TEACHERS' EMBODIMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MOVEMENT:

COMPETING NARRATIVES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A WHOLE-SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION INTERVENTION IN UK PRIMARY SCHOOLS

SAMAR SHAHID

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Abstract

The rising mental health concerns among UK children highlight teachers' importance in school mental health promotion. Yet, there remains a gap in understanding how teachers' perspectives impact interventions. This research aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of mental health and movement in relation to their implementation of *Stormbreak*, a whole-school intervention in five primary schools in the Southwest of England. A qualitative approach, consisting of two phases, was adopted to gain insights before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Semi-structured interviews were employed to explore the lived experiences of six teachers with a focus on mental health and movement and associated selves and identities. The data underwent structural and thematic narrative analyses. Analyses of teachers' body narratives, framed by the contexts of sports, health, and education, revealed most teachers held positive and evolving views on sports and mental health. Teachers told inspiring stories of resilience, drawing on the dominant narrative of "get on with it" as coping responses for enhancing mental well-being. Male teachers created hypercompetitive athletic identities, reinforcing stereotypically masculine traits, while female teachers constructed strong identities in sports that emphasised traditional feminine characteristics. However, one teacher presented a counternarrative, highlighting the negative aspects of physical activity culture and the exclusion of individuals with larger bodies who challenged societal norms of masculinity and femininity in sports. Crucially, engagement with a movement and mental health programme compelled her to confront and renegotiate her relationship with physical activity. Meanwhile, other teachers adopted more vulnerable narratives of mental health and movement amidst the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These narratives highlight how cultural contexts shape teachers' professional lives and identities. Understanding their body-self relationships, which can drive engagement or resistance to such interventions, is valuable for holistic teacher-led education and well-being programmes. The discussion also emphasises implications and recommendations for future school initiatives.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the topic

Supporting the mental health needs of children and young people is a global concern and a major public health priority in the UK. Research suggests that adopting a whole-school approach in which the role of schools, and concomitantly, teachers, are pivotal in addressing the concern over children's mental health problems. However, there is little known about teachers' perceptions of mental health, and especially an overall lack of research regarding the teacher perspective concerning the implementation of a whole-school mental health *and* movement intervention in the UK primary school context, for example, in this case – *Stormbreak*. This research aims to explore the narratives of six primary school teachers implementing the Stormbreak intervention in five different schools across the Southwest of England for an in-depth understanding of their experiences of mental health and movement. This chapter will aim to introduce the study by first discussing the background and context, featuring a description of Stormbreak and its purpose, followed by the research problem, the research aims, objectives and questions. The significance of the study is also pointed out within this section of the chapter. Finally, a brief outline of the structure of this thesis is presented at the end to help orient the reader to the main contents and ordering of the thesis.

1.2 Background to the project

Addressing the growing prevalence of children's mental health conditions in the UK (Pitchforth et al. 2019), the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care invested £1.4 billion over five years to transform children and young people's mental health provision, especially within educational settings, proven to "play a vital role in identifying mental health needs at an early stage" (Department of Health and Social Care and Department for Education 2017, p.4). While this has led to the development of mental health prevention and promotion interventions aimed at supporting and promoting the mental health and well-being of children and young people in schools (e.g. Stormbreak), a significant research-to-practice gap still exists in the areas of school mental health interventions (Reinke et al. 2011). There is evidence, though, that suggests 21st-century education in the UK requires schools to adopt *a whole-school approach* that involves all members of the school in a whole-school change towards a positive school culture and school leaders prioritising the well-being of students and staff (Glazzard 2019). Notably, teachers involved in mental health promotion interventions, *regular* teachers – not trained health professionals, are expected to assume responsibilities in the early identification of children's mental health problems (Rothì et al. 2008; Loades and Mastroyannopoulou 2010; Department of Health and Social Care and Department for Education 2017; Glazzard 2019). Similarly, teachers participating in Stormbreak are expected to direct children to learn about physical activity and mental health through Stormbreak activities without necessarily having the professional training, skills, and knowledge specific to these areas.

Importantly, the relationship between mental health and movement is magnified and threaded throughout the thesis. That is, while the relationship is assumed to always be positive at all levels of intensity (Asztalos et al. 2010), I draw upon a more critical lens to explore the alternative ways that movement contributes to mental health. As such, the contribution of exercise and sport to mental health is seen as complex and nuanced, especially focusing on more holistic forms of movement that stretch past the typical exercise contexts to intentionally include mental, emotional, social and/or spiritual components (Vergeer et al. 2021). In the current research, one teacher's counternarrative of mental health and movement indicates that the relationship between the two is not always positive through how she reconstructed the self and identities in past childhood experiences in sports into adulthood.

1.3 Stormbreak in context

> "When the storm rages we teach children to find shelter and create light, calm and change through movement" (Stormbreak 2024a).

Stormbreak (2024a) is a teacher-led primary education programme in England that aims to improve children's mental health through movement, by using a whole-school approach that engages with the wider community (parents/carers), schools, teachers, and students. Stormbreak activities, or in Stormbreak's terms, Stormbreaks, are different forms of movement that are explicitly designed to teach children about core mental health concepts: "Resilience, Self-care, Relationships, Self-Worth, Hope and Optimism", also known as, Stormbreak concepts (Stormbreak 2024b). Stormbreaks, with at least one of the five Stormbreak concepts underpinning each Stormbreak, and tailored to support children's emotional health, are therefore seen as, "movement for every child, every day", and categorically called – *mentally healthy movement* (Stormbreak 2024c). At the core of this, Stormbreak (2024c) attempts to reduce the stigma around mental health through movement by delivering mentally healthy movement that enables children to have everyday conversations with their peers and trusted adults about their own and others' emotions while moving their bodies.

In this thesis, the term mentally healthy movement is used at times to refer to the movements, practices, or activities that inform mental health within Stormbreak, rather than Stormbreaks. The exact name of the intervention is mainly adopted to discuss Stormbreak, although the terms intervention(s) and initiative(s) are also used interchangeably to refer to Stormbreak and similar school-based programmes related to the scope of this study. Importantly, in discussions around teacher participants, staff or teacher professionals, the focus of the study, I primarily embrace the direct term of teachers, while *regular* teachers, is also recycled to emphasise that they are not experts in mental health and movement, and their influences on Stormbreak's intended outcomes.

Ultimately Stormbreak aims to embed their mentally healthy movement in primary schools to improve well-being, resilience, and coping skills for children to thrive throughout life, drawing on support from teachers, parents, carers, and the community for their processes of a whole-school approach and lasting change that leads to a positive mental health culture. Stormbreak's design, particularly, the "Mentally Healthy Movement programme" (Stormbreak 2024d), identifies the key changes that are required at various levels of the primary schools to achieve their aims of a cultural/societal shift towards mentally healthy movement. Though a comprehensive account of this programme, along with a meticulous mix of materials describing Stormbreak's aims, beliefs, goals, activities, and strategies are displayed on their website – stombreak.org.uk and throughout this thesis, I draw on the important aspects considered in the context of teachers to focus on the component of teacher change or learning and development within Stormbreak.

For teachers, in particular, Stormbreak strives to:

- "Raise awareness, challenge, and change perceptions of mentally healthy movement
- Improve confidence and delivery for supporting mentally healthy movement
- Develop a whole school approach and sustainable cultural shift towards a climate for mentally healthy movement" (Stormbreak 2024d).

Upon committing to engagement, Stormbreak informs primary schools about the benefits of delivering their mentally healthy movement and provides various training courses for teachers, to help regular teachers in their delivery. However, it is unclear as to whether that is effective or if teachers require more training and support. Against this backdrop, the current study directly addresses Stormbreak’s aims targeted at engaging teachers in their whole school shift towards mentally healthy movement, by understanding teachers’ perceptions of mental health and movement in the initial small-scale implementation. In that exploring the different ways in which teachers therefore embody Stormbreak’s notion of mentally healthy movement, especially in the pilot stage of development.

1.4 The current study

This research sits at the intersection of education, health, and sport and focuses on teachers' embodiment of mental health and movement in implementing Stormbreak. Building on past works within these contexts and catalysing qualitative research in new ways, this study informs the collaborative project evaluation of Stormbreak. The Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), Stormbreak CIO, is a registered charity in England and Wales (1182771) that develops and provides products and services to help organisations (e.g., schools) transform the culture, policy, and provision of movement by understanding and improving how to support staff and children/young people in positively shaping their mental health (Charity Commission for England and Wales 2024). As part of a larger collaborative team led by Dr Martin Yelling, Stormbreak (2024a) partnerships include Bournemouth University, University of Winchester, Dorset CAMHs, Public Health Dorset, Dragonfish, schools, teachers, and children. As such, the industry-academic partnership and collaboration between Stormbreak and Bournemouth University is wider in scope and ambition for policy, practice, and research and involves an ecosystem with different levels of organisations.

In the UK, a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) is a structure designed for charities with a constitution registered with and regulated by the Charity Commission (Kendall and Knapp 1996; Kendall et al. 2006). Then, since Stormbreak CIO (hereinafter referred to as Stormbreak) raises awareness of children's mental health concerns and provides education and health services to the community (schools, families, etc.) (Evers and Laville 2004), it is situated in the not-for-profit sector of industry, also known as the voluntary sector or ‘third sector’ of organisational (economic) activity in the UK (Alcock 2010). The funding for a charitable trust, voluntary (non-profit) or third-sector organisation often comes through donations, grants, fundraising, volunteers, government contracts, and other assets. Stormbreak is a non-profit or charitable trust with a group of people (‘trustees’) to manage their assets. Thus, in the thesis, Stormbreak trustees who provide socially-focused health education services to shape public policy and advocate for children's health in the UK are considered not-for-profit industry (industrial) partners or external stakeholders (Hutton and Zaidi 2024). Understanding the nature of social advocacy as strategic responses within not-for-profit charities in the UK is essential as it influences public discourse and policy (Dhanani and Connolly 2012).

Stormbreak's ecosystem includes academic researchers across different disciplines, fields, universities, and other affiliated organisations in the public sector, with members and experts outside of academia who focus on health and wellness and are committed to supporting the small non-profit organisation in intervention implementation and community engagement activities. The research-practice partnership is research, practice, and policy-driven, with wider aims to address the public health concern surrounding children's mental health needs in the context of primary schools in the UK. The overall goal of the research project, involving a charitable trust partnering with organisations beyond academia, was to provide academic expertise and insights through strategic collaboration in teaching communities to improve the quality, efficacy, and implementation of Stormbreak in primary schools.

The original Bournemouth University academic team of experts on the larger research project who agreed to connect and work with the local charity for this collaboration included Professor Michael Silk, Dr Carly Stewart (primary supervisor on the current study), Dr Daniel Lock, and Professor Tim Rees. These BU academics partnered with Dr Martin Yelling, Stormbreak CEO and Founder, to support exploring the possible real-world impact of the Stormbreak intervention through their diverse areas of expertise and research. This team grew with two postgraduate researchers, a postdoctoral researcher, and Professor Julie Gamble-Turner (supporting supervisor on the current study). The external partners on this project consisted of Dr Martin Yelling, the lead external stakeholder on the evaluative project, and his board of trustees for Stormbreak. Their main aims were to collaborate with academics and researchers to understand existing intervention processes and efficacy better and use academic expertise to help design and develop new or improved training and practices for greater intervention effectiveness and outputs. While the key stakeholder met with the Bournemouth University team periodically for updates on the research progress, only the postdoctoral researcher and I, as one of the postgraduate researchers, consistently attended Stormbreak events, including teacher training workshops and introductory meetings with external organisations and partners related to Stormbreak and separate from the university.

Developed to inform the larger collaborative evaluation project between the university and Stormbreak, the current study was made possible through a jointly funded Bournemouth University Studentship (2018-2022), with the funding duration lasting 36 months. The first half of the study included actively engaging with Stormbreak partners and their affiliated partners (e.g., Dragonfish consultants, University of Winchester researchers, and primary school members) to facilitate the piloting of Stormbreak in the original five primary schools. During the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement with external partners became more limited, and the latter half concentrated on the research processes of analysis and writing up.

This collaborative research is positioned to critically engage with community and societal issues and play a vital role in bridging the gap between research and practice by combining knowledge and action for social change to improve public health and eliminate health disparities. Largely to advance education via the provision of the Stormbreak programme and services for the physical and mental health of children and young people in the UK by engaging with teaching communities in Southwest England. Specifically, the study aimed to explore teachers' experiences embedded in the cultural and behavioural change process beyond their engagement with Stormbreak in the contexts of health and sport. The collaborative approach for education and action or shaping social change shares characteristics with community-based participatory research centred around research, participation, and action for addressing mental health in the local community and designed to help provide (Minkler 2005). In this view, the strength of the current research informing the collaborative work is its commitment to action concerning children's mental health issues, with the key feature of engaging in a critical way to understand how the teaching community understands the topic of children's mental health in educational settings. Critical in this sense is characterised as understanding the broader topic of concern (e.g., sociopolitical, cultural, historical perspectives and discourses) and teachers' personal experiences and understandings, as influenced by their sociocultural contexts in a more meaningful way.

Crucially, acknowledging the interests of external partners who supported the jointly funded study and their influence on the scope of the research (topic of concern or research question) and, consequently, have factored these into consideration throughout the research process. That is, taking an embodied approach to understanding the lived realities of teachers and dominant social influences via Stormbreak and broader cultural contexts that influence their understanding of mental health in diverse ways. In this light, a case study in the thesis illustrates the problematic nature of the intervention as experienced by one teacher in ways that oppose the dominant views about the benefit of sport for mental health. More detailed considerations and discussions in the thesis emphasise embodied understandings and their impact, including but not limited to the broader contexts of mental health (see section 2.5.3) and physical (see section 2.7.2) interventions similar to Stormbreak and the representation (see section 3.6) and implications (see section 7.4.1) of this study.

This doctoral study aimed to understand how teachers' perceptions of mental health and movement impact the implementation of Stormbreak. Focusing on the perceptions of teachers participating in the implementation of Stormbreak, as their beliefs and perceptions about mental health and movement in their lives outside of teaching and within this new role were unclear. Thus, understanding teachers' personal and professional experiences of mental health and movement was valuable, as it can offer important insights into the contextual influences that encourage or hinder their engagement with Stormbreak in schools. In turn, this knowledge about factors that impact teacher engagement with whole-school mental health and movement interventions can assist in developing better support for regular teachers involved in Stormbreak or similar interventions within educational settings in the future.

Therefore, the study aimed to understand how teachers have learned about mental health and movement over time. Specifically, addressing this via the following research objectives:

1. To explore teachers' past and current relationships to movement and mental health.
2. To explore how teachers narratively construct stories of movement and mental health.

A qualitative design and semi-structured interviews allowed for exploring teachers' mental health and movement stories via past experiences with movement, including but not limited to play, exercise, sports, physical activity, and mental health and well-being. This enabled teachers to focus on the events they valued and used to make sense of their personal and professional lives – identities, bodies, and selves – in contexts of sports and health and while engaging with Stormbreak, without being restricted to educational accounts or professional motivations alone. Importantly, facilitating new knowledge was one type of goal. However, using qualitative and narrative – or new approaches that have been limited or not used in previous evaluative work on the efficacy of multidimensional interventions illustrates the application of an interdisciplinary evaluation framework in its methodology. This is because, despite the importance of teachers widely acknowledged in implementation research and frameworks, their different levels of influence lack consideration in the context of multidimensional interventions that consist of three key elements – a whole-school approach, mental health, and movement. Considering these levels of influence is critically vital for teacher engagement and the effective implementation of Stormbreak. The interdisciplinary, embodied approaches of qualitative approaches can offer new ways of understanding contextual factors that support the development, quality, and implementation of multifaceted interventions like Stormbreak. Adopting a qualitative design, particularly a narrative inquiry, can capture how teachers' diverse embodiments of mental health and movement guide their engagement with intervention within these contexts. That is, how teachers' experiences of mental health and movement, shaped by broader historical and sociocultural contexts, influence their motivations and abilities to deliver Stormbreak effectively and influence the overall implementation of Stormbreak. Thus, supporting the case for more comprehensive methodologies is crucial and needed to capture the complexities and contextual influences, as well as the personal and social contexts, generally leading to various outcomes and determining the effectiveness of such programmes.

Finally, how Stormbreak stakeholders choose to embrace the findings, these embodied insights into teachers' diverse experiences within contexts that influence their pedagogical potential as vehicles for mental health and movement, may yield the conceptual affinities and sociocultural change intended. Using the findings to improve teachers' learning and development for mental health and movement within school settings can, in turn, inform efforts to bridge the gap between research and practice around mental health interventions in schools across the UK. As such, this study has the potential to support third-sector industry and research by providing findings that contribute to filling the gap in the current body of literature related to school mental health interventions. Moreover, to facilitate the wider goals of transforming whole-school mental health initiatives in the UK in a practical way that does not overlook teachers in their processes of implementation and design.

1.5 My story

The *inside-outsider* debate (Hellawell 2006; Bridges 2017; Finefter-Rosenbluh 2017) comes to mind as I think back to the Fall of 2018 when I moved to the UK to become a doctoral researcher and, naturally, an outsider in the new British Culture. As a privileged American, I found the transition across the pond hardly dramatic, although acclimating to the stereotypical British weather took a bit longer. Speaking of differences and reversing to my natural way of speaking and writing, I will continue to tell *my* story in American English. Trying new cultural forms in the shape of qualitative research and a global pandemic instead of backpacking across Europe – not *exactly* a culture shock when you sign up for a PhD.

Since moving here, I have often been asked: "*Why leave New York for the UK?*" which serves as a reminder and further fortifies my stance as an outsider. Not that I mind it, really. In fact, it's welcomed at times since most people are captivated by my New York accent and tell me about their dreams of visiting "the Big Apple" – words a real New Yorker would never utter. This gives me the chance to talk about growing up in NYC, and as the saying goes, *home is where the heart is*. I bask in the nostalgia after rambling on about my life in the city. How I would kill for a slice of pizza, right now. The same question felt slightly intimidating when it was aimed at me by one of the six senior academics on the panel towards the end of my online interview. That did bode well for me though, as it propped the start of my journey at Bournemouth University.

As an American-Pakistani woman of color, and one out of four children to immigrant parents who gave up the motherland (Pakistan) and shifted to the States (NY) so that my siblings and I could have a better future, I have internalized the importance of Western education. So here I am, trying to achieve it at the highest level to fulfil my parents' version of the American dream. That is not the only reason, but my parents' struggle in the Western world has motivated me to pursue an Ivy League education, earning my Master of Bioethics from Harvard University, and with it perhaps a sense of recognition and freedom that, unfortunately, not all South Asian girls are bestowed the same privilege. As I fight for *their* American dream in schools across the US, Canada, and the UK I have learned to identify my positionality in more distinguished ways. As such, I can acknowledge the advantages and disadvantages of my position in different spaces and cultures, and more specifically, my personal experiences of mental health and movement that have brought me to England to pursue my PhD.

Despite having South Asian parents who romanticized academic achievements over sports, and most things to be fair, being the only brown girl on school sports teams as a kid was kind of cool. Some of my fondest childhood memories include basketball. God, I loved watching Kobe play (RIP, GOAT). I also loved being on the court. Outdoor double-rimmed or shiny indoor floors that I eventually came to despise after Coach P made us run suicides (RIP coach). I loved playing with the neighborhood kids, even if it was mostly boys, my teammates from an outside league, and my high school teammates in Canada and the US. I was always moving growing up on and off the court. Man, I loved sports. I chose that as the topic for my college application essay, mapping out the importance of the game and the power of teamwork, embodying positive traits like dedication, determination, and discipline. Resuscitating the three words etched on the back of my basketball jersey during my adolescence. The blocked text alone was anti-climactic, but the jersey: incredible, hard-earned – varsity status. I often wondered what going pro would be like, not as if I was at the level or anything, just wondered. I imagined it would be like the plot of *Bend It Like Beckham,* a popular 90's movie in which the main protagonist, Jesminder "Jess", a brown–*Asian* British girl who loves football and wants to pursue her dream of playing professionally or *bending the rules* (on and off the pitch) (Chadha 2002).

Mental health in South Asian culture? As far as I know – mainly the rejection of Western-centric notions of health. Mental health was not explicitly understood or was not a topic of conversation at home. While that culture of acknowledging physical health as health and mental health as not may have changed over time culturally, it made me want to know more about it and not live under a rock—even if my social life has been buried under one for a while now.

Going back to everyone's favorite question, then, I'm here because my parents let me bend the cultural rules made for brown girls, so I ran towards my calling.

1.6 The structure of the thesis

Here, I offer a general overview of how this thesis is structured. I aim to provide the readers with a sense of how it is ordered, along with the content and logical flow of the chapters produced. While the final thesis structure appears like that of a traditional chapter-based thesis, the structure *and* content of the findings chapters specifically are less conventional.

I begin with the general structure of the thesis, then describe the non-traditional order in chapters four, five, and six. For the latter, I underscore the emergent and flexible nature of qualitative research and writing up to present these chapters in alternative forms: (a) chapters four and five are *structured* as stand-alone chapters and organised into parts, and (b) the *contents* of the different analyses within these chapters include a range of theorists – linking theory, methods, and analysis. The specific descriptions of how I break free from tradition and the rationale for this structure, which presents theory and methods linked with the resulting insights, are provided towards the end of the section.

The thesis consists of seven primary chapters, three of which are chapters on findings. First, and as seen above, the introduction chapter presents the context and background, research problems that inform the study, and the research objectives that this study aims to meet. In addition, I introduce the Stormbreak intervention and reveal the researcher's positionality by sharing *my* *story* and the worldview that influences the research and theoretical frame in contexts of health and sport. Second, the literature review chapter highlights key issues, concepts, and themes related to the broader contexts of Stormbreak and this study, followed by an outline of the proposed original contribution to knowledge. Importantly, I bring together a literature review informed by research activities and outputs that I have undertaken since joining the collaborative research project as a Postgraduate researcher and throughout the thesis to show how the research problem relates to previous relevant works across different disciplines and fields. Third, the methodology chapter covers the detailed theoretical framework that defines methods and theoretical approaches—specifically, linking narrative approaches and a narrative inquiry towards embodiment for understanding teachers' views in Stormbreak. Importantly, it covers the concepts of judgment criteria, representation, and reflexivity, with the latter two as a confessional tale. Equally important, I commit two separate sections in the thesis to discuss research ethics (pre data collection) as is discussed in this chapter, with the second part following the chapters on findings and situated within the final discussions (post data collection).

Fourth, the first of the three main findings chapters offer initial findings from a thematic narrative analysis. Specifically, part one of the two findings from a thematic narrative analysis resulted from exploring teachers' stories in the context of mental health and movement pre-pandemic. Fifth, presented as part two of a separate chapter because of the length, the second round of findings from a thematic narrative analysis illuminates how teachers' understanding of mental health and movement shifts to new dominant narratives due to the disruption of the pandemic. Sixth, the third findings chapter, which includes structural narrative analysis, is available in a case study format. I focus exclusively on one teacher's counternarrative that challenges the dominant narrative of mental health and movement, displayed in the other teachers' stories and reinforced in wider Western society and cultures. Seventh, the discussion chapter concludes the thesis by explicitly defining how the current research influences different strands in research and practice, while also revisiting the moral principles of ethical research. Ultimately, I make the case for more expansive methodologies to deal with aspects and multi-dimensional models like Stormbreak. I emphasise the need for narrative approaches that explore teachers' embodiments and contextual dynamics to understand better teachers' participation in intervention research practices and implementation effectiveness.

As mentioned at the start, I now focus on the structure and content in the chapters of findings in the thesis. For the first point, chapters four and five are structured as individual chapters and organised into parts to allow the reader to make sense of stories in sport and physical activity, pre-pandemic and post-pandemic, separately, but also make the connection between these stories and how can shift over time and across evolving contexts. A helpful distinction between the forms of narrative analyses and the rest of the thesis can demonstrate the accomplishments of the exploratory process undertaken. That is, the ways the main chapters of findings are compromised exemplify how the emergent nature of the qualitative research design responds to the unprecedented pandemic events. Specifically, it allows for capturing the influences on teachers' understandings and different embodiments during that time and beyond in the changing socio-cultural context. These emergent and contextual findings (from phase one of the research in chapter four – part one, pre-COVID and phase two of the research in chapter five – part two, post-COVID) are integrated into the thesis to consider current events and impacts and to help identify important considerations for future research and practice.

For the second point, and as the three chapters of findings may still adhere to the traditional thesis format, I focus on the unique way I connect theory with methods and present them in more detail towards the middle/end of the thesis within the analyses. Instead of simply highlighting the role of each chapter, I explore the non-traditional order. In this sense, *I am breaking free* (Wolcott 2002) from the traditional writing up and reporting of resulting insights by linking literature with theory and methods in a new way that complements and augments the research I am reporting and, importantly, resists constraining interdisciplinary and qualitative approaches. I begin by drawing attention to how the three stands are interwoven and positioned within the analysis intentionally. However, this thesis's structure is only relatively free from traditional order. Then, I explain the deliberate choice to locate specific theories in the various narrative analyses (chapters four, five, and six) rather than exclusively in the theoretical framework in the literature review (chapter two) and methodology (chapter three).

Specifically, I present the *crux* of the theory and methodology in the traditional order to immediately provide the reader with the sufficient understanding needed to discern the theoretical underpinnings and methodological approaches. However, I draw on *additional* literature with theory supporting the overarching theoretical framework and narrative approaches in detail in the research findings. In a way that honours the traditional literature review in broader contexts and dedicates an entire chapter to the methodology, alongside selective links to interdisciplinary perspectives that offer a better understanding of the complex constituents of the narrative inquiry. Thus, the reader can expect to engage in deeper discussions of the analysis procedure and theory later in the thesis – and *outside* the confines of the theoretical framework and methodological approaches presented initially.

In considering the specific purpose of situating theory uniquely, I make a case for moving away from traditional forms of qualitative writing that segregate theory and toward reporting in a more integrated manner, especially in the case of interdisciplinary research. More specifically, it brings theory and methods to the data and analysis to provide a more coherent understanding, focusing on the ideas and procedures specific to the topic under analysis. In this way, I present multiple theories in the findings in a *discovery-oriented way* (Wolcott 2002) that engages with rather than detracts from the data and analysis. Thus, I define and unpack the theory or concepts as they are introduced in the analysis unless previously presented in detail, in this case, directing the reader to that area. Linking the theory, methodology, and analysis in the case study (chapter six), to maintain the integrity of the analytical pluralism that produces a certain type of interpretation and subsequently, allows the reader to become familiar with specific elements within a variety of analytical techniques (Clarke et al. 2016). The procedural layers of multiple structural analyses are revealed in combination to increase the impact of the counternarrative in which all the parts are situated and thus, more appropriate for understanding the complexities of the embodied story in a more digestible way.

This alternative way of writing and presenting qualitative research is constructive for engaging the reader to consider the specific components underpinning the interpretations and emphasise the topics presented, given that the reader is not left to revisit the theoretical framework in a past chapter but is immediately presented with the relevant information to make sense of the thematic and structural narrative analysis. Ultimately, by expanding the gaze of the traditional thesis via links to theory and methodology, I invite the reader to actively engage with the lengthy texts and multifaceted complexities of the thematic and structural narrative analysis in contexts of sport and health.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the existing body of literature relating to the main theories, concepts, and broader areas of research for positioning, designing, and conducting this study. I will begin by offering a formal discussion about interdisciplinarity, followed by a literature review that is centred around two main areas: mental health and physical activity. These overarching areas consist of multiple subtopics, including the background and context of Stormbreak, how mental health and physical activity are conceptualised in this context, and how it was brought together to inform the current research. This leads to the theoretical framework that represents the concepts and theories adopted in certain ways to respond to the focus of the study. I reveal how narrative forms towards embodiment can help to understand the diverse and embodied views of teachers in Stormbreak. The literature review aims to present a coherent synthesis of diverse theoretical perspectives and complex knowledge to consider the big picture. Building on this, latter sections are presented and framed to reflect the need for stories, to understand how teachers' embodiments are situated within the sociocultural and historical contexts of sports and health, and their influence upon the effectiveness of whole-school approaches related to mental health and movement.

To explore teachers' meanings of mental health, sport, and physical activity in a British context, I draw on works from multiple disciplines and fields including sports studies, health, education, sociology, and psychology. The interdisciplinarity of the research process is represented throughout the thesis, albeit pronounced within this chapter. I call attention to the relationship between research and practice, and diverse understandings of *the problem* or methodological approaches that offer a deeper understanding as opposed to *solving* the problem. To provide a better understanding of the study and to demonstrate how this study is situated within various theoretical insights alongside the goals of the collaborative externally driven project, in this section I introduce the contexts that influenced the choice of an iterative literature review strategy. Specifically, following a pragmatic approach for systematically reviewing the research literature in qualitative research, I used relevant literature *throughout* the research process to address four functional objectives:

> “(a) define the phenomenon in question, (b) identify the research gap in which the study is situated, (c) support the methodological choices made in the study, and (d) compare and contrast what was learned through the results of the study with what was previously known and not known about the phenomenon” (Chenail et al. 2010, pp.89-90).

Appendix A presents an overview of the correspondence with the above process, defining the research questions and the emergent style of the qualitative study. That is a reflection on how the approach was used to address each of the four roles of the literature review to offer greater transparency about the initial orientation that is most appropriate to meet the research aim. Along this line, as the scholars remind researchers adopting a qualitative analytical approach, “evidence is not a matter of quantity” (Chenail et al. 2010, p.90).

Finally, and as briefly mentioned in the last chapter, I bring together a literature review informed by research activities and outputs I have undertaken since joining the academic partnership with industry and collaborative research project as a doctoral researcher. In the initial stages of the research process, I explored the existing literature in the context of the larger research project to direct the specific research inquiry that is contextualised and contingent on collaborative work. Later in the research process, I iteratively continued reviewing the literature to distinguish the current research from the literature and better understand its value. For example, how the research aims, objectives, and methodology adopted meaningfully contribute to the charity-university collaboration and existing knowledge. In the next section, I consider the definition of interdisciplinarity and position this approach to the relevant literature, which was selectively drawn from multiple disciplines through an iterative literature review throughout the research process. Doing so, to frame the critical role of teachers and their embodied emotions in increasing the efficacy of, and long-term participation in, whole-school programmes mirroring the nature of Stormbreak. And, ultimately, for evaluating the methodology of classifying the current research-doctorate programme in interdisciplinary studies.

2.2 Interdisciplinarity

> "‘Interdisciplinary’ combined the notion that nothing is static or fixed, that discovery comes from breaking some conventional limit or barrier, with the desire to see things whole” (Frank 1988, p.146).

This suggests that interdisciplinarity conveys a more flexible, less rigid way of learning, favouring different disciplinary views. In this view, interdisciplinary research studies illustrate some degree of plurality, featuring a broader scope with pluralistic philosophical underpinnings or disciplinary efforts that go against the traditional focus on an individual branch of knowledge to seek far-reaching results. For this reason, there is an increasing interest in collaborative, pluralistically approached research and concomitantly funding projects such as the present study, which involves working across disciplines to develop new ways of tackling real-world problems (e.g., complex health issues) (Choi and Pak 2006; Aboelela et al. 2007; Choi and Pak 2007, 2008; Picard et al. 2011; Schmalz et al. 2019; Mandelid 2023). While the flexibility fitted to the term interdisciplinary is valuable, the ambiguity connected in parallel to this term has led to the construction of additional, equally vague terms attempting to reflect the relationships between different disciplines (Moran 2010).

In this respect, undertaking research that crosses disciplinary boundaries comes with an array of tensions, and blurring the definitions of multiple disciplinary approaches, like multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary, can take away from the benefits, goals, and efficacy of such collaborative efforts. Thus, I explore what makes this research interdisciplinary and the complexity of contributing in a new way to collaborative research, especially as an early career researcher with an *inherently* interdisciplinary background in bioethics. First, the term interdisciplinary is compared to multi- and transdisciplinary, highlighting the key features, strengths, and weaknesses of its meaning. Then, I examine how adopting an interdisciplinary approach to knowledge best suits the current research design and position this approach in relation to the specific body of literature that grounds it. Finally, the definition of interdisciplinarity is considered in relation to the larger research project, which the current study informs and includes multiple stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to present the practical and personal challenges I encountered in such multidisciplinary teamwork.

While the importance of using pluralistic approaches, such as multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinarity, over monodisciplinarity or one disciplinary lens is widely emphasised in health, education, and sociology, distinguishing between these terms that are often used interchangeably allows for better exercise of their specific strengths (Choi and Pak 2006; Schmalz et al. 2019). Exploring their different aspects and meanings helps depict the links between the broader disciplinary elements and their related research fields. In other words, the sub-disciplinary fields of study that have emerged from cross-cutting questions or problems can integrate compatible methods, paradigms, and epistemologies for a more holistic understanding (Weingart 2010). Accordingly, synthesising literature drawn from multiple disciplines and moving away from monodisciplinary research, the dynamic terms are conceptualised from a critical perspective to engage with this study of health promotion through physical activity. In this way, accounting for the multidimensional concept of integration is integral to epistemological frameworks for learning across boundaries (Klein 2021; Pohl et al. 2021). Moreover, interdisciplinarity is more than a form; it influences or implements collaboration or teamwork for complex problem-solving (Klein 1990, 2010, 2017).

More specifically, I follow the core characteristics within Julie Thomson Klein's (2010, 2017) conceptual framework for the broadening meaning and heterogeneity of interdisciplinarity to make sense of these three most widely used terms:

Multidisciplinarity – juxtaposing, sequencing, and coordinating. This approach captures the limited relationship between disciplines and their juxtaposition, where various disciplines are brought together to broaden understanding of a particular event or problem. Although this proximity widens the scope, each remains separate and retains its own identity. Importantly, their lack of integration and interaction is highlighted in this case.

Interdisciplinarity – interacting, integrating, focusing, blending, and linking. This approach is more difficult to define as it has more factors, with a varying range of interactions, scope, and purposes. However, I highlight the different degrees of interaction among the methodological and theoretical aspects that must come together to understand complex objects or issues. In this case, it spotlights integration and interaction as proactive for understanding through multiple perspectives or disciplines rather than a wide array of disciplines that constitute a broader scope. Importantly, this approach distinguishes the nature of integration, with attention to the degrees of interaction between disciplines, for making sense of the different disciplinary components constituting different forms of interdisciplinary work. In particular, the level of interaction that occurs when concepts, insights, and other parts of one discipline travel across another discipline to contribute to its framework, fostering new conceptual understanding and crossing the traditional boundaries of knowledge for a new way of studying cross-cutting questions or problems.

Transdisciplinarity – transcending, transgressing, and transforming. This approach transcends the narrow and establishes elements that were not previously connected, going beyond disciplinary, theoretical boundaries or worldviews to create new knowledge forms that advance understanding of a field.

Against this backdrop, interdisciplinarity is not considered synonymous with collaboration (Klein 2010, 2017), and the present study is not seen as interdisciplinary, solely based on the involvement of a third-sector organisation with affiliated partners beyond academia. In this sense, interdisciplinary research challenges the disciplinary hegemony and embraces new perspectives and directions to move beyond a narrow focus and singular way of assessing significant issues. The current research draws knowledge from several academic fields like sociology, psychology, education, and health, alongside collaborative working involving multiple stakeholders contributing their different expertise to address broader concerns around young people's mental health in the UK. Bringing together the interdisciplinary depth and breadth of information and critical perspectives on all aspects of health and health promotion in the context of UK schools allows for generating new, collective understandings relevant to the project goals and, subsequently, empowers creating impact.

Additionally, interdisciplinary research adds value to traditional fields (Klein 2017), in many cases enabling holistic consideration of complex societal and cultural factors (Klein and Philipp 2023) to comprehensively address complex, overarching societal issues – climate change, global pandemics and other diseases (e.g. COVID-19, mental health and well-being) (Vienni-Baptista and Klein 2022). In the thesis, I bridge the disciplines of education, social sciences and humanities for a landscape that includes the sub-disciplines of health, PE, sport, and pedagogy to understand multifaceted concepts like the *mind*, *body*, and the *mind-body* relationship in culture and society over time. For this, drawing attention to the historical and current political economy of education and the cultural inequalities of social change to better address persistent public health concerns for children's mental health through educational settings in the UK.

Sociologist Moran suggests that interdisciplinarity is always transformative, and in disagreement with the scholar in Interdisciplinary studies, Klein (1990), argues that it produces new knowledge in its engagement with discrete disciplines.

> Interdisciplinary approaches often draw attention, either implicitly or explicitly, to the fact that what is studied and taught within universities is always a political question. As the composite nature of the term itself suggests, 'interdisciplinarity' assumes the existence and relative resilience of disciplines as modes of thought and institutional practice" (Moran 2010, p.15).

While emphasising complex connections between disciplines, methods, techniques, theories, issues, and concepts is a strength, challenges can also arise because of the interrelationships between disciplines and fields within interdisciplinarity. For example, as a researcher lacking educational experience in sport pedagogy in an interdisciplinary study that emphasises sport, health, education, and society, and within which PE and sport pedagogy are reference points, influences the methodological, theoretical, and practical implications of this research through the different approaches, methods, theories or concepts I adopt. Specifically, I initially approached the research with limited knowledge of the relevant sport and health disciplines and of the perspectives between these disciplines and how they influence educational policies and practices in the UK. Consequently, not knowing how they can shape the outcomes of physical activity and health interventions like Stormbreak, and roles and responsibilities of teachers involved in such initiatives. A working solution to this problem is to clarify my position as a researcher through reflexivity in the thesis, being transparent about the experiences that shape my worldview (see sections 1.5 and 3.6) and, thus, how they shape the study and its interdisciplinary initiatives and processes (see section 3.4). The latter emphasises the specific ideas, concepts, and techniques that I draw on, understanding these across disciplines and the outcomes and implications of doing so.

Ultimately, interdisciplinarity is selected as it is best suited for socially constructed understandings on the topic of concern or answering the research questions in a way that is embodied and accounts for factors beyond the sociological lenses. This is considered in detail in the thesis, starting in the next section that uncovers a range of perspectives within education, psychology, the sociology of PE and sport, and health to generate cross-disciplinary understandings to frame the concerns and responses pointed at the increasing mental health issues among children in the UK.

2.3 Review of the literature overview

As mentioned, the review of the literature reflects the synergy between core topics, theories, and methods relevant to the interdisciplinary nature of the research. I provide an insightful synthesis of the key themes that emerged in the existing literature, mapping out the research landscape by using a wide range of perspectives and designs from empirical findings that work together to inform judgements on the efficacy, feasibility, and appropriateness of Stormbreak, followed by an outline of the proposed original contribution to knowledge. The chapter brings together the contexts of *mental health* and *physical activity* in education, essential in understanding teachers' experiences in whole-school interventions promoting mental health via physical activity woven to portray the whole. As such, I attend to the historical, social, political, and cultural contexts specific to its understanding.

First, the magnitude of the complex problem, growing concerns around children's mental health and its implications for health policy and practice are considered from an interdisciplinary standpoint. Medical, sociological, psychological, and educational research on childhood psychological conditions helps demonstrate the multiple factors that influence children's health and the long-term effects of childhood psychological problems in wider society and in and outside schools. Then, I set forth sociological perspectives within the specific areas of sport, PE, and sport pedagogy to illustrate the social forces that shape education policy and practice. After narrowing down the broader scope of the research on mental health and physical activity, I pay greater attention to the existing literature on implementing school-based mental health and physical activity interventions. Finally, I describe how applying an embodied approach best suits the study objectives by showing how most interventions differed from the multifaceted nature of Stormbreak and failed to understand the teachers involved adequately and, consequently, implicated. The theoretical framework for this approach is discussed in detail towards the end of the chapter, followed by the rationale for the study.

2.4 Mental health in context

2.4.1 Conceptualising mental health: an interdisciplinary lens

Mental health has traditionally been examined primarily from a psychological standpoint, while negative mental health issues or mental illness have been predominantly associated with the prevailing psychiatric discourse in the field of medicine (Patel et al. 2018; Rogers and Pilgrim 2021). However, addressing issues of mental health from specific scientific perspectives concerned with the mind and the brain, disregarding critical components such as social and cultural contexts, promotes a relatively narrow understanding that fails to reflect the multidimensional nature of mental health (Summerfield 2012; Chambers et al. 2015; Rogers and Pilgrim 2021). To develop a more comprehensive and contemporary understanding of mental health – not centred solely on dominant views in psychology, psychiatry, and neuroscience – it is crucial to adopt an interdisciplinary lens that draws on insights from different academic disciplines and fields. Interdisciplinarity is deemed important as it allows for emphasis on the central role of the interrelationship between the mind, brain, and body health in conceptualising mental health.

In recognition of the benefits of broadening the notion of mental health, the World Health Organization (WHO) conceptualises mental health, which exists on a complex continuum, as:

> "a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, to realize their abilities, to learn well and work well, and to contribute to their communities" (World Health Organization 2022b, p.8).

From this standpoint, mental health is acknowledged to encompass more than just the absence of mental illness (Keyes 2002), and the vital role of social determinants in enhancing mental well-being is emphasised (Saraceno and Caldas De Almeida 2022). Aligning with the long-standing globally recognised principle that there is 'no health without mental health' (World Health Organization 2021a, p.1), the WHO's *Intention to action series* (2023) incorporates the perspectives of individuals who have lived through diverse health conditions, including the impacts of living with mental health conditions, for better understanding and addressing the barriers and complex factors that can help manage these conditions and strengthen cross-cutting agendas, programmes, and services concerning health. The recent report highlights their aims to enhance the limited evidence on the impact of meaningful engagement, exploring important subjects such as the power dynamics and power reorientation amongst people with lived experience, health literacy, and community engagement across wider health networks and systems. This underscores the need for effective healthcare and social support, recognising that the benefits of change may vary for each person or community (Saraceno and Caldas De Almeida 2022). Importantly, it also accentuates the significance of valuing individuals with personal experiences as catalysts for positive change by raising public awareness of mental health and reducing the stigma associated with mental health conditions (World Health Organization 2022b). To this end, considering people's lived experiences as – *powerful narratives*, evidence, and a meaningful way of sharing solutions, challenges, and practices toward understanding and improving health outcomes, requires replacing the 'one size fits all' approach that underpins existing interventions for 'bottom-up inclusive co-creation processes with an intersectional lens' (World Health Organization 2023, p.1).

Rather than prioritising the mind over the body, as has historically been done (Turner 2008), this research rejects the rigid Cartesian model of mind-body dualism (Rozemond 2009)and embraces constructionism within the interpretive paradigm to support an interdisciplinary exploration of the inseparable connection between the mind and the body in relation to mental health. In moving away from a Cartesian approach, it is necessary to acknowledge the Biopsychosocial model that was conceptualised by George Engel (1977) and taken forward in health psychology, to understand the psychological and social dimensions, and not the biological factors alone, underlying health and well-being. While the biopsychosocial model still dominates in Western medicine, the significant influence of the biopsychosocial approach, suggesting there is more than a purely biomedical perspective, is important to consider as it directly contributes to more recent perspectives of health overall, and enables the sociological and interdisciplinary work that is embraced in the thesis. Shifting the focus from the predominant emphasis on mental ill-health to fostering interdisciplinarity in mental health research, I use an interpretive approach and qualitative methods that are – flexible and less constricted between disciplinary boundaries, to explore the context and the impact of social determinants underlying mental health. Thus, I draw on different disciplines to study mental health and well-being in a way that includes the views of individuals in determining their subjective well-being (Stewart-Brown 2013). Notably, it considers narrative forms as valuable for understanding the complex relationship between bodily experiences and psychological well-being in the current study.

Finally, employing an interdisciplinary framework that bridges the perspectives of sociology, health, and education offers a more meaningful comprehension and knowledge of mental health and well-being in contemporary society. Further, focusing on the nature of mental health and well-being in educational practices, in which the role of various stakeholders and professionals from the community with lived experiences, as well as diverse academic perspectives and methods, are considered, is especially useful in the current UK context of whole-school mental health interventions.

2.4.2 Amended The prevalence of children's mental health problems: a global public health concern

The mental health and well-being of children and young people (birth- 24 years) have become a major public health concern globally due to the prevalence of mental health conditions among children and young people over the past decade (Patel et al. 2018; Pitchforth et al. 2019; Ford et al. 2020). Globally, 10-20% of children and young people experience a mental health problem (Kieling et al. 2011), with one in seven adolescents (10-19 years) or nearly 14% of young people in this age group accounting for the global burden of disease (United Nations Children’s Fund 2021; World Health Organization 2021b).

In 1999 in the UK, the first survey in a series of the Mental Health of Children and Young People Surveys, carried out by the Office for National Statistics (2000), showed the prevalence of three main categories of mental disorder (emotional, conduct, and hyperkinetic) in 10% of children (5-15 years) living in England, Scotland, and Wales (Meltzer et al. 2000, 2003). In 2004, the second national health survey, Mental Health of Children and Young People in Great Britain (Ford et al. 2005), also included 16-year-olds in the repeated sample and added autistic spectrum disorders to the main disorder categories, showing no differences in the overall proportions of children with mental disorders between 1999 and 2004 (Green et al. 2005a). In 2017, the third cross-sectional survey, Mental Health of Children and Young People in England (NHS Digital 2018), only covered children in England but extended the age range, estimated that one in eight (12.8%) young people (5-19-year-olds) had at least one diagnosable mental disorder and showed a slight increase in the prevalence of mental health issues in 5 to 15-year-olds over time (Sadler et al. 2018). In 2023, recent findings from the fourth (wave 4) report in a series of follow-up reports to the 2017 Mental Health of Children and Young People survey showed that 20.3% of 8- to 16-year-olds had a probable mental disorder (Newlove-Delgado et al. 2023a).

Additional epidemiological research suggests that the first onset of mental disorders often occurs in childhood or adolescence, with nearly half of all mental health illnesses presenting by 14 years of age, and thus specifies the critical need for interventions to support the mental health needs of children and adolescents (hereafter mainly referred to as ‘children’) early on (Kessler et al. 2005; Kessler et al. 2007). Against this backdrop, it is also important to consider the factors that contribute to the dramatic increase in children’s mental health issues in the 21st century and have led to urgent calls for prevention and development of early interventions and treatments. That is the implementation of social work response strategies, which emphasise mind-body coping processes and include multiple systems (individuals, families, schools, etc.) to promote child well-being through policy and practice (Larkin et al. 2013).

Considering the magnitude of this problem from a sociological perspective, there is a growing body of literature that indicates that poverty dynamics and parental health are important driving factors of childhood mental health in the US (Kessler et al. 1995; Felitti et al. 1998; Smith and Smith 2010; Evans and Cassells 2014; Elmore and Crouch 2020) and in the UK (Fitzsimons et al. 2017). Childhood psychological problems linked with these social determinants of mental health include anxiety, depression, and substance abuse (Kessler et al. 2009). Additionally, high rates of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), traumatic events disrupting the childhood developmental stage as defined within the nine categories of more current research, encompassing economic hardship, parental death, and racial/ethnic mistreatment, are also associated with overall poor physical and mental health from childhood into adulthood (Crouch et al. 2020). ACEs, as first identified by the ten categories of childhood abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction in the original ACEs study (Felitti et al. 1998), include childhood abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional), neglect (physical or emotional), and household dysfunction (living with a household member with mental illness, divorce or separation, substance abuse, incarceration or domestic violence) in the first 18 years of life.

Comparably, recent findings from research in the UK also suggest the combination of poverty and adversity, encompassing domestic violence, parental mental health issues and alcohol misuse, particularly increased the risk of children's mental health issues (Adjei et al. 2022). In addition, more recent research shows how exposure to a parent/caregiver with mental illness and poverty during childhood impacts health across the lifespan, with more than 50% of children growing up in the UK exposed to at least one or both categories and the result of being exposed to them in combination strongly associated with negative health impacts for the next generation (Adjei et al. 2024).

Furthermore, and against the backdrop of heightened global concern over mental health problems, recent evidence supports existing concerns about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental health and services related to mental health provision for children worldwide (Newlove-Delgado et al. 2023b). The impact of COVID-19 on children's mental health, including the negative effects of lifestyle restrictions and social distancing measures during lockdown, has further highlighted the importance of children's mental health needs and the need for feasible, long-term interventions (Meherali et al. 2021), especially in the context of the UK (Holmes et al. 2020; Waite et al. 2021).

Taking an interdisciplinary approach to examine health concerns in society casts a wider net for considering diverse perspectives and contemporary agendas connected to the influence of politics and political processes and not isolated to social determinates alone. In this context, then, and accounting for critical sociological perspectives, it is valuable to account for empirical arguments linking the idea of *neoliberal epidemics* (Schrecker 2016) within the political and economic philosophy of neoliberalism to the current health outcomes and considerations. For example, Schrecker and Bambra (2015) posit the effects of neoliberal politics on health outcomes internationally and *between* the larger, high-income Western countries (e.g., the US and the UK, which are especially subjected to neoliberal economic and social policies). The public health researchers described how it produces economic insecurity and inequality and how that adversely impacts public health. They argue that neoliberal nations dominated by market-based public policies, with specific reference to the UK that pursued a policy of austerity to reduce government debts by cuts in public expenditure, are leading to less healthy and less financially secure populations. This is largely because of the decreased safety nets and poor financial upkeep of public support networks in these countries that serves to support people in lessening public health issues. Thus, from their view, the consequence of neoliberal politics is diminished living and health standards, as neoliberal practices create environments in which people struggle to afford nutritional foods, have chronic stress, and experience more adversity, all of which impact the increasing health problems of socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals.

In a similar vein, David Kirk (2019) highlights the disturbing effects of neoliberal policies and practices (e.g., poverty, mental health, gender inequality, etc.) to refer to the concept of precarity in this era of crisis and within the contexts of critical pedagogy and PE. In doing so, he argues that physical educators must be exposed to the serious economic and social challenges impacting children's well-being and, despite this *precarity*, be prepared to support children's health. Accordingly, he notes that enhancing children's well-being via PE requires inclusive and fair responses and PE teachers who are physically competent and literate. Although considerations to responses within the context of PE are offered in greater detail later on in the chapter (see section 2.7), I briefly draw on this framework for critical pedagogy here to integrate diverse views on the social, economic, and political determinants of health for the purposes of the discussion.

