that, in terms of education, and being a working mother and that, she's really influenced me to want to do this. I mean I've learnt so many little tricks and valuable lessons from her, for my teaching. Um, so that, for me, is definitely, you know, where I see myself, is that she influenced me like, in a huge way. Um, but in terms of my love for the community and that, there was a woman in my life, luckily we are still very good friends. She's much older than me. And she definitely influenced me because of the way that she gives to people. You know? Um, I can phone her at two o' clock in the morning and she'll talk. She'll listen, she'll help. So, I wanted, I always felt like, I looked up to her and I wanted that. I wanted to be that kind of, I mean, it probably, that's why I'm so good at teaching the subject that I teach is because of the way that I spend time with her. I mean, I think if she had the financial means, she probably would have stayed, she would have made an amazing teacher. She just never did it, it was just never an option. So, I mean, definitely, she's a mentor to me. I mean, she was a huge leader, she worked within the community, and I still look up to her. I still look at how she's helped, like she's adopted three children, that their mom died of cancer, and she's taken them under her wing and loved them as her own. And that's, I admire that in her, you know? Definitely.

I When you give of yourself, selflessly, to someone else, that's …

K Yeah, that, I really admire that in her. Because it's hard to do that. You know?

I It is. I agree with you.

K You know, sometimes you, you help people, but in the back of your mind you're always thinking about, "But I've also still got to be here, and I've still got to be there." You know, to take time for somebody else, and really give them that time, completely with your body, your mind, your heart, it's hard. You know?

I Yes. Has teaching been what you expected? And if not, why not?

K It has, and it hasn't. But I'll say it hasn't because I think, you know, when you come out of college, you have an expectation, it's going to be like this. And then it's not like that, at all. Because there's so much more pressure, in terms of actually being on the battleground of teaching [laughter] is much harder than it looks. I think, you know, you often go into schools, and you see nice children sitting well-behaved, and in their rows, and their piles of books that are marked, and you don't actually know how much work really goes into that. So I would say it has been what I expected, I think, because I had the experience of living with a teacher, and that kind of thing, but in, in terms of it, I thought it would be much easier than it really is. It's a very hard job, and really, you know, you start to respect educators on a different level. It's, And, and your first year of teaching is the hardest, because it's, it's really this awakening, like, this is what this is really, this is what this is really about, you know?

I If we're looking at the next question, what did you expect when you entered into the profession? If you would change, thanks, [inaudible background whispering 0:34:55], um, if we look at, um, well I think you've, you've answered that already when I s-, when I asked you, has teaching been what you expected. But, what did you expect when you entered into the profession [overlapping conversation 0:35:20]?

K You know, I just, I think I expected, sort of, being with children, having fun, um, you know, sitting on the carpet, reading stories, all the children loving you, you know, bringing you presents and an apple on your desk, and you, I, didn't get that, at all. At all, I mean …

I You're very, you …

K Children don't all like you. They don't all do what you ask. They don't behave, unless you make them. You know, generally it's hard work and you kind of, yeah,

I think teaching is sort of, people who are not in teaching think it's so easy. I mean, "I could look after the kids all day." "No, you couldn't." It's hard work, you know. And I think the younger they are, the harder it is. You know?

I That's so true. Because, um, I mean it's a case of people [unclear 0:36:20] anymore, you know. So, if you could change your teaching assignment in any way, how would you change it?

K I'd like to have a less, um, rigorous timetable. I think I'd like to have more time with each child that I teach, you know? Um, I'd like to just teach life orientation. I'd like to not teach junior children. I'd like to teach less and have more time on my hands, but doesn't everybody want that? I'd, I'd like to not have, um, I'd like to have a teacher's assistant, who would do those little things, like fill in marks, and you know, hand out books, and, and do those kinds of things for me, that I could just focus on each child. That is what, if I, I mean, everybody would like that, I think. I think each of us would like to teach, have less demand on our time, and more time to say, "What do you really need?" You know, that's what I'd like. I, I wouldn't want as much pressure in terms of my administration. I wouldn't change what I'm teaching. I wouldn't change, even, the number of periods that I teach. That, I could teach like that. But, just the admin, if that was, disappear, which it probably won't [laughter], then that, that would be how my teaching assignment could improve. But it's not going to disappear. So, you know, you make the best of it.

I And I think it's, it's just not your sentiment, it will be the sentiment of people, of teachers across …

K Across the world.

I Yes. It's that, um, you want to spend more contact time with these students, and you'll invest more of yourself in the classroom, minus the admin. Describe the challenges you face with the current educational changes? You've already touched on one of those aspects.

K I just think there's a lot of administration, you know? Um, it's a document for this and it's a, the test paper has to be set like that, and it's this and this and we have to have this many assessments a term, and sometimes we lose out on the time that we spend for children. So I would say the biggest challenge in terms of the education system, for me, right now, is not the curriculum. I think that that's just a step, that's just a pebble on, on, on the road. The curriculum is, doesn't have that much importance, they can change it twenty times, you just, you fit in with that. But, with new curriculum comes new demands. And I think the administration, although they're saying now that it will be less, I think it will remain, you know? Especially if you're teaching matriculants, the, that is much more serious than

teaching grade one, but it's equally as important. And, but if you're looking at the demands on an administration level for a matric teacher, it's much more than that teacher teaching grade one. Because if I mess up in grade one, I've got twelve more years to fix it. When you get to a child in grade twelve, you have to have things right. You have to have documents in order, you have to have your assessments right, that kind of thing. I mean, if I look at me, I'm busy doing portfolios now, and each one has to be right. Each one has to be perfect, because that's a reflection of that child's ability. And if I don't do my job, if I don't help them accumulate their work and put those things together, if I can't do that, I can't do that, then how can I expect them to do it? So, definitely, I, I would say, the only thing I think is that, I think the education department needs to look, re-look at the level of administration, you know? We have to have a weekly forecast and a phase planner, and a term plan and an assessment plan, and no-one really looks at them, let's be honest. People do them, because we have to do them. Some people don't do them, and then, on top of that, on top of that, you've got to teach. And listen. And be with the children, and be alive, and be creative, and make your classroom be inviting and comfortable and feel like home. But you're so overwrought with paperwork, and, "I can't talk to you right now, because I've got to do this now." "But, Miss, I'm having a …" "You need to wait, come at first break, because at first break, I'll have five minutes for you, because this document has to be in by ten o' clock", or whatever. So, I think that's what I would change, that's the only thing I would change. I wouldn't change the subject I teach, I wouldn't change the hours I work, nothing. Ex-, just the paperwork, if that was different. It won't disappear, but if it could just be different, you know?

I Following on from that, it says please give me an example of a positive experience you had of school change.

K You know, I came fresh out of college into a school where, I think, there weren't a lot of structures in place, in terms of administration. So, I kind of did what I thought was the right thing. And we worked on a principle of trust, so nobody really checked anything that we were doing. The results were the check, you know? When your marks are handed in at the end of the term, that was when, "Is there a concern?" and then, perhaps, someone would ask you. But there was never really anybody to say, "You're doing this like this", or whatever. So, definitely a positive experience, for me, is having structure in terms of what is expected. And as much as I hate someone to come into my class and check on me, I love it. Because it's an opportunity for me to grow as a teacher. So, definitely a positive experience for me was having a negative experience, where somebody came in and said, "This is wrong, this is wrong, this is wrong, this is wrong, you need to fix this, you need to do that." And I was totally despondent about my job. And instead of giving up, I just, I made it right. And so it's become a positive experience, because, now, that's what I'm good at. Getting all my things in order, having everything in place. And now I can get down to the business of teaching. So to me, a negative

experience was actually a positive one, even though it felt, it didn't feel like that at that time. Um, it, I realise now, that it was probably the best thing that could have happened to me, because I never, ever want anybody to ever come into my classroom again and say, "That's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong". And since I've had that, nobody's come into my classroom and said, "That's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong", [laughter] because I haven't allowed myself to lose, sort of, focus on what I really need to do. Because, I think, you know, for me, the hardest thing is I don't like criticism. So I have to, I don't want it to happen. So, def-, I would say definitely, the most positive experience I had, was someone criticising me, because it made me be better at my job. I don't know if that makes sense?

I **It does. You are saying criticism, um, criticism can be very constructive, as well.**

K It's not, it didn't feel constructive when it happened, but it was constructive for me, you know?

I **You also made it constructive for you.**

K I think, if I'd been a different kind of person, I probably would have thrown in the towel. But my nature is one where I like to prove people wrong. I like to, "I'm going to do this my way." You know? So, yeah, that's why it became positive.

I **You've already answered the next question, where we talked about a negative experience you had of school change. So your negative experience would be a class visit, is that what you're saying?**

K No longer.

I **No.**

K But, definitely, when they first, um, when we first started having them here, at the school. It was definitely something I was very frightened of, in terms of, because I didn't want things not to be right, after that. But I haven't had a negative one since my first one. So I think it, a negative experience I've had in teaching, is the negativity amongst staff members. I think that, when you work on a staff of teachers, teachers complain all the time. They do complain, it's, you know, I, think about it, for a teacher, what you do for your job, is you criticise children, all day. And you say, "You haven't done this right, I'm only going to give you three out of ten", or whatever it is. So, if teachers, in general are critical, and when you work on a staff, and people become despondent and negative, so I'd probably say the biggest negative experience I've had is working with people who are negative, because I don't like to be, I can't be in an environment like that. I need to be in a

positive environment, so. And I hate to feel, um, like I'm being scrutinised. I, I, I, I, I don't mind people checking on me. Um, I value, as I've grown in teaching, I've realised how much I value the input from an older person. Not even necessarily an older person, but someone with more knowledge than me, um, but it's not nice to feel like you're under the magnifying glass. And sometimes your colleagues are the ones on the other side of the magnifying glass, watching you. Not necessarily management. And that's definitely been a negative experience for me, working with other people who are equally as critical as I am, and who are negative about the profession and about what we need to do. And "This is ridiculous", and "This is such a waste of time" and, I'm sick of hearing that", you know? So …

I Would you say they're negative about school, the school, this, um, the changes that are taking place, or the demands made of them?

K Yeah. I think people don't like change. Nobody likes change. We like to be in our comfort zone. So I think that teachers, in general, are generally unhappy with, like, "I've been teaching for 40 years, what can you tell me? How do you know what I need to know? Just, you be quiet, let me do my job." You know, "I know what I'm doing." But, you know, something like I've chatted to my mom about, as I said to you, you might have been teaching for 40 years, and know what you're doing, but on the same line, we need to learn every day, because learning is lifelong. And so, yes, you might know what you're doing, but you need to embrace what's new, so that what you know, so that as you know what you're doing, you can become better at it. Because, I mean, there's nothing worse than stale bread. It'll still feed your body. It will still sustain you, if you're hungry, but it won't be nice. And it won't leave you feeling satisfied. And so, there's nothing worse than a stale teacher, because they'll still do what they need to do. They'll still be in their classroom. They'll still teach. They'll still meet the requirements, but if they don't embrace what's new, and they don't make the children love what they're teaching them about, children will learn something, but it won't hold forever. It won't be part of them. You know? And that's what I, I really believe that.

I Another thing that is such a vital ingredient in your teaching, as well, when you are feeling energised, you use the metaphor of a, of stale bread. And if you are feeling, or if someone is like stale bread, how do you expect students, or learners to feed off you?

K Definitely. You're right.

I You know? We're looking at ten, where it says does your professional time encroach on your private time? If yes, is there a cut-off point?

K Yes it does. Obviously I'm, I was married to a teacher, so school formed a huge part of our life. And I remember when we were first married, the first year we were

married, I used to take work home every day. Every day I'd have a bag of books, or projects, or, you know, things that needed to be filled in, or whatever. And I'd come home, quickly, and work, and then quickly throw supper together and feed him and keep him happy, and then get back to what I do. And he, he said to me one day, "Are you married to me, or that school?" And it was a real wake-up call for me, and so I don't take work home, at all. I, it used to be part of my life, but you'll often see me here in my classroom, rather that extra hour or two, and go home a little bit later, but once I, once I step out of this gate in the afternoon, I am no longer a teacher. I'm "mom", and that's really important, and especially now that I'm single, as a single mom, I don't really have time to work at home, because by the time my two children are in bed it's eight o' clock, and I'm tired. I don't want to sit up all night, marking books. So I'd rather work in my free time, my breaks, my free periods, my, after school, whatever, doing that work. I don't take work home. You, if you see me taking work home, you must know that I have absolutely no choice, um, because I spend several hours a day at school, and that's the hours I spend on my teaching time. To me, the cut-off is, if I dec-, I work late two afternoons a week. I'm here until five two afternoons a week, so those are the days I do my work. And I'm really strict about it. And I don't take work home, so there, I would say I spend the number of hours I'm at school. That's what I spend on teaching. Over and above that, I do research on the internet. I might set my papers at home. I might do that kind of thing, but, no. When I'm, when I'm, when I get into the car in the afternoon, I'm going home. I'm going home, and my children come first. When I'm at school, my job comes first. Um, but my children always come first, but when I'm here, this is my focus. I'm not focused on what's going on at home. I'm not focused on the situations that I'm facing at home. Those kinds of things, that's in the back. When I'm at home, this, what's happening here, is in the back. You know?

I **I understand that your role is to teach. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have?**

K Well, firstly, like you said, I teach. Um, one of the biggest things I do here, is, um, I work with our prefects, our school leaders, um, which I love doing, um, because I really feel that I have the ability to help them to become better at what they do. So I'm definitely involved in that. Um, and then, obviously, I'm involved in our school choir, but that's just because I love it, not because of any other reason. Um, and then, I would say, definitely a role that I fill, here, is definitely that of mother to the children I teach. You know, a lot of, especially the boys, I really have a soft spot for young, for boys, you know, because I have two sons myself. And um, so definitely I fill in that role, sometimes for chil-, for boys and girls as well, who want to just, you know, have someone's advice. "What do you think?" So, definitely the role of mother, and disciplinarian. Because, a lot, I think, I think in the society we're living in now, children aren't disciplined the way that they used to be. And I mean, I'm, I'm still reasonably young; I'm twenty eight. But, I don't

think the children of today are disciplined the way that I was disciplined. Um, so, definitely, I think, um, yeah, I think it's much more than teaching. Not just my extra-curricular activities, much more than that. I think I fill a role of someone who cares about those children. The children that I teach, you know?

I Which of these responsibilities do you find particularly challenging, or difficult, and why?

K I think it would definitely be, um, the, the role that I fill as a mother to these children. Because it's very hard, at the end of the day to forget, you know, about a child who's having parents at home, who's abusing them, or, um, a girl who's having problems with her boyfriend, or, or whatever it is. It's very hard not to worry about the children I teach. So, definitely, I would say that that's probably what's the hardest. It's not really getting involved. I'm not afraid of, of that kind of thing. But definitely, you know, what you take with you. Because when you're listening to people's problems all day, it's very hard not to take that, a little bit of that with you to the next day, to the, to the evening, to bed, to the bathroom, [laughter] to, to the kitchen. It's very hard not to sort of think about that person, and think what's going to happen, and worry, and, and that. You know, sometimes, on a Friday, a child comes and talks to me, and I spend the whole weekend thinking about what am I going to do to help this child, and then, by the time Monday comes, they've forgotten about it and I spent the whole weekend worrying about them. [laughter] So, I mean, definitely, it's very difficult to sometimes separate yourself from, from children, on a personal level. And I think it's also hard, like when you've listened to a child and you've nurtured that child. Then they don't do their homework, and you have to discipline them. It's very hard to, now, step into that role, although, I don't do it with difficulty. But I think it is hard, because suddenly that child, "Hey, but we were, you were listening and you were being kind to me yesterday, and now you're shouting at me, because I haven't done my homework", you know? So, yeah, I think that's probably the hardest part, is separating yourself from the children you teach. Because you have to, because when I get home in the afternoon, my sons need mom. They don't need mom who's worried about this, this, this and this and this. You know? So that's, for me, that's something that's difficult.

I The boys need mom, not a teacher, at home.

K Yeah, and it's hard not to be a teacher with your kids.

I How do you feel about the demands made on you?

K I think I handle them well. Um, I've been through a particularly difficult time this year, um. I'm in the process of getting divorced, and, and all of that. So, I found that, this year, sometimes the demands were a little bit unfair. Um, but the children

don't know about those demands. About my personal life. So, um, what's always been okay, still has to be okay, in terms of teaching. So it's still okay to come and unburden yourself at Miss Kerry's classroom. But what you don't realise is that she, I'm dealing with, what they don't realise is I'm dealing with my own personal issues. So I felt that this year, just this year, and I have never felt it before. And possibly next year, when, you know, this has been moved on, my personal life has transformed, um, I'll handle it better. But that's what I found hard this year, is that, "I'm having my own problems, why should I help you? Just leave me." But in a way, that has helped me to face my own personal demons, my own, you know, my own heartache. I mean, um, because I faced a huge, uh, uh, a very hard time this year. And some days I don't want to get up and come to work, and some days I don't want to listen. But it's been therapeutic to listen. To see that there're children with problems, and there're families with problems. It's not isolated. It's not just me. So, the demands, that's what I found hard, is that the responsibility of it. That children, once you do it, they're going to expect it over and over. You know? Um, so that's what I found hard this year. I've never found it difficult before. I've never felt like it's too much for me. I've never felt like I'm not coping. I've always felt like I can cope. But, this year, because of my personal walk, this year, I found that difficult. You know, the reality of "I'm human, and I've also got my problems". That, I found difficult, this year.

I **If I say to you that, sometimes, just coming into the school premises and listening to the children laughing and calling your name, and all those things, makes it different as well?**

K Yes, and better.

I **Better.**

K Because you, you forget that you're "Kerry". You suddenly become "Teacher".

I **Teacher, yes.**

K And so, for me, like, um, especially being in the classroom where I am, I, I, if anybody knows me, I don't like noise, at all. And I moaned, and then I got moved to a class that was supposed to be quiet, which is now very noisy, every afternoon. And, and I thought it would drive me mad, but I like it. Even though it still drives me mad. I enjoy the sound of children laughing and playing, and they, it, it, it's nice to hear happiness, you know?

I **I understand, and like you said, you know, you had your own personal problems, and children, they're needy, as well. And you were also needy. So, um, I think giving off to them, helped you.**

K I think it helps, though, to have a good support system, because, I think I've had an excellent support system. So, as much as I was still required to give, there were people who were giving to me. Um, I had people that I could come and close the door and cry, and say, "I've had enough, this is too much for me." And then go back to my classroom, and having felt better. So, I had a good support system in terms of my friends, and my family, and my colleagues, even, to a certain, um, degree. Not all of them, obviously, but those that I allowed to know what was really going on. So, I've had a good support system. So that helped, because I was a support system to children, but in te-, on top of that, I had a support system. I think if I didn't have that, I don't think I would have been able to continue, at all. You know? I think I probably would have thrown in the towel. And you must remember something. When you're involved with children, in terms of, um, listening to their problems, you can't ever reject them. You can't ever be too busy. Because, then they won't come back. And when there's a real problem, when there's something that's potentially life threatening, they won't come to you. So you have to always be there. You can't turn around and say, "I'm having my own problems today, leave me." Because they don't understand that. They feel rejected. And so, then they move on. Children are fickle, and they'll, they move on. So if you want to be part of that, if you want to really help children, just set yourself aside.

I And you feel that, you know, just listening to you, um, I think we, as teachers, we have to listen. We have to make time. And it can be very demanding as well. And like you said, sometimes it's difficult not to take it home with you. The school things.

K Very difficult.

I Um, think about other aspects of your life as a wife, mother, friend, member of the community, and reflect how you experience these in relation to your career as a teacher?

K Well, like, as we said before, children need a mother, not a teacher. And so it's, I think it's very difficult not to be a teacher in your home. I think, when you spend your whole day saying to children, "Sit down, be quiet, take out your book", it's very hard to come home and not say, "Sit down, be quiet", [laughter] you know, "Set the table, go wipe your nose", or whatever. So, I think, definitely, being a mother, in terms of being a teacher, it's a big challenge, because, uh, you know, you know what to expect. You know how, what's going to happen. If I don't sort my child out now, he's going to go to grade one, and he's going to make their teacher's life miserable. I don't want that for him, I want better. And so, you try and prepare your children. Um, my son, you know, my elder son, uh, had a report, and his teacher said to me, "I can see you do lots of stuff with him", and I mean, I felt so embarrassed, I thought I don't want to do that. And so, I try not to be a

disciplinarian, like I am in my classroom, at home. I, I'd still do, obviously my children are well disciplined, and loved and cared for, but I try to be more nurturing with my children. Um, but it's made me a better teacher, becoming a mother, made me a better teacher, and becoming a teacher made me a better mother. They work together. Um, because somebody said to me, "One day you're going to be a mother, and just remember these words", and I thought, ag, [clicks tongue] And it's true, you know, when you're a mother, then you don't want to shout at that child, because you don't want your child to, one day, face the same wrath. And so you, I really believe that the wheel turns. And so, [laughter] I, I, I think that, in terms of being a mother, my career is a good fit, because it's helped me to be a better mother. But it's, sometimes, hard to, kind of, splice it, you know? To say, okay, today I'm mom. And when I'm at school, I'm teacher. And I think that's why it's important not to really, I, I don't know if I, if I would have my children at the same school as me, because I think that would change the relationship. It changes the dynamic. I think once they're older, it's different. But when they're younger, then they definitely, um, they definitely need not to be with their, their mother twenty four hours a day. I think it's important to go to the school and be individuals, you know? Um, definitely as a wife, it did take strain on my marriage, um, I, I think because we worked together, or we still work together. Um, because it's very hard not to discuss what's going on at school, at home. And I think it does definitely um, make you, you know, teaching is realistic. [laughter] When you're a teacher, you see the world as it is. You don't see a picture of perfection. You see what's really happening, because children let their families down horribly. They talk about the most, you know, you try and hide things from the world, but your children will tell everybody. There's no secrets with children. So you see the world the way it really is, when you're a teacher. You see how children are really living, how they're really experiencing life, and, and that. So, I think, it, it makes you a much more practical, a much more, er, in your face kind of person, when you're a teacher. And so, as a wife, it's very hard to, kind of, accept your husband's shortcomings, and sort of weaknesses, because you know, in reality, it's because his mother did X, Y and Z, and he should have, you know. And you're kind of more of a realist, and you feel like saying, "Come on, get on with it, let's get on with life." So I think that, definitely, I would say, put, I won't say strain, because I mean, you know, I was happily married. Um, but I think it definitely changes your perspective on what's really important, you know? Do we really need that? There's children without food, and families, and whatever. This is not realistic, this isn't, you become much more of a realist when you're a teacher. And it's hard, because marriage, and family needs that romance. You know? And you don't really have that, in teaching. I, I don't know if, if other people feel the same way as me, but I think, for me, teaching has made me be much more of a realist. You know? You know, like, often we sit in our staff meetings and we discuss uniform. And, I think, because I teach a subject like life orientation, where I learn a lot about children on a personal level, teachers are going on about if the kids wear grey socks or white socks, and I don't care. I don't care if he's got a nose ring and

a tattoo on his forehead. As long as he's polite, and he, he treats the people around him with respect, and he's done what I've asked him, and he's, you know, he's got good manners, to me, I don't notice when a child's dressed incorrectly. And when I said that, my colleagues were like horrified. But, I mean, in reality, those things are not really important. And I think, the subject you teach, definitely changes your perspective on how you see life. And teaching a subject, a language, I think, and teaching the subject of life orientation, where you have an opportunity to really talk to the children you teach, because you talk, in those kinds of subjects, about everything, about life, about stories, about you know, urban legends, and a kid who was born with ten toes and, you know, on one foot and whatever, you talk about everything. You get to know children on a different level. And so, things that are trivial, like uniform, or you know, a signed homework diary, whatever, they sort of fall by the wayside, you know? So, I would say, definitely, my ren-, my, as a member of my staff, not as a member of my community, if I look at it as being a colleague, I'm a much more practical person. And I sometimes say to people, "Why are you sweating the small stuff?" You know? I think, definitely, it's made me someone that my colleagues can definitely rely on for the reality of it. As a member of my community, I, I think being a teacher has helped me to see the community as people, and not just hordes, you know, as individuals. You know, we, we, we're dealing with individuals here. We're not dealing with white trash, or, um, with, you know, people from Eldo's. We're dealing with people, individual people with individual needs, individual desires. Um, you know, I have an opportunity, I do a lot of charity work. And I sometimes collect, like, Christmas presents, and that really is something that, we're dealing with one child. I don't want to wrap a present and put a whole box of presents and give it. I want to give that present, to that child, because you are an individual. You are a, a person that I care about. So we, I think, as being a member of my community, it's helped me to see people, each person on its own. I think as teachers we often group them together. "These grade nines are terrible." But, if we'd got to know each child personally, and we don't have time for that, not everybody has time for that, um, and not everybody's learning area allows for that. And that's the reality, um. But if we looked at each child as an individual, we get much more out of them. So, definitely, as a member of a community, and then, as a friend, teaching the subject that I've taught, it's helped me to listen to my friends, you know? Um, to say, you know, "Let's talk. What's going on? Why are you doing this?" You know, it's like, [laughter] made me a much more, sort of, um, I, I'm filling a role that I didn't always fill. I was always the one who was saying, "Ag, I don't care" or, you know, "I'm having my own problems", or whatever. And I be-, I've become a person who sits and listens now, to my friends' needs. So, definitely being a teacher, and teaching life orientation. Because I think, maybe if I taught another subject, I don't know if I would be the way I am now. I mean, it's all relative. But I think, definitely, that has, yeah, it's definitely made me a better person. You know, a more likeable person. A more responsible person, you know, in terms of being a

wife, a mother, a, a friend, a member of my community, a member of staff, just a person.

I I do know that you, um, you are also involved with that, um, with the charity drives at school …

K Yeah.

I And, uh, you've mentioned, um, or I've heard that, at one, at one point, that you had wrapped gifts individually?

K Yeah. Um, the year I was pregnant with my second son, um, I didn't do any invigilation at exam time, because they didn't want me on my feet, and whatever. And we collected five hundred gifts, and I had five hundred children's names, and I wrapped every present and put a bow on it [laughter], and wrote the car-, well, we had a printed out card, but I put the child's name on and, and then, I delivered them. So yes, I have done that, I mean. I didn't do it for people to see it, you know. I did it, because, I don't know, I wanted to do it. So, I didn't do it last year, I did it the year before that.

I It's a sense of fulfilment [overlapping conversation 2:10:25].

K It's nice just to see a child smiling, you know? Maybe that will be the only gift that I will get this year. You know, maybe, yeah, you know? Maybe the only time they get a present is, you know, when they have to keep a secret. Because, don't tell mom that I'm doing this. This is a, you know, lots of things like that, you know?

I If we're looking at question twelve, what aspects of your work do you feel you have the power to change? And what aspects do you feel powerless about? And give examples?

K Um, I think what I would have the power to change, would be my organisational skills. I think you can become more organised. You can become more prepared for lessons. But I think I would be powerless to change the s-, the bureaucracy within education, you know the red tape and, and that kind of thing. So, to me, there's no point in complaining, about, even though I have said previously, if I didn't have to do it, I would love not to have to do it, I'm not going to change it. There's always going to be those structures. So, definitely, yeah, I would definitely say that I would, I would like to, I would say I'm powerless to change that. There's nothing I can do, nothing I can do or say, unless I, myself, become the Minister of Education, and [laughter] whatever I say is my sole decree, nothing is going to change that. There's always going to be those kinds of structures, there's always going to be red tape anywhere, you know?

I If we look at a, it says, how does the structure of the institution affect your power to effect change and are there contradictions? Um, there is …

K The institution I'm working in?

I Yes. Yes.

K I think that we work, I work in a school where there's a lot of flexibility. I think that I work in a school, um, probably my coll-, some of my colleagues wouldn't, um, agree with me, but I think we, I definitely work in a school where I'm allowed to be myself. Um, but it comes at a price. And, uh, I think that sometimes, you're given freedom within a school, and you're given that opportunity to do X. But with that, comes, you know, we want it like this, like that, so there's actually no freedom. Um, and…

I You mean it comes with conditions?

K There's always conditions.

I Yes.

K So, I would say that, at the institution where I am, I think that sometimes, it's a double pronged, a, a, um, it's a double forked, like a double fork tongue, hey? Double-sided tongue. People talk two ways. "You can do what you feel, Kerry, go into your classroom, it's your space, but, the infamous but, make sure that you've filled in this document, done that, then don't forget, you've got to do four assessments, and two this, and duh, duh." And, so, in the end, there's no freedom, because I'm still following structure. So, I think, in that term, I think, and I don't think it's just at this school. I think it, in general, I would say, definitely as well, I don't have a lot of resources, you know? Um, we don't have an overhead projector in every class. We don't have a radio that we can just use, or, you know, if I want to use the TV, it's a big deal to get it into my classroom, or, or whatever. I think that there needs, that would probably be hard, because it's, you get told, whatever you need, you can have. But when you need it, you can't always have it. Yeah, I'd say that's definitely a contradiction. But I don't think it's just here. Although, I think that because we're a smaller school, resources are limited. Even though we're proud at school, I think resources are definitely limited.

I Have you encountered a lot of opposition, especially as a woman? If so, could you please elaborate?