Notably, the perspectives of public health scholars expose how health issues affect social issues (e.g., poverty, inequality, and insecurity) and are largely a consequence of political and economic failures within society. Similarly, while most sociologists do not contest these views dramatically, the prescription of more skilled and engaged PE teachers as an antidote to children's mental health issues with 21st-century recommendations for whole-school approaches in an era of neoliberal globalisation is not adopted by all. This dialogue has become a popular framework for understanding health problems in social problems within broader theorisations of sport, physical activity, PE, and well-being, and again, as recently noted above it takes shape in the following sections.

Against this backdrop, several key determinants are strongly associated with increasing mental health conditions across the lifespan, which require urgent attention. Engaging with the existing research that emphasises these factors is vital to consider for a more comprehensive understanding of the concerns around children's increasing mental health issues and, consequently, the global policies that emerged requiring methods of health education and promotion. In this way, a broader lens illustrates the wider economic and social-political shortcomings in Western society and its negative effects on children's health and well-being. Those which point to an intergenerational cycle of adverse mental health conditions and developed into public health concerns that present implications for health and education policies and practices as they are meant to be treated through educational services. As such, while health outcomes are the consequence of different social, economic, and political categories, the magnified role of education in alleviating public health concerns is brought to the fore alongside the systemic pressures that place a strain on schools and teachers. The next section sets forth important considerations and consequences for enhancing the fundamental health needs of children through school-based prevention and intervention.

2.5 The context of mental health in education

2.5.1 Children's mental health needs in the UK: the role of specialist services and schools

The rise in the number of children experiencing mental health problems in the UK also significantly increased the demand for counselling services, hospital admissions for self-harm, and referrals to specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) (Pitchforth et al. 2019). The increased pressure on CAMHS and specialist resources fully stretched, with extensive waiting lists and delays in referrals accentuating the overall result of unmet mental health needs, consequentially presenting the need for a concerted effort by schools to prioritise the promotion of children's mental health (Atkinson and Hornby 2002). To underscore the importance of mental health services and programmes for early intervention and prevention, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education held a public consultation and published a joint report, Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper (2017), outlining the UK government's commitment to work with schools to address the mental health needs of children. Therefore, schools, working in conjunction with CAMHS, play an important role in identifying mental health needs that can appropriately support children at an early stage, and in cultivating an environment that has a beneficial impact on mental health and well-being (Hornby and Atkinson 2003; Rothì and Leavey 2006; Rothì et al. 2008). In light of establishing schools as key settings for action in which to promote mental health and well-being, there is growing interest in the effectiveness of school-based interventions or frameworks promoting the health and well-being of children (Lister-Sharp et al. 1999; Weare 2000; Weare and Murray 2004; Green et al. 2005b; Weare and Markham 2005; Stewart-Brown 2006; Langford et al. 2014, 2015).

2.5.2 Mental health promotion in schools: a whole-school approach

Health promotion, as expressed in the WHO's Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and recognised as an important standard for health promotion that guides healthcare policies in the UK today (Thompson et al. 2018), is "the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health" (World Health Organization 1986). While health prevention and promotion are seen to overlap and complement each other in some ways, there is a distinction between the two, and in this regard, *mental health promotion* is seen as promoting the value of mental health – and often used about *positive mental health*, to improve the coping strengths and capacities of individuals, as opposed to, actively improving their signs and symptoms – or mental illness (World Health Organization 2002). Similarly, the term *social and emotional well-being* is often used as an alternative to the term mental health so as not to be incorrectly associated with mental illness, and thus, the former is seen as more positive (Green et al. 2005b). While I frame the research predominantly with the term *mental health* as conceptualised by the WHO (2022b) in a positive, all-encompassing, or holistic way, in which emotional and social well-being and aspects are critical components (see section 2.4), I do not limit the review from different perspectives and fields (e.g., emotional and social – well-being, health, and education) that are fundamental to mental health (Weare 2000). Importantly, in recognising that mental health is an essential component of health overall, I also outline how Stormbreak, as a school-based programme, therefore, responds to this context and framed in conjunction with current UK government priorities and calls for action, sets out to address children's mental health needs by applying a whole-school approach toward mental health promotion.

To achieve positive outcomes both in and out of school and in general, to succeed in modern life, children in the 21st century require a balanced set of cognitive, social, and emotional skills (OECD 2015). Accepted as a central part of children's lives, given the considerable amount of time spent there, schools are notably seen as optimal social settings for implementing mental health promotion and prevention programmes that support their social and emotional development (Hornby and Atkinson 2003) and behavioural outcomes (Goldberg et al. 2019). This is because it has been indicated that health does impact education – and vice versa; thus, happy, healthy children can have better educational outcomes that are correlated with their improved health into adulthood (Suhrcke and de Paz Nieves 2011; Langford et al. 2015). The promotion of health in school settings has traditionally focused on health education, disseminating health information to children in a formalised manner as part of the school curriculum, with little evidence to suggest the long-term efficacy of these approaches (Brown and Summerbell 2009; Waters et al. 2011; Langford et al. 2014, 2015). Nevertheless, research has advocated for long-term mental health promotion programmes adopting *a whole-school approach* to enhance children's social and emotional development and mental well-being, where teachers, school leaders, and all levels of the school are actively involved in the collaborative process of cultivating change to achieve a more positive school ethos (Atkinson and Hornby 2002; Wells et al. 2003; Weare and Markham 2005; Jones and Bouffard 2012; Clarke et al. 2014; Langford et al. 2014, 2015; Meyers 2016; Oberle et al. 2016; Stirling and Emery 2016; Barry et al. 2017; Dray et al. 2017; Glazzard and Bostwick 2018; Mackenzie and Williams 2018; Barry et al. 2019; Glazzard 2019; Goldberg et al. 2019; Higgen et al. 2022). The nature of the included literature generally relates to the results of multiple studies, some including control trials in a meta-analysis, narrative synthesis, or systematic review of whole-school mental health interventions, that demonstrate the significance of a whole-school approach toward efficacy, feasibility, and acceptability in different ways.

Focusing on the evidence, systematic reviews have shown that not all interventions are effective, and the challenging nature of promoting children's mental health via educational settings since the broader meanings and influences of mental health are not consistent with young people's views about what directly helps or hinders their mental health being (Harden et al. 2001). For example, a meta-analysis of 45 studies involving 30 interventions and 496,299 participants between 4 and 16 years of age, and seventeen of the whole-school interventions in primary schools (57%), including in the UK, showed that interventions that included characteristics of a community component within a whole-school approach had a vital impact on social and emotional skills development (Goldberg et al. 2019). However, unlike previous works that indicated a significant positive relationship between the quality of implementation of whole-school mental health promotions and academic performances (Dix et al. 2012), including an 11 percentile gain in academic achievement among students (Durlak et al. 2011), these results did not display outcomes of academic achievement. This is consistent with the current evidence that suggests there are neutral to small effects of universal, school-based interventions aimed at promoting emotional or mental well-being or the prevention of mental health problems in the UK, with more positive effects found for poorer quality studies and those based in primary schools (students 9–12 years) (Mackenzie and Williams 2018). The various positive effects of emerging evidence in tandem with the widespread backing of whole-school approaches globally have placed the focus on determining the structures and processes that are needed to effectively embed and sustain practices within whole-school approaches (Brown et al. 2021).

A holistic, whole-school approach to school health promotion is based upon the WHO's Health Promoting Schools framework (1997) that recognises the close relationship between education and health (Langford et al. 2017), and the multidimensional nature of health and well-being comprises of the physical, social, mental, emotional, and environmental determinants (Weare and Markham 2005; Langford et al. 2014). To bring about the positive model of whole-school care, emphasising several aspects of the school, not solely the curriculum, requires change most notably in three areas of the school: 1. School curriculum, 2. Ethos and/or environment, and 3. Families and/or communities (Langford et al. 2014, 2015). Thus, for whole-school interventions to be effectively integrated into the school curriculum and sustainable over a long period, producing a range of successful mental health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes, heavily relies on all contexts of the schools (individual, collective environment, and wider community) to be committed to teaching, supporting, and engaging in health-promoting practices (Weare and Nind 2011). This overall commitment to the implementation of whole-school approaches includes continuing efforts by front-line school staff, primarily teachers to embed mental health interventions that promote a positive mental health and well-being culture into their classrooms. Further to their recognition as a core component of the whole-school approach, it is also expected that teachers must effectively adapt their pedagogical practices and classroom learning environments to fit within the programme boundaries. This is the focus of the current study.

Despite the vast amount of research on whole-school interventions, that are increasingly being implemented in educational contexts (Han and Weiss 2005), the effectiveness of this approach remains unclear (Goldberg et al. 2019), with a lack of evidence for outcomes related to mental health (Langford et al. 2017). In ascertaining effectiveness, the main challenges of a whole-school approach are noted as:

> - "Lack of adequate support (in terms of staff willingness and/or funding)
> - clarity operationalisation, and consistency in terminology used (this would also need to consider how mental health and illness are conceptualised)
> - having appropriately trained staff to provide support and supervision, and

- engaging young people in the development of the promotion of positive mental health" (O'Reilly et al. 2018b, pp.648-649).

This evidence represents the complex factors that are in broad agreement with other reviews evaluating the efficacy of whole-school mental health interventions with multifaceted outcomes but does not reflect the nuances that underpin these challenges. In terms of the difficulties in understanding these challenges, some of which are explicitly linked to overall staff understanding, training, and willingness/engagement, albeit all of which in some ways are influenced by teachers, and therefore, need to be explored in a more meaningful way that directly involves teachers and their understandings in these processes.

This consideration of teachers that emphasises their inclusion, experience, and expertise, is supported by research in a similar context that suggests that the limited evidence base for whole-school approaches aimed at improving children's mental health and well-being is a result of focusing on the development and evaluation of new, research-led interventions, rather than benefiting from the potential of local, contextually-relevant processes that can enable intervention delivery in local contexts (Gobat et al. 2021). Similarly, in educational research, researchers have argued that it is important to consider the research findings on professional learning, capturing the complex nature of teachers' prior learnings, dispositions, and behaviours in the evaluation of intervention designs directly involving pedagogical learnings that impact student outcomes, as a way of bringing together "research findings and designs that are often seen as paradigmatically separate" (Boylan and Demack 2018, p.353). Thus, although the role of teachers in interventions is highlighted as important, the nuance of teacher knowledge and experience related to mental health – understanding how it fits with contemporary mental health literacy in the professional learning and development training in interventions and the ways it influences on outcomes is largely absent from processes of evaluation.

Taken together, the importance of promoting the social and emotional well-being of children via school-based interventions is widely understood (Jones and Bouffard 2012; Durlak 2015; Barry et al. 2017), but the complexity of evaluating the effectiveness of change and improvement of strategies or programmes in schools remains less clear (Weare and Nind 2011). Further research is required to gain a better understanding of the varying efficacy of different interventions and strategies in addressing different types of pressure and to determine the necessary steps in implementing intervention across various locations with different access to resources (Saraceno and Caldas De Almeida 2022). Similarly, the various levels of success with a variety of interventions for mental health promotion in schools, alongside a lack of high-quality research evaluating the effectiveness of mental health promotion in the UK especially (Oliver et al. 2008), demonstrates the need for a more rigorous and wider evidence-based in the area of mental health promotion, which focuses on whole-school approaches for addressing children's mental health needs (O'Reilly et al. 2018b). Notably, whole-school mental health promotion interventions, such as Stormbreak, that aim to improve children's mental health are seen as potentially central to the solution.

2.5.3 Whole-school mental health promotion: the roles, experiences, and needs of teachers

To recap, the current evidence emphasises that mental health interventions are more effective when adopted by the whole of the school, as such, a whole-school approach requires accounting for the needs of all members associated with the school – staff, students, their families and communities (Spencer et al. 2022). That is not to say that the undertaking of implementing such school-based mental health initiatives is not complex and without its challenges (Gee et al. 2021). In the implementation of this approach to transform children's mental health in UK schools, teachers especially, are positioned in the front line to help aims of promoting well-being and generate a positive impact. Not only because they work directly with students, which makes it easier for them to facilitate the interventions, but also given that, parents often seek help for their children's mental health problems through teachers (Shanley et al. 2008). Thus, along with schools, teachers play a vital role in collaborative approaches to care for the welfare of children, and with greater reason due to the growing expectation for teachers to help in identifying children with mental health problems and referring them for external support (Hornby and Atkinson 2003; Rothì et al. 2008; Whitley and Gooderham 2016; O'Farrell et al. 2023), which in the specific context of the UK, involves referrals to CAMHS (Gowers et al. 2004; Loades and Mastroyannopoulou 2010).

As a result, teachers, willingly or unwillingly, are central to whole-school processes in the context of mental health promotion that impact children's mental health and underpin the wider, joint aims of the UK government and schools. In attempting to shift the focus away from the political and educational agendas and the widespread acceptance of whole-school approaches in the context of mental health, as illustrated in previous sections, to the roles, experiences, and needs of teachers in whole-school mental health approaches, the complex interplay between education, health, and policy and how they impact on each other becomes more evident. First, mapping the new landscape of teacher education in which teachers are expected to assume the responsibilities of identifying and managing children's mental health issues, in addition to delivering the national curriculum, and in the case of Stormbreak, promoting children's mental health via whole-school mental health interventions, despite not initially being a stipulation in their job descriptions or their motivation for teaching. This shows the importance of accounting for the views of teachers regarding mental health in the context of schools and changing responsibilities that involve collaborative processes. It also introduces the ways that the concept of mental health literacy differs for teachers in the context of mental health promotion interventions.

Despite the growing expectations for teachers in the UK, given their changing roles and responsibilities to support children's mental health, there is limited evidence in this area that directly focuses on their views regarding children's mental health. However, a qualitative study that explored the perceptions and experiences of 32 teachers from schools across England, regarding their responsibilities and competency in recognising and managing children's mental health problems (in their roles as Tier One Mental Health Professionals), demonstrated that although teachers appeared to accept these responsibilities and felt that they had a duty to care for their students' mental health, they simultaneously found the evolving nature of their role and responsibilities to be concerning (Rothì et al. 2008). Ultimately, the study showed the need for teacher training due to teachers feeling neither adequately prepared nor supported in their changing role, with the key issues described as a disconnect in communication because of confusion in different terminology between schools and CAMHS (as teachers often avoided using psychiatric language and discourse), a lack of confidence in identifying and addressing children's mental health issues in general, and concerns about not having explicit knowledge or training in mental health (e.g., in recognising less visible mental health conditions), as well as, the reality of implementing mental health training with existing time constraints and pressures.

Complementing the findings that show teachers have accepted the responsibilities of early identification and referral to CAMHS as part of their roles, research suggests that teachers can benefit from further training to adequately recognise and seek timely help for children's mental health problems and therefore, reduce the need for future intervention (Loades and Mastroyannopoulou 2010). These insights from past research on teachers' views in the identification of children's mental health, such as insufficient training and knowledge of mental health and mental health terminology (Gowers et al. 2004), are also seen in recent findings of a qualitative study that identified that upskilling teachers had the potential to facilitate early identification and lead to timely support. As well as, a recent review that identified and summarised the four main challenges of implementing whole-school mental health (see bullet points in section 2.5.2) that can undermine the benefits of a whole-school approach, three of which pointed to the needs of teachers within their roles in the interventions in the same ways (O'Reilly et al. 2018b).

Thus, there is growing emphasis on the need to improve teachers' mental health literacy and training within their roles to deal with children's mental health issues. This overlaps with the needs of teachers in the context of mental health promotion interventions. On the other hand, while the importance of improving teachers' mental health literacy in relation to the identification of mental disorders may persist, the current emphasis is placed on teachers and their mental health literacy because of their front-line roles in school-based interventions. For example, much like the teachers in this study and expectations for them to commit to the processes of Stormbreak, currently in the pilot phase. That is, mental health interventions that align with, and underscore, the wider public health goals/priorities and focus on schools, and relatedly, whole-school approaches for promoting positive mental health, as central to addressing the mental health needs of children in the UK. However, the existing literature on teachers' views regarding mental health in the context of whole-school promotion interventions in the UK – Stormbreak is profoundly scarce.

Against this background, for teachers to effectively manage children's mental health problems or support their mental health needs early, it is important to gain a greater understanding of their past and current understandings in the context of mental health. This is because, teachers in this crucial role may conceptualise mental health in diverse ways, adopting a range of beliefs and definitions in their mental health literacy from earlier experience that may not be as effective in the modern context. Perhaps like the teachers in the noted studies who often lacked appropriate training and knowledge and raised their concerns about the impact of their limited understandings to impede their collaborative efforts to support children's mental health in schools. In this way, it is useful to understand teachers' diverse understandings of mental health to better support whole-school mental health provisions that involve the important role of teachers in promoting children's mental health and transforming the school ethos.

The current study, therefore, which takes a different approach to understanding the challenges related to teachers in whole-school approaches, following previous works in this context, and in response to the need for contextually informed understandings, can lead to offering important insights into teachers that can progress the nature and potential of whole-school mental health interventions, including Stormbreak. Specifically, interdisciplinary informed understandings, using sociological theories in conjunction with psychological theories to offer a more theoretically informed framework for exploring teachers' perceptions, relationships, and identities, influenced by sociocultural scripts, and impacting their pedagogical practices of mentally healthy movement and the implementation of Stormbreak, can help to address a few of the methodological issues raised with previous forms of analysis and calls for more sophisticated understanding of how whole-school interventions work within school cultures and settings (Langford et al. 2017).Whole-school mental health promotion: the need for exploring teachers' embodied experiences of mental health

Qualitative insights drawn from the literature related to the delivery of school-based mental health programmes in the UK indicate that the sustainability and efficacy of implementing such programmes are contingent on contextual influences, with staff engagement and support and the school culture noted as key factors of impact (Gee et al. 2021; March et al. 2022). As such, and again, teachers are recognised to be crucial components in school-based prevention and intervention programmes for several reasons related to their responsibilities of delivering mental health practices that influence the mental well-being and social development of children – or change within educational contexts. Yet research demonstrates a significant research-to-practice gap concerning mental health practices and school-based interventions, for example, teachers perceived school psychologists to play a more important role than them in teaching mental health lessons (Reinke et al. 2011). In addition, recent research shows that UK teachers perceived themselves to lack the specific knowledge and skills required for promoting positive mental health (Maclean 2021).

This is problematic as neither teachers nor students can benefit from school-based interventions promoting positive mental health and well-being unless teachers actively perceive themselves as key influencers who seek to shape and enhance school culture to promote children's mental health (Jessiman et al. 2022). Against this background, the value of exploring the experiences of teachers within the context of mental health in the UK and the diverse sociocultural settings of schools is significantly relevant for understanding their levels of engagement and how it influences their implementation of school-based mental health promotion interventions. Given the limitations of previous intervention-focused research, including limited attention paid to teachers' personal and professional relationships to mental health in the past and present, adopting an embodied approach within a narrative inquiry (Clandinin 2006; Clandinin et al. 2007) – that emphasises the sociocultural and institutional influences on teachers' ability to convey concepts of mental health to children – is a promising alternative methodological approach that fits within their specific engagement with, and practices of, Stormbreak. Using this methodology to analyse the meanings and experiences of teachers in mental health can potentially provide theoretical insights that can benefit other mental health promotion interventions, also based on the premises of school culture change, along with expectations that teachers include physical activities in their classrooms to reinforce children's positive mental health.

2.6 Physical activity in context

2.6.1 The prevalence of children's physical inactivity: a global public health concern

The WHO defines physical activity as:

> "Any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person's work. Both moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health" (World Health Organization 2021c).

Recognising the significant health benefits physical activity has for the heart, mind, and body, the WHO suggests at least an average of 60 minutes a day of moderate to vigorous physical activity for children and adolescents; yet, few tend to meet their global recommendations on physical activity for health (World Health Organization 2010; Guthold et al. 2020; World Health Organization 2020). Even though insufficient physical activity has been established as a leading risk factor for non-communicable diseases, as well as having negative effects on both mental health and quality of life (World Health Organization 2013; Guthold et al. 2018). In recognition of this, and for the promotion of physical activity to be a current public health priority, the WHO has set forth various efforts to help achieve this.

For example, the WHO's *Global Action Plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases* (2013) proposes a global target, which was initially planned for 2013-2020 but extended to contribute to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, for reducing physical inactivity by 10% by 2025 and 15% by 2030. Additionally, following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO's *Global status report on physical activity 2022* provides recommendations for creating healthier and more active societies and practical guidance for countries to promote physical activity within national plans and policies of primary health care and sports, which include the implementation of a whole-school approach (World Health Organization 2022a).

2.7 The context of physical activity in education

2.7.1 PE, physical activity, and school sport in the UK

In the UK, physical education (PE) remains a compulsory subject of the national curriculum at all key stages to support the essential elements of child development, with cross-government commitments and substantial government funding allocated to schools recently for improved standards of delivery and the quality of PE, physical activity, and sport in primary schools (Education et al. 2023; Long et al. 2023). In England, current government initiatives combining work in education, sports, and health are outlined within briefing papers that emphasise the importance of PE, physical activity, and sports in schools for children's physical and mental well-being and the need for collaborative approaches that enable schools to increase children's engagement in sport and physical activities so that children reap the health benefits that ensue from participation (Foster and Roberts 2019; Long et al. 2023). Recently, for instance, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2023) published the government's new sports strategy, *Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity*, which set forth their aim to have 1 million more children be more active in England by 2030.

In light of current UK government initiatives related to PE, physical activity, and sport, and further emphasis by the WHO coining all schools as primary settings for implementing a whole-school approach to ensure children's adequate physical activity levels (World Health Organization 2016) towards achieving the new target to aid and reinforce lifelong health and physical literacy (World Health Organization 2018), the public health agenda has shifted towards transforming children's health. That is, in a holistic way that supports their multiple health benefits and developments in schools. In this context, regular teachers, again, teachers who are *not* experts in the areas of mental health/health and movement/sports, are now expected to implement physical activity interventions aimed at improving children's mental health and well-being in their classrooms. Within this role, they are charged with the responsibility of helping their students become more physically educated and active. Although regular teachers have become teachers of PE, sport, and physical activity – or *movement*, given their job role now encompasses the obligatory adoption and maintenance of contemporary public health initiatives and understandings, it does not necessarily follow that they have truly embraced the change or conformed to the existing views and discourses of physical activity culture.

Previous research in PE and sport pedagogy has illuminated the challenges faced by schools in implementing policy into practice, such as those encountered by headteachers when effectively cultivating and upholding an ethos that enables the provision of effective, high-quality PE and sport at primary school level (Rainer et al. 2011). Although recent studies continue to highlight the importance of PE, in helping children develop life skills in practice, little is known about the experiences of teachers who support children's development of life skills through PE (Cronin et al. 2023). Additionally, while the idea of inclusive education is promoted globally in the context of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4) (Nations 2015), recent findings from a scoping review of the literature on teacher's perception and practices show that PE teachers' subjective views on the meaning and importance of inclusion presented different challenges to how they enacted it into practice (Karamani et al. 2024). In this way, supporting earlier research in PE and sport pedagogy identifying the challenge of sustaining pedagogical change and policies that oppose traditional pedagogy, with teachers rarely moving beyond 'the honeymoon period' of implementation (Goodyear and Casey 2015). As well as research that acknowledges the importance of contextual factors, to understand teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning in relation to these pedagogical practices (Kern et al. 2021) and how they make sense of the implementation processes in their local contexts (Beni et al. 2023), for achieving pedagogical innovation with change.

In terms of sports practices, other than within PE, current research evidence shows that, despite continued investigations into understanding the processes and barriers of implementing contemporary health education and strategies regarding sports participation, there is limited research that explores the experiences of key stakeholders involved in classroom-based physical activity interventions (Cline et al. 2021). This points to a fundamental difference between collective (politically accepted and influential) and individual (teachers) views of PE, sport, and physical activity, as most of the empirical evidence supports the rationale behind accepting dominant views of contemporary health education, with little work accounting for how teachers value sport.

Addressing the current health needs of children, in this way, fails to coherently understand the complexities in the relationship between teachers' participation in interventions in the context of sports and teachers' sports experiences. That is, how teachers have come to learn about – accept or reject – sports in their lives, and how that influences their involvement in programmes related to the contexts of sports and physical activity. Ultimately, to enable teachers' participation in school mental health interventions related to physical activity, and support implementation effectiveness, requires more research on the relationship between teachers' personal views concerning the underlying discourses of interventions. For example, in the case, exploring teachers' embodied experiences in physical activity and their alignment to the dominant notions of physical activity, sports, exercise, and PE in Western culture, those underlying long-term government strategies for sport in the UK, and more directly, underpinning the framework of movement-based programmes like Stormbreak.

Reviewing the historical background of PE and sport in the context of education in the UK, highlighting the changes in past and present meanings, and the challenges and inequalities over time, is important for understanding the discursive elements that shape the current interpretations and priorities concerning PE, sport, and physical activity futures (Kirk 2009). This is because, while the contemporary understanding of *sport* is becoming more comprehensive and starting to embrace soft forms of physical activity, with girls more involved in these activities, historically, sports and PE have predominantly reinforced a highly competitive and male-dominated discourse in schools (Kirk 2002). This shift in the way sport is conceptualised over the years is important to consider in the current study that informs the larger project evaluation of Stormbreak, as the goal of Stormbreak sits directly within this conceptualisation by addressing physical activity culture. Stormbreak's whole-school adaption to a *positive physical activity* culture is formed in the context of the 21st century, and thus, characterised by current public health concerns and calls for action to address children's mental health needs in educational contexts.

In this view, Stormbreak seeks to embed an enjoyable, positive culture of physical activity in schools through their notion of "mentally healthy movement", bodily practices that respond to children's mental health needs, which can, in their view and words precisely, "create more happy, healthy humans" (Stormbreak 2024a). This incorporation of *mental health promotion* and *physical activity promotion,* along with contemporary understandings and terminology of mental health and sports within their mentally healthy movement and widely accepted framework of a *whole-school approach*, looks to address *two* major health concerns at current. However, Stormbreak's ambitious visions and strategies, underpinning crucial government priorities in the UK, are largely dependent on the views and engagement of teachers – the physical bodies that will be delivering their sports practices. Thus, recognising these processes involve female teachers, and the lasting influence of the gendered history of PE to have serious consequences for their childhood experiences in PE and sports (Kirk 2002), and in turn, their ongoing experiences within Stormbreak, serve to illustrate topics that are relevant in the context of Stormbreak and beyond this contemporary context of sport in the UK.

In this thesis, the focus is on how teachers who are engaging in physical activity in mid-to-later life by way of school-based interventions, particularly, Stormbreak, have come to understand PE, sport, and physical activity over the life course. More specifically, this study explores their experiences with PE, sport, and physical activity by drawing on the interpretive sociological understandings of the body-self relationship in the fields of sport and physical activity culture, to describe how teachers understand their changing bodies, selves, and identities when sustaining dominant views in modern-day physical activity cultures. As such, the following sections highlight the unique nature of this exploration by providing a more detailed review of the existing body of literature relevant to the context of physical activity and the importance of positioning the body as a site for understanding the psycho-social-cultural experiences of teachers.

2.7.2 Physical activity interventions: the roles, experiences, and needs of teachers

The literature pertaining to primary school teachers and movement interventions suggests that movement integration or additional physical activity interventions aimed at increasing children's physical activity levels are implemented in schools. While this is primarily seen in response to the rising public health concerns for childhood obesity and increased sedentary behaviours (Ługowska et al. 2022), with secondary aims often being to improve children's academic achievements despite constraints related to delivery (Goh et al. 2017; Routen et al. 2018; Mavilidi et al. 2019; Sember et al. 2020; Wassenaar et al. 2020), the benefits of physical activity for positive health (World Health Organization 2010; Carson et al. 2017) and general well-being (World Health Organization 2010; Das and Horton 2012) are now more widely accepted (World Health Organization 2020). Despite the numerous reasons that encourage implementing physical activity promotion interventions, qualitative approaches for the evaluation of such interventions are limited. This is unfortunate, given research has shown that qualitative strategies can help uncover some of the important factors that influence the processes of implementation, and although it focused on the target population of children and parents, the need to attend to the ways that information is transmitted to children during implementation was highlighted (Beltran-Carrillo et al. 2017). Hence, teachers, specifically, are placed at the centre of the Stormbreak evaluation.

Regardless of not explicitly requesting the changing role and responsibilities, teachers do play a crucial role in the implementation of movement programmes promoting physical activity culture to achieve optimal health and well-being of children in primary schools (Goh et al. 2017). As a result, there is a growing interest, globally, in examining the factors associated with teachers' experiences of implementing school-based physical activity programmes for developing competencies that support the continuance of physical activity programmes and subsequently, children's physical activity outcomes and various developments in school (Allison et al. 2016; Dinkel et al. 2017; Goh et al. 2017; Van den Berg et al. 2017; Watson et al. 2017; Routen et al. 2018; Malden and Doi 2019; Quarmby et al. 2019; Jørgensen et al. 2020; Jones et al. 2022; Schmidt et al. 2022). While several studies have been conducted in the United States (US), the focus here is primarily on prior studies in the context of teachers in the UK, with some insights offered into what influences their integration and delivery of movement in schools in the US and The Netherlands. For example, a study in the US exploring elementary school teachers' experiences of implementing a movement integration programme found that although teachers believed in the value and importance of movement integration, they identified the barriers to implementation as their perceptions of students' resistance to movement integration, students' inability to perform academic learning and physical activity simultaneously, and time and space constraints. Likewise, a qualitative study in The Netherlands described that all teachers showed a positive attitude towards physical activity, even if nearly all teachers also indicated time and space constraints, and a lack of financial support as the main barriers to their delivery of physical activity (Van den Berg et al. 2017).

Similarly, and more closely related to the context of the current study, a qualitative study exploring the acceptability and feasibility of a whole school approach to physical activity in UK primary schools reported that although teachers perceived the provision of PE, school-sport and physical activity positively, teachers recognised the major barriers towards implementation to be low confidence, with little knowledge and experience because of their limited training in PE, competing priorities related to the traditional teaching model, and time and space constraints (Jones et al. 2022). Complementing these findings, a qualitative exploration of UK primary school teachers' perspectives of the barriers and facilitators to the delivery of a school-based physical activity intervention (The Daily Mile) identified that teachers were positive about the initiative in general, but their style of delivery differed considerably across schools, and a significant number of teachers were concerned about the time-consuming nature of the programme and its impact upon children's learning (Malden and Doi 2019).

Although there is a growing interest in school-based physical activity interventions, multi-dimensional interventions adopting a whole-school approach for promoting children's physical activity in the UK, especially related to *mental health promotion* (e.g., Stormbreak), are largely underexplored. Subsequently, to date, the literature in this area specifically related to teacher perceptions of physical activity, as conceptualised in their personal and professional lives and in the context of mental health in the UK primary schools, is even more limited. In this sense, understanding teacher knowledge by understanding how teachers perceive physical activity in their daily lives via narratives of their selves, identities, and bodies can better support teachers in bridging the transition from traditional teaching to modern physical activity programmes, even for more multifaceted whole-school approaches, rather than, as a specific response to Stormbreak alone. Specifically, in this thesis, I explore teachers' embodied experiences of sports, PE, and physical activity, by drawing on the concept of embodiment as a lens for understanding the nature of knowledge or how teachers came to their knowledge and teaching in movement-based programmes.

2.7.3 Teaching physical activity practices: the need for exploring teachers' embodied experiences of movement

Intervention-focused research in the areas of mental health and well-being, physical activity, and sport acknowledges that teachers are highly influential stakeholders who impact children's health developments, the efficacy of health promotion programmes in schools, and as a result, wider public health outcomes. Therefore, it is especially important to understand their perceptions of factors that can impact this, and how to effectively engage with, and support, teachers in their delivery of multidimensional interventions. Despite emphasising their importance, theoretical frameworks for the development, implementation, and evaluation of interventions revolving around teachers and their pedagogies in mental health and physical activity, often fail to consider the psychological and social determinants that are acutely important for understanding teachers and impact on their engagement in bodily practices. Specifically, there is limited analysis that focuses on the embodied nature of teaching in the context of physical activity and multi-component interventions, therefore, this study explores the existing work in education research and the discourses of teacher education and adopts the concept of embodiment as a lens through which teachers come to learn to teach (Ord and Nuttall 2016). More specifically, I use this lens in a narrative inquiry (Clandinin 2006; Clandinin et al. 2007) to conceptualise teachers as embodied pedagogues involved in didactic interventions – and to reflect on how they *feel* in performances that may conflict with their values and ways of teaching and learning (Sparkes 2005). This theoretical lens is explained in more detail in the next section, while in this section, I focus on relevant research that places emphasis on the concept of embodiment.

Researchers in pedagogy and PE understand that our embodied values, beliefs, and attitudes have an influence on society, and similarly, society can influence us due to the closely-knit relationship between personhood and pedagogy (Camacho et al. 2006). This close connection wherein bodies are central to conveying movement practices, allows us to better understand the influence of teachers' values and beliefs of movement, engaging in the collaborative learning process by using movement-based practices in their classrooms. Considering the embodiment of teachers, the relationship between their bodies, identities, and selves in teaching physical activity practices is also useful for understanding the challenges and limitations of implementing, adopting, and maintaining effective teacher-led movement interventions in schools. This is because teachers' beliefs of movement, interconnected to wider cultural narratives of PE, sport, physical activity, and diverse experiences in contexts of movement and body cultures, shape their teaching practices and teacher-student interactions. Thus, teachers' embodied knowledge – how they came to know movement – influences their pedagogical practices. Given the relational process of learning and teaching between teachers and students, their embodied understandings and practices directly impact the understandings of their students who participate in the co-construction of knowledge within their classrooms.

The concept of embodiment is seen as a medium for enhancing understanding between the self (teachers) and others (students), which is central to pedagogy (Latta and Buck 2008), and concomitantly, pedagogical practices related to programmes that emphasise the importance of movement-based practices, such as Stormbreak. For this reason, there are various sociological approaches towards understanding the body using the concept of embodiment (Evans 2004; Oliver and Kirk 2016; Aartun et al. 2022; Standal et al. 2023), embodied selves (Armour 1999; Shilling 2012), and embodied identities (Fisette 2011) in PE and related subjects such as PE teacher education (Block et al. 2021; Fletcher and Hordvik 2023). Recent research suggests that an increased focus be placed on PE over the interests of sports and health for the nature of 'ability' within the particular discipline to enact reform in schools (Standal et al. 2023).

From this view, understanding teachers' personal, embodied experiences in the context of Stormbreak is seen as important to enable embodied teaching and learning in a way that opposes traditional pedagogy in PE and enables positive, meaningful experiences of movement (Aartun et al. 2022). In so doing, they use the concept of embodiment for studying what is less understood

– the embodied ways in which teachers came to understand and then teach bodily practices linked to positive mental health and well-being outcomes. Specifically, exploring teachers' lived experiences in contexts of Stormbreak can reveal diverse bodies, identities, and selves. These may be positioned with negative views of movement and traditional views of mental health, that challenge the aims and assumptions of Stormbreak and similar school-based initiatives in physical activity and mental health. Adopting this theoretical framework to gain insights into the cultural discourses that inform teachers' experiences of their bodies, and in turn, their embodied understandings of physical activity and health can help in managing their shifting subjectivities to bridge differences. In this sense, teachers may connect with the views and practices of such programmes that attribute positive meaning to movements for mental health in their own way.

To date, the perspectives of UK primary school teachers engaging in movement interventions that aim to promote mental health are understudied, especially in terms of understanding the impacts of psycho-socio-cultural narratives and individual views of mental health and movement as defined through their bodies. However, there is literature on the importance of the body and body culture in the context of PE that draws attention to the way the body is conceptualised and suggests a need for transformative pedagogies that challenge body culture in PE (Oliver and Kirk 2016). For example, sociological research in this context, which features life stories and draws on Connell's (1995) theory of multiple masculinities and gender power relations from a critical post-structuralist perspective, showed that male teachers were complicit to hegemonic norms of masculinity to uphold their masculinities in a way that aligned with social expectations and their experience of teaching in PE and school sport in the UK, and by doing so, perpetuated and reproduced dominant masculine forms within PE (Brown 1999). Similarly, exploring the nature of how teachers are implicated in the social construction of gender relations in teaching PE and school sport, highlighted how male student teachers served as "cultural conduits" in teaching PE, as their embodied gendered dispositions, those that they had learned through gendered pedagogy and brought into teaching, influenced upon their professional practices and through their embodied masculine identity and pedagogy were forwarded onto the next generation of students (Brown and Evans 2004).

This empirical research identifies the need for adopting an intergenerational approach to provide a greater context for understanding factors outside of teaching that add to the ways that teachers reproduce gendered cultures and practices within the profession of PE and resources for actions. Moreover, to disrupt the cyclical nature of traditional embodiments of gender and promote more gender-inclusive cultures in the domains of PE, physical activity, and sport, researchers strongly support the need to gain a better understanding of the varied influences of the process of enculturation (Brown and Rich 2002). As such, this research explores the social processes and cultural aspects underpinning primary school teachers' perceptions of PE, sport, and physical activity – in and out of schools – to better understand their embodiment in teaching various forms of movement. This focus on embodiment that places their body as central to teaching mental health movement opens the scope of understanding to go beyond the classroom teachings and the scientific, dualistic views that are deemed natural. In doing so, exploring further their new responsibilities for pedagogies of embodiment, and what the onus on regular teachers to become physical activity teachers means in their personal lives.

Further, highlighting the need to bring the concept of embodiment into focus when considering health promotion initiatives using body practices, is the notion that health is not the leading motivation concerning continued engagement in sports activities (Roessler 2005). Rather, the important factor is that people experience a deeper personal and social meaning in their physical activity (Stelter and Roessler 2005). Thus, broadening the perspective by taking an embodied approach, attention is drawn to the body – and how the body, the central medium in sports practice, *feels* in performance (Sparkes 2005) – to better understand the bodily experiences of teachers in sport, physical activity, and body cultures. Therefore, for this process, I use narrative inquiry to explore the experiences of teachers in the specific contexts of mental health and movement to better understand the stories that shape their understandings, and contribute to the construction of their multiple identities, selves, and bodies.

2.8 Theoretical framework: defining the key concepts and theories of the current study

While in the preceding sections, I bring together the key issues, theories, and concepts, that frame the larger project by means of Stormbreak and offer useful insights that point to the utility of embodiment as a concept for understanding the views of teachers involved in the processes. In the proceeding sections, I pinpoint the main theories and concepts that shape this study, grounded in a blend of disciplines such as education, psychology, and sociology, particularly, as a way of understanding the psycho-social-cultural experiences of teachers within the areas of mental health and physical activity, and their influence on teacher pedagogy within Stormbreak. This line of research embraces interdisciplinary perspectives and approaches towards a different – embodied way of understanding the important and evolving role and responsibilities of teachers in Stormbreak. In the sense that, and as I understood, the *embodiment* of teachers has not been explored as a construct in the context of school physical activity and mental health promotion interventions in this way before, and therefore, can be forwarded on and applied to the embodied understanding of teachers in future initiatives in sport, health, and education.

2.8.1 Narratives, stories, and narrative inquiry

Given the varying conceptualisations of narrative and, relatedly, narrative inquiry, a strand of qualitative research that covers a wide range of disciplines and professions, I incorporate the distinctive viewpoints within seminal works in the humanities, social sciences, and educational research based on the context of the current research (Mishler 1986; Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Lieblich et al. 1998; Clandinin and Connelly 2000; Riessman 2003b; Riessman and Quinney 2005; Clandinin 2006; Clandinin et al. 2007; Riessman 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2008b, 2008c, 2009a, 2009b; Riessman 2012; Smith and Sparkes 2012, 2016). As such, I draw on previous research, which has expanded my understanding of the fundamentally interdisciplinary nature of narrative work as a novice qualitative researcher and, in turn, significantly shaped the interdisciplinary perspectives of this qualitative research. In terms of narrative *analysis* and how I used narrative inquiry to make sense of narrative data in this research, I include more extended accounts in the following chapter around methodology and methods (see sections 3.3.3 and 3.3.7). Additionally, it is essential to note that the structure of the analytical chapters defies the traditional order, as I will draw on more literature and elucidate on a range of theories later in the thesis. In what follows, I attempt to define narrative inquiry and the related concepts used to refer to this genre of research in the ways I have come to understand and engage with its theoretical grounding without being restrictive, or as Smith and Sparkes put it, “not to prescribe that *this* is narrative inquiry” (Smith and Sparkes 2009b, p.2).

To develop this understanding and focus primarily on the growth and diversity of linguistic, theoretical, and methodological aspects that foreground this study, I first briefly outline how the terms discourses, narratives, and stories are differentiated and how I will apply these terms in the thesis. Doing so involves extending the views and definitions of social and humanities researchers that play a crucial part in constituting meaning to narrative research and narrative inquiry and analysis to narrow in on understandings of the sport and exercise sciences. In what follows, I define the three terms clearly to offer the reader a better understanding of their specific interpretation and usage in the thesis and, consequently, make clear the nuances between them and how I will adopt them for a more comprehensive understanding of diverse experiences in health and sport contexts.

The term discourse is traditionally attached to linguistic studies and broadly connected to the conceptual structures in language and events in speech (Labov and Waletzky 1967) or perceived as types of text or literary genres (Fludernik 2000). Relatedly, the term discourse analysis, a formal method for studying connected speech or writing, specifically, how events connect in speech (e.g., to look for content/theme) was first coined by linguist Zellig Harris (1952). On the other hand, Foucault's poststructuralist work on discourse and power lies on the epistemological assumption that knowledge is power and is relative to the contexts within which it originates and through the discourses that exercise it. In a Foucauldian sense, discourses are strongly interrelated to notions of truth/knowledge and relations of power/domination, as the latter creates discourse through what is socially and culturally embraced by society and is relationally embedded and constructed through language and practices:

> "What I mean is this: in a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth" (Foucault 1980, p.93).

To better understand the concepts of power/domination within this perspective in sport, I fuse the views of Foucault with Connell's theory of masculinity (see section 4.3.1 for the detailed discussion and application of this) and refer to the work of Bourdieu (1977) on cultural and social reproduction (similarly, see section 0), which helps to illustrate the social inequality and gender privileges that exist as a consequence of the dominant sociocultural discourses in sport. In this way, the critical dimension of the social emphasises within these different viewpoints for understanding multiple constructions of the self and identity (race, gender, class, sex) in sport and society.

Ultimately, *discourses* are defined here primarily by epistemological and theoretical traditions of social constructionism within the social sciences, and notably as connected to the body, sport, and power relations (Hargreaves 1985), and thus, socio-political constructions not free from broader political interests (Hargreaves 1992). Drawing on different sociological perspectives from qualitative researchers in narrative studies, sport psychology, sport and exercise, and PE allows for making sense of the meanings and language within discourses of sport in culture and society and the inequalities they can produce through narratives. As such, discourses are fluid, socially constructed, and a medium for social actions; those that create and shape meanings–experiences and lives, thus, serve to control *what* we do and *how* we do things (McGannon and Smith 2015; McGannon 2016). Accordingly, the social contexts in which they are created, recreated, and received, along with what is *not*, are essential to consider and study via discourse analyses (Smith and Sparkes 2005a). Highlighting these contexts or cultures of sport and physical activity can enable understanding the identities and selves constructed within and who they include, exclude – or marginalise (Schinke and McGannon 2014). Finally, discourse opens up several ways of understanding society and culture as nuanced, socially constructed, and linked with the constructions of the body, gender, age, class, sex, race, dominant Western ideals, etc., in the context of PE, physical activity, sport, and education (Brown and Rich 2002; Brown and Evans 2004; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Wellard 2016).

Further considerations to discursive ways of understanding continue throughout the thesis to conceptualise and extend the term to the specific contexts of embodiment (see section 2.8.2), narrative inquiry (see section 3.3.3), structural narrative analysis (see section 3.3.7.2), and dominant discourses of privilege (see section 7.2.1). In this vein, I intentionally leave theorising the constructions of the self and identity within discourses, those which are then situated within narratives or stories, until the next section on embodied narratives, as it is necessary to explain the terms narrative and stories beforehand for a more comprehensive understanding of the relations. To distinguish between discourse and narratives, discourses within the context of sport are seen as expressed through the body, practices, performances, and displays of gendered bodies. In contrast, narrative focus is central to the storytelling and storied forms of making sense of experiences, bodies, etc., and in that way, making it possible to draw from the different communicative forms within the sport, PE, and sociocultural.

Historically, in narrative studies, narratives have been understood in terms of coherence, for example, as seen in Labov's (1972) influential model that emphasises *fully-formed* narratives in terms of temporal order and sequential events (see section 6.3 for a detailed explanation, which is purposefully situated in the chapter that it is vital to understanding a narrative of sport trauma). While sociolinguist Labov's approach to studying narrative structure is still considered beneficial for analysing personal experiences, as portrayed in the structural analysis of one participant's narrative later in the thesis (see section 6.4), researchers have challenged the dominant paradigm of coherence for studying less conventional stories (Georgakopoulou 2006a; Hyvärinen et al. 2010) and narrative dimensions (Ochs and Capps 2001; Ochs 2004). Hyaline et al. (2010) suggested nurturing a paradigmatic change within narrative studies that opposes the coherence paradigm. This paradigm, as they described, generally assumes that (a) good and coherent narratives are linear and chronological, with a beginning, middle, and end, and a thematic closure; (b) narrative and storytelling mainly function to create coherence for an experience which is mainly unstructured (seen as either a benefit or downside of narrative); (c) people live a more ethical and good life if both their life story and narrative identity are coherent (or opposingly, a narrative that creates such coherence can be harmful).

In this respect, and for this research, I primarily adopt the epistemological considerations of Smith and Sparkes (2008c) to make sense of the term narrative. Their perspectives align with the evolving views of several researchers who similarly adopted less rigid notions of narratives for understanding human experiences in sociological studies (Mishler 1986; Georgakopoulou 2007; Riessman 2012; Griffin and Phoenix 2016). Not surprisingly, they are consistent with ways of understanding the messy, embodied nature of narratives in anthropology (Ochs and Capps 2001). Although a variety of definitions of the terms narrative and stories have been suggested, in this thesis, I use the following descriptions to distinguish between *narratives* and *stories*:

> “We organise our experiences into narratives and assign meaning to them through storytelling. Narratives thereby help constitute and construct our realities and modes of being. They help guide action and are a psycho-socio-cultural shared resource that gives substance, artfulness and texture to people’s lives. Thus, stories envelop us and are a way of life” (Smith and Sparkes 2008c, p.18).

Storytelling, conceptualised from the view of these scholars who have significantly influenced the development of narrative research over the last decade, is then seen in the study as a type of narrative in which people tell stories revealing personal, social, and cultural lives and experienced realities Since narratives help create our realities and modes of being by providing us with frames to order our experiences and make sense of them through the telling, our personal stories, therefore, cannot entirely be separate from social stories. Thus, stories are sociocultural – not only personal (Riessman 1993; Smith and Sparkes 2008c).

Also recognising the storied nature of human life in which people compose personal stories that are rooted in the social and cultural context, Murray (1999) described that:

> “Narratives do not, as it were, spring from the minds of individuals but are social creations. We are born into a culture which has a ready stock of narratives which we appropriate and apply in our everyday social interaction” (Murray 1999, p.53).

The above highlights a fundamental assumption in narrative inquiry that is widely agreed upon, which revolves around how storytelling or stories are contextually situated. From an epistemological perspective, narratives operate twofold: as a way of telling about our lives and as a way – or means of knowing (Richardson 2000b). Likewise, pointing to the epistemological assumption that narrative inquiry is grounded in, Bell (2002) argues that humans make sense of miscellaneous experiences through already enacted structures, where we select specific instances or elements of experiences to focus on and pattern our experiences in ways that resemble the stories available to us. This is because, as Smith (2007) explained, “people understand themselves as selves”, that is, negotiating their identities – who they are, “through the stories they tell and the stories they feel part of” (Smith 2007); thus, the self is constructed – and stories *do* things – in relation to others.

In this view, the concept of narrative is connected to the construction of identity and senses of self since narratives help construct our modes of *being*. Again,

there is a range of ways that narrative identity is conceptualised across diverse disciplines, I primarily adopt the viewpoints of Smith and Sparkes (2008b) also to understand the multiple ways that selves and identities are shaped by the larger sociocultural influences of the world. In this way, the terms self and identity in narrative inquiry are multifaceted and attached to social, historical, political, and cultural contexts. Thus, both are defined and seen in the plural – identit*ies* and sel*ves* constructed through narratives in and through time. Notably, although I draw on the narrative work of several sociological researchers, I consider their views in greater detail later in the thesis with specific reference to the context or within the particular modes of narrative analysis they are used (e.g., Frank’s socio-narratology is introduced as a mode of analysis in section 3.3.7.2 with more detailed descriptions provided in section 6.2.3 to preface its application later in the chapter).

As a prelude into the diverse terrain of narratives across boundaries, I briefly draw on the medical sociologist Arthur Frank whose work in narrative, experience, and ethics intersects with my interests and background in bioethics. Frank (1995) is mainly known for his illness narratives that have significantly contributed to the ways of understanding and doing research in the domain of sport and exercise psychology. Specifically, he posited that storytellers and listeners structure and interpret stories *alternatively* and *repeatedly* using these three major narrative types:

Restitution: The first narrative type represents notions of the achievable goal of health—wanting to get well and being reassured that recovery is a possibility, and illness is temporary. This is seen to be the dominant storyline, or 'culturally preferred narrative,' given that individuals who are suffering from illness desire to be healthy again.

Chaos: The second narrative represents the disconnection and dealing with notions of remaining ill endlessly. It is seen as an 'anti-narrative' that lacks progression over time and is diminished to a series of chaotic events because there is no chance of recovery. Thus, those telling chaos stories are principally 'the wounded storyteller', yet individuals truly *living* in chaos cannot put it into words.

Quest: The third narrative type represents the illness process as a discovery, a journey in which the person can learn about themselves via storytelling.

Interestingly, the author more recently described the fuzzy boundaries of narrative psychology due to the predominant focus on illness narratives with less attention paid to his other vital narrative works (Frank 2010):

> "I don't take that personally, because there are also no references to my most significant resources for thinking about stories and storytelling. No references to the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (2000), whose writing on *disposition* is crucial to how I address the question of how we select which stories we pay attention to and which we readily ignore or forget" (Frank 2019, p.122).

In this way, Franks draws attention to the limited ways in which narratives can be conceptualised within specific fields or disciplines, where the disinterest in his non-psychological forms of narratives reflects a broader lack of interest by researchers in *different ways of thinking about stories*. While I focus heavily on the work of Bourdieu by elucidating and applying it in various ways later in the thesis (see section 4.3.1.5), I continue to focus here on Frank's work by adopting his views to distinguish between the concepts of narrative and stories. Like Smith and Sparkes (2008c, 2009b), Frank (2002a; 2019) focuses on experience as dependent on *learning* from other stories and how to tell a story, making experience in its original form – a narrative. The concept of 'narrative learning' or 'life learning' is beyond the traditional way of understanding learning (e.g., knowledge and skills), as it is a fundamental form of mean-making and a core site for personal learning via a person's sense of sense which is narratively constructed and through the process of living (Goodson and Gill 2011).

In light of these points, Carless and Douglas (2010, 2017) use narrative methodologies to explore mental health and identity in contexts of sport and physical activity in which narrative is both a method and a way of theorising psychosocial phenomena. Douglas and Carless (2006) use Frank's (1995) narrative types to conceptualise the dominant narratives or 'performance narratives' among women golfers to understand the experiences as lived and how the sports cultures influence the mental health and identity development of these professional athletes in high-performance sports. They consider the dominant narrative in sport as a storyline of a single-minded focus and dedication to success/achievement and prioritising winning above all other aspects of life. According to Douglas and Carless (2006, 2009, 2015), when the performance narrative ceases to "fit" the elite athlete's changing lives, or in other words, fails to align with their personal experiences, then the professional elite sports people experience narrative disruption and mental health difficulties and sometimes trauma as an alternative narrative to guide their personal lives is not available. I draw on the performance narrative type later in the thesis to consider important issues related to broader sociocultural factors and teachers' personal experiences of mental health and sport (see sections 4.3.1.3 and 5.4.2). Thus, exploring their diverse stories and how they make sense of their relationships in contexts of health and sports as the narrative no longer aligns with their embodied learnings at various intervals over the lifecourse.

The importance of narratives is equally shared in education. For example, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) understand narrative inquiry or inquiry into narratives is as both *phenomenon* and *method,* distinguishing between the two by referring to the phenomenon as a story and the inquiry as a narrative. Narratives as a phenomenon, for them, is the view that humans are natural storytellers who lead storied lives, that is, both individually and socially, and use stories as a way of telling others about those lives. From this view, education and educational research, in which "teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and other's stories" (Connelly and Clandinin 1990, p.2), is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories. These stories of teachers or teachers' stories are seen as educational literature or storied resources that, when studied, can provide us with an understanding of the way they experience the world. In this way, studying and describing the structured ways that people experience the world – or their *stories to live by* (Connelly and Clandinin 1990). Narrative inquiry as a method may also be understood as a mode of analysis or narrative analysis that "takes as its object of investigation the story itself" (Riessman 1993, p.1) in that people are so strongly immersed in culture – "speaks itself" through their stories. From this analytical lens, narratives refract, as opposed to mirror, people's past experiences that are situated in the social and historical contexts that shaped their identities and provided the cultural resources used to construct them; thus, cultural narratives make personal stories possible (Riessman 2005).

Repositioning this view, Smith and Sparkes (2008b) imply that people construct their identity and sense of self by using the available narrative resources in a strategic way that essentially helps them form personal stories, which later in life are seen as a distinctive event to their particular life, rather than actually being unique to their life alone. Against this, they propose that storied resource perspectives demonstrate the potential to include their view that identities and selves are both social and personal, where people can draw on a cultural stock of available stories that are specific and unique to their life events particularly but are not entirely separate from the social. For example, they note that, even within the boundaries of these wider sociocultural frames, people still have a level of autonomy regarding the way that larger storylines are adopted. They point out how this could be viewed through people's capacities to – edit stories, choose the genre of story they wish to tell and live, the people they tell their stories about, and the people who they tell their stories to. Ultimately, they emphasise that the selves and identities constructed via narratives are sociocultural phenomena, understood through our dynamic relationships and taken up, modified, and personalised. Therefore, to an extent, people actively engage in constructing their identities and selves via the stories they consider worth telling and living, as well as actively making their stories to live by.

Notably, agreeing with the common ground amongst scholars that suggests that larger sociocultural narratives shape our stories, I draw on aspects from their social construction perspectives on selves and identities as viewed and defined in plurality, even if limited by wider social frames. I aim to tease out the degree of emphasis that is given to the social dimension for understanding identities and selves within different modes of narrative *analysis* in the methodology section by offering a typology of perspectives on the reasons for applying them in the plural. Further, appreciating the many variations and differences in terminology, in this thesis, I often use the terms narrative or narratives synonymously with story or stories unless referring to the more structured features of Labov's model of narrative analysis, which requires more specific language and processes (see section 6.3). The reason for this choice is not to exclusively focus on one or the other in the modern day, but rather because "people do not tell narratives, they tell stories; 'let me tell you a narrative' sounds strange" (Frank 2000a, p.354). I take this in combination with, and similar to Douglas and Carless (2009), who acknowledged this ambiguity and used the terms narrative and story interchangeably by following Frank's usage of the terms:

> "*story* when referring to actual tales that people tell and *narrative* when discussing general structures that comprise particular stories" (Frank 1995, p.188).

Interestingly, in a similar vein, Riessman (2008) described how, in the past, she had stressed the difference that "a story is one kind of narrative, while there are other kinds…" (p. 6) with distinct features and structures (e.g., habitual or hypothetical). However, more recently, although Riessman is certain that "the definition of story (reminiscent of Aristotle)" (p.7) continues to be relevant for the field of sociolinguistics and acknowledges that "narratives are strategic, functional, and purposeful" as they "do political work" (p. 8) by serving different (sociopolitical) purposes for individuals than groups, she has conformed to *contemporary conventions* by frequently using the two interchangeably in text. Further attention is given to the contemporary prevalence of personal stories "reflecting, and producing the cult of 'the self' as a project in modernity" while narratives remain to have "robust life beyond the individual" (Riessman 2008, p.7).

This reflects the shift in understandings which can be interpreted as the result of the term narrative evolving, with new meanings ascribed to it over time and, because of this evolution, influencing new ways for narratives and stories to exist in our lives today, even if the grammatical ambiguity remains. Following this view for the purposes of the research, the more contemporary conventional use of narratives and stories is applied, although, and to reiterate, narrative and story are more explicitly used specifically for addressing Labov's sociolinguistic analytic approach. As such, I recognise the distinction and importance of these terms in – time, contemporary life, and in the context of the research.

Additionally, in agreement with Bamberg (2012), who also uses the two interchangeably to refer to storytelling and stressed that as narrative inquirers, our shared interests in stories, in general, should be around "what people do when they engage in storytelling" (Bamberg 2012, p.202). So, as he argues, we can focus on the important elements of storytelling, like the content and structural properties. Again, this revolves around the commonly agreed-upon view in narrative inquiry that places emphasis on stories to be considered and calls for multiple perspectives and meanings (Smith and Sparkes 2008c; Griffin and Phoenix 2016). As such, committing to a constructionist epistemology, the relational nature of narratives, and the multidimensional nature of narrative inquiry that is not definitive, I incorporate aspects linked to the psychosocial and the storied resource perspectives in ways that complement the concept of embodiment within narratives. Finally, it is worth noting that dominant, grand, master, larger, wider, prevailing, pervading, and broader, are often used interchangeably to refer to dominating discourse or narrative.

2.8.2 Embodiment, the body, and body pedagogies

Using narrative inquiry for exploring teachers' subjective experiences within the contexts of movement and mental health is tied to the notion of embodiment that helps provide a sense of their worlds to explore and better understand their embodied practices of mentally healthy movement. Their bodies as implicated in their current positions and practices of delivering physical activity and mental health in school and shaped by contexts beyond their involvement in Stormbreak. For this, I draw on sociological works on the body that emphasise the centrality of the body in the fields of education, health, sport and exercise psychology, and as such, provide a theoretical foundation for conceptualising the multifaceted nature of teachers' bodies and a framework towards embodiment that guides the study. I begin by briefly defining the concepts of embodiment and pedagogy to offer a clear understanding of the meanings and usage of the two in the thesis. This will contribute to understanding the embodied narratives within this thesis, particularly a counternarrative that goes against dominant ideologies and, ultimately, their implications for new movement-based approaches in education.

Pedagogy and embodiment are both widely used terms in the literature, with several different understandings equated with their meanings depending on the contexts. Here, I primarily define these terms within specific contexts of movement, sport, physical activity, PE, and health, and as part of that, draw on interpretive sociological perspectives of the body for the key underpinning ideologies. In this way, recognising the significance of the body – the different ways real bodies move, change, or grow over the life course for learning and teaching sport, health, and PE in schools (Evans et al. 2009; Sparkes and Smith 2011). Consequently, in the thesis, *embodiment* defines the subjectivities, the relationships between mind, body, and culture, as expressed in our identities, bodies, and selves, and shaped through power/control in society and culture. Appreciating this in the context of education and from a constructivist approach, I understand *pedagogy* as how children come to learn in educational settings, profoundly shaped by social, historical, and political structures, with attention to how wider sociocultural factors operate to influence teaching and learning directed towards social change.

For the latter, I briefly recognise the influential work of Basil Bernstein (1996) on pedagogy that integrates three key factors: language and social class, curriculum construction, and knowledge production (Scott 2008). These elements constitute his notions of pedagogical practice, which as he described in short, refers to "a fundamental social context through which cultural production-reproduction takes place" (Bernstein 2000, p.3). From a Bernsteinian perspective that focuses acutely on the underpinning ideologies influencing the socially constructed forms of pedagogical practice and discourse, knowledge in the subject of PE extends wider than school contexts. Pedagogical discourses in this model are primarily defined by the two categories of *control* and *power* relations and operate to carry the two in different ways. Distinguishing between the two categories from this view, control produces legitimate communications *within* given forms of interaction in pedagogical practice, whereas power produces relations *between* categories of pedagogical discourse (its agents and context). Bernstein's sociology helps reveal the contents of the curriculum and the hierarchical knowledge structures underpinning it, how social and cultural forces from *outside* education shape students' specific understanding and the specific functions and rules within education and school settings, to reproduce existing inequalities.

The notion of pedagogy has changed over time with new ideas and thinking about what it means. Yet, this does not imply that past works have been replaced by new understandings; rather, it suggests the evolution of these perspectives over the years and how frameworks have been reconceptualised for a greater understanding of embodied learning and the inherent connectedness of the mind, body, and culture in pedagogy. Importantly, this includes more commitments to criticality – using critical approaches in PE and PE teacher education (PETE) to examine and challenge constraints to its ideology by engaging with the present educational context and dominant constructions of the power relations that work to produce social inequalities (Kirk 2019; Tinning 2020; Brown and Lloyd 2024). Thus, I draw on these more recent ambitions for a *critical pedagogy* that appeals to the interdisciplinary nature of this research and, albeit in different ways, is inclined to disrupt the normative patterns in PE and PETE and informed by the principles of social justice.

For example, notions that draw attention to the increasing *need* for critical pedagogy in the social, cultural, political, and economic context of today to enable young people to be more *skeptical*, a disposition that is seen as married to the idea of criticality, and engage them "in meaningful ways that connect with their subjectivities and life experiences" (Tinning 2020, p.983). In this way, ideas are influenced by the seminal works of Paulo Freire (1972) and Henry Giroux (1981, 2009), and associated past critiques of critical pedagogy rooted in understanding the complex relationship between power and knowledge for PE and PETE.

In alignment with these assumptions in pursuit of equity and inclusion, and for this reason, I apply an embodied approach that acknowledges the subjective, corporeal/bodily, lived experiences of movement and recognises that social determinants (e.g., class, age, gender, and ability) influence participation in the contexts of sport, physical activity, and PE (Wellard 2016). That is, appreciating the role of the body as a corporeal reality/entity with *fleshy feelings* (flesh and blood, sentient, thinking and feeling) and its corporeal importance in the ways children learn sport, health, and PE in schools (Evans et al. 2009). This approach is deemed useful and important in the field of sport and exercise psychology as it offers a way of understanding diverse, embodied experiences in sports for making sense of the existing societal inequalities related to body/culture problems. Concomitantly, it pays attention to the selective sports interactions that we subjectively remember or retain and then actively construct, share, and communicate through a process of storytelling (Sparkes 2005) that is premised on the view that "the *body is a storyteller*, and *narratives are embodied*' (Smith and Sparkes 2009b, p.5). Engaging in the dynamic process of storytelling by adopting this view in the current study then provides a deeper understanding of how primary school teachers involved in Stormbreak embody the notions of health and sport through their material bodies. How they construct the selves and identities, which have been linked to analytical approaches to memory and pedagogical selves and practices. This collective memory *work* – "is not only experience, but work with the experience" (Haug 2008, p.22) or collective biography that exists via language, reading, and writing, and includes family, time, embodiment, and context is seen as a way that informs teaching practices – *pedagogy* (Clift and Clift 2017) .

I draw on a few significant points shared by Carless and Douglas in *Sport and Physical Activity for Mental Health* (2010) as presented below, alongside brief reflections that will help contextualise the participants and make sense of the dominant narratives in sport and health in this study. In this sense, portraying the various degrees of diverse experiences and emotions to better understand the reoccurring themes, including but not limited to: 21st century dominant mental health narratives, dominant cultural narratives of physical activity, dominant ideals in the 21st century/contemporary day related to movement and mental health and the body (e.g., movement as desirable). Importantly, and in line with the view of the authors, I recognise that *our* perspectives influence these themes and as Braun and Clarke (2022b) chant: *themes do not simply emerge*.

> “Stories of the experience of mental health problems are highly diverse and individual. However, we see several themes (which may be experienced in different ways) across personal accounts of mental illness. These include fear, isolation, joylessness, hopelessness, a loss of agency, a sense of inactivity or emptiness, and distress that is total, permeating a person’s life in profound ways” (Carless and Douglas 2010).

Especially as some teachers are participating in sports and physical activity later in their lives by incorporating embodied learnings that require them to teach – move, and change their bodies in different ways. Feel and experience in new, alternative ways. Given that teachers are expected to embrace new pedagogical practices with *dominant cultural practices that are shaped through larger cultural forces*, specifically, to accept contemporary notions of physical activity culture that intersects with mental health and well-being and deviates from their traditional forms of teaching.

> “Most existing research reports broadly positive conclusions regarding the mental health benefits of physical activity. However, the majority of studies have focused primarily on the potential of physical activity to alleviate symptoms as opposed to contributing to recovery in a broad and holistic manner” (Carless and Douglas 2010).

Consequentially, teachers must renegotiate central features of their personal and professional bodies and identities to align with socially accepted notions of what it means to be *healthy* – or dominant narratives of health and well-being in Western society. However, as emphasised in the current study through one participant’s counternarrative of the visceral materiality of her sport trauma, not all teachers readily accept these dominant narratives with the assumptions of movement always being positive for mental health as shown.

> “The experience of a mental health problem – alongside the processes of diagnosis and treatment – can interact in powerful ways with a person’s understanding of themselves and their goals and aspirations for life. Often, people who have experienced severe mental health difficulties describe a loss of identity and sense of self alongside a loss of meaning and purpose in their lives. Marginalisation and disempowerment are common

> themes in individuals' accounts of being users of mental health services" (Carless and Douglas 2010).

In attempting to better examine this shift within teaching and what this change looks like or means in the context of both personal and professional lives, I pay close attention to the *embodied narratives* told by these teachers as a way of storytelling, voicing and talking about their *lived experiences*. For this, I draw on the perspective that narratives are told *about, out of,* and *through* their bodies (Smith and Sparkes 2012). In doing so, their narratives can reveal the discourses that help them construct the multiple ways of knowing and understanding sport and sport cultures (Schinke and McGannon 2014) and contribute to the (re)constructions of their selves, identities, and bodies within these contexts (Kerr and Stirling 2014). This is helpful because discourses, which serve to reflect different worldviews, positions, and constructions, can show how teachers' beliefs may conform to or contradict the nature of Stormbreak. Specifically, the different embodiments that teachers have created and situated within their daily language and discourse will actively shape, enable, or constrain their practices of Stormbreak. In this way, the "dominant discourse of health and sport" or Stormbreak's dominant notions refer to the idea that sport or movement is always positive for mental health, which also aligns to wider public health goals in the UK about advancing health via movement, and more specifically, interventions like Stormbreak.

Similarly, teachers will either accept or reject Stormbreak's dominant discourse of health and sport based on how it emphasises – produces or reproduces their ways of knowing or what they believe about health and sport over the life course. For example, as Wright (2009) emphasises:

> "One of the most powerful and pervasive discourses currently influencing ways of thinking about health and about bodies is that of the 'obesity epidemic'" (Wright 2009).

As such, and as pointed out above (see section 2.7.2), while multidimensional initiatives similar to Stormbreak are adopting physical activity relating to the mental health needs of children, there is a prevailing epidemic related to obesity in the UK. Thus, the focus on health can shift to being about physical appearance and weight, rather than emotional well-being. This is because, the multidimensionality of physical activity (Stelter et al. 2003) and school initiatives with such practices are largely linked to idealistic body sizes, specifically, viewing thin or slender bodies as symbolic of "good health" and reflective of social "control, virtue, and goodness" (Rich et al. 2004). In this way, as teachers situate themselves within the contexts of education, pedagogy, and physical culture, they view body cultures of change differently and perhaps as influenced by wider cultures of physical activity and health. More specifically, as findings illustrate, Australian pre-service teachers combined life-long dispositions of physically active and healthy bodies with adopted contemporary Western narratives of sport, physical activity, and PE ideologies that reaffirm bodies, subjectivities, and lives can be shaped to prevent obesity-related health risks (Wrench and Garrett 2015).

In this way, teachers are also seen as embodying policy concepts and health policies related to health, obesity, exercise, and diech are emplaced, enacted, and embodied through their bodies and pedagogies (Evans and Davies 2012). Thus, to better understand teachers' positions related to new health education policies and initiatives within contemporary society, it is essential to understand how they perceive and embody these cultures and behaviours of, in this case, mentally healthy movement within and outside of school contexts. As such, I explore *counternarratives*, which as defined here, resist social normativity and the appeal of dominant storylines, such as the contemporary narrative of obesity and its primary focus on the goal of weight loss (Shugart 2011).

Acknowledging the embodiment of teachers in their roles as providers and advocates of physical activity also illustrates that teachers do not exist or teach in a vacuum where they have become emotion-free vehicles of knowledge but embody lived experiences. Bodily experiences can become a vehicle for *social transformation* (Shilling 2005). Like others, they are social actors who teach *through* their bodies and, thus, can be seen as teaching bodies that convey insights, those shaped by the multiple meanings they have ascribed to past emotions and experiences, revealing their socially and historically situated modes of being, and the cultural narratives made available to them for knowing (Smith and Sparkes 2012). In this sense, engaging with a theoretical approach towards the body allows for linking the politics of social movements and public health policy concerns – the nature of social power with cultural (re)production, lived experience, and physical change (Shilling 2007). Notably, the body's importance as a *multi-dimensional* medium in social phenomenon construction, reproduction, and transformation is recognised (Shilling 2005, 2007).

Sociological perspectives that emphasise the physical body and attend to the wider discourses and narratives that underpin their knowledge and pedagogies are considered advantageous and therefore, adopted in this thesis in different ways. This is done to offer a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences and influences within the context of sport and physical activity culture in a critical way that moves beyond the dominant inquiry into exercise addiction experiences. That is, acknowledging the social processes of power and control in pedagogical practices or embodied learnings and the social and cultural hierarchies in and outside of schools to understand how they influence sport discourse and experience. Interestingly, this rejection of dominant discourses in sport and health is emphasised later in the thesis, where one teacher's counternarrative illustrates a traumatic sport childhood that has constrained her relationship with sports into adulthood and consequently, engagement with the activities of Stormbreak.

2.9 Rationale for the study

This study delves into the demanding landscape of UK primary education, spotlighting teachers tasked with implementing interventions like Stormbreak to enhance children's mental health through physical activity. It challenges traditional models by exploring how teachers' personal connections to movement and mental health impact their engagement with such interventions. By examining teachers' embodied experiences and narratives, it aims to uncover how past influences, gendered body cultures, and personal beliefs shape their approach to teaching and implementing these interventions. Addressing a gap in understanding, this study aims to shed light on the complexities teachers face, providing crucial insights into the effectiveness of teacher-led health interventions in primary schools and offering a nuanced perspective on mental health promotion through physical activity. Ultimately, this qualitative exploration aims to enrich health education practices and improve the delivery of multidimensional interventions like Stormbreak that have the potential to enhance children's mental well-being.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter delineates the research methodology and methods to distinguish and justify design choices that inform the present research as part of a larger multidisciplinary project at the intersection of education, sociology, sport, physical activity, and health. In this sense, key findings of the research can, in turn, contribute to the collaborative charity-university evaluation of Stormbreak, a primary school-based intervention in England that aims to improve children's mental health and well-being through movement. Charity involvement in tandem with Stormbreak is acknowledged here in brief to distinguish between the aims of the larger project and this doctoral research, an exploratory study of teacher perceptions and experiences. Further, making the distinction in terms of focus is relevant for understanding the research philosophies, methodologies, and methods, described in more detail in the sections to follow. Finally, the assumptions presented in the chapter are neither methodologically directed nor theoretically imposed by external perspectives but rather based on a secure foundation in alignment with personal viewpoints, the research aims, and objectives.

In this context, I illuminate the philosophical assumptions and approaches for the purpose and function of analysing and understanding stories. Namely, recognising the strengths of adopting a narrative inquiry frame, situated within the paradigms of social constructionism and interpretivism. Thus, I describe the various steps that led to qualitative longitudinal research using multiple methods and a narrative inquiry approach. Research steps, including but not limited to inductive reasoning, purposeful sampling, and the impact of my position, as the researcher adopting a reflexive stance throughout this narrative study of teachers' diverse stories of mental health and movement. To do this, I metaphorically unfold layers of Saunders et al.'s (2019) "research onion" (see Figure 1), as described in the next section. Finally, before concluding the chapter, I discuss the ethical considerations and judgement criteria for qualitative research.

3.2 Overview of the research design

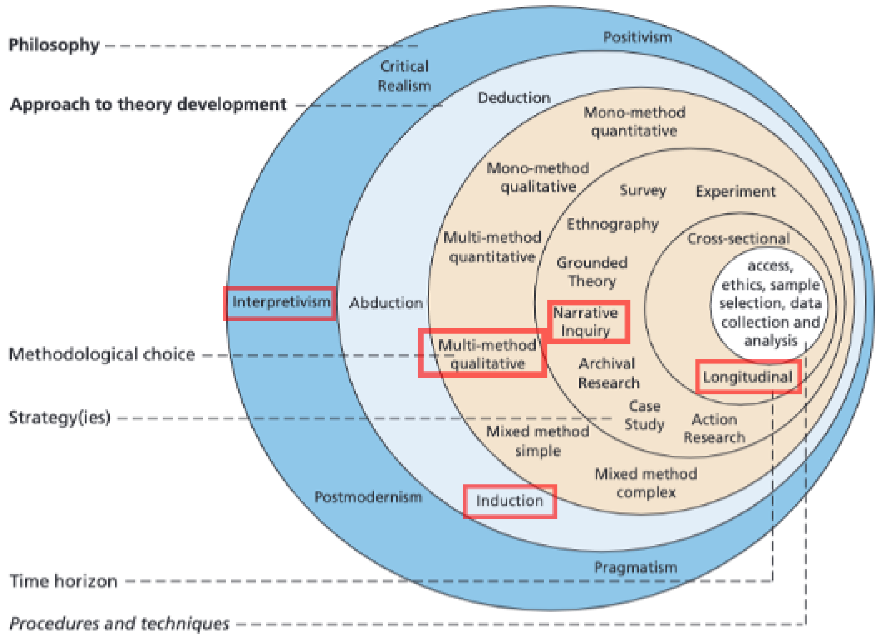
As described above, I attempt to identify, logically and intuitively, then justify in detail the philosophical, theoretical, and methodological constituent elements that inform this research design. For this, adapting the *research onion* proposed by Saunders et al. (2019) as a visual representation of the research design, and logical framework that helps bring together a variety of elements that are suited to the context of the study, to offer insights into the important aspects of the research methodology and methods. Thus, the illustrative model of the research onion provides structure to this chapter in terms of organising the multiple and complex constitutes of the study into headings and subheadings in a logical, clear, and structured format to better identify the specific contents of each step. However, given the interrelated nature of the components within qualitative research, occasionally, it is necessary for me to provide a brief description of a concept related to the element central to the discussion for context and clarity, before the more detailed explanation later in the chapter. This can also mean revisiting and expanding on constructs introduced in the last chapter for purposes related to the research methodology and methods.

3.3 Research design

In this section, I provide a figure of the research onion that I amended to draw forward the specific elements adopted in the study in the manner of nine sections. In the succeeding nice sub-sections, I attempt to systematically offer in-depth justifications for the study design as mapped out: (1) research philosophy, (2) research approach, (3) methodological choice, (4) research strategy, (5) time horizon, (6) sampling strategy, (7) data collection methods, and (8) data analysis techniques.

Importantly, and like the pragmatic approach for systematically reviewing the literature (see Chapter 2), it is necessary to emphasise that adopting the research onion does not subtract from the emergent style of the qualitative study. Rather, as a novice narrative inquirer that is new to the complexities of presenting qualitative work, it provides a visual map to help ensure that I have provided the appropriate information in a comprehensive manner. That said, in the following section, I focus on the philosophical stance but briefly introduce the methodological choice and strategy to offer a rationale for subscribing to a particular research paradigm. This is followed by detailed discussions of an inductive approach, qualitative research, and narrative inquiry within proceeding sections.

Figure 1. The "research onion"


Philosophy
Approach to theory development
Methodological choice
Strategy(ies)
Time horizon
Procedures and techniques
Positivism
Critical Realism
Interpretivism
Postmodernism
Pragmatism
Deduction
Abduction
Induction
Mono-method quantitative
Mono-method qualitative
Multi-method quantitative
Multi-method qualitative
Mixed method simple
Mixed method complex
Survey
Experiment
Ethnography
Grounded Theory
Narrative Inquiry
Archival Research
Case Study
Action Research
Cross-sectional
Longitudinal
access, ethics, sample selection, data collection and analysis

Amended from Saunders et al. (2019, p.130)

> "Questions set our destination, but they often also set the direction or path. Questions do not arise out of thin air" (Gill 2011, p.309).

Understanding the ontological, epistemological, and philosophical underpinnings of the research design entails exploring the questions or objectives that guide the researcher and establish the initial focus of study (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Gray 2014). Addressing the given research questions, at a fundamental level, to develop an understanding of the complex dynamics underlying diverse experiences of teachers in relation to the concepts of mental health and movement requires an emergent and flexible research design. That is, embracing the intimate connection with qualitative forms of social inquiry that allows for a practical approach encompassing these characteristics. Specifically, I draw upon the emerging methodology of narrative inquiry within the field of qualitative research (Clandinin and Connelly 2000; Clandinin 2022) to suit the goal of a deeper understanding of the given phenomenon and its complexities in ways that focus on context, subjectivity, multiple truths, and multiple ways of conceptualising those truths (Sparkes and Smith 2013). Accordingly, upholding the view that the research questions respond to the paradigmatic persuasions of narrative inquiry within qualitative research, in effect, reveals the epistemological and ontological commitments to a set of *interpretive* approaches (Smith and Sparkes 2020). To understand the interpretive approaches and practices deployed, we need to understand how the concept of a paradigm contributes to the nature of qualitative research.

Paradigm is an umbrella term for a range of philosophical underpinnings of research, described as the *basic belief system or worldview* (Guba and Lincoln 1994, p.105), those that guide researchers towards set theoretical foundations that help them determine the nature of the research and the research methodology. Thus, for them, the researcher defines not only the nature of the world but their place in it, and the varying possible relationships to that world and to the parts of that world. Operating within the *metaphysical* paradigm, researchers do not enter the research process in the void of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) about the nature of reality (ontology) and knowledge (epistemology) that influence the study design or their choice of research (methodology) and methods (Sparkes 1992; Morgan 2007), Guba and Lincoln (1994) used this framework to analyse the competing paradigms in qualitative research and presented their considerations in the form of four ideal types: *positivism*, *postpositivism*, *critical theory* and related ideological positions, and *constructivism* or *interpretivism*, which they initially considered naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln and Guba 1985). This paradigms approach developed by Guba and Lincoln serves as a basis for guiding qualitative forms of inquiry within the social sciences but also illustrates certain contesting perspectives and methodological issues due to the emerging changes over the past 25 years.

Recognising their past limitations, Guba and Lincoln (2005) expanded the interrelationships between the concepts of ontology, epistemology, and methodology within their system, to include *axiology*, the study of values/beliefs (ethics of the research), and a fifth paradigm, *participatory* to the range of paradigms that underpin qualitative research. Sparkes and Smith (2013) conceived the changes in Guba and Lincoln's metaphysical approach to reveal how the defining characteristics ascribed to the various paradigms that guide qualitative research are not inherently fixed but flexible to change over time. Along similar lines, Morgan (2007) viewed the instability of the metaphysical paradigm as a significant opportunity for addressing the associated anomalies through the reconceptualisation of qualitative methodologies and positions in social science research.

Given the continuously evolving nature of qualitative research, I concentrate on more recent considerations regarding the design, thereby addressing the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the interpretivist paradigm. That is, a subjectivist, transactional, and constructionist epistemological perspective situated within the interpretivism paradigm and a relativist ontology that conceives social realities exist in the form of multiple, subjective, mental constructions fashioned by humans in fluid and multifaceted ways (Sparkes and Smith 2013). In addition to viewing social reality as humanly constructed and shaped, Sparkes and Smith (2013) emphasised the role of the mind, given that people determine value and ascribe meaning to objects and interpret the movements and utterances of others using constituents of the mind that are contextually dependent (e.g., via language and cultural symbolism).

In this sense, I primarily adopt an ontological relativism and epistemological constructionism as *nonfoundational*, the view that “there is no possibility of theory-free observation or knowledge” (Smith and Deemer 2000, pp.427-428), but rather, knowledge is subjective, relative, and socially constructed, with no single *truth* – only partial truths of the social world (Guba and Lincoln 1994). Thus, to understand truth, “or what we come to accept as true in terms of intentions, purposes, and meanings” (Smith 1989, p.171) requires interpretations of the social world that it pertains to. For claims to knowledge or truth in personal accounts, are constituted in historical, cultural, moral, and political assumptions that emanate from dialogue and reasoned discourse, and are constantly evolving (Smith 1989; Smith and Sparkes 2009b). In the next section, I link the adopted position with qualitative methodology and methods that are useful for “interpreting the interpretations of others” (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.12). That is, a qualitative and narrative inquiry, using a range of interpretive activities in addressing the social determinants in health education, particularly, to explore the experiences of teachers in contemporary health promotion.

3.3.1 Research approach: inductive

To answer the research questions, I engage with *inductive* strategies or a “bottom up” approach to theory development, that moves from the specific cases to the broader theoretical assumptions or general principles that connect them (Sparkes and Smith 2013). That is, collecting data to explore a phenomenon, by analysing the descriptions of specific events, actions and meanings that are understood and shaped by the unique situations in which they act, to identify general meanings and patterns and create a conceptual framework. Thus, a major strength of the inductive approach is that it offers a clear interpretation of the data that accounts for the ways in which people come to understand their social worlds.

In this respect, I use an inductive approach to understand the contexts in which teachers came to experience movement and mental health. In this tradition, working inductively towards an increased understanding, it is deemed appropriate to adopt a qualitative methodology, providing an array of qualitative strategies for data collection and analysis, that align to the features of both the research philosophy and approach.

3.3.2 Methodological choice: multi-method qualitative

This section sets outs the qualitative approach employed in this research that reflects the traditions of the interpretivist paradigm with the underpinning epistemological and ontological assumptions detailed above. *Qualitative research* is an umbrella term for a wide range of diverse, rich, and evolving research interpretive paradigms, methods, approaches, and evaluation practices that, despite no absolute definitions or causal models, produce qualitative work (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Denzin and Lincoln 2017; Smith and Sparkes 2020). Under this framework, there is no singular or clear-cut way to *do* or define qualitative research, at best, it is all-encompassing and consists of different resources that offer a solid foundation to support researchers in diverse ways and across various disciplines (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Smith and Sparkes 2016). Acknowledging the multifaceted methodologies and multidisciplinary uses of qualitative research make it difficult to define, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) commented:

> "Qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matter. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions surrounds the term. These include the traditions associated with foundationalism, positivism, postfoundationalism, postpositivism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, post-humanism, and the many qualitative research perspectives and methods connected to cultural and interpretive studies" (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, p.3).

Against this backdrop, I strive to illustrate the position that qualitative research provides a solid theoretical and methodological foundation and empirical practices that contribute to the nature and purpose of the research. Employing an emergent and evolving research design, this research takes a qualitative interpretive approach to explore teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs around mental health and movement. Placed under the umbrella of qualitative research, interpretivist forms of social and educational inquiry, support practical and moral activities that recognise the role of the researcher as actively involved in the co-construction of knowledge. Moreover, qualitative approaches enable researchers to focus on major concepts – *meanings*, *subjectivity*, *context,* and *process,* from which to understand the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and social realities (Sparkes and Smith 2013). Finally, regarding the interacting processes, relationships, and concepts, adopting a flexible, evolving research design is a tactical way to draw on potentially more impactful criteria or alternative qualitative techniques that allow consideration of diverse meanings in empirical material.

As such, and as a significant part of the methodological repertoire within the social sciences, I draw on one of the five main qualitative research arenas, specifically, narrative inquiry, to focus on the *whats* and *hows* within narratives (Smith and Sparkes 2009b; Phoenix et al. 2010; Smith and Sparkes 2016). More specifically, viewing teachers' stories in relation to mental health and movement are socially and culturally constructed and communicated, as a means of understanding their identities, selves, bodies, and events. However, I limit considerations of narrative inquiry and how this interrelates with the research design to the next section and continue to focus on the areas of qualitative research mentioned above. To set the stage for the theoretical basis and pragmatic approach of the preferred methodology, I offer an understanding of qualitative research that recognises the value of interpretive research traditions and qualitative methods for collecting and analysing data, arising from social interactions.

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) described qualitative research, in a generic sense, as the *world of lived experiences* in which personal beliefs and actions are interconnected with culture. Further, Denzin and Lincoln (2017) understood qualitative researchers wield an arsenal of interrelated and complex interpretive practices, each offering a different view of the world, to enhance understanding of lived experiences and meanings. Thus, for them, a commitment to qualitative research means to adopt an interpretive, naturalistic approach to:

> "Study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, p.3).

Relatedly, Sparkes and Smith (2013) suggested that taking on the role of a qualitative researcher to study the meanings that people ascribe to their experiences and the world requires understanding the contexts in which they exist and how the particular contexts influence peoples' beliefs and actions. According to Charmaz (2004) qualitative researchers can have *an insider view* of the participant's social worlds by understanding their experiences, meanings, and actions from their perspectives; thus, this view from the inside can offer a better understanding of their life, as felt and experienced by them.

> “Entering the phenomenon also means that your active involvement with data shapes the analysis. A few descriptive codes and a powerful computer program do not suffice. We enter the phenomenon to discover what is significant from the viewpoints and actions of people who experience it. We cannot assume that we already know what is significant” (Charmaz 2004, p.981).

Taking the implications of the dichotomous insider-outsider perspective into consideration, I adopt a *reflexive* stance to convey my active involvement or ‘position’ in this qualitative research study (Creswell and Poth 2018). The concept of *reflexivity*, a key characteristic of qualitative research, enables researchers to reflect on the interconnected relationship between the self (e.g., social class, religion, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual identity, and ableness) and the study that cumulatively shapes the research process (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Smith and Sparkes 2020). While a wide variety of forms exist for reflexivity (Finlay and Gough 2003), Finlay (2017) described reflexivity in practice as a researcher’s critical self-awareness for looking at the self in terms of interpretation – how their background, assumptions, positioning, behaviour, and subjectivity may impact the research process and vice versa. More recently, reflecting on a broad version of reflexivity in qualitative research, Smith and Sparkes Smith and Sparkes (2020) asserted:

> “Reflexivity refers to the process critically reflecting on the knowledge we produce and our role in producing that knowledge. In line with ontological relativism and epistemological constructionism, the process aims to facilitate a critical attitude or self-awareness toward locating the impact of the research context, power relations throughout the project, and the researcher’s background (e.g., gender, age, ableness, ethnicity, sexuality, religion), theoretical history, and experiences with the topic” (Smith and Sparkes 2020, p.1004).

Along these lines, I explicitly recognise my role as a qualitative researcher involves critically examining how the subjectivity of personal experiences, assumptions, behaviours, and positions influence the ways in which I conduct research and interpret the findings or experiences of participants in this study. Reflexivity is not seen as an option but rather as an essential part of qualitative inquiry. I demonstrate its relevance and importance by keeping a reflexive journal to capture how I situate the self as a researcher, the participants, and the dynamic process of our interactions that inform changing understandings, feelings, and actions throughout the research process (Etherington 2004). As such, I make critical, informed, ethical and strategic decisions in the process of qualitative inquiry that can be justified for the purpose of understanding the social lives of teachers in the context of mental health and movement (Sparkes and Smith 2013).

This *emic* perspective of entering the phenomenon focuses on the quality of experience that prioritises the dynamics of what the experience means to participants, as opposed to searching for a cause-effect relationship (Charmaz 2004; Sparkes and Smith 2013). Considering the significance of subjectivity in their search for meanings in the contexts of physical activity, sport and mental health, Carless and Douglas (2010) stated:

> "Our interest here is less to do with answering the question *What effect does sport/physical activity have on mental illness?* And more to do with exploring the question *What does sport/physical activity mean for you in the context of your life?* To answer this question it is necessary to take seriously the stories individuals tell about their experiences because these stories reveal how they make sense of their lives (in relation to the past, present and future) and the place they give to physical activity and sport across their lives" (Carless and Douglas 2010, p.1).

Mirroring these interests, I engage with qualitative techniques that allow me to gain a deep understanding of the lives of teachers in a similar context. Given the complexities of educational research in physical activity, sport, and mental health, and that of the interactive and dynamic process in terms of the changing social relations in the past, present and future, I embrace a *flexible*, *iterative*, and *emergent* research design (Sparkes and Smith 2013). Working iteratively and fluidly with methods, whereby the development of knowledge is not linear, can provide insights into the contexts within meanings that were cultivated and highlight issues that might be relevant to the research problem and require redirecting the focus of inquiry (Holloway 2005). Using flexible, emergent methods such as open-ended questions or non-restricting forms of inquiry allows researchers to adjust design and pursue the unanticipated directions that might emerge later in the iterative process of understanding experiences (Charmaz 2006, 2008). Therefore, working in such ways is especially significant for the present exploratory study to develop within the context of crucial aspects that can be discovered in the future and not strictly limited to the research questions imposed early on (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Smith and Sparkes 2020).

Sparkes and Smith (2013) proposed another way to preserve the individuality of participants' accounts is to use a smaller sample size or *ideographic* approach when seeking how meanings are shaped by the specific situation in which they happen. In light of this, the research involves the ideographic approach, an interrelated aspect of an inductive approach (see section 3.3.1), for examining a small number of participants' experiences. The exact sampling strategy and data collection techniques are discussed in detail in the texts to follow.

Considering the reasons highlighted, pointing at the numerous strengths of using qualitative methods and the dynamic and joint process of qualitative research, a qualitative approach is understood as the well-informed choice for the research design. Given that, I explicitly draw on the abilities of different types of qualitative interpretive methods in a way that focuses on meanings, contexts, subjectivity, and the dynamics of process, including my active role as the researcher, to explore and interpret the complex ways that teachers make sense of their social worlds. Thus, adopting a pluralistic methodology serves as a solid foundation that significantly contributes to the quality of understanding teachers' (individual and collective) perspectives, behaviours, and experiences in relation to mental health and movement across the life course and in their daily lives (Sparkes and Smith 2013).

3.3.3 Research strategy: narrative Inquiry

> ''If we are constructed by stories, or are storytellers by nature, or perhaps both, then narrative must, surely, be a prime concern of social science'' (Andrews et al. 2000, p.1).

The term *narrative* is used to express spoken, written, or visual material – beyond storytelling – and the process of telling a story extends to cover a variety of forms. In this study, a narrative and a story are conceptualised as interchangeable for the most part, although certain structures, parameters, and elements that inform how data is collected and analysed. While I introduced narratives and narrative inquiry as a theoretical frame towards embodiment, in the last chapter (see section 2.8.1). Here, I consider narrative methodology, thus reconsider narrative forms in an attempt to outline the strengths and characteristics that distinguish narrative inquiry as an *explorative* research strategy within qualitative research, before going on to describe how narratives will be studied.

As such, to recap, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) understand narrative inquiry as both a methodology (methods as tools of inquiry) and phenomenon (the human experience studied). Within that framework, the epistemological stance observes knowledge as socially constructed and in the multiple, and ontology is transactional (Clandinin and Connelly 1990). The transactional, subjectivist, and constructionist features within the theoretical underpinnings of experience as framed by narrative inquiry make it especially useful for this exploratory study. Viewed this way, drawing upon Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) pragmatic view of knowledge, I prioritize stories as a crucial medium for understanding experiences that are relational and co-constructed in specific social interactions between the researcher and narrators (participants).

Like, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) in education, Smith and Sparkes (2009b) constructed an argument for experience and story within the field of sport and exercise psychology:

> "We live in, through, and out of narratives. They serve as an essential source of psycho-socio-cultural learning and shape who we are and might become. Thus, narratives are a portal through which a person enters the world; play a formative role in the development of the person; help guide action; and are a psycho-sociocultural shared resource that constitutes and constructs human realities" (Smith and Sparkes 2009b, p.3).

In concert with their work, a narrative strategy is adopted via a *psycho-socio-cultural* approach to explore the narrative reconstruction of teachers' stories of mental health and physical activity in relation to both the *individual* and the *social*. Also opposing the dualism between the individual and society in narrative, Andrews et al. (2000) described the self as:

> "a psychosocial phenomenon, and subjectivities seen as discursively constructed yet still as active and effective" (Andrews et al. 2000, p.1).

From this perspective, personal narratives – experiences, bodies, selves, identities, motivations, etc., are situated in social – material environments, discourses, and traditions. Narratives, therefore, reveal the cultural meanings produced through diverse discourses that shape social practices. Moreover, despite the theoretical variations and methodological uncertainties, analysing both narrative and discourse can provide a deeper understanding of both individual and collective experiences. In this sense, exploring the stories that teachers draw on to engage with Stormbreak to gain a better sense of their experiences, subjectivities, and social worlds (Holstein and Gubrium 2000).

> "Personal stories are, again, not to be understood as strictly individual. Any person's story is the site of struggles permeated by multiple voices." (Frank 2005, p.972).

Based on this understanding of narrative inquiry, teachers are storytellers and teachers' personal stories are considered in the context of their personal and social (professional) interactions to provide insight into their lived experiences or individual subjectivity. Therefore, by paying close attention to the spoken personal accounts or individual *stories* of teachers, narrative inquiry provides an opportunity for a better understanding of teachers' experiences and the diverse meanings ascribed to mental health and movement as socially and culturally situated. The ways in which stories are collected and the specific modes of narrative analysis used to study their lived experiences through narrative and storytelling are outlined in the sections below. Before getting to this, in the next section, I focus on the advantages of adopting a longitudinal research approach.

3.3.4 Time Horizon: longitudinal

A *longitudinal time horizon* (Saunders et al. 2009; Saunders et al. 2019), in which data collection is not limited to investigating a single point in time, is adopted in this qualitative inquiry. Longitudinal qualitative research allows for considering change over time for a person or community (Derrington 2019) and exploring changes over time in meanings or phenomena in relation to the past, present, and future (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Neale 2020). In this way, a theoretical methodological frame that views time as an important concept for both the nature of narrative understanding and as a method for studying narratives (McKibben and Breheny 2023), recognises the dualism of temporal depth – in the *real time* methodological and narrative unfolding (Neale 2020). Thus, completing the research project in a reasonable and achievable timeline while appreciating the dynamic nature of teachers' lives includes both methodological and theoretical considerations.

First, determining a practical research timeframe over a protracted period is relevant to the research objectives and exploratory nature of the research. Using an emergent and flexible design in combination with a longitudinal research timeline is advantageous to capture discontinues that may occur during that time and explore the potential impact of unprecedented events on participants' narrative histories (Derrington 2019). For example, seemingly intractable issues caused by the global pandemic, not only transformed the interdisciplinary nature of the research to be increasingly complex and diversified, but also required renegotiating the research design, notably the timeline and capacity of field research. However, having a flexible research design in a long-term study provided reasonable time for considering alternative forms of data collection and managing uncontrollable factors to achieve desired research goals. Specifically, gathering contextual, informative data to address the research questions despite arising situational challenges.

Second, understanding teachers' experiences narratively, by focusing on the temporal dimensions in terms of continuity and change, to gain insights into how stories are told or unfold over the life course (Neale 2020). Based on the central view that, teachers live in and through time and stories that let them organise their experiences of temporality (Smith and Sparkes 2009b). Against this backdrop, I consider narrative data collection and analyses as time consuming or longitudinal processes, wherein participants tell stories at their own pace and understanding how these stories unfold over time, by moving back and forth between their storytelling or narrative texts, takes serious consideration. As such, this research, exploring the multiples meanings of mental health and movement over time for a small group of teachers, embeds two phases of data collection and interpretation that involves repeated interactions with the same participants over an extended period.

Ultimately, using a longitudinal time sequence and narrative approach, I gather data or multiple stories told by the same six teachers in two instances over a three-year period to interpret these data collections in relation to one another and the temporality inherent in narratives. This is because longitudinal methods or in-depth follow up interactions can generate more rich, meaningful insights through an iterative engagement with teachers' dynamic stories, cultivated from the unanticipated and emergent elements arising in initial conversation and interpretation. That is, engaging with teachers a second time during the unprecedented educational disruption of COVID-19 to explore the link between pre-pandemic events and later outcomes within the social context of the pandemic contributes greater insights into mental health and movement. In view of this, a longitudinal approach is pragmatic and concrete, especially in a narrative inquiry that employs an emergent design, as it assists in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of stories – reflecting changes in emphasis or how they shift over time.

3.3.5 Sampling strategy: purposeful

> "Sampling involves making informed and strategic choices about which people, places, settings, events, and times are best for gaining the data you need to address your research questions" (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.68).

In terms of qualitative research, Sparkes and Smith (2013) suggested that *purposeful* sampling is generally used to guide the selection processes for the purpose of attaining in-depth understanding rather than generalisability (external validity). Further, it has been noted that the "logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (Patton 2002, p.273). In accordance with Sparkes and Smith (2013) and Patton (2002), the major advantage of this method is seen as allowing researchers to deliberately select information-rich cases, by carefully evaluating criteria or characteristics (e.g., people, places, events) that will lead to greater insights. Given the emergent nature of this qualitative study, purposeful sampling is an appropriate sampling strategy as it recognises the complexities of human phenomena and allows for flexibility via a range of more specific strategies. That is, adopting an alternative sampling strategy depending upon the emergence of new information that is deemed valuable for the purpose of the study, can provide greater insights than could be gleaned from an inflexible approach.

Following this logic in the development of the qualitative research design, purposeful sampling is considered particularly useful for purposefully selecting 'information-rich cases' – or participants who can provide in-depth and relevant information that will help to inform the research questions (Patton 2002; Sparkes and Smith 2013). Patton (1990) described 15 types of sampling strategies for purposely selecting information-rich cases, including a 16th – combination or mixed strategy, placed within the broad approach of purposeful sampling. Drawing from the typology of strategies by Patton (1990), I used *criterion-based sampling* and *snowball sampling* to study the phenomena of interest, as summarised by Sparkes and Smith (2013):

> "*Criterion-based sampling*. The researcher predetermines a set of criteria for selecting places, sites, or cases. Participants are chosen because they have a particular feature, attribute or characteristic, or have a specific experience" (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.70).

> "*Snowball (chain, network, nominated) sampling*. Researchers rely on participants to direct them toward others who meet the study's criteria for inclusion. They might begin with a few participants who then identify others 'like them' who they feel would provide information rich cases and be useful for the researcher to meet." (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.71).

In this research, Criterion-based sampling was used to predetermine a set of criteria for selecting participants. This was because the sites of research: five English primary schools in South England that implemented the school-based mental health and movement intervention, Stormbreak, were preselected by external stakeholders. Because of this, I selected participants based on one key criterion, their engagement with Stormbreak, which enabled a sample of participants with diverse backgrounds, motivations, and experiences of physical activity and mental health. Specifically, the sample of six primary school teachers, chosen across five primary schools, included only those who were responsible for delivering Stormbreak in their classrooms.

Further, I used snowball sampling in this process with the key eternal stakeholder and gatekeeper, who provided access into the social world of primary school teachers and, relatedly, helped in the processes of establishing rapport and building trusting relationships with teachers that were relevant to the study criteria and eligibility (Sparkes and Smith 2013). The snowballing technique also proved effective with participants who recommended other key participants, as the gatekeeper had established my authenticity as the researcher. This said, adopting purposeful sampling techniques, specifically criterion-based sampling and snowball sampling, helped build trusting relationships with participants who fit the sampling criteria and who then identified other information-rich cases that provided in-depth, relevant knowledge. This was especially helpful for a researcher like me – an *outsider* to the teaching community (Hellawell 2006; Bridges 2017; Finefter-Rosenbluh 2017).

To further clarify the sample selection in relation to Stormbreak, Stormbreak partners were responsible for selecting the specific primary schools and teachers – *how* many and *who* engaged with the Stormbreak pilot. At the outset, that is when I joined the research project in 2018, the Stormbreak intervention was accepted by five schools in Dorset and meant to be delivered by approximately 10 teachers engaging across these schools. Not all the teachers from the outset remained on the pilot as a few could not continue engagement with Stormbreak and the related Stormbreak training workshops for various undisclosed reasons, separate to the context of the research.