K No, I don't think I have. And, I'm going to say yes, I have. And first I'll say I don't think I have, because I work for a woman. And I think that she is more in tune to the needs of women, in some ways. And so, she's a mother, and she's been

a wife, and, and all of those things. So, she understands, sort of what it means to be a woman. But I'm going to say yes, I think that men get away with much more in the workplace. I think that when a, a man doesn't have a tidy classroom, doesn't have his paperwork in order, blah, blah, blah, it gets laughed about. He's a man, men don't have to do things like that. Whereas, I think with women, it's expected that you'll have things in order, you'll have things in place, and whatever. So, I think that there's no equality in terms of expectations for teachers. You know, if, if I haven't handed in my work on time, I will be dealt with differently to a man whose running late. Because he's a man, and men aren't organised. And it's almost that stereotype of men in education. So I think that men definitely have better opportunity not to grow, and not in terms of development, and not in the institution I'm at, I think we have equal opportunity, but men have more opportunity for error, more room to kind of make a mistake. Whereas with women, it's less, sort of, what's the correct word, it's less, um, accepted.

I And, ah, if I may ask, are you dealt with in the same way?

K I don't think so. I think that it seems that way. I think that, because it's always on a one-on-one level, and I think that, it's always, you know, "What can I do to help you?" or whatever. But I think that men, because, I think, it's so hard to find men in teaching, that when you have men on your staff, you hold onto them. That they're dealt with much more, sort of, like, with kid gloves, you know? "We want to keep you happy, I don't want to lose you. I need you, because I need a soccer coach. And when we have matric exams, we need a man and a woman", then, and "I've only got three men, so I'm going to hold onto you." So I don't think that men are dealt with in the same way. I don't believe it, at all.

I Okay. Principals respond differently to staff members, trying to effect change. I am interested in understanding how your principal understands your attempt to improve, or to effect change.

K Well, I think in the eight years I've been here, I don't think I've faced a lot of opposition in terms of being ambitious and doing things. I think that, um, in that way, I'm privileged. Um, because my boss is always open to me, on a personal level. I don't know what she's like, um, with other members of staff. But with me, generally, if I come with an idea, or something I want to do, she, she will support my idea. She, but she would also expect me to behave in a certain way; to, she would expect that if I'm going to do it, I would do it properly. And I think that if I didn't do it properly, that it would be the last time. I, I think that, because I've proven myself, she accepts my ideas. But, if I had proven myself to be unreliable, I don't think her response would be, but in my situation, whenever I've asked for something, or to do something, I've been met with approval. You know?

I And that does make a difference, especially in the teaching situation.

K Definitely.

I You know, one likes to be considered a valued member, who is making a valuable contribution …

K Yeah.

I … to the, to school and to school life, as such.

K I think that sometimes, though, colleagues within a school don't always get involved with that. We don't get involved with one another. It's, you know, it's more, "Well, that's your thing", or "You're doing that again?" or, um, "I'm not interested. It's a waste of time. I'd rather be teaching. I'd rather be, you know, I'm teaching matrics. This is wasting my time. Why are we playing soccer all day?" or whatever. Um, so I think the way a principal embraces a situation, then feeds down into their staff. I think that if, if I'm doing a charity drive, and I say I'm collecting money to buy, uh, food hampers for our support staff, and I'm looking for teachers who'd like to contribute, and the principal is the first one to dig into a purse and take out money, from your own, not from the school, from your own, I think that when people see that, then they'll follow. So I think that part of a person embracing somebody's idea, is embracing it in its fullness, and getting involved. It's not enough to say: "Go ahead". It's more important to say, "How can I help?" And I don't think we always, I always get that. And, I've always gone and, I, I can do whatever I want, whatever I feel. If I feel in a, in, and anybody who knows me, if I say I'll do it, I do it properly. And, my boss will understand that, but sometimes it's not, that's only to that level, no further. And I think it's sometimes important for management, for principals, heads of departments, to get more involved, with their hands. You know?

I If we're looking at number thirteen, Kerry, it says, does anyone monitor what you're teaching? If so, who and how? You've talked about a class visit. Are you on, perhaps monitoring, not just, well, in terms of class visits, everything is monitored …

K Well, I have a head of department, um, and she's the one who did my class visit. She checks all my assessments. Um, and then, yeah, she comes when she feels the need. Um, I suppose if my results were not what they should be, she'd probably be there more frequently. Um, but, uh, this year we had the IQMS testing. She used that, um, that was what we had, this year. Um, and so it's a very, sort of, structured, kind of, "I'm coming on this day at this time. Please be ready for me." Um, she checked my administration and watched me teach, and said she would come back, if she felt it necessary. So, I think, um, yeah, that's how we get monitored. I think at the end of the term, when our results are handed in to the

principal, that's how she monitors it. But say, "Why are these kids all getting forty percent, or thirty percent?" or "It's a very high failure rate." And then it becomes more, you know. And I think the first point is not with the teacher, but with the head of department, who has monitored them. "Why is this happening?" And then, further steps are taken.

I How did you feel before you were informed, or when you were informed about the time and day?

K You see, some, um, when, when the class visits were happening, um, she said she wasn't going to tell us. She was just going to come. And I didn't want that, because I'm, hmm, as I said before, I don't like to be scrutinised. So I went and I said, "I would like to know when you're coming. I don't have anything to hide, you can come five times. But I'd like to know I'm coming, you're coming on this day. Just so that I can know in my mind, that, because every time I saw you coming down the p-, coming down the passage, I think, she was coming now, and it would stress me out beyond, I wouldn't sleep for three weeks, you know? And what if she never came? What if she got too busy, and she didn't come?" So I'd like to know when she's coming. But some people don't know, you know? And some people prefer that. Uh, you're here now, that's good enough. But I don't like that. [Laughter] I want to know you're coming, because most of the time, uh, because of the nature of my subject, my classroom is like, I can, you know, chaos. So at least she could come in once, and see it's sort of tidy, and everything in its place. [laughter]

I And how was your, how did you feel after the visit?

K Well, this year, I felt very positive. I had a very good visit. She was very impressed. I was very nervous, because, um, the lady's a new teacher, and I thought, "I'm sure she's going to pick on me." But she didn't, so it was nice, and it was good to just have someone be truly impressed with me, and really say, "Wow, this is really good" and mean it. [laughter] So it was really nice, you know? I did like it. I, I was very nervous, but once she was there I wasn't nervous. And, since having that visit, my relationship with her has transformed. Because I now know that she's not really going to nitpick and worry about, you know, if I've used a blue pen, or a black pen. Because I've had a head of department like that. And, it was terrible. So, [cough] she's more relaxed and that helps me feel better about what I need to do. And, somehow, I'm more willing to do things now, because I know that they're not going to be met with disdain, or whatever. You know?

I Are teachers in your school collegial and cooperative? And can you tell me how often you talk with other teachers, in what kinds of situations and what you talk about?

K Well, I would say, for the most part, as a staff, we're pretty close, for the most part. I think we all have our days where we, we're not close at all, [laughter] but I think, mostly we, we, we enjoy being together, and we work well together, we'll help one another. Obviously there are exceptions, there're people who, who don't cooperate, but I think that that's a personality thing. I don't think it's, um, really, a personal thing. Um, and we get together every day. Um, every morning, the staff room, I would say, as a, as an FET, specifically, teachers teaching in the FET, we talk a lot about the kids. And we laugh, and we, we joke, and we're good friends. And actually most of us are friends. And kind of, like, I work with someone who I was at school with, so we've known each other for years. And it's a much, it's a very, uh, we're very close to one another. We work very well together. We'll help each other. We'll bow for one another. We'll, we'll stand in the firing line for one another, [laughter] we'll get into trouble for one another. We'll stand up for one another, and that's good. So we get together every morning, but once a week, we do have a meeting, where we air out our views and sometimes they take three hours, the meetings, because everybody wants to say something, because we're all teachers. But, um, yeah, and I think it's, I think it's good. I think we have a good relationship, but obviously, every family has its ups and downs, but we tend to, kind of, be able to offend one another, upset one another, but still work together and say, "I'm sorry" eventually. You know? Eventually. [laughter] Sometimes we don't say anything, we just carry on as if it didn't happen. But I think we're a good team, and I think, I think we, yeah, I think we work well together. I mean, obviously, you don't get along with everybody. There's some people who you just don't get on with. But for the most part, we work well together.

I Do you feel you're able to talk about any concerns with regard to the changes and its impact on you?

K I don't think you can talk to everybody. I think that there's some people who don't, firstly, have the knowledge to respond intelligently. I think that they don't know what they're talking about. I think, for my subject, I don't believe that there's a single person on my staff that I can really talk to about life orientation, because I'm the main teacher here. So, I'm the one that people are asking, [laughter] so I need to know. Um, but I think there are people that you can, I can talk to, and say, "You know, what do you think?" and "You know, I'm going to do this" and "I'm having a problem with this child". I think, sometimes we have to, everybody has a different nature, and you talk to somebody about something, and instead of them keeping it to themselves, they talk to one another. And something that was private becomes unprivate very quickly. So I think that, in terms of curriculum, in terms of concerns and that, I think you have to choose very wisely who you go to. You know? And there are people on the staff that I can definitely approach, but there's some people that I would never approach.

I Is it because of their lack of understanding or, uh, knowledge about what is taking place? Or is it merely a personality issue?

K I think sometimes, I think in some cases it's a personality thing, but I think in some cases, definitely, lack of understanding. Um, you know? A subject like life orientation is reasonably new. It, the first time it was done in matric was three years ago. Um, and people, you know, in the past, who taught it, are now ex-PT teachers, ex-whatever. And so they're not really, uh, they don't look at it as a serious subject. So when you talk to somebody who doesn't really understand the seriousness and the gravity of it, um, they, they don't really understand your concern. "Ag, just do it." And you feel like saying, "I can't just do it, because I have to do it right." So, I think, I think sometimes it is a lack of understanding. Definitely sometimes it's personality. But for the most part, I think it's very hard to find someone who's like-minded, you know? Especially in a small school. I think that's the benefit of being on a big staff, where there're five or six teachers, someone who is like-minded, who's going to think like you think. Um, yeah, and it's hard, you know? There's another teacher here that I can talk to about things like that, because he's teaching a subject that's also new. And so he's also in the same boat as me. He's the expert, [laughter] and people are expecting him to be the expert. And sometimes, he doesn't feel like "the expert", he feels like "the idiot". [laughter] And so, we work well together, because we're both in the same position, you know? In terms of, you know, understanding, what's expected, and that kind of thing.

I You were saying that you, uh, do the life orientation, and that, um, it was a subject introduced a few years ago. If you're having a problem with any aspect of your work, who is it that you approach?

K I have a colleague, um, at another school, that, um, who's very similar to me, in the way she thinks. So, generally, if I'm having a pro-, a problem that affects my subject, perhaps a query, or a, "I'm not so sure of this", then I will, generally, give her a call. Um, I wouldn't, there's, I, I don't think there's somebody in my school that I would talk to, because I don't feel that they're in the same boat as me, because I'm teaching it. There's nobody else really teaching it. There's a teacher in the junior phase, but she's not me, and she's taken over from me, so she'll be the one to ask me. So generally, if I have questions, I'll ask my equal, someone who I feel is, is my peer, um, in terms of knowledge, and being in the same boat as me. Not, um, I, not that I feel that there's no-one here that's good enough. It's just that it's nice to talk to someone who's in the same, your shoes, who's you know, saying, "Yes, I'm also having that, what do you think?" You know? So I would definitely talk to my friend at another school. Um, yeah.

I Um, you are the cluster leader for your, for life orientation?

K Yeah, well, I am with somebody else. We do it together. So that was really good for me, the first year I did it, I did it on my own. And it was an amazing thing for me, because it really made me find out the truth. I mean, people were asking me questions. I had to know the answers. [laughter] So, it was really good for me. Um, but now we, kind of, do it together, because she's also the regional moderator. So we, I, kind of, help her with the paperwork and, and that kind of thing. But she's really the one who does all the hard, hard work. You know? I'm just, I just serve the tea, sort of. You know? So it's, yeah, definitely, I was a cluster leader, and, yeah, and then, for the last couple of years, we've kind of shared the burden. You know? Because it's a reasonably new matric, it's a completely new matric subject. So we all, you know, we're still learning. Like, this is where I am. This is what I'm doing. This is where I'm going, or whatever. You know?

I Have you not tried any kind of, uh, workshops? Or has she not tried any kind of workshops [overlapping conversation 0:31:29]?

K Hmm, not really. What we do, as a cluster, though, is that we share work. And it's like, we've got a big file that, um, she keeps and sometimes I have it, that we keep examples of work. So if I do a really good portfolio task, for example, I put a copy of it in there. That's almost our resources, our cluster resources. So, I know that if I'm looking for an assignment on a certain topic, I can go to that file and I'll find something that would be good, you know, good starting point for me. Because I, you see, I wouldn't use somebody else's work in completion. But I might take the idea and, sort of, grow on it or change it and tweak it and whatever. So that kind of doc, and then we all get a copy of that. But we do have, like, a master file that we keep. So we don't really run workshops, no. But we help one another. If it, if somebody needs help, we help them, without, like, we're having moderation in two weeks time, but a week before, we're having pre-moderation, moderation, moderation, to check that everybody knows what they're doing. So when we have the moderation, we don't have to write on forms that somebody didn't know what they're doing, because we don't want to look bad. So help each other, sort of, to no end. We, you know, I'll, I'll meet the teacher at four o' clock, you know, when he's finished his soccer practise, and help him, if that's what he needs. We really help each other. There's nobody better than another, we're a team.

I Coming down to your domestic and personal situation, you've mentioned that you are presently going through this divorce, and I know that that is difficult for you. And if we look at question fifteen, it says, what effect do you think having children or not and/or being a, a career woman has, or, or being in a career has on a women's career in teaching? Do you think that having children, or not having children impacts?

K I think, if you look at it from both ways, I think that having children helps you to understand children better, and look at that child as someone's child, not just as a

person in your class, and you think about how someone loved, nurtured, cared for that child, I mean, yeah, I mean, I'm sure you know. When you have a baby, you get up at two o' clock in the morning. They don't care if you want to sleep. They don't, when you tell them to be quiet, they don't listen. They'll wipe their snot on your nice clean blouse, they'll, they'll do those things. And I think, so it teaches you to, sort of, appreciate children as somebody's child, not just a child. You know, not just a body that I'm teaching. I think that, so having children, definitely is good in that way. But I think, some days I wish that I didn't have my children, so that I could be more focussed on my career, because I think that, I mean, if my children hear me say that, they'd probably be terrified and horrified, and shocked that I would say that. I don't regret having my children, but I think that if I didn't have them, I could be better at my job. But having them has made me better at my job. It's, it's a, it's, its a double-sided thing. I think, if I didn't have them, I wouldn't be, you know, although I said earlier, you know, when I'm at home I, school's at the back. When I'm at school, my children are at the back. Your children are never at the back of your mind. I worry about my children often, with no end, so, you know, you think about them because you love them. And you worry if this one's doing this, and this one's doing that, and I hope he's okay. And when I leave my son at school I know he's a terrorist, and I hope he doesn't get a smack today and, and whatever. And so, yeah, definitely I would say that having children, or not having them, both ways can make you better at your job. I think, though, the desire to have children and not having them, not being able to have them, I think that would be detrimental in teaching. I think, because there would be that, I think that you would become too soft, uh, you know what I mean? Because of that, yeah, I think if you desire to have children, and then didn't, and you couldn't, I think that you'd, you'd view children differently. And so you wouldn't, perhaps, be as hard on them. You'd be more nurturing, more caring, more loving, because that would be your opportunity to have children. You know? But I think that not having them, out of choice, would make you better at your career. Yeah, yeah, I definitely think it made me, it definitely has made me better. You know?

I **How have you managed to cope with balancing your career and private life?**

K I don't always manage it, but I'm getting better. [laughter] And one of the things is, like I said before, school is school, home is home. And unfortunately I work with my soon-to-be ex-husband, so it's very hard to have school is school and home is home, because everybody's sort of, no-one says anything, but everyone's watching. [cough] But it's very hard to balance it, I think, especially if you're in a career that demands a lot of you, personally. You know, when, when I get in front of my classroom, every day I give of myself, my privacy, my life, my, my experience, you know? Um, so it's very hard, and I don't always get it right. Some days I go home with the weight of the world on my shoulders. Sometimes I come to school with the weight of the world on my shoulders. Um, but in general, children are quite sensitive, and they can, I think they see more than we realise.

Often times, you know, when I've been having a tough time this year, children have behaved extra special in my classroom, without me having to say, "I'm going through a tough time", or whatever. So I think it is hard to balance it, but you get it right eventually. Over the years you kind of, you learn to sort of say, "Okay, I'm not going to worry about that now." You, some, like I said, some days I get it right. [laughter] Most days I don't. I'd, I'd like to think that I'm getting it right, but not really. [laughter]

I **Do you want to say something about the stress factors in your life, and if any, how do you deal with them?**

K I think the biggest stress for me, this year, was my marriage. Um, and working with my husband. Um, and it put a lot of stress, because, you know, um, I think when you don't work with your spouse, as most people don't, when you're having a tough day, you can come to work and set it aside, or talk openly, without affecting that person and other people's opinion of that person. But when you work with your spouse, and you're going through a hard time, it's very hard, because you can't really, uh, talk to anybody at work. And, the circle, your little pool is much smaller. Um, so definitely, for me, the biggest stress factor this year, has been keeping my private life private, um, because it's not private. It's actually very public, you know, in terms of what I'm going through, because of my colleagues. Um, but I think the best way that I deal with them, is I try not to take work home. And when I say that, I don't mean actual, physical work, but what's happening at work, I try not to take it home. And I actually did set in place some kinds of strategies where I, when people asked, I, I said: "Look, I don't feel comfortable to discuss this now", or, "What's the situation?" and I'd say, you know, "Um, I'm not really sure." Even if I was, I think I tried, I distanced people from the situation, which helped me. You know? I think, you know, sometimes we give to much information, and then we're sorry. So I've learnt that, the hard way, this year. And by doing that, by keeping my private life private, I've helped to reduce my stress levels, because, yeah, it's less stressful, because then there's no expectation. Do you know what I mean? Like, there's no, you know, "What's going to happen next?" or whatever, because you don't know what happened before, so it doesn't matter. And you learn, and I've learnt who I can trust, in terms of my colleagues, who I could really talk to, and say what I think, and they won't judge me. They'll understand where I'm coming from and love me regardless, you know? Even if it's something said in malice, or you know, intended to hurt, it's not taken that way. The situation is, I know where you're coming from, and we move on. And we forget about it, you know?

I **I'm glad that you do have a kind of, like you've, you mentioned before, that you do have a kind of support system at school to help you deal with it …**

K Yeah definitely.

I And I hope that your, the stresses will eventually, wouldn't go away, but would be, you know, you will have some kind of alleviation in terms of that. Do you regard your job as equal in status to your spouse's work, or like you say your ex, well, you did mention that your ex-spouse now has got, is also in teaching.

K Well, we're working at the same school and I think that, um, I don't think it's equal in status. I think, in his mind, he probably feels like he works harder. And when we were married, I mean, I would work a full day at work, the same hours as him, probably harder than him, because I gave of myself emotionally and his learning area doesn't really require that. And then I'd come home and still have to fulfil the duties of wife, and mother, and homemaker, which he didn't. I mean, he didn't have to cook and clean and do washing and ironing, and that kind of thing. So I think that sometimes, I think in general, men, men don't really view their women's, their wives', um, jobs as important as theirs, even though we were doing the same job.

I What contribution does your income make to the family budget? Or should I use that in the past tense? [overlapping conversation 1:41:41].

K Well, when we were married, my con-, my salary was fifty percent of our, of our income. Um, I earned exactly half of what was brought into our family. Um, but now it's obviously a hundred percent for my family, for me and my two boys. And then, obviously, with contributions in terms of maintenance and that. That's over and above it. But my salary meets a hundred percent of the requirements for our family.

I So when you were married, you were making a fifty percent contribution towards the family budget?

K Yes, fifty percent.

I And it was important?

K Very important. Without it we couldn't have lived. We, if I look back now, we probably could have, but we couldn't have maintained the lifestyle we had. Because I think, before you have children, you live a certain way, and then, when you have children, you don't change the way you're living, you just include them. And so it becomes, the demands on your money and your finances and your whatever becomes much more. You know?

I Where do conflicts of role and priority occur?

K I think, for me, it's at work, because at home, I know what my priority is. It's my children, um, and my role there is to be their mother, and provider. And, at work, sometimes I find that, uh, what's important doesn't always come first. You know? And it's very hard to sometimes differentiate between what my job is, and what my role is, because they're different. Because, on paper you sign, I'll teach life orientation grade ten, eleven and twelve, but in reality, you're teaching that and you're listening to a kid's problems, and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. There's much more to it. So you have to prioritise, like, "What do I want to do, what don't I want to do? What's okay, what's not okay?"

I Do you think we are living in a changing world, where men and women are increasingly regarded as equal in terms of family?

K No. I think that women, there's an increasing demand on women in the workplace. Women are working just as hard as men, but men are not coming to the fore, in terms of family. I think that, I mean you look at most families, women, most women work now. I mean, when my mom, my mom was saying to me, you know, when she grew up, women didn't work. Only women who didn't have children might have worked. But you had families, and it was, and I think, men, as much as we say we're equal to men, we're not, because we're still expected to run families, have homes. And a woman, and, and, and society still looks at women on those, um, with those expectations. So they still say, uh, for example, "I can't believe that that woman works till six every night." Meanwhile men are working till eight at night. But their expectations are still the same, but we're living in a, we're living in a changing society, where women are working just as much as men, but family doesn't allow for that. Men still expect their wives to be, you know? Have dinner on the table, almost that, that, uh, what's it, that, that perfect all, all, all a woman. You know, dressed perfectly, ironing, reading, keeping a perfect house, well looked after children, and now, also bringing in money. You know? The, the roles of women have increased, not changed.

I Kerry, is there anything else that I should have asked you, that would have thrown some light on these issues that we talked about, about women teachers' lives?

K I don't think so, I think that we've covered everything that we, we could have.

I Anyway, I just want to thank you for taking part in my study, and for giving of your time. I don't think I could have asked more from you. Thank you, Kerry.

K Pleasure.

End of recording

CLIENT: Selma
QUALITY OF AUDIO: Good
DURATION: 105.41 mins
NATURE OF TRANSCRIPTION: Interview

VOICE FILE NAME: Teri

Key:

I = Interviewer
T = Respondent, Teri
s.l. = sounds like

T Let me just, Selma, I don't have enough memory. I then just want to, is it okay?

I Yeah, that's fine.

T Okay. Look at this one.

1. I Okay, Teri. We're going to be going question by question, but feel free to answer like the way you want to, be as open, as honest as possible. How long have you been a teacher, Teri?

T It's my tenth year now, being a teacher. I am from, yeah, I started at a junior secondary school called Klatlogang, got promoted last year to Trinity. So it's my first year in Trinity, which makes it ten of experience, nine years in between the secondary schools.

I So is this your first year at Trinity then?

T Yeah.

2. I Describe your current teaching assignment?

T I'm an HOD for English. I manage the department, I give support, I teach learners, I'm in the management team, I'm part of the management of the school. Um, yeah, I participate in debate, I do music. It's not just one portfolio that you manage, but you just get to be a manager and a teacher, you just… holistically so.

3. I How did, how did you decide on becoming a teacher?

T I actually never decided to be a teacher. I was influenced by my parents, lack of finances. And yeah, and I was not present, actually, during the, the time when I was supposed to register. So my mom saw it fit for me to go there, and then she actually registered for me, and then I wanted to deregister, but already I've collected some of the courses. Therefore I couldn't go anywhere, because Wits wouldn't, didn't give me, wouldn't grant, uh, what do they call it? Wouldn't grant, um …

I A bursary?

T No, not a bursary, they wouldn't credit my courses. So I felt, ag man, I've wasted my time, so why not? Why not continue? Yeah. But I guess my mom played a role there, because she was a teacher, and then she ended up being a principal. So, yeah, in a way, I guess, for me to stay, it was through her influence.

I Was teaching your first career option?

T Not really. I wanted to be a lawyer at some point, but I realised that it clashed with my principles. And then being the person that wants to help, I, I thought of psychology, not psychology but social sciences and still, because of the faculty, it

was limited, I couldn't change. And then I thought of psychology, I liked psychology with teaching. So they somehow made sense and yeah, I again, I tried to do music, so yeah. My first love, it's music, but for some reason it's taking long. I don't know. Yoh!

I **What did you plan to do with the music, Teri?**

T I just wanted to sing, as, just sing and being part of, I feel I'm a healer, part of healing, but through song. So, I tried to go to school for music, but it's not appealing for me when I learn it. It's appealing when I perform. But both of them, they go hand in hand. I guess it will happen later in my life, because at least with the kids I am able to share it. I guess somehow.

I **Do, do you teach, have you had the opportunity to teach music at school, at any one point?**

T No, no. No, no. Because where I teach there's no music. But we, as in teaching formal notes and everything, yes I have, because I've got a bit of understanding. But, I can't play an instrument and teach them as a subject. You know what I mean?

I **Yes.**

T But with songs and singing, teaching them songs, going to competitions, yeah, I do. I won, I won several. My previous school, I managed to go onto provincial level.

I **Is that so?**

T Hmm.

I **So it's something that you would like to pursue, even though you're so busy right now?**

T Now, where I am, I can't, just to be honest, and it's depressing.

I **I hope it, it's also an avenue to be able to let deal with that kind of depression, or that stress that you feel if you do get into some kind of music. And I hope you will, someday. My third question is: People come to teaching by different pathways. What type of teacher preparation have you had? You did say that Wits did not credit your courses, so how did you manage to get into teaching?**

T Okay. Yeah, I went to Vista University. I did all that was expected. I did Psych and English. Um, I did Northern Sotho too. But I managed to pursue, I did my Psych one, two, three, and my English one, two. So I did the methods. I did all my courses, and then I did computer and no, no, librarianship, yeah. But, mostly, I enjoyed Psych and English, which I still do. So, but with the fact that I, I actually, I was just studying, I was not even thinking about I'm going to be a teacher. I was just studying, and I was enjoying what I'm doing. Psych and English.

I [laughter] Did you think that the Psych would have let you into any other field, besides the teaching?

T True, because at, at the first time I actually targeted on where I can speak with people, hospitals and with my Psych, but for some reason, it never worked out. I even tried corporate, to be a consultant, like direct communication with people, using my Psych, but yeah.

I Doesn't it help you in school, at all?

T Psych? It did, because it made me relate with people better, it made me to identify with myself better, I was able to even go to monsters that legal [unclear 0:07:12], with that particular Psych two. My self esteem was a bit low, and I would go revisit myself, and, because I was always questioning even my identity, as a woman in my position. As a girl, Psych somehow helped me. English both, I can say English and Psych. The books that we used to read, I read one book *Nervous Conditions*. It was talking about the patriarchal society, and I could see myself in that. And it gave me opportunity, you know when you go to classes, it gave me opportunity to speak out. There was this one girl, one character that was called, um, ey, Nyasha. So she was rebellious and she refused to eat. She was bulimic and blah, blah, stories. So yeah, that helped me to focus on the Nyasha within me. You know what I mean?

I Yes.

T So, yeah, it literally helped. It helped a lot. Psych helped. The different theories that we learnt, it did help. Especially the Psych one. It did help. And the abnormal psychology, where one would focus on the behavioural patterns, the narcissistic patterns, the schizophrenic, you know you go back to yourself to say, "Oh, am I schizophrenic?" or whatever. Yeah, it did help. That's why now, much as I was a bit confused, not knowing what I want to do, what is my drive in life, now, I think I have to pursue it. It's in me, somehow.

I Do you think you were fairly ambitious when you went into teaching as a career, Teri?

T I was. I, I would regard myself as an ambitious person. Every, everything that I hold at the particular moment, I want to, to make it work. But, with teaching, as I'm saying, I never thought about it. Instead, part of me made me angry, a bit angry because I felt I'm living my mom's life. I'm a continuation of her life, being a teacher. So, and with her marriage, it was not one of the best marriages. I could see her struggle. I thought this is the one thing that I should focus on, to help her. So it was not necessarily about me. It was about, she's paying a lot of money before I got a bursary. So I said, I remember one time she, she went to get a loan, and she had to give me 4 000. And I got 4 000 hard cash, and I said to myself, I remember jumping this and saying, "If there's one thing that I should do now, it's not to disappoint her. I must have passed." And yes, I have. So now, when I look at it, it was not really about me. It was about me being a better person for her, and I was tired of looking at her going to these mashwanisas and whatever, paying all the monies, so that I might be in a position to help her out. It's not really about me. I guess now, in my thirties, I'm getting a realisation that it has to be about me. That's why I, I, I really struggled, emotionally, to tap on what I exactly want to, to do.

I Do you think your mom felt like that at all? About I'm doing this for Teri, for Teri to actually follow in my footsteps?

T I think she was just saying, "My marriage failed. If there's one thing that I should do, is to give these kids education so that they don't bother me when I'm old." I think.

I And I think it's worked.

T Yeah, I think. That's why I don't even have blame her a lot. I think she was doing the best that she can do at that particular time. And the best thing that she could do is let me struggle, but I know they're going to school. The intention was good.

I Yeah, I think the best.

T Yeah. And, and, and she was not, she was not going to risk not taking us to school and listening to me with my music, something that she's not sure of. She wanted to be sure of something else. But the dilemma is that, we never even got to have good opportunities of really understanding which career we must take. You know? And being a, a single parent, it's a bit influential, because there are a lot of things. She makes decisions, she's like a man, she is, you know? And she was strict, my mom, there's a fear factor along those lines to say, "If you choose this and you don't make it …" you know? So, you're fearful. You know you have done mistakes. At that point you, you, you don't even know the responsibilities of my saying, "I have to be responsible." Those are the things that I'm learning them, in my thirties, where I'm supposed to be at the peak of my career. I'm still

battling with the decisions that I'm supposed to make, because of the protection that other parents give, which is good. But at the same time I feel one should be set free. That's why I, I would relate with those characters, in the book, who, who rebel. They would give me courage to rebel. And, um, you can't always rebel.