Stormbreak training workshops were developed for teachers and held almost monthly for at least a year so that Stormbreak staff could instruct teachers on how to deliver Stormbreak practices in their classrooms. Stormbreak staff, which in the pilot phase was a team of about six individuals who were either involved in the development of Stormbreak activities or brought on by Stormbreak partners to become well-versed in Stormbreak practices for instructing teachers. The reason for teachers being the ones to deliver Stormbreak specifically was aligned with the larger goals of the intervention – to implement mentally healthy movement in *all* schools for *all* children.

As such, Stormbreak staff trained aimed to effectively train primary school teachers on Stormbreak practices so that they would be able to successfully implement Stormbreak at their designated schools and in their daily teachings. Stormbreak staff determined the details (e.g., date, time, duration, location) for these workshops and along with teachers, researchers from Bournemouth University (me, the other PhD student, and the postdoctoral fellow) were also expected to join. From this group of teachers, then, which I was introduced to by the CEO of Stormbreak and the gatekeeper for this research and subsequently, had a chance to further establish rapport with by attending the Stormbreak training workshops (see section 7.4.1 for the methodological implications of this), six teachers were recruited for the present research.

Notably, Stormbreak partners determined the schools responsible for its implementation depending on those that agreed to its terms and conditions, and consequently, the teachers within these schools who were responsible for its delivery as part of their daily curriculum. As a result, recruitment was limited to the teachers selected by the Stormbreak partners, either from the start or sometime shortly after (e.g., to replace the teachers who stopped engaging with Stormbreak and its teacher training workshops).

More specifically, drawing on the purposeful sampling techniques used, first, I selected teacher participants based on the criteria that they engaged with Stormbreak and the related training workshops. Second, teachers who engaged with Stormbreak later, and thus, I did not have as much time to establish rapport in comparison to the teachers from the start, were already familiar with the teachers engaging from the outset. This is because all the teachers belonged to one of the five primary schools implementing the Stormbreak pilot. Hence, the teachers who had come to trust me over time *and* knew the teachers who onboarded more recently, especially as *insiders* to the teaching community within the context of Stormbreak, assisted in the recruitment of those new, equally suitable teacher participants and information-rich cases for this research. In the sense that the teachers who had agreed to participate in the research informed the other teachers about their intentions to and suggested the other teachers should also participate. In this way, teacher participants along with the gatekeeper helped to facilitate the sample selection, recruitment, and participation in the study.

Ultimately, six teachers were recruited via criterion-based and snowball sampling strategies. This was based on who met the study criteria and was willing to participate in the study. In this way, not all the teachers who fit the research criteria by engaging with Stormbreak from the outset or later also participated in the study. In that, recognising teachers have different responsibilities and motivations, and thus, not all teachers could commit or wished to participate in research.

Finally, while the research sample initially consisted of six primary school teachers, only four out of the six participated in both research interviews spanning over the first three years of the research. Three teachers dropped out of the study in phase two of the research by not participating in the second research interview that took place during the time of COVID-19 via online Zoom interviews. A table is provided in the next section to present these key aspects more clearly (see Table 1.), while methodological considerations related to the pandemic (see section 7.4.2), and methodological (see section 7.4.3) and ethical (see section 7.5) considerations in relation to the teacher who told a sport trauma narrative are offered in detail in the Discussion chapter.

3.3.6 Data collection method: individual interviews

According to Sparkes and Smith Sparkes and Smith (2013), qualitative research encompasses a variety of data collection methods, with research interviewing being the most widely used, particularly in the sport and exercise sciences (Smith and Sparkes 2016). The authors defined research interviewing as a social interaction that takes place in a specific context, involving two or more individuals who use their senses to “actively engage in embodied talk, jointly constructing knowledge about themselves and the social world” (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.83). Connelly and Clandinin (1990), in accordance with Sparkes and Smith’s (2013) social constructivist perspective, suggested that interviews are the most commonly used form of narrative inquiry in educational studies and a valuable tool for exploring stories of experience. These range from the inflexible way of interviewing, structured interviews, to more flexible and dialogical methods predominantly used in qualitative research, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Sparkes and Smith 2013; Brinkmann 2018, 2022).

Expanding on the advantages of using semi-structured interviews, Sparkes and Smith (2013) highlighted the way this approach affords participants greater control and flexibility to express their opinions, ideas, feelings, and attitudes. Additionally, they emphasised the impact of semi-structured interviews lies in the depth of understanding that can be attained as participants are able to convey the meaning they attach to their experiences, in turn, offering the researcher a more profound comprehension than could be achieved through a structured interview alone.

Building on this, Damianakis and Woodford (2012) asserted that qualitative research interviews are often conducted in a face-to-face format between the researcher and the participants.

Against this backdrop, I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews that lasted around 90 minutes each, inviting teacher participants to share their experiences of mental health and movement. Guided by Sparkes and Smith's (2013) articulations on a semi-structured style of interviewing, I created an interview guide with predetermined open-ended questions that helped direct the conversation to focus on the key topics of interest while allowing the participants to have the autonomy to express their thoughts and feelings. In other words, I purposefully adopted a less structured frame of conversation by only preparing a few questions in advance (e.g., "Please tell me about your past experiences of movement or sport") that let the participants decide, in their own way, the most important experiences, motivations and events in relation to the themes of mental health and movement. Thus, relatively unstructured conversational interactions – storytelling as a medium for learning about mental health and physical activity in a way that mirrors the worldviews of classroom teachers is especially valuable for revealing teachers' selves, bodies, and identities from their own perspectives.

In the first phase of this process, the research interviews were conducted in a face-to-face manner, while in the second phase, during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing, I shifted participant interviews to online forms of communication. Regarding the initial face-to-face interactions, I audio-recorded my conversations with the participants using a voice recorder and kept a research diary (i.e. reflexive journal) to note my observations of the dynamic features, such as their posture, facial expressions, etc. Regarding the follow-up interviews that were conducted online via a video conferencing platform, *Zoom*, I video-recorded the conversations with the participants after attaining consent. Importantly, the diary that I briefly mentioned in relation to the interviews was more realistically, several diaries that I went through to journal my experience since starting my research journey six years ago.

This allowed for me to think about a range of things like the research contexts, physical settings, the atmosphere of each interview shortly after it ended. For the first phase of the research (in-person interviews), I set aside the free time on my commute home via public transit (from any one of the five primary schools) to do this. This dynamic changed during the second phase of online interviews, although I still allocated time to reflect and scribble down my initial thoughts and feelings, it was more quickly after interview which swiftly ended at the click of a button. My reflections were not limited to the participants alone, how they expressed themselves or their body cues that I considered important to jot down for the analysis later. I also wrote about how I felt (my initial thoughts, what stood or what I learned) after each of these interviews, and sometimes even before. For example, how I took in teachers' accounts of sport and well-being as a researcher, a female, an American – or I simply reflected on how the interactions could have gone differently – better, whether I could improve my questions or the way in which I asked a particular one before the next interview. These constructions associated with my feelings, thoughts, and how I understood the interview, depending on that day or with a particular participant, are still available for me to revisit. In that, I can look back even today and get a better sense of how I approached these interactions nearly five years ago, the ways my immediate thoughts at that time have changed, along with the privileges that I was aware of and how this awareness influenced my thinking and speaking and even the ways I conducted these research interviews. While doing reflexivity has been an insightful, interesting experience that felt easy and natural, writing about reflexivity or writing reflexively is not as second nature for me, but I expand on my personal experiences in the confessional tale towards the end of the chapters (see section 3.6).

Ultimately, the qualitative study involved nine semi-structured interviews, which lasted approximately 90 minutes each. I conducted one face-to-face interview with all six participants in phase one (pre-pandemic) and two online interviews (via Zoom video-calling) with only three of the six participants since three teachers dropped out of the study in phase two (post-pandemic), for a total of approximately 13.5 hours of interviews. I use a table to clearly describe these key aspects of data and collection, along with the participants, and some basic demographic information in relation to the participants (summarised in Table 1).

Table 1. Summary table: Key facets of the qualitative data

Participants	Age	Sex	Race	Number of interviews	Duration of interviews (in minutes approximately)
Annie	50	Female	White	2	180
Casey	32	Male	White	1	90
Dylan	25	Male	White	2	180
Jenny	40	Female	White	1	90
Karen	28	Female	White	1	90
Lisa	30	Female	White	2	180

3.3.7 Data analysis techniques: modes of narrative analysis

3.3.7.1 Thematic narrative analysis

Following the work of Riessman (2008) in the areas of health and illness on thematic narrative analysis, alongside Braun and Clarke's (2012) approach to thematic analysis (TA) in health and social sciences, I present a brief overview of the difference between the two in qualitative research. In explaining the two forms of thematic analysis I used and why these are specific, I acknowledge that qualitative research is complex and often messy as there is no singular analytical approach or universal 'truth' and, therefore, pluralism in methods is beneficial for coding and analysis (Braun and Clarke 2012; Terry et al. 2017). Although the two approaches are seen to serve a different purpose, much like a range of contemporary approaches for narrative analysis (thematic, structural, interactional, and performative), they can be applied in the plural as "they are not mutually exclusive" (Riessman 2005, p.2).

The *thematic analysis* approach focuses on meaning *across* the data, themes or patterns of meaning – meaningful insights that are generated through a systematic process of identifying and organising a dataset to better understand collective/shared experiences and meanings (Braun and Clarke 2012). In this view, the strength of it being accessible and *flexible* where it can be used in several different ways, so it is especially helpful for novice researchers like me engaging with qualitative research for the first time. The main difference linked to thematic narrative analysis overlaps with this reason. That is, thematic analysis can be used to analyse a wide range of qualitative datasets to explain shared, explicit meaning around a core concept in small or large data from interviews, transcripts, or literature reviews, or even to capture more implicit meanings across these datasets (Braun et al. 2019). Thus, while the thematic approach is useful for theorising across a number of different cases, it does not share the exact goals of *thematic narrative analysis* that places narratives at the centre to focus on the construction of meanings as they unfold over time via:

> "stories told by research participants (which are themselves interpretive), interpretive accounts developed by an investigator based on interviews and fieldwork observation (a story about stories), and even the narrative a reader constructs after engaging with the participant's and investigator's narrative"(Riessman 2008).

Against this backdrop, and for the purposes of this research, I primarily rely on this definition to clarify what constitutes the difference between the two. Notably, as the two forms of analysis differ in important ways, but the underpinning commitments and assumptions are not juxtaposed, I often use the two interchangeably in the thesis. In this way, while recognising this ambiguity, I follow Riessman's (2008) more contemporary conventional use of narratives and stories and use the two interchangeably (see section 2.8.1).

Riessman's (2005) conceptualisation for *thematic* analysis of narratives suggests that the focus is on "what" is being told or the content of speech rather than "how" it is being told or the more organised way of "telling" a story. A thematic narrative analysis enables the categorisation of interpreted meaning found across participants' stories, reported events, and what they are about, into shared thematic elements (Riessman 2005; Riessman 2008). In this research, for example, because most teachers described positive experiences of mental health and movement across the life course, one teacher's story of negative sports experiences served as an outlier, with the focus on her "deviant" responses that did not conform to the common thematic typologies (Riessman 2005). In this way, while contradictory to a thematic (narrative) analysis, a *structural* analysis of narratives that focuses on the telling or the structured *way* a story is told can be used in combination with thematic approaches to better explore the nature of (individual) narratives (see section 3.3.7.2). Especially since identifying common thematic elements is not disowned during the process. Instead, the emphasis also shifts to the form and structural components we purposefully chose to construct for a persuasive story (Riessman 2005).

Braun and Clarke's (2019) contemporary conceptualisations around *reflexive thematic analysis* in the context of sport, exercise, and health are essential for reflexively thinking about the specific themes and how I *get* these meanings across the data. In doing so, I am not offering the theoretical and analytic philosophy as a rationale alone but explaining *how* I did the thematic analysis specifically to identify themes around mental health and movement in teachers' experiences and stories. For this, I begin by drawing on their descriptions that highlight the meaning of qualitative research, and as Braun and Clarke (2012, 2013, 2021) have consistently stressed – themes do not simply emerge from the data:

> "For us, qualitative research is about meaning and meaning-making, and viewing these as always context-bound, positioned and situated, and qualitative data analysis is about telling 'stories', about interpreting, and creating, not discovering and finding the 'truth' that is either 'out there' and findable from, or buried deep within, the data. For us, the

final analysis is the product of deep and prolonged data immersion, thoughtfulness and reflection, something that is active and generative” (Braun and Clarke 2019, p.591).

By paying close attention to more recent work and terminology of the *reflexive* thematic analysis process by Braun and Clarke (2019, 2021, 2022a) (as developed now and which emphasises 'stories' of themes), I *do* a thematic analysis of narratives in a way that is distinct, albeit not free from reflexivity. Drawing on the approaches noted above, specifically, to make sense of teachers' stories as situated in broader historical, sociocultural, and political landscapes and as informed by the researcher's positionality to understand shared meanings of sport and health. I aim to describe the rigorous (*not* rigid) processes and procedures of undertaking a thematic narrative analysis – a reflexive, theoretically informed, and valuable approach for meaningful understanding.

Turning to the data and analysis, I use Braun and Clarke's six-phases of analysis as developed to *reflexive TA* via more recent contributions and delineations (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2012, 2013, 2019). Pointing this out to recognise no singular method or "standardised TA" as it is better conceptualised as *a family* of methods (Braun and Clarke 2022b, 2023b) and – *how* I engaged with this approach:

1. *Familiarising yourself with the dataset*—For this, I became fully immersed in the data and well-versed with its contents by reading the data repeatedly and making notes across the individual stories and as a whole dataset, losing track of the number of times I went back to the start to re-read the data. Also, I highlighted specific words or bits of text that stood out and jotted down initial thoughts and observations
2. *Coding*—I used the features that initially stuck out and were relevant to mental health and movement (the data collection questions as themes) to generate codes or labels within these overarching domains. I looked for shared and individual meanings across stories about the predetermined concepts and the entire dataset, with several rounds of coding orientated toward explicit and less explicit codes. Interestingly, as I worked through the data, I created a label for British vernacular I needed to define to explore the analytical possibilities better. Although I knew the research questions in advance, I was still less familiar with the cultural influences of sports and health in England. The codes evolved to reflect these nuances.
3. *Generating initial themes*—I used the patterns of shared meaning underpinning the stories of mental health and movement or central organising concepts. I revisited the

individual story text in relation to the concept to collate the relevant data and develop potential themes. These were less polished than the themes I initially imagined when reading the data.

4. *Developing and reviewing themes*—The themes I considered in the last phase as potential analytical narratives of the main concepts were mapped against the whole dataset to determine what kind of story they tell. As the participants' stories are nuanced and profound differences exist, the themes were subjected to further review and change.
5. *Refining, defining, and naming themes*—Even though I was working with a few participants, refining/defining the themes to capture the deeper insights more appropriately in the dataset was complicated. As such, while I defined a set of themes and moved on to writing, the subthemes and the intimate focus between them continued to develop in the next phase.
6. *Writing up*—I combine the different parts of the extracted data to craft a convincing story, using the literature to conceptualise the contours of participants' subjectivities better. This phase further evidenced the recursive nature of the process as I did not abruptly stop analysis upon reaching the writing-up stage. In contrast, I worked through the themes to make sense of them with the existing understandings, and then again, following feedback from the supervisors.

3.3.7.2 Structural narrative analysis

The method of structural narrative analysis (Riessman 2008) closely examines the linguistic context of a story, looking for the hidden meanings that participants may have alluded to in the referential expressions that are used to make sense of their lives in storied form, and not necessarily to be taken at face value. Labovian narrative analysis, a method of narrative analysis linked to story elements like characters, setting, and plot, as well as narrative functions (elucidated in section 6.3), is an exemplar of a structural analytical approach (Riessman 2005; Patterson 2013). Labov’s (1982) updated approach was used to analyse the functions of narrative clauses in the investigation of brief, event-centred, and temporally organised personal narratives of violence (Riessman 2005). Setting forth several typologies of narrative analysis, Riessman (2008) presents the *dialogical/performative* method of analysis which reflects Riessman’s (1989, 2003a) view that storytelling or the ways in which people describe and interpret their experiences is interactional and favours subjectivity and positionality. Here, positionality or the “social positioning in stories—how narrators position audiences, characters’ and themselves” (Riessman 2003a, p.337) are valuable for understanding the performative elements of storytellers’ identities and selves, how they want to be understood by drawing on certain plots and settings, and storytelling as a collaborative process. Similarly, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) understand narrative inquiry as a collaborative process, emphasising the mutual relationship between the researcher and storyteller that cares for the voices of both in the *storytelling* and *restorying* as the research progresses.

Relatedly, Mishler (1986) proposed the view that a research interview is a type of discourse or speech event eliciting jointly conducted language and meaning between the interviewer and participant, both shaped and organised via the behavioural practice or performance of interviewing. Given this view of the interview process as interactional constructions of narrative accounts (e.g., life histories or stories), Mishler (1986, 1997) argued that research practices should incorporate analytical methods that are more attentive to the sociocultural contexts and the participants' problems or storytelling rather than those of the interviewers. That is not to say the role of the investigator is not important in shaping the production of a narrative and knowledge or does not warrant closer investigation (2003b) but that, "narratives do not speak for themselves" (Riessman 2005, p.2) and require analysis for meaning, which can easily become obscured when the voice of the storyteller is subdued. Agreeing with Mishler's (1991) concerns for research processes fixated on investigating the "point" or meaning of stories to an extreme extent that it sometimes *suppresses* the discursive nature of the interview, Frank (2000b) argued for the value of stories to be more than just "data" or "text", seen as supplementary to narrative analysis and interpretation.

Despite criticism from Atkinson (1997) for his perspective of narratives, Frank (2000b) understands the act of storytelling to be relational in that storytelling is for oneself as much as it is for another. For example, illness narratives "give voice to experiences that medicine cannot describe" (Frank 2013, p.18) in a way that helps people make sense of their suffering when "illness becomes a circulation of stories" (Frank 2013, p.5), which includes the medical narratives imposed by physicians. Frank (2017, 2018) more recently noted his interest in narrative therapy, or what he calls the postmodern experiences of illness, where ill persons recognise their experiences to be more than their medical prognosis (Frank 1995, 2013). From this view, seeing the relationship between the storyteller and listener is twofold: (1) provides the listener access to the storyteller's lived experiences through the storyteller's unique lens of knowledge and simultaneously (2) offers the storyteller a *therapeutic* space to understand the self and lived experiences. Disruptive life events like chronic illness, in particular, prompt a "call for stories" (Frank 2013, p.53), and storytellers, when telling their story, invite the audience to engage with "others who will answer their story's call for a relationship", (Frank 2000a, p.355). This is because, "a story is a call to enter relations of storytelling" (Frank 2000a, p.355); thus listeners (e.g., interviewers) who accept their invitation into the story are inevitably placed into the dynamic storytelling relationship, representing a shared world of meaning formed between the two.

Although I present the above as a brief rationale for the structural narrative analysis methodology here, as mentioned in the introductory chapter of the thesis (see section 1.6), the various theoretical approaches and multiple analytical techniques adopted for the structural narrative analysis of Karen's narrative are offered as a descriptive account by way of analysis in a case study (see section 6.2). This is done intentionally to maintain the integrity of the counternarrative, conveying the theoretical pluralism of structural narrative analysis in contexts of health and sport (Clarke et al. 2016). Chapter six will supply the specific procedure in detail, where the analytical elements within each method are imbued and further delineated to demonstrate the pluralistic findings. This includes the application of Labov's (1972) six-part model (see Figure 6 and section 6.4) encompassing the following structural categories of a narrative: an *abstract* (see section 6.4.2), *orientation* (see sections 6.4.3.1 and 6.4.3.2), *complicating action* (see sections 6.4.4, 6.4.5, 6.4.5.1, and 6.4.5.2), *evaluation* (interspersed throughout other elements), *resolution* (see section6.4.6), and a *coda* (see section 6.4.7). This is used in conjunction with thematic analysis (Riessman 2002, 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2009b; Braun and Clarke 2023b) to explore the multiple dimensions of the individual and social contexts underpinning Karen's embodied storytelling without being limited to a singular lens (see section 6.3).

Additionally, an example of the initial application of the plot enactment technique is displayed in the appendices (see Appendix D: Depiction of the messy realities of structural narrative analysis). The plot structure diagram worksheet includes the basic codes of *exposition* (start of a story where characters and settings are introduced), *rising action*, *conflict*, *turning point/climax*, *falling action*, and *resolution.* This was used to plot Karen's story following a thematic narrative analysis of the data as described in the previous section (see section 3.3.7.2), and in a way it even illuminates the second and third phases of the TA method – coding and generating initial themes within the structural approach. The preliminary data was then defined and refined using more complementary approaches in contexts of structural analysis which can be gleaned from the related findings.

3.4 Ethics: the dual pre-commencement considerations of data collection

This section is dedicated to ethical considerations mainly attached to pre-determined methods to prevent harm and preserve ethical obligations before conducting research. In this way, ethical responsibilities are considered in two: not to detract from the importance of ensuring ethical standards and regulatory procedures as qualitative researchers, but rather, to equally consider the ethical dilemma that can persist in different ways even after data collection ends. The latter is unpacked in greater detail in the second part towards the end of the thesis (see section 7.5), while I focus on the former here.

I reflect on the traditional ethical position and the overarching ethical concerns related to the study from this position. Using the regulatory model of research ethics that involves the traditional form of procedural ethics, ethical approval was sought and obtained from the university for each of the two phases of the research. As such, the research was subjected to appropriate ethical reflection through a formal ethics review before commencing research activities for two different forms of data collection due to moving from individual face-to-face interviews to remote interviewing for phase two of the research. The more recent amended online research ethics checklist that I submitted to Bournemouth University's Research Ethics Committee (REC), and which was approved by the REC in July 2019 (Ethics ID 26134), included considerations around the ethical implications arising from the research design, methodology, conduct, dissemination, archiving, and future use and sharing of the research produced. The current study was flagged as high risk by the REC early in the research process due to the inclusion of sensitive topics with discussions around mental health, thus, the ethical challenges were made explicit and appropriate strategies to protect the confidentiality of the participants and mitigate ethical vulnerabilities were set forth.

Despite being a "Master" of Bioethics with previous clinical research experience related to sensitive subjects of health, I found it difficult to account for all the possibilities of an emergent design which involved fieldwork in dynamic settings of primary schools. Thus, in the preliminary stages of the study, I referred to external sources for guidance on ethical issues, such as the British Psychological Society, the British Sociological Association, and the British Educational Research Association as suggested by senior academics on the larger research project and Sparkes and Smith (2013). As a result, while still unable to definitively define the interactions with participants, following ethical guidelines outlined by the university and alternative credible resources, I was able to account for varying aspects of the emerging design and propose processes to address the ethical issues that were required in advance, for example, adopting pseudonyms when presenting raw data to mitigate the risk of disclosing participants' personal information.

Acknowledging the difficulty of dealing with ethical issues in the context of qualitative research involving face-to-face interactions with participants, particularly, with small connected communities, Damianakis and Woodford (2012) noted that:

> "In such situations, the researcher temporarily enters the participant's world and accesses experiences and reflections, which might be highly sensitive and involve future or unforeseen risk for the participant and possibly others. Researchers purposefully foster trusting relationships with participants to learn from them and achieve study aims. As this trust develops, especially in studies that involve prolonged engagement, participants might entrust the researcher with deeply personal information. Within a context of ethical research processes, the researcher must decide whether to draw on participants' full or partial narratives to generate knowledge" (Damianakis and Woodford 2012, p.709).

This acknowledges the interrelated nature between the methodological epistemology and ethical considerations underpinning the qualitative research design, as well as the trusting relationship that can develop between the researcher and participants. There are three common qualitative methods of interviewing: 1. Participant observation, 2. In-depth interviews, and 3. Focus groups.

Research Ethics Checklist Summary (Ethics ID 26134):

Semi-structured individual interviews (approx. 45-90 minutes) will be conducted to start a dialogue with participants and gain in-depth insight in order to collaboratively construct meaningful realities. Specifically, in-depth life history interviews will allow participants to reflect on the past, their own ideas, and provide an opportunity to relate events to sociocultural contexts and integrate personal experiences to the wider social framework. Interviews will be conducted more than once, perhaps once every week, and interviews are anticipated to last for the full 90 minutes, although participants' time constraints will be recognized.

I have four years of clinical research experience conducting individual interviews engaging with sensitive mental health topics (e.g., postpartum depression). I am familiar with the lone worker policy and safeguards focusing on both mine and the participant's wellbeing. Before interviewing participants, I will establish rapport and make participants feel comfortable engaging in dialogue to balance researcher-researched power. Also, I will maintain appropriateness, sensitivity, and reflexivity. Talking to an attentive and understanding listener can be a rewarding and happy experience, and even therapeutic for some individuals. Also, recognizing that discussing mental health may be uncomfortable for participants suffering from mental health issues is important. Participants will be informed in advance about what interview discussions will engage with and their rights, to stop or skip over questions at any point throughout the interview. If necessary, I will verbalize it again during the interview, being aware of participants showing signs of discomfort or reluctance. If participants become evidently distressed, then I will stop the interview to prevent further distress and uphold respect for persons. As an additional safeguard, if a participant was to become very upset during the interview, and is concerned about anything discussed or feels upset about any issues raised, they would be recommended to see their GP or would be suggested an external resource, Education Support Partnership, a free helpline available to all teachers, lecturers and staff in education (primary, secondary, further or higher education) in England, Wales and Scotland 24/7, 365 days a year. Participants will be provided information sheets written in layman's terms with the purpose of the research, the interview procedure, potential hazards or discomfort participation may entail, and ethical issues like anonymity, confidentiality, and data storage.

Data withdrawal will only be possible up until the point of anonymity; therefore, if participant data has already been submitted for publication, it can no longer be withdrawn from study dataset. This will be clearly explained to participants during the recruitment and reiterated in written form on the participant information sheet. I will obtain informed consent with a participant agreement form, after 24 hours so participants have the opportunity to ask questions and express any concerns. Researchers have an ethical duty to maintain research transparency in participant-researcher relationships throughout the study duration. Highest ethical standards will be upheld to protect research participants during all stages of the study, and necessary amendments will be made if any changes were to arise. Participants will be made aware of any significant changes to the research as it develops which might reasonably affect their original consent to participate.

Participant confidentiality and anonymity will be protected as far as is possible using pseudonyms and by removing any descriptors. Every effort will be made to ensure that the data they provide cannot be traced back to them in reports, presentations and other forms of dissemination. Additionally, I have completed an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to ensure authorized entrance into all institutions involving the presence of children. Martin Yelling (founder of Stormbreak) has helped me establish initial rapport with teachers during Stormbreak activity training workshops since the start of my Ph.D. studies (September 2018). From initial contact through now, teachers are keen to participate and contribute to research. Overall, no study data will be collected from minors or other vulnerable populations. After study completion, participants will be recognized for their contributions and provided with meaningful closure so they don't feel like they trusted and confided in a researcher

only to be —left hanging. Lastly, study findings may be potentially transferable to certain contexts, rather than broadly generalizable. Research outputs will be disseminated through many forms: dissertation/thesis for postgraduate study, journal article, and conference paper or presentation.

Storage, Access and Disposal of Research Data:

Personal data (e.g., name, phone number, date of birth, etc.) will only be stored on BU secure platform and password protected computer. Special Category Data is being collected (ethnicity). All data will be stored until study completion, 3 years, and then erased or anonymized when no longer needed. Also, study data will be retained securely so it is not traceable and cannot be linked back to study participants. Only BU research personnel affiliated with the study (Professor Michael Silk, Dr Daniel Lock, Dr Carly Stewart, Professor Julie Turner-Cobb, Dr Ashok Patnaik, and me (Samar Shahid) will have access to research data. No special category or criminal offense data will be collected. After the study has finished, no identifiable participant data will be stored. Anonymised data will be added and archived to BORDaR, BU's research data repository (a central location where data is stored) which will be publicly available. After the study has finished, no identifiable personal data will be stored, only pseudonymous data will be registered and indefinitely discoverable via BORDaR, BU's research data repository and linked (where applicable) to any associated research outputs via Bournemouth University Research Online [BURO], BU's institutional repository.

3.5 Judgement criteria: qualitative research

Researchers have acknowledged that in contrast to quantitative research, the conventional criteria of validity, reliability, generalizability, and objectivity should not be applied to judging qualitative research, given the marked differences in philosophical paradigms (Sparkes and Smith 2009; Tracy 2010). Lincoln and Guba (1985), known for their influential work within the sport and exercise sciences, set forth a new set of criteria that better responded to a paradigm based on emergent design – qualitative research. Convinced that the traditional criteria were not suitable for assessing the naturalistic approaches of qualitative research, they substituted those four criteria for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, along with offering corresponding empirical processes that would appropriately (if not fully) affirm the criterion of trustworthiness. Despite their approach being widely adopted, Sparkes (1988) and Sparkes and Smith (2009) contested their perspectives of validity as appropriate for qualitatively oriented research, claiming it was problematic as it so closely paralleled the traditional criteria and did not realistically follow the logic of qualitative work, especially in relation to the view of multiple realities. Similarly, advocating for flexibility in indictive qualitative writing style, Tracy argued that interpretive research would remain on the back burner if actively strained by deductive logic (2012). Given that there is a greater variety of conceptualisations for judging the quality of qualitative research, competing claims revolving around what constitutes "good-quality work" prevail among qualitative researchers (Sparkes and Smith 2009). Nonetheless, there is no one approach that is agreed upon in full, adopting the traditional criteria of validity, reliability, generalizability, and objectivity remains, overall, overtly opposed by communities of interpretive scholars.

Against this, I consider ways in which this qualitative study may be judged, and thus, I attempt to provide some considerations with hopes that they will be taken into account in judging this doctoral research. Although there are several ways to judge qualitative work, I take up ideas that move away from epistemological foundationalism (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005; Smith and Hodkinson 2008). In this postmodernist context, no one method is privileged, rather, all existing methods are open to inquiry, new methods are welcome, and then subjected to critique – but from this postmodernist position, we can still know (partial, local, or historical knowledge) – "'something' without claiming to know everything" (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005, p.961). Specifically, I summarise Sparkes et al.'s (2014, pp.195-197) criteria that refer to the reader for more detail and are picked from lists offered by a range of scholars (Lieblich et al. 1998; Richardson 2000b; Sparkes 2002; Holman Jones 2005; Sparkes and Smith 2009; Tracy 2010; Barone and Eisner 2012; Smith and Caddick 2012; Sparkes and Smith 2013):

Substantive contribution: This considers if the research contributes to our understanding of social life; if the writer demonstrates a deeply rooted (if embedded) social scientific perspective – and the ways that perspective has informed the construction of the text.

Impact: Reflecting on how the text affects you – emotionally, intellectually, and if it generates new questions, influences you to write, try new research practices, or towards action.

Width: This criterion refers to the researcher(s) ability to provide comprehensiveness and quality evidence in their final report and regarding the proposed interpretation or analysis. Do they offer the reader a range of quotations in reporting studies, along with suggestions of alternative explanations for the reader to judge the evidence and its interpretation?

Aesthetic merit: This considers if the final report is aesthetically pleasing; if creative analytical practices were used to open up the text, to invite interpretive response – if the piece is artistically shaped, interesting, satisfying, and complex.

Coherence: This element can be assessed internally and externally, such as how the parts of the interpretation fit together against existing theories and previous research to create a meaningful whole.

Dialogue as a space of debate and negotiation: Does the research display the capacity to open up meaningful dialogue among different people?

Personal narrative and storytelling as an obligation to critique: Does the story uphold the ethical duty to be critical about subject positions, actions, and established notions of expertise and justice both within and outside of the work – and if so, how?

Engaged embodiment as a condition for change: Does the research have the capacity to enact political action and social or personal change in and outside the work? In its ideal form, if this criterion is appropriate for judging the research at hand, and the research does have incredible potential for transformation, then the research meets this criterion and can be deemed "good".

Worthy topic: Is the research topic relevant, timely, significant, interesting, or evocative?

Rich rigor: Does the study adopt sufficient, abundant, appropriate, and challenging – theoretical concepts, fieldwork (data and time), sample(s), context(s), and data collection and analysis?

Sincerity: The study has illustrated distinctive elements of self reflexivity around the researcher's values, biases, and dispositions – and transparency about methods and challenges.

Resonance: The research is influential, affective, or moving for individual readers or groups/different readers via its aesthetic qualities, evoking illustrations, naturalistic generalizations, and transferable findings.

Credibility: This criterion considers if the researcher has spent a significant amount of time with participants or sought participant reflections on their interpretations of the data. This is because participant reflections (also known as, member checks) can open up dialogue about the fairness, appropriateness, and believability of interpretations offered, which can offer researchers fresh insights, and a spur for richer and deeper analyses. Notably, this technique is seen as an opportunity for dialogue with participants, reflexive elaboration, critique, feedback, affirmation, disagreement, and even collaboration, rather than as a test of research findings or way towards achieving trustworthiness.

Transparency: Was the research made transparent? For example, through an audit trail, having a critical friend scrutinize elements (e.g., theoretical preferences, breadth of the interview sample, and the process of sorting, choosing, organising, and analysing the data) or presenting interpretations of the data to critical friends who provided theoretical considerations for the data that encouraged reflection on, and exploration of, alternative explanations and interpretations as they emerged. This is not to say that all those involved in the process need to define the meanings of a particular data set in the same way but that presenting an interpretation acknowledges that there can be agreement, those who are positioned differently in relation to their theoretical interests, research experience, and power resources can provide different perspectives and act as a resource for challenging and developing the interpretations. As such, researchers can construct a coherent and theoretically sound argument to defend the case they are making for the data within their study. Ultimately, this is not about making claims about validity or reliability, but rather seeing individual perspectives as a resource to deepen and extend interpretation.

Incisiveness: Does the research get to the heart of a social issue? If it cuts to – is penetrating the core of an issue, instead of getting bogged down in details that are inherently insignificance and hardly contribute towards increasing the cogency of the research, then the work meets the criterion of incisiveness.

Generativity: How the work enables one to see or act upon phenomena, even if it represents a type of case study involving only one participant.

Set against this list, which, when applied, is contingent on several factors, such as what type of study is being judged, its purpose, and the subjectivity of the person judging the work, it is important to emphasise that the list is *not* fixed or closed. As such, “meeting ten criteria does not make a study twice as good as one that meets five criteria” (Smith et al. 2014, p.197), rather, perceiving a list in this way defeats the point of such lists and their very purpose for passing judgement (Smith and Deemer 2000). For judging this thesis, then, I encourage applying criteria from parallel perspectives that revolt against the idea of privileging one set objective truth and instead accept the position of a relativistic world of multiple constructed realities that are dependent on the researcher.

In doing so, I am confident that the reader (at least one of the few) will recognise that I have offered *incisive* work that cuts at the heart of a social issue and, thus, carries the potential to resonate with teachers or, perhaps even communities of teachers, and bring social change. More importantly, expecting that it demonstrates that the study is characterised by sincere efforts to be reflexive, transparent, and ethical at all stages of the research, but especially in the collecting and sharing, even when critical in the interpreting, of teachers’ personal narratives.

Alongside the criterion of incisiveness, I wish the reader to invoke the judgement criteria of *impact* and *engaged embodiment as a condition for change* to judge the research for the two reasons I explore. First, methodological scholars of the British Sociological Association (BSA) Auto/Biography Study Group (2024) engaged with Karen's counternarrative academically and emotionally during an online presentation discussion, which generated an interesting discussion about the narrative analysis (see section 6.4.2). Additionally, I contributed to a report by the All-Part Parliamentary Group (APPG) on a fit and healthy childhood early in the research process as part of the collaborative work (Parliament 2019). This engagement and impact of the research on the audience is a testament to its potential to bring about change.

The opportunity to present the structural narrative analysis findings to this group of experts was helpful, insightful, and a testament to the work affecting others emotionally and intellectually. For example, several members noted that they found the specific mode of narrative analysis and the choice to engage with it as a counternarrative interesting, as it left them *feeling* the profound emotional effects of Karen's trauma in sport and a new understanding of childhood experiences in sport. Others probed into specific narrative elements of Labov's model, such as talking about the coding and evaluation to describe their interpretations, resonating with and even considering how they would apply it to their research areas. This group feedback helped shape the research as I engaged with it differently and in more detail. Seeing from their perspective how the story made them feel and stimulated academic dialogue helped demonstrate its value in narrative research.

For the second point, not separate from the first, this research has the potential to inspire and bring about transformative change in our understanding of English teachers- and their embodied experiences that influence engagement in school-based initiatives towards positive childhood health. As part of a collaborative project, it offers a hopeful and inspiring vision for the future of health education policy, where our understanding of teachers' influence on children and adolescents' health in contexts of physical activity in the UK can be significantly enhanced to develop policy solutions.

3.6 Representational confessions of an imperfect narrative researc*her*

In this section, I share a confessional tale (Van Maanen 2011) about the raw experiences and stark realities of being a doctoral researcher. I confess the challenges of *trying* to understand qualitative, interdisciplinary, and narrative research in the contexts of sport, physical activity, and mental health while navigating the newly discovered landscapes of academia and collaborative research in the UK – to construct a *reflexively* golden thread (Braun and Clarke 2019). This personal account includes a critical reflection on the role of a researcher in a collaborative project involving external partners and a social constructionist/embodied approach, how that affects the intertwined processes of data collection and the different presentations of narrative analysis, representational content, and reflexivity in the thesis. I illuminate the struggles of aiming to achieve – write a *perfect* narrative in a narrative inquiry, to shed light on the value of being an intentional researcher, albeit imperfect, to provide a particular type of narrative work that does not fit the traditional form but represents a unique voice of the researcher and participants' narratives in a coherent and meaningful way.

Before confessing, I draw attention to the narratives of authors who have made it easier to escape the solitary confinement of academic writing via alternative techniques fitted to a social constructionist methodology. These ways of writing allow for thinking and writing in a neurodiverse way, presenting a socially constructed sense of self in writing and, therefore, feeling more natural and less policed.

> "The narrative turn moves away from a singular, monolithic conception of social science toward a pluralism that promotes multiple forms of representation and research; away from facts and toward meanings; away from master narratives and toward local stories; away from idolizing categorical thought and abstracted theory and toward embracing the values of irony, emotionality, and activism; away from assuming the stance of the disinterested spectator and toward assuming the posture of a feeling, embodied, and vulnerable observer; away from writing essays and toward telling stories" (Bochner 2001, pp.134-135).

Bochner's words are liberating for many novice researchers. He encourages social scientists to break free from the limited conceptualisations that refrain from representation, meanings, stories, and theorising in the plural. He urges us instead towards embodiment, feeling, and vulnerability to represent our feelings and experiences through sociological writing and storytelling. In this section, I adopt a similar transitioning and informal writing style as Bochner for the confessional tale, which renounces the cultural conventions of academic writing.

In a similar light, Wolcott (2002) also promoted diverse writing practices and doing qualitative research in ways that reject the traditional order (as mentioned in section 1.6 for the alternative ways of writing this thesis and reporting analysis). This approach enables researchers to do research in alternative ways that are more suited to their theoretical thinking and not restricted to the standard procedures to present their findings in discovery-oriented forms. The author notably stresses that it is essential to account for appropriately drawing theoretical implications and criticality and meeting the various important expectations for research. While Bochner emphasises the need to move towards local stories and away from dominant, singular narratives, Wolcott conveys his views on allowing flexibility in qualitative approaches for writing up research. Mainly not to stifle doctoral students by tradition to the point that they deter from it altogether.

> "Indeed, you may feel that I am promoting a lessening of standards, a diminishing of rigor. But hear me out, and consider whether things need to be quite as hide-bound as they sometimes appear. When the dissertation becomes the *last* document a person writes, the dissertation research the *only* research in which a person ever engages, then our efforts at rigor seem counterproductive" (Wolcott 2002, p.93).

In the throes of writing up, I cling to the life raft Wolcott has provided doctoral researchers, especially for positioning the interpretations of stories within this thesis but also for the ways of writing reflexively and the presentation of this reflexive writing. To support this case, I point to Richardson (2000a, p.11), who also argues for new writing styles and formats in qualitative research and highlights *evocative representations* as an essential way "of seeing through and beyond social scientific naturalisms". As such, the power of social science work and writing lies in moving from the prescribed methods to writing in more stimulating forms. Evocative representations illuminate cultural rhetoric, researchers' efforts that may otherwise remain less explicit, and the capacities of social sciences as a field are potent forces, exceedingly because writing "touches us where we live, in our bodies" (Richardson 2000a).

To direct the reader to understand some of the deeper feelings and nuances as personally experienced and position the self as the researcher reflexively, I use writing to showcase specific contours of the selves and identities. At the very least, I will expose the doubts and uncertainties I experienced over time about the specific study and broader research project. In an attempt at more, constructing these subjectivities in the postmodernist context – local, imperfect, and situational and in which the self is always present via language and thus, the researcher's voice permeates every aspect of the thesis.

Combining this perspective with an ethnographic approach to represent the participants' points of view in the data, I pursue culture to account for their meanings and evaluate the underlying contextual meanings that are less explicitly presented from an interdisciplinary perspective (Van Maanen 1979, 2011). Finally, I deliberately choose to deploy the crux of reflexive writing at once here to avoid nurturing the voice in ways I do not know, and because in our writing, when we story and restory, "There is no such thing as 'getting it right', only 'getting it' differently contoured and nuanced" (Richardson 2000a, p.10). For this reason, reflexivity or reflexive writing in the thesis is not explicit via interspersed text with sporadic pauses reflecting a style that personally feels far from natural and committed to the qualitative identity checklist. Significantly, it does not suppress the need for reflexivity and accountability in qualitative inquiry; it is just engaging in a form that ranks higher on the spectrum of authenticity and feels equally exposed.

Against this backdrop and answering these calls for *alternative* writing and *breaking free* from the traditional way of understanding and writing reflexively, I move towards a more personal writing style to share my story as a researcher and what I understand as a critically reflexive stance. As such, in a second attempt to better position the self in the research, with less focus on what led to pursuing the study (see section 1.5 for the cathartic blunder), I use the concept representation in narrative research. Ultimately, it informs the reader of the researcher's position – or even the altered sense of identity in this collaborative research underpinned by notions of interdisciplinarity and embodied experiences.

* * *

I will pause and shift my writing to a more personal voice and less academically inclined grammatical format to portray the stark realities of being a novice – an imperfect doctoral researcher embedded in the minefield of academia. In this way, I hope to make my awareness of representation clear. I start with this moment once I've conjured up the nerve to write this section on representation. For context briefly, a section that I'm adding to this thesis post-Viva following the very detailed and well-guided suggestions by my examiners who emphasised its importance in narratives and implored me to, at the very least: "show an awareness of representation - in essence, what kind of tale are you telling?" – and rightly so! After all, I am doing a narrative inquiry.

It seems blatantly obvious now, as do many of the meaningful considerations they outlined for my amendments. They were meaningful because I was even given some well-referenced and helpful resources that genuinely made my life easier. Yet, what was weird was that I was already familiar with some of these articles. I had even bookmarked or saved them as PDFs within the realm of academic oblivion that all journal articles are banished into until that point sometime in the hypothetical future when we direly need to revisit them.

So, if I read it, saved it, and recalled the notion of self-reflexivity (Richardson 2000b). More than just that, I understood the importance of writing reflexively, where language serves as a tool to shed light on underlying sociopolitical ideologies and thus, even resonated with postmodernist and poststructuralist ways of doing research in the post-pandemic world and political climate, then why in the world did I not think to shed light on representation on my own?

I'll come back to answer this question in a bit. I want to return to where I started, right before I provided context on the origins of this section and right after I found the courage to start writing it, which, as you now know, for some perplexing reason, I unintentionally disregarded. Anyway, back to that instance where I had finally put words down.

After snowballing through a plethora of research articles on representation in qualitative research (QR), qualitative inquiry, narrative inquiry, narrative research, sport, and physical activity—you get the point: I did a lot of research.

I wanted to understand the interdisciplinary world of research. In fact, I needed to, and as the external stakeholders on the research project often reminded me, I was being paid to. The voice of external stakeholders, the same ones who generated the research topic and I interacted with continuously, and thus, whose point-of-views are entrenched in early literature considerations. The same partners served as the gatekeepers and introduced me to the group of teachers from whom I would recruit the participants for the study and represent the source population relevant for practice. In this way, I learned the dynamics of Stormbreak and teachers' engagement with the intervention in practice, away from the literature and before the individual interviews. I was entrenched in Stormbreak, which consisted of teachers across five of the pilot's school settings. It influenced how I understood English teachers, primary school education, mental health, and physical activity in the UK.

Taking in all this, before I fought to study teachers' stories in ways that best suited the stories I was telling.

My raw experience of academia is fascinating, multifaceted, and complex but simultaneously relatable. I can summarise the latter in a light-hearted way in one sweeping statement—or better yet, in only three little words: one more article. If I just read one more article, I'll finally get it, and then I'll start writing because it all makes sense. This way, it'll be more refined.

Do you get it? Or does that not make sense? Was that too subtle? Should I replace the word plethora above with something less pretentious or wordy? That's a good idea since the Grammarly app has underlined ' a plethora of' in blue to suggest I change the wording. Should I change it to 'many', then? I don't know, okay, fine, I'll do it to move on. No, I'll leave it and focus on the point. What was that again?

The postmodernist context of doubt is applauded for allowing multiple approaches of knowing and telling to exist together – we're lucky to be working in such a time…apparently. I mean, I know that there is no universal or one truth, and we all have our own interests and subjectivities, which change over time and within different settings. On the other hand, if all methods are not to be trusted alone or equally, do you know how much room that leaves for newbies like me to feel lost *constantly? Overwhelmed! For us to enter the research world only to drown in ambiguities and uncertainties in all shapes and sizes, starting from the trivial, little things, like worrying about using the right word, at least 10 tens, while grappling with the heavier stuff of epistemology, ontology, and all things 'ology'. For the former, I end up going for the more pretentious words about 9/10 times and then try not to judge myself for trying too hard, but just like you see 'pretentious' still hanging around up there, I tend to leave it. I've already bored you with the latter at the start of the chapter in exhaustive detail, so I'll try switching it up here. Observing the complex nature of the research process, taking part in activities linked to the conduct of research and the importance of the participants' stories.*

Being a doctoral researcher is hard, and being a novice interdisciplinary qualitative researcher in PhD studies is harder. However, I do not purport to be conclusive or represent the experience of all (novice/interdisciplinary/qualitative) researchers by that. That's how I feel as an international (American ex-pat) PhD student and qualitative neophyte.

Assuming I'm still allowed to go by the latter six years into my PhD and nearly at the finish line, but much like imposter syndrome creeps in when we feel most vulnerable, I'm not sure I can control it. Don't get me wrong, I love qualitative research and all its various strands, even if complex and often messy, but as a researcher who was new to the QR scene and simultaneously thrown in the trenches of the literature review for investigating the broader contexts, and that too in a different country, requires digging even deeper for the "bigger picture" and the "so what" questions. Along with choosing the correct theory and methodology so that they all seamlessly connect, but that too, in a way that the golden thread pierces through the hardcover binding of your final thesis – good luck! Oh, and for motivation, remember that "you'll be in the 2%"!

Multiple factors play a role in my understanding of QR and how I engage with it through narratives, stories and lived experiences. Leading me to think about how I may have understood it differently during the research process – if I wasn't haunted by personal challenges, the global pandemic, funding running out midway, expectations from my parents in NYC and those for myself to see through my commitments to telling the tales of teachers. Those who entrusted me with their personal stories – lives and vulnerabilities of the past and under more significant systematic pressures more recently. Stories that invited me to better understand myself as I tried to make sense of their learning through each other.

I consider all aspects related to narratives important. I intended to offer descriptive, meaningful accounts that linked the literature review and theories to my methods and personal reflections to highlight my positionality as the researcher and how I understand representation and represent others and myself in the thesis. Or, in this case, attend to, and to my surprise, how I failed to acknowledge it with more reflexive writing throughout the physical thesis. Not through the other outlets I focused on, like the reflexive questions or my reflexive journal, which felt more personal, authentic … hidden.

Not in a sneaky way, as I recognise my multiple privileges, including but not limited to passport privilege, pursuing and attaining Western education in various countries, attending an elite university, being a recipient of a studentship, ability, straight, cisgender…

This crisis of representation is not new, albeit experienced differently. I am not the first researcher of my kind, yet one of many who struggled to incorporate themselves into the research story while knowing that the analysis and interpretations are constructions of shared meaning. I have come to accept that we are storytellers by nature, and we live our lives through and out of stories; thus, I am both a producer and product of the stories I tell. Indeed, locating myself, the participants, and broader sociocultural, historical, and political influences in these stories are relevant. I do not deny the significance.

I quickly learned that doing and writing qualitative research are two different things. Both entail deliberate considerations for the numerous processes and procedures linked to them throughout the study and require different skills and ways of learning. Early on, I made it my mission to hone in on the theory and practice I needed to be a qualitative researcher. I started keeping a reflexive journal soon after Carly (a lifeline for me these past six years) suggested it to me soon after she took me under her wing.

I used this journal to understand how I thought and felt in the moment and to revisit it later to see how my thinking had changed. This was not only throughout the research process but also from how I thought and knew before entering new spaces of education, sport, and health in a new place, England. At that time, I did not fully appreciate the latter as much as I can now. Now that I am more aware of British culture, health, and politics, and how the intertwined problems of the three are connected to education with teachers positioned as the frontline soldiers who are meant to fight a war that largely stems from the operating economic framework and influences British economics, politics, and society – the crisis around children's health in the UK. The neoliberal *policies that prevail and their empirical failures serve to benefit the elite while undesirably increasing social and cultural insecurities and inequality.*

Against all this, the question remains – why did I forgo the topic of representation? Now, here's what I think: I didn't elucidate on the idea of representation in the thesis for the same reason that I did not correctly do a few things the first time around.

All because I am an imperfect researcher. I am still learning –and narrative work is no easy feat.

> "*Narrative* is like the elephant in the fable of the five blind men, each grasping a different part of the beast and saying with certainty what sort of animal it is, based on that grasp. The moral of that fable, for me, is that the blind men's five stories all need each other; the truth of each depends on the alternative versions, which do not compete but rather complement each other. Among multiple stories, problems begin when one story claims representational privilege. The problem of writing about narrative is to make a case for one's own perspective without foreclosing other ways of understanding. The problem of writing about narrative is to make a case for one's own perspective without foreclosing other ways of understanding" (Frank 2019, p.107).