I **[laughter] No. Again, like you say, you've come to a point in your life where you're able to make decisions for yourself, and …**

T Yeah. If, if I learnt that earlier, you know, where I was, my mom was not scared of failing, I guess I would be doing exactly what I love. Because that child in you, you forever go back to her and you say, 'No, make a decision." It, it, it's a struggle …

I **It is.**

T … when, when you are confronted with a crisis, you always want a second opinion.

I **Just to give you that little bit of confidence, and to say that you are on the right track, if nothing else.**

T Hmm, because you, you never learnt that early. You push yourself all the time. And you learn now to say, "It's okay for me to fail." Now. Remember.

I **And that's important.**

T Hmm.

I **What did you want to achieve when you went into teaching Teri?**

T Honestly I, I never, I never had anything, you know? I never had anything. I went there to work for my mom.

I **Yes.**

T Yeah, I went there to work for my mom.

I **And if we look at the next question, where it says, "What was your dream as a teacher?" Was it fulfilling your dreams or your mom's dreams?**

T Yeah. I was happy I'm working. I was tired of struggling. I won't. Being the person that loved books, some part of me looked up to my teachers, who taught me at high school, to say, "If I can be like them." Now, at that point, I can't deliver that. But, at the same time, I, I realised how teaching needs experience,

even when you're from the varsity, because you're delivering. You have to take out that understanding, and it was a challenge for me. Um, yeah. With the outcome based education, with the complication of what we are supposed to teach, which was a bit unfamiliar because I did English and Psych, but I found myself teaching Technology. And I failed so many times. You know? And we had to go to workshops, they were a bore for me. There was part of me which, I again never even respected the profession at that particular time. I got bored all the time, because it was not challenging for me.

I **You say that you failed so many times, …the Technology?**

T Yeah.

I **What is it that you failed at? Was it say the content?**

T The delivery of the content itself

I **Because you weren't familiar?**

T Yeah, every day I would learn something. Like for instance, Technology, it's divided in, in sub-things. You've got your structures, which is dealing with, it's an engineering content. You've got um, um, what is it? Your drawings, which is technical drawing. You've got this other part, your food processing, which is your home economics. You know? And, um, you've got your mechanical systems, which is systems and control. You know? All that. If you now, like for instance, the drawing part of it, and the building part of it, and the home economics part of it. So, by then, I couldn't even divide them, I couldn't even understand what I'm talking about. Like food processing. What exactly in food processing? If, if we're dealing with carbohydrates, I couldn't deliver a content to say, "Let us look at different carbohydrates that we have. What do they do in our bodies?" And then, later, we're making a product. You know?

I **Yes.**

T What I would do, I would make a product without understanding. [laughter] Let's say we're dealing with flour. I would say, "Bring your flour." And, "That flour, it's white." We never even discussed anything… it's whatever. But as I grew, as I grew I would allow ...yeah. We would, I would choose if I'm dealing with the making part of it, or I'm actually looking at the different types of, of food that we have, what are the products that we get, the processing part of it, the ancient part of processing that, …the now, how are we processing it now? Go and research on how Sasko does it. You know, I would look at the making part of it.

I **Yes.**

T It was, the making part of it was not even my objective. I was looking at the processes. You know? With textiles again, you know? Before, I would just bring different textiles. [laughter] Oh! But later I would know … we've got the synthesis you know? Yeah. And with that I was doing it on my own. So you can imagine how many times I failed. Until I got to, okay, and now I was teaching, what, what I've done at school, I was not teaching. I found myself excelling and exploring with tech, the drawing part. I've thought, and I can't draw. Structures, I used to love them. Now, as I walk, I look at houses. The shapes of houses, how they do them, the triangular shapes, they make house. Struts, members, now, I, I look at that, and I'm saying …

I You're saying that came with experience, and being informed at workshops. So we are still at number four and it says… you just went into teaching, because it was the option …And now, do you still feel the same? That "I'm into teaching, because I need to, to have a job." Do you still feel the same?

T Not really. I'm growing up now. I'm, I'm a very spiritual person. I feel I had to, it, it was grounding me, in a way. I guess part of me was selfish, it was like now, when I look at it, it was like about me [emphasis]. You know? Sometimes you have to go out of your way to help others and, yeah. Now, when I wake up, we'll all have frustration, but I've got time to say, in life you have to prepare not to disappoint others, but not to disappoint yourself again, because if, if I'm not part of that, definitely I'm not going to feel complete. But still, I feel, I feel I'm a teacher, but I'm wondering if I'm a, I'm a teacher for teenagers. I don't know.

I Why, why are you questioning that?

T They steal a lot of you. They take a lot of you, and they give nothing. You teach two hundred learners. About twenty give back. You have to push all the time, it's tiring. You have your life too. It's, it's tiring.

I If you had to rethink about which age group you would, uh, you would teach, and if you're still intent on teaching, which age group would you prefer?

T I think I will like to teach elder people.

I Adults?

T Yeah. Adults, yeah. Or if it has to be twenty, from twenty, or from, let me say twenty-one, those at the varsity? I know they've got their own challenges. But I would, or let me just say, I would love to teach anyone who has the zeal to keep me motivated. I need that.

I **I think we all do.**

T Yeah.

I **Without that, you feel demotivated and you don't have that zest for going on.**

T Yeah. Sometimes, um, you, you're down, yourself, your life, you're down. You don't want to go to work. Ne? And with the things that we see at work. Sometimes they come sulking, they're, they are drunk, from abusive families. Sometimes they're sad. Sometimes they don't just want to learn. Those five learners who are ready, they give you a boost, so, sometimes they just don't give you a boost and you're like sitting there, and like, "God!" But you can't keep on complaining all the time.

I **Yes.**

T You know?

I **And the thing is that, like you've said before in your, in your journal entry, you talked about reaching out to everybody, not just the learner that is willing to, but reach out to the quietest learner at the back of the class.**

T Hmm, hmm. At the back of the class.

I **The learner with the problems as well.**

T Hmm. Hmm. And you find them, because they've been demotivated from where they come from, it's very hard to reach out. When you reach out, they get shocked. "How can, who are you? How can you reach? I'm like this, I've accepted myself, I am like this, I am this." So you have to start there. You have, sometimes your lesson, you teach, you go back to them, as individuals. You, like, you can't just afford to be identified to say, "I'm going to be, I'm going to be here. You are somebody, you are more than that." Where do you get the time to say that? [laughter]

I **Yeah.**

T While you're doing that something is lacking. But you really have, you, even through the midst of that, you just have to push on, and try.

I **Because you, like you say, you're working with human beings. You're working with individuals.**

T Yes. Hmm. Others, they can't even write, they're not supposed to be in the main stream. They are, they, and they see themselves, they are struggling within this group of learners, and they've been admitted. I guess they've got a conflict, how, of saying, "Why am I here, while I can't do it?" You know? Then, and those are the learners who have zeal again. You want to try so much to help them. You don't have time, you can't. You don't have time. You try to reach out to them, but you can't give, give yourself to them, because they are not even supposed to be there. You are the wrong teacher, you know?

I Yes, because you have never been trained in that field, as well. That you're looking at the inclusion, with the policy for inclusion, today, that you're struggling with.

T Uh-hmm. Hmm.

I Have there been any obstacles to your chosen career development, Teri?

T Okay?

I You say that, you know, teaching was a job that you went into, and this was what you had to do. It wasn't for you, it wasn't, you didn't see it as a career; it's something that you had to do, because it helped you through that period of time. Because you were struggling, and it was something that was there, and was a kind of job. If there have been obstacles, could you describe them and say what strategies you used to overcome them?

T Ob-, obstacles in my chosen career? In the teaching?

I Career, yes. In the teaching.

T Ah, ah. A lot. Um, hmm, a lot, a lot. There's a lot of logistics in the planning, but delivering number one, that's my concern. Delivery, there's no, there's no, um, sufficient time, resources, confidence. Um, yeah, resources, I'm basically even talking about the schools themselves. Um, the kind of learners that we have, the kind of material of teachers that we have. As colleagues, we are not the same. The level of enquiring and trying to, to upgrade ourselves, we're not the same. You will find one teacher very informed, the other one less, less informed. Um, and I think one of the irritating parts, Selma, is that, okay, I understand, there should be a plan in a school, right? There is a plan. But, this plan, people should be open and transparent in of that, to each and every institution. We need to have a plan, but we, we might not attain anything. In, in the, in, in, in, and we need to be conscious about that. Not all the time that we need to, to meet targets, whereas we know, we need to, we need to meet targets, but the kind of learners that we have? Do you know what I mean?

I **Yes. Yeah.**

T I'm supposed to finish 'The beautiful ones are not yet born' in three months, according to their plan. But the kind of learners that I have, they can't understand even reading on their own. It's, it's really frustrating. I find myself rushing, rushing all the time [clicking fingers]. I can give myself time, two hours of reading that book thoroughly, myself, on my own, but with those learners I should start, we should start with vocab, number one, before we start reading, because they are kind of learners when you say, "Go and read at home", they don't. I'm not a "notes teacher". I don't believe in writing notes. I believe learners must be involved with me.

I **Yes.**

T You know that, no, you'll find yourself writing notes. There is something that they've done, and that, it's not profound for me, it's not. I don't want to lie. It demotivates me. I sometimes find myself tired. Um, sometimes I push myself, sometimes I'm tired. Sometimes I force them, like a double period, you do your vocab for the first chapter. When you start reading, that period, it's done. So what must I do? Must I jump that? When I, when we don't discuss what does this word mean within this context, and I find myself jumping, and then I say to them, "You will check that in your dictionaries", I don't feel good. It's …

I **But don't you think children should be allowed to become independent in that way, where they check and you go back and check that they have checked? Or looked up the word in the dictionary?**

T Exactly. I, I believe that. I force them to use the dictionary, but you know what's the challenge? I'll be doing that hundred percent, they know. English dictionary, but when they go to history, there's no dictionary, you know?

I **Yes. Yeah.**

T So there's no consistency there. They'll always search for a dictionary when they are in English. So I find myself, okay, I realise sometimes I spoil them because I want to, but it's the same. Even when I don't give them, they're going to fail. How many are there in class, thirty eight?

I **Yes.**

T Believe you me, they are going to fail. I, all the time I'll say to them, "Go and read from chapter one till chapter four, we'll discuss it together. Go and read."

But the chapters that I know that I've never discussed with them lengthily, I'll never set that in my exam.

I **Because you're not confident that they know the work?**

T Yes. For the fact that they are not analytical, Selma, for the fact that within a paragraph they cannot interrogate their minds and say, "What does this mean?" [laughter] Like we are reading one, one, one short story now, from Best Stories, *The Suit*. Um, the, the content it's about one woman and then this woman was the wife, the husband was, was working, and then the woman was not working. And, so they find the woman sleeping with, this guy, the other guy, so he comes back. So we read the story and then we finished the story. When we have to divide to analyse the plot, they just keep quiet. They cannot give the definition of what is a plot, in relation to what they have read, they can't break that. They'll just have an understanding of the story. Even when you can drive them to reach the peak of the story, and say, "Go finish up", they will never.

I **Yes. So you feel that they're not motivated enough? Do you think that there is no motivation at home, as well?**

T Yeah, hmm, especially, I'm not meant to be racial, or whatever. Especially with our black kids. Yeah. No motivation, the focus, it's… they're focussing on irrelevant things, and, one of the things that I've realised is that I no longer promote the multi-cultural schools, especially with our kids, so far. Coming to multi-racial, to multi-cultural schools, their thinking starts to be clouded, because the kind of leadership that another culture provides, like for instance communication. I will be shouting, they hear me, you will be speaking calmly, they don't. You know what I mean?

I **Yes.**

T Yeah. They don't. For the fact that you will be giving him a go-ahead on him understanding his rights, it's something to him. It's lack of discipline to him. You know what I mean?

I **Yes, yes.**

T Like the leadership, the discipline styles, just as they arrive there, at school, their behaviour has changed. You know?

I **So don't you think that the leadership should take into account different aspects of multi-culturalism, then?**

T Uh-hmm. Uh-hmm.

I And deal with students in that way?

T Uh-hmm.

I Where you accommodate different cultures?

T Yes, yeah, but culture is dynamic. At the same time I have my own style of discipline. And with my learners being different in one class, it's is a challenge again. Because, sometimes you find yourself using your one style of discipline, for you to be on the safe side. So, I don't, I, it, there's an impact, again, into learning. An Indian boy will say, "I'm not going to write, and she's not going to shout at me. She's not going to raise her voice" you know?

I Yes.

T With a black child we'll be saying, "I'm not going to write, but I know she is not going to hit me."

I Okay. You're talking about the punishment that's metered out at school, as well?

T Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And how they are comfortable about it.

I Yes.

T I'll answer back. He's shouting at me. And it's demotivating. [sounds tearful] I …

I Right. So there is, there is that struggle with communicating with different groups in a classroom?

T Hmm. Hmm. Hmm. Even when you call parents, you call a parent. Your child is doing this and that and that and that. Instead of dealing with that particular matter, together as adults now, there would be, like everything just falls into place, there will be a spiritual perspective, you know according to the Koran. And then, now, what's the …

I Yes, yeah.

T Yeah. Is it Koran? Like I'm not Koran.

I Yes, you come from a different background.

T You know?

I Yes.

T And then is this child going to respect Koran more than me? But you can't deal with that the whole time.

I So again, it's being informed about the different religions, perhaps in a way where there is that religious tolerance that is practiced at school level?

T Hmm, it is, but these parents when they come, they come with strong feelings about what they believe in.

T But I look at it beyond… yeah. I don't dispute her referring to the Koran, but we're not talking about books now, and, that that I'm not Koran.

I Yes.

T You know? Making her own choices now.

I Yes, number 6 says, "What do you feel presently about the idea of teaching as a career for women?" Does teaching offer *you* a good fit as a career, Teri?

T Yeah. Teaching for women, it's good, but I still feel we still have a lot to do, in terms of ourselves again, gaining confidence in ourselves, respecting the learners, you know? Preparing, you know being prepared at all times and passionate about teaching itself. You know, those kids, as you speak there, they should see themselves in you. "I wish I can be this speaker." I have a, a personal goal, you know in our files you have your, your school goal and whatever, what is your mission and I've got my personal goal, being an English teacher. I would love them to be good, eloquent speakers, readers, and writers. You know, we can have all the technology, Selma, but if you are not that, you will, I want my learners to be global learners. You know? They go to China, they might not know China, but when they speak there, they are confident they are able to stand on their own. I want that. Yeah. And I feel, as women, being naturals, we're good. We're good. We nurture, we're able to say, "You're going through obstacles, it's okay." You can get the best out of this, you can get that queen within you.

I How long do you plan to stay in teaching, Teri?

T [Laughter] No, we're not forty, I know. It is, I, I don't know. I, I don't think with kids I'll turn forty there. God willing, you know? Sometimes we plan, to find out that we, no, no, forty… I don't think I'll be there somehow, definitely.

I Will family influence your plans in any way?

T No, not this time. Not this time. I want to fall down and rise. I want them to be there to support me. Yeah.

I I'm talking about you having your own family, and, um, …

T No, even when I can have kids and husband, and husband will be [over laughter 0:36:51], husband. No, no, no. I don't think I'll be able to compromise for anything. I'll love my kids. I'll have to go to school and then they'll have to downgrade [unclear 0:37:04] to take them to an expensive school, and I want to go to school. They'll have to downgrade. I'll help in the house. No problem.

I Yes.

T It's to live a sacrificial life a lot, it's, you'll find yourself wanting them to pay back. I don't want anybody to do that. I want to do it from my heart.

I So, you're saying that if, in the event of you having your family, with children, that you will want to stay home? Will you want to stay home, or will you still want to be at work and teach and be at home, at the same time?

T Yeah.

I What I'm saying is that you're going to balance both your work, and home?

T Yes, and home. Yeah.

I So there's no option of you staying home anyway, because of finances?

T No, no. No, no, no, no, no.

I Okay. Now, you're planning to leave teaching, what would it take to keep you in teaching longer? You talked about saying that you still would like to pursue your dream of doing the Psychology in some other form. What would it take for you to stay in teaching for a longer period of time?

T If the people who are in charge, or the government, I don't know, who are planning this, and even to lower levels, like in the school, if they can stand being

realistic, about the material that we have, and what we are supposed to offer. Material I mean learners …

I **Learners, yes.**

T … and, like for instance, let me just make an example. You know, during the apartheid time, ne? You would find a teacher for a term, creative writing, only focusing on one essay writing, building up all the skills, for a term. You're reading one book, for a term. Something like that, let us be developmental, really. And we stop this running around, so that really, if I have to account that I'm not teaching kids they really hold me accountable of saying, "I can't be doing creative writing, marking it quickly, doing literature, marking it quickly, doing my control test, no, no, no, no, no. I can't be doing that" it's really a mess. We're not doing justice to the kids. We are definitely not doing justice to the kids. As per the writing part of it, I mean, just teaching a child to write an introduction of an essay, a descriptive essay, it takes a week, or two weeks.

I **You're talking about grounding their skills?**

T Yeah. Yeah.

I **Reading, as well as writing?**

T Uh-hmm. They don't know what's the difference between argumentative… how to create an argument. They answer the question, if you give them an argumentative, they answer it. They can't build up an introduction, to create an argument. It's a skill. We had to go through processes.

I **Yes. So you're saying that, what we should do is go back to basics?**

T I was debating the time factor, I was debating last term; I was, I put my mind on that. I like researching; it was interesting for me to research. So I would stay in the computer room with those kids, I never even had weekends. I was working, they would come to my house Friday, and then I'll say, "Let me just have Saturday - do my ironing, my washing." They would come and spend the whole day, Sunday, preparing for a debate. At school I couldn't, my classes overlapped with lunch to ground them. And they were enjoying that, because it was another activity. We won, we even, you know, went to provincial level, that's where they lost. And, they made it to the province and they were beginners. You know, we put a lot of energy into it.

I **That, yes, that was an achievement.**

T After that, I was tired. I'm supposed to submit marks. No understanding about the debate, they want their marks. When?

I Deadlines?

T Yeah, deadlines. And I was sitting down, now I may cry, I was asking myself, "Okay, must I stop this debate, for me to submit?" What are you submitting?

I A piece of paper with just your record of marks?

T So I, I even said before the end of the year, I'll ask my principal if he can't give me three classes, to accommodate me on the debate, because I feel if those kids need that.

I Yes.

T Because I'm having four classes English. So, if he can take one, I think with three, I can manage.

I Manage, yes. And do better?

T And do better. And have the debate still.

I I think if you sit down and talk to him and negotiate your timetable, he perhaps will accommodate you.

T Hmm.

I If I ask you, do you have or had mentors, and how did they assist you? You talked about students looking at you and saying, "I would like to become like this teacher."

T Uh-hmm. Did I have mentors? Yeah my primary school principal was a very strong woman. She used to force us to speak English. I was attending in Soweto. She would really, she had a very good ear. She was very strong. Um, very honest, the way you would pronounce words, she would intervene and say, "You don't say it like that, say it like this." So, I think she was the first woman to make me love English. My sister too, she passed on in 1992, she would say "Today, we are not just going to speak Sesotho, we will be preparing everything, and we will be speaking English." Yeah, because she was a teacher too. So she was teaching English. My mum, again. Yeah, raising us, you know? Um, she never had a better life, she always pushed hard. But she would say, "You're going to get there." I loved my high school English teacher. The way he was practicing OBE, long before, come to think of it. He would come to class, let's say we're doing

direct and indirect speech, I remember in Grade 10. He would write on the board, "Objectives" on that lesson, on that particular day. And you can imagine - I was attending in Limpopo. He would write the objectives, and then he would start teaching, teaching, teaching, and summarise everything. And then we go back to the objectives and say, "Remember." And that's exactly what I liked about him. He enhanced my liking the languages. Yeah, that was one guy. And, um, my lecturer, Mr Thale, in Vista. Vista University. I remember my first year I failed my assignment. I, I forgot the name of the guy, and then he said, "I don't understand." And the page was full! And then he laughed. Okay. And I thought the language that I love so much, somebody says he doesn't understand what is all this. Um, but, yeah, that guy, I loved, I loved the freedom that he gave us, in terms of expressing ourselves and our views, based on the stories that we read. Do you know, I, I developed the love of reading from Matric. First year was worse, because pots would burn, I would read, yeah. I've got several women that I looked up to, people that I'm around them, that are in my space at a particular time and I'm learning.

I **Yeah.**

T But basically my two teachers. There was this other one, who was teaching me music in high school. I was looking up to her. Yeah I, had. Though I was not talking to them, I was observing what they do, and I would get motivated because of what they did.

I **Good. Our next question is about the teaching, and I think you've touched on some of this. Has teaching been what you expected? If not, why not?**

T Not really. There's a lot of frustrations. The money part of it. I don't know if we are expected to just give, give, give and not receive. Yeah. And the good planning. It's rich, our curriculum, it's rich in what we are supposed to deliver. But we don't have time, and I think it's, it's all about, they never considered the apartheid government, what it did to us, and with what we're supposed to do it will never happen overnight. I think they should have waited for about twenty years, to thirty years, to think of applying this, because definitely so, S. there's still some mental slavery, multi-cultural schools, there are issues.

I **Yes.**

T Um, teachers are not confident. They are still struggling with their own identity. You find that? Like I, it's not what I've expected. People are just tired, demotivated.

I **Okay. If you could change your teaching assignment in any way, how would you change it? I think you just answered that, you said that you would like to**

actually do less teaching and give more time to say the debating with the kids? Is that what you were saying?

T Yes, and I guess it's that question of what would make me to stay longer in the profession, yeah.

I Yes.

T And for them being realistic about their plan. Have your plan, but know that there should be adjustments in your plan. Yes, our goal, our drive, we need to meet deadlines. But let our deadlines go hand in hand with the delivery. You know what I mean?

I Yes.

T January, we've got, what do we have? We've got our athletics, right?

I Yes.

T For instance. Much as we have our athletics, we don't have a lot of time to go to class, because we're developing that. And then, don't expect to have all of that. Let us be realistic about what we have. Because January, from this term to that term we are having blah, blah, then let us focus on this. Let us just be realistic, so that everybody is into athletics. We're developing that, at that particular time. And then, after that it's gone …

I Yes.

T … we're developing this. I don't know if I'm strategic, or whatever. We're developing this. We can't be running like headless chickens all the time. It's athletics. Run, run, run, run! And then after school, you stay behind.

I Yes.

T Kids are split, S. And if they are split, we are split too.

I Yes. Yes, I imagine it becomes too exhausting and at the end of the day, you don't see what you have. What you …

T Hmm. Why are they stealing our weekends? I'm a strong believer of sacrifice, but I can't keep on being at work all and every weekend.

I Yes.

T I can't.

I Because of the extra-curricular activities that you're involved in as well.

T Hmm.

I Describe the challenges you face with the current educational changes? If you could give me an example of a positive experience you had of school change? One positive experience? I know there've been so many changes that have taken place. Can you think of any…?

T Well when my principal, he was a very rigid kind of a guy, who doesn't even listen. And then they invited a psychologist to our school. I'm talking about the one who was teaching.

I Yes.

T And then this psychologist - our school was used as a pilot, okay? This woman came, and then they selected teachers to come and complain, and I said, "Please, put me in", and then we went. And I couldn't realise how bitter I was, as we were talking and I said, you know, "I feel we are not appreciated in the school." I've never had my principal saying "I'm not happy about your work", but he would say. "You're late on this, improve." But not with the content of my work, but when there are promotional posts, I don't know. I, I even had to go personally to him to say, "What does it take for you, for us, to improve? Because you've got your solid post level one, but you take people that you're supposed to train. I don't understand, in that department, because I was, I was heading it, and there was no HOD there, but you never even gave me an opportunity to go to an interview. So what does it take for me to be in that position?" And then he stopped a lot of things, and I even cried. I felt, "I'm not going to wait for you to clear paths for me, I'm going to clear paths for myself, and then I'm going to move on." And then we went to a meeting, and we had to write, this woman, when she started, we had to write positive things. She started from 'time', we need to respect time. By the following day we were on time, and, because time was a problem for me. I was rebelling, being late all the time, so that I should clash with him. And I never realised that, I thought I'm tired. Aah, you know? So, the second day already, I was pepped up, you know. Time, I was early in the meeting, and she said to us, "You must look at each other and look at the positive things that you can see." For the first time I was able to look at this guy, and say something positive about him. And later on, she gave me a platform, to say, "Okay, heard one of the concerns, Teri, and much as I would, I would love to say it, but I would love it to come from you, because you seemed to be passionate about it. And I was able to say, "I'm not happy with him employing other people," because he is the most influential person in the management, employing,

I'm not being personal with the teacher, because the teacher was there, I'm not personal, but I'm saying I've been serving here for the last eight years, and you choose somebody outside? And you've never said you don't like this and that and that about me, and gave me a period of time to say, "This is where I want you to be, in this particular time. If you don't, you know, I've never had that. But, you just decide and I even asked your management, your deputies, they all say they don't know. And how? Being the management? Can't you discuss us? We think this one has a capability. I'm disappointed at you, but yet, all the time you say we must work as a team." And you know what he said? "You're right ma'am." That was profound for me. Because this time he was listening. So, I never wanted him to change, I, I felt it's my time to go. But, at least he said, "You are right ma'am." And I was happy. I started working, I was happy that he acknowledged it, and now when I hear from my colleagues everything is all good, they're working fine and then I'm like, whoa, I might not be there, but I'm part of being a catalyst at that school. Yeah, that was profound for me.

I **In that you're talking about change in management.**

T Yeah, change in management. Okay, I should look at change in education. Describe changes? No, please give me an example.

I **We're looking at school change. You've already mentioned your negative experiences …**

T Yeah.

I **… of the curriculum and about the time factor, and about how everything has to work according to deadlines, and you're having a battle with that, because you have to actually keep on target. Anything positive that you've experienced?**

T Yeah, the curriculum, S, the curriculum it's rich. I don't want to lie. It's diverse, it, it accommodates everybody. I love the interaction, of bringing the world into a classroom. Um for instance, we would find a comprehension on the Bella, Bella Singers. I think it's interesting. It's not something that they don't know. They know. I, I love, I love that fact, I love that your teaching now, is holistic. You're able to, you will be touching on verbs, for instance. Let's say you're looking at your comprehension. A verb within the context, your own context, or the child's context. That's, that's one thing that I like and I like the opportunity that they give to kids, like the arts and culture, to express that in them, while they are learning, because i I think it even lets kids know that I love drawing, I love singing. They are tapping into those areas, within the school. And they are learning more. Like I was seeing with music, arts and culture, they are learning how to write music already, they're learning that at a very age, early age. If you're having a kid who's

really blessed, already that kid will be writing music. A lot of things. Rights, understanding their bodies when you go to LO, you know?

I **Yes. Uh-hmm.**

T With us, we never had that opportunity. You would question your acne, you would question your breasts, you would question, you would want to change this and, but with them, they are given an opportunity to say, "Oh, okay, this time I'm supposed to be like this, and then I'm going to..." you know? Yeah. They are not marginalised. You know? That open-mindedness, the level of communication that we have. You speak sex as explicit as it is, it is okay. And it makes your relationship to, to really grow. There are a lot of positive things, a lot of positive. You know, the community, the community is involved with us. Police involved with us. There's a lot, even when things are happening, but there's a lot of involvement, it supports the statement "Ubuntu".

I **The concept Ubuntu?**

T Yeah, the concept "Ubuntu" and it supports what is usually said, in, in our culture "A child is not just raised by one individual, but is raised by a village."

I **Yes.**

T Because everybody, it's, it's …

I **Is involved?**

T Yeah, is involved. Parents are given an opportunity to learn. So many

things, so many things.

I **That's good to know, Teri. If you're looking at the next question where it says: Does your professional time encroach on your private time? If yes, is there a cut-off point? Uh, we talked about you having to spend weekends with the, with the students, preparing for your debate as well. If I ask you: How many hours do you spend a day, on your various teaching activities? Can you put a number of hours to it? Do you think you can?**

T How many hours do I spend on, oh, okay. It depends, you know? Just when we open, for some reason, I just give myself that kind of a break.

I **Yes.**

T But the following week, everything just starts, you know? Everything just starts, you just find yourself moving out of the school premises for you to find yourself. So I just have 30 minutes of my break.

I So, you're busy throughout the day?

T Yeah.

I Throughout the school day?

T Yeah. It might not be contact, but it has to do with the school.

I Yes, it's to do with your management, your department as well.

T Uh-hmm. Yeah.

I So you're busy throughout. Um, if I ask you how many of these do you spend at school, and how many do you spend at home outside formal school hours? Do you just work at school, or do you work at home as well? Do you bring school into your home?

T I do, I do work at home. My boyfriend sometimes stops me to say, "I'm here."

I Hmm. Okay.

T Uh-hmm.

I So do you find that it does encroach on your private time?

T Hmm. It does a lot. It does. Because, if you don't give yourself that time, you're not a happy woman. You're always thinking about that. So you want to do, get it over and done. When, when you're just over it, something comes up. When you're just over that something comes up.

I So you're busy all the time.

T You are just not happy. Like, I'm not happy now, people are striking, but I'm thinking work already. I have to go to my colleague and fix my file, my portfolio file. Everything has to be in order, because soon, as we come back, we'll be straight away going to the moderation.

I Yes, it is a portfolio moderation we're on now. It's oral moderation as well. I understand that your role is to teach. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have? Which of these responsibilities do you find

particularly challenging, or difficult, and why? I know that you do a lot of teaching, you teach English. What is your other, what are your other responsibilities?

T Where, at work?

I At work, yes?

T Managing the department. It's not easy, because sometimes you're caught up on, on trying to be the best teacher that you can be, teaching.

I Yes.

T But, at the same time, you have motivate your colleagues. Okay, I am blessed. Let me just say, let me just stop complaining, complaining. My department, they try to do their work. But you know what irritates me, this follow up thing …

I Yes.

T … where you have to be the manager now.

I Yes.

T Okay, with my grade twelve teacher, it's fine, she's experienced. Sometimes she doesn't even offer me respect, but for the fact that she's doing her work, I'm just happy with that. With her respecting me, it's another story, I'm okay with that. And with my grade ten teacher, yeah. But I am a bit concerned with other teachers about, for instance, one teacher in my school was teaching Hamlet. Ne? Last year. And I said to her, "Just give me the gist of the book, what is the theme?" She said, "Ah, I was giving only scenes." And I'm like, okay, what, okay I thought she doesn't understand what I'm saying. I'm just saying, "What is the overall picture of this book?" You know, she never answered me and I kept quiet and I said, "Yeah, it's true, she can't." For the fact that it's problematic to me, she, she was just doing it. She said, "I was relying on question papers." But what is the content of the book? That's exactly what I want to hear.

I Yes. Yes.

T And, I said, "Yeah, it's …" But people don't speak about it, because they don't want to be labelled as incompetent. It goes, they don't want to be labelled as incompetent. You are a teacher, but you don't understand. And that is a character problem, because you are not willing to say, "This is where I'm at, and I want to be there." You know? You suck it in, you hide. So, I'm like, this is what I want to expose. I want us to come out to say, "If in other books, we don't understand

them because it's Shakespeare's work, as being a teacher, I don't understand it. I have to work, I have to understand it." And it's okay.

I **Did you not, then, have a workshop, or just get all the stuff …?**

T She's not doing it this year, because it's me who's doing it. So, obviously, I'm giving myself time to read it, and to study it, but I'm just saying, um, but with my team, believe you me, they do work, yeah, they do have files, but one thing that you cannot be certain about, it's what are they doing in classes?

I **And I think that's the most important of it all, because that's where we're going, we're going back to basics, about the teaching. About quality teaching. How do you feel about the demands made upon you, Teri?**

T S. you know what? Um, I've come to accept that I'm not a perfect person, and there're things that I am going to allow in my life, and there're things that I'm not going to allow. And people have the right to interpret me the way they want, I'll just be the best that I can be for myself. If I cannot meet the deadline, I can't.

I **And for your learners?**

T Yeah. For my learners I try to stretch it, you know? I, I really, like to push them hard, and my stretching gives me peace to say, "Okay, they might not be listening to me, but I've done it."

I **So long as your students have actually benefited from the work that you are doing. Shall we go on? I'm talking about demands from management.**

T Hmm. As I'm saying, I will meet the demands that I know. Like now, I know I have to submit my portfolio file. Other demands that people decide to make, or, okay, if I can't make them, I, I, I can't. And if I can, I, I can, I know, my first time was terrible. I would, I used to, when I go to them, I would think about work. No I had to work to a stop.

I **I think most of us do, hey?**

T Yeah.

I **It… it seems like your mind is constantly working, as if you are at work.**

T Yeah. Yeah.

I **Think about other aspects of your life, Teri, as, um, in your case, as a friend, as a member, as a daughter. And reflect on how you experience these in relation to your career as a teacher.**

T I've got a very, um, strong, supportive family, friends. I bombard them all the time about this, but I think what gives me solace is I'm a very special person. I always believe that God will never place me in a place where I can't manage. Even when I'm scared, I just push on. Yeah. But I've got someone I'm able to call my mom tell her about my frustrations and she will just say, "Ag man, stop complaining, just do." I've got supportive friends, who will say, "You know what? What you're doing, it's for the betterment of other people. Create your positive karma" and you know?

I **Yes**. **Like you say, you have a very supportive network.**

T Yeah. Uh-hmm, I do.

I **You're very fortunate in that way.**

T Yeah, I am. I push on, because there are other people behind me.

I **Yes.**

T Yeah.

I **Again, we talked about the concept of "Ubuntu", and about helping each other.**

T Yeah. Hmm. And I guess even, even sharing with other teachers, you know, like my grade twelve teacher, all the time when she looks at me, she's like, "Teri, I have to do this today." And then I say, "Take it easy, W. It's fine." "But, you know I have to do …" Like all the time when we meet, "Hi, how's it?" "I have to do this and that and that and that." So sometimes I'm like, you know what? Let me give her space, and do as she would feel comfortable, and, because it was my first year, next year definitely we will start on a cleaner slate, where we will say, "Let us sit and caucus and caucus together. Where do you think we have to focus?" So that everybody must be involved. I don't want to find myself saying, "Do this and that and that." But I want us to sit down, come together and say, "But for real, these learners can't read. What can we do?"

I **Yes, we decided on a workshop. We're going to workshop with the teachers the reading, reading disabilities and how best to conquer the reading, uh, problems that we have at school. So, maybe you should look at that as well. I think the department has sent out reading material, reading workshop**

materials. And it's a good idea to get the team together, so you're all deciding together, about your strategy for next year.

T Uh-hmm. Hmm. Um, um, um. Because when I look my, our Afrikaans HOD, she really works hard. And sometimes I ask myself if that's working, she keeps her teachers' at break, she is forever on. And ..

I Do you think her teachers are happy?

T No, I don't think so, because they're forever complaining. Okay, it's a good thing, but at the same time I, I, I would love to let people reflect and grow. You know?

I That's important. And I think that the teachers who work with you will appreciate that as well. Because I think it's important for them to be happy in their work environment.

T Hmm.

I And you need to communicate that to them by your whole demeanour as well. Okay? What aspects of your work do you feel you have the power to change, and what aspects do you feel powerless about?

T Okay. Um, let me start with the one that I'm feeling powerless about. Um, if a person doesn't have a good attitude about life, and he's not ready, or she's not ready, I feel pretty powerless. Like for instance, we might be having all this, but life has to go on. We have to teach. You know?

I Yes.

T Even when things are like this. So, if somebody is forever complaining and doesn't see that, he or she doesn't see that, but this week can better, you know, let me just choose this week to be better, I, I really feel powerless, I really feel powerless. Because I know we can make this week better, if we want. And when somebody says, "Deadline and what, what", and we're shut out and we're saying, "We're making this week better", and by him seeing us making it better, he can even change his way into say, "Okay, submit Monday". You know? Something that is better.

I Yes. So you're saying that you can accommodate deadline dates, and if you can accommodate them, to make it better for the teachers.

T You know. Yeah. Uh-hmm.

I Okay.

T What aspects of your work do you feel you have the power to change? Yeah, if people are having the zeal, we can move mountains.

I Yes. And like you said that, if a teacher cannot submit on a due date, then you can perhaps give him an extension, so long as there is that monitoring of what is done. So then you have the power to actually help him in that way. Okay? How does the structure of the institution affect your power to effect change? Are there contradictions? The structure you're looking at, perhaps management as well as your SGBs …

T Yeah, like?

I And remember, you are in management.

T You know, It's funny ne? Sometimes you just don't want to rebel. Um, I think there's a problem again to stay in a place for a long time.

I Yes.

T Ne? There's a problem, again, not to always reflect and change, and to get how you think, um, you find your deputy, your principal, they've been in a school for twenty-five years. You come in, um, they've been there. They've been working together, the principal and the two deputies, they know each other better. They're the same age. Possibly they've been having these HODs, the departments, coming in and out. When you get to that management, you are not all the same somehow. There's a bit of them being senior, you come in under, …

I Junior. At junior level.

T … yeah. And then what happens is that, there are other things that they decide on, which is just right. When you question them, I don't know what is it. Others they even get personal and become offended about it. And you say, "Yes, I'm not fighting for equality, but let the information be shared equally." And, um, with the level of respecting the portfolios that they hold, sometimes you decide to keep quiet.

I To your own detriment?

T Yeah, still being in management. And let me just make an example of exams, for instance, where learners have to write exams. The deputies will write on the exams and whatever, they will never sit you down. Okay, it just changed now because we talked about it. And then, give it to you, to sign. Ne? And teachers will be starting to complain. Okay? And then, how it's addressed, the principal

comes to the meeting, and says, "Who has a problem?" You have a problem, as the manager, too. While your teachers are saying its utter… it's really correct. You have a problem. But, if it's addressed in the staff room, you can't say anything, because it's a bit of a contradiction. You're saying to these teachers, "Aha, this is how the SMT is", and then you go back, when you go back you lay this issue on the table, they'll be saying, "But we asked in the meeting", and then you're like, "I can't say this in the meeting. I'm saving you, because I'll be opening up a can of worms about you." "But you signed, that simply says you acknowledged." "Yes, I'll acknowledge what you're giving me, but we never sat at the table and agreed upon this."

I **And have you discussed this with management? Have you?**

T Yeah, so far we have, but like those are the examples that I …

I **Yes.**

T Yeah.

I **And have you, do you think it's going to get better?**

T I think so far, but there are those elements that come out, you know? Some of the things you see happening, but you don't even know about it. You even find yourself asking, "Do I, what am I in this SMT? Do I form part of this, or I'm just there?"

I **Okay, you should be forming part of the SMT and there should be collective decision-making when everybody meets and talks about whatever needs to be implemented.**

T Uh-hmm.

I **Um, if I'm looking at the next one, have you encountered a lot of opposition, especially as a woman? In management, in teaching?**

T Uh, in management, no. I don't know if I have to call it opposition, but they walked out of the meeting.

I **Let's say discrimination there, at least?**

T Yeah. There, there's a level of that, uh, there's a level of that. But, I guess, being the woman that I am I don't entertain it, because I speak my mind. Yeah. Or I'm really observant. I'll deal with it.

I **In your own way?**

T In my own way, yeah. But there with my department, others were not, they were not totally accepting of me, based on the experience that they have. They know better, I'm from a junior secondary school. They never allowed me a bit of growth, of me growing. But I just said, "It's just normal. Um, I'll grow. I give myself time to grow." There is that level of, "Who is she? What is she going to offer?" And it, it just puts you in a can, where you feel claustrophobic, because you're new, you want to adjust. At the same time you want to learn. At the same time, you're supposed to lead. You know?

I **Yes.**

T So, what I usually do is keep on doing what you've been doing. Let me deal with myself first and adjust, I'll go get papers, until I find my ground. Now, I'll start leading. Yes, I'll be leading, but not as intensely as when I'm more balanced. When I'm balanced, I would know that this is what I want. For now I'm saying, "Be free, and do whatever." But I'll still have a voice as a leader.

I **Have you not been to any kind of leadership course? Um, any, I think there are some leadership courses on offer, and if do a leadership course, or if you can't, they normally do an orientation course, for new heads of department.**

T No, no, I just saw the manual. They gave us a manual, I've been reading that.

I **So it was just from the manual?**

T Yeah, and I, I was reading, I got my list on teamwork, and whatever, and like I've been searching for myself.

I **Yes. So it's been work that you've been doing on your own?**

T Hmm.

I **Okay. It says principals respond differently to staff members trying to effect change. I'm interested in understanding how your principal understands your attempt to improve or affect change.**

T Okay. I wouldn't, I'm not going to lie. My principal was very supportive, very supportive as I, as I came in. Yeah. Yeah. He supported me all the way. "Teri, do the work. Any problem that you face, come." The way he was supportive, I even felt if I am going to come to this guy all the time, I'm going to lose the point, I'm not going, I'll be a child going to report to the father, you know? So, others, other issues I had to deal that, I had to deal with them on my own, others I had to record

them, and say, “This is where I’m at, and this is what I did, and this is what transpired”, unlike going to him.

I **How does he, for instance if someone, you use the word rebellious, rebels against this, or, if there’s any kind of opposition from any one staff member, or a staff member is trying to bring about change in a, in a positive way, how does your principal respond to it? Is he very accommodating of it, does he, is he amenable to it, or does he see things from his own perspective?**

T With the general staff?

I **Yes.**

T Um, one thing that I’ve realised with my colleagues, they were bitter. They’re experiencing the same situation that I did. They are bitter, I was shocked that in the meeting always the principal is the one who’s speaking. And they are quiet, but I’m saying to myself, “They choose to be quiet for reasons known by them, I don’t know why are they quiet.” They are quiet. There’s only one lady who, I don’t know if she rebels or what, but she forever questions and sometimes they use the union on matters which just have to be dealt with. One thing that I’ve seen about our principal is that even when there’s an input, he will never entertain it. He will try to make a better explanation about that, and that’s exactly what people don’t want. So, I don’t think he’s a good listener, though. [laughter] Though he’s an intelligent man, I think his intention it’s right all the time. He has a good well-being, and I think there’s a level of attachment to the school with the years that he has spent in the school. And what again? There’s a level of protecting and, and owning the school. I think that’s where he’s missing the point, to say if he can share that, if he can share the dream that he has, it’s going to flourish. But he’s thinking, “I have to maintain this”. And I guess people are getting irritated about that. I don’t think he’s doing it consciously; he’s doing it out of love and to safeguard the school and the passion for the school.

I **Yes. Has anybody sort of tried to pinpoint this and say to him, “You’re not listening”, or “This is a bigger dream, not just your dream, this dream belongs to all of us.” Has anybody said to him, “This is how you should view it?” Like you say he wants to safeguard what he’s built over the years.**

T Yeah. No, I don’t think so. With me, it’s very, I’m saying these now, so …

I **Yes. So you will, perhaps, speak about it at some point, when you’re comfortable to speak about it. Because it’s only for the betterment of the school, don’t you think?**

T Yeah. Hmm. Hmm. Yeah, it is. It is. So, all the time, he's explaining what people are saying. He doesn't leave people to say what they think. He explains that. I was asking one guy… I don't know what we were talking about, and then he was saying, "But he, why is he saying this? Can we really keep quiet?" And I was saying to him, "Why didn't you say that at the meeting?" "Ah, he will never listen to you!" And then I'm saying, he's from Zim, and then I'm like, "You guys, you are not here to build our country. You've got good points, but you're just here to just work." So it's that kind of thing. That's why, even the unions that we have, when the SADTUs are leaving, it seems as they are the rebellious ones, then NEPTOSAs are the gentle ones. You know what I mean?

I Okay. Yes.

T And I don't think we should be doing that. As a school, much as you are NEPTOSA and SADTU, we should be coming up with something that says "us" …

I As a school.

T … as a school.

I I think that, yeah, I think that's a valid point.

T Yeah.

I Because, then you've, you've got a division, a clear division again, between NEPTOSA and SADTU …

T Yeah, and SADTU.

I … and yet, and yet you're all aspiring to the same goals.

T Yeah. No, SADTU would say, "Ah, we're leaving! We're leaving!", and then NEPTOSA would say, "Why, what did SADTU say?" You know what I mean? But, we are in our individual unions, but we're still people, we relate. "SADTU, are you leaving? Come in. What is NEPTOSA saying?" You know, being free, so when things like this start, it's like those are those ones, and those are those ones. Our principal emphasises, like even the way we sit. You'll find guys that side, you'll find black girls this side, you'll find Indians this side.

I Okay, so there's, there's a clear division, even in the staff room?

T Yeah. Yeah. Though we speak.

I **Yes.**

T We're subtle about it. Sensitive, as Adolph said. I was telling my Indian girls the other day,that I was swearing at these two Indians, the girl and the boy. And the way I was so angry. I think this is racial now. I was called "A stupid, black teacher" by these two learners. And then the girls went like, "[gasp] Oh, Teri!" And then I said to them, "This is exactly what's happening. And because, I'm not going to sit and, and talk about you guys at the back, no, I'll be telling you, 'These guys, when they see you screaming at them, there's a level of adjustment.'" They said, "Wow, I don't know what makes them to get to that, to that." "But with us, there's something that they're doing, you will never like it." "But Teri, they do that to us." Or that, but I have to tell them that I see that, I see that in them, so if they are not changing, therefore they'll be put, after I said that, they even cried, because I said to them, "Why are you crying?" Because …

I **It's not because of the attachment they feel with you? I'm talking about the teachers. Was it the students that cried, or was it the teachers that cried?**

T It was the learners, because I said, "I'm even calling your mother."

I **Okay.**

T I was just trying to conscientise the teachers …

I **Yes.**

T … because we've got that level of communication. But I mean we're talking about us sitting like this, the blacks there, what, what.

I **Yeah. It's something …**

T But with us and A. and P, we're even able to come closer, as compared to other teachers.

I **Other teachers.**

T Because I'm looking at them as souls, I click very well with them. I'm not looking at, so there's a very subtle energy. The principal said it once. He's open to change, but I feel, again, the staff is not trusting that he's changing. Why? Because they are not trusting. We don't trust, because we don't trust ourselves. I don't know.

I **Perhaps, again there's a trust amongst teachers, trust and acceptance. It will go a long way towards bringing some kind of balance in terms of relationships.**

T Uh-hmm.

I **And, if at any point you feel that you're able to address it, you must address it. I do know that at the school that I was at, they had someone come to talk about integration. It's important.**

T Uh-hmm. I think we need, I think we need someone like that. I don't think I'll reach them as I stay with them all the time.

I **Yes.**

T Yeah.

I **And they will listen to somebody else.**

T Else, yeah.

I **And it's about integration, it's about not trusting the other person, and yet, like you say, you've made the first important step, is to make that advance to the teachers in your team, because again, they are in your team, whether you are black or white, or Indian for that matter.**

T Uh-hmm. Uh-hmm. And opening up. You know, this year I said I'm not going to make any, um, I'm not going to make any, what do you call them? These goals that we make yearly? What do you call them?

I **Yes.**

T What?

I **Resolutions?**

T Resolutions. I said I'm going to do everything that I am scared of. Opening up my heart was one of the things that I'm scared of, because I want to be cautious all the time and protect myself. I said, I'm saying I'm letting myself go. I'll talk to people that I feel like talking to them, that it feels okay that we grow together, it doesn't matter they're yellow, they're red. So I think we're still struggling with that, again. It's a good school, it's, what I'm saying, it's very deep. On the face value, you're not going to see it. We're laughing, ha, ha, ha, ha, you know?

I **It's mainly cosmetic.**

T Yes. Yeah. We're laughing. But when crisis comes, that's when you see people are not objective to say, "But he manages, he's well." People say, "Ai, the management! Ai, they're like this, these people." Just because somebody didn't do his work. Let us be open and …

I **And tackle the problem?**

T … and, and, and say, "But you never did your work!"

I **So what you're saying is, just tackle the problem when it does arise?**

T Yeah. Hmm. There's a problem with this guy who apparently applied for a post in our school, but he never got it, and then he's in an office. There's an office in the principal's office. But he's an HOD. The periods are not the same as mine, he's staying where the deputies are staying.

I **Okay, so he's located with the deputy principals?**

T Yeah. In it, yeah.

I **So that now puts him in at another level, almost according to you guys?**

T Yes. You know?

I **Okay.**

T And, the principal, in the SMT meeting, the principal said, "Who has a problem of him staying there?" I don't think that was appropriate. He should have told all, why is he there? Instead teachers were rebelling against that. Now the principal was explaining to us how their offices were, those are the things that the teachers want to know.

I **Yes, you know, sort of say, "He is there for these reasons, because we don't have another office."**

T Yeah, so he's saying to us, "Anyone who want to join him in that office, that office, it's free." As if he's defending himself. He's not. He shouldn't find himself in a situation where he's defending himself. But things have to be understood.

I **And it will make things easier for everybody too, if you understand, like you say, if there's some kind of transparency then people are more accepting of it.**

T Yeah. Uh-hmm. That's why there's a question of these ones and those ones.

I Okay, the black and the Indian and the rest of the group?

T Yeah. Hmm, hmm. And I guess,the other thing that perpetuates it is the history, where they come from. I don't know.

I Yes. I think it's because of all the separate schools that we've had.

T Yeah.

I We've been to separate schools but it's changed, it's gone almost. It's '94, since '94 we've had integration.

T Mental slavery.

I Yes. We seem to be still …

T Start again. Stuck on that. And it's, yeah.

I Yes. And then, you know, you need to take people at their worth, and not be judged by the colour of their skin, like we say.

T And, as I'm saying, it starts with you. If you want revolution, revolutionise yourself. It starts with you.

I Yourself, yes. Does anyone monitor your teaching? I know that you're head of department, you monitor the others in your group, does anyone monitor yours?

T Yeah. Yeah, Mr C. does that.

I He's a deputy?

T Yeah, it's a deputy. He wants to know what we do, like now we're supposed to meet. The district was coming on the 23rd, we're supposed to meet to see my file, what did we do, all the thoughts there.

I Okay.

T I submit to him my work, my books, yeah.

I **You're okay with all of that? That it has to be, that my work has to be monitored?**

T Yes, you know, Mr C's not even teaching English.I don't think I would even love to be monitored by him. I would actually want to be monitored by the same teachers, like grade ten, eleven and twelve, because the content, it's the same. Just to come and say, like W.is good with the language, just to say, "Approach it this way." I trust myself with literature, if, you know, just to have those aspects to say, "Okay, this is what you did, you could even approach it this way." Or go to W's class, she comes to my class, for the sake of development, nothing else.

I **I agree. I also think that's vital. Have you not approached your heads of department, or, or the management to say perhaps he just needs to put a signature on your work, let's, for instance? Don't you think that you should, I think it's, it's very brave of you to say, I, as head of department "I would like a colleague to monitor my work."**

T Okay.

I **It shows, again, transparency on your part …**

T Yeah.

I **… and that willingness to learn, which is so vital to our own, like you say, your own growth and your own development. I think if that happens in your group, Teri, that the other teachers in your department would be so accepting again, and see that side of you where you're saying, "I need to grow, I need to develop. You are very good at this, basically, help me to grow as an individual here."**

T Okay. Hmm.

I **And I think that you should put it to the test, where she comes in, you know, the lady that you're talking about, she comes into your class, and she sees what you're doing. I do know that this comes with the IQMS as well, with the appraisal system.**

T Yeah. Yeah.

I **Have you done that already, here at the school?**

T No, no. Not yet. Remember there was a query about if it has to be applicable or not.

I Not.

T And then we agreed, as a school, that monitoring will still take place, but, sad to say, that there's nothing like that. So, there's a level of others stretching and, yeah.

I But do you think that monitoring is important?

T It is. It is. The day that you know you're going to be monitored gives you the zest. Because you sit, not that you're doing it for that particular day, but you plan further, and now you realise, "Wow, this lesson was not as comfortable as the ones that I have, I've stretched." It's, it's good. It's good. It just gives you that rush, and it's encouragement, and you hear what the other person says.

I I think you should actually go ahead with the peer monitoring, with the peer checking, or the peer teaching, as well. We do that at our school, where we have peer teaching where we have a very experienced English teacher, who does the teaching, the other lady will sit in, a very young person, who's just came in last year, and it's learning all the time. And then, when the younger teacher's teaching, the older woman would sit in. Not as, in terms of surveillance, but in terms of saying, "Okay" at the end of the lesson, it's guidance, it's saying, you know, "Why, you should look at it like this or do this or whatever."

T That's good.

I And it leads to the building of that department, and that department becomes extremely strong.

T Hmm. Hmm. Because, now you get to be together and people are free to decide, to even make the decisions in the department, suggestions again, in the department, yeah.

I It's shared skills.

T It's shared. Yeah, I'm going to try that.

I And the thing is that, they would respect you no end for doing that, because we don't want to come across as being, knowing it all, like you say, and where there is that shared expertise, it makes, it leads to the enrichment of that subject, and of that department. I've found that it works beautifully at our school. We do it not just in the English, we do it with the Maths and with the Afrikaans, and a lot of subjects.

T Uh-hmm.

I You know, where teachers are not threatened by their colleague, or what that colleague has to offer, as well. Okay?

T I'll do that.

I Are teachers, are teachers in your school collegial and co-operative?

T Um, they are.

I Can you tell me, it says, can you tell me how often you talk with other teachers, in what kinds of situations, and what you talk about? You just mentioned that episode with that childs?

T Hmm. Uh-hmm. We talk so often, it might not be formal where we're having meetings, but we always update each other, especially with my grade twelve teacher. She's forever on her toes, you know, she runs around all the time, all the time when I speak to her, is she fine, "Are you coping?" She will say, "I'm doing the orals, can you sign for me?" So, we don't have a lot of talking, but the one that I speak to a lot, is my grade ten teacher and the grade eights and nines. We might not be sitting in a meeting, but, "How are your marks? How is this? Guys, are you fine? Do you think …?"

I Yes.

T Hmm.

I And you get a lot out of those …

T Out of that, yeah.

I … the informal, informal chats that you have.

T Uh-hmm. And then sometimes I even say to these ones, the guys there, "You really have to take care of me, the head of the family, but I'm putting the work." You know? We do talk. Like we're supposed to have the meeting, last week Tuesday, so the strikes, and, everything, yeah. We do talk.

I Okay. Do you feel you are able to talk about any concerns, with regard to the changes, and its impact on you, with your colleagues, with your management? You said with management it's a bit difficult because they tend to have hard and fast ideas about things.

T Yeah, moreover that, it's my first year.

I Yes.

T You know, my communication it's not, I'm still looking at things, and to really assess am I right? You know what I mean?

I Yes.

T But with my colleagues, I do. Like now, we were speaking about… we were supposed to submit drafts. An exam draft. They gave us last week. Ne? We, we just opened, it was just two weeks. It's exam now.

I I think we're all having the same problem with the time factor, with, uh, having assessments, that many assessments and we haven't covered enough work. Is that what you're saying?

T Uh-hmm. You find yourself doing exam, whereas it's two weeks. You've been focusing on the first terms assessment, but you have to plan for exams, and they want it. [snaps fingers]

I Because it's according to the timetable?

T Uh-hmm.

I I know we are, we are into our test week this week. It's, like you say, two weeks into school and we are into our test week this week, so, I think all schools are experiencing the same kind of problem.

T What is that?

I I think each school needs to make the adjustments, in terms of its assessments, especially for this year, because of the shortened terms, that difference in times, and, uh, whatever else. I do know that the department is also looking, has also looked at the number of assessments we were doing, because I think, I, I don't know how you feel about it, there are times when I feel I have not covered enough work, and I'm having to assess. And what do I assess on? Because, like you're saying, you come back from an exam, from the holidays and you're into your exam again, so that's creating a problem.

T Uh-hmm. And for the fact that these kids will be writing their exam, ne? After they have written, they don't come to school. So that you have to push the …

I The teaching.

T Yeah. They decide …

I So what …?

T They decide not to come.

I So there's not enough teaching that's taking place?

T Yeah. After exam, that exam makes it impossible for you to finish your work, because kids are not coming. And if we're allowed to make our exam, not to have this particular time, the exam time, where they say, "Okay, let us say this time only grade eights are writing", or "use your double period on this day", you know, kids would come. But what, what happens is that they are writing, and they are not coming, and you're not done with your assessments. And you can't press them.

I Because you're not there? The students are not there?

T They're not there.

I So you find that you're having a problem to cope with completing your syllabus, as well. Okay. We're looking at your domestic and personal situation. We're coming almost to the end of it, Teri.

T Okay.

I It says, what, I do know that you don't have any children right now, what effect do you think having children or not, or being in a career has on women's career in teaching. If I'm looking, if I'm listening to you, if I've read your journal entry, you said something like, "Because I don't have children does not mean that I don't have any responsibilities." How are you going to respond to this?

T Uh-hmm. You are your own responsibility. You need to manage your life you've got, things that you want. For instance, I might not have kids, but I've got a family. Let me just make an example. This weekend, my mom called me, "Where are you?" I'm like, "I'm here, I'm in Len's." "I think you should come, because …" we've got another house in … "I think you should come and go to that house, because the person moved out, and you're supposed to hang the curtains." You see what I mean? So, your family make demands, again, for your life. And being close-knit, and saving the situation all the time, you have to attend to what they say. Sometimes you've got a lot of work, but your family has this that you need to take care of. You have to move from your own house and go back to them. Your

personal life, generally, having a relationship is just such a lot of work. Your boyfriend comes to you, you manage him, you complete him. You prepare breakfast, you prepare lunch, you make it a point that he's happy, you're there, you're listening, you can't work when he's there, because it simply says you, you're just not present, with your work, again. So you work better when you are alone.

I **Yes. So you're saying that you are having to juggle and to cope.**

T And just being a woman, it's a responsibility on its own, because so many things are expected of you. You even hold yourself emotional hostage if you don't clean. Yoh, don't clean! But with guys, it's simple. You have to fix your bed in the morning. Because I am a woman, you have to cook, because I am, I have to clean the pots. I am a woman. So many things. So, generally, this gender thing, being a woman, it's just tiring.

I **Okay. And if I say, how have you managed to cope with balancing your career and private life? What you're saying is that you have a problem with it, but you'll just, you cannot, or you can. I know that you've said that it becomes so difficult.**

T Sometimes, yeah, sometimes you find yourself balancing, but with the balance, you have to wake up early. Like there's always an extension that you have to make, you cannot just be comfortable.

I **Yes. So you're stretching yourself?**

T Um, it's hectic. Another example. Let me give you another example. Much as I'm having this work, I'm having my personal life, as I told you about, my spirituality, it's important. We had a women's conference this weekend, from Friday, Saturday, and my boyfriend felt I should come and see him on Saturday, because we're having a holiday on Monday. When I said, "You know, I have to go to the conference on Friday and Saturday", we started fighting, as if I'm not interested. That, on its own, it's just hectic, because I have to convince him the conference is as important. I need to be balanced spiritually, much as I'm coming back to you. And then I had to go to him later. Conference, you leave the house dirty, go to him, come back with him, so that he realises that, oh yeah, this woman was, like that, yes. It's tiring. I, sometimes feel, okay, let me just be alone. At the same time it's all not nice again to be alone. It's, it's just a lot of work. Sometimes, but you find yourself just going on. It's okay.