That is not to say that I do not hold myself accountable. I try my best from the position that I'm in and the knowledge I have currently, with the innate desire to learn, to grow, and to know more about culture through stories. Different versions of it represent the raw realities of others, and if allowed, we can embed ourselves to understand from within without constraining their individual voices. We must recognise not only our privileges as researchers but also other social, cultural, and political influences, as well as the privileges of the participants, both explicit and implicit.

In the UK, I worked to become a qualitative researcher while also working towards becoming an interdisciplinary researcher and a postgraduate researcher on a collaborative charity-university project. Working towards diminishing the effects of clinical settings, quantitative methods in larger samples to generalise health causes across state lines, and positivist roots as I uprooted my life in the States to move to England in the most privileged sense. In the mix, I've temporarily traded in past identities as a runner, extrovert, and best friend for the more recent ones of an almost-Dr, hermit, and one I intend to retain, cat-mom. Amongst these privileges across the pond, I was guided by two of the most intellectual, helpful, and grounded supervisors, making the process more enjoyable; I am still on my qualitative PhD journey.

I employed theory and practice from my background in bioethics, being transparent, ethical, and an activist to bring out the voices of teachers. I went through the traditional ethical checks by the university. Still, alongside their checklist, I considered the practical ways I knew to ensure participant well-being and recognise conflicts of interest in relation to the participants and the external stakeholders. For this, I dawned my ethereal bioethicist hat that often positions us as the moral police and drew from my past experiences in clinical trials where I discussed sensitive topics about mental health and the effects of depression with women who experienced adverse events during pregnancy and postpartum. Dominant discourses permeate across developed Western countries' public health policies and influence their residents and developing countries. This reminds me of my fieldwork in China and Pakistan and the difficulties of understanding cultural affairs without being the paternalistic Western bodies that enter for a short period to refine, recondition, and dominate with notions of health, pleasing our narratives of altruism.

I used these stories from the past to learn new stories about teachers. To be extra sensitive during our discussions, mindful of their expressions and bodily gestures, and highly sensitive to the changes in their storytelling. I interviewed a group of six primary school teachers who were all white, British, and, at that time, were all living in southwest England. A place I call home now, wild. Teachers were chosen by the external stakeholders on the larger project and were the ones I engaged with before the research interview through Stormbreak workshops. This provided the teachers with plenty of time to get to know me outside of the research interview. Not in a way I'd disclose in a survey: 27-34; Other–American Pakistani; heterosexual; female, but a more natural way, much like the talk during our interviews. They often asked why I came to the UK, and I'd share my interest in running, health, and the experiences that led me here. I also used these interactions to explain to them how my research objectives were separate from the specific objectives of Stormbreak and their levels of engagement with the Stormbreak intervention in their classrooms. I was interested in exploring their experiences in sports and health over time.

One of the teachers shared a different story about her raw, visceral experiences of being excluded from sports. Perhaps unconsciously, I draw on this story that goes against the grain to consider the other stories in stark juxtaposition and how my childhood story of sport and health would sit within the majority and oppose hers. In some sense, I feel bad for embodying the dominant narrative of sports myself in the past and present, thus shining a penetrating light on her story and, perhaps, looking for relief morally.

Borrowing the words from my examiners as written in their comments, I'm "coming off the fence" and exposing myself as the imperfect researcher that I am—imperfect but not entirely flawed. I'm no longer hiding behind my reflexive journal, away from the thesis and the reader, where I could write a lot, often and unexposed. I'm wildly aware of my limited knowledge, which shapes this thesis, and the meaningful stories constructed between six teachers and me in a specific way and within the specific sociocultural contexts of the UK shortly before and after the pandemic. But do I know it all? Absolutely not. I know it's a lot easier to focus on studying other's stories while hoping your reflexive self is not outed. Thus, the co-constructed stories in this thesis have been analysed repeatedly, with the help of many calling me out for reaching - overanalysing. Again, rightly so, because as a researcher applying an interdisciplinary, embodied approach for socially constructed understandings, the world is your oyster, yet it's still possible to get bogged down in a singular position and contort rather than interpret. This has implications – a ripple effect – because narratives are emotionally and politically charged.

The stories we choose to tell and that are heard and retold take larger forms. Yet equally, so do the stories we silence. Why were we never taught the right balance? Or is this not separate from Aristotle's golden mean, especially appreciated as a middle child but now archaic?

I felt that I had honed the craft of reflexive writing from the various reflexive journals I've written over these years; despite this, it feels new, exceedingly knowing it'll be scrutinised. More personal when you haven't pointed at another researcher or scholar for their help to support your dialogue – and comfort. Writing reflexively truly is a method, no doubt, one that serves as a stark reminder to be less savage and more mindful in the study of stories attached to real people, real lives. Exactly how I perform the ritual of thinking about what others will think of my writing, my story, which compels you to revisit their stories and come to new ways of understanding it, giving meaning to it in a way that might have escaped me the first time. Just like this section.

I focus on the representation of the participants. Teachers who are all white. The lack of diversity was dramatically apparent, especially as a New Yorker who previously lived in ecosystems with a blend of ethnicities and races and engaged in previous research with diverse, underprivileged minority populations. However, the participants in the study reflect the diversity of their culture and positioning in Southwest England, as well as the research participation and engagement of Stormbreak. In this sense, what initially seems like a lack of underrepresentation in ethnicity is understood as the country's population, which mirrors England's population demographics in the south coastal region. Especially when taking other aspects like gender and age into account. It's *not that simplistic. In this thesis, I represent the voices of English teachers as a researcher shaped by US politics and cultures. This strength allows me to understand their stories from a less biased lens. And hopefully, not one that is too narrow or unjust.*

To wrap up this tale, I hope this thesis is the stepping stone for my enhanced qualitative writing future, where someday I'll be able to write more reflexively and worry less about doing it perfectly; until then, I leave you with my modest attempt at representing the many different strands of the research without heavily focusing on a singular area, or myself, as I now reflect on whether it'll be received well.

* * *

Chapter Four: Findings – part one, pre-COVID

4.1 Introduction

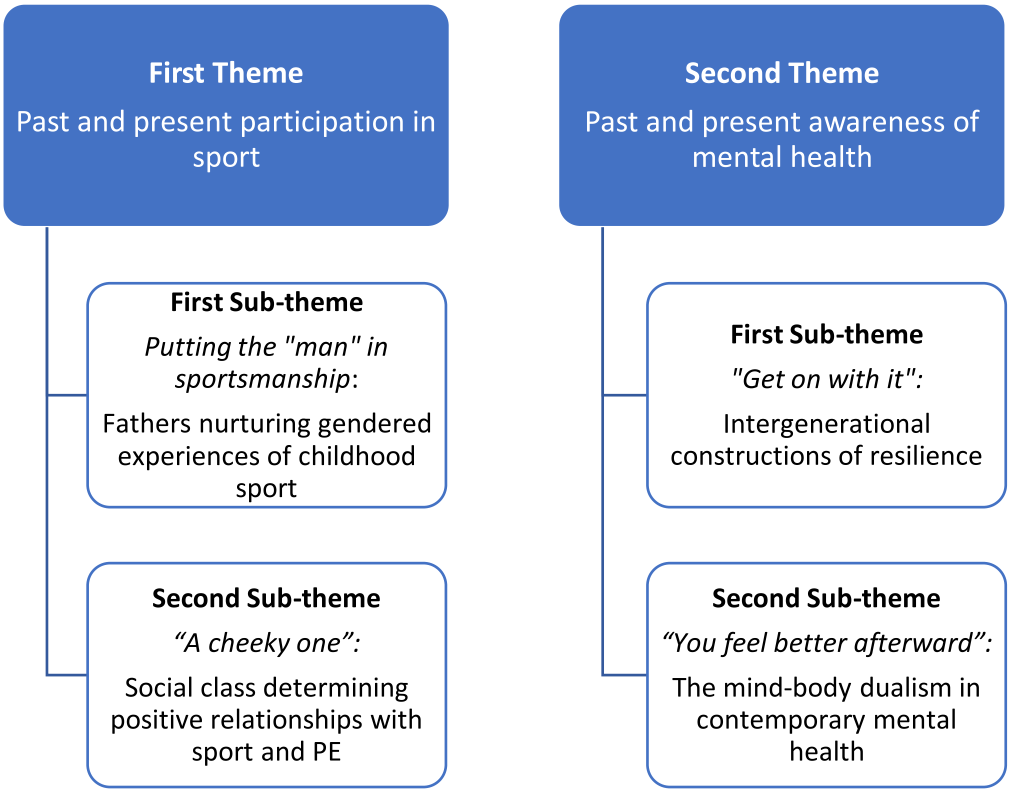
This chapter presents the key findings of a thematic narrative analysis (Riessman 2008) from in-depth semi-structured interviews of six primary school teachers who were responsible for the delivery of a movement and mental health intervention, *Stormbreak.* Exploring teachers' diverse narratives of their past and present relationships with mental health and movement using a life history approach generated insights into their embodied experiences, narratively constructed and lived, and illuminated their pedagogical knowledge, identities, bodies, and selves through multiple lenses. Rather than being wedded to one theory in my data analysis, I adopt an interpretive bricolage approach (Denzin and Lincoln 1999) and draw on concepts from the works of Pierre Bourdieu, Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, R.W. Connell, and Iris Marion Young due to the complexities and multi-perspectival nature of inquiry and meaning-making (Rogers 2012). A thematic analysis (Sparkes and Smith 2013) of each teacher's story allowed for flexibility with an interchange of psychological, social, political, and cultural interpretations. It revealed that teachers' understandings of movement and mental health were primarily positive, privileged, and evolving. Findings indicate that, although primary school teachers connected physical activity to well-being, describing it as overall beneficial for mental health, there was a generational gap persisting in their mental health literacy. Thus, interventions can benefit from providing professional training to support the mental health literacy of teachers in relation to contemporary understandings of mental health promotion.

4.2 Key themes

Two main themes, compromising two sub-themes respectively, frequently emerged throughout teachers' experiences, or as Clandinin and Connelly put it, *stories to live by* (Connelly and Clandinin 1999, p.4) around movement and mental health. To recall, they refer to these stories to reflect on the context, knowledge, and identities of teachers, specifically, conceptualising teachers' identities as shaped through stories of who others are as they make sense of their past in narrative form (Clandinin and Rosiek 2019). Framing identity through narrative ways of knowing "speaks to the nexus of teachers' personal practical knowledge and the landscapes in and out of schools, past and present, on which teachers live and work" (Clandinin et al. 2009, p.141). Thus, drawing on their stories, individual and social, to capture the complexities and meanings of teachers' daily lives, in and out of school, allows for learning from their diversity of lived stories. As such, exploring teachers' stories in the context of mental health and movement revealed insights into teacher knowledge related to these two evolving concepts. That said, this thematic narrative analysis includes the stories of two male teachers and three female teachers; the sixth participant's story is considered in the case study in chapter six.

A visual representation of the key themes and sub-themes that emerged from teachers' stories to live by of sport and mental health over the life course is presented below (See Figure 2). The two overarching themes that emerged from in-depth interviews with teachers were: 1. past and present participation in sport and 2. past and present awareness of mental health. The first theme examining teachers' past and present experiences of physical activity includes two subthemes: a) *Putting the "man" in sportsmanship*: Fathers nurturing gendered experiences of childhood sport and b) *"A cheeky one":* Social class determining positive relationships with sport and PE. The second theme that reflects teachers' past and present interactions with mental health consists of the following two sub-themes: a) *"Get on with it*": Intergenerational constructions of resilience and b) *"You feel better afterward":* The mind-body dualism in contemporary mental health.

Figure 2. Phase one: Key themes from a thematic narrative analysis pre-pandemic


First Theme
Past and present participation in sport
First Sub-theme
Putting the "man" in sportsmanship:
Fathers nurturing gendered experiences of childhood sport
Second Sub-theme
"A cheeky one":
Social class determining positive relationships with sport and PE
Second Theme
Past and present awareness of mental health
First Sub-theme
"Get on with it":
Intergenerational constructions of resilience
Second Sub-theme
"You feel better afterward":
The mind-body dualism in contemporary mental health

4.3 First theme: past and present participation in sport

4.3.1 *Putting the "man" in sportsmanship*: fathers nurturing gendered experiences of childhood sport

This first sub-theme describes how gender impacts childhood experiences of sport*,* bodies, sense of selves and identities involving play, physical activity, movement, exercise, and PE (PE). Teachers' early social interactions in sport revealed the construction of *hegemonic masculinity* and *emphasized femininity* (Connell 1987) through wider systemic social structures, social relations, and dominant discourses. Specifically, fathers were depicted as leading influential agents of socialisation into sport, shaping teachers' initial gendered beliefs and behaviours around sport. In this section, I present past performances of masculinity within the context of sport for two male teachers before examining the sporting lives of two female teachers related to the cultural discourse of emphasised femininity.

Foucault's (1977; 1980) poststructuralist work on discourses as the roots of power/knowledge has been used to view gender relations in contemporary sport participation and sporting bodies. Especially to further understand the perpetuation of traditional masculine bodily practices and social constructions of the masculine or feminine body from dominating discourses producing power relations, which subjugate certain bodily identities in sport (Markula 2015). Three of the primary school teachers who were interviewed and participated in the delivery of Stormbreak described early influences of fathers, predominantly paternal influences on childhood involvement in the social practices of sport. Given the history of male privilege and female exclusion in sport culture (Kidd 2013), it is important to understand the gendering process and the long-term effects that arise from early engagement with sport (Young et al. 1994). Although most of the narratives focus on the direct and indirect influences of father figures, the involvement and impact of other family members and peers in teachers' experiences of initial engagement in youth sport was evident.

4.3.1.1 Casey

I start with the story of Casey, a 32-year-old, White, heterosexual, male primary school teacher, who recalled how he first came to enjoy sport and consequently self-select his role as PE Lead:

> "I think purely because of my interest in PE from when I was tiny. My father played a lot of sports when he was younger; my–the parents I lived with, my mom and stepdad didn't–had no interest in sport at all, so it was always my father who would take me to the park and teach me how to play various things. Play tennis, play football, play golf, etc. Um, and then getting to university, um, was kind of the first, kind of step in thinking about it as a career. I always wanted to teach or coach, so I used to coach various sports, but I always wanted to teach as well, so it was kind of the first process for me, going into schools, seeing what primary school was like, not as a child but as an adult, um, and I really enjoyed it, and from there it was a case of jump up to some training, and I did a year's PGCE, part of a MA, and here I am. I think I was–I don't think I was a PE lead the first year, but I've been PE lead of any school I've been at from my second year, so what would that be? Seven years, I think I've done it. Um, with other responsibilities as well, but, generally, PE is kind of the thing I've been responsible for." (Casey)

Casey constructed his sporting identity through conformity to masculine norms at different points throughout his life course: during childhood, through the paternal influence and his participation in organised competitive sport, and in adulthood, through his endeavours to professionally pursue a career in PE and continue the cycle of sport taught by men. Evidence suggests that parental social support, especially encouraging children to be physically active, can have positive effects, such as an increase in children's physical activity involvement when coming from a same-sex parent (Bauer et al. 2008). Direct involvement in children's sport participation by fathers can influence the types of sports children choose to play (Zahra et al. 2015). Additional research demonstrates the strong effects of gender on parental impact. In relationships between male adults and, in particular, male children, fathers who previously engaged in sport displayed substantial intergenerational transfers of sport behaviours that enabled their sons' participation in sport and reinforced social norms, along with long-term sport involvement (Downward et al. 2014). Fathers play a vital and cyclical role in sport as they are assumed to be experts in sport, and thus, they feel inclined to embody the coach/sporting parent identity that leaves them responsible for supporting their children's sport skills and involvement (Coakley 2006). Accordingly, Casey's positive childhood experiences of sport consisted of strong paternal influences and masculinising experiences in which his father served as his sport coach, primarily responsible for helping him develop strong sporting abilities early on.

In line with this, Young et al. (1994) found that sport practices privileged dominant notions of masculinity on account of early exposure to environments of sport that emphasised masculine ideals. Particularly, during initial experiences of sport, a *male-to-male influence* or father and son relationship revealed generational male privilege as fathers were most influential in teaching and normalising violent sport practices related to boys. In this case, a maternal absence in Casey's experiences of childhood sport enabled his father to have sole responsibility and autonomy of his sporting practices and engagement. This role was upheld by his father by supplying sport equipment and investing time into supporting Casey's involvement, which encouraged his early involvement in gender-approved organised sport (Fredricks and Eccles 2005). Casey's early understanding of what it means to "be a man" was learned through organised sports that are traditionally masculine and perpetuate stereotypical gender ideologies.

Going into more detail about his past, Casey described his early memories of sport and how he came to construct his sporting identity and body:

> "I think this is from my experiences as a child when I had the opportunities to do lots of things, we weren't a rich family by any means but we were able to when my mom remarried, we were able to afford some things that maybe we wouldn't have been able to before, so I was lucky in the fact that I can do those things ... so I was lucky in the fact that my father taught me from quite an early age how to do the basics of, you know, catch a ball, throw a ball, run properly." (Casey)

Casey shows overt appreciation of his father embodying the role of a coach for a few reasons. For one, he had the opportunity to foster a meaningful father and son relationship through learning sport, and secondly he used those initial embodied experiences of sport to pursue a career in sport education that he is passionate about. Also, as an educator of PE today, Casey teaches other children the value and meaning of sport and understands that developing motor skills like throwing, running, and catching is crucial during childhood, a critical time of learning, as it impacts on children's future participation in physical activities (Coppens et al. 2019; Dobell et al. 2020). Further, Casey's exposure to sport throughout his life strengthened his internalization of sport as "natural" practices for the construction of masculinity from childhood into adulthood (Connell 1996). He credits this construction of his masculinity through ongoing experiences of sport, as him being "lucky". However, this is problematic, as Casey's engagement with sport and any respective outcomes are not a product of mere chance or luck but a depiction of privileges that men *collectively* have and actively construct in sport practices (Connell 1996).

Casey’s white heterosexual male identity, as constituted in dispositions of sport, physical activity, and PE, made sport easily accessible and inclusive across the lifespan (Leonard 2017). This is because masculinity, whiteness, and heterosexuality are all systematically represented as dominant attributes within sports landscapes. Despite having his masculinity actively constructed and reinforced both at school and at home in the past, Casey is naive to his privileges in symbolic social practices of “doing” masculinity, namely, organised sports that (re)constructed his gender identity, sporting body, and physically fit self. Thus, he embodies the positive values rooted in Western sporting landscapes.

For the most part, Casey expressed feelings of positivity towards his childhood experiences of sport; however, he also described feelings of vulnerability when it came to occurrences of trying out new sports. Acknowledging the different realities and focusing on the ways that teachers tried to construct meaning of this phenomenon, certain fragments of text, such as the following one, are purposely presented through an extensive quote:

> “I could do some things, but the things that I couldn’t do, I didn’t have any resilience, so things like swimming, and I can swim, but because I wasn’t even the middle part of my group, I was probably in the low end of my group, I gave up. So yeah, I was never good at athletics: there was never anything I was in the top bracket of, so I stopped doing it. I think there was a fine line between being sporty and doing the things I was good at and then never trying anything else so actually, my own personal view of activity is that I’ve always done the things that I know I can do. I’ve never pushed myself to try something new. For instance, I tried windsurfing two or three years ago, which is incredibly hard. Because I found it so hard, I never tried again. And I think that kind of really poor resilience is mainly through my childhood of not giving things a proper go, even now, I still do it. I don’t really try things that I feel like I’m going to be embarrassed about and it’s properly pathetic but it’s just part of my, my ingrained personality from when I was a child. It’s that kind of, I don’t want to seem like I’m failing at something so I’m going to do something that I know I can do. Um, the only thing that I’ve tried recently that I’m still bad at but I enjoy is golf, and I think that’s because I’m playing with other people who are equally poor *laughs*. So if I was playing with someone who was much better than me I think I would honestly find it really hard to play every week, and that’s really sad, but I think it’s part of my…I’m not sure, it probably is a mental health thing, but more–more my self-worth was low because I was comparing myself to others as opposed to not

> caring and just going because actually, half of the time, people don’t actually care.” (Casey)

Then, Casey shared how the role modelling of his father for sport behaviours influenced current goal-directed attitudes and behaviours in sport.

> “Today it’s just a, it’s your own self-image that they care about. Yeah, but I think the competitive element was built within me, I’m so, I’m super competitive that I found and still find failure really, really hard to take, again, which a strong negative on my personality but I think it’s something that was ingrained in me from a child and not from my parents because my parents, especially my dad who was very laissez-faire when it came competition, but I don’t know where it came from but I’ve always found myself to be competing in most of the things I do and whether it’s sport or not, I’m competing in board games. I’m that annoying person that you just want to go – *please leave the room like you’re taking this way too seriously*.” (Casey)

Employing the lens of *hegemonic masculinity* (Connell 1987), Casey's deeply embedded win-at-all-costs mentality, which he attributes to his “personality” can be rationalised as a hypercompetitive attitude that is culturally validated for men in the Western world. Although, interestingly, Casey attributes this to his personality, as if it is something engrained individually, rather than, socially influenced and situated. Hegemonic masculinity is employed to describe a category of desired and idealised men who maintain social power and privileges over various categories of identities, including other men through the notion of “multiple masculinities” (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005) Within these competing masculinities, men who belong to constructions of *heteromasculinity* with expectations that “real men” should present as tough, aggressive, courageous, and resilient (Anderson et al. 2012) are idealised.

Casey worked on the (re)construction of his heteromasculinity through his embodied actions that ascribed to the tenets of hegemonic masculinity. For example, since winning represented the successful way of “being a man” (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 1994, p.3), losing, therefore, triggered feelings of embarrassment as the idea of loss or others doing better than him threatened his sporting abilities and in turn, masculinity. Consequently, Casey consciously engaged with masculinised sports in which his body measured up to the competition, making him feel *like a man*, while consciously allowing him to disconnect from sports that had a reverse effect. Meaning, sports that spotlighted his physical inabilities left him feeling embarrassed and emasculated, despite the norms ascribed to heteromasculinity being unrealistic. A Western *hegemonic masculinity script* (Spector-Mersel 2006) attaches poor sports performance to emotional triggers of masculine inadequacy, self-doubt, and inferiority. Therefore, a sense of failure in certain sports often left Casey feeling robbed of his social power (Messerschmidt 2000) because he considered himself to have *failed* to perform a certain *type* of masculinity (Anderson 2002; Waling 2019). Namely, the maintenance of masculine hegemony as this type of masculinity marginalises men, in particular, who do not possess stereotypically over-emphasised masculine traits such as hypercompetitive attitudes (e.g., excessive focus on winning) in sport (Messner 1992). In this way, Casey shows awareness about his past views in relation to the potential sport outcomes as binary: doable vs. not doable (winning or losing) thus, preferring to, and in his exact words, "do something that I know I can do."

Overall, Casey's vulnerability in the past illustrates how male bodies can be both privileged and subjugated (González-Calvo and Varea 2019) depending on a complex blend of opportunities and limitations. While the stark ideas of subjugation do not apply to Casey, he did feel a sense of loss despite his power and privileges as a heterosexual cisgender white male embodying the "ideal" attributes pertaining to hegemonic masculinity (de Boise 2019). This is magnified through his constructions of competitiveness, a traditionally masculine trait that is socially expected from heterosexual men in sport (Eagly and Steffen 1986), along with the need to do well in sport central to his involvement and satisfaction as a boy (i.e. winning in sporting culture) (Drummond 2020). Although some may go as far as to argue that this underpinning win-at-all-costs mentality is "macho behaviour" that further nurtures and perpetuates a toxic culture of masculinity (Alsarve and Angelin 2019), Casey does not embody true hypermasculinity or toxic masculinity. Arguably, his vulnerability connected to sport *challenges* the notion of toxic masculinity, which prides men on suppressed emotions and views the show of emotion or vulnerability and sensitivity to feminine traits.

Importantly, Casey attributed his defining characteristic of hegemonic masculinity and self-described competitive actions since childhood to his "ingrained personality" alone, in a way that emphasises mind-body dualism, where competition is inherently engrained and not a product of social force. In this vein and equally important, he embraces notions of *natural* masculinity as he chalks it up to being an individual character rather than – men *work* at constructing their masculinities and the kind of masculinity they construct is within a socially constructed context, not done alone (Messner 1989; Connell 2010).

Casey's position of power as a male body located in the discourses of sport exists in his story of "possible selves'' (Markus and Nurius 1986), the future self that one imagines as potentially possible as a continuation of their past and present. In this case, Casey envisioned the construction of his *possible self*, teaching youth sport practices to be an extension of his past self as a young athletic boy because the meaning, relevance, and importance attributed to sport in his personal life align with his professional life. In considering possibilities for the future self, past engagement with incentivised sport behaviours enabled the construction of Casey's future sporting identity, body, and understanding of his sense of self to achieve sports-related outcomes (Chalk et al. 1994). Thus, Casey's personal and professional identities developed through his childhood experiences and performances in sport, with personalised patterns of stereotypically exaggerated notions of winning in sports, have led to the construction of a professional self. That is the *kind* of primary school teacher that he specifically chose to construct within the male-dominated domain of sport and PE (Butler 1990).

> "So, when I was younger, [I played] tennis, squash, golf, to be honest, anything really, I was super active. Still active, still play football every Saturday, I play five-a-side football on a Thursday, and I play golf, as much as I can, I want to say every Sunday, but it's not every Sunday um and then recreationally I play tennis and squash, and, and what else do I play? That's probably it really, the occasional badminton, but nothing much more than that. So, I'd say I'm probably active two to three times a week if I can if school isn't too busy." (Casey)

In this sense, while Casey still sustains the influences of a gendered past through his engagement with sports that were not left behind. Casey's gendered relationship with sports in the past transitioned into adulthood as he maintained involvement in organised sports like golf (Maas and Hasbrook 2001; McGinnis et al. 2005) and football, which continue to legitimatise the notions of traditional masculinity. In the (re)telling of his story, Casey draws on the narrative facets of storytelling to organise and present his sport experiences and embodied self in a logical, chronological manner, mainly spotlighting his continued involvement in sports. In other words, employing a domino effect in the form of various sport or recreational activities that help in the construction of his past and present "*super* active" and "*still* active" selves. Other than this obvious continuance with golf, the nuances situated within these experiences and the meaning of their sociocultural consequences across time, requires drawing on a brief excerpt of text that was previously presented at the start.

Before doing so, it is important to note that Casey's story is nuanced as he demonstrates more positive constructions of sport and health at present, which are located within contemporary understandings that underscore the concepts of fun and enjoyment in sport to maintain positive mental health. Therefore, as the story unfolds, while gender remains a core component, the sporting body and culture are renegotiated to include dominant discourses of health. As such, Casey expands his view of the potential outcomes in sport and reconceptualises competition towards sport reform, specifically, challenging the dichotomous forms of winning *or* losing, which can be seen as broadening his awareness and diminishing the win-at-all-costs attitude (English 2017). This positive change is translated through more recent behaviours in sport today:

> "It's that kind of, I don't want to seem like I'm failing at something so I'm going to do something that I know I can do. Um, the only thing that I've tried recently that I'm still bad at, but I enjoy is golf and I think that's because I'm playing with other people who are equally poor (laughs). So, if I was playing with someone who was much better than me, I think I would honestly find it really hard to play every week and that's really sad…" (Casey)

That is, Casey's story of childhood experiences of sports reflects a shift in his sense of self as he engages with contemporary discourses of mental health (Bengoechea et al. 2006; Kobau et al. 2011; Jhanwar and Avinash 2017; Barry et al. 2019). For example, in the past, Casey would not have incorporated the concept of "resilience" to interpret his habitual emotional patterns, nor would he consciously reflect upon his attitudes and behaviours. However, given his contemporaneous reconceptualisation of mental health, Casey now has the capacity to express his vulnerability in sport and identify, and show awareness of his competitiveness as negative behaviour that stems from his low self-esteem. Notably, he feels empowered through his new mental health awareness in that he now understands how his self-worth is *not* dependent on winning or a dualistic *doing* in sport.

For example, Casey aspires to protect other children from participating in similarly negative displays of competitiveness:

> "Maybe that's the reason why I push activity and movement as opposed to competitive sport in my school because I don't want children to grow up like I've become (laughs) almost like that idiot who can't take losing. I want them to be gracious and try different things and um I'm almost putting on what I should've been when I was a child, not a petulant child who can't stand losing and has zero resilience in anything (laughs)." (Casey)

Casey's body as a boy was a site of low self-esteem onset on account of the institutional stigma deeply embedded in sports culture that marginalises boys and men who perform poorly in sport. Despite this, though, Casey continues to engage in sport today. This is because, he finds no faults with the (social) institutionalised game of sports, but rather, views his (personal) "competitive" self or masculinity as problematic. Hence, Casey has personalised his current involvement in sports in accordance with what he believes to be his negative "ingrained personality" or "the competitive element" that was "built within" him, to the degree that he exclusively plays sports (e.g., golf) "with other people who are equally poor" at the sport as well. Regardless, his evolving relationship with sport, including continuity and a transformative change in his hegemonic masculinity, can be helpful for encouraging his students to have less competitive and concentrated views. Especially as the contemporary understanding and promotion of fun/enjoyable sport involvement is embodied through Casey's more recent carefree dispositions about enjoying the social aspect over achievement in golf.

In an educational article offered by the American Psychological Association, men engaging in unhealthy behaviours, that is, traditional masculinity, was noted as "marked by stoicism, competitiveness, dominance and aggression—is, on the whole, harmful" (Pappas 2018, p.34) Casey displays conscious awareness of how traditional masculinity, romanticising competitiveness and emotional detachment (Kidd 2013), is harmful and needs to be eradicated, yet, he still embodies the man who cannot stand losing. Also, as Casey describes his *idiotic* obsession with winning, he bursts into laughter more than once, an effect of the body that has long been recognised as an essential element of our subconsciousness displaying expressions of amusement or humour (Martin and Ford 2018; Sandberg and Tutenges 2018), which suggests ambiguity in the seriousness of intentions to diminish unhealthy competition in sports. In recent Western culture, Casey's laughter within this instance can be viewed as the technique of self-deprecatory humour (Meyer 2006; Stewart 2011) that he uses to diffuse tensions after the exposure of flaws and vulnerabilities in direct contradiction to the expectations for men to disregard feelings. Or perhaps Casey is laughing at the irony in disclosing his own sporting body's attributes of traditional masculinity while aspiring to support the prevention of toxic gender performance.

Casey's story presents insight into the contextual nuances of masculinity and mental health. Specifically, it illustrates how manifestations of masculinities like Casey's unhealthy competitiveness in sports can often be internalised as personal failure. For instance, Casey demonstrated authentic self-awareness of his "petulant" or "proper pathetic" emotional attachment associated with sports practices and, consequently, altruism towards helping children cultivate healthy positive relationships with sports. However, although channelling internalised gendered cultures in helpful ways more recently, he retains notions of traditional competitive masculinity in sport as self-failure – *natural*, *isolated* internalisations or *individual* traits. Failing to recognise gendered sport behaviours as a systemic problem, largely influenced by the wider cultural narratives of masculinity (i.e. socially constructed within sport discourse and culture), makes it difficult to systematically dismantle the unrealistic expectations of men in sports. In that, collectively promoting change to the current sports culture serves to be more useful than addressing hypercompetitive attitudes individually.

Ultimately, Casey's past experiences in sport highlight how masculinities are constructed in wider cultural narratives with gendered practices of sport, primarily taught by men (i.e. fathers) during childhood. For Casey, social expectations of masculinity in sport were detrimental to the degree that he intentionally created a life trajectory to teach children sport (PE). An exemplary image of masculinity as always relationally entangled and existing in the plural, as Casey grew to oppose expressions of traditional competitive masculinity that once manifested in his childhood towards adopting more contemporary and holistic views that include the positive factors of fun and enjoyment in sport experiences (Bengoechea et al. 2006). Specifically, Casey adopts more embodied assumptions that prioritise the notions of fun and enjoyment, over achievement within interactions of sport and in relation to health and well-being, and thus, highlight dominant influences that go beyond gender (Wellard 2013, 2016).

4.3.1.2 Dylan

I pull forward Dylan's story within the context of the masculine domain of sport. Dylan, a 25-year-old, White, heterosexual, male primary school teacher, described childhood experiences of sport with an emphasis on his engagement as an adolescent:

> "I was brought up playing sport, rugby, rugby family, but then I got injured when I was like 18 years old. Before I went to university, I had surgery on my shoulder. I had like three pins put in, but then I went off to university, and I played a bit; I played a little bit of rugby, but I didn't really like the crowd. They were a bit, I don't know, 'jockey'... um, so I played ultimate frisbee, and there wasn't a club for American football, so we started an American football club. I played for that, started that up, Captain. I thought my shoulder was good, and then it's like two and a half years I took to set this club up, the

> kits, all the money, and it was the very first game, dislocated my shoulder again, like, it was like two plays in, so I was kick-returner, returned it, one hand-off, needed a second handoff, and then dislocated it, went straight to hospital. And I was in my third year of Uni at Christmas, it was like, end of November and that ruined me. Absolutely, I was like nah, so I was, people were...you know, but I kept on going, I started coaching. Yeah, I love doing that, but I can't play contact sport anymore, so no rugby, no American football, so now I've got eight pins, tied up ligaments and stuff...play football but just on a Wednesday. I want to run a marathon this year." (Dylan)

This illustrates the construction of gender in Dylan's early childhood and adolescence experiences of sports, in which he constructs his masculinity through gendered sports behaviours with outcomes of sports injury that are normalised as overtly masculine in the dominant discourse of sports. Specifically, Dylan portrays a hegemonic performance of masculinity in past behaviours in rugby, an aggressive collision sport. While he does not directly link his father to sports behaviours as a child and young adult, he indirectly shows paternal and overall masculine influences for his sports behaviours. First, he does this by emphasising a long-term positive relationship with the physically demanding sport of rugby. Interestingly, Dylan's relationship with rugby changes at university, where he begins to find it restrictive to his masculinity or as he stated exactly, "jockey". Specifically, referring to the hypermasculinity that manifests in the traditional sport of horseracing known for its disparity between male and female horse racers or *jockeys*, once exclusively male.

The noun *jock* is informally used in American English slang to refer to a stereotypical athlete, or "an athletic man" (Mattiello 2008), thus, often seen as a blanket term to refer to an athlete typically presented as a man that is obsessively dedicated to sports and sports culture (Wikipedia contributors). In the UK, *jockey* is also considered as a verb to describe the act of gaining power or position over others by any means (Cambridge Dictionary). In this sense, Dylan claimed to have been put off from the masculine hierarchy in the university rugby team, so instead of jockeying for a higher masculine position, he created a separate team where his masculinity was not restricted. Second, assembling an American football team and taking up role as the captain of the team demonstrated how Dylan positions the identity, body, and sense of the self to align with features ascribed to masculinity, such as expressions of independence, strength, assertiveness, and competitiveness. Concomitantly showcasing the conflicting views of Dylan as he emphasises feelings of dislike for "the crowd" of "jockey" rugby players, to the degree that the hypermasculinity of the rugby team influenced him to disassociate from a sport he grew up playing, yet he continues the performance of masculinity by taking initiative and daring to start a new sports team. Additionally, despite suffering from a sports injury that “ruined” him, Dylan identifies his efforts where he “kept on going”, which facilitated the transition from being a sports player to a coach.

Elucidating on the consequences of his sports injury, and what influenced his actions to persevere regardless of enduring a physical setback, Dylan said:

> “Yeah, so basically I put everything into it. University was good, I enjoy history and I thought that— American football with a couple of mates, I put everything into it. When you emotionally invest in something, and then like, you’re lead in that, and then suddenly it gets taken away from under your feet, it was like that. So, I was like, “what’s the point of being at Uni anymore?” So, I was like “ughh (groans), should I sack it off and do something else?” But then, like, my dad, my Godfather, my mates around Uni, they were like, “Nah, just crack on, you can’t work or anything like that”. So, it was kind of a complete shut off, of everything, but they encouraged me on, to keep going. I kept on going. But yeah, it was just like, putting the table away if you know what I mean.” (Dylan)

Following a sports injury that was disruptive to Dylan’s sporting body, sense of self, and life, he attempts to make sense of the overwhelming impact of disruption by consulting the various men in his life, such as male peers and paternal role models like his father and Godfather. This shows how Dylan views exclusively men, including his father, as important facets of learning and understanding sports behaviours; thus, the unilateral advice provided by them affected his view of the world. Specifically, the important male figures in Dylan’s life directed him to *crack on*, an informal phrase used in British English for essentially, starting or continuing something, even more quickly or energetically than before (Cambridge Dictionary). This phrase, then, conveys the embodied knowledge of male role models adopting the mind-body dualism to embody macho versions of masculinity through a promotion of athleticism and sports participation. Given this, Dylan’s sports injury is interpreted through social relationships within the context of masculinity, where the meanings associated with sports are understood solely from the views of men embedded in Western society, who encouraged Dylan to embody masculine attitudes and behaviours related to sports. Ultimately, Dylan’s story illuminates how the social process of sports is heavily masculinised, in which discontinuing participation in sports is not a socially accepted performance of masculinity, and despite suffering from a sports injury, men are insisted to “keep going” and “crack on” – or embody resilience in the sporting context.

Relatedly, and much like Casey, Dylan views his initial feelings of agitation and attitude to quit because of his sports injury as personal failure. Specifically, understanding his momentary inability to recover and overcome adversity in sports as his own lack of resilience, unaware of how deeply he has internalised societal expectations of *bouncing back* from adversity and positive outcomes (Galli and Vealey 2008). Yet, he still recognises the self as overall resilient, even if not in sport within that particular instance:

> "Yeah, maybe, I think also because... it's like something you really love doing and you love going, you're playing like three times a week and suddenly, you can't do it, you know, just um… I'm really, really resilient but at that point in my life, I wasn't. But it's just that one thing." (Dylan)

Finally, Dylan's long-term engagement in rugby led him to a sports injury that he experienced as disruption. To make sense of this disruption to his sporting life, Dylan undertakes the views of others to create order by understanding the individual body, self, identity—and the world through men who have adopted dominant ideologies of resilience. In an attempt to create continuity following a disruption, Dylan constructs experience through wider cultural scripts of resilience in sports and masculinity in Western society.

4.3.1.3 Jenny

Like Casey and Dylan, Jenny, a 40-year-old, White, heterosexual, female pastoral assistant, illustrates the important role of her family, principally of her father in initial memories of sports:

> "The one thing we used to do as a family was, we used to go horse riding because there was a stables just up the road, so the one thing we did together was we used to go on hacks and things together as a family and that was one thing I always remember, and my dad used to always take us swimming on a Friday night, that was our thing...The swimming definitely has always been a real feature, we always swam in the sea, wherever we could wherever we went, we would swim in the sea, or in a lake, or in a river, um you know we were always quite like that as a family. My dad was a really big swimmer, um and even holidays here, we would go to Devon and places, swim in the sea, and I've always liked that." (Jenny)

According to Young (1980), most girls are not encouraged to develop physical skills or move their bodies in sports in the same way as boys. Thus, while women are equally physically capable as boys, they do not view themselves as such because of the societal influences limiting their engagement with physical activity. Recent research emulates that despite the recent rise in girls' sports participation, gender norms in sports are still inclined to support sports participation with parents placing more value on sons' participation in sports than daughters (Fredricks and Eccles 2005; Heinze et al. 2017). Fortunately, that was not entirely the case for Jenny, who initially cultivated an enjoyable and positive relationship with swimming through a family culture that encouraged and normalised her participation in sports as a girl. Much like Casey, Jenny's father also played a salient role in her socialisation into sports. This is visible in her restorying, sharing how she came to swimming and the construction of her sporting body as a child:

> "I probably didn't realize at the time, and you know I was saying about how my dad used to take us swimming on a Friday, for me it was always about "am I going to get anything from the vending machine afterward? And how long can I swim underwater?" You know we used to have that "how long can you swim underwater for?" challenge, but it never felt like I'm doing this to be you know, healthy, mentally healthy or physically healthy, it was just, it was just family time, it was just our time together…" (Jenny)

Jenny describes an emotional attachment to her father in initial experiences of sports illuminating the association between pleasant emotions and her intrinsic motivation towards swimming. Specifically, she draws on the narrative of the *hedonic athlete* that predominantly revolves around sports participation as a means of "having fun" (Berntsen and Kristiansen 2020). She also associates her positive relationship with swimming as a young girl to memories of her grandmother who she recalls being an inspirational swimmer:

> "My grandparents, both sets of my grandparents lived by the seaside. In fact, ones that lived here and another that lived in West Sussex and we used to go see them at Summers and two of my grandparents didn't swim, but one of my grandmothers swam every single day of the year in the sea and she was really hardy and really tough, and she was a really good swimmer, and she always used to swim with us so we would swim in the sea from really little with her." (Jenny)

Interestingly, Jenny described her grandmother as "tough" and "hardy", which points to how women in sport, female bodies *doing* sport are decorated as inspiring. Despite Jenny growing up with both male and female role models who influenced the construction of her swimming identity in ways that defy conventional gender constructions and thus, knowing strong women exist in sport, she still feels the need to account for those in the narrative. That is, to legitimize her grandmother as a "serious athlete" (Ronkainen et al. 2016), Jenny draws on the dominant "performance narrative" within sports (Douglas and Carless 2006). In that, she reconstructs and affirms her own femininity and self in swimming as a child by validating her grandmother's swimming body and identity. This shows how Jenny challenged gender stereotypes and believed in the capabilities of female bodies in sports. Yet, her storytelling emphasises accounting for the strong women who engage in sports, which, in turn, highlights how women's sport participation is not normalised within wider society, therefore, it is seen as special or inspirational.

Jenny's childhood socialisation into sports, primarily through interactions of swimming with family members helped construct her sporting identity as a swimmer (Theberge 2003) and allowed her to have positive experiences of sports early on (Theberge 1995). Through these positive experiences, Jenny developed a sense of confidence in sports, especially given her encouraging home environment, where family members supported her sporting behaviours and body. However, Jenny was forced to renegotiate her sporting identity, body, and sense of self upon entering the social landscapes of school sports.

> "I was fairly active. I wouldn't say I was like running for the district or anything like that, but I, you know, I played all the sports at school. I played tennis, played netball, played hockey, all of that kinda stuff, um but then as a teenager, I think, particularly girls. I went to an all-girls school. The idea of you know moving, exercise-related activities took a real dip I think and um, I probably moved a lot less as a teenager and as a student than, looking back, than I should have done. I did quite a lot of swimming and life-saving training when I was a student, and a lot of walking." (Jenny)

Jenny's personal environment at home normalised women's participation in sports and consequently, her understanding of women's sporting identities and bodies. However, Western sports culture and the social expectations of femininity in sports (Krane et al. 2004) contrasted with Jenny's individual experiences of sports. As a teen girl especially, Jenny felt inclined to renegotiate her sporting identity due to the influence of her new sociopolitical setting of school sport and PE, which maintained more traditional notions of femininity and masculinity. Even though Jenny had developed competence in a range of sports early during adolescence, she reconciled with her sporting body, particularly, the different ways the sporting culture in school impacted her engagement with physical inactivity.

For instance, Jenny emphasised that although she was running, it she was not as if she was "running for the district or anything like that", as such, criticising her efforts of running in comparison to others. This can be seen as her simultaneous expressions of "I can" and the self-imposed "I cannot", or *inhibited intentionality* (Young 1980); ultimately diminishing her sporting self and body even though she can, and did, through relational levels of running achievements. The comparison of one's sporting body to other sporting bodies has proven to negatively impact upon girls' sports participation (Evans 2006). The next excerpt of text depicts this in particular via Jenny's memories of school sports and PE.

> "I went to quite small, to start with, I went to a village school like which was people who worked in farms and stuff like that so physical exercise and PE was never really, it was never really positioned like that so my memories of my childhood were very much we had a school grounds that were fields, so we used to play in fields and we used to climb trees, um natural, it was very unstructured. I mean I do remember being taught how to throw a ball and things like that. My memories of movement were more unstructured, climbing trees, paddling in streams, sort of storybook stuff really, I was really lucky I had that sort of school life and then, I went to a girls school where you kinda, it was part of the curriculum, but you did, nobody really wanted to do it, it was I don't know either not cool or there was always an excuse why people didn't want to do sport, but I did things like I did do a lot of dancing, and a lot of singing." (Jenny)

Importantly, Jenny's "memories of movement were more unstructured", showing how her feminine body, did not occupy spaces of organised sports. So, while she recalled "being taught how to throw a ball", she embodies Young's (1980) view of "feminine bodily existence" or "throwing like a girl" as a girl who could engaged with physical activity, but restricted her own movement and body's full capability by understanding her body as both the subject and "*object* of the motion rather than its originator" (Young 1980, p.148). Specifically, Jenny's engagement with "more unstructured" forms of movement exemplifies Young's (1980) notion of how men move more freely through space while women show greater uncertainty about their bodily capacities and control. This is further established through Jenny's observations where her female peers in secondary school, who viewed sports and PE as uncool, presented her with the opportunity to disengage from sporting practices entirely. As a result, Jenny started to realign her perceptions of sports and exercise, conforming to the new social influences and expectations that are largely gendered. For instance, Jenny described how she managed to perform femininity despite being embedded in a school culture that placed more value on PE.

> "I went to, it was a very creative school, um so there was always a show, a lot of dancing, always a sort of routine so that was very much, that was very joyful. There's a physical exercise side of that, that was very low key, I would say, but I don't think that was very normal for schools back in, you know, of my generation, I think it was a lot more focused on PE, just not at the school where I went." (Jenny)

That is, Jenny reconstructed her femininity through what she identified as a "very low key" form of "physical exercise", or socially accepted feminine forms of movement that was not made available in all schools. This is because the dominance of masculinity in organised sports values individual achievement through aggressive competition and marginalises *other* forms of physical activity, like gymnastics and dance, which often are associated with femininity and women (Wright 1996). In line with this, Jenny interrupts her relationship with sports like netball, tennis, and hockey because of the subconscious belief that her body is physically incapable and begins engaging with a less goal oriented physical activity like dancing (Young 1980). Thus, dancing, or performing femininity, allowed Jenny to fit in with gendered norms and her peers through the construction of an appropriate female identity of a dancer. This construction of her feminine body and identity is emphasised below in the text illustrating how she believes the performance of dancing is different to sports which are centred on skills or masculine practices.

> "It isn't always sport but I think those kind of things that are very much about skill for some people it just puts them off straight away, whereas silly kind of dancing is easy for anybody, doesn't matter what shape or size you are or how fit you are but when you start to get into things like tennis, or hockey, or things that involve running really fast or being really accurate then we have a, then we hit a wall I think." (Jenny)

It is evident that Jenny's gendered school habitus and socialisation into sports is critical for how she positions her body. In that, she reproduces gender by denoting her female bodily engagement with dancing as "silly" and "easy for anybody", and on the other hand, aligns more powerful corporeal movements like "running" and "hockey" with the masculine. Thus, she has constrained her female body to perform differently than men, who are given the societal acceptance to engage in sports that require "skill" and fitness. Jenny's internalization of gendered norms and performance in the context of living in a patriarchal society that assumes masculinity as powerful and femininity as subordinate, represents the concept of *emphasized femininity* (Connell 1987). This notion of emphasised femininity is visible in the text below that portrays Jenny's practice of normative femininity and society's view of feminism, how heterosexual women like Jenny, believe that being slim or presenting a certain image to be a female expectation to accommodate the interests of men.

> "It's funny, isn't it? As a child, I think, you know growing up, I never really thought about it as a specific, you know, 'I have to do this to keep fit', I don't think you do when you're children, do you?" (Jenny)

Jenny's gendered perceptions of physical activity predominantly follow contemporary Western society's normalised and dominant health and fitness discourses that subjugate women, specifically, reasons for exercise being the internalised idealization of thinness and having a slender body (Myers and Crowther 2007). For example, while explaining her reason for exercising, "I have to do this to keep fit", she draws on the narrative of "fitness culture"(Sassatelli 2014, 2018), which has been critiqued for perpetuating problematic gendered ideologies that underlie the practice of sport in response to issues of poor health. Jenny's individual motivations for engaging in sports as an adult employs wider sociocultural and institutional narratives of that equate "fit" bodies to *skinny* and *healthy* bodies. Therefore, Jenny reveals her self-objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997) and conformity to feminine norms and their potential for toxicity through doing femininity, that is, her conscious engagement with sports primarily based on achieving dominant ideals of a slender body. This is done through her use of language, speaking ironically, to show her amusement or lessen the blow of losing control over her body later in life (Dews et al. 1995). While this conformity to dominant discourses of sports started during childhood, she shows conscious awareness of the objectification of her body in sports as an adult, in particular, Jenny employs the Western phrase, "*It's funny, isn't it?*", to indicate the extremely unusual (WordSense Online Dictionary) juxtaposition of her relationship and understanding of sports during the past in comparison to now. As a child, Jenny viewed sports to be enjoyable, whereas now, she sees it as more disciplined behaviour to help her achieve an ideal body type.

4.3.1.4 Annie

Like Jenny and Casey, Annie, a 50-year-old, White, heterosexual, female primary school teacher, also integrates the influence of her father in initial memories of sports:

> "I think my mum had always done sort of, she never ran or anything, but she was *Keep Fit*, she would go to *Keep Fit*, that was sort of very much in your leggings and your, like every day, so she had always done it. My dad was always sort of, he liked cricket and football was always on you know. We'd do a lot of walking together, cycling, so, what, I guess I was sort of brought up with movement and I've kinda hopefully, have brought my kids up with movement, personally, and I've always moved, I suppose, partly, I would have to say, partly, I feel better for it physically and mentally, but I do, I don't think. Otherwise, I think I'd just get fatter and fatter." (Annie)

In contrast to Casey's experiences, Annie does not specifically associate her sports identity solely with paternal influences. Nor does she provide a story like Jenny's describing a shared sports culture at home. Instead, Annie's story illustrates the effects of her parents' engagement with gendered sports, where her father appreciated organised sports that are associated with masculinity (e.g., cricket and football), while her mother incorporated feminine exercises into her lifestyle. This primarily includes a combination of movement and dance practices associated with the national *Keep Fit* association that remains popular at present with nine regional associations across England and a long-established body from 1956 (Keep Fit Association 2024) (see their website using the embedded link within the italicised text for their 'about us' and prominent feature of female members).

Notably, while Annie shared no explicit memories of participation in inherently masculine sports influenced by her father, she repeatedly recollected Keep Fit interactions of movement that were directly influenced by her mother's way of staying fit:

> "There's always been movement and exercise in my life. I remember doing *Keep Fit*, you know, as I was growing up as well, doing aerobics classes as a young, young person." (Annie)

Consequently, Annie's body talk of childhood physical activity experiences exhibits a stronger impact of maternal influences on her attitudes and behaviours early on. Specifically, her memories of "doing *Keep Fit"* exercises, those she associated with the body image of her mother (i.e. primary female role model) and socially observed to promote the study of movement and concepts of embodiment by Rudolf Laban (1879-1958), also known as the *Father of Modern Dance* (McCaw and Lehner 2024). Laban's art of movement transitioned into modern educational dance in the late 1930s when his theory and practice of dance, movement, and gymnastics made their way into English schools and where his embodied practices inspired predominantly female physical educators (Vertinsky 2004). However, Laban's movement analysis that underpins the sociocultural, historical, and political landscapes, early under the Nazi regime (Dickson 2023) and then the wider British educational ideals of that time to which his expressive dance (*Ausdrucktanz*) especially suited and were upheld, faded during the 1960s and changing educational system (Vertinsky 2009). As the focus in the UK shifted to the culture of sport-based techniques in PE and forms of masculinity began to dominate sporting educational contexts (Kirk 1992, 2002), or rather, the increasing number of male physical educators of the time questioning the *credibility* of movement practices served to bring an end to the female tradition in PE (Kirk and Vertinsky 2016).

In this way, *Keep Fit* movements in which dominant narratives of the traditional assumptions of the body in PE, and in some cases widely destructive ideologies, in Britain postwar have been held, are represented in Annie's past. Specifically, Laban's *mystic* power of dance that especially captivated his women disciples and more specifically in historical contexts of PE was sustained by female physical educators (Vertinsky 2004, 2009; Kirk and Vertinsky 2016) is seen to exist in similar ways in Annie's expressions of sporting contexts and bodies during her formative years.

Interestingly, Rudolf Laban's modern dance, albeit not in education now, continues to grow in contemporary British society, alongside dominant Western ideologies of health and fitness in the current sociocultural context that echoes the idealisation of thin female bodies (Bordo 2003). In this way, Annie's selective contours of the female body and body practice as defined through her mother and *Keep Fit* exercises, portray a connection between grand narratives about bodies and the gendered body (in and out of PE) as driven by limited ideals about the female body, with past ideas and techniques about the "ideal" body type retained over the decades in England.

Annie was exposed early on to sociocultural views and expectations of a woman's body in the context of physical activity and sports. The effect of this exposure is seen through the gendered nature of Annie's sports behaviours, incorporating "aerobics classes as a young, young person", which are often described and socially accepted as a performance of femininity. Therefore, Annie illustrates constructions of the feminine body, sense of self, and identity through activities such as *Keep-fit* and aerobics, embodying gendered perspectives of physical activity and sports in conformity with her mother's views recognised as dominant cultural narratives of women and sports in the Western world (Choi 2000).

Annie shifts back and forth between her experiences of school sports in the past and her current engagement with sports involving her children:

> "My own [experiences] as a child? I was kinda, I think I've always really liked sports. I've always been, like at school, I remember doing sort of rounders and netball, and tennis, and running. I've always enjoyed sports, so, I've always really liked it. I've always been, never the best—anything, but always, sort of, able to do it. You know, I can hit a bat and a ball. I can play netball. I can probably, even with the kids, I always used to play, you know, we'd be out playing football in the garden or throwing a cricket ball and that, with Owen and that. I started running when I was in Germany, so most days would run, did half marathons, never a full (laughs). I feel better for exercising, for always, I always, I remember always cycling to see my friends. We'd walk. I'd cycle to school when I was young or walked a good sort of half an hour to school." (Annie)

In the text above, Annie describes a positive relationship with sports throughout the life course in the (re)construction of her sports identity. Similarly, to Jenny, Annie, delimits her body's abilities by consciously underestimating her bodily capacity beforehand. For instance, although Annie is physically capable of playing sports, she still sees her body's capacity and the sense of self as "never the best—anything, but always, sort of, able to do it." This is in line with Young's (1980) notion of *inhibited intentionality*, which as mentioned in earlier descriptions of Jenny's story of sport, posits that women fail to succeed because they restrict their own corporeal movement through socially influenced fears or perceptions of their bodies as not only subjects, but also as objects. To the degree that women like Annie adopt socially accepted feminine bodily movements, incorporating visibly low-level physical activities (walking) and recognised feminine practices (aerobics) to reinforce their femininity in sports. Concomitantly, women offer justifications for their engagement in more intense sports that can classify them as the "sporty" type or what is considered masculine (Choi 2000).

In Annie's case, then, downplaying her involvement in running with a disclaimer stating that she "did half marathons, *never* a full" showcases internalised differences between women and men in sports where she must immediately deconstruct notions of masculinity in relation to her sense of the self, body, and identity. The visibility of Annie's feminine bodily existence or femininity in physical activity is further supported in the text below where Annie summarizes her experiences from childhood PE.

> "I think I was good enough to be able to play but I was never going to be one of the best players and I knew that but it was never, I was never made to feel, nobody else, I knew myself, nobody tried to make me, I don't think, feel bad about it or was unkind about it, I just knew, you know, you just know, so, and that was fine." (Annie)

The concept of inhibited intentionality is further exhibited by Annie within the text above, given that she initially presents her body's capacities in sports with an "I can" statement before she ends with a self-imposed "I cannot" mentality (Young 1980). This reflects how Annie considered gender and female bodies, in that her personal views align with the dominant cultural views of male bodies as strong and powerful; thus, like many young girls, she is expected to conform to social views of femininity. Specifically, society has helped to shape Annie's gendered body, as girls and women are not expected or made "to feel bad" when they are not "one of the best players", even if Annie equated this to her autonomous sense of self and identity in sports alone. Therefore, and equally like Casey and Dylan, Annie illustrates a sense of unawareness for the social influences at force in the construction of gendered body that is not constructed in isolation or a character trait in itself.

4.3.1.5 Jenny revisited

As white, heterosexual women who grew up in England and experienced school sports and PE around the same time, Jenny and Annie have a similar understanding of the gendered British PE culture. For instance, as seen through their shared dislike of sports that emphasise traits of competitiveness and performance, which in ways opposes their feminine identity as they have both internalised such features as masculine from childhood interactions in PE. For this reason, and to further support the similarities in their understandings of English sport culture, I briefly revisit Jenny's descriptions with new features. This is intentionally done following the accounts from Annie's storytelling to provide a better sense of the shared meanings constructed by girls and women in sport and in stories that are never isolated.

I begin with Jenny's expressions of a particularly subtle yet not individually experienced interaction in PE amongst girls :

> "I, you know, I do remember though, those days where you know if you split the class up and somebody had to pick a team, you know there was always the same people who got picked last and I always, it stayed with me my whole life that you know, how awful that

> was to feel like you weren't good enough to be, you know, and part of it wasn't about your skill necessarily, it was about whether or not somebody liked you, but I do always kinda remember that. Standing on a netball court and being picked for a team and seeing the same people being chosen last and just how soul-destroying that must have been back then but that's how people did things, you know that's how people did things, there were people who were good at sport and then there were people who weren't and then there was sort of nothing in between. I mean I was sort of, I was kind of average, so I was sort of okay, I was never brilliant, but I was okay, and I quite like it." (Jenny)

PE lessons at school can be viewed as grounds that perform gender (Butler 1990), where children's gendered bodies and behaviours are under judgement by their fellow peers, with forms of bullying aimed at individuals refusing to behave in ways fitting stereotypical gender norms (Paechter 2003) and more positive responses to people conforming to gender role expectations (Wood and Karten 1986; Eagly and Wood 2012) . Children's sports abilities are scrutinised by their gender specifically, with boys expected to adhere to elements of hypermasculinity through successful abilities in school sports and girls expected to mainly show a lack of interest in sports or PE altogether.

As such, and interspersing the views of Annie with the similar ones of Jenny, who described herself as "average", "never brilliant" in sports, demonstrates a sense of satisfaction with their mediocre sports performances that resist overtly masculine tendencies and help to more effectively reinforce their feminine identities. This social acceptance of their limited bodies or the social construction of women's sporting abilities is seen by how neither of them experienced bullying or "soul-destroying" victimisation for their sports performances despite being a part of the group of "people who weren't" observed as "good at sports" or athletic. As a result, Annie, and Jenny became familiar and content with performing femininity through the life with an average engagement in physical activities that worked to reinforce their feminine bodies and identities.

As mentioned above, Jenny attended an all-girls school, with female peers who shared a unanimous disregard for sports and PE, a rhetoric that coincided with the wider narrative of femininity and influenced Jenny's adolescent constructions of gendered identities. In that, she performed femininity by actively engaging with a feminine form of movement (dancing) during secondary school. However, later in adolescence, once exiting a school setting consisting of only female bodies, Jenny described disengaging from excessively feminine practices of movement.

> "I do remember we had a basketball coach ah when I was in, doing my A levels but that was kind of an outside club that I joined because I thought it would be fun. I joined the basketball club and fencing, (laughs) the fencing club because I just thought it would be good to try different things and the basketball coach was brilliant, he used to play, and you'll know this when I tell you, he used to play the music from the Harlem globe trotters ah as a warm-up, so when we can in after school in you know, we're 17-year-old girls, you know it's not, you know they're not rearing to go and he used to put that music on and get us all going. I do remember that but that was a club more than a, more than a lesson. I don't remember lessons, but I do remember that." (Jenny)

This presents the temporal disruption of Jenny's binary constructions of gender in sports because of organised sports participation, reflecting less feminine performances. Jenny's internalised social constructions of gendered identities and bodies are made visible through her body talk where she feels compelled to justify new engagement with more masculine forms of movement like basketball. Ultimately, Jenny's sports participation as a 17-year-old girl in basketball or activities that valorises men's sporting bodies, allowed her to disengage from overtly feminine behaviours, and choose how to be a certain kind of girl.

> "I just thought, it always just looked cool and I wanted to have a go and I wanted to do something that was not, quite so girly, I ah, you know some of the...That's how I felt you know, that's, and I know it's wrong now but that's kind of how I felt at the time, I didn't want to do the girly type stuff, I wanted to do something different that girls could do together." (Jenny)

Jenny shows awareness of how social factors, such as her female experience of sports because of her time at an all-girls school with stereotypical notions of gender in the context of sports and PE, influenced a limited sense of the self and identity that embodied the appearance of a "girly-girl" in sports. Hence, in an attempt to distance herself from past sports experiences suggesting overly exaggerated notions of femininity, Jenny explores new sports participation, which contradicts with her past self, identity, and cultural expectations related to femininity, but provides her with a sense of freedom through behaviours that are not hyper-feminised (Holland and Harpin 2015). Jenny's childhood and adolescent identities were primarily influenced by her home and school settings, both of which demonstrated gendered experiences of femininity. For instance, Jenny described early memories of her parents undertaking demanding physical activities and her own "physical life" of housework growing up.

> “Well growing up, well my parents worked really, really hard, we um, we actually, I grew up living in a pub actually, yeah, my parents had a pub, well it was a hotel, it was more a hotel with a pub and rooms, but my dad also had a job. He worked somewhere else, but we also ran this pub so um you know they worked really really hard. They were always working, um you know, morning, noon, and night, um it was, yeah, it was a great childhood. It probably wasn’t for them you know they were probably exhausted all the time but um for us as kids, it was a great place to live it was always full of people, it was always full of interesting people to talk to um, so it was quite ah, you know it was quite a lot of physical stuff you know um things like making up rooms, and laundry and changing things like barrels in the bar, it was quite a physical life you know.” (Jenny)

Sociologist Ann Oakley, known for her doctoral research that was later published and recently updated (Oakley 2018), examined the sociology of work in the home – housework and emphasised women’s continued household or domestic labour responsibilities as social performances of femininity. Drawing on Oakley’s conceptualisation of Jenny’s childhood experiences of her body as connected to housework. While the physical act of her changing barrels in the family pub alone, is not characterised under femininity, Jenny’s selective construction her body as girl was done through a number of household responsibilities. In this way, and given that as the burden of domestic responsibilities is often expected of girls, with boys viewed fundamentally different or irresponsible (Montgomery 2005), Jenny provides an account that represents the gendered expectations concentrated on girls, rather than boys. Deliovsky (2008) posited that normative femininity is more than just aesthetics and appearance, female bodies are objectified and regulated to look and *act* in ways matching expectations of gender roles. These expectations of young girls and normative femininity attached to household labour responsibilities, is seen through the ways that Jenny explains her understandings of the physical body as understood through her body as a girl and its image at home.

To further develop this point, Jenny described both her parents as exceptionally hard-working parents and emphasised that her father “worked somewhere else” or “also had a job” in addition to him helping run the family pub. This is interesting as it implies that Jenny’s mother solely worked at home in contrast to her father, and thus, would have had more unpaid household responsibilities within the family. Noting this in combination with research that illustrates that women in comparison to men are more likely to do housework and the primary influence connected to gender roles at home, especially in relation to household work in adolescence is primarily reproduced across generations via parental role models and the time they devote to housework (Giménez-Nadal et al. 2019). This sheds light on how Jenny is unaware of her gendered socialisation at home as an adolescent girl, particularly as transmitted over time via a greater proportion of housework performed by her mother, and the perceived physical differences and abilities between women and men that have formed her traditional perceptions of the body (Vertinsky 1992). Ultimately, traditional gender norms embedded through the gender inequalities in which the unequal power relations between genders learned during her childhood, notably her mother's demonstrable role at home and share of housework directly influenced the ways Jenny conceptualised and socially reconstructed the female body. This gendered nature in relation to the "physical stuff" or her early "physical life" at home constructed through housework then becomes restoried in the context of physical activity.

In line with this, Jenny acknowledges the differences between her childhood understanding of sports (e.g., dancing) and PE from her current understanding of movement.

> "I mean, it's difficult, I mean, funny, because I never really considered a dance thing kind of PE but if you, that would be movement to me [now], and I think growing up, PE was always kind of sport, it was cross country, running, or hockey, things like that, maybe country-dancing in the early days when we were little. Um movement was always very much to me, it was kind of, until recently, you know, just literally moving standing up, or walking around or, you know, maybe a bit of dancing, something like that. Not different exactly but slightly different definitions." (Jenny)

The experience of gendered bodies is located early in the life course where all the teachers in this research assigned a male, predominantly fathers, as their role models shaping early childhood and adolescent physical activity and sports behaviours. Indicating gender division, female teachers demonstrated less exposure to social performances of sports designed around male bodies, with more exposure early on to cultural norms and representations of "feminine" movements that were either deemed socially appropriate (e.g., dancing, aerobics) or the responsibility of young girls (e.g., domestic labour). More so, female teachers' socialisation into physical activity and sports illustrated the effects of dominant cultural narratives perpetuating idealistic notions of health, fitness, and the ideal body type, which they learned and reinforced in differentiated ways over the lifecourse.

Finally, the findings of the present research are in line with the findings of Duquin (1977) that showed children were 13 times more likely to see vigorously active men than women, and three times more likely to see relatively active men than women when comparing the physical activity of role models to which children were exposed to in elementary school. This is because, teachers in the current research experienced mainly paternal influences in childhood interactions of sports through which they learned the dominant cultural narrative that men and sports go hand in hand, and concomitantly, female bodies are underrepresented in physical activity cultures of school sports and PE. Eventually, the male role models or paternal influences related to early experiences of sports led only the male teachers to pursue future endeavours in the context of sports and PE. Specifically, Casey and Dylan constructed sporting bodies, identities, and selves early on to position their personal and professional identities in the future in PE and sport, with each occupying gendered positions as either PE teacher or sport coach. Importantly, in positioning themselves into these positions, dominant sociocultural narratives, discourses, and practices that privilege men in sports and PE worked in their favour and helped them into the designated roles. Overall, Casey and Dylan are positioned to shape the socialisation of future children in PE and sport, in a way that can reflect their subjectivities and influence children's understanding of sport, sporting bodies and sporting cultures to be associated with predominantly male bodies as embodied by them— and reinforcing the dominant narrative of sport which pervades in society.

"A cheeky one": social class determining positive relationships with sports and PE

This sub-theme explores teachers' childhood experiences of movement and sense of self, involving, but not limited to, play, physical activity, sports, and PE in relation to social class and socioeconomic status (SES). In so doing, I point to Pierre Bourdieu's philosophy that positions the body as central and consists of three fundamental concepts: habitus, field, and capital, and its core is the relational link between social field (objective structures) and habitus (incorporated structures) (Bourdieu 1998). Using the former to appreciate the complex nature of the French sociologist's conceptual framework and more wide-ranging theory with all its distinctive features before turning to the theory I draw on and, importantly, how I deliberately engage with the concepts of cultural capital and habitus (Nash 1999). In this thesis and to understand subjectivities and social class inequalities in sport, I focus on Bourdieu's (1977) theory of cultural reproduction and social reproduction, which suggests that children belonging to middle-class or upper-class families hold privileges and power through their possession of cultural capital to retain or gain dominant social status.

Bourdieu's (1986) key concept of *cultural capital* exists in three forms: an *embodied* state (tastes, skills), an *objectified* state (material objects), and the *institutionalized* state (educational credentials), which, in accumulation, establishes an individual's social status and cultural competence beginning as early as childhood. Cultural capital, in this sense, is described here as what children have learned through their particular existence and as influenced by their initial sociocultural contexts, what they internalised and retained after being born into an already existing world – its culture (or *paideia*) (Kauppi 2000), which is acquired via cultural resources and cultural values or more distinguished ways of cultural/subcultural influences on their educational attainment (Lareau and Weininger 2003).

Further, Bourdieu (1984; 2005) noted that *habitus,* one's dispositions or worldviews throughout life, like cultural capital, also begins in early childhood and accumulates across the lifespan. It can be *changed by history* – social experiences and education that one is not born with but the product of social conditions that often perpetuate and reproduce social inequalities. In that, one's internalisation of their social system (rules, norms, cultures) during early childhood is positioned according to their social class and consequential for their life choices and behaviours. In other words, the experiences awarded to higher-class families that acquired their higher position in the social hierarchy via their stronger habitus and cultural capital serve as advantageous for their children's educational outcomes (Dumais 2006).

Ultimately, "habitus is an extremely elastic term, which is suited to the purposes of a creative theoretical project" (Kauppi 2000, p.41) and therefore to clear the conceptual fog for the purposes of this thesis, it is understood here as embodied knowledge that is relational to the concept of cultural capital and permeable depending on its evolving surroundings. In this way, then, habitus is also a method to understand teachers' dispositions in sport (past and present) that are reflective of the sociocultural contexts in which they were acquired during the formative years (Reay 1995). Equally importantly, to reveal how class, race, and gender are embodied subsequently, in differentiated ways via their personal practices and perceptions that are not detached from the corporeal body (Reay 2004).

In this way, according to Bourdieu (1984), people belonging to a higher social class adopt a lifestyle of increased physical activity and sports participation than those from lower classes (Scheerder et al. 2002; Stuij 2015). Using Bourdieu's concepts of *cultural capital* and *habitus* to analyse teachers' stories of sports and PE in the present study revealed the lives of teachers within the dominant social class. Specifically, findings highlight that having strong cultural capital based on belonging to middle-class families, enabled teachers to cultivate positive and ongoing relationships with sports and physical activity that were formed during childhood and adolescence and sustained into adulthood.

Teachers' stories shared a backdrop of sports experiences with a certain similarity between their inherited social capital—family connections, environments, and cultural practices. This was revelatory of their dominant social positions and dispositions that enabled healthy lifestyles and physical activity adoption and maintenance despite generational differences (Erickson 2010). In that respect, understanding teachers' past sports experiences and motivations in more depth illuminated the culturally and socially similar backgrounds of teachers from different generations that shaped their lives and practices. For instance, Annie, belonging to "Generation X" (born between 1965 and 1979) (Erickson 2010), and having lived in a variety of countries, reminisced about the idiosyncratic experiences of school sports in England followed by her brief engagement in American sports during adolescence.

> "My own [experience] of doing sport? Um, hmm…(laughs) a cheeky one, I don't know why. I just, I do remember being in like in, ah must have been Year 4 or 5 at…college? So that was like, um I'm trying to think, 14-15. We used to go on cross-country and I just (laughs), I do remember we would run out, and we got—we were allowed out of school in those days. So, we were running around the roads with a group of friends, and we'd run to her house, have a cup of tea, and then run back (laughs), and pretend that we'd been running the whole time. So that's sort of one thing, but then, I do remember, sort of being in, I remember being in also the Rounders team, and going off and being part of a team and really enjoying that and when I was in high school, I did go to America, and I was in high school, I was in a hockey team there and I remember that always being fun as well but I do remember, I suppose thinking, I knew I wasn't as good as the people who, because I think sport was taken quite seriously in America whereas here, but it's practised every now after school, you know once you go into the hockey team it was really quite serious and here, I've never taken it seriously, it was never, I'd always done it just because I liked it, it was fun, and there it was like "oh, it's quite serious" and I do remember thinking and knowing I wasn't as good as the other players there." (Annie)

Annie expressed a certain sense of nostalgia and belonging when she spoke about sports participation in the UK compared to the US. This is because of the special or "cheeky" way that Annie experienced cross-country runs during outdoor PE in England: "running around the roads with a group of friends, and we'd run to her house, have a cup of tea, and then run back (laughs), and pretend that we'd been running the whole time." Annie sees this past engagement with sport and physical activity in PE in a positive way, an opportunity for her to socialise and have fun with her friends through their collective appreciation of the time-honoured tradition of England: drinking tea. Looking back at her past interactions, Annie finds her risky sports behaviours of running away from school followed by the pretence of normality, especially valuable and amusing, as the past actions of her and her friends went undetected. This illustrates the important role of friends that influenced Annie's adoption of physical activity and overall positive disposition of sports. Specifically, Annie finds sports participation (running) with friends to be meaningful social interactions on account of shared British middle-class tastes (Bourdieu 1984), influencing a shared understanding of the socially constructed values, attitudes, cultural habits and behaviours in England, in this instance, the significance ascribed to a *cup of tea* (or cuppa-tea, afternoon tea, high tea) (Mason and Baveystock 2009). Annie's non-prescriptive socialisation into sports and PE, linked to characteristics of friends and their shared preference of tea drinking, is seen as meaningful or valuable because of socially accepted British values and identity, the dominant narrative of British culture normalising an excessive consumption of tea. In that the conformity to cultural narratives and tastes played a crucial role in the shaping Annie's everyday decisions to engage with sports in a British community. Thus, Annie's early constructions of the running self and body were motivated by meaningful sports interactions with friends sharing similar internalisations of British culture that reinforced Annie's British identity and ultimately, helped shape the portrayal of Annie's British adolescent experience of PE and sports as enjoyable.

The excerpt above shows the important relationship between running, embodiment, and sociability. Running, for the purpose of social interactions around tea, an embodiment of British culture, is seen as the embodiment of Annie's self and environment—or middle-classness. The sociable process of running provided Annie opportunities for the creation of the physical body and sense of self through self-reflection, social relationships, and the social world (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Lee and Ingold 2006). Annie built a connection with friends through a body-environment interaction to the extent that she freely expressed emotions of comfortability and security through their practice of running in spaces outdoors. This is evident in her language, "we were running around the roads with a group of friends", which shows that Annie felt safe amongst friends, the non-threatening environment was twofold: in a psychological sense, through a freedom of expression (freely expressing her sense of self and thoughts) and in a physical sense, through bodily movements in a local setting (easily moving her body through familiar routes).

The plurality of positive meanings that Annie had come to associate with socialising, outdoor running, and tea-drinking with friends, was not shared in the USA. Despite moving to another Western world country, Annie was met with a multifaceted sense of unfamiliarity through new sports and PE milieus that had distinctively competitive attitudes and behaviours which drastically opposed her past social practices in England and led Annie to question her self-worth:

> "I think, when I was in America, for me it was more serious, I think Americans took it more seriously, it was either, or people didn't do it as well, there was a bit of a culture where you need to be good at it, you know the elite, maybe in British, that isn't sort of what they went with. I kind of still, I knew I wasn't going to be in the A-team, and that was fine. I was okay with that, I think I'm okay knowing I'm never going to do this professionally, but I like it, I enjoy it. I think I was good enough to be able to play but I was never going to be one of the best players and I knew that but it was never, I was never made to feel, nobody else, I knew myself, nobody tried to make me, I don't think, feel bad about it or was unkind about it, I just knew, you know, you just know, so, and that was fine." (Annie)

Engaging with sports in the USA presented several challenges to the cultural competence that Annie had accumulated over the life span. Her cultural capital and social position involved in cross-country running in British landscapes did not transition over from England to America in an unequivocal manner. American schools presented slightly foreign dispositions to her geographical origins that impacted upon Annie's confidence in sports and led her to reconstruct who she was and who she may become in the future (Crossley 2000): "I kind of still, I knew I wasn't going to be in the A-team, and that was fine. I was okay with that; I think I'm okay knowing I'm never going to do this professionally". This illuminated that Annie's sense of self was disrupted by a new social environment to the extent that she attempted to make sense of the self and body, through reconstruction or re-storying of the body-self relationship (Charmaz 1995).

Annie described her body-self in a positive light in the context of the UK, despite any more of an enhanced display of athleticism there; yet, when talking about her exposure to American sports, her body talk is rooted in a lack of self-confidence and criticism. Her new sports involvement robbed her of the class-dependent values and meanings she had ascribed to sports and the predisposed luxuries that are familiar back in her native country (Shilling 1991). In a new social world, or country with novel situations and different symbolic elements (tastes, skills, clothing, mannerisms) – social resources or cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977, 1986), Annie felt a degree of alienation and an unwelcomed demotion. In terms of power relationships as her middle-class

English practices and embodiments, which dominated in the UK, differed from American culture, practices, and social construction of the body (Bourdieu 1984; Brubaker 1985; Synnott 1992).

Bourdieu's (1977) theory of cultural capital and social reproduction not only argued that children from middle-class families are more advantaged than families of lower social class as a result of their cultural capital, but also, that these class divisions, hierarchies, and inequalities continue to exist from generation to generation. This social reproduction can be observed in the present study in which Jenny's cultural capital and social class directly provides her children with an abundance of privileges:

> "One of the reasons that we moved here was because we wanted our family to grow up sea-side and have an outdoor experience of life because I worried for my children, the way kind of schooling was going, that you know, it was less and less about outdoor activities, it was more so about sit down, read, revise, do your works and then as a teenager, some of the outdoor opportunities that I saw, you know hanging around the bus station or going to McDonald's, and I worried that my children would grow up and not have those opportunities, opportunities to go and travel and everything because they had never experienced them so we kind of made a conscious decision that we would move and be at the seaside so they can swim and sail and kayak and paddleboard and play on the beach and do those things, and that's, that's, we made a very conscious decision to do that and that has transpired to be exactly what we hoped." (Jenny)

Jenny points to her children's experiences of moving around freely in nature and interacting with other children in various enjoyable ways as "opportunities" that she values to a higher degree when comparing her relationship between outdoor time and physical activity to children of this generation. This is because evidence suggests that in contemporary society, the current generation of children display greater sedentary tendencies in comparison to their parents' generation as their behaviours consist of playing outside less frequently and for shorter durations (Gray et al. 2015). For example, research has shown that people who moved to greener environments benefited significantly from an improvement in mental health (Alcock et al. 2014). Further, neighbourhood identities are underpinned by social class and status with studies illustrating the importance of how neighbourhood dynamics can impact their community (Robertson et al. 2010). From a psychosocial perspective, socioeconomic status affects the health of children, where people's poorer levels of health are linked to lower SES (or social capital) rather than people with higher SES (Chen 2004). Jenny displays knowledge and awareness of environmental and health dispositions through her “conscious decision” to move to an area that provides her children with similar “opportunities'' and benefits through social environments that are only easily accessible for someone in her families’ social position. Thus, her story displayed strong patterns of privileges and power through class structures that were socially reproduced and generationally perpetuated (Bourdieu 1977).

Similar class privileges were granted to Casey in his childhood full of outdoor sports:

> “Yeah, so when I was younger, tennis, squash, golf, to be honest, anything really, I was super active, and I think, anything all my friends were playing, I was playing as well. I was very lucky, the local park had an all-weather tennis court, had a basketball court, a football court, we had football pitches, and a cricket pitch, so anything that was weather worthy, we’d go and do it. The only thing I’m trained into actually coach is golf and cricket. And I did a tennis coaching course, but it was so long ago, I wouldn’t be able to coach anything now really, but yeah.” (Casey)

Casey perceives his social outcomes of positive physical activity experiences that were culminated through participation in differentiated sporting practices during childhood to be the consequences of sheer luck. Sauder (2020) examines luck to be a concept that it is framed in a range of ways in society, yet, whether or not the concept is understood to be merely transcendental, a real phenomenon, or conceptualised through other accounts does not make the social construction of luck any less influential to social structures, in particular, meritocracy (success contingent on hard work). In the case of Casey, he intentionally positioned his body in sports as a means for seeking enjoyable experiences with friends even though those sports choices could have had negative consequential events such as injury (Bourdieu 1984; Brubaker 1985). Casey does not recognise that his distinctive lifestyle and tastes in sports are constituted within a dominant class or that his social identity provides him advantages that made it easier to achieve positive experiences of sports which allows him to value the improving effects of outdoor play for children through his positive ways of living in the body (Tylka and Piran 2019; Sundgot-Borgen et al. 2020). His conscious experience of emotions also has implications on his teaching and the students to whom he teaches a range of sports and movements instructed through his physical body—or embodied pedagogy (Thorburn and Stolz 2017).

Casey’s embodied pedagogy is deeply grounded in the power and privileges made available to him as a child belonging to a middle-class household, such as a safe neighbourhood, which can have major long-term effects on children’s happiness and plays a significant role in childhood development. That is, with regard to the relation between SES and childhood development, research shows that families of a high SES can provide their children with good neighbourhoods, family stability (e.g. parenting practices), and additional resources that support their children's developmental outcomes (Bradley and Corwyn 2002). Including, health outcomes (Chen 2004), as mentioned above in relation to Jenny. Opposingly, children belonging to low SES backgrounds are deprived of such an abundance of resources and more positive experiences that have substantial effects on their well-being (Brooks-Gunn and Duncan 1997). Therefore, what Casey understands to be his *luck*, is truly his dominant class privilege, which, coupled with all the other privileges bestowed to him as a heterosexual white male, provide him with a total set of social determinants (Brubaker 1985; Shilling 1991) – an embodiment of dominance.

4.3.1.1 Lisa

Lisa, a 30-year-old, white, female primary school Headteacher, expands upon her childhood privileges in the context of outdoor sports:

> "I think the only thing I did that wasn't physical was piano, um but the rest of it was all out outdoor-based, it was always physical. Um at home, like our weekends, my parents live on a river, on the river, so like our weekends were spent on the river or boats, and we were just told to be back by dark. Then, as a teenager, I got into horses, and again, I was always back in the daylight, so I was constantly on the go, all the time like I don't remember, I never sat and watched TV or anything, I was constantly moving." (Lisa)

The cultural narrative of "children playing outside" serves as a metaphor that captures the complexity of the context in which teachers lived in the past. In this case, teachers' personal practical knowledge is a result of their socioeconomically privileged bodies at a young age, which have reaped the benefits of high SES such as establishing a positive relationship with movement, higher educational achievements, and general good health. Whereas socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, generally residing in chaotic and unsafe environments are more likely to be physically inactive, experience poverty, and adverse health outcomes than those who are less disadvantaged (Craike et al. 2019). There are a host of well-documented health benefits derived from the corporeal act of moving the body during childhood and adolescence, yet children's physical activity opportunities are influenced by neighbourhood safety. (Carver et al. 2008). In this way, different positive components may include, face-to-face interaction with peers which enables the development of social skills and confidence, boosting optimism and self-esteem, as opposed to children who remained indoors, in danger of feeling isolated and insecure. Yet, parents from different SES expect different development outcomes (Hoff and Laursen 2019). Jenny, specifically made a connection between diverse environments and children's behavioural problems, displaying her individual beliefs of how strongly environment, outdoor settings especially, influence children's positive development:

> "The other children, perhaps who've got behavioural issues, perhaps who find the classroom setting really restrictive, you know the sitting, the having to pay attention all the time, so a lot of those, we would maybe on an individual level, go outside..." (Jenny)

As adults, teachers who had the opportunity to play outside as children based on their parents' parenting style and SES understand the positive effects it had on their physical, social, and emotional learning and development during childhood and into adulthood. Casey's childhood neighbourhood, family's social status, and levels of physical activity are all interconnected:

> *"*I grew up in North Dorset, well activity-wise, I lived very close to a park, so I was always heading down there with my friends when I was younger. I grew up in quite a working-class family, went to school, went to university..." (Casey)

Most teachers understood that growing up in a good neighbourhood was a privilege that came with a wealth of resources that were influential for ideal childhood development. This included Casey, who belonged to a working-class family and grew up in the southwest region of England, Dorset, which is a largely rural county (Ridding et al. 2020). Although the county is one of the more affluent areas in the UK, I attempt to avoid *place-based politics* by acknowledging that rural and dispersed areas in Southern England, especially Hampshire and Dorset have considerable pockets of deprivation that can perpetuate false narratives of cultural capital pinned down to the neighbourhood alone, rather than as subjectively experienced by individuals in less affluent areas within the region (Boswell et al. 2022). As opposed to an overall emphasis on the coastal town of Dorset through rose-tinted glasses as a landscape rich with wildlife, countryside and woodland areas, and nature reserves (National Trust 2024). To steer clear of layering onto the sociopolitical divide in this way, I concentrate on the lived experiences of Casey in which his childhood home being nested near a park allowed for him to frequently engage in outdoor activities with his young friends.

Teachers, those who are also carers now, hoped to provide their children with the same outdoor bodily experiences they received in their youth, which they believe resulted in positive physical and mental health outcomes. Annie, who has previously also lived in Germany described how her kids benefited from living in a good neighbourhood which provided them with ample opportunities to reap the benefits of their natural environment through outdoor physical activity:

> "I think in Germany, Germany was a really outdoor kind of country to live in. There were so many cycle ponds everywhere, then we had woods next to our house, it, Sundays you know people didn't work, the shops closed. It was like that's family day and people would all be out, walking, or going to parks, you know it was always really busy. They had, a more, 'let's everybody move in the fresh air', and I think they could sort of see the benefits of that." (Annie)

Annie highlights a cultural narrative in which the fresh air outdoors is deemed to be beneficial for one's health. As such, revealing the influence from SES on her parenting style, in a way similar to Jenny, and overall, like the views and practices of the other who also valued physical activity for children's positive mental health.

4.4 Second theme: past and present awareness of mental health

4.4.1 *"Get on with it":* intergenerational constructions of resilience

The British culture narrative of *"*get on with it*"* is prevalent in teachers' past stories of mental health. According to the *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*, "get on with (something or someone)", which in this context, "something" is "it" – and *get on with it* is an expression that means "to continue doing (something)" (Merriam-Webster). Although a more contextually appropriate definition of how teachers made sense of "get on with it*"* can be understood as verbally pointed criticism, generally from older adults/parents, which is often directed towards children in response to portrayal of problematic behaviours or emotional expressions of distress with expectations for children to suppress emotions and disengage from negative behaviours. Salovey and Mayer (1990) argue that *emotional intelligence* is a set of skills that enable us to understand and regulate our emotions to help navigate thoughts and behaviours accordingly. Mayer and Salovey (1997) later redefined this concept into the four-branch model of emotional intelligence related abilities: *perceiving emotions, using, understanding, and managing emotions*, which included 16 specific skills. Then again, based on more recent research, the branches were revised a second time with 25 abilities included (Mayer et al. 2016). In this case, teachers reported that the culturally accepted phrase, "get on with it", was employed by their parents as an authoritative approach to control behaviour and regulate emotions. Research supports the influence of parenting styles on children's socioemotional development with findings showing negative parenting practices such as emotional control linked with undesirable developmental consequences such as internalising and externalising traits that are negatively related to children's emotional understanding (Alegre 2011).

Despite the teachers in this research encompassing a wide age range, most used one colloquial idiom to make sense of mental health over time. Specifically, teachers' stories shared a significant sociocultural understanding of "get on with it", predominantly drawing on the prevailing narrative in British culture as *coping strategies* or responses of resilience, which many teachers had observed, learned, and assimilated during childhood from parents (Turner-Cobb and Cheetham 2016; Cheetham-Blake et al. 2019). This illustrates how the narrative about resilience has become normalised within British identity, society, and culture across generations and the traditional bedrock on which it stands now as a dominant British narrative of resilience, informing teachers' intergenerational selves, relationships, and identities through time and as situated in sociocultural contexts.

As the grand British narrative unfolds across the multiple stories told by these teachers about mental health to make sense of their lives and selves, it reflects the intergenerational family storytelling processes that point to the construction of resilience across generations, and equally, influences their psychosocial development (identity) (Merrill and Fivush 2016). In this way, revealing their collective and individual understanding of mental health and well-being via culture and family stories, in ways that contribute to their personal identities (McLean 2016) and professional pedagogies. The latter in the way that the cultural values passed on to children via intergenerational stories serve multiple pedagogical functions (e.g., revealing parent/family identity, the self, and life lessons) (Merrill et al. 2019). Ultimately, these teachers' personal narratives of the past, present, and future offer crucial insights into the narrative identity contoured to the shape of intergenerational narratives of resilience, shining a penetrating light on the importance of culture and family, and the underlying intergenerational knowledge of positive mental health and well-being.

Acknowledging the differentiated ways of adopting this coping response and seeking to understand the nuances in lived experiences of mental health and well-being across time, I begin with Casey's family story of mental health in the past.

> "To be honest, I think probably through my experience as a child, I don't think I suffered from mental health problems, maybe I did, I wouldn't know. You fall on the floor, and your parents or your friends and family go, 'get up, get on with it'. You're crying for whatever reason, and they're saying, 'come on, sort it out, you haven't got any problems. Two or three years ago, I was very much, come in, teach, children are having problems, like in a slightly old-fashioned way: 'come on, deal with it, get on with it', they wouldn't ever tell me what was wrong, but it was always that slightly old-fashioned way." (Casey)

Casey shares a glimpse of his parents' parenting style through expressions of how his carers generally responded to his childhood behaviours: "*come on, sort it out, you haven't got any problems"*. Although this can be interpreted as exemplifying a "non-optimal parenting style" that lacks parental warmth, which has been positively linked to children's emotional intelligence (Alegre 2011), it is understood here from a less tapered view. In Casey's (re)storying of family and mental health, the limited cultural repertoire available to his parents during that time and as located within those past sociocultural contexts are uncovered. Specifically, the ways Casey's parents constructed and reproduced intergenerational narratives of resilience by drawing from the cultural menu at their disposal at that time and as situated within that culture. More specifically, the stories told by their elders to them as children and the stories his parents adopted and that served as way for them to recreate a sense of family and culture in the construction of their parenting identities and inform their children.

As an adult now, Casey shows awareness of how his parents' style of parenting, using the intergenerational narrative of "get on with it" during his formative years represents an "old-fashioned" way of understanding of mental health. In this way, he rejects this coping response or dominant narrative that promotes notions of resilience – children having the capacity to independently manage their emotions by overcoming any disruptions or obstacles that present to hinder their positive demeanour. This is interesting as Casey absorbed the intergenerational patterns of understanding positive mental health and well-being via culture and family, yet, his storytelling reveals that he makes sense of childhood interactions to interpret dominant narratives of resilience differently than his parents and their dated meaning. Importantly, Casey recognises how his socialising of mental health has directly impacted upon his pedagogical practices as he created this sense of awareness by focusing on instances of teaching where he felt that he lacked the capacity to appropriately understand and support some of his students who displayed problematic behaviours. Thus, Casey extends the self from the past as a child to more recent events of teaching a few years back to create a present self that is temporally extended and in this way illustrates a disruption of the meaning derived from these past events to potentially shape a future self that is extinct from the intergenerational patterns of resilience. In this way, Casey learning family stories and insights on his parents' identities has informed his personal identity (McLean 2016).

To place this interpretation of intergenerational resilience in the context of culture that extends beyond the family to British politics, Casey links the dismissal of his negative emotions in the past to friends as well, showing how the prevailing narrative was adopted by parents *and* children/adolescents. In that, it was the prevailing story about mental health during a time when public health policy in the UK was not as overtly concentrated on the mental health issues of children (Aranda et al. 2012). Government policy and services including efforts with the Department of Health and Social Care, Department for Education, and NHS England doubled down on pledges to improve mental health support for children and young people over the last decade (Garratt et al. 2024). More importantly, it underscores the point that these stories are a blend of the broader culture, family, and individual meanings.

Finally, bringing meaning to this in the context of gender, Casey's storytelling of his lived ones responding with "*come on, sort it out, you haven't got any problems"* to make sense of his emotions, illustrates certain constructions of masculinity. Particularly, where approaches like this are used to tease or police boys who are expressive with their emotions as unmasculine or less than (Bridges and Pascoe 2014). Overall, pointing to the ways Casey developed an understanding of selves, bodies, and identities, across time and the meaning of emotional well-being based on the raw experience of being a boy in his house and in the outer world, which gave meaning to sociocultural expectations for boys like him to be emotionally detached, less sensitive and, in some more extreme cases, aggressive (Arxer 2011).

Elsewhere, Dylan, describes how he came to understand mental health:

> "My grandma, she was always, she was really Catholic and every time something bad happened, she would say, 'Just forgive them', and I feel like ever since I was a young child she would say, 'say, I forgive you', I'd be like, 'no, I don't forgive them', [Grandma:] 'say, I forgive you', so I would forgive them. I think bit by bit by bit that's really dripped in. So, somebody could really annoy me, and I'll be like, 'I forgive you', it's done, I don't care, brush it off, rather than hold on to it and I feel if you hold on to negativity, it just breathes, doesn't it. So, I feel like because I'm able to just let things go and not let them affect me,

> not become too emotionally attached; I feel like I'm quite a positive person. I would say I'm positive just because I get on with it; I don't hold on to negativity, and if someone does something to annoy me, I'll just be like whatever, and I don't like to talk negatively about other people either because I feel like that can also fester. It's all about positive relationships, isn't it?" (Dylan)

Dylan understands mental health as explicitly positive, exclusive of negative expressions or emotion-free altogether through informal teachings of forgiveness from his Catholic grandmother and her religious stories to live by (Clandinin and Connelly 1998). In his story, Dylan uses metaphorical language such as "fester", "breathes", "dripped in, and "brush it off" in the construction of mental health that illustrates the element of *stigma* (Goffman 1963) of mental illness to the extent that it has permeated his language and in turn has implications for pedagogy. For example, Dylan perceives negativity, negative mental health or mental illness as a disease that can either *breathe* (live) or *fester* (rot), depending on one's choice of either allowing it to be *dripped in* (accepted) or instead simply *brushing it off* (neglected). In other words, *just get on with it* implies the necessitating rejection of mental illness. Drawing again on Frank's (1995) work on the body and illness, Dylan constructs his *disciplined body*, where he *controls* the body's wellness or *fighting* off all negative feelings: "'I forgive you', it's done, I don't care, brush it off, rather than hold on to it". Taking this view in Dylan's case, forgiveness is seen as positivity or the *cure*, almost like an antidote that "bit by bit by bit that's really dripped in'', and his disciplined body becomes monadic in its demands to perfect its regimen. Dylan perceives this narrative that he adopted as valuable for positive mental health: "I would say I'm positive just because I *get on with it*; I don't hold on to negativity". Unlike Casey, Dylan finds minimal fault with mental health ideologies of the past and, in fact, agrees with previous understandings to the extent that they have worked wonders for his mental health, personally.

Dylan shared a similar primary socialisation process of learning about mental health with Casey and Lisa:

> "What it [mental health] was growing up? Yeah, it just wasn't spoken about. If you, yeah physical pain, even then actually, physical pain, like I was quite fortunate growing up, I never had, I never broken a bone, I never had a serious accident sort of thing, but like if you fell over it was like, yeah, it was told to 'get over this' sort of thing like why bother TCB [taking care of business] and that was it, but, but yeah, mental health, our feelings were never ever spoken about. I'm pretty sure my dad is autistic, he doesn't ever talk

> about feelings, even now. Mum’s like a lot more open, um, dad would moan because me and mom, not like, well I suppose it is sulking, but we would get upset and then hold onto that for a while. Whereas my brother and dad, would like have a full-on argument and then that would be it and then they would be fine so they can’t understand why you would be upset for so long, um but yeah, it just wasn’t spoken about, you were just told to “get on with it. Yeah, so, I had um relatively positive growing up until I was a teenager, but equally, at the same time, was really busy, so I was kept busy with lots and lots of different things. I mean, yeah, I suppose we never really talked about mental health. We didn’t ever talk about mental health in school or home. Um, I would remember a lot like if we were told that we were upset it was: ‘get over it’, or ‘stop whinging’, or ‘stop telling stories in school’ and if my brother would hit me, it was ‘stop whinging’, and I was like ‘but he’s hit me’, um so yeah, that was, you weren’t allowed to, like my parents were amazing, but you weren’t allowed to be so keel, like be upset about something, so it was just get over it.” (Dylan)

This emphasises the important point that these dominant cultural narratives around mental health are learned in early years, including in the home environment. Interestingly, Lisa’s story illuminates similar elements that were drawn out from Dylan and Casey’s stories such as emotional regulation at a young age from parents: “feelings were never ever spoken about”. Specifically, the restriction of negative emotions, which may imply learning about mental health with a stigma of mental illness: “you weren’t allowed to, like my parents were amazing, but you weren’t allowed to be so keel, like be upset about something, so it was *just get over it*”.

Lisa uses “keel” to refer to the opposite of even-keeled (calm or stable), a nautical term since a keel is part of a ship, but used figuratively since the mid-1800s in a way which alludes to “keeping a vessel's keel in a level position” (Dictionary.com), thus, assuring stoicism or a stiff upper lip attitude when faced with obstacles. As such, suggesting her parents’ expectations of emotional management or mindfulness from her as a child. In her story, Lisa also highlights a new strand, in particular gendered mental health behaviours, in which the men in her life displayed lower emotional intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990) describe *emotional intelligence* as the:

> “ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others” (Salovey and Mayer 1990, p.189).

Although Lisa's family collectively displayed low emotional intelligence, she perceived her father and brother to perform emotional intelligence better due to cultural preconceptions and gender stereotyping, such as women are more emotional than men, which is societally viewed as a negative trait (Hess et al. 2000). Additionally, Lisa's stigmatisation of mental health permeates through her language in the ridicule of her father who she labelled as "autistic" based on ingrained cultural beliefs of mental illness (Hinshaw 2007) or public stigma (Corrigan 2000; Corrigan and Watson 2002), specifically pervasive disparagement of mentally ill persons who are perceived to be synonymous with incompetence (Corrigan et al. 2005).

Lisa appreciates her diminished emotional intelligence due to the underlying connotations of *just get on with it* throughout the life-course to the extent that she now consciously acknowledges its integration and adopts it as her own:

> "I very much struggle with myself if things go badly, I won't say anything, I'll just get on with it, find a way around it, do it yourself, get on with it, whatever it is, where I know there is stuff I should speak about more but I don't. But I can't get my head out of that mindset like I know what would help me, like I know exercise will help me, and all of those things. I know what the right thing to do is but I can't, and I do think it is down to like my whole childhood being like: 'you get on with it, you sort it out yourself'." (Dylan)

This highlights the impact of the cultural narratives that the teachers in this study grew up with. Lisa shows self-awareness of intergenerational transmission of stigmatised mental health ideologies but continues to engage with these problematic attitudes and behaviours regardless, reinforced practice, which makes her a conscious perpetuator of stigmatised and stereotyped attitudes to mental health. Overall, teachers' childhood experiences in the 1990s revealed a generational gap in the understanding of mental health through the cultural trope of *just get on with it* which represents teachers' stigmatised and outdated attitudes of mental health subjugating persons with mental illness and romanticising healthy bodies, including their own. Only one of three teachers displayed resistance to the stigmatisation of mental health while the rest accepted and implemented their parents' deeply rooted internalised stigma.

4.4.2 *"You feel better afterward":* The mind-body dualism in contemporary mental health

In the exploration of teachers' mental health and movement experiences, teachers made no explicit connection between the mind and body even though they shared life events proving the interconnectedness of the mind-body relationships. For example, teachers described feelings of burnout because of work or overworked bodies, feelings of inadequacy due to lack of activity or sedentary bodies, feeling energetic because of physical activity or active bodies, and feelings of guilt from binge-eating or unhealthy bodies. This illustrated how teachers unconsciously privileged the corporeal mind over the body by prioritising psychological feelings, essentially manifesting a Cartesian dualism of mind and body as opposed to a holistic view of the mind and body. This is crucial to understand as teachers' beliefs in mind-body dualism shape their health-related behaviours.

Casey explained his motivators of exercise, which echoed wider narratives of Western health and fitness discourses:

> "Um more than anything, and this is going to sound really cliché, but I do it because I know it makes me feel good. And I probably still don't do it enough. So, last night I played, and I still felt very lethargic and I think it's because I haven't done anything in a while. Um, so it's, but it is that classic, everyone says it: 'when you do that thing, you feel better afterwards'. I feel better when I get up for work, um I'm not so grouchy with the kids, um, so, yeah, that's the main reason. Um, I also, I also do it if I've had a poor nutrition week, like if I've eaten loads of rubbish, I'll then make sure that I don't feel so bad about myself by going, hitting the gym, or hitting football, or whatever extra hard, you know? Um, I would say probably the biggest benefit is because it makes me feel better and I quite like the group dynamics of team sports as well, um that's the main reason, yeah." (Casey)

Teachers' self-narratives provided unsubstantial considerations to the body when describing their current physical activity levels, yet, emphasised the mental health benefits of bodily movements such as *feeling better*. Although teachers were cognizant of their bodies, they did not believe bodies to be the knowledgeable entity guiding their health-related movements.