I **But you just balance, you're just basically juggling everything.**

T Yeah. Moving from here to there, there to there, yeah.

I **Do you want to say something about the stress factors in your life? And, if any, how do you deal with them? You talked about your boyfriend, you talked about school, anything else that we should know about, or that you would like to talk about?**

T The money part of it. I think my career is not giving us enough. Sometimes I say, with the load of work that we have, if it was paying I would save for a holiday.

I **Yes.**

T If I have a holiday … I think money would, if, if we were earning okay, I would really focus and give it my all, my all. Sometimes you find yourself split, because it doesn't even satisfy you materially, so. If you buy a car, you can't get a house. If you buy a house, you can't get a car. It's stressful. You're always looking at other avenues. And you don't need that. It's okay to give, but it's okay again to receive.

I **And you feel that we're not reimbursed adequately?**

T Yeah. No. We're not. We're not.

I **And have you not thought about, perhaps, a sort of, another job besides the one you have, or a part-time …?**

T I've thought about another job. Part-time, I'm going to die, with the load of work that I have. Especially part-time, if it's not something that I love, let it be.

I **So you say that you're having a problem with coping financially?**

T Yeah.

I **And that is a stress factor, especially if you're not meeting your budget at the end of the month and seeing to everything else.**

T Uh-hmm. Uh-hmm. You always have to sacrifice. You know? You're not going to get this perfume, to have that. And it's tiring. It's tiring.

I **Tiring, yes. Because as women we want to have it all as well. Okay? Do you regard your job as equal in status, perhaps, to your boyfriend's work? What would you say?**

T No. No, he's running his own business. He works when he wants to at any particular time. He's pushing himself hard.

I **Because he's going to make a success of it, yes.**

T He's saying, "Today, I'm in nine o' clock, because I just want to do paperwork. This is what I'm focusing on today."

I **Okay.**

T So, it's not the same. Teaching…, people who think teaching is easy, it's not. It's one of the difficult jobs. You are sometimes a psychologist, you're a doctor, you are so many things in one body. It's not, it's not …possible.

I **What contribution does your income make to the family budget? But you're on your own, I know. So, you did say that you're having to actually balance your budget.**

T Hmm, but, as I said you've got your family. It extends.

I **Yes, your mom. So you're not seeing just to yourself?**

T Yeah. Yeah. When you go home you have to go with some meat. You have to buy something. Your mom calls you, "I don't have this." It's not even your mom, only. Even your friends!

I **Okay.**

T Who are not, the one who got paid on the twenty fifth, they want money from you. "I don't have enough." "Put some money for me." So even a budget doesn't work. [laughter] You can [laughter] you can have it like that, but it doesn't work. You want to buy, you know how we are. You want to buy cups, you see them, like, "I'll pay you month end." Month end, you're like, "Jeez, I got cups!" And you're wondering if you need them. Why buy at that particular time? You suffer. You have your cosmetics, I always have energy boosters, I can't afford. You have your energy boosters, you want to go to gym, you want to eat right, you want to buy the best food, you want to drink nice coffee. If there's one thing that you, I mean, you're not going to go out often, so if you have to provide, you have to provide. You have to pay for where you stay, for your people, ah, so many little things.

I **Where do conflicts of role, and priority occur, uh, Teri? Conflicts of role. Like being a daughter, being a teacher, being a girlfriend, sister, friend?**

T Um, you don't grow up for your mom does see you as "that girl", like "that little girl of mine". And sometimes you don't want to go home, like I never wanted to

go this weekend. She'll call and say, "Oh, today you're not even calling." A guilt trip, you know? "I know, I was going to call you before I sleep" or you, you just have this conflict in terms of the decisions that you want to make. I'm thinking of doing, "No, don't do it this way, do it that way." You know? And with, with boyfriends it's, just, you just, sometimes you just have to be selfish. Because there is more, I sing for a band, ne? I was supposed to go to Durban, but he felt I'm choosing the band more than him. Okay, I got to consider what he said. I want to go to the Women's Conference. I thought, "Let's fight, but I'll do it later. I'm going." You have to go, because if you don't do that, they choose things that they want to do, and you will never stop them. But somehow, they've got a way to get through us. I don't know why.

I **And make you feel guilty if you don't follow that kind of pattern?**

T Hmm, hmm,. But you just have to be stubborn and say, "You know what? I'm doing this for myself" because you will be standing there, frustrated and saying, "You're refusing", and he'll be saying, "You're refusing me to go there", and then you're saying, "You had your own choices." So, even relationships, generally. Just to submit to your boyfriend, it's just work, because you can't even make decisions. You always go to the drawing board, which is him. I was thinking, "Ai, ai, ai, ai, I, …". So, yeah.

I **Did your mom have the same problem with your dad? Where she had to get a kind of a second opinion of what she should be doing, and the okay from him? Or yes, you can go ahead or you can't or whatever?**

T I don't think so. I don't think so. She's quite a very strong, you know these women who just think for themselves. Um, I don't know, though, with other things, I think, but most of the time I would see her, her deciding, like when she went back to school, she decided to go to school. And one of the things that I remember is when she got mad, when they fought, that's where she would take her books and study. So, because she was the provider and my dad lost his job, with the ego that my dad had, he left the house. They never got divorced, but they were separated. He left the house and felt that, "I'm not going to allow this woman to be working" for him. And then he left, and my mother stayed there. And my mother always said, "Guys, even when he dies, I will bury him." And then he died in his village, and then my mom went and took him. It's fine.

I **So you're saying she's very strong, independent woman?**

T Yeah, very, very independent. But I still feel that, then, their independence was again, was in conjunction with them wanting to get married. That feeling of, "Yeah, I'm married." I was telling her the other day that I feel if you have divorced your husband earlier, you should have been a better person than now.

But, because it was the union thing, going back, that's why you are where you are.

I **Uh, Teri, do you think we are living in a changing world, where men and women are increasingly regarded as equal in terms of family? You've mentioned that your mom was a little bit different. Your mom was very strong and independent and made her own decisions, without having to check if it was okay with your dad. What do you think?**

T I don't think we will ever be equal. I will, I would always feel, as spirits we are equal, but within this flesh, we will never be equal, for the fact that there's an elephant and there's an ant, there will never be that equality amongst us. But, I feel, with acknowledging and accepting each other that it's very possible, which embraces all the gifts that we have, our spiritual gifts, all those qualities that our parents tried to instil in us, the respect. Even, even when it's not gender-based. Just to understand that you have to respect, um, somebody. Instead, what I see, I see us working very hard, as women, in comparison to men. We're career women, we're raising kids. Sometimes you're having that guy who's having a lot of money, but he's not coming back home. He's going somewhere. You find, yeah, he's doing, he will provide the roof, he will provide the furniture, but okay, the woman is still on her toes, is, is still running around [snapping fingers]. So I don't think there'll be that equality. I think if we can maintain our position as women, that we are strong and it's okay for us to be strong, yet we are feminine, embrace that, that we will never be men, they still need us in their lives, and we need them. Much as we give them balance, they give us that, what do we get? We get a bit of comfort that they are there for us.

I **Yeah.**

T It's okay, but we don't lose our capabilities that we have. I think all the stereotypes are being removed now that your husband must work for you, yes, those are the things that you expect from him. But yeah, let us try to push it harder and do that for ourselves and appreciate that. But working hard and achieving whatever that we achieve shouldn't make us to lose this femininity within us, because when we start losing that, we're not attractive anymore. But when we keep that, when we keep that naïveness within us, when we keep that fragile personality within us, it makes us very interesting, because we're able to say, "Yeah, I've fallen down, but I'll rise." But when we stay there and say, "Yeah, I'm not going to fall", it's, it makes us to clutter, to, to run around. So I just, I just feel, let us be strong, it's within us, let us all the time embrace them, love them, and still be women. And enjoy it. Enjoy raising kids, and enjoy running around, because really, if they can lock this door and say, "Get your relaxation bit, I don't think we're going to go, because we're used to all that. I think so.

I **Teri, are there any other questions that I should have asked you? That would have thrown some light on the issues we are interested in, that is women teachers' lives? Do you think that there's anything else that I perhaps have missed out, and you would like to add?**

T I think it's very important that either as women or as teachers to always have mentors, even in schools, to shift our focus, to accept ourselves as who we are, as women. I'm saying as teachers, let's say from while our kids are being taught, they have LO. We have mentors, women, who will be coming to schools, let's say from grade A, to really attack the issues that women face. Ne? Our roles are changing all the time, which is my concern. You are in grade R, you are just a girl, you grow up, you go to grade seven, there are a lot of changes, your family expects you to change. You are in grade twelve, you're changing now, you're going to go to the university. Even your family expects you to change again. After university, you are working. They expect a baby, you're getting married to change again. You get to be a wife, you change again. You're 35, you're like, "Who am I, who am I? [laughter] We need, mentors who'll be telling us things will be changing in our lives, but we'll stay being who we are.

I **I know. I hear you, yes.**

T Yeah. Yeah.

I **Yes, if I ask you, do you have any mentors at the moment in school, for instance, you being the new head of department, do you have a mentor who's mentoring you, and who's helping, who's walking with you along this, along this path of being head of department?**

T No. No. No. No, no, no.

I **And you're saying that you would really like that?**

T Yeah. Holistically so, because even my career is being affected.

I **Okay.**

T You know? That's why most women, when, it doesn't matter you're a doctor, you're a teacher, you're a, when they retire, they get sick. They've been changing.

I **And they have not made provision for that time of retirement?**

T Yeah. Uh-hmm.

I **Provision, or rather psyching themselves up for that time of, of retirement?**

T Uh-hmm. They bought the pots, they are stainless steel. She's stuck with the pots, the kids are gone.

I Yes.

T So my whole point is that schools should provide that resource, while these kids are learning. They know there are going to be changes, but that doesn't mean they should change, or be confused. Guys are still guys: Grade R, they drive cars. Grade twelve, they drive cars, they even go to the play stations. If he's not fixing his bed, he's not fixing his bed. Um, he'll always protect you, even if he's your son, at twelve, "Mommy, don't go there! Don't go!" There's an element of protection. He's an elder, he's an elderly person, he'll always provide. He'll always play video games, at fifty! He doesn't change. With us, there is a lot of …

I Too many phases, you're saying, that we go through and to adapt to?

T Yeah. So you find yourself very confused, sometimes.

I Anyway, Teri, thank you very much for your time.

T Yeah, thanks, Selma.

I And thank you for your participation.

End of recording

DURATION: 69.21 mins
NATURE OF TRANSCRIPTION: Interview

Key: I Interviewer
P Respondent - Priscilla
s.l. sounds like

I Hi Priscilla.

P Hi.

I I really appreciate the fact that you could come and do this with me today. I know how busy you are. Anyway, the way we're going to do this is by going through the schedule question by question. Feel free to speak your mind about any matter, as long as or as short as you want it to be. If we're looking at the very first question, we're looking at your background information. My first question is, how long have you been a teacher?

P It's about, um, I'll say twelve years, eleven years. Uh, one of those years I left, and I travelled overseas for a year.

I What did you do, besides just travelling? Did you just travel?

P No, actually I was an au pair for a year …

I That's wonderful.

P … in the States, and I came back and then it's like ten years since then.

I And what did you do after you came back? Did you enjoy the experience, firstly …

P Definitely. I was twenty five; I was at a really good age. Um, so it was an experience I will never forget. I looked after two children, and I still felt I wasn't really prepared even though I was a teacher, but to actually look after, and become a parent, sort of thing, was an experience I'll never forget.

I Do you think at any one point you would encourage young girls to do something that you've done?

P Definitely. But I wouldn't encourage them to go at say just after school, you know, after matric. I think the age that I went at was the perfect time for me. I was a bit more matured I didn't take advantage of the freedom, because I realised how, how I could mess up my life. But at eighteen, you don't. So, twenty five was a good year for me.

I How long at this school? How long have you been a teacher at this school?

P Five years.

I Describe your current teaching assignment?

P Okay, I'm the coordinator of the grade twelve English. I have grade eights as well. I'm the LRC educator, the teacher rep there.

I I'm just looking at your teaching assignment, uh, you're talking about the grade eights and the grade twelve's …

P Twelve's.

I If we're going down, it says, how did you decide on becoming a teacher?

P Well, I didn't really decide on becoming a teacher. Coming from a relatively poor background, it wasn't an option to study. I got a bursary and I just took it.

I Okay.

P My intention was to work, because that's what we do. That was our future. We had to work to support the family. And my elder siblings did that. I got the opportunity, having a bursary, I just chose it because I got a bursary. But I haven't, I don't regret it, at all. So, it was a good choice …

I I'm glad to hear that. You've enjoyed it so far?

P Definitely.

I Did your parents influence you in any way?

P To become a teacher?

I Yes.

P No, no. Not …

I Like you said, it wasn't a choice. It was a matter of financial constraints.

P It wasn't a choice. It wasn't really a choice, yes.

I Was teaching a first career option? Again, I think you've answered it already.

P Yes. No, definitely not. I was, I'm very interested in anything in the medical field, with your body, and things like that. But again, it wasn't an option for me to pursue that. I enjoy art, so it, it wasn't even in my mind to, to follow something that I love to do.

I Have you not thought about possibly pursuing the art as a hobby?

P Pursuing it now? No, I do, I do it. I do charcoal sketches and things like that, but not, uh …

I Seriously.

P Yeah. And now I don't have time. So that goes out the window. [laughter]

I You talked about the medical field, you talked about the body, that you were really interested in it and very curious about that. Would going into the medical field have been a choice for you?

P Actually I studied, Bio in college, to teach Bio.

I Okay.

P But in my first year of teaching, I got an English post, and ever since then, I've been teaching English.

I Were you able to make the switch from Biology, having studied it, to teaching the English?

P Yeah, no. I think I would like to go back to teaching Bio, Biology, but I'm sort of settled.

I People come to teaching by different pathways Priscilla. What type of teaching preparation have you had? You've been at college, you said.

P Uh, college, uh, teaching practise. I think, actually being in a school and having to fend for yourself, that's the best experience. Or I don't think teaching prac or college can ever prepare you, prepare you for the real thing…

I The reality of teaching?

P The real, yeah.

I Do you think you were fairly ambitious when you went into teaching, as a career?

P In retrospect, maybe my personality wasn't… I think I'm good with the kids, socially, but I do get frustrated when they don't get it, you know? I don't know if that's every teacher, or is it just me, but I want to get them to, it's not possible for everyone to have As, but I want them to get it. You know what I mean? So I think, maybe a bit ambitious in thinking that I could even …

I If we're talking about a career pathway? Um, in terms of being a teacher, and then, perhaps, a head of department. Have you not thought about moving up the career ladder in any way?

P Okay, I really enjoy being in the classroom. You know, it may seem unambitious or things like that, but I wouldn't want to change that, I wouldn't. Not even for the money. Not even for any reason. I know my husband says, "You can make more changes in management than you can right now", but I feel I make more changes in individuals, the learners, where it counts. And I do, I, I'm very outspoken, I make changes, even though I'm not in management, I do that. But, being in the classroom is where I want to be. If I have to be ambitious, I'm going to get out of teaching, completely.

I Okay. What did you want to achieve when you first went into teaching?

P Um, I think more on a social level, than actually academically, because I know I can give people information. But my background was more to help, that is why I actually took a job in K W, because I wanted to make a difference. And I know it's sort of a cliché, "Oh I want to make a difference", but I think my parents… I have to give them that with the whole poverty and helping the poor, we had this organisation where we helped the poor… that they instilled that in me. And, I felt like if I'm going to make a difference, I'm going to make it in their lives more than the whole academic part.

I Did you enjoy teaching at K W?

P Definitely. I, actually, I enjoyed teaching, that's what I'm saying, the learners, but my aunt was the principal, and we clashed. We just did. That's why I left, I would never have left.

I When you say "clashed", what do you mean?

P She had a different, um …

I Approach?

P … approach, and I needed everything to be out there. I think principals have to hide a bit, that's their management skill. They can't show everything, they can't be totally open about everything, and I was on the SGB as well. So, what she would say to the teachers was completely different to what she and I understood , but I think honesty is obviously the best policy, if you can say that. And that's where we clashed. I would tell her, "But you're lying, you didn't say that." But our personalities clashed.

I What was your dream as a teacher?

P What is my dream?

I What is your dream, as a teacher?

P I understand that children have different levels, but I feel we shouldn't limit them. And then my dream is to get the child that is failing, to a B or a A. My dream is that every child passes well. Um, and I think after the whole discrimination, and we still have it in our school, my dream is that my black children, and I'm going to say my black children, because, they call me a bit of a racist, because I, and it's weird [laughter], because I tend to favour the black children, and I think my dream is that they should not be discriminated against, and I want total equality in our schools, especially our Indian schools, and it's not that way.

I You're talking about discrimination against a black child? Is that what you're saying?

P Yes, that's what I'm saying.

I So you are their, you feel that you are their custodian, in a way? [overlapping conversation 0:10:45].

P Oh, I, yeah, I would definitely want to remain that. And I want them to be able to stand up and not feel that… it's their right to be here. It's not the fact that they're

in a Indian school, that they should be ever so grateful. You know what I mean? It's their right to be here.

I So would you say it is still regarded as an Indian school or an ex-Indian school because …

P Yes.

I We've had complete integration with other races?

P No, it is, on paper, but in reality it's not. It's getting better, I have to say it's getting better, but I have children come to me and say, "Madam, this teacher said this, and it's okay because it's an Indian school", according to the children. Obviously it's not, but yeah.

I Have you addressed those concerns that you have?

P I have. Especially I feel like I can do that with the staff. I don't feel that I could tell another teacher, "You're being racist", but I could show how it's done, how you treat a child of a black background. Um, we had quite a few… I'm sort of looked at as a trouble maker. But I don't let things like this, I don't overlook those things. I will say it in a staff meeting, I will say, "You can't say 'they' or 'them'." And so, if I can teach the teachers how to treat other teachers, then maybe it will ripple down to the children.

I That's good. Question C follows 12 B. What is your dream, as a teacher, and do you still feel the same, but when I said, what was your dream as a teacher, you said, "What is your dream as a teacher." [overlapping conversation 0:12:36].

P Yeah. It will always be the same, yeah.

I Yes, and I hope that you are successful in whatever you endeavour. Because at the end of the day we are here to protect and to nurture, if nothing else.

P Yes.

I Have there been obstacles to your chosen career development? Um, you have said that you're not planning to go into management, because you feel that being in the classroom, you could make a difference at classroom level, rather than management. Because you've been thinking of it, in that way, has it never ever crossed your mind to actually rise in the ranks [overlapping conversation 0:13:21]?

P You may look at it as rising, and I don't. I don't. I think, for me, this is the height of what I want to be. It's not being "not ambitious"; it's not that I'm complacent, because I'm not. Every year changes for me, I make different, different differences. You know what I mean? Uh, but management is not a call, not my calling, not something I want to do.

I Okay. What do you feel, presently, about the idea of teaching as a career for women?

P I have a problem with you saying "for women", because I don't think that we should ever, uh, say it's, I know, in this school, it's sort of a finishing school for Muslim women, that, can I say that? [laughter] Um, purely because most of the female teachers, Muslim female teachers, they teach until they have children, and then they leave. So, I don't think that it should be that way. I don't think that it should be a profession for women. I know you're going to say that, or people may say that, "Oh, you get to go back to your children early", uh, but not really. Because, when I am at home, although I fully, I put all my concentration, all my time on my children, I still feel like I need to do, there's so many things that I have to do, with school, with regards to school, so it's not really a profession that would suit just women.

I If I'm looking at the numbers of women in the teaching profession, for instance, women will always outweigh the men in terms of sheer volume of members.

P Okay.

I You've already said that when you get home you can spend more time with the children so the next question then asks, does teaching offer you a good fit, as a career? So, would you say, "Yes it does, no it doesn't?" Because you've already said that, although you spend time with your children, you're still concentrating on, you're still focusing on work.

P Yeah. But, the other thing is that I do get frustrated at school, I do uh, because teaching, especially in a high school, is very stressful. And if it's a good profession for women, and we're going to go home, and we're going to be with our children, I don't think that we can say that. Because when I go home, I'm still stressed. I don't have the time, I probably have the time, but I don't have the energy to fully give my children that attention that they need, and to give my husband that attention, because I'm stressed and I'm tired. Um, most of the time, I'm exhausted after the day.

I If I say to you that your school times will allow you to be at home, and you are saying, "I'm present physically …" but you're not really …

P Yeah, but I'm too tired to really give them valuable attention.

I Okay. How long do you plan to stay in teaching, Priscilla?

P Well, I won't go up to management. I won't go into a private school, purely my whole idea of what I want to do… I think I'd probably stay in another ten years, and then I would like to do something in charity, some charity organisation, and run my own charity organisation.

I Do you do any of that in school presently?

P Yes, with my LRC we do that all the time. We've raised funds for the, is it Haiti, the disaster area?

I Yes. It is.

P Uh, we do for the old age home, and I enjoy that. So if I'm going to change I'm going to do something in that.

I Okay. Will family influence your plans in any way? Will your family influence your plans in any way?

P I think financially if it does, if I have to restructure my whole financial situation, I think that's what's going to change. I'm going to get out of teaching, to provide for my family. That's the only reason why I would. Um, I think, also, right now I want to go into a primary school, to be with my, my son. So if that's going to change, it's going to be because I want to be with my son. He's going to be in grade one, so I'm going to change there. Um, but if they're older, I'd probably do something else, yeah.

I If planning to leave teaching, what would it take to keep you in teaching longer?

P What would it take? Like I said, the financial situation. If I'm going to leave, I love this job, but if I'm going to leave, it's going to be to provide for my family.

I If I ask you, do you have, or had any mentors, and if yes, how did they assist you?

P Um, well, I can't say I've had many in K W, right? Um, I don't know. I don't know. It was a very unorganised school. Uh, we just did, I just did what I thought was supposed to be done. You know what I mean?

I Was that your first teaching assignment?

P Yes. My HOD, I don't know if you know her. Uh, she is a brilliant manager. She allows you to take the reigns from her. I've learnt so much from her. Especially teaching Biology and then coming into English, I think she's taught me invaluable lessons and so she's definitely one of my mentors. Mr T. I have to say that. His manner, the fact that, the one thing about him is, I truly feel he cared about the children, as much as he would scream at them. At the end of the day, when I sat in his office, I felt that he cared about the children. So, to me that was, maybe some of his methods, like hitting the children, because I don't, I don't agree with that. But I know that he did it for their good for their own good, and, so that's one thing I learnt from them, from him, is that I have to love them; I have to care about them enough to say, "They're mine." You know?

I You say that you don't agree with someone hitting a child, and I do know that he's retired. Uh, how else would you discipline a child, if you had to? If you had to, if you were perhaps in his position?

P You know my husband says I emotionally abuse the children, [laughter] but I think I have that way, and I have a, a "look". That even my matrics, I have good, very good discipline. I have to be, that's one thing I do have, very good discipline, for some reason. And I think children can get that. That, you're doing it for their own good. And I have a "look" that, well, my children at home will also tell you about that. But I don't know what it is, but I don't hit the children. It's not, it's a short-term solution, and if I hit them, I am demeaning them and that, in itself, eventually will… they wouldn't respond to it. And I do, emotionally abuse them and tell them how their lives will be forever affected by talking in the class. [laughter]

I Do you think that anybody else in your school uses corporal punishment?

P Well, I do. I think they do.

I They do? Has anything been reported? [overlapping conversation 0:22:22]?

P Um, there has been, I wouldn't say who they are, but yeah, there have been. Uh, it was also in the newspaper, one of the teachers. But in K W it was not reported, but it was the only form of punishment, and to a point of actually abusing the children, where you'd have children with dislocated shoulders, and I mean really badly disciplined. But the parents would not say anything, because that was their way of disciplining their children. And they would tell you, "I want you to hit my child". So yeah.

I So many of them [overlapping conversation 0:23:05]?

P I'm sure we have it in this school, but not as bad as.

I Has teaching been what you expected? And if not, why not?

P Um, expected when I was in college? What I, I thought it would be? Definitely. Especially, I think, for me, I looked at my teachers and I really respected them and I admired them, and I thought it was such a, not just a noble profession, but a status profession. I mean, I walked in the mall, or wherever and I looked at my teacher and, "I know him!", you know? I really respected them, but as far as respect is concerned, the children don't have that anymore. They don't look at you with that same sense of respect that we had for our teachers. Um, well even, if I have to talk about my parents, or my family members, my one sister, the older one would say, "Oh, my sister's a teacher, wow." And she'd brag about it. But my other sister would, "Why didn't you get out of it, there's no money." "What?" "You're not successful." And I'd say, "I am. You have no idea how successful I am". Uh, she constantly finds me jobs, that I could be more successful, according to her. And I think that the children also feel that, that we're not successful.

I In financial terms?

P And, and I think that is what success is to them. So I can say financially I'm not successful, but according to the children that makes up what a successful person is. So they look at you, and you're not a success.

I Okay.

P So that's the one thing that I didn't expect, coming into teaching. But everything else, I expected it to be difficult. I expected a lot of work. It's increased, so maybe that's something I didn't expect.

I If you could change your teaching assignment in any way, how would you change it? Your teaching assignment would be what you're doing currently.

P Um, I'm not really comfortable with the grade eights. I feel coming down to their level is difficult for me, and maybe how can I say, uh, I'm doing a disservice to them, purely because I feel that it's an advantage to them, I'm sort of bringing up their standard, but sometimes I feel I need to bring my standards down for them. The grade eights, I would change that.

I You talked about your son going to primary school, and you would like to move into primary school. Don't you think that would be a big adjustment?

P Yeah, I know, but I'm going to move to PE …

I **Yes.**

P … and so it's a different place. I wouldn't want to just place my child in a school and not have some control over that. And if that's the adjustment I'm going to have to make, I'm going to have to do that.

I **Are you looking forward to your move to PE?**

P It's getting closer, so I'm a bit apprehensive, but we decided, and we're going to do it.

I **Okay. Describe the challenges you face with the current educational changes?**

P You know …

I **And I'm saying "current", with the intensification of work, with the OBE coming in, but recently they've sort of said that OBE [overlapping conversation 0:27:13].**

P They've sort of discussed the OBE yeah.

I **Now with all the work, what did you feel, what were the challenges that you faced?**

P The challenge for me was, I enjoyed the OBE system. I enjoyed the discussion, the group work, it worked for me. And I'm not, I'm sure it didn't work for many teachers, but it worked for me. I liked the whole pupil interaction; I liked the fact that they had to do more than what I had to do. You know what I mean? Um, and to make them more independent, I like that. And then it had to change. And, not much, because I didn't really change my teaching methods, or change my whole way of teaching. Um, as far as the paperwork was concerned, it was ridiculous. Where I could have done more with actually teaching, I spent on the paperwork. And then they cut it down. When I just got used to the whole idea of it, sorted myself out, you can't do that. And then it changed, and then we had to, I had to sort of get used to a new system. So, that, that constant changing, it does something to your teaching and your ability. So, I think that was …

I **And what about the assessments, at that time?**

P You know, I do the same amount of work, because I felt that I still want to develop the children, but I choose now what I want to give to the department or use as the assessment, which hasn't changed much for me, because I'm still

doing, if it was nineteen assessments, I still do nineteen assessments, and give the children the opportunity to choose what they want to …

I **Has it become overwhelming, in any way, the assessing and the marking and …**

P Initially it was, but, like I said, you get used to it, because you have to do it. There's no going around doing that work. But it seems to me I'm a bit more comfortable with it right now, because I've been doing it for a while now.

I **Okay. Give me an example of a positive experience you had of school change. I think you said that you've enjoyed the OBE?**

P Yeah.

I **So that would be a positive experience for you?**

P Yeah.

I **Give me a negative experience you've had. I think you've already done that when you said that the negative experience for you was the marking, and …**

P Yeah, yeah.

I **Well, the workload. [overlapping conversation 0:29:58].**

P The workload. Yeah. And the amount of children. The large learner- teacher ratio.

I **Yes.**

P I think that I could do so much more if I had less children in a class. I could be more effective, really make changes.

I **Does your professional time encroach on your private time?**

P Definitely.

I **[overlapping conversation 0:30:34].**

P All the time, all the time. I mean weekends are not, totally, my own. I mean, I mark, or I'm prepping, or I'm finding if there's a learner that's not, responding to something, I'm thinking about it constantly. So, all the time. I can't, I can't really separate myself. I try, when I leave at, say, three o' clock, I try to say,

"Okay, this is my children's time." But I, while I'm busy with them, or cooking, I'm still thinking about something that happened, what I got to do, so yeah, all the time.

I **You are saying that there doesn't seem to be a cut-off point for you, because …**

P No.

I **… it's there, it's in the background, it's there all the time.**

P All the time, yeah.

I **How many hours do you spend a day on your various teaching activities, just roughly?**

P Uh, well it's the twelve, I think it's ten hours in school. I'm going to say ..Is it seven?

I **It's seven or eight hours.**

P Okay, eight hours. Uh, and then at night, I take about two hours, and this is after ten. It's two hours prepping, getting myself sorted out for the next day. And, um, so that's about ten, I'm going to say eleven hours.

I **So you start working after ten o' clock at home?**

P At night, yeah.

I **At night.**

P That is the only real time I can …

I **So it's your time and …**

P Yes, the children are settled, everybody's fed … [laughter]

I **And they're out of your way?**

P Yeah.

I **Now are you rested enough the next day, then if you're having …?**

P I've grown so used to it that I can't really say I'm tired in the morning, because you just carry on every day. You get used to it. I've grown so used to it, that it doesn't really affect, maybe, I mean, it has to be affecting me some way, but I don't really notice it.

I Because you say you're constantly exhausted, as well?