For instance, Dylan described why playing sports stimulated feelings of goodness or happiness:

> "I've only started playing football mid-week for about almost a year now and it makes you feel great, like 'oh yeah', You're buzzing for a Wednesday night because you get to

> go and kick the ball around, that makes a difference because then it's just like you look forward to it and then you've done it, and then you feel good after. I don't play on a Wednesday – I'm like "ahh I'm missing football!" because you feel good when you play it." (Dylan)

Further, Dylan explained how engaging with any form of movement, like walking, outside, is particularly therapeutic.

> "We go spend a night in a cave on the sea and you've got to climb down, sleep in the cave and literally, you've got a ledge, and then you've got the sea, and at night you get to see all the stars, hear the sea and you just lie there, and you fall asleep. You have a great night's sleep, and you wake up, and you've had no interaction with anyone else. Just each other and water and the birds, and you feel great, but again, that's not necessarily movement but you are. You're going outside, you're having to walk there, sort stuff out, fire and stuff." (Dylan)

Teachers have a limited contemporary understanding of mental health as they consider it to be a modern-day phenomenon. Mental health was not openly discussed or understood by teachers growing up as the public health initiatives and the rise of interventions (e.g., Stormbreak) to improve mental health and well-being in the UK are more recent. However, as mental health evolves into a prevalent topic of discussion at present, teachers are expected to understand and inform mental health despite lacking any professional training for it. Teachers' current understanding of mental health is a conflicting one, as they previously understood a dualistic view informed through their personal experiences incorporating the cultural narratives of mental health in the 1990s via their family stories (Merrill et al. 2019). Thus, as the topic of mental health gains more traction in the 21st century, teachers are re-learning the meaning and significance of mental health education. This is seen through their ability to recognise their emotional patterns that are often repeated non-reflexively.

In the following excerpt, Casey describes how his previous conceptualisation of mental health has evolved in recent years:

> "To be honest, it's only the last two or three years that, although I've always noticed it myself, I think where it's become such a big thing in the media, a big thing through research, it's only recently that there's been something in my head, where I've, not only

> seen it for myself, but also seen it for the children I teach, and my peers, and my friends, and I think it's something that's going to get bigger and bigger. Personally, I have always known that it's good for me but whether I would've made that direct correlation maybe ten years ago, before it all got so, so much bigger, probably not, um all I knew that it made me feel good, but I didn't have the emotional or personal skills to ...um what's the word or phrase, to understand." (Casey)

This explains how teachers' personal and professional identities are interrelated as they are expected to incorporate their limited mental health literacy into these new professional cultures prioritising psychological wellness. While teachers did not personally or organically come to view mental health as essential, they are quickly beginning to understand the mind-body connection and appreciate the benefits of school-based mental health initiatives. However, mental health is taken for granted as it is not explicit and there is a lack of consistent understanding of mental health in the teaching community.

4.5 Summary

In summary, the thematic narrative analysis of revealed teachers shared and embodied knowledge of mental health and physical activity that inform their delivery of health-related lessons in Stormbreak. This research provided teachers space to explore in-depth their varied relationships with sports and mental health, and as such, uncovered tacit and embodied forms of knowledge. Teachers recognised their emotional patterns and the influences of wider sociocultural scripts because of their long-term immersion in British culture and the intergenerational narratives within experiences of mental health and movement. This thematic narrative analysis provides new insights into the contextual nuances of masculinity and mental health. That said, it represents an attempt to bridge the gap between sociology, the wider cultural narratives and discourses of masculinity, to impact on mental health. This will be focused upon in the discussion chapter. In the next chapter, I explore these teachers' experiences of mental health and movement in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chapter Five: Findings – part two, post-COVID

“It’s been a rollercoaster—a rollercoaster of emotions!”:

Teachers’ stories of physical activity and mental health as shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a thematic narrative analysis (Riessman 2008) of teachers’ experiences of mental health and physical activity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that extended from March 2020 to April 2021. The outbreak of COVID-19 was officially declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on the 12th of March 2020 (Viner et al. 2020). Subsequent responses to the pandemic by the UK government (e.g., lockdowns, social distancing, quarantine) caused a significant shift in the provision of education that impacted teachers and teaching practices (Daniel 2020). Examining the lives of three English primary school teachers via follow-up interviews conducted over a year later in April 2021, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, revealed that the profound effects of the pandemic shifted teachers’ stories of mental health and movement. This subset of three teachers from the original group of six teachers who partook in the study, hereinafter referred to as ‘teachers’ in this chapter, reported experiences of disruption due to new teaching expectations, including more demanding responsibilities changing throughout the series of COVID-19 national lockdowns. In this new context, shaping a change in education systems and teaching pedagogy with significant workload burdens impacting mental health, teachers were forced to reconstruct a sense of order in their professional and personal lives. While the two are still considered innately intertwined, dual themes are adopted as they provide a structure similar to the ways that most teachers tell their stories—focusing heavily on one or the other.

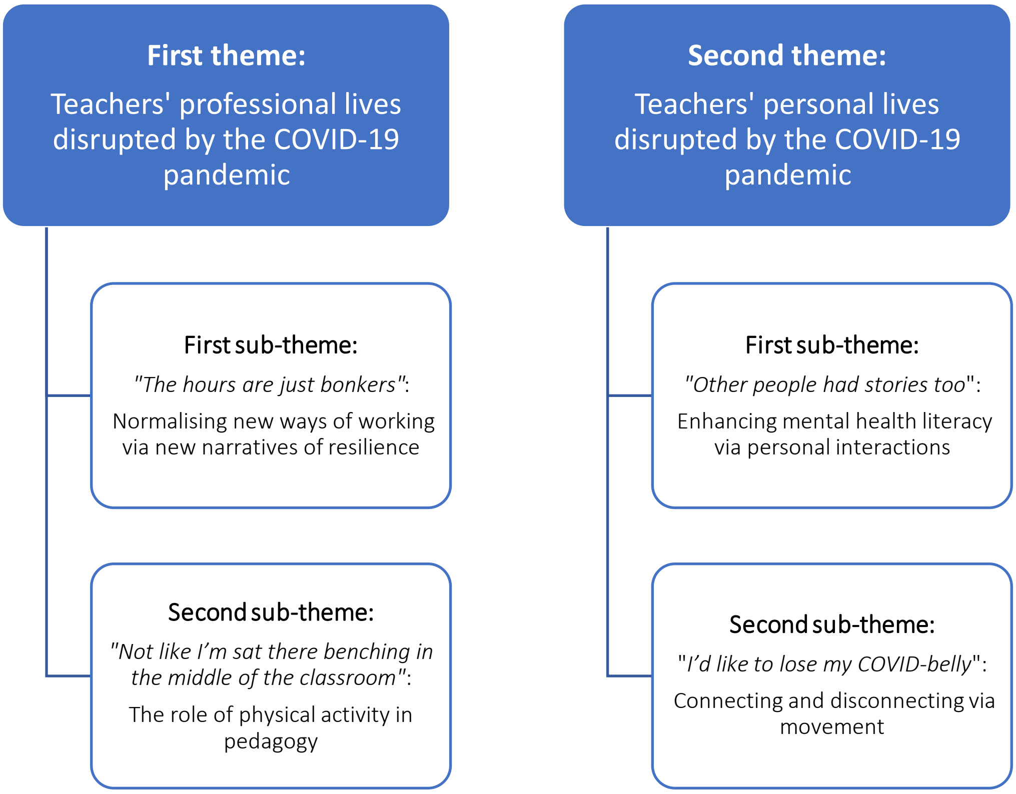
Attempting to reinforce a sense of coherence in their lives according to the “new normal” and blended learning, globally (Dziuban et al. 2018) and in the UK, teachers adapted to new forms of pressure, using dominant cultural narratives to create order and reconstruct positive meanings associated with teaching in chaotic times. Specifically, teachers made sense of their experiences with teaching by emphasising their positive feelings of gratitude and a sense of continuity related to maintaining teaching positions that offered them financial security, social interactions, and constant movement, especially amid a time of COVID-19 work-related challenges, social distancing, and quarantining. This reflects teachers gained a better understanding of the interconnected relationship between physical and mental health over time. Particularly, during a period of dramatic change, teachers showed awareness of the detrimental effects of sedentary and socially isolated lifestyles and inversely considered physical outdoor activities and socialising crucial for preserving their physical and mental health. Thus, teachers' experiences throughout the COVID-19 pandemic were seen twofold—an unprecedented disruption to their normal lives, as well as an opportunity to inspire positive change towards healthy physical activity habits to improve personal mental health and well-being. Finally, longitudinal findings from exploring teachers' relationships between movement and mental health amidst an acutely perilous global pandemic highlight the importance of wider cultural scripts that provide teachers with meaningful, positive ways to construe the major disruption of COVID-19 in both their personal and working lives.

5.2 Key themes

The insights presented below are specifically from a second set of research interviews with three of the six primary school teachers who were first interviewed in 2019 before the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted planned research. In that, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted data collection and fieldwork where access to teachers who reformed to frontline instructors became seriously difficult and entry into school settings for research purposes was prohibited. Considering the extent of disruption to research participation and the corresponding need for additional data, efforts for research progression were re-directed to exploring teachers' relationships with mental health and movement in the context of the pandemic. Thus, teacher re-engagement, albeit limited due to time and space constraints relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, allowed for conducting a longitudinal study with emerging themes in relation to mental health and movement over the span of a year. Specifically, comparing and contrasting past relationships with movement and mental health in the period before the pandemic to more recent times of lockdown provided a deepened understanding of changes and continuities over time. This involved using a thematic narrative analysis (Riessman 2008) approach that focuses on the *whats* of storytelling and allows examining the content of stories for identifying core themes that consistently emerged as well as re-emerged across teachers' life stories. In the text that follows, teachers reflect on their experiences of maintaining their mental and physical health while teaching throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including at times of lockdown.

Two core themes emerged: Teachers' professional lives disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and Teachers' personal lives disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the two are entwined, teachers often spoke of them separately. Several sub-themes of key aspects in the context of the pandemic that affected teachers' lives—and identities in and out of school were placed under these overarching emergent themes (see Figure 3). The first key theme in relation to teachers' working lives disrupted in school environments extends two subthemes: *"The hours are just bonkers"*: normalising new ways of working via new narratives of resilience, and "*Not like I'm sat there benching in the middle of the classroom"*: the role of physical activity in pedagogy. The second key theme related to the personal lives of teachers disrupted at home encompasses the following two subthemes: *"Other people had stories too":* enhancing mental health literacy via personal interactions and *"I'd like to lose my COVID-belly"*: connecting and disconnecting via movement. Overall, teachers' stories of mental health and movement, which shifted during the pandemic outbreak, facilitated insights into both sociocultural and personal understandings of contemporary mental health and the corporeal body that are important for teacher education and whole-school development interventions. Primarily indicating that the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to teachers' personal and professional lives altered not only teachers' professional pedagogy but also individual relationships with movement and mental health. Further, exploring the multi-layered nature of primary school teachers' lives within the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic was especially valuable for supporting *Stormbreak* processes, given findings illustrate how it took a major disruption–experiencing a global health pandemic–to positively influence primary school teachers' perspectives of physical activity and mental health.

Figure 3. Phase two: Key themes from a thematic narrative analysis post-pandemic


First theme:
Teachers' professional lives disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic
First sub-theme:
"The hours are just bonkers":
Normalising new ways of working via new narratives of resilience
Second sub-theme:
"Not like I'm sat there benching in the middle of the classroom":
The role of physical activity in pedagogy
Second theme:
Teachers' personal lives disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic
First sub-theme:
"Other people had stories too":
Enhancing mental health literacy via personal interactions
Second sub-theme:
"I'd like to lose my COVID-belly":
Connecting and disconnecting via movement

5.3 First theme: teachers' professional lives disrupted by the pandemic

5.3.1 *"The hours are just bonkers"*: normalising new ways of working via new forms of resilience

Teachers in England generally, were required to continue working during the COVID-19 pandemic and faced an array of new job demands because of the pandemic caused disruption to traditional pedagogy that threatened their mental health and well-being (Johnson and Coleman 2021; Marsh-Davies and Burnett 2023). Contemporary experiences of primary school teachers in the context of the pandemic showed the advantages and drawbacks related to the changing and critical roles of educators, more recently recognised as "key workers" in education, as the UK government deemed educational professionals essential to society during a state of emergency. Socially designated as critical workers, teachers felt compelled to embrace the complex nature of their unfamiliar new roles, which meant accepting the unexpected shift to new ways of teaching—undertaking increased workloads that often required working from home to be their "new normal" (Kim and Asbury 2020; Boyd et al. 2023).

New ways of teaching prompted a transformative change to regular teaching practice, including engaging in more collaborative and virtual forms of education since classrooms now consisted of a greater number of students (e.g., children of key workers and vulnerable children in schools as well as children at home). In addition, home-based teaching interactions for both children and adults, such as PE or workouts with Joe Wicks (The Body Coach 2024). Thus, teachers, obliged by law to keep students educated during the crisis, had to overcome the myriad challenges associated with onboarding new methods of teaching: remote education that involved learning to use online learning tools and working from personal spaces, grading extra assignments, and providing greater emotional support to carers/parents in addition to students. In the process of prioritising the needs of children and schools during an unprecedented time, teachers came to normalise excessive workload in response to COVID-19-related uncertainty. Despite certain elements such as working from home negatively impacting their mental health, teachers constructed positive stories through a sense of collective hope for returning to life before the pandemic.

Referring specifically to the difficulties of effectively teaching throughout lockdown measures during the pandemic, many teachers expressed frustrations concerning the increased workload. For instance, Annie, as stated earlier, a 50-year-old primary school teacher, described the impacts of the pandemic on her teaching interactions and subsequent emotional responses.

> "It's been, yeah, really strange times. Isn't it really strange times? Busy. You know this first lockdown was in school. We only...there wasn't, um. We tried to keep in touch with families as much as we could, but we weren't sort of providing as much work. And sort of keeping on top of that as much as we did the second time where it was every day, you know we were doing video calls and making sure we did registration with children, so there's a lot more work I think the second time at school that was really quite difficult. Sort of teaching children in school and out of school, and the first time, we weren't as prepared for that. I think been better for the children, but you know the workload's been far more I think on teachers this time. As we were not perhaps more prepared for it. So, it's been a (sighs). It's been a rollercoaster—a rollercoaster of emotions! I think from it all, but really looking forward to hopefully light at the end of the tunnel and things going back to more normal." (Annie)

In the text above, Annie highlighted many of the issues affecting teaching interactions for teachers during lockdown, such as "doing video calls" starting from the first wave of the lockdowns. She asserted, "the workload's been far more I think on teachers this time" to describe the negative effects of an excessive new workload given that teachers were required to develop skills and competencies for teaching the curriculum via online tools. She presented the first lockdown as the "first time" period where teachers "weren't prepared" for "teaching children in school and out of school". Therefore, while teachers used that time to learn the set of skills required for online forms of education, inevitably preparing to conform to the new ways of teaching (Boyd et al. 2023), children had a lighter workload and in comparison, a "better" or less taxing experience of learning during the lockdown. Going into more detail about experiences of having to teach virtually throughout the lockdowns, Annie describes specific online teaching tools and how she eventually came to embrace the new ways of teaching.

> "We haven't taught online from home. So, we've always been in school. So, I, with my class as well, the only thing we did sort of. We did a story time sort of face to face and because I've got the really young children and we did a—every morning we did and every afternoon we did, a registration for sort of 10 minutes. So, it was great. I think in the

> second lockdown to keep that contact with the children. I think they felt still part of the class, but we didn't teach lessons. We had a—we used a lot of Oak Academy. Have you heard of the Oak Academy? So, it was sort of video lessons that we followed at school, and they followed at home to try and keep sort of the continuity that what we were teaching in school was the same as what they were getting at home. So, it was great to *see* the children at home, I think, and sort of keep that contact during those times. But it's just (sighs). I mean I found story times quite difficult in a way because you don't get, you don't get the same sort of feedback I think on a video as you do in in real life you don't get the same—I don't know. I think it's I think it's really. It's like I'd much rather you (referring to me and our online research interaction) were in the same room as me. Now I think it's really difficult to, even though I can see you. I don't think you get the same. I don't know what it is as being in the same room as somebody. As being on a on a video call with somebody, it's just not quite the same." (Annie)

In Annie's case, school expectations for teachers to teach students virtually only meant during school hours, from social settings of school. Therefore, unlike other teachers who were at time expected to teach from home, Annie never experienced the challenges associated with teaching from more personal spaces, but still considered the sudden shift to online teaching and subsequent processes "really difficult". This is because Annie incorporated the online teaching tools and practices that aligned with the expectations of the school and allowed her to connect with students, but she personally found online teaching to be difficult and less effective means of interaction.

Like Annie, Dylan, as pointed out earlier, a 25-year-old primary school teacher, focused on the overwhelming new pressures ascribed to teachers including aspects of remote working to accommodate changes to teaching practices. However, for Dylan, shifting to multi-modal classrooms with both face-to-face interactions and virtual techniques of teaching and learning was not solely limited to school environments. Given this, Dylan shared his unique experience of teaching from both home and school during the pandemic.

> "So right at the start of the first lockdown, it was like a year ago, wasn't it? It was like March, what, the 18th? I think it was. We were ready to go to school etcetera and kind of come back, but my girlfriend's got asthma and we were really worried kind of thing and so she went up to isolate essentially with her family and basically my head teacher said you can go up and you can go isolate with her. So, I was working from home essentially

> for the first couple of months which was quite nice. And then we came back half term and we came back to school with, you know, restricted kids. There wasn't many at that time and it was really quite chilled out at school and then obviously we came back in September. Umm? Summer was nice. Summer was nice. We came back in September and kind of just got back to normal essentially. And in terms of the schooling, it was pretty nuts after Christmas. It's been pretty crazy since Christmas, to be honest, with all the home learning and things like that and it's quite challenging, let's say. Um. But it just seems to be just—get it done and then once it's done, it's done. You know, hopefully it will just be the end of it, and we won't have to redo it, so it's been a bit rubbish, but my life hasn't really changed because I've been going to work, my work hours have been normal if probably not more." (Dylan)

Dylan describes enjoying the experience of working remotely at the beginning of the pandemic as it allowed him to support his partner's vulnerable health without having to choose between his relationship (personal life) and career (professional life). Following my probe asking him to expand on what "working from home essentially for the first couple of months" entailed for teaching, Dylan explained that initial period "was quite nice" because "that was actually kind of just prepping and planning and resourcing stuff. There was no teaching—or recorded videos." Following this period of working remotely (March-April), Dylan returned to the classroom (May-June) to teach a few of the "restricted kids", vulnerable and children of key workers, which he found relaxing or in his exact words, "was really quite chilled out". This is because, in contrast to Annie, Dylan was able to easily transition to new teaching methods, which necessitated using online tools and technology, that he was already familiar or comfortable with. In other words, at the start of the pandemic, new teaching practices allowed for work flexibility and a lighter workload. Yet, later, once there was a sharp increase in the number of students learning from home, as well as, in the classroom, Dylan began to quickly feel overwhelmed by the new workload, pressures and demands on his time. Therefore, like Annie, Dylan demonstrates acceptance of the excessive new workload, but he still clings on to the hope of returning to "normal" or regular teaching practice, prior to the effects of the pandemic with ever-increasing workloads and stress. In a sense, Dylan is conflicted about accepting new ways of teaching that he found "quite challenging" and "a bit rubbish" as the *new normal*.

Related to the myriad demands of teaching through the pandemic and consequent emotions, Dylan describes in more detail the silent struggles related to new measures for teachers, especially during the second lockdown.

> “It was key workers and vulnerable children. Uh, before the summer and then we went back to normal for the whole. The whole cohort in September. Up until Christmas and then it was key workers and vulnerable [children] again after Christmas. This year, however, we were like. We had 29 in our class during lockdown. You know so, it was a full class. So, we had 29 in the class and then we also had another 29 at home. Kind of 'cause we were sharing a class essentially, so that was pretty nuts. Well, I think since Christmas the amount of work has just doubled essentially because you have the kids in class and school. And then you also have the kids at home. And then obviously you gotta deal with them and deal with their parents as well. Who struggled a lot, actually. Umm lots of tears from parents and then settled down a little bit to be fair, now, which is good. But yeah, since that lockdown period from Christmas was quite—quite crazy. So, what we were doing, we were doing a day on day off inside the classroom so you would do, you would teach 29 kids in the classroom. And do all of that, and then your teaching partner will take all the 29 kids who are at home and then swap that round. But then you've gotta make so, we had to make videos for all of the kids who are at home. So, we had to do the teaching and make videos and then do the online marking for all the kids who are at home *and* mark the books [of students] in school. And plan for at home and at school. And make phone calls. Yeah, it was very, very busy.” (Dylan)

Dylan reported some changes to teaching during the pandemic such as shared classrooms with significantly more students and emotionally vulnerable parents/carers that consequently increased teachers’ workload. He describes the effects of teaching expectations later in the pandemic as “quite crazy” or pretty nuts” to emphasise the mental and emotional toll they had on teachers. Especially since new teaching approaches created additional work for teachers who were responsible for not only teaching the students attending school, but also making videos for the students learning from home and grading the assignments of all the students or double the regular class size. In addition, Dylan reflected on the impact of COVID-19 on teachers in England who experienced stressful instances related to parents/carers seeking emotional support. When I asked him to expand on his assertion of “lots of tears from parents”, Dylan said:

> “So, you’re not even a teacher. You’re more of a parental counsellor at times as well. So, umm it was a bit mental, you know. Kind of you didn't know where to start like what to do in terms of like I knew what to do but it was just learning because you haven't done that. You got your parents crying and you're like well. You can just do whatever you could,

> possibly can, to support them, and some of the stuff I suppose just comes naturally rather than—you don't get any training for. I don't think anybody gets training for you know so. I think they were expecting too much of themselves. UM, you know, we reset. We reset five hours of work pretty much a day, and obviously they're working from home. You're but they're. They're trying to also educate their children. And it was just too much for him, you know? So it was just reducing the expectations really. And I just most of the time, just tell them that it's gonna be OK, you know, just reassurance really, because they just they needed, just reassurance and needed they needed to know that I'm not. We weren't as a school expecting five hours of work to be completed. You know, do whatever you can and then whatever you can is, is good enough, you know." (Dylan)

This illuminates the emotional workload imposed on teachers due to new job responsibilities during the pandemic. Dealing with the parents of students who looked to teachers for emotional support following the tremendous disruption of the pandemic forced teachers to take on the role of *carers* in addition to already increased job demands. In this way, teachers felt caring for both students and parents to be an innate part of their professional duty. Although Dylan felt supported by the school and his colleagues with respect to new responsibilities, he continued to express the variety of challenges faced by teachers.

> "It's just. It's a massive learning curve for everybody, but not even that. I mean, you would also then have positive cases [of COVID-19] in school as well and staff members out and stuff as well. So, it was just—it was just like fighting so many fires at the same time. You know. Um. But I feel like we got through it, back stronger than we were when we got—when we ran into it so it's all these positives: people stepped up, the teams stepped up. I feel like it was. It was actually a really positive experience when you look back on it, it's just when you're in it. You're just like ahh, let's get to the end of it." (Dylan)

Regardless of all the challenges endured as a teacher, Dylan draws on the cultural narrative of resilience during adversity to make sense of teaching during the pandemic as a generally positive experience. Specifically, using metaphors of fighting and war to glorify different ways of being overworked throughout the pandemic. In fact, Dylan normalised the excessive new workload to such a degree that he prioritised teaching as a coping strategy that allowed him continuity of normal during a time of enormous interruption. This is seen in the excerpt of text below focused on the importance of work for preserving his personal well-being.

> "I actually genuinely think work because…it was normal. There was a couple—I had to isolate once because of a close contact and that was crap, that was rubbish because of the, we live in a one-bedroom flat, and it was just, I felt like you know, I felt like I was watching Tiger King. You know, you're just trapped in a cage without anywhere to go. But I think if I had to stay in all the time and work from home that would have driven me nuts. I think the only thing that kept me sane actually to be honest with you, is because I was able to go to work and you're able to get out. My life was normal. Pretty much." (Dylan)

Dylan understands working in school as a form of socialisation and strategic way of avoiding isolation at home. He uses a caged animal metaphor to express an isolated and constrictive environment by depicting himself as a caged tiger to symbolize a sense of confinement inside a "one-bedroom flat" or limited space. Breaking free from feeling "trapped in a cage", specifically by have the opportunity to go into a school environment to teach represents his return to freedom or what Dylan considers "normal". This is because the social environment of school and the social act of teaching provide normality that is linked with a positive feeling of being free, whereas self-isolation, for example, "to stay in all the time and work from home" feels abnormally lonely and contributes to psychological manifestations of tension, restlessness, and anxiety. For Dylan, normalisation is perceived via social interactions of teaching in school, thus, returning to the fundamentals of teaching and learning in the classroom, despite new demands, is seen as a reward that positively impacts on his personal mental health and well-being.

Lisa, as indicated previously, a 30-year-old primary school headteacher, also described how her daily life of teaching continued as *normal* apart from the pandemic ensuing in teaching from home on certain days of the week.

> "Yeah, to be honest, it didn't change a huge amount (laughs). So obviously we've been in school, so school changed slightly last or quite a bit, but general parts of like working. You know we weren't furloughed or anything. So, um day-to-day life, particularly since the autumn term has been very similar. Um, last summer was different in that I was only in two days a week and working at home three days a week, so that was probably the period of time that changed the most. But yeah, I mean since then we've been in school every day and even in the last lockdown, we were all in, so it didn't really make any difference from that sense, I'm still having to get up and work." (Lisa)

Like Annie and Dylan, Lisa highlighted how professional responsibilities were not placed on hold during the pandemic as her daily life of teaching continued. Due to this continuance of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, Lisa felt her professional life was not disrupted to the degree that she was forced to experience furlough. This shows that she understood the impact of the pandemic on education and teachers in comparison to people from other professions who were furloughed; consequently, she perceived the changes to teaching practice in accordance with UK government guidelines regarding remote education to be less severe. Speaking about the consequences of schools transitioning to remote education and teachers implementing blended learning, Lisa appreciated how the educational adjustments put in place allowed for greater levels of accessibility, or as she described exactly, "made it more accessible for others". Her appreciation of remote education provision, which ensured children continued learning, corresponded to the sentiments of the other teachers.

For example, like Annie and Dylan, Lisa demonstrates not only recognising but also prioritising the needs of children, despite personally disliking certain effects of the disruption to regular teaching practice. This reflects teachers embodying the construct of care as they all described teaching practice and selves that care for others, which encompassed diverse forms of care such as, caring about benefiting their students, parents of students, and even showing a certain degree of care for people who lost their jobs because of the pandemic. This embodied care is emphasised in the excerpt below, by Lisa in specific, who expresses features of social deprivation to portray her negative experiences related to contemporary forms of pedagogy. In that, Lisa remains motivated to act for others benefiting from remote education even when teaching from home distinctly deprives her from the social spaces and important feeling of community she craves and consequently, provokes feelings of nostalgia and anxiety that now permeate into her most personal space.

> "So, we work from home or like in the summertime last year. So, I was working home three days a week and teachers worked at home four days a week. They just came in one day. Yeah, but then we haven't done that since September. I didn't like. I felt when I was working at home, I did really miss that interaction with people, and I mean I was speaking. I was having zoom meetings all day, so I was talking to people. But the actual like proper face to face stuff like I did start going mad like I turned to my cup of tea and asked if it was hot one day like thinking it was gonna talk back to me like it was just…yeah, I was going stir crazy by the end of three days at home because we had worked it with—my boyfriend worked 24-hour shifts and we had the dog, it was like we were, um, the two days that I

> was in school, I'd change around each week depending on when Simon was at work for his three days because he, well, yeah, the time he was able to do three 72-hour shifts, so I was literally on my own for all that time and I was just like crazy by the end of it. So yeah, I think that was, that was not so enjoyable. But yeah, since then okay, life just feels like it's being pretty normal in schools because we've had 630 kids then so, we see the children and parents every day." (Lisa)

During the time of limited in-person attendance in school, Lisa described experiencing negative emotions such as "going stir crazy" and feeling deprived of meaningful social interactions through solely virtual communications from a dominant setting of home. She perceived face-to-face interactions as inherently better than virtual, pointing out many similar details labelled as advantageous by Annie, such as greater connection, trust, and communication with others. Also, expressing remarkably similar feelings to Dylan, Lisa recalled days of prolonged working from home during the ongoing pandemic that left her particularly bewildered, predominantly because of feeling isolated. Describing one instance of life under lockdown and social restrictions that led her to believe she was "going mad" or unravelling from staying home alone for three consecutive days, Lisa said, "I turned to my cup of tea and asked if it was hot one day". This occurrence depicts the messy realities of teachers' professional lives, reflecting how teachers embodied a pedagogy of care and empathy as a form of resilience or coping to evolving job role. That is, they adopted remote education or placed the needs and well-being of others before their own, seeing as they actively side-lined personal desires of teaching from social spaces and endured the challenging practicalities of online teaching from domestic spaces.

Further, as shown through Lisa's talk, opening with "we weren't furloughed or anything", and as seen from Dylan's text above, and to follow below from where he left off, teachers described coping with new ways of working in relation to others. Particularly empathising with others who were furloughed because of the pandemic, and in comparison, since teachers as key workers were not adopting their previous narratives of resilience as a coping response to normalise new ways of working to preserve their well-being. For example, despite highlighting the array of pressures related to their evolving job roles and responsibilities above, in the same way as other teachers, Dylan makes sense of it through a certain *type* of resilience, specifically, one grounded in the dominant cultural frames of gratitude, empathy, and care during the pandemic:

> "My life was normal. Pretty much. [new text starting onwards] And I've – I've been getting paid. Normally I've been furloughed. I've been getting paid holiday pay. Again, I think it's

> made me really grateful to have a job and have a have a secure job because I, I couldn't imagine the stress if you've been on furlough being made redundant, you know. I think it's just made me grateful. Really. I think to be honest as well. A haunting experience.” (Dylan)

Overall, exploring three primary school teachers’ experiences of mental health during the pandemic revealed a collective focus on school restrictions and the subsequent change to remote education, the negative impact of their changed lives, whereby all teachers expressed negative emotions related to virtual ways of teaching. Two of these teachers experienced the solitary confinement of home-based pedagogy and consequently, felt deprived of their loved ones. Yet, all three teachers eventually normalised new ways of teaching in attempting to preserve their mental health and well-being as they made sense of their changing selves, identities, and bodies, personally and socially, and as impacted by the pandemic. Specifically, through constructions of (1) positive selves as caring pedagogues who acknowledged the educational and care needs for students, (2) dominant narratives of resilience in Western culture and (3) actively holding onto hope for returning to their professional lives pre-COVID-19 pandemic.

5.3.2 “Not like I’m sat there benching in the middle of the classroom”: the role of physical activity in pedagogy

Reflecting on the professional life of teaching, rapidly changed by the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers described themselves as physically active as teachers’ practice provided regular physical activity. In imitation of the first set of research interviews, pre-pandemic, all the teachers engaging with this study during the pandemic sustained perceptions of health matters and identified themselves as active individuals. In this way, the theme presents an element that re-emerges, where teachers still find themselves physically active, even in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, their relationships with physical activity changed slightly as the pandemic resulted in teachers collectively sharing new meanings for the concept of pedagogy. To the point that teachers identified the specific performance of teaching as synonymous with their daily engagement in physical activity. Only after experiencing unfamiliar, exceptionally sedentary modes of teaching from home did teachers value and emphasise the constant movement involved in their day-to-day teaching practice. Thus, while teachers reported reaping the health benefits from regular physical activity engagement in both their professional and personal lives throughout the pandemic, this section focuses mainly on their professional experiences of physical activity in school environments. For example, Dylan described how teaching pedagogy implicates a constant movement of his body.

> “Again, because I've been on my feet all day at work, it's not too bad and I've been like, let's say before summer last year, we were pretty much outside for two hours playing sports with the kids, so I was quite physical there. That's quite nice.” (Dylan)

Dylan mentioned that lockdown-related measures in the UK, which restricted people from accessing gyms and most social forms of physical activity, were not overly personally concerning, as he sustained physical activity through his continued engagement in teaching.

> “It's been pretty normal apart from that time it's been like outside activities have been called off, but I feel like I'm on my feet all day. I'm not too bothered. Lots of steps, lots of squatting cause you always have to squat down to a desk. I feel like, I'm not playing sports twice a week, which I'm loving, but then again, when I wasn't playing sport. I mean I was missing it, but I think yeah, because I'm on my feet all the time.” (Dylan)

Highlighting how most of the days in the week entail a consistent physical aspect, given it is fundamentally incorporated into regular teaching practice, Dylan elucidates how entwined professional pedagogy and personal behaviours and attitudes toward physical activity are. For example, moving back and forth between bodily experiences at work and at home:

> “When I was at home. Let's say I'm at the weekend. I'm being really lazy and then gets to 8:00 o'clock and I'm like scratching at the walls because I need to do something, so I think it's different. Again, I think that just comes back to being kind of physical at work, I suppose not like, I'm sat there benching in the middle of the classroom. It's just your view or they're kind of walking around using your legs and stuff.” (Dylan)

It is clear Dylan does not perceive teaching as a vigorous form of physical activity, yet, as a pedagogue and someone who requires constant stimuli from movement, he sees standard teaching behaviours embedding movement of the corporeal body that positively impacts personal well-being. In that, he is content with sustaining physical activity via pedagogy while expressing negative feelings of restlessness associated with certain days during the lockdown, particularly on the weekends, the days where he is not engaging with teaching pedagogy so desires to be physically active via other types of movement.

In the same manner as Dylan, Annie recognised physical activity as an integral part of teaching, during specific interactions of school sports following the initial dealings of the pandemic declared lockdown.

> “Sometimes we'd put Joe Wicks. We'd put Joe Wicks out and say, if you want to do that, or links to dance things and that, but it's a school because in foundation we don't have a physical, but we don't have to do PE lessons as such, we have to teach physical skills, but we'd always go out. So, we knew we'd be out and about around the school. We did a lot more of the buddy run type things miles a day so we would try and incorporate mile a day because we were aware of trying to keep children active as much as possible and say to the children at home. You know we're going out for our run today. If you get a chance. We did a lot of Joe Wicks. . . I moved as well.” (Annie)

Annie reported engaging in a range of school-based physical activities that necessitated moving the physical body while interpreting educational experiences of movement as supplemental to her personalised physical activity regime outside of school. In comparison to views by Dylan, Annie’s perceptions of pedagogy, albeit involving movement, are primarily understood as professional aims of promoting physical activity amongst youth, whereas her physical activity participation after school hours is a conscious decision for promoting personal fitness. Unlike Dylan, who feels less inclined to participate in additional forms of physical activity following a day of teaching, a physically taxing act on its own, Annie feels compelled to engage in physical activity even after a long day at school.

> “Like this week I've had parents’ evenings every week, so I've got home late but thought God, I just need to get out. I need to go and do something.” (Annie)

Only later, bearing in mind that the new responsibilities associated with teaching during the pandemic may not necessarily allow for attaining personal goals of fitness.

> “15,000 steps, was kind of like what we'd [Annie and her husband] like to do in a day kind of thing, especially in that first lockdown when there was a bit more time. Now it's like, can't guarantee that. Try to get in the 10,000, probably during the day due.” (Annie)

Although Annie presents a somewhat more rigid or determined pursuit of fitness via movement, she is still aware of the constant movement of the body required in the act of teaching. To the degree that she considered it possible to achieve a culturally constructed threshold of physical activity—accruing a total of 10,000 steps from a single day of work in the life of a teacher (Hallam et al. 2018). Akin to Annie, Lisa also demonstrated greater personal aspirations of physical activity outside her professional domain while acknowledging the physical act of teaching in character with Dylan and Annie. Speaking of the various online physical activities incorporated in pandemic-influenced education, Lisa emphasised, “I've always had like a lot of movement, probably too much of my life”, before elucidating how the effects of the lockdown impacted in a professional capacity.

First, focusing on the previous and newly implemented physical activities that teachers conjointly participated in with students, she recounted:

> “So, we’re doing Stormbreak still, um, so we do that most days, so at least three times a week, but usually four or five. Um, so they did that all the way through all the lockdowns. And we did them live with children over zoom, and we did them like as part of like through lockdown. They did one daily in the groups that were in school and gave the children one to watch from the website every day and then, so they've got that they do. There's a couple of other movement-based websites. They were doing like the Joe Wicks workouts in the first lockdown, but they got quite bored of those after a few days. They were, but um, the teachers were enjoying them more than the children, I think. I think it was just they're quite—they were quite repetitive, and you know like that sort of workout is great as an adult.” (Lisa)

The above excerpt depicts how Lisa, a headteacher in the same style as the other teachers, became more physically active in educational settings during the lockdown, given that teaching expectations involved regular delivery of school-based movement interventions. She describes how teachers enjoyed the obligatory movement-based teaching practices more than students, in a way that helps reinforce the representation of a physically active school ethos, where teachers promoted children’s physical activity more than their parents/carers.

> “So yeah, that we're trying to build it in, but we've always been quite uh, an active school like that anyway. But yeah, we've what a part of every single day had to be a movement based through lockdown and things. I think in the last lockdown people had really lost

> that motivation to do so much, so that's what we were really pushing it as a school because we felt like a lot of our children were literally sat in a flat and weren't going out at all because the weather wasn't so good, and parents just didn't see that need. So, we were pushing it a lot more than parents were, just automatically doing it." (Lisa)

Crucially, this sheds light on the increased responsibilities for teachers to support children's emotional and physical health during the pandemic, even more than before, and simultaneously, emphasising their increased show of care and concerns for children of parents were not appropriately doing so in the home environment.

5.4 Second theme: teachers' personal lives disrupted by the pandemic

Analysing how teachers personally experienced disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic revealed a connectedness between their professional and personal lives. In the same way, the last section showcased that the stories of teachers who taught throughout the pandemic do not exist in a vacuum, albeit focused on new educational responsibilities and pedagogy influencing a shift of their professional identities, bodies, and emotions. In attempting to avoid repeating earlier discussions related to teaching during the pandemic, I briefly acknowledge switching to instructional modes of hybrid learning with prolonged periods of working from home led teachers to experience emotional isolation (e.g., feelings of loneliness, restlessness, stress), both collectively and individually, whereby the negative impact of such job pressures on teachers' mental health and well-being is noted in detail above. Given this background, the focus then shifts to the lives of teachers outside of educational spaces in the next section, in a manner that is relatively separate from their professional stresses, but still seen as relational. Explicitly exploring the impact of the pandemic on teachers' personal lives in the context of psychological and physical wellness, I pay more attention to the complexities of personal relationships, selves, and bodies, as narratively constructed and socioculturally situated.

5.4.1 *"Other people had stories too"*: enhancing mental health literacy via personal interactions

This section refers to the effects of social isolation on teachers' mental health, focusing on aspects of personal relationships, self-awareness, and reflections influencing enhanced competence of mental health literacy. Teachers reported being more aware of familial connections and increased attitudes of gratitude and empathy, whereby caring for not only personal mental health and well-being but also supporting their families during an unprecedented time of disruption and uncertainty. I begin with the experiences of one teacher who spoke extensively about familial concerns impacting her mental health during the pandemic, especially exacerbated due to her son's health, before making connections between the impacts of personal relationships in the stories of the other two teacher participants sans children. For instance, the first of the three teachers, Annie, demonstrated a deeply evolved understanding of mental health through personal experiences of supporting her son's sudden onset mental health issues during the pandemic. To illustrate the exact emotion shift, how Annie's families' collective emotions shift over time from one lockdown to the next, I engage with her story of life at home during the pandemic from the start.

> "Wow, what a year. What a year. So, I think I first lockdown it did work for us as a family. It's been lovely to actually have when first locked out and not for the. I know, it's been a dreadful time and it's a terrible thing to say. But there have been some things that actually the first lockdown. We were all here. Had, you know, Ollie [a pseudonym for Annie's son] and Sally [a pseudonym for Annie's daughter] were home and as a family we spent a lot more time together and that was really that was really lovely. You know nobody we couldn't go anywhere. You know, touch we were all safe. So, it meant that as a family we spent a lot more time sort of playing games and things." (Annie)

Undoubtedly, Annie associated mainly positive feelings with the first lockdown as she makes it very clear she enjoyed being at home and spending quality time with her family during the initial lockdown. In that, Annie's entire family was finally together under one roof, allowing her to monitor their well-being and notice changes that required parental support. The excerpt below extends the introductory telling of Annie's teenage son, Ollie (a pseudonym), who came to develop dramatic shifts in emotions and behaviours during the second lockdown and the impact it had on her collective family and individual emotional well-being.

> "So, it was quite a special time really, you know, terrible in some ways. But given an opportunity that we'll never get again. I think then the second lockdown, I think. My own children found it really difficult I think sort of older teenagers — Ollie sort of really suffered with his mental health, and there were a few other things going on, but and then he'd had his first break up and that was a really difficult time because then he couldn't do anything else to get over that. He wasn't able to go out with friends and socialise and he just sort of spiralled downward, which then had quite a negative effect I think on all

> of us for a while that found it really. We had a really tough time for a while. So, the sort of lockdown has been a bit up and down for us, really, I think as a family and as in individually, but it's been, yeah, really strange times. Isn't it really strange times?" (Annie)

Trying to make sense of personal experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic that profoundly altered the family culture at home, Annie recounted the early warning signs leading to an emotional decline experienced by her son and his psychological suffering negatively affected the whole family. Her account demonstrates the emotional dimensions of family vulnerability and dynamics extending through the second lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic impacted areas of personal life, which corresponds to earlier descriptions in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic influencing professional facets of life. Precisely noted in a preceding section, Annie described the metaphor for "an emotional rollercoaster" to convey the psychological impact of the pandemic was disruptive to the degree that she proclaimed, "really looking forward to hopefully light at the end of the tunnel and things going back to more normal". The earlier sections above include a specific feature on the negative mental health impacts on professional life, importantly, strategically exploring the messy reality of Annie's life at home enables a better understanding of personal motivations for returning to a pre-pandemic lifestyle. Against this backdrop, the metaphorically described "emotional rollercoaster" is reconceptualised here to address detailed instances of trauma and intense stress caused by the pandemic in Annie's personal world. In the following account, she explained why she wished for "things going back to normal".

> "I think especially for my, for children at school and for my own teenage children, you know. And families be nice to see family again. You must feel that [referring to my family in the US], I've got a dad in America I haven't seen. So, and he's not been very well, so again, not being able to get there that's been difficult. Alright, but yeah, up and down, up and down." (Annie)

The essential constituents of Annie's emotional exhaustion because of events in the second pandemic lockdown are all immediate family members. While the focus of her fluctuating mental health is mostly associated with her teenage children, she also identifies one of the "down" or negative aspects of the pandemic as government implemented travel restrictions in the UK that prevented international traveling, so Annie was kept from seeing her sick father in the US for a prolonged time. Similarly, Lisa described the personal impact of disrupted travel.

> “I hadn't, you know, I don't know. Like [gone] out of [place of residence] really or anything like that so yeah that side of stuff that's closed down. I mean holidays are supposed. Yeah, we normally go away to France.” (Lisa)

While at first Lisa voiced concerns over the pandemic and subsequent safety measures like lockdowns and travel restrictions limiting holidays in France, her next account depicted personal impacts of travel restrictions that carried more weight.

> “So I'd say it's better in that it has forced me to slow down and it has forced me to re-evaluate what really matters to me and going. Do you know what I'm not gonna do that I haven't missed it over all this time, so why should I do that now? Like why should I carry on something? Or you know what? Remembering like, who really matters? Few friends and things like that and but then so from that side, I'd say actually my. I'm actually helps a lot better and but then there's the other side where you just like and just getting more fed up now and more.” (Lisa)

Lisa felt that the lessons from the pandemic restrictions had lasting implications as it made her learn to “slow down” and essentially, reflective practices to improve self-care, as well as care for the important people in her life, such as family. For this reason, much like Annie, who decribed the importance of family even more during this time, Lisa found staying connected with family members who lived abroad especially difficult during such turbulent times.

> “Like I'm missing people like my brother lives in Australia and I haven't seen him for nearly four years, and I just miss him so much and like there is no like I don't at the moment know when we're gonna see so there's still no like it's not gonna be for at least another year. And then it's like, oh God, that's so long. Whereas so I think I'm getting more frustrated around things like that than I than I was before because you can't do stuff and it's the unknown like you wanna book stuff and you just don't like that. That feeling of not knowing is a really hard one to deal with, isn't it? As an emotion, it's not natural for us to feel like that. I'm not have that control, and I, I think. Yeah, that frustration of being like when are we gonna start being able to book things is. Probably the bit that's really getting to me most now.” (Lisa)

Adapting to the cultural transition of restricted travel during COVID-19 was challenging for both Annie and Lisa due to significantly interfering with the certainty they are typically used to for planning international travel or visiting family members abroad. Although Lisa appears to be impacted by travel measures more heavily, perhaps on account of her living with only her partner and consciously aware of being away from family. Whereas Annie described her emotional turmoil of grappling with several challenges related to family dynamics and negative experiences in the context of the pandemic. Specifically, Annie articulated in length, how actively supporting her child's mental health issues directly influenced her mental health and in a new way, eventually led to an increased awareness of mental health overall.

> "I think my son's made me very aware of sort of the mental health implications that this has had. He did get to, he was he. He then ended up going to the doctor and sort of diagnosed with sort of depression. He's taken actually and I never, you know. I think your own child depressed. It's such an awful, but he was, seriously was. And I you know, and it and I never thought it would happen to my child. You know what I mean? But actually, it really, he — it's really affected him. I don't know. I think it has been part of his mental health and sort of he needed something. To sort of bring him out of that. And then, and actually other people's mental health on your own sort of well-being as well. I could how upset I was for him and. Yeah; I think mental health has really come to the sort of forefront during this time. And I know it's affected. A lot of people. A lot of people have found it. You know, really difficult. Yeah, Internet and I just find it so interesting. I know what you're saying. Like you know where you're saying it's your own child like how, how? How do you think that it kind of impacted you like how? How did you feel about? Seeing him go through this—ohh it was awful!" (Annie)

Aside from her articulating her increased awareness of mental health, she provides deeper insight into the personal implications of dealing with mental health problems. As a mother, Annie felt a sense of responsibility towards her son and helping him manage his mental health during the pandemic.

> "I did and I didn't know how to help you know and it's really difficult. I think when you don't know the answers and you don't know why necessarily, I knew you know part of it was about a breakup and part of it was then he couldn't. Like he used to play football, but he wasn't able to go to football to feel better. He then he couldn't see friends. You know it was when we couldn't meet with anybody so he couldn't. And then he was like I don't. And then you know, an hour a day, but he didn't want to go out. He didn't want, and I'd say, come and walk with us and he was like no. And he could sit see it down and

> down and down. And he was upset. And because of that I was, I was getting myself really upset, you know, and I'm normally quite stoic. I think not. But even at my own mental health, I ended up throwing up my hands, saying I need somebody." (Annie)

In the process of supporting her son's negative mental health, Annie shows a deep awareness of her mental health, including the negative implications of supporting a child with needs. She directly connected her negative feelings to her son's behaviours which indicated a negative mental state. Specifically, Annie understood that her negative feelings, such as feeling "really upset", were the effects of Ollie's negative mental health and realising that while she was able to identify the sign, she was unable to effectively intervene. This awareness of herself and others stems from a pandemic-related disruption that forces her to accept defeat and seek professional help in the hopes of restoring her personal life. Relatedly, while Annie focused more on her personal life at home and Ollie, in contrast to Lisa and Dylan who paid more attention to work-related events even when talking about their life at home, she describes how she was able to make sense of her changing life:

> "The thing I think, I found when I did speak to people at work was that *other people had stories too*, there were far more people sort of more willing to open up about their own sort of mental health or family members who suffered as well. It was like, you're not alone. I think it's far more prevalent than you sometimes think. In fact, most people I spoke to knew somebody, you know quite close to them, who at some point had sort of mental health issues. So that was yeah, that was interesting." (Annie)

This highlights the concepts of *storying* and *restorying* (Clandinin and Connelly 1999), where Annie shares the story about her son, and then later, returns to the people that she shared it with to consider different meaning for the experiences with her son, thus, she creates a new story that alters the way she makes sense of Ollie's mental health and her experiences of dealing with it. Importantly, it also touches upon the dynamic nature of storytelling, as Frank described,

> "Stories inform in the sense of providing information, but more significantly, stories give form–temporal and spatial orientation, coherence, meaning, intention, and especially boundaries–to lives that inherently lack form" (Frank 2010, p.2).

From this view, paying attention to what storytelling *did* for Annie, provides a sense of the stories that people told during the pandemic, the dominant cultural narrative of empathy and care that informs her contemporary way of knowing mental health. Stories situated in pandemic-related cultures, bringing mental health to “the forefront during this time”, and allowing for her to move past her initial stigma and dualistic views of the mind and body, which she now considered dated, to talking openly about Ollie’s mental health issues and her personal experience of dealing with it at home. For instance, as Annie explained:

> “And talking about it I suppose. First, I spoke to a few people about it at work, and actually sharing it did help. It was reassuring to know it’s okay to talk about and I think that’s what, when I was talking to Ollie as well, I was like you need to get help now. You’re at a point where — if you had broken your leg now and it was hurting for this long, you would be seeking help. You need to think of it as at some point you need to get help. It is like a broken leg, isn’t it, but you can’t see it. I think that’s the trouble with mental health isn’t it, you can’t physically see it.” (Annie)

Against this, Annie’s enhanced mental health knowledge seems to be linked to 21st century dominant narratives around mental health during the pandemic, which brought coherence and connections to her life especially at a time when she had “thrown up her hands”. Thus, instead of quitting on her son and escaping from her feelings of frustration and uncertainty, she was able to develop her understanding and adequately seek help for Ollie via contemporary dominant cultural narratives. Notably, this shift towards dominant narratives of mental health during the pandemic is considered a positive coping response that enables the destigmatisation of mental illness, especially remarkable in Annie’s case, who retained a traditional view for over 50 years. Importantly, Annie’s enhanced understanding of mental health is connected to the use of stories, those she adopted to share her thoughts and emotions with others, and ultimately, feel empowered by doing so (Matson-Barkat et al. 2022).