P Hmm. Yeah.

I I understand that your role is to teach. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have?

P I am a counsellor at the school, I've been for courses. I don't think I'm really qualified as a counsellor, but I'm a good listener, so I think that's one of the, um, positives and why I chosen to be a counsellor. And I think I'm, I'm very approachable, so, uh, the kids find it easy to talk to me. That's one of my responsibilities. Or …

I You said that you were involved with the LRC, Is it?

P Yeah, I'm busy with the LRC. I think why I've been chosen to do those things, because the pupils relate well to me. So yeah.

I That says you're good.

P Yeah, no, I think, it's just my personality.

I Which of these responsibilities do you find particularly challenging, or difficult and why?

P The LRC, right now, for me, with my matrics, and getting all the portfolio work done, and right now, I think it wasn't such a good year to take that responsibility on, because I would really like to have done a good job. Um, I know I don't give the LRC my full attention, but I think I've sort of, developed the members enough to handle it on their own, but I would really like to have done more with it, but I can't, because of my other responsibilities.

I How do you feel about the demands made upon you?

P I think, uh, as far as?

I As far as your extra duties are concerned, besides the teaching?

P You know we are not given a choice, we don't, we can't volunteer. It is told that you have to be on the matric ball committee, and you have to do it. Those are certain duties, and there's sport, and there's cluster meetings, and there's so many things that we have to do, it does become overwhelming.

I And you have a problem to juggle all of these?

P Everything, yeah.

I Think about the other aspects of your life, as a wife, mother, friend, member of the community, and reflect how you experience these, in relation to your career as a teacher? But you've already said that you have a problem with the time, that you just don't have the time to do what you would like to do.

P Uh-huh. Yes. I think, also it does affect my marriage, because I'm a bit of a perfectionist, and I can't say no. Excuse me. I have this problem with saying no. And so my husband constantly I can't say no to him, but I definitely can't say no. I'm collecting money, or raising funds for somebody, and it all sort of stems from school. Like a teacher will tell me, that this, this organisation wants to raise money for this child that's sick, and it becomes my responsibility. It definitely has affected my marriage, in that I really don't have so much time to spend with my husband, especially since I work after ten. Yeah.

I And as a mother?

P You know, I'm a bit obsessive with my children. I try to do their homework, and do extra work with them. And I know that he is at school, my son's at school, and they're sorting him out, but I try to do it, and besides, I'm a teacher: I have to do extra work with him. Um, get him to karate, or, and it's very stressful, because you look at other parents and you say, "Oh, they're taking their children for karate, shouldn't I do that?" Or, you know? So it does become a bit, um …

I So what is he involved with, presently, your little son?

P He does karate, he does play ball, like a gymnastic thing, we wanted to get him into music, because he's young, but his fingers aren't developed. [laughter] You know, so it is, trying to get him a good start in life, and you know, prepare him, it is quite stressful …

I And as a member of the community?

P I think any teacher, you don't have to do much in your community, because you are doing everyday community service, so …

I **What aspects of your work do you feel you have the power to change, and what aspects do you feel powerless about? You can just give me a, some examples.**

P I think there's really nothing that I cannot change. I mean I had a say in the curriculum, when we had the core training sessions. I voiced my opinion. I think there are lots of avenues that you can, besides being in management, you, as a teacher, as a level one teacher, you can make a difference in most of those aspects of teaching.

I **Are there any aspects you feel powerless about?**

P I think, the student population. I would like to get more SGB teachers, but it's not in my power to do that. I would like to raise funds to get them that's the only way I can make a difference. Um, but as far as school fees are concerned, I'd like to raise it, but I can't do that by myself, and I think school fees will give us that opportunity to have less pupils in the class, and have more facilities, you know? Yeah.

I **How does the structure of the institution affect your power to effect change? And are there contradictions?**

P [unclear – background noise 0:40:03].

I **The structure would be your hierarchy.**

P As far as this school is concerned, the lowest levels have a say in the running of the school. My principal, the previous one, and this one, has an open door policy, and we have workshops and meetings, about dress code, we have so many, that's another thing, we have so many meetings and workshops, we address everything …

I **Okay.**

P … and so, and everybody is allowed to voice their opinion and make a change.

I **Have you encountered a lot of opposition, especially as a woman? And, if so, could you please elaborate? In your school?**

P As far as discipline is concerned, it's always, and I think it's causing more damage than any good, the female teachers always call the male teachers to sort out the discipline. And once the children get a hold of that, they won't respect us, you know, as female teachers.

I Have you encountered a lot of opposition, especially as a woman?

P Okay. Not really, um, I feel that, like you said, there's so many females running the whole scene here that we can't, we don't. The other thing is, females have a tendency to undermine each other. I haven't really found an obstacle with males. We can, we tend to get what we want when it comes to the male species. But, as far as women are concerned we don't stand together. And so, many times you, I don't know what it is, I don't know what it is, there's lots of conflicts between women, where maybe, and I think it's also because women want to get what they want. And they want it their way, and so, if any other woman has a different suggestion, you want to keep it your way. You know what I mean? So, yeah, as far as, other women, I have, yeah.

I So there are obstacles in terms of, um, the relationships amongst women on the staff …

P Yeah.

I … among them, from men to women?

P And I think, also, we have to prove ourselves more often than men do. Especially, even with each other, we have to prove ourselves, so yeah.

I Principals respond differently to staff members trying to effect change. I am interested in understanding how your principal understands your attempt to improve, or to effect change?

P Mr T he was old school, so anything, anything modern, anything that the learners would want, and also, I am a younger teacher, I would want to implement, there was quite a few obstacles, and that was him. He had a set way of doing a thing, and it worked, but you need to have change. Um, with our new principal, she's more open to change. Uh, Mr T would say no, I'll say, "But can, let me just explain it to you, what I'm saying…", "No.", "But...", and then he'd say, "No." But I understood where he was coming from. I understood that, with experience, he knew better. Um, but with our new principal, she's open to change.

I How long is she here now?

P Well, she was a deputy for many years, and now she's the acting principal.

I Does anyone monitor what you're teaching? If so, who and how?

P You know, I always say there's so many moderation, especially at this school. KW not. But this school, and it's good, because it keeps you in check. You know

what I mean? Sometimes you want to slack off a bit, but you never get the opportunity, especially in this school. Um, we have coordinators …

I **Yes, you mentioned you're the coordinator for the English.**

P Right. I will check the matric teachers, the English teachers. I will report to my HOD, she will check up on them as well. So it's, there, it's, its different levels of monitoring. She reports to the principal and it goes on.

I **So you do have a deputy or you have the head of department [overlapping conversation 0:45:21]?**

P Well now, my HOD is now the deputy, yeah.

I **So there is a certain, there is definitely an amount of monitoring?**

P I think way too much. In fact, sometimes it becomes a bit tedious, because I've checked it and somebody needs to check it again, and that person's checked it, and somebody needs to check it. And then, it's a bit frustrating, because I need to get the work done and I have to have some three, four people checking it, when it's been checked already.

I **Are teachers in your school collegial and cooperative?**

P Are they?

I **Are they collegial? Are they cooperative?**

P Um …

I **You talked about the kind of conflict that you experience with women.**

P Generally? It's a very smooth running school. I don't know if I feel this way because of my past experiences, but I feel that everything gets done, even if it is because it's being checked so often. Even if, it gets done on time, because it's being monitored, and someone reminds you and makes sure that the work gets done. So, even if you're not cooperative, you have to be.

I **How about talking with other teachers? Do you often talk with other teachers? And what kinds …**

P Socially?

I Yes, in what kinds of situations? Not just socially? And what do you talk about? Outside of a meeting perhaps?

P Mr T always said he doesn't like corridor talking. If you have something to say, you say it to him but it happens. Outside of meetings we normally discuss what happened in the meeting. As far as dress code is concerned, discipline, our duties, constantly we break it apart. We say, "Okay, so why must it be that way?" And yeah, we do that.

I You do that?

P Hmm. And then, socially, I mean as much as there's obstacles working together, as women, when we get together we socialise. We can talk about our children, we can talk about life in general, we can talk about the kids at school. Everybody seems to be approachable. And I think it's also very cathartic, because when we have opportunities to talk about something, other than school, we take it. And we vent, we'll have teachers crying in the staff room, and there'll be so many other teachers that have a solution. You know, so it's good.

I Is there any kind of peer teaching going on in your school?

P As far as my HOD is concerned, she constantly encourages that. She will do it herself, or if you have a problem, she'll say, "Okay, madam C, you know more about discipline. I want you to go to that teacher and advise her." And so I know that it's not undermining me. When somebody comes and says to me, "Okay, you know what? I have this idea, and this is what's happening in my classroom", I know it's just a suggestion; it's just a way of helping me. And I don't think when I do that to other teachers, if I go into a class and I talk to the class, it's just peer development.

I Do teachers actually observe each other's lessons?

P Yes, we do. When we have IQMS we have peers that come into our classes and sometimes, if it's a really good lesson, we discuss it with the other, not just the person that observed the lesson. We'll discuss it in our English department meetings, and, "This is what she did, and maybe you can use it." So yeah, we do that. Maybe you haven't observed it, but someone has told you about it.

I So you do find it very …

P Yeah.

I How do you feel about the IQMS and the inspections that you have?

P Just, sometimes I want to be honest, but this is my friend. I want to say "Madam W, or whoever, you are not doing a good job. You know that lesson was terrible." I want to tell her, but I'm going to sort of soften it a bit, and maybe not develop her the way I want to, because she's my friend. And I think, the one thing you could do, is sort of swap teachers, to go into another school, and be brutally honest, and say, "You know what, I'm not insulting you, but this is what I've noticed." I think that would be better, we're very subjective ...

I Do you experience any kind of tension before an inspection?

P For me, I do, I think any time you're being observed is stressful. Once I'm into the lesson I forget my HOD, or the principal is sitting in.

I Have you had nice experiences with the appraisals then?

P Yes, I did, and very good development coming from it. Some, things that I've never noticed I say, and they bring it to my attention, and I've changed it. They have noticed that I've asked the children says to me, 'Do you understand?' very often." And I asked the children, "Do I say that?" They say, "Yes, madam, you say it all the time!" and I'd change it.

I I think many of us are prone to ask that question, "Do you understand?" because we want to know …

P Yeah.

I … we want to know that they've understood this and they've grasped whatever you're teaching, actually.

P Yeah.

I Do you feel you are able to talk about any concerns with regard to the changes and its impact on you? Changes, I'm talking about school changes? Are you able to talk to your colleagues about it? Y

P Yeah, no we do. We do. We complain. The one problem I have is that, because it has to be done, that, even if we say to my HOD and she tells the principal and it goes up, ultimately it has to get done. So, if they come to us and say, "We need to have your marks tomorrow", and I say, "No, it's too short notice, I can't do it, I'm not going to do it" my HOD will say, "I understand what you're saying", but nothing gets done. No-one will stand up and say, "Okay, madam C. I'm going to tell the department we're not sending it, because it's too short notice." Because they have to cover their back and whatever, it has to get done. And she says, "Okay, just do it, you have to do it." So, I have a problem with that, where as

much as I can say there's a problem and voice my opinion, nothing gets done, really.

I So it's just a matter of adhering to the instruction?

P Hmm.

I Okay. If I'm looking at your domestic, your personal situation, what effect do you think having children or not, and being in a career, has on women's careers in teaching? Please respond with reference to your situation.

P It's made it more difficult. I think when I was single and I was a teacher, it was fun. I could really get involved with the children; do more with them, with the school kids. Now, I have to say to myself, "I'm going for parents' meeting, where am I going to leave my children?" Not, "What can I tell the parents? What, how can I make a difference in them?" I'm concentrating more of how can I manage this, how can I schedule this into my life with my children. And parents' meetings are always on a Saturday, so to find, babysitters, or even to get my husband to do it, it's a problem. But it has become more difficult, having children. I think the single teachers, or the unmarried teachers in the staff will find it better.

I How have you managed to cope with balancing your career and your private life?

P I haven't really [laughter], found a balance yet, but holidays, and if I set it aside for my children, that's time for my children. I don't care what, I don't care what comes up, what's due, I'm going to just, if I have to go away to Durban, I don't take anything with me. That time is for my children. But other than that it's difficult to balance it, because things need to get done in school, and I need to get things done with my kids.

I Do you want to say something about the stress factors in your life? And if any, how do you deal with them?

P For me, and I think it's become a habit, like I've developed a habit of just putting… my husband says that I'm a very low maintenance woman. I don't shop, there's certain things that women do, massages, it doesn't even occur to me to do it. He says, I'm very low maintenance in that respect. But that's what I do; I put myself last. I say, "If I can do everything else, then I can sort myself out later." You know what I mean? The whole stress thing is I've begun to put my children after school. I've put schoolwork and getting things done first, and then my children will get what's left. And I know it's bad but this is my job and I feel that I can make it up to them, but I can't do it when it comes to school. So, it's

stressful, because then I have to find time to make it up to my children. So, yeah, that's how I sort out my stress level. What's immediate? What do I need to do first? If the matric marks are due, and Ethan wants to go to the movies, I need to do what's more important. I know that's more important, but I have to prioritise.

I So you will actually say that the marks are due and you have to get your marks organised?

P Yeah.

I Do you regard your job as equal, in status, to your spouse's work?

P Definitely. He gets more money, but my work is just as important. Uh, he was a teacher, so I don't have such a problem with him realising how stressful and how important what I have to do is. But there are times where he feels that, "I need to bring in more money, so maybe you should get something else." Or, you know. But I feel that what I'm doing is something I love, and money's not a issue to me.

I Why did he leave teaching?

P Because he wanted another child, and I told him we wouldn't be able to afford it, on a teacher's salary, for me to do the best I possibly can for my children, we wouldn't be able to have two children on it.

I Is he happy where he is?

P No, he loves teaching. He loves it. And we talk about it all the time and now I regret forcing him to leave, because I see how miserable he is at his job. But, if he needs to leave, it would be fine with me. We'd find a way, now. Now I realise that you can have two children and be a teacher.

I Yes, and be a teacher. What was he teaching?

P Biology. We were in the college together.

I Is that so?

P Yeah.

I Okay. What has he said when you've encouraged him to return?

P We have already created a lifestyle, with him having this job. And as much as he'd like to, he's made that sacrifice. That, now, it's for the kids and for the lifestyle we've created now.

I What contribution does your income make to the family budget?

P [laughter] You know, we're very good at that, why we can just up and leave and go to PE, we don't have any bonds, or loans. I think we haven't really, we're married for six years, but we haven't really established ourselves. We have two cars, but one is paid off. And so we don't have a lot of commitments here. What is the question again?

I What contribution does your income make to the family budget?

P So it's not that we have lots of expenses, so I can't really say that it doesn't make a contribution, because, we were just talking about it. At the end of the month we still have quite a considerable amount left.

I So it does allow you a certain lifestyle?

P Yeah, yeah.

I And it's your contribution that helps you to do this?

P Yes. Hmm. But I'm saying even if I didn't have it, we'd be okay. We'd be okay. So money, to me, is not an issue, really. It was when I thought about my child, having another child and thinking about how we're going to support the child, and also, my background, of coming from a really poor background, I was thinking, no, we had to, but right now it's not too important to me, and for him to come back, wouldn't make much of a difference to me.

I Because you'll work around that?

P Yeah, we could, we could work around it.

I Where do conflicts of role and priority occur?

P Uh, within my family?

I Yes, school, family, mother …

P Sometimes, because of school obligations and school responsibilities, my husband has to take on that that role that I'm supposed to. You know, look after the kids. If he had to do it I would be there. I don't want us to define our roles as, I am the mother and you're the father, and I have to be more with the kids and you can work. I don't want us to have that, so we're very equal. If you're bathing the kids, I'm going to be cooking. If you're cooking, I'll do the bathing

of the kids. You know? So it's not really, our roles seem to change constantly. As far as teaching is concerned, I can't really say that I always want to have a certain role. I'd like to change my roles and I think I'm a very flexible person. I can do that.

I So what you're saying is that there's an equal sharing of responsibilities at home?

P Yeah, yes, definitely.

I And it's by mutual agreement as well?

P Yes.

I Do you think we are living in a changing world, where men and women are increasingly regarded as equal in terms of family?

P I would like to think so. I would like it to be that way. I still have friends my age look at me and say, "You let him change the baby's napkin?", which is surprising to me, because I, I feel like we've come so far that girls my age should be saying, "Yes, wow, okay, good" You know what I mean? But they still, "I could never do that. I could never tell my husband to do something like that." And I think as much it comes from our parents, I know my mother tells me, "You know, you need to go and dish up for your husband", and I would say, "He can do it himself." I have, sort of, rebelled against what my mother says, because I've seen how her relationship… she does everything for my father. I'm sure there are so many girls my age that followed in their mothers' way.

I Footsteps, yes.

P Yeah.

I Are there any other questions that I should have asked you that would have thrown some light on these issues we are interested in? That is women teachers' lives? Is there something that you would like to add to it?

P Hmmm, I know it's going to sound ridiculous, but I have that hormonal issue. There are times when my hormones and that part of me really does affect my teaching, affects my relationship with other teachers, it affects my conflict resolution, affects my whole life, in general, how I deal with the stress, and I think for us to just not address it that would be sad, because that's what makes up a woman, all those little things. I think older women, going through menopause, it's an issue. It affects the way you deal with things, especially in the school environment. So, yeah.

I **It does, yes. That was one thing …**

P One thing.

I **… that you would have actually liked to have added in?**

P Hmm.

I **What about your students, then?**

P Excuse me?

I **What about your students? You're talking about how your hormonal levels …**

P Yes, and how, especially their puberty, and how they're handling it, and you know, things like ...

I **So you would have lots more empathy for students [overlapping conversation 1:05:29]?**

P Yes, definitely, definitely. I think different generations, we have to start changing with that. I mean, we can't, every generation blames the one before, but I feel like the youth have so much to offer, so much to teach us, so much that we can get, instead of saying they're a hopeless generation. You know, we should start looking at what they have to offer, and maybe, if you make them valuable, they'll start contributing more.

I **And what about the teaching, the women teachers in your school? You talked about different generations, how would you perceive that?**

P You know, that's a big problem for me, we have older female teachers, that's why I'm saying we should look at the younger generation and accept some of their valuable contributions, where, in teaching in our school, the older female teachers are so set in their ways and they believe that this is, especially, if I have to take one thing that gets to me, it's the whole dress issue. Women, modern women, or younger generation are more liberal, I'm not saying less modest, but I'm saying more liberal in their dressing, more, confident in what they wear, and it's not looked as confidence, it's looked as, "How can she possibly wear that to school?" You know what I mean? I think, for me, I would really want the older teachers, older, female teachers to be more tolerant and more accepting of the younger generation.

I **The young teachers [overlapping conversation 1:07:42]?**

P No, the younger teachers.

I **Do you think it's a general view of younger teachers on your staff?**

P Yeah, no, definitely. I think, especially when the younger teachers would say something, it wouldn't be valued, because of their age. You know, it wouldn't be considered, because of their age. "I know better, we've always done it this way", and, or "What makes you think that what you're saying is going to make it better?" So I think if older teachers, older female teachers start becoming more accepting of younger female teachers, it will really make a difference. I'm not that young, compared to the other teachers in the school, I would be considered a older teacher, but I do that. I value what they have to say, and sometimes it may not be feasible, but I sort of encourage it. I say, "No, you're right", or "I understand where you're coming from, but I do it this way. What do you think?" But, older teachers, "No, it's supposed to be done this way, it's always been done this way, and so it's going to be done this way. That's it." [laughter]

I **Okay, is there anything else that you would like to add, Priscilla?**

P No, I, I think that's it.

I **Anyway, thank you very much.**

P You're welcome.

End of recording

DURATION: 99.28 mins
NATURE OF TRANSCRIPTION: Interview

Key: I Interviewer
P Respondent - Fiona
s.l. sounds like

I Hi Fiona.

F Hello. Hi, Selma.

I And thank you for making the time to come and see me.

F It's okay.

I I really, really do appreciate the sacrifice you made. Let's just get straight into the interview, I know that you have time constraints, we're going question by question. The background information to your teaching career - how long have you been a teacher?

F Nineteen years, this year.

I And how long at this particular school?

F Sixteen of those years, yeah, at this school.

I Describe your current teaching assignment?

F I teach English grade twelve, and I've got grade eleven classes as well. Home language.

I How did you decide on becoming a teacher? Did your parents influence you?

F Not at all it was just, we had very few options. So it was teaching, nursing, and then the, the guys of our generation went into IT. So teaching was just kind of a natural, you know if you didn't want to go into the work environment. And so it was actually not a choice at all.

I Was teaching your first career option? If not, what were the other career choices?

F I would have preferred to being, to be a psychologist, but there were no funds at that, at that time. So the cheapest option was to go to teachers' college, where you got a bursary. And so my parents couldn't afford university fees at that time. And, because the government offered a bursary at that time, it was the easiest option, financially, to go and study.

I People come to teaching by different pathways. What type of teacher preparation have you had? Did you go to university? To college, like you said? You know, you went to college because there was a bursary available?

F Yeah. I spent four years at college. That was the year they introduced the Higher Diploma in Education, so, it was the first four-year course that we, that we, that we were exposed to, shall I say. So I did four years at teachers' college, and then I studied part-time, wha-, I went into teaching. And whilst I was teaching, I studied at RAU at that time. So I did evening classes, which was hectic, because I was a mother at that time, and had a, a job and so, to juggle all of that was difficult, but I did that.

I So you're saying that you went to college, and did you complete your teachers' degree?

F Yes.

I So you were just upgrading your qualifications?

F No, I, I received a teachers' diploma …

I Okay, yes.

F … um, which was a four year teachers' diploma, and I did it, yeah, just, not to really upgrade myself, because you weren't getting any monthly compensation for that, it was just personal, to go and complete my degree. You know? Because it was almost as though, with the university, with the college credits, you had almost three quarters of a degree. So it was a matter of just going to do two or three extra courses and then getting your degree.

I Do you think you were fairly ambitious when you went into teaching as a career?

F Not at all, not at all. [laughter] I had absolutely no ambition to further myself in the teaching profession, I had no ambition at all. And I think it stems from how, um, you know, very little we were exposed to in our schooling. We didn't have any guidance, career guidance, I had no idea what my aptitudes were. Um, I had absolutely no idea of what the world held out there. I knew teaching, I knew nursing, because my mom was a nurse, and that was the only careers I thought available, and air hostess. So I had no ambition at all. [laughter]

I What did you want to achieve?

F In teaching?

I Yes.

F I actually didn't want to stay in teaching very long. I thought there was just, while my kids were small, I would have the time to see to them. So, I kind of begrudgingly, I taught for ten of those years in a very begrudging fashion. I hated the environment; rather well I won't say I hated it, I despised the conditions I was working under. It almost, it was almost embarrassing to tell people I was a teacher. You know? I mean, my classroom's always dusty and dirty, the environment is just, not pretty, shall I say. And then, I was, I think those factors kind of embarrassed me, coupled with the money that we were earning. And until later, I learned to actually look at this thing through different eyes, you know? But for the first twelve years, I taught very begrudgingly. I was resentful of my conditions, I was resentful of what I was earning, and so I really, I must be honest, I didn't try my best. I didn't try to do well, as a teacher. I did what I had to do, I did my job.

I So the status of the teaching profession bothered you?

F Terribly. Terribly. It held no promise of anything better, it just actually became worse. I think when I started teaching, we had fewer periods, fewer classes, you know, fewer students, and you really could afford to have a life, or do something with your life, besides being exhausted from the teaching. And then it just became so overwhelming, the workload, you know after about five years, I would say that the workload almost trebled, in a sense. It was, so what it left me was drained, and physically and emotionally and mentally drained, at the end of the day. So I, I actually feel like my life came to a standstill as a result of getting so overwhelmed by the terrible and immense pressure of being in the class, and, and having so many children and taking work home, and never feeling that you've quite completed your work. Even weekends; on a Sunday go home and worry about marking. You know? And everybody would be relaxing and I'd be thinking about going to prepare and mark, to be ready for Monday. So it's detracted from my life, in my personal life, a great deal. And I did feel, for many years, a lot of resentment about that. You know, it was just all that it was, and it was benefiting me nothing, in terms of my lifestyle. I wasn't growing; I could not afford, in fact, I was going backward in a sense. The more things were becoming expensive, the less I could afford it. And so, over the years, my lifestyle has really dropped tremendously. And I blame it all on teaching. [laughter]

I Often you hear people say that, "I love my job, and I love the teaching, and I'm passionate about the work I do." If I pose the question, don't you ever feel that sense of being passionate, it does come out a little in your journal entry, where you say that you are, when you get in there, then it's …

F Yeah, no let me qualify. Um, four years ago, I was forced to resign, for financial reasons. And I, I was in a terrible state. I hated everybody, resented everybody, and then I was admitted for depression and anxiety. My hair was falling out. It was a number of things, it was the work pressure, being a single mom; I just had too much. Because, added to that, I had to start doing things after school. I was forced to take on extra classes, and to teach privately. I was teaching Saturdays, sometimes the students had to come on

Sundays, because, you know, exam pressure. And I had run myself to the ground. So, I obviously, suffered from this nervous breakdown in 2006, and I think I was forced to, it was a cathartic time for me, because I realised I didn't feel I was marketable enough, and I kind of had to come back into teaching. And I think once my perspective changed, and I realised that, perhaps I do love it after all. And I've realised that, I think in the past four years having grown spiritually and all the growth that takes place, I have come to love, to love it, to be honest with you. And I see that, you know, I think once I get to that point, I will be able to, to progress. But I think this has been my journey. And as resentful as I was, I got to a point of appreciation. Just for the things that, you know, that it does bring. That I'm not confined to an office, and so I learnt to appreciate what there was about teaching, and learnt to interact with the children on a more humane level. And, and I have learnt to, to love it, to be honest with you. I think the qualm is still that we feel, you know, that the salaries are just too low to ...

I **Yes. And the workload, like you've mentioned.**

F And the workload is just too much, yeah.

I **You know, you say that you teach on Saturdays and you come in on Sundays to do extra teaching. That alone says that you have your interests of your students at heart.**

F Yeah. No, I know I definitely. In fact, two years ago, uh I'm a very authoritarian person, just come and do your work, and then one of the kids said to me, "You know you're the best teacher that we've had." [laughter].

I **Lovely, yes.**

F And, and that kind of inspiration, that motivates you. And I realise that, you know, I've come to love it, and maybe not through the path that I wished it was …

I **Yes.**

F … uh, let's say through the most unusual, most unusual way, I came to love teaching, actually. And I do think I'm committed. I think that. We come in extra during the holidays, for example, I come in at least four, five times, and, you know, nobody pays you anything for that. It costs me R50 to come in a day, which makes quite an impact on my little budget. Because it's like R250, R300 a day for the time. And just for the sake of coming to give them extra class, nobody pays you anything. In fact, sometimes nobody even knows that you're doing it. You know, you just do it for the love of it, for, to get these children through. Because you realise that they have so little out there that if they don't make it here, what are the prospects? And then you think about the community and how few opportunities there are for these children, so you just want to get them through that.

I **And you did say that many of your students come from dysfunctional families.**

F Yeah. And then there's a sense of needing to help contributing to society in that way. I've realised that it's, there's a bigger picture. It's not just about the money and all that, it's about what contribution you're making to the lives of those children. And so, once I saw value in that I started to see more value in myself. You know?

I And you feel better about it now?

F I feel better. I feel better about it.

I That's a good thing. If I look at the next question, it says, what was your dream as a teacher? Um, your dream, then, you went into teaching begrudgingly, so I don't think that you would have, actually, thought much about that. But, if I ask you, what was your dream as a teacher, what is your dream now as a teacher?

F I think just to be the best that I can be, and I think I'm moving in that direction. I think that I've mastered my subject matter, and that's a good thing about teaching in our schools, because you tend to stay in one subject, you know, be good at it, and then you kind of just grow in it. I think, I just want to be remembered for the impact I've made on the lives of individuals. That, that would be my dream. You know? Further than that, in the actual profession, there's no dream to strive to be, anything like, I was head of department, and then, with the resignation I lost that position. Um, and that position, and that decision was also prompted out of not having a clear head, at that time. So I do regret that, because I see now that it's become more difficult, that I would not, probably, be able to, to get back that position.

I Have there been obstacles to your chosen career development? If yes, could you describe them and say what strategies you used to overcome them?

F Career development? Um …

I Yes. You did say that you …

F That I went to study? Yeah, I think the biggest obstacle there, was obviously the money. Because, the first year I went to UJ and I studied, and then I couldn't pay them. So I had to wait for a year, and then embark on my studies. So it was always a financial challenge, always, because it's really just enough to get by with. So, the biggest obstacle there, at that time was money. Now, I would say I wouldn't be able to study, because of time constraints, then there was time, when I just started teaching. So I had all the time, I didn't have to do extra classes, but the money wasn't there. Now that, maybe the salaries have improved slightly, with the OSD, you know? Since last year, I must say I've been able to make ends meet. So I was happy about the OSD, the changes it made, and there was a slight improvement in most people's salaries. But now I just wouldn't have the time. Not with the workload that I have, definitely not.

I If I also ask you about many years ago when you first started teaching if there were any obstacles that you experienced at that time? Many years ago, being female …

F Female, yeah.

I **… would have been seen as an obstacle.**

F Yeah. I've never really encountered that I know that it was an obstacle. I remember a friend of mine had to get married, years ago. Um, she fell pregnant, she was a teacher, and she basically said to me she's forced to get married because she's female, and she'd lose her position at that time, having been unmarried. So she stood to lose her position, so there was a lot of discrimination in that respect. But, I can't say I ever encountered it, but I do, I am aware that it was there. I think another obstacle that prevents me from studying further now is that I've applied for bursaries through the Department of Education, but, there's a perception now that the bursaries are only going to the black teachers. So we apply year after year, and um, it seems that when you look around, only the black the black teachers seem to be getting the bursaries to study further. Um, that might be a perception, it might be because of the status quo, I don't know, but very few of us are getting the chance to improve ourselves by means of aid from the state.

I **Okay. Well, you would have started teaching sometime in '90, '94?**

F It was '80, it was in the '80s.

I **In the '80s, yes you said 20 years.**

F Yeah, '88 . The date my daughter was born, yeah.

I **Okay.**

F Gee whiz, that's longer than I thought, so it's 22 years. But, I had a break in between.

I **Yes, you did, you had a four year break. What do you feel, presently, about the idea of teaching, as a career for women? Does teaching offer you a good fit as a career? Firstly, let's just look at the first one, where it says, what do you feel about the idea of teaching, as a career for women?**

F Okay, just, I still think it's a good career, especially if you're planning to start a family. Um, that there is definitely the time. You don't have the immense time constraints in terms of traffic and travelling and all that I see with my daughter now. I mean, people in the private sector go to work, they get up at five, they're home at seven. So, at least I can do my schoolwork at home, while supervising my kids. So, I don't think it's such a bad, bad idea to start off, and I think that the salary's also better now, for new teachers. Uh, the entry salary is quite high; it's actually comparable to what we're earning now. [laughter] So it wouldn't be, it wouldn't be bad and I think that what else can I say, I don't think it would be a bad career choice, yeah, at this point.

I **And how long do you plan to stay in teaching? I'm onto B, I'm jumping to B, yes.**

F [laughter] Yeah, no, no. Does teaching offer you a good fit as a career? Fit as in my personal everything?

I **Yes, I think you would have answered that already. Yes.**

F My personality? I think so, and I realised it 22 years later. Definitely a good fit as a career. For now, I think it's helped me to stay and to just grow as a person. I think I'm on a spiritual path, so whatever I'm going to answer, I'm not looking at the negatives and the obstacles anymore. I think it has to do with my age now, and where you see your journey and your path, and you realise, and the answers start coming to you. So I'm at that point, where I think it is a good fit, now. I think what it's allowing me to see how I can become marketable, I can go into training. And I'm looking at options that would still have education as a background, but I'd never want to deviate too far from this. I just feel comfortable with it now. This is who I am. I would deviate, possibly, into something, you know, maybe curriculum development, things like that. That would be my interest, training.

I **Okay. How long do you plan to stay in teaching?**

F Um, I think my time has almost, almost come to the end. [laughter] I've got grown children, and I think maybe another three, four years. That would give me about 25 years, and then I think I'd be ready to move on my own, move out there, into training. But like I said, it will have to be at an education background, because I don't want this to go to waste. I think I've built up so much expertise, especially with curriculum development. So, I think I'd like to move into that field. I think it would be sad if we didn't take our expertise and use it now, to benefit the country, to benefit our system. Because, I think the system is failing the children more, you know, forget about teachers' salaries. You look at what it's producing, and then you see that the children are becoming more illiterate, to be honest. I've got grade twelve's, who ask me what orchestra means. I mean, basic words, um, and they're not familiar with it, you know? So, we need to re-look at our education system. I think there're going to be serious problems, as a result. We're going to have a lot of illiteracy, um, or growing illiteracy. I'm aware it's not like that with all the schools. But I think in the township schools, reading and things are neglected? The white children are socialised, but others don't develop this love for reading, because their parents don't instil that in them. So I think, I'd like to help and assist in that direction.

I **Will family influence your plans in any way?**

F Um, they will influence it positively, in a sense, because my children are grown. So I don't actually have any restrictions right now. You know?

I **If planning to leave teaching, what would it take to keep you in teaching longer?**

F More money, that's for sure. Then I'd stay on. I felt that your self-worth was linked to what you earned, and it really impacted on that. You know, because I was embarrassed. We'd go somewhere, and people would say, "I'm planning a holiday" then I'd be quiet. Planning to buy a new car, you'd still be driving the same car for fifteen years. So I actually started feeling embarrassed about my situation. I realised that that was linked to what I was earning. But, until I looked beyond that, I went through a period of self-disgust, in a way. So, if they really improve teachers' salaries, then I think the motivation

would come, to make a difference to impact the way we should, as educators, holistically develop these children. But, right now, people are just going through the motions, I can tell you that. Because, things are becoming tough, hey, you know, the economy, I mean, everything's more expensive, and you're getting by, by the fifth of the month, you don't have much money, you know? So they have to increase salaries, there's no way. They have to look at re-adjusting that. And, and along with it quality control should come into, into play. I mean, they should start looking at what you produce in the class, what you're doing, and not let people get away, because there is a lot of laziness. There's a lot of people hiding behind, and blame everything on e.g. "I'm not producing good results because they don't have the resources", and the bottom line is most people just lack motivation. They're demotivated because as a result of poor salaries. There might be other, other things that impact other people, I agree, not just personal demotivation or whatever. But for many of us, when we just see a little increase in our salaries, we're happy. And you just have the inclination to work harder, you know? Because you're being rewarded for it. So, more money. [laughter]

I **Do you have, or had mentors, Fiona? If yes, how did they assist you?**

F No, I, I don't think so. No, I haven't had mentors in my life. I can't say my parents, because I felt they were both emotionally absent when I was growing up, I told you that.

I **Yes. Yes.**

F Um, being the eldest, I also, kind of, had to mentor myself.

I **In your work environment?**

F There's nobody that I particularly admire, to be honest with you. Not that I find it hard to admire things in people, I think I have never seen really, a teacher that I could look up to, whether it be a colleague, or something. We're kind of all just on par with each other, there's nobody that I could really strive to be like.

I **Okay.**

F And I think that, yeah, fictional characters, or even, you know, maybe role models out there, I can't say I've been influenced by anybody, to be honest with you. I think, being such an independent spirit I've always just wanted to become my own best mentor in a sense.

I **Are you mentoring anybody right now? Are you anyone's mentor?**

F I think I do, kind of, take on that role, inadvertently, in class. I think, the whole of my teaching in between, we learn that these children need guidance, so you mentor, in a way. So I would think it's holistic and that's what my job requires of me, in a sense. There's a sense of responsibility I feel towards the children. Um ...

I **What about your younger colleagues?**

F I think this is the first year that we had young people come into the profession. Other than that for the fourteen years, fifteen years I've been here, we've kind of been the run-of-the-mill, the old, old guard. So nobody's really had to teach anybody else. With the young people coming in this year, I think there's been a slight shift in that, because I've had two young teachers coming to ask for help, and they actually paid a compliment, saying, "No, we can learn from you guys." It's the first time that I actually see the value that I can add. And that is quite interesting, because for many years nobody was entering the teaching profession, so there was nothing new, no new blood. And for this year, for the first time, we can see new staff, younger staff. They're enthusiastic, they're willing to learn. And so, that has encouraged me a little bit, because I see that people, um, maybe that perception is changing, that teaching is a viable career. And we know that up to six, up to a couple of years ago, nobody dared enter the profession, I mean the teaching colleges were closed. And nobody dared enter the profession. I think, this year, I've seen a change in that. So I think I can mentor. I could become a mentor, and I will definitely guide.

I And you're possibly a mentor, without you …

F Without me … right.

I … putting a label to that assistance and guidance you give to the younger teachers.

F You're right. You're right. Yeah, well, like I said, for this year, for the first time, I, I think that I'm more of a, I have more leadership qualities, in that I like to, if there's any opportunity to train, or, I think that I would volunteer. And I think I have so much to give; I think my confidence has grown tremendously. That is why I do feel I want to give back to teaching at this point, and I will, I would like to be a mentor. I'd like to mentor in my field whether it's indirectly, or directly.

I And what about the option of moving into, applying for a head of department's position again? You did say it's more difficult to get into that kind of position.

F I think when I got that position, years ago, there was not so much other influences, it was, if you were at the school and you've proved your worth, you'd most likely get the position. But I have seen, lately, the new trend is the equality, they want equity in schools, and many people are getting positions based on colour, now. And so we're finding that, this is my perception, whether or not you are really capable, you they need two extra black people on the staff, they're going to get in two extra black people, whether you've proved your salt and your worth for twenty years at the school. So I actually am very sceptical that I will ever get a HOD position. I think, for now, it's going to be about equity in the schools, and that will be about balancing out the different race groups. And I think coloured teachers don't stand much of a chance anymore. So, I don't actually think I'll move up at all.

I Okay. Has teaching been what you expected, and if not, why not? Look, you did say that when you started teaching, and this is how you felt towards it.

F Yeah. Um, I don't know if I can, my goodness, how can I answer? It's always been what I expected. Well, after twenty years I think so, I can't, I can't understand from which angle I should answer that.

I Um, if you're looking at the way things possibly have changed; we go into teaching with this notion of us entering this very noble profession, and things like that.

F Okay. I think what has happened is that, at first, it was a very lonely profession. There was lots of respect and the children in class also displayed that, and out, the world out there, kind of stood to attention if you said you were a teacher. And there was some respect that came from it. But I think today, um, it's been relegated to, to a low-down kind of profession, in a sense. And we get a sense of that in class, and I think maybe just changing times, changing dynamics, changing society, but kids really feel that you must be more of a friend, these days. They want to engage you as a friend, and not as, so much as a, a teacher. They don't want you standing there, and drilling things into them. They want to engage with you. I felt that today with my children, um, "We want to just talk about this." So they come here and have an informal chat. And the younger generation teachers are encouraging that, and it might be a good thing, I don't know. But you find that the formal didactical approach to teaching has changed, it's become much more informal. So, we're actually more facilitators. So, from the chalk and talk, you keep quiet and I teach, and you listen, we find I can't engage children like that anymore. They're just much, so much more interactive, so much more curious. And they're not willing to sit there and just listen to you. So, that has changed, and it might be a good thing. But I think we also need to move into a more, uh, technological era with the kids. I think they're becoming bored; they don't see us as the all-knowing, all-seeing. There's so much more out there, and I think we need to work in tandem with technology if we want to get any respect from these kids. We're, we're moving away from the traditional chalk and talk, and you listen and shut up. [laughter] We can't get away with that anymore.

I What did you expect when you entered into the profession?

F Um, I, honestly, I had no expectations, I had no dreams, and I had no ambitions when I entered it. Right now, I realise it is a calling. So, if I thought I'm going to have more money, then I fell far short, then it definitely didn't meet with that expectation. But I think, right now that we need to move with the times. We need to change. That's what my expectation is now. I think that education has really stood still for 20 years. It stood still. Um, nothing has changed, except that the attitudes of the children have changed. And so, we've got to change, start changing with that. We still have the same old ways, that we're thinking, and so this injection of new blood into the profession, I think, will be good. And I think we need to start learning from them, in that respect. They come with their things on computer, and so we feel a little left behind. So I think that, this interaction of the young and the old guard will be beneficial for teaching.

I If you could change your teaching assignment in any way how would you change it?

F As I said, I love what I do, because I teach, uh, English, and Literature. But I think I would like to interact more with technology, um, and have the children do research.

Right now, you do all the research for them. And that's what takes a lot of the energy outside of school hours. So the children need to become more interactive with the whole process, with the whole teaching process. I, just being an English teacher, I love literature, and I love all of that. So, I love my teaching assignment, I've always, I always have, and I have, because I have a passion for the language and, you know, I don't think, I want to change anything about that, except that I'd like the kids to become more interactive. Um …

I **Don't you have research assignments with the kids, which they do on their own, independently of you?**

F They do, but invariably it is of such poor quality, because they don't have access to the information. They come here with loads of notes, and they don't, haven't learnt research skills or anything. So they just regurgitate everything, and what we find now is we're forced to, I, I'm forced to mark things up, because the standard is so low. So to have redo it, and redo it, takes a lot of time. So, I'm actually marking, if you take my grids now, the children write, I'm marking above that. I'm not really keeping, keeping with how I should be, and the standard that I should be on. I'm, kind of, giving them the benefit of the doubt. So, I, I find that the children just lack in that, they don't, they can't do research.

I **Describe the challenges you face with the current educational changes?**

F Um, describe the changes you face with current educational changes?

I **With what we're experiencing, as teachers.**

F What area? As in curriculum change or what?

I **The OBE …**

F OBE.

I **… and the workload. You talked about the workload earlier on, and the time factor.**

F Um …

I **And because it hasn't worked so well, it's, it's changing again.**

F Yeah. You see I'm at grade twelve level, so that's really their exit level. So basically, I realise that there's been such a big backlog, wherever it was, in the primary schools. But right now my mission is to get them through, so I can't say that I even engage with any issues, but to, to get the matriculant through, and, and, and do the work for that year. And I realise there's a, there's a big backlog, um …

I **If you're looking at the question again it says, with the workload, with the assessments, with …**

F Oh, okay.

I With all of that?

F Yeah, are you talking about the admin work, current challenges facing you, the current changes? Yeah, admin has just become a nightmare. So, we find that, because the administration is taking up much more time than the actual teaching. So, what most of us, what I see most of my colleagues doing is that they don't actually get to teach, you get to teach in between the admin. So it's admin first, and then, administrative work first, you get all your marking, the recording of the marks, I mean everything has got to be done manually. I think that's a big challenge, because it's so time consuming. So everything is added manually, everything is recorded manually, everything is duplicated, triplicated, nothing is put on computer, our schools are far behind in that respect. So, everything gets done by hand, gets calculated by hand, when you're working on averages. So, we spend an enormous amount of time on admin, and then we teach, kind of, "by the way". You know? With the matriculants I try not to do that too much, because they need the time. But, with the other grades I find that, if I have to do admin, I will do it at school, rather than at home, because I'm just resentful of that. And then I'd rather not teach, for sometimes a whole week, while I'm doing admin. That's what everybody's doing, and, you know? Government must start realising that's what's happening. You've got all this admin, so you do it while you're at work; and that's as simple as that. And then, you teach kind of "by the way", so that's why there's not really much teaching, guidance, there's notes. "Take these notes, and I've covered that work." So the challenge is admin. Administrative work, it's a nightmare. It leaves you with little time to actually teach.

I Give me an example of a positive experience you had of school change. You've talked about the negative already.

F Yeah.

I Give me an example of a positive experience you had.

F In terms of curriculum, and, to me nothing has really changed in 20 years. I teach now, and I teach the same thing that I taught 20 years ago. Uh, we've been kind of subtly forced into changes, but I think nothing has, nothing major has happened, except the admin has increased. So, I think the positive is that the merging of people coming into the schools, and people of different cultures, people of different colours, I think it's been an eye opener. We really have been, it's challenged our pre-conceived notions about people. And so, the positive thing is that. Um, I think we are merging as a society, and that it's going to take a long time, but I think that that is the only positive that I see. The merging of society, the merging of people just, um, realising that we're all equal at the end of the day. And you see it in the children, you see it with your, your staff members. So I think, before, where we saw ourselves as exclusively coloured, we can't do that anymore. It's now about blending and merging, coming together, and all of that. So that is the only positive experience I think I've had.

I **Does your professional time encroach on your private time?**

F Ooh, you know that definitely. [laughter] Yes, it, it has, but I am learning to cut off. Um, it encroaches, yeah. For me, because I have the added dynamics of teaching extra private tuition, so I have very little time left in the week, to actually have any private time. But I have learnt to cut off, and I've learnt to manage my time more effectively. In the past, it did encroach terribly; there's, actually I didn't have a private life. But right now, I've learnt to balance it. So I would say that I take a manageable amount of work home, and then I do the rest of it at at school. So I've just learnt to, what I do is, on Wednesdays, so that's marking day. So I don't teach. I now mark on a Wednesday, to be honest with you. I know, nobody should know that, but that's the only way I could cope. So, I use time now, at school, because, you know, to me it's only fair. I mean, I cannot, I cannot continue to have it encroach so much on my private life, that I find that I'm missing out, so I don't do that to such a great degree anymore.

I **How many hours do you spend on, a day, on your various teaching activities, besides teaching, um, English, what else is it that you're busy with?**

F Are you talking about when I go home too? The extra classes? No, [unclear 0:39:36] it's just here at school.

I **No, I'm talking about here, just here at the school.**

F I teach from eight to, to two o' clock, and then two to three, admin or preparation, and then I'll probably spend another hour at home, between seven and eight, when I'm winded down, to work, but I would say, what, how many hours is it? Three, that's seven, so eight hours.

I **Do you do any extra-curricular activities at school? Do you have, are you responsible for any activities?**

F No, I don't do any. We do help with girls' soccer, when the winter codes are on, so we go every Wednesday. And we spend about an hour or two on the soccer field, and that's the extent to which I am prepared to go. I, I wouldn't want to do any extra-curricular, because I think that I should be paid for that, I should be rewarded for that. In the private schools, teachers get an extra, they get a stipend, they get some extra money to participate in that. So, I just won't do it, if I don't get paid for it. You know?

I **Okay it asks about how many of these you spend at school, and how many do you spend at home, outside formal school hours, and you're saying that you spend roughly …**

F Eight hours maximum on school …

I **… at school, and then at home.**

F And another hour at home. So that's nine hours, yes.

I **Okay, so a lot of the work, like you said, that you were spending a lot of time doing work at home.**

F I do, no. I take time off, and I manage my time in such a way that I actually do it at school.

I **Yes. I understand that your role is to teach. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have? I think I've asked you this already. Which of these responsibilities do you find particularly challenging, or difficult, and why? Besides the …**

F At school, you mean?

I **Uh, yes, at school. Besides the soccer training as a ...**

F That your role is to teach. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have? Which of these do you find particularly challenging or difficult, and why? Um …

I **You, you did say that you do soccer, you do help with the soccer?**

F Soccer, yeah. Yeah.

I **Is there anything else that you do? Are you on any committee, or the other?**

F Yeah, I'm on the banquet committee this year, so I'm organising the banquet, but that, I enjoy doing that. So we actually have to be on two committees, each, you know, each teacher. But I think you basically get, are given a choice, so you do what you enjoy, and you just kind of fit it into what, to the normal day. We try and fit that, any, any other responsibilities that we have. I don't think that I find anything challenging. I just, that's my contribution, my extra contribution, I do it willingly, you know? Working on any committees, if it means extra hours or so, then I haven't had any gripe about that.

I **What about your subject committee? You have a subject committee going, don't you?**

F Um, I'm cluster leader at this point, for English, for the grade twelves. So I find that I spend a lot of time having to liaise with other teachers. Um, but then again, I do it, because I think I'm the best person to do it, and I get frustrated if somebody else is doing it. You saw the teacher coming here, what I'm going to have to do is coordinate a cluster paper for this term. So, I don't think that anybody actually knows that you do that. I just do it, because I volunteered to be a cluster leader. We have meetings once a month, until about four, five o' clock. And then I have to report to the language facilitator about what's happening, and so I do put in that extra time. But to be honest it just becomes such a part of what I do, that I do it without even thinking it's extra work. So, I don't find it challenging, I just find it more, um …

I **The sharing of information, and expertise and skills.**

F Yeah, yeah, expertise and I don't mind giving, as I said, to me that is where I think I can make a contribution.

I How do you feel about the demands made upon you? And it says, think about your, um, especially at school. You touched on that previously.

F You know, I, it, a few years ago, I would have said I felt, I, I feel resentful, there's too many demands and I can't cope. But I think, like I said, again, you learn to cope and you learn to, to fit things in, and you learn to, you know, rather than end up being a nervous wreck. Because a couple of years ago, I think we were all heading down that, we've had a couple of nervous breakdowns at the school, and then, you know, at one point everybody was saying, "Everybody's on some kind of anxiety pills." But I think I just trying to beat the system, by fitting in the demands made of me, whilst I'm in the employ of the state, at school. I take my eight hours and I try to juggle it in such a way that whoever wants a share of it, if it's admin, if it's being a cluster leader, if it's extra-curricular, it gets, I, I fit it into the eight hours. So I try not to do anything extra, beyond that, because it wore me out. And so, I don't do that, I've, I've learnt to juggle all of the demands. I don't feel particularly resentful of any demands, to be honest.

I Think about other aspects of your life, as a wife, mother, friend, member of the community, and reflect on how you experience these in relation to your career, as a teacher. Perhaps not as a wife, as a partner. As a mother, as a friend?

F The strange thing how you experience these in relation, as a mother. Um, sadly, I must tell you, I felt its impact through my children in that I think the emotional demands made on you during the day, it's you know? And you're dealing with two hundred plus children a day. So, you're interacting with them all the time, you're an advisor, you're a guide, you're a mentor, you teach, everything. I tried to incorporate all of that as part of my teaching. So when I get home, I cut off completely. I don't, I can't even have a conversation with anybody. You know, my children know that. I've actually been not much of a teacher to them, sadly, I must tell you that. Not much of a teacher to them, because it's the nature of the job, I believe, it's like a plumber will not see to his own plumbing, and a teacher neglects their own children. And I've heard this from my friends, as well. We, as much as we pride ourselves, and acknowledge the influence, and the impact and the contribution we should make to our children in terms of guiding them, and all that, I've done the least with my children. So I feel, like my mother was emotionally absent, I also feel I've been emotionally absent, but that is simply because the physical demands coupled with emotional demands, and then the financial restraints while my children were growing up, contributed to an immensely negative attitude that I had. Lack of time, lack of resources and all of it just led to a rather pathetic human being I would say, that really had no time. I was there physically, but I wasn't there emotionally for my children. And I think, I particularly think I've had a bad run, up to a couple of years ago. I think I had a bad run. I think I've experienced the full gamut of being a single mother and teacher, because everything kind of came together. You have to cope on your own, you have very little resources. And so, whilst I don't want to sound as though I'm feeling sorry for myself, but I think it impacted on my children today. I didn't have much to give them, I had very little to give them. And I do, there I blame it on everything surrounding my circumstances. The physical drain, the financial

restrictions that I felt, all contributed to very sombre home life for my children. You know what I'm saying? No holidays, no entertainment, I remember once somebody said, "Do you put anything aside for entertainment?" And I thought, "I don't have any extra money for entertainment; what are you talking about?" You know, so, I've had to rely on family for the extra things that I could give my children.

I **Have you not had any support from your ex-spouse?**

F No, no, unfortunately I didn't. And there was no way I could. I tried, because I realised that to benefit my children I have to make him responsible, but he was unfortunately not working, so there was no way I could do that. And, um, yeah, and then I, I bought a house a couple of years ago, and I think that just took every bit of my money. So, there was just enough to pay my bond, and, um, not even buy food, to be honest with you, I think it was just enough for essentials, and that is maybe petrol, my electricity and my bond. After that, there was nothing left. So, it was a tough run, um, financially, tough.

I **What about as a member of the community, are you busy with some community work? Um …**

F No, I've had, I've had very little time for that, to be honest. Very little time, um, yeah. No, no, no involvement in community at all. I think this is my contribution here, this is the community. I haven't had the, not even the inclination. My daughter is involved with the policing forum, and I'm glad that, in a way, you know, she's becoming involved in that. I've seen that we have to be active citizens, but I've honestly have no inclination, up to now but to see to my job, to see to my children. And like, you know, it sounds pathetic, but I think I'm past that, in a way. But it has been a terrible sixteen years, in the profession.

I **And what about a friend?**

F Uh, most of my friends are teachers, and most us just sit and moan about the same thing. [laughter] And um, the friends who, that I have outside of teaching end up saying, "Shame, she's a teacher." [laughter] So, so if I, I haven't had time for them, they, they seem to understand. "Shame, you're marking again." Or they come to visit me and I'm marking. And so now it's common knowledge amongst them that, "We can't get a hold of Fiona, she's busy" or "She's too tired to get to the phone, or to see you, or to interact". That was for a number of years. I tried to change that now. But I think, yeah, most of my friends, we just complain about the same thing and there's nothing new. That's why I'm trying to, to reach out for different kind of friends. But, really, there's been nothing interesting, nothing different, nothing new, we just, I've been kind of in a rut. And so, maybe from that perspective I wouldn't be such a good person to interview, because my challenges were the same. I think it's afforded me no new experience. I think that, that for all these years, it's sad that I have to change my perception, but nothing else, nothing has changed, physically, in the profession, really, except that my perception had to change.

I **What aspects of your work do you feel you have the power to change, and what aspects do you feel powerless about, and why, and give examples?**

F Uh, what aspects of work do you feel you have the power to change? I am not, at this point, sure that I can change anything. I changed the way I relate to children, that's all. I feel powerless about, that we as teachers can't make any input into curriculum and what we actually teach these children.

I How does the structure of this, of the institution affect your power to effect change? Are there contradictions? If you're looking at, perhaps, the hierarchy in the school, how does it affect your power to effect change? Do you think that the management, perhaps, are they very accommodating to any kind of suggestions or input that you make?

F Academic, uh academic wise?

I Academic or it could be extra-curricular.

F I think, yeah, they're quite flexible, I've never had any, there've been no stumbling blocks in terms of that. I think sometimes, because I haven't had any significant contribution, shall I say, because I've just never been inclined to make a significant contribution, sadly I must say that. Um, I would go to them, when I was running the newspaper, school newspaper, with ideas, and they just kind of let you run with it. There's been no resistance to actually impact, bring in about any changes. I think it's just lack of motivation, that's why nothing has come about. And I think, many of us just feel we kind of do what we came here to do, and that is teach. And beyond that, we're not really interested, you know? We're not really interested in, uh, empowering the kids, changing things in the society within the school system. I can't say that the institution has offered any resistance in that way, no.

I Have you encountered a lot of opposition, especially as a woman? If so, could you please elaborate? But you said before that you were aware of the discrimination, but you haven't …

F Hmm, I haven't really experienced it. I feel that, in fact, when I got the head of department position, I was favoured, because I was a woman, or, I mean, that was one of the factors that contributed to me getting that position. So I think with gender equity and all that, I think that we are becoming more powerful as women, rather than encountering any kind of opposition. I think that female teachers, somehow, just seem to have more to give, and we make our voices heard more. In fact, we are the dominant force at the school here. I think, because I've been here for so long, we're almost like family, and so there's almost, there's accommodating of ideas and, and things like that. I've never encountered that, and I think, being a strong woman, I would resist that in any case. Um, because what happened was, when I actually fought for this position as head of department, and it was given to a male teacher. And I think I was one of the few women who actually lodged a grievance and I objected to the, it wasn't so much procedural…

I Issues.

F … issues, I challenged it. I did challenge it. I think that I was one of the only women in this district who managed to have a ruling overturned. It took two years. But the person who had been given the position was a male at the school, and I challenged that, and, um, besides the fact that I had been in the English position, I've been, uh, the English teacher. So I felt that that was the main motivating factor for me getting the position. But I think what came into play was that I was a woman so I did challenge the, shall I say, the traditional structure that prefer males over female, to get this position. And I won, you know? So that gave me, I actually don't back off from any kind of opposition, I'm a fighter in that case.

I Forceful in that way?

F Yeah, forceful, definitely.

I When you got the position as head of department, was the other male that was appointed here, was he at the same school as you?

F

Yeah. Yeah.

I Did you encounter any kind of resentment from him?

F Oh there was, in fact, there was. In fact, I think for a whole year, while I was fighting this, we had to go to arbitration, and if it hadn't happened in a coloured school, really, with a coloured female that was just resisting, you know? And, opposing the status quo, and for about a year I heard everybody, "You know, you should have just accepted that." And I'd made bad friends, we weren't speaking. The principal wasn't speaking to me. And I remember the day that, so for a year I would, quietly went to fight my battle, realising that people don't like to take sides. So we just went about our way, but there was a lot of resentment. You know? It was like, "Who the hell does she think she is?" I got that impression. And, "She's never going to get it right." And so the principal was also scared, at that time, to kind of show that he's taking sides, so he kept quite neutral at that point. But, when I did get the position, I think, contrary to everybody's beliefs, because this, it never happened, you're fighting something, that person is now HOD, they're getting the money, and blah, blah, blah, "Just leave it and let it go", and I fought my battle by myself. I used my union to help me. Um, at that time it was, not NEPTOSA, there was something else. So, I used the union and actually it was a terrible time for me, because of that, for the entire year I didn't really socialise with the staff. Because I felt they don't want to take sides. And, um, the person that had got the position had his support, and my people, my friends, were, sadly enough, didn't want to show me support, openly. So the other females, 'cause they didn't want to estrange other people. And, so I just fought a lone battle, and, um, the day that it was overturned was such a victory for me and I think it was contrary to everybody's expectation. So on the day the IDSL called me and he said, "Ms Kirsten, um, can you meet us at six thirty at district office?" I said, "No, I, I don't get up that early" [laughter] and he said, "We mean tonight", so and I got there and he got me at the door and he said, "I admire you. You know? And I can't understand why you didn't get this position in the first place", and when I got up to everybody, the HTP and the principal, he said, "You have caused, Ms Kirsten, a lot of trouble, and grief, and I'd like you to apologise to us." [laughter] And

we shook hands and they apologised, "Sorry, you know, it wasn't meant to be personal", and there I was given the position. [laughter]

I **What was your grievance based on, uh, Fiona?**

F Well, it was just, what do they call it? It was not actually gender equality, I must tell you. It was based on the fact that I felt I was more competent than that man, and that was it. And based on, what do they call it? Something. My brother in law in HR helped me fight the case, so you get procedural grievance and then you get, based on the qualifications or whatever of the person. I just felt I was more qualified and more competent, and I based it on that, that's it.

I **Okay. Can we just move on to the next one, where it says …**

F Yeah I agree.

I **… um, principals respond differently to staff members trying to effect change. I am interested in understanding how your principal understands your attempt to approve, or to affect, change. But you've already said that [overlapping conversation 1:00:06].**

F You know, there's been no resistance; he's very open to everything. And there's never been gender issues, I feel, at school, really. Um, and I think that our contribution is actually valued more than the males' contribution. So he's always been very positive to listening to ideas from female teachers.

I **Yes. Does anyone monitor what you are teaching?**

F Yes, the head of department, at this point. Um, but, I must say I don't feel that answerable to her, because we share the same, um, expertise. I, I was HOD before that, so I'm a bit, uh, in a privileged position, where I kind of, um, allow them to monitor what I want them to monitor. Because, and I think there is a sense of respect for me being the head of department, um, I think I really am the one who possesses the most expertise in English, at this point. So I, I get more that "just, just check on the paperwork and whatever, but don't really monitor what she's doing, because she knows what she's doing." So there's that, um, definitely sense of I suppose, respect and acknowledgement that you have come this far, you really know, they understand your personality, that you have a conscience, that you're doing what you need to do. So, nobody's really monitoring what I do, but because of those factors. But I do think that monitoring is important. You know, I could be messing up here. And I think, with the young people, the IQMS system is just not, I don't think it's adequate. I feel like we need a more serious monitoring tool here at school, at schools. I think people need to be accountable for what they do. Many people are getting away with doing the least. And actually, with the IQMS, I mean, that it's an ineffective tool, I think. It's just not covering I mean, I can give you my files, and you can come visit for one day, but that doesn't necessarily mean I'm doing the work, what I should be doing. So I think there are loopholes, I think the monitoring system needs to become more vigilant, more regular, more effective. It's not working at this

point. It's allowing people to get away with doing really shoddy work. You know, slipshod work. And the quality of teaching is below standard.

I Do you monitor anybody in your school?

F Yes, when I was head of department, I did. Right now, I monitor the basis, it's informal, kind of. You know, I'll report to the head of department. "I don't think that Sir's marking correctly, is assessing correctly, I don't think he's covering the syllabus." And then you get it from hearsay, the children would say, "We didn't do anything", you know? So then I report it, and I'll make recommendations. Whether or not they follow it, I don't know, but I am kind of informally monitoring, especially the younger teachers, as I say. Um, what else can I say about that?

I Do you do any kind of buddy teaching in your school?

F No, no. There, the system was suggested, but nobody's really got time. We're all just doing our own thing here, and I think the department should move, step in there and, kind of, do more, I mean, there should more development for us, and, sharing of ideas, and they should, they should actually monitor that, facilitate that. So we get together in cluster meetings, but it's, it's really optional, if you want to come, you don't want to come. Nobody actually monitors that. There's actually no monitoring taking place.

I Because if you have a younger teacher coming into your class, for instance, and observing you teach, they could learn quite a bit from you.

F We do that only with IQMS, because it's a formality. We have to kind of, have somebody see your class, but other than that, nobody's really suggested that, which I think is a good idea.

I Are teachers in your school collegial and cooperative? You said that you've been here, many of the teachers have been here for sixteen years.

F Hmm, hmm.

I So, you said that there is a kind of family situation. Can you tell me how often you talk with other teachers? In what kinds of situations, and what you talk about?

F Yeah, we talk every day. You talk with your colleagues concerning the work, there's a lot of interaction within the subject itself. Doing this, and I've got these worksheets. So we interact a lot concerning the subject, and how we can assist each other, we do that. It's I wouldn't say it's monitoring, it's kind of just assisting and aiding. So we always interact, definitely, with regard to the subject. On a social level also, but I find most people keep it here at school, like I do. And this is the only time we socialise with each other. We haven't taken it beyond that. We don't socialise outside of school hours, most of us. Um, talk with other teachers, what kind of situations, what you talk about. Um, are teachers cooperative? What I've found, I must be honest, um, with the new influx of black teachers to our schools is this resistance to guidance. And we've had about three, and it's never happened before, about three issues where people are, "You're not going to

tell me", and they refuse to cooperate. Um, and I've found that there is a perception that the standard has dropped. Um, we've had an instance where the one lady teacher, the black teacher was asked twice to change a paper, that paper just didn't meet the required standards. And she just refused. And eventually the HOD had to do it. So, you know, that's becoming a trend, I see. It's becoming a norm. It's like, um, "This is my standard", there's a lot of resistance, I'm not sure if it's colour-based. I'm not sure on what it's based. I mean, it's almost like resistance to you telling me what to do. And so there's been quite a few altercations regarding that. That's never happened before. I think our standard has been consistent. We've been willing to learn from each other. And if somebody came and said, "I don't like this question paper", or something, and "I think you should change this", I would do it willingly and cooperate. But I think, there's been an issue of, "I won't". You know?

I **If it benefits the students, if it's beneficial to the learners in your school, then why not?**

F Why not? I think so, but I think now it's become, and I'm not sure what it's based on, so, you know, a couple of times, this person was asked to change, and they just refused.

I **And the change was explained to the person concerned?**

F Yes. Yes. And you've given examples of how you should do it, and all you ask is to go and effect the changes, and this person refused. They felt that what they were doing is right.

I **Do you feel you're able to talk about any concerns, with regard to the changes, and it's impact on you, with, perhaps, your colleagues?**

F Regard to the changes. No, no, no, no, no. I think there's become a definite "them against us" kind of issue. It's really ugly this year. And, because I find that we were, and that is the change and I think it's subtly creeping in, with just being a coloured school, let's say, I was used to just coloured teachers, all the issues affected all of us equally, and so we could be very open about everything. But now I find we're talking, and it's "they", and then there's a "us". But, of course, we wouldn't dare, it's kind of whispered in the corridors, "these people". And that is coming through. Um, and there's a definite perception that there's a sense of laziness. And I'm going to say, I hope you don't ever quote me, I mean, I hope that, but I'll tell you that it's true. Standards have dropped as a result of people's, which we generally see as, you know, the black person not wanting to work, it's hard. But we find that, we feel that the coloured person, and the white person, that there's a stronger work ethic, and we find that's impacting and we're becoming resentful. And then, it's not just hearsay, when you look at what is happening in the class, um, very little is getting done. So there's a perception that they are lazy and we work, and I must tell you. I don't know where this is going to lead, where this will end up in. But I think there is going to be some time where, um, there's going to be a clash. There's going to be a clash, you know? Um, they're just resistant to the, new teachers, who are mostly black, they're just resistant to, kind of, follow things the way we did, because they see this as the old way, and people don't want to change. And so we're going to resist it. Whether that resistance come about from a genuine, um …

I **Concern for the students?**

F … concern for the students, I don't know, or is it just plain "We're not going to cooperate just simply because we don't want you to have the upper hand to tell us, or dictate to us". So there is that definite, definite "them" and "us" coming through. And then, you find that the status quo has changed, in terms of, for example, when we have social get-togethers, that we would usually be Muslim and having a few Muslim teachers on the staff, we'd automatically, for all these years, just have somebody Muslim catering for us. There's no question about it. So Auntie So-and-So would be cooking. But now, we find that even that is changing. They don't want to eat what we always, used to eat. So, you know, so we have to now start ordering food, to cater, which is fair, which is fair. But, I think we are becoming scared of the changes, it's like things falling apart, in a sense, the old ways are dying. And, and we're going to have to change with that. So that there is some resistance to that, there's almost, like we're going to stay until, there's almost a fear that we're going to be pushed out, in a sense. I don't say I fear that, on a personal level, but I think it's almost like the influx of black children, influx of black teachers, and we all say, "Oh, you know, fifteen years ago, there were no black teachers. Four years ago, there were two. Now, there's, of the forty two, there are 26, so they're outnumbering us". And so, that whole idea of coloured schools, black schools, it's changing dramatically. And there's almost that hidden fear that, soon, we will be outnumbered and ousted. And so, there's almost, like, this need of preservation for the coloured teacher. You know, we're saying, "No, the principal we're going to stay here, because it's our territory, and we're not going to allow ourselves to be pushed out." [laughter] And I don't know where that will lead to. I don't know whether it's unfounded, I don't know if it is but it's happening. You have to admit it.

I **I was just going to say, that, do you think it's an unfounded fear?**

F No, I think if you look at demographics, if you look at numbers and you look at the dwindling, I mean the black people what is their percentage of this country? So it's automatic that it's going to happen, if you look at demographics and all that, that there will be more and more black teachers at the schools. But we're wondering about our futures, coloureds, so where do we go? You know what I'm saying? And so there is almost a sense of self-preservation, that we keep things as they are. And for how long that's going to happen, I don't know. I almost see, in four, five years, I anticipate huge changes. Um, and it's like we think that the coloured, maybe Indian teacher's becoming an endangered species. You know? And, um, yeah, we're making plans. [laughter]

I **If I talk about school changes, if I talk about, perhaps, educational changes that have taken place, for instance, the introduction of OBE, many years ago, and again I will reiterate the point that, as of late, there are additional changes that have been made, and we've heard that the OBE is dead.**

F Is dead, yeah.

I **Now, about those changes, do you, are you able to talk about those changes, and how it affects you, and how it affects the other teachers in your work environment?**

F I have to say that I, I just, as far as I'm concerned, you know, nothing changed dramatically, only the method in which we're supposed to teach, right? So we simply haven't implemented that, because we have restraints. We are limited because of the numbers that we have in our classroom. So the group work, I mean OBE said, do group work and have discussions. And by all intents and purposes it's excellent, but we cannot facilitate that in our classes. So where I'm supposed to break them up into five groups, I'm going to need eight groups of five or six each, and it's too difficult to monitor. So we have, I have, quite frankly, ignored that. I have gone, I've taught the same way that I've always taught. OBE hasn't impacted me, because I haven't used it. I've gone about things the same way. And I, uh, you know? From what I hear, most schools have done that. We've implemented in terms of paperwork that we need for the department. Uh, and, but, when they say group work, then I do a class discussion. I have tried it, and I just could not facilitate it, especially with the huge numbers that we have, I could not. It was impossible to deal with the noise, controlling the whole class. So, the fact that we have so many learners impacted on our ability to implement OBE. So we just didn't do it, quite simple as that. And so the powers that be might not know that, but … [laughter]

I And I suppose that was happening elsewhere as well?

F It was. It was. I think in the primary schools, they were, kind of, more forced to implement that. But high schools, we just really went about things the way we had. We implemented curriculum changes, where I was teaching the same poetry for the seventeen years, it changed last year. So I could teach Macbeth with my eyes closed. There were no curriculum changes until last year. So that, that was a challenge, I think that was a challenge. And it came with its set works, especially with English teacher. And then they'd offered us no support. So there was new poetry, new set works, and there were no study guides, there was nothing to help us. We were just thrown in, it was like cold turkey. We had to just jump in there. And when we phoned our facilitators, "Can you help us with this? How do we approach this?" There was no background to some of the poetry, because they brought in a lot more South African poetry. "Help us, help us with some…", and we couldn't get on the internet, because it was a bit flimsy. And so we were left to our own devices last year. We were thrown in the deep end and we had to sink or swim. And so, many of us didn't do a good job last year, because we were tentatively approaching this subject matter, which we didn't have much background to, yeah, especially the poetry. And then I suppose, being an English teacher, you find a way. You know? You find common themes, and you find all of that. But many of the new teachers, and then, especially the black teachers were shaky, because this not being their home language. They were, they need all the aid they can get in terms of study guides. So if a teacher doesn't have full study guides, he's not going to feel confident about relaying that knowledge. So people were on very shaky grounds last year. And I think, this year what that has fostered is that we've now learnt to cooperate with the cluster. We aid each other, to have notes and it's the first time there's interaction between schools. So we've learnt the sharing of knowledge, sharing of information, of resources, which has been a good thing, I suppose, you know?

I Um, didn't you do this last year, or the year before, where you had clusters and where there was this kind of sharing of common papers, and, or you wrote a common paper? You didn't do that before?

F I think that is becoming more, um, commonplace now, but before that we just were really working on our own. And I think that, what has happened now, is, if I look at our cluster, there are seven high schools. I think there are two coloured, um, teachers, teaching home language. And I sense that the other teachers, whose home language is not English, are on shaky ground. So they kind of, want to rely on our expertise. It's not said overtly, but it's almost as though, "Have you got something for me?" You know? And um, I have no qualms about that, what I'm saying? But there has been, as far as I'm concerned, a drop in the standard, especially of the Languages. Because you find that you need to be a master of the language, you need to be *au fait* with the nuances of the language, to teach it at the level you need to at home language grade twelve. And so, many of the teachers are not even familiar with some of the concepts. So you're wondering how do you convey anything. "What do you mean by", in fact they don't understand some of the things you try to teach the learners. And so, a survey was done, last year, in our schools, which showed that, in some cases, the teacher actually does not possess the knowledge to teach, is not in possession of being master of the curriculum matter so you find that it's affecting standards, definitely. I'm a marker, so at the end of the year, we see the drop in standards. We see that the children don't understand basic English anymore. You know? And so, you ask yourself where does that come from? I'm not sure, if you can just blame that teacher, maybe, who's home language is not English, was not proficient. But I think, somewhere down the line, if it's languages, you have to be proficient. I think, if you teach another subject, maths or so forth, that's not going to be a big problem. But, if you're teaching language, then the basic requirement is total proficiency in that language. And we, kind of, for the sake of, how can we say it, "Because you're black you can't teach the language?" We are, you know, we're a very accommodating society in South Africa. So we're not going to say, "You're not proficient, you can't teach." But it's impacting on the children, children come in here and they say "con-scious", instead of conscience. I'd say, "Where did you learn that?" "No, the teacher So-and-So has been saying it for five years." So it's impacting. Um, I wouldn't want to teach Zulu, even if I was fairly proficient, I wouldn't want to teach it at this level, because I'd be doing an injustice to the learner, you know?

I You said you mark. Do you bring your marking experience to school?

F Absolutely. Absolutely. I think that's what's really fine-tuned me in a way, you know? I've been marking for about eleven, twelve years now. And so we come with all of that. And I think that's what has honed my skills, as a teacher. And, you do it for the money, but it's also been very valuable experience, and many of the teachers at our school have had marking experience, and you find that, automatically, we've been excelling, in terms of better results than most of the other schools, because our principals always believed that, "Go and mark, you get that experience." So we come back anew, with different perceptions, and you're meeting, you're interacting and, um, sharing ideas and whatever, even at the marking centre. "Oh, I've got this book and this, this tackles that topic excellently." So it's been a nice …

I **Invaluable to you?**

F … yeah, experience.

I **What about your cluster, do you disseminate any kind of information to them regarding your marking experience?**

F Um …

I **Especially with the younger, more inexperienced teachers?**

F Yeah, yeah. No, not really, it doesn't come through. You know, if you're marking, I think it's more beneficial to the younger teacher at the school, we kind of say, "We mark like this." And at matric level, we will not look at that, and we look at that. So we try and guide the younger, the other teachers at school, not necessarily younger, but the other teachers at school. There are many people in the cluster who do mark, so you know, we're all aware of the benefits of marking. So we're all scrambling to mark for the money, [laughter], it pays well. [laughter]

I **… at the same time it has been …**

F At the same time, definitely, definitely.

I **… beneficial, like you're saying. If we're moving down to number fifteen …**

F Okay.

I **… what effect do you think having children or not, and/or being a career, has on women's careers in teaching?**

F What effect do you think having children or not, and/or being in a career, has on women's career in teaching? I think if you speak to most female teachers, they'll tell you that just being home earlier, for your children is a benefit. I mean, it's as simple as it is. We don't have the latchkey kids that have to come home to no parents, we're there, at least. So, regardless of we're dog tired when we get home, but at least we're there, physically. And we do admit that that is one of the pro's of teaching.

I **How have you managed to cope with balancing your career and private life**

F Um, yeah, career has only impacted on my private life, because of the work that I used to take home, and then the fatigue used to set in all the time. And so, I'm just somebody who strives for excellence, so I allowed it to fatigue me in a way, mentally and physically, and maybe it shouldn't have. You know, maybe it shouldn't have. Um, so my career has definitely impacted on my private life. And it left me very little time and energy. I think the focus is on energy to do it. Because teaching is multi-facetted. It has the emotional input, the physical input, because you're not sitting at a desk, you're standing, you're talking, and I tend to, children need a vibrant teacher. They just get totally bored when you sit there. So I'm quite vibrant in my class and I find that this kind

of drains me when I get home. But, if one thing can come from this is that it used to be difficult for me to do all that juggling, now I'm just finding my balance. I'm really finding my balance, so nothing specifically has changed about the teaching, I think. In fact it's worse, in terms of time constraints, in terms of marking, it's far worse than it was many years ago. I mean, with the portfolio marking. It takes a tremendous amount of hours to mark after school hours. So my boot is my library, because my car is always full of books and marking, and I take it out as I need to. So everybody knows that's my library. But the demands have become more, as far as marking goes, and assessing, and all that. But, I just learned to manage it myself, that's from a personal perspective.

I Do you want to say something about the stress factors in your life, and if any, how do you deal with them?

F I think, last year, with OSD there were the slight increments. It wasn't much, I would say but it was enough to make a note of it, and to make a little difference to myself. The stress factors were just mainly the money issues that exacerbated everything else, because we're not paying the bills, then you're going to be stressed about it, I mean, It's just going to impact on everything in your life. So the main thing there was just that the money wasn't enough to just afford you peace of mind, when it comes to doing what you need to. So the stress factors were mainly monetary issues.

I Do you regard your job as equal in status to, perhaps your partner's work, if you have a partner? Or your ex-spouse?

F My ex-spouse? Now, let's see.

I Or to a partner, perhaps. But I do know that you did say that you were always concerned about the low status of the teaching profession.

F Yeah.

I And how do you feel now? Do you still feel the same?

F I just know that when I go to the bank I don't want to show them my payslip because I'm too embarrassed to show it to them. So I try to cut off the top part, and just show them the big amounts. [laughter] But, actually, two years ago, I was embarrassed. Now I don't. But status, man, I think teaching is in a genre of its own, really. I think that people out there in the private sector play a different ball game, and that they earn more money, and there is, I think, stress in a different kind of way for them. This is a different kind of job. It comes with different kind of stressors. And, um, yeah, I think, I don't know. I just never saw it terms of status, I always felt lowly, my status was low in the community. Um, my ex-husband always thought, I always thought I was so smart, but I'm earning so little money, so what's the point? [laughter] "You think you're so clever, but look how you're earning, look. You know? And so, I don't think you're so clever after all." Because you find that your students come to you, they've been working for five years and they're earning much more than you are. You know what I'm saying? They're driving cars and I feel embarrassed to get into the same old car with a big dent

in, and I know quietly they're saying, "Shame madam, poor you. You can't afford a better car." And it used to bother me, but not anymore, but it did bother me. I felt that our status in society on the whole had really declined considerably. The average teacher's standard of living has, has declined, over the years. When I was a young person, Mr So-and-So was driving that car and they got a fairly nice house, and that's a teacher, you know? But now, I mean, you can see a teacher by the car that he drives. [laughter]

I **I do know that you're a single parent, and the next question, which is nineteen says, what contribution does your income make to the family budget?**

F It is the family budget, yeah, it is the family budget.

I **Where do conflicts of role and priority occur? You did say that you, uh, felt, at one stage, that you were emotionally absent, as a parent, as a mother.**

F Okay, you're talking about on a personal level, now?

I **Yes.**

F Oh no, okay. Number twenty. Where do conflicts of role and priority occur? At home? I think if I was married, maybe conflicts of role would play a part, but for me, not really. Um …

I **And what about when you were married?**

F Man, I was young, I was married, what happened was I studied, and then I went to Cape Town, I couldn't find work there. So, I can't say that I was married for much of my working life. Um, so there's never been any conflict there, in my private life, about anything, roles and priorities. I think my husband when I wanted to study at UJ, he just didn't see the value of it, because he was in the private sector earning a lot of money, and so, "Why do you need to go and improve your qualification?" I think there was a personal clash, between us, you know, in terms of, "It's not going to help you improve your salary, so why do you want to go and study?" He just couldn't see the point in me going to study. So he didn't support me at all. I remember the day I got my results, and he was totally, nonchalant about it, so, "So what? What difference is this going to make to our lives? You've spent all this time and you had to go in after hours, in the evening", I had to, at that time they had evening classes, "and you're making all these sacrifices, for what? It's not going to make a big impact to our lives, at all." So he just didn't see the point of me studying further. I think that's all I can say there.

I **Do you think we are living in a changing world, where men and women are increasingly regarded as equal in terms of family?**

F Yeah, for sure. Definitely. Well, again, because I'm not married, so I can't really say, but when I look at the people around me, I can see that. I think that equality, I see more equality in terms of what can I say? Roles, um, in terms of your contribution, you know?

I **Yes, at home.**

F At home. Um, my nephew's newly married now, I've seen him changing nappies and all that. And how they work, it's kind of a fifty-fifty. You know, the new, younger generation definitely it's a changing world. And he doesn't bat an eyelid about changing the nappy and being equally responsible for the child. And I think there's a nice balance, I can see, from what I hear, working together towards goals, you know? Um, but I think, me just being such a dominant personality, just not really being able to accept the subservient role because I was married to an Indian man, so it was more like he just saw, it was embarrassing for him that I was more qualified than him. Although he earned more money, but I think still, it always niggled him. So there was this idea that I had to play subservient and make roti's and stuff all the time. And I grew up in a more traditional Muslim home, but there was a little more equality in the house. The woman wasn't really subservient, my mother wasn't. And so I could never fit into that stereotype of coming home, and, you know… Because I thought my career, my status as a teacher, at that time it was still a noble profession gave me a little dignity at that point. And I'm a professional so you're earning more money? I didn't think I allowed it to affect me. Um, yeah, so it is changing, [laughter] women are becoming more equal, that's for sure.

I Fiona, are there any other questions that I should have asked you, that would have thrown some light on these issues we're interested in, that is women teachers' lives? Do you think you could add to this, or something else that I have not, perhaps, have included in this interview?

F Uh, let's see. Yeah, I think what has hampered me, I must say, when I look back now, is the fact that being in a coloured school and having coloured peers and coloured colleagues, the status quo was being maintained in terms of nothing changed, perceptions haven't changed about your values or whatever. We're just kind of stuck in a time warp. We're stuck in a time warp. And many of us realise we actually haven't moved forward. Nothing has changed really. So, the department and education authorities have tried to bring about some changes, we've resisted it in our own way. We're in a time warp. The way things were done seventeen years ago is still the same way things are done now. We're resistant, we're resisting change, technological change. We kind of just want to keep things the way they were. And I think that will have to change. That has kind of kept me in a bit of a time warp, personally. And I think it's got to do with the socialisation, the way we were brought up, in a coloured community. Never to value yourself, never to look beyond. That has come through strongly, you know, in my life. That racist stereotyping has impacted on us and then we continue the racist stereotyping ourselves, by being entrenched in what we know best. Stay in the coloured school. But this is because I'm comfortable here, and I can get away with a lot of the things, and I don't have to open my mind and shift my perceptions, because nobody requires it of me. And I'm not being forced to do that. So I'm sitting here in my little comfort zone, and I realise time is passing and things are changing, I'm just staying the same. You know, and, and I think, with me, it's been a slight shift in perception, the awareness of that has been my first change. And so the next step, I hope that I can grow beyond this, but I realise I'm in a time warp. I have resisted change, probably as much as I say we needn't have resisted it. And I've kept things the same, because that's my safety net. And the world has left me behind, I think the world has left the school behind, and many of us behind, that have stayed here. My colleagues and I we kind of think the same and we do

the same and, honestly, it's been my greatest security, but also maybe in that security was the greatest threat to my existence to who I am. I haven't encouraged change. I've resisted it, and possibly if it does come about, I will resist it to the extent where I have to leave, and that might be good for me. [laughter] You know what I'm saying? But I think we're in a time warp. I don't know if the same applies to other schools, I don't know. I've seen people readily accepting things even technology. Computer rooms are working. Here we haven't, and we make every kind of excuse, and we blame the department. We really do like the way things have stayed the same to be honest with you. And so, it kept me back in a way, it kept me back. And then the other part of me says, why not, why not stay with what's comfortable? When I look at M. and my colleagues who've been here for 32 years, and I see they're just happy. [laughter] So I'm saying maybe at the end of the day, if you love what you do, then that should be enough to sustain you. But I don't think I've really grown. I don't think I've grown as, in my career, I've grown slightly as a person, in a spiritual dimension, but that's all. So there's a slight sadness about it. The slight sadness is that I see myself as a coloured woman, who's gone into a coloured career, kind of, so to speak, and maybe not valued myself enough, or had enough confidence to move beyond this, to move beyond what is the "known". And I will always wonder what could have been, because I do think I had lots of potential. Maybe I shouldn't say I had. Maybe I should still see myself as being able to move above that. But there's a definite mindset that possesses us women of colour, you know? And it comes about because our parents didn't really encourage, "You can be better, you can do more." We were just caught up in the inadequacies that apartheid brought about, the feeling there's a lack of, "I'm not enough, I'm not worthy of." So, the stereotyping that, especially the older teacher would now feel, is very, very entrenched in us. We're actually the sad products of that society, you know what I'm saying? Because so many of us had so many things that were inherently good, wonderful, good work ethic, wonderful qualities and values, and then we kind of got stuck in this. So we have been a product of the apartheid era. [laughter], The stereotyping, I think it's almost, uh, been a traumatised past in a way. Traumatic. And then we had to put up with the changes, and we didn't quite know how to adapt and move with it. And then we felt left behind, so we resisted the change, and we realise that we've actually been left, left back, left behind. The rest of the world has moved on. [Laughter]

I **I just want to thank you, Fiona, for your time.**

F Okay.

I **It's been a pleasure to spend this afternoon with you.**

F Thank you, I hope it's been some of help. From maybe the younger teacher you'll find a different dynamic, but from us you're going to find a mindset. The perception hasn't changed, it's been the same. This has been what's held me back, but I've never really moved beyond that. And so I've just tried to roll with the changes, but resisted it in my own way. [laughter] Resisted it by making things stay the same, and just kind of covered up, you know, the paperwork, and if they require that I, I've done it, but nothing has changed since the day I taught. You know, nothing has changed that has been major, so …

End of recording

INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

My name is Selma Nagan and I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My research project entitled "The Experiences and Challenges of Women Teachers' Lives" seeks to understand women teachers' experiences of teaching in South Africa today.

I wish to examine their experience of role expansion in view of the recent changes imposed by current policy (Innovation overload; intensification of work – multiple demands compounded by increasing demands for external and internal accountability). The study analyses the impact of gender in the construction of their identity and agency in this kind of change. It investigates the teachers' lived experience in the school and in the home in view of the changed mode of teacher regulation. I wish to establish why these women became teachers, and how has their role expanded in view of the introduction of the seven roles and the IQMS (Integrated Quality Management systems). I wish to determine how they deal with the new pressures created by the extended role; in what emotional ways do they experience the new mode of regulation, and the factors that encourage them to remain in teaching. The objective of this study, therefore, is to gain an understanding of the complexities of women teachers' experience of the demands placed upon them by the new mode of control.

The researcher does not envisage any risk to any participation. The project will take the form of a case study involving four women teachers (African, Coloured, Indian and White). The participants will be from four different public secondary schools in Gauteng. The women will be Grade 11 or Grade 12 English Home Language teachers. The participants must be married with a young child or with young children. The age range will be between 25 – 35 years. All participants will remain anonymous. Any participant may withdraw from the study should she no longer wish to participate. The study will be over a period of approximately 3 months commencing in January 2010.

Individual interviews will be conducted and participants will be requested to write their autobiographies and keep a journal over a period of two weeks.

/2……

There will be guidelines / questions for the autobiographies, journal entries and interviews. Analytical chapters based on autobiographies, interviews

and journal will be sent to participants to check the accuracy of data representation. I will report on the data collected and the findings in my Dissertation.
The participants will help us to gain an understanding of the complexities of women teachers' experiences.

Selma Nagan
Researcher
29 September 2009

9 Flamink Street
Meredale
2091

29th September 2009

The Principal
…… High School
……..
……..

Dear ……

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Selma Nagan and I am a PhD student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. To fulfil the requirements of the degree I have chosen the topic "The Experiences and Challenges of Women Teachers' Lives" as my research topic. The study seeks to understand women teachers' experiences of teaching in South Africa today.

The study was motivated by my own experiences as a teacher. I too, like so many other female teachers, struggle with current reform agendas both complex and uncertain, demanding and time consuming. That I walk the tight-rope of home and school is hardly surprising. In my study I want to explore how women with their specific subjectivities or identity experience, deal with and manage their role and how they protect their identity in view of the expansion of their role.

I am seeking the participation of a Grade 11 or 12 female English Home Language teacher in my study. The study will entail interviews which will be audio-taped and transcribed by me. The school and all the participants

will remain anonymous. I will be transcribing the tapes. Participants will also be requested to write an autobiography and make a two-week journal entry based on guideline questions. The study will be over a period of approximately 3 months. Should a participant choose to participate she may decline to answer questions and she may withdraw from the study at any time. I should like to commence the study in January 2010.

My contact details are as follows:

Work telephone number:	011 4354214
Home telephone number:	011 9425294
Mobile number:	0825622269
Fax number:	0114359891

I will be contacting you within the next few days to answer any questions that you might have concerning the study. In the meanwhile please feel free to telephone me to discuss any concerns or questions you may have.

I look forward to a productive relationship with you in the interest of education in our country.

Yours sincerely

_____

Selma Nagan

LETTER OF INTERVIEW CONSENT

I…….
…….. have consented to participate as a research participant in Selma Nagan's PhD studies. I understand that the autobiographical essay, the semi-structured interview and the journal will form part of the PhD dissertation. I also understand that the interviews will be audio-taped and that her studies may be used for educational purposes.
Furthermore, I have agreed to the researcher referring to me by: (tick the appropriate block)

a pseudonym ☐ my given name ☐
In the study.

…….. …….
Signed Date