Returning to Dylan, whose story revolves around work, financial security, and constructions of resilience as coping responses during the pandemic, the following text shows Dylan’s descriptions to my probe directing him towards unexplored topics:

> “I will say so because someone asked me this question, but I think we were chatting like my family. Actually, you know about effective lockdown and luckily enough, pretty much all of my family were key workers, essentially. So, it hadn't affected us at all. Whereas all of like Kate, my girlfriend, her family. Dave, they're not so they've all been working from

> home and it's – and so they've been OK. To be fair, they've got like nice houses. It's all stayed the same. It's really a bit, bit weird.” (Dylan)

Before this reply, I asked Dylan, “okay, thanks, is that it, or is there anything else that you'd like to add about your experience that maybe we haven't explored?” He immediately confirms that there was nothing more to explore, and in attempting to reinforce his teaching selves, identities, and bodies, alongside convincing me of this, proceeds to draw on a conversation with Dave, a family member of his girlfriend, which also emphasises his life revolves around work. In doing so, Dylan reveals his subjectivities, in which key workers, like himself and his family, are seen as the privileged or *lucky* ones in contrast to individuals who are working from home or furloughed, who like Dave, are seen as weird or – abnormal. Also, it captures his adoption of dominant cultural narratives of gratitude and empathy as motivation for resilience and normalising new work pressures in the specific context of the pandemic. Dylan’s’ empathy for Dave is visible through his talk, where he abruptly cuts off from expressing his initial thoughts to say something more diplomatic instead, recognising his privilege perhaps, where not everyone has the option to go to work like him. Then, explaining that working from home for Dave in particular is okay because he has a nice house, thus, not as likely to endure the same hardships as Dylan who had limited space.

Turning now to the next sub-section, I highlight the interrelated nature of dominant cultural narratives across teachers’ participation in physical activity outside of school settings. However, in contract to this section, I set forth the stories of Lisa, Dylan, and Annie, one at a time.

5.4.2 *“I’d like to lose my ‘COVID belly”*: Connecting and disconnecting via movement

This last theme is primarily in relation to teachers’ experiences of physical activity during the pandemic. Most teachers noted increased engagement with diverse forms of movement at the start of the pandemic, which gradually ceased or reduced. Importantly, they viewed physical activity (walking, running, etc.) as a form of socialisation and escapism in terms of socialising with others and disconnecting from the pressures of teaching in the context of COVID-19.

I start by exploring the story of Lisa:

> “Physical activity I do, like on my own anyway. So I'm like running and things like that. I haven’t been having asthma much running recently, but uhm, yeah, that's just because there's the horses take up so much time. So yeah, horses swimming has changed like I

> haven't been in a swimming pool for over a year now, but I swim in the sea, so I suppose that level of like normally, I'd swim at least once a week in a pool, so that's decreased. And Zumba, like, I was. So we're back to doing Zumba outside. Uh, but through like the autumn I didn't go to Zumba at all because she did. It started doing it inside and I just didn't feel that was safe enough to be doing so. It's sort of been up and down like whilst lockdowns were going on and she did Zumba online so like I'd do it and then when it went to being in a hall I decided not to. So that's sort of been on and off when I've been doing that but. That's still being active a lot every day just because of the nature of the horses as well." (Lisa)

Lisa constructs multiple selves and identities within her narrative, hinting at the tensions that place her sporting body in the context of the pandemic lockdown: "It started doing it inside and I just didn't feel that was safe enough to be doing so." While providing cultural context for her experiences, "lockdowns were going on and she did Zumba online so… that's sort of been on and off", Lisa recognises that she is no longer *playing the part of an athlete* (Carless and Douglas 2013). This is because, she attempts to reinforce her identities in relation to teaching, highlighting her responsible actions of avoiding indoor areas by drawing on a dominant cultural narrative of the pandemic lockdown, in which indoor areas are considered health risks and thus, widely discouraged during that specific time. Returning to her recognition, that she is no longer performing the role of an ultra-runner athlete, she overrides this with: "That's still being active a lot every day just because of the nature of the horses as well". In this sense, demonstrating what is expected of her as a teacher and an athlete.

This is further illustrated in her reply when asked: "How would you compare it to pre pandemic?"

> "Ohh so right at the moment. Ohh well, except for the swimming I'm doing everything. It'll be the only thing that I'm not doing regularly." (Lisa)

Probing her further because of the prolonged silence, I asked: "So can you describe some of your experiences of either, you know, when you're swimming or riding, focusing on, like sensations, thoughts, and feelings that are significant to you?"

> "So it's like the freedom I think and like just that complete different from – difference from day-to-day life like it… It just is sort of escapism I suppose. So you can't think about work or like home life or anything because you're so in the moment with that sport. So

> whether it be running or, or with the horses like it is all consuming on your mind and that yeah so that would be like an escapism I suppose." (Lisa)

This is the most striking statement as it portrays a different version of the "normal" Lisa depicted throughout most of the previous accounts: "Yeah, to be honest, it didn't change a huge amount (laughs)." In hindsight, now recognising that as perhaps nervous laughter, to cover or resist exposing feelings that can be seen as weakness, or contradictory to her constructions of resilience. Interestingly, though, Lisa continues to assert:

> "I think my problem is I try and do too much. So um, like I wanna do everything and I wanna see everyone and then, I try and fit too much into a day. Whereas when we're in lockdown like you couldn't see anybody so it was like well I'll go and do the horses and then I'll come home and then that's it. Whereas now I'm like oh but now I could go swimming with them and I know I could do that and then and then you end up getting stressed because you can't do everything and want to do everything and. and I wanna see everyone and then I try and fit too much into a day. Whereas when we're in lockdown like you couldn't see anybody so it was like well I'll go and do the horses and then I'll come home and then that's it. Whereas now I'm like oh but now I could go swimming with them and I know I could do that and then and then you end up getting stressed because you can't do everything and want to do everything and in too many directions." (Lisa)

Lisa's construction of multiple identities and selves in the context of the lockdown reveals her assumptions are influenced by wider cultural narratives in sports: a *performance narrative* (Douglas and Carless 2006). That is, once lockdown is over and Lisa has greater teaching responsibilities, she is forced to cut down her levels of physical activity and no longer dedicated to one focus:

> "It took me a long time to get used to not being able to do stuff. And I yeah it was like almost going cold Turkey from being active the *whole* time. About one and probably thought it took a good few weeks to get over that, and then once I had it felt so nice not rushing around and like my boyfriend. Sort of said to me right, you need to just like make a deal with yourself that you won't ever do more than one thing and night, um, and you know maximum of two things a day at the weekend. Because it just got to the point where it didn't enjoy things as much because I was rushing around and it took that full on break for me to realize that because I was like. Actually it's really nice just to go in the garden

> and go on Slack right in the garden and have time just to chill. But and he does remind me of it sometimes like some nights are better than others at being like. Only one thing tonight and sometimes. Uhm, I forget that and so I am, but I am better than I was pre-pandemic though it definitely." (Lisa)

Coming to terms with not being able to *do it all*, the several physical activities she participated in within the specific context of the pandemic, or as Douglas and Carless described, "a total focus on performance" (Douglas and Carless 2006), while also teaching, compels Lisa to renegotiate her self-body relationship again. Specifically, while Lisa adopted the dominant performance narrative in sports during the lockdown, as a personal response to pre-existing pressures (Carless 2021), she must draw on an alternative narrative post-lockdown to restory her life to the new ways of teaching. She points out how her boyfriend helps her make sense of this diverse script, regularly reminding Lisa not to overextend herself. In this way, Lisa gradually decreases her performance in sports and renegotiates the body-self relationship, no longer moving the body as a form of escapism, but as a way to connect with her boyfriend:

> "I took up yoga in January and at most nights. That's not included in part of my *one thing allowed in the evening* because both me and my boyfriend do it together and it's like nice to have that shared thing." (Lisa)

Before moving on to Dylan's story, it is important to note that while this resistance to the wider cultural performance narrative can mitigate the associated risks, from a dialogical view, it can also be seen as limiting, especially in the context of women in sports, and in an embodied sense of how it makes her *feel* (Sparkes and Stewart 2019).

With respect to Dylan's story of physical activity, in contrast to Lisa's, it opens with the wider cultural context:

> "I feel like everybody at the start was like, Oh yeah, I'll go for a run, right mate? Everyone was like, yeah! it wasn't – and then, so I started going for a little bit of a run. Right, the start, like twice a week. And naturally, that died off, didn't it? As everybody has, as everybody else did. Yeah, suddenly everybody's downloading Strava and then, uh." (Dylan)

Dylan sets the scene straight away, by providing insight into the larger dominant narratives in the context of sport and the pandemic. In doing so, he draws on the popular mobile application, *Strava* that connects athletes around the world and tracks levels of mostly outdoor activities, namely, running, cycling, and hiking, but also used for other exercise types, including indoor (Strava 2023). This displays his cultural competence (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu 1984) in relation to sports. That is, Dylan's familiarity with sports culture that was produced in the context of the pandemic, and the dominant cultural narrative that he transmits and reproduces through storytelling to reinforce specific behaviours of running during the pandemic. Further, Dylan was aware that I was a runner, and for this reason, he did not stop to explain the concept of Strava, rather assumed that I knew (which of course, I did). In this way, further re-establishing his running identity.

Like Lisa, Dylan also connects sports with personal relationships:

> "Then over the summer holidays was beach. Volleyball nets at upper Branksome as well, so we used to go down and play volleyball. It was like a scene out of Top Gun. It was. It was one of them and, and then, yeah, rugby started up again. I play tag rugby so I'm gonna touch up, going tonight and football started up so it's been OK. [Following text transitioning into work talk also used in section 5.3.2] To be fair, it's been pretty, pretty normal apart from that time it's been like outside activities have been called off but…" (Dylan)

As previously noted (see section 5.3.2), Dylan's storytelling shifts between descriptions of his embodied practice in and outside of the classroom. This is because, embodied practices (personal and professional) within teachers' multidimensional stories are interrelated; thus, Dylan constructs his story and identities via actions in and out of school in a way that aligns with his conformity to culturally dominant narrative of performance in sport (Carless and Douglas 2013) and education (Day 2018). Even though this is also depicted in Lisa's story: "It took me a long time to get used to not being able to do stuff", Dylan and Annie explicitly link the two together by explaining how their personal sports interactions are based on bodily experiences at work.

For example, Dylan describes the way in which marking affects his sports engagement:

> "Yeah, kind of in a moment I kind of think. The best thing about it is you can just go and you can like socialise. I think that's always a good thing like the, the social aspect of it. I

> think that I don't – I'm not there, running around the pitch, thinking ‘Ohh God, I need to mark a book.’ I kind of just let it go. I just deal with it. Over the weekend I think. It will just and then, I end up working on the weekend, but it is what it is I suppose.” (Dylan)

This exemplifies how personal identities are sacrificed for teacher identities, where teachers are losing agency over personal interactions in sports because of professional commitments (Day 2018). Particularly, Dylan and Lisa missed out on opportunities to socialise with friends or disconnect from work-related pressures via sports, to live up to their identities as teachers, and thus, fulfil teaching responsibilities which were especially heightened during the time of the pandemic.

In Annie’s case, physical activity during the pandemic was also associated to personal relationships and mental health:

> “Mike [a pseudonym for Annie’s husband] and I made sure we still walked. Walking has been a real, I think, a lifeline for us in a way. I think in the first lockdown, because all the gyms closed, we’d both been sort of going to the gym before we stopped that, we do a lot more walking now. And even now, coming home from school, when I get in. Generally, I did find just going for a walk, did help. And I’ve done a lot more yoga, I think, just trying to...those things do help me. I know, I do feel better for doing something, either being outside, or sort of physically. That sort of not thinking about it. I think when I do my yoga, I go into my yoga-zone a little bit where I’m not think about other things, that really helps.”

This illustrates how Annie, similar to Lisa and Dylan, adopts an outdoor activity that allows her to decompress from work and connect with her partner in a way that *feels* good, and importantly, fits with her work like during the pandemic. In this way, also providing similar cultural context as the other teachers: “we’d both been sort of going to the gym before we stopped that”, and highlighting shared disruptions caused by the pandemic to sports behaviours. However, in describing her experiences, Annie shows greater self-awareness about her preference for walking over alternative physical activities. In the sense that I did not have to probe for the relayed accounts, rather she more than often explained in depth on her own, for example:

> “I think…when we walk, we got a few different routes, so there are certain routes we have depending on time (laughs). Our basic, like, this week, I’ve had parents’ evenings

> every week, so I've got home late but thought 'God, I just need to get out, I need to go and do something'. So, we got like, there's a Broadstone, it's like, 45-minute walk, there's a bit of a hill, so I like that bit where I get a little bit of a 'heh-hehh' (breathing sound effect), so we pace walk. We're not, ah it's not a stroll. We call it "Walkers walking", which is (laughs) the Walkers' [a pseudonym for Annie's sir name] pace, it's like if, if you're going for a stroll, then you're, you know, but this is not. This is a proper walk; it's done for fitness (laughs). It's done for a reason; we're trying to keep up some sort of fitness and health regime really. So, sometimes, we're ah, Mike's got on his, like, we often go together, so he's got the Garmin, so we're always trying to make sure we've done our, at least like 10-15,000 steps, was kind of what we'd like to do in a day kind of thing. Especially in that first lockdown where there was a bit more time. Now, it's like hmm can't guarantee that, try to get it in the 10,000, probably during the day, do. So, I have thoughts and feelings, um I like going, I think we like going together because we generally go 'neh neh neh neh neh' (speaking sound effect while mimicking mouth movements with hands and fingers moving/flapping together to create the illusion of two puppet's talking), especially after work we go 'da da da' (referring to sounds effects of speaking)."
> (Annie)

A number of contextual factors (e.g., natural, sensorial, temporal, cultural, physical, and social) at play with in the text above. Again, I focus on Annie's cultural competence related to sports, who in a similar manner to Dylan, pulls forward a well-known brand for sport and fitness smartwatches, *Garmin*, especially popular amongst runners, and typically connected to Strava via the Garmin Connection mobile application (Garmin 1996-2023). The interrelated nature of teachers' personal stories about their physical activity experiences is visible as they all draw on the dominant cultural narratives around sports during the pandemic: *learning to shift towards embodied practices outdoors for health and safety measures*, thus, most of them draw on dominant cultural concepts related to dominant sports performances in the context of the pandemic, such as Garmin and Strava. Interestingly, neither of which were not mentioned by Dylan or Annie in phase one of the research interviews. Finally, and again, Annie did not pause to explain, like Dylan, she also assumed I would know (although, full disclosure, this could have been because I was wearing a Garmin watch). Overall, this shed light on how pandemic-related narratives have influenced the ways in which teachers constructed their sporting bodies, as teacher have develop a more sophisticated understanding of physical activity, despite work-related time constraints and pressures.

Finally, taking the view that narratives are embodied, emphasises the importance of bodies in narratives, especially in the contexts of physical activity as “our bodily experiences of sport and exercise are shaped by narratives and our bodies help shape narratives” (Smith and Sparkes 2009b, p.6). Accordingly, drawing on the views of Smith and Sparkes (2006, 2008a, 2009b) and (Douglas and Carless 2006; Carless and Douglas 2008; Carless 2021) serves as useful for better understanding the meaning of teachers’ intersecting experiences of physical activity, selves, and bodies shaped, specifically, from the abrupt disruption during the COVID-19 outbreak. Importantly, revealing that despite their collective, and constant, claims to living a “normal” life, their stories with multiple narrative constructions of their selves, identities, and bodies showed differently. That is, although teachers articulated that their lives were continuing as *normal* even in the middle of a global pandemic, their stories demonstrated the ways in which they were emotionally exhausted because of their evolving roles and responsibilities during the pandemic in conjunction with the dynamics of their personal interactions. Collectively, drawing on dominant narratives of resilience to reinforce their identities as carers and contain the burnout as individuals who are expected to inherently support and care for children, thus, playing the part as expected and facing exceptionally challenging circumstances. Personally, drawing on narratives in sports to deal with these demands, alongside the uncertainties at home. Despite this, teachers ultimately, made conscious efforts to remain positive and resilient, drawing on the dominant narratives of sport and education with Western culture, combing the concepts of gratitude, care, and empathy to accept and, even grow into new ways of teaching. However, at times, at the cost of their own mental health and resisting other narrative identities. Thus, it is deemed important to address pandemic-related stressors, inducing the possibilities of teacher burnout because, as Denzin and Giardina pointed out, “we can’t keep acting like it’s normal” (Denzin and Giardina 2021, p.8).

Chapter Six: Findings – a case study

"That ship has sailed a long time ago": A counternarrative of one teacher's sports experiences

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings of a multi-layered narrative inquiry employing a typology of narrative analyses for exploring the story of one primary school teacher, Karen (a pseudonym). Exploring Karen's multidimensional story of past, present, and future relationships with sports and PE through an interdisciplinary lens illuminated the long-term implications of an embodied trauma related to the disrupted body of PE (Sparkes 1999). I construct this case study to illustrate Karen's embodied sports trauma as "biographical disruption" (Bury 1982), where Stormbreak, a school-based intervention informing children's mental health through teacher-led physical activities, makes her revisit past traumatic events. Specifically, the obligation for Karen to partake in emotionally demanding corporeal activities (Sparkes 1999) triggers a deeply rooted fear of sports and PE—manifestations of anxiety and panic attacks in her daily life. The significant consequences of this disruption include the added burden of *emotional labour* (Hochschild 1983) emerging from the organisational agenda, notably a prescriptive conceptualisation of health within the teaching community (Bolton 2005; Brennan 2006). Through efforts to manage her emotions in the workplace, Karen is compelled to make sense of, renegotiate, and reconstruct her identities and body-self relationships (Sparkes 1999; Smith and Sparkes 2008a; Sparkes and Smith 2008, 2011; Sparkes 2020), given the re-emerging disability and distress associated with physical activity threatened constructions between self, body, and society developed over the lifespan (Riessman 2008).

Karen's narrative of movement exemplifies the embodied context of pedagogy, in particular, demonstrating that teachers are embodied pedagogues who are not detached from complex emotions and subjectively experienced bodies (Sparkes 1999; Smith 2010; lisahunter and emerald 2016; Aartun et al. 2022; Hall et al. 2022). Therefore, difficult and divergent body narratives rejecting the accepted dominant narratives of 21st-century health can serve as exceptionally valuable resources (Smith and Sparkes 2009) for empowering marginalised bodies and voices through stories of illness and health that go against the grain. For this reason, I chose to present Karen's story in the form of a case study, separate from the original group of six teachers who partook in the study.

Further, sociological case-centred findings show a credible representation of the effects of biographical disruption on a female teacher's body-self relationship, yet narratives of disruption are not seen as a singular entity but theorised as both personal and social (Smith and Sparkes 2009b). In accordance with this, teachers' sporting narratives need to be understood as pedagogical resources as they have powerful implications for primary school teachers and teacher pedagogy. Finally, considerations of teachers' diverse experiences are necessary in the implementation and evaluation of school-based health programmes since organisational expectations for *regular* teachers (especially those who consciously choose to avoid physical activity altogether) to teach PE as it may produce harsh embodied feelings of disruption and perversely counterintuitive consequences, albeit unintentionally.

6.2 Overview of the narrative case study

Drawing on a narrative inquiry approach (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) understood as both the phenomenon and methodology, I describe a single, "tellable" (Labov and Waletzky 1967; Labov 1972; Labov and Fanshel 1977; Sacks 1992b; Norrick 2005; Smith and Sparkes 2008a) counternarrative or "small story" (Bamberg 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006b; Norrick 2009; Phoenix and Sparkes 2009; Georgakopoulou and Anna 2015) to capture the multitude of complexities embedded in Karen's emotionally traumatic experiences of sports and PE over the life course which may have otherwise remained untold (Sparkes 1994a). First, I provide a tripartite summary examining: (1) various qualities of dominant narratives and counternarratives to distinguish between the two typologies, (2) shapes (Vonnegut 1981, 1985, 1991, 2005, 2006) and emotional arcs of stories (Reagan et al. 2016), and (3) socio-narratology—how stories work for people or accord with diverse sociocultural settings and why they matter in our personal and social lives (Frank 2010). The aforementioned literature, although briefly introduced before (see section 3.3.7.2), is offered in greater detail at the start of this chapter to better engage the reader in the analysis of a singular story of biographical disruption. That is, to examine a fear of sports that challenges the dominant Western cultural narrative that physical activity is desirable, and the conceptualisation of Western culture storytelling and what it entails for narrative analysis while situated in a matrix of qualitative research. Second, I introduce Labov's (Labov and Waletzky 1967; Labov and Fanshel 1977; Labov 1982) six categories of structural narrative analysis for personal narratives to contextualise adapting the Labovian model to identify semantic sequences and structural functions of Karen's story, such as emphasising the central, extraordinary events that made it "reportable". Third and related, I draw upon Riessman's (2008) methods of narrative analysis for a wider interpretive frame, which encompasses the sociolinguistic forms of Labov's model in conjunction with Gee's (1986, 1991) approach, as well as the psychosocial perspectives of Mishler (1986), Sparkes (1999), Smith (2016), and Smith and Sparkes (2005b; 2007, 2009b, 2009a) to offer a systematic analysis in the plural for greater validity and deeper insight. Adopting a plurality of analytic techniques allows attending to a bricolage of significant factors such as the linguistics, historical, social, personal, psychological, institutional, and cultural contexts in the interpretation of stories, while recognising that multiple *narrative truths* exist, rather than a single truth (Freeman 2003). Lastly, extending these perspectives to preserve the authentic self and identity over time, particularly, the embodied nature linked primarily with the pivotal events of bullying in PE and school sports, I recognise Karen's self-ascribed "powerful trauma complex associated to sport" as a significant claim that implies the experience of trauma.

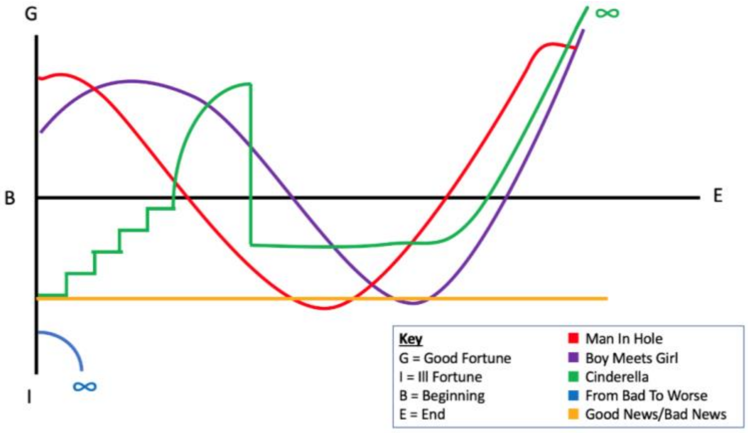
6.2.1 Dominant narratives and counternarratives

Undertaking a narrative inquiry approach is a worthy way of theorising for researchers within the domain of sport and exercise psychology as "the body is a storyteller, and narratives are embodied" (Smith and Sparkes 2009b, p.3). Given this, I use the methodological framework of narrative inquiry (Riessman 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2009b) to explore teachers' relationships and embodied experiences with movement and mental health over the life course to gain a deeper understanding of how they came to construct meanings for their selves, bodies, and identities. This is important to explore as relationships between the body and the self continuously changes across the lifespan relative to the dynamic wider culture (social) and individual constructions of selves and identities (personal) (Phoenix et al. 2010; Griffin and Phoenix 2016). Understanding stories using this perspective, stories as a form of social practice, appreciates that people "draw from a cultural repertoire of stories that they then assemble into personal stories" (Phoenix and Sparkes 2006, p.109). In this light, "we become the stories we know" (Bamberg and Andrews 2004, p.1), (sub)consciously using or reproducing the dominant culturally determined narratives available to us for shaping our experiences, who we consider ourselves to be today, and in hindsight, who we perceive our future selves evolving into (Phoenix and Sparkes 2007). Opposingly, stories that go against the grain or suggest resistance to prevailing master narratives are counternarratives or small stories. In nature, counternarratives are relational to the dominant cultural narratives that they are countering, but still not entirely separate entities from preferred cultural storylines. These stories function to empower *voices* that are often silenced within dominant cultural discourses by offering the understanding of individual and sociocultural dimensions of language and meaning revealed in those narratives (Squire 2005). Thus, in this narrative research, I situate one teacher’s counternarrative of physical activity in relation to dominant cultural narratives of Western physical activity culture and 21st century political narratives of health.

6.2.2 Shapes and emotional arcs of stories

The fascination for humans to live storied lives and share their life events with others through storytelling has invoked research over the years on narratives as a primary mode of communication. One that permeates each aspect of our lives. Specifically, studying vital characteristics like the plot and emotional arc of a story (useful indicators of its progression) has provided diverse understandings of the structural properties of narratives (Propp 1968; Labov 1997; Labov and Waletzky 1997). For instance, in a short lecture that was video recorded, *Kurt Vonnegut on the Shapes of Stories*, the influential American writer, Kurt Vonnegut (1985) posited that the highs and lows experienced by the main character (protagonist) in popular stories can be plotted on a graph to show five simple shapes—or emotional trajectories of stories. This famous speech presented his fundamental theory of the shapes of stories and how the emotional arcs, which all stories have, can inevitably serve as a lens of analysis. At the start of the speech, he established: “there’s no reason why the simple shapes of stories can’t be fed into computers—they are beautiful shapes” (Vonnegut 1985), and subsequently, demonstrated how highly familiar emotional arcs of stories (e.g., classic stories) can be visualised by effortlessly mapping out five basic story shapes (see Figure 4): *Man in Hole, Boy Meets Girl, Cinderella, From Bad to Worse, and Good News/Bad News* (see) on a vertical *G-I axis* (good fortune-ill fortune) and a horizontal *B-E axis* (beginning-end).

Figure 4. Plots Diagram: *Kurt Vonnegut’s five shapes of stories:*



Adopted with permission from Troilo (2021), amended from Vonnegut (1985, 2005)

First, and then later featured in Vonnegut's (2005) novel *A Man without a Country*, Vonnegut (1985) described one of the most common story shapes*, Man in a Hole,* which was not exclusively a story about a man inside a hole, but as he pointed out, "it's: somebody gets into trouble, gets out of it again" (Vonnegut 2005, p.25). He offered this simple narrative arc as it depicts the type of story that endlessly fascinates people, who, as he explained, "don't like to hear about people who are poor or sick" (Vonnegut 2005, p.25). According to Vonnegut (1985, 2005), then, people prefer storylines that begins with a main character that has good fortune, encounters some type of hardship in the middle, but in the end achieves better fortune overall which leads them to even greater happiness and success than before. Comparing to *Man in a Hole* and to further prove his points: (1) successful stories favour a plethora of familiar patterns and (2) reading about successful characters (e.g., with good prosperity and health) is meaningful for people, he sketched out the tale of *Cinderella* (see Figure 4) or as he claimed, "the most popular story in our civilisation" (Vonnegut 1985). He described this as a fairy tale about a young orphan girl in a woeful situation because of a series of unfortunate events, who becomes momentarily happy, only to return to her sorrow, but, ultimately, ends up in an immensely improved position as a princess of the royal family with the chance to experience a life of infinite love and happiness.

Although Vonnegut highlighted the similarities between the story shapes of Cinderella and the New Testament in 1947, initially proposed as the topic of his master's thesis, "Fluctuations Between Good and Ill Fortune in Simple Tales" (Shields 2011, p.193), it was rejected by members of the University of Chicago's Anthropology Department. Despite this rejection, Vonnegut's theory has proved to be of fundamental relevance for modern literature (Shields 2011), especially his framework for narrative structures that is useful in application for linguistic (Reagan et al. 2016) and motion picture analysis (Del Vecchio et al. 2021). For example, Reagan et al. (2016) sought to better understand stories, a textual medium of emotional experiences, employing sentiment analysis through three different digital tools to capture the positive or negative emotional arcs (major highs and lows) of chronologically storied texts for 1,327 mostly fictional stories from Project Gutenberg. The research, based on Vonnegut's typologies of shapes of stories, revealed that all the stories Reagan et al. (2016) analysed could be labelled under the umbrella of *six core emotional arcs* (based on the complex *emotional trajectories* of the main character):

1. *Rags to riches* (rise)
2. *Riches to rags* or *Tragedy* (fall)
3. *Man in a hole* (fall-rise)
4. *Icarus* (rise-fall)
5. *Cinderella* (rise-fall-rise)

6. *Oedipus* (fall-rise-fall)

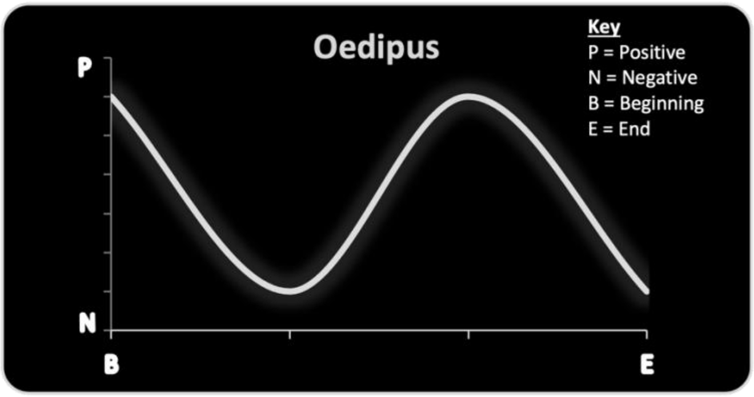
Additionally, the researchers' "big data" uncovered the three most successful emotional arcs in stories were *Icarus*, *Oedipus*, and two sequential (double) *Man in a hole* arc, which by incorporating Vonnegut's story patterns of *Man in a hole* and *Cinderella* reinforced his literary theory. More recently, researchers in the UK, Del Vecchio et al. (2021), explored the emotional arcs of motion pictures and found that all the movie scripts they analysed fell under six main emotional arcs*,* identical to those reported by Reagan et al. (2016), with the three "highest box offices"—most popular movies watched in theatres as such: *Man in a Hole, Cinderella,* and *Oedipus*. Thus, Del Vecchio et al. (2021) analysis of movie scripts presented findings that further validate Vonnegut's contributions and show how the importance of an emotional arc of a story extends beyond merely narratives.

This said, the complex emotional trajectory of Karen—the primary teacher in question corresponds to one of the most successful emotional arcs: *Oedipus (*fall-rise-fall). For that reason, here, I exclusively graphed the emotional trajectory of fall then rise then fall in the story of Oedipus (see Figure 5), which illustrates the sentiment value on a vertical *P-N axis* (positive-negative) and the span of the story on a horizontal *B-E axis* (beginning-end). Instead of Vonnegut's *G-I* (good fortune and ill fortune) metrics—used ambiguously, I purposefully apply the vertical axis values of *P-N* (the positive and negative emotional impact) by Reagan et al. (2016). This is because, they explicitly distinguished between the *plot* and the *emotional arc* of a story:

> "While the plot captures the mechanics of a narrative and the structure encodes their delivery, in the present work we examine the emotional arc that is invoked through the words used. The emotional arc of a story does not give us direct information about the plot or the intended meaning of the story, but rather exists as part of the whole narrative (e.g., an emotional arc showing a fall in sentiment throughout a story may arise from very different plot and structure combinations)" (Reagan et al. 2016, p.2).

To gain a better understanding of Karen's emotional and physical well-being and dynamic relationships with physical activity and mental health through her embodied experiences, I plot the emotional arcs (highs and lows) of her story after observing her storytelling for positive and negative emotions. A more detailed plot diagram and examination of these emotional arcs corresponding to her story are offered later below in the complicating action segment of interpretation Karen's narrative using Labov's approach. In the next section, I present a summary of Frank's (2010) socio-narratology, which attends to stories as "actors" or what stories do and how they enable people to be who they are, as this will inform how Karen's story is a valuable resource for education and teaching pedagogy.

Figure 5. Plot diagram: "Oedipus" emotional arc (fall-rise-fall)



Amended from Reagan et al. (2016)

6.2.3 Socio-narratology: what stories do and why they matter

In *Letting Stories Breathe*, Arthur W. Frank (2010) offers a fundamental theoretical framework (socio-narratology) and a method (dialogical narrative analysis) for studying stories. This interdisciplinary approach, coined by him as socio-narratology, draws extensively on sociological, psychological and linguistic studies, to understand how stories shape the lives of individuals and groups—yielding the power to educate, empower, and destroy human lives. The following passage illustrates an understanding of socio-narratological analysis:

> "Stories inform in the sense of providing information, but more significantly, stories give form–temporal and spatial orientation, coherence, meaning, intention, and especially boundaries–to lives that inherently lack form. How stories inform lives can be a gift or a danger" (Frank 2010, p.2).

For Frank (2002b), we live in a storied world where stories work dialogically as valuable resources for living and shaping lives, telling others who we are, what does and does not matter to us, and why our identities matter. Frank (2010) theorises that stories provide content or information on various topics; consequently, stories serve to be vital resources enabling people to live lives authentic to the self, with purpose and meaning that is recognised through stories, not merely by sharing our own stories but by hearing the stories of others. In other words, people draw from a pool of narratives—templates that structure personal experiences as culture excerpts impart both lessons and pressures in terms of affirming and opposing one's values and beliefs. Specifically, arguing that "stories precede experiences" (Frank 2017, p.8), which he explains relies on the fundamental idea that world order is constituted by narratives as they provide people with agency. In other words, our ability to function as humans, what we do or how we act depends on what we have learned through stories, so human behaviour or one's possible actions are limited to a particular set of parameters. This is because understanding larger sociocultural activities and events allows people to then construct their own stories, thus, "stories work with people, for people, and always stories work on people" (Frank 2010, p.3).

In this view, stories we know work as an arsenal containing the social values at our disposal—narrative arsenals that influence the construction of people's diverse realties and experiences. Namely, what we (as an individual or cultural group) have internalised to be desirable and achievable, and likewise, what we find disadvantageous and steer clear of since it fails to reflect on the values considered vital for the betterment of either society, ourselves, or both. Simply put, stories (both social and personal) act as a tool for people to claim, reinforce, and reconstruct identities by telling others about themselves, selves that are moulded via the stories that resonate with us. Therefore, Frank's (2010) view of the power of storytelling or stories, which he accepts is vital to society as humans live through stories and human life depends on the work of stories, is seen as the bridge between stories and the social world. This is because, "stories are also told to be echoed in future stories. Stories summon up whole cultures" (Frank 2010, p.37).

In line with this, his unique approach of inquiry of a narrative allows greater understanding of Karen's personal narrative of sports culture and sporting bodies since her narrative constructions are drawn from the narrative resources, which she has available. That is, her experiences and internalised ideas of sports are largely shaped through the influences of the English culture. Finally, Frank's dialogical narrative approach enables recognising Karen's narrative as a key resource, which other English primary school teachers can draw on to make sense of their own identities, body-self relationships, and experiences of sports; especially teachers who resonate with her embodied story of sports trauma as their stories echo Karen's.

6.3 Structural narrative analysis overview

Sociolinguists William Labov and Joshua Waletzky (1967) introduced a pioneering framework for analysing oral narratives of personal experiences. Labov (1972) later updated their event-centric framework focusing on the function and structure of stories and provided a model for the structural analysis of personal experience narratives. The Labovian approach is especially influential for the evaluation of personal narratives, but also remains widely used as a starting point of narrative analysis across a range of disciplines (Huberman and Miles 2002; Riessman 2008; Frank 2010; Patterson 2013). Thus, I provide further information on Labovian tools and concepts before combining several strands of thought to present narrative findings. That is, the Labovian model provides a framework for structural analysis that attends to the formal aspects of the structure and text of Karen's story. This is used in conjunction with a thematic analysis (Riessman 2002, 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2009b) to uncover the deeper meaning of the individual and social contexts underpinning Karen's embodied storytelling.

Drawing on Labov and Waletzky's (1967) initial analysis, Labov (1972) argued that narratives of personal experience are recapitulations of a series of past events in the temporal order which they occurred. He described a *minimal* narrative as "a sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered" (Labov 1972, p.360). Later, proposing a definition, particularly, for a *narrative of personal experience:*

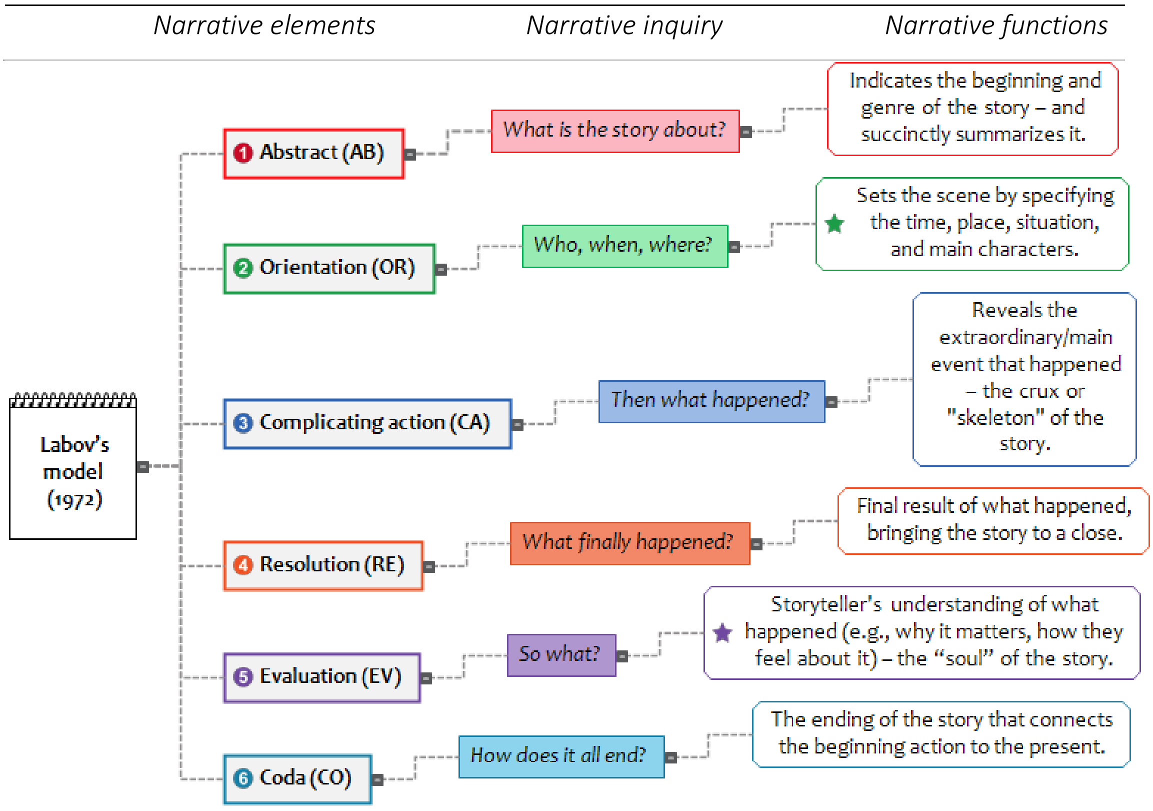
> "A report of a sequence of events that have entered into the biography of the speaker by a sequence of clauses that correspond to the order of the original events" (Labov 1997, p.398).

Frank (2010) refers to Labov's categorisation of stories as "*tick tock*", a metaphorical analogy between the structure of narratives to "the ticking of a clock: each *tick* creates an expectation for the corresponding *tock* to follow" (Frank 2010, pp.25-26). In addition, he strategically draws on a notable short story analysed by sociologist Harvey Sacks (1992a), "A child says: 'The baby cried. The mommy picked it up'" (Frank 2010, p.26), to demonstrate narrative structure, that is, "*one thing happens in consequence of another*" (Frank 2010, p.25). Specifically, he interprets the first clause of the baby crying as the *tick,* and the latter clause of the mommy picking it up as the *tock*, to emphasise that, while stories start off as *tick tock* they evolve into being more complex. In this way, Frank recognises Labov's theoretical contribution to narrative research and emphasises its importance, particularly, the six components of Labov's approach that develop in sequential order to form a "fully formed" narrative. Thus, given that most stories are not fully formed, it further portrays the complexities that begin to develop as stories take greater form:

> "In narratives, things happen *tick tock*. If narratives begin as *tick tock*, they soon become more complicated" (Frank 2010, p.26).

Labov's (1972) six-part model (see Figure 6) defines the structural categories of a narrative as: an *abstract*, *orientation*, *complicating action*, *evaluation*, *resolution*, and a *coda*. While these six narrative elements in the Labovian method are chronologically ordered, the sequence of certain categories like the orientation and evaluation in particular can vary and are often interspersed throughout a narrative (see legend in Figure 6). Additionally, according to Labov (1972), and as mentioned above while discussing Frank, all six components are not always included in all narratives and stories actually containing all six elements are classified as "fully formed". The Labovian approach ultimately treats personal narratives as organised story texts that are temporally sequenced–unfold in linear time–and allows for an analytical way of understanding the textual structure of a specific story. Importantly, Labov's framework focuses especially on the retelling of past events instead of experiences (Riessman 2008; Patterson 2013).

Figure 6. Labov's model of narrative analysis (adapted)


Narrative elements
Narrative inquiry
Narrative functions
Labov's model (1972)
1 Abstract (AB)
What is the story about?
Indicates the beginning and genre of the story – and succinctly summarizes it.
2 Orientation (OR)
Who, when, where?
Sets the scene by specifying the time, place, situation, and main characters.
3 Complicating action (CA)
Then what happened?
Reveals the extraordinary/main event that happened – the crux or "skeleton" of the story.
4 Resolution (RE)
What finally happened?
Final result of what happened, bringing the story to a close.
5 Evaluation (EV)
So what?
Storyteller's understanding of what happened (e.g., why it matters, how they feel about it) – the "soul" of the story.
6 Coda (CO)
How does it all end?
The ending of the story that connects the beginning action to the present.

Key

★|★ = Non-sequential: elements are interspersed throughout the narrative

Amended from Labov (1972) and some content from De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2011, pp.40-42)

The usefulness of Labov's paradigmatic approach, attending to the function of clauses or how content is structured in oral narratives, is widely accepted despite its limitations. This is because there are numerous advantages to using the Labovian model. As noted by Riessman (2008), Labov's analytic model can be applied to analyse how different storytellers use structural elements for telling a persuasive story while constructing their identities and making sense of their past experiences. Like Riessman, Patterson (2013) supports using the Labovian approach as a starting point for analysing personal experience narratives as it is a systematic and rigorous method that facilitates identifying and understanding event narratives, the narrator's perspective, comparing narratives, and finding or eliciting personal narratives. However, scholars in the field of narrative inquiry (Cortazzi 1993; Riessman 2008; Patterson 2013) also recognise that the Labovian perspective can be restrictive given that many narratives do not conform to its assumption of all narratives being stories about specific events that happened directly to the storyteller. Additionally, Labov's framework overlooks the context/content of stories, such as how they were shaped by social and historical discourses and is limiting for complex stories that are not organised using a culturally contextual episodic approach (Riessman 1987; Patterson 2013). Appreciating the advantages and limitations of Labov's theoretical approach, Riessman (2008) reconceptualised Labov's analytic process and proposes a strategy that combines thematic and structural analysis of narrative accounts for paying close attention to the content (what is said) and form (how it is said) of narratives. Riessman's (2008) adaptation combining narrative analytical methods remains effective for achieving methodological triangulation and reinforcing both the wider themes across stories and varying meanings that are ascribed by individuals. Therefore, I begin this review of narrative analysis with Labov and Waletzky's (1967) initial formulation as an introductory simple structure to explore textual functions before incorporating other interpretive approaches to address the complexities involved.

In what follows I present findings from a structural analysis illuminated from both a segment and the extended text of Karen's narrative using Labov's (1972) model of six categories: *abstract*, *orientation*, *complicating action*, *evaluation*, *resolution*, and *coda)* based on Labov Waletzky's (1967) original framework. Using this Labovian model to evaluate Karen's story structure showed that Karen's storytelling generally moved chronologically in time as she recapitulated core events of the past and the social meanings connected with them (Mishler 1986).

6.4 Structural analysis of Karen's narrative using Labov's approach

Labov's narrative analysis model was used to facilitate a preliminary understanding of the linguistic functions, examining how Karen connected several segments together to form a coherent life-history narrative. Employing this analytical technique revealed Karen was an effective storyteller who told a good story, particularly fitted to the Labovian structure or properties of *tellability* (Frank 2010, 2013). That is, a structural analysis focused on the textual functions, elicited modes of speech that helped make meaning of the complexities between the intentions, motivations, and emotions driving Karen's physical activity behaviours (Riessman 2008). Combining several strands of thought for narrative inquiry (Labov and Waletzky 1967; Labov 1972; Mishler 1986; Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Vonnegut 2005; Clandinin 2006; Riessman 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2009a, 2009b; Frank 2010, 2013; Clandinin 2022) allowed for developing a deeper understanding of multiple methods of evaluation, going beyond a retelling of events and textual semantics to elicit the most meaning and interpretation from the narrative data (Riessman 2012; Casey and Schaefer 2016; Meraz et al. 2019). Employing this critical analytic approach showed that Karen formed her negative experiences of sports and PE into a meaningful story, reflective of a disturbing reality and emotional pain shaping her personal and professional identities in the unfolding of the narrative. Additionally, an analysis of Karen's narrative, encompassing Labov's model, identified a strategically composed storytelling from a Western socialisation into narrative. In the next section, I refer to this briefly before applying Labov's approach to Karen's narrative within the proceeding sections and presenting comprehensive accounts about how each of the six elements are located in her storytelling.

6.4.1 Narrative development and socialisation

The segmented text from Karen's fuller narrative offered below (see Transcription 1) is understood as a fragment of narrative discourse highlighting Karen's narrative practices—or storytelling abilities developed from being a native English-speaking teacher. Specifically, storytelling serves as a socially constructed tool of reasoning that enables Karen to make sense of her embodied physical activity experiences and self-construct multiple selves and identities. I attend to these self-constructions in a standalone section below while here, I merely draw attention to Karen's socialization of storytelling through discourse. Purposefully diverting attention to the general skill with which Karen told her story, before examining the specific use of Labov's narrative elements (and various others), permits recognising her story as socio-culturally situated and the influences of her long-term socialisation in England and teacher education.

Transcription 1: A snippet of transcription from Karen's narrative

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences of movement and physical activity?

> Karen: Okay, um, I'm not the keenest (laughs)—never have been. As a child, I wasn't very keen on...well, I was as a young child, I was very keen on exercise and movement and activity, but I was quite badly bullied at school. And that put me off sport, for life, really. So, by the time I was in secondary school, I avoided PE. I was constantly "ill" so as not to engage in any movement at all. As an adult, I am a walker, really. I do things that aren't formal exercise because I'm still uncomfortable in formal exercise situations. But I do, I walk a lot. We've got dogs, so I go walking quite a lot, so more informal movement has been down my street. So, I totally get children who don't enjoy organised exercise because it can be a very uncomfortable situation for children.

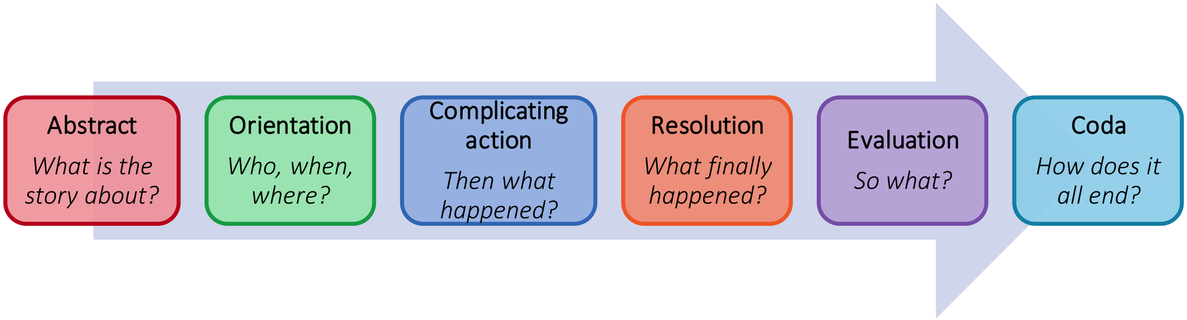
First, Karen shows her proficiency in the use of narrative as a socialising tool (Miller 1994). She does this by drawing on discourse strategies of sociolinguistic such as functional features of temporality and evaluation, and structural components of syntax and semantics, to compose a coherent narrative—with brevity and clarity. This is apparent by examining just the brief passage of text in Transcription 1, which irrespective of a restricted word-count, illustrates how Karen temporally organises her story in accordance with Labov's model from the very beginning of her storytelling. For one, she easily shifts between the past and present tense when describing personal events over the life course and recalls past occurrences before leading into descriptions of more current events while simultaneously, interspersing evaluative elements throughout her story (see Figure 6 above). Second, Karen's Western culture socialisation into narratives and storytelling is demonstrated through her proficiency level as a native English speaker and Western-trained teacher. The influences of Karen's educational attainment and experiences of British culture are particularly visible in her storytelling style or narrative skill to draws upon culturally appropriate metaphors and colloquialisms of communication. Further, the organisational development of Karen's narrative adheres to Labov's prototypical narrative structure model, which predominantly classified as rather narrowly Western-centric (Riessman 2008). Finally, an analysis of Karen's "communicative competence" (Hymes 1972) that is understood as continued socialisation over the life course, including but not limited to applying Labov's narrative elements, transpires in respect to the unfolding of re-created constructions and events via her storytelling.

6.4.2 First narrative element: abstract

Applying Labov's approach of structural analysis to an opening snippet of transcription from Karen's narrative (see Figure 6) showed that the short extract of text in Transcription 1 stand-alone fulfils Labov's definition of a "fully formed" narrative. This was made clear through the application of all six of Labov's categories. I forgo elucidating on the remaining five narrative elements that emerged in a temporal order here to closely attend to the first narrative element: the *abstract* and its function alone. However, I pay closer attention to the other Labovian elements in the sections to follow by adopting the Labovian approach to analyse Karen's whole narrative and in conjunction present excerpts of segmented speech that support interpretation and coding.

In this section, I used Labov's model (see Figure 6) to make sense of the vignette of Karen's story in Transcription 1. This was done by chronologically plotting the narrative elements that attended to the functions of each clause (see Figure 7). For example, the interviewer's question coupled with Karen's first responding clause fulfilled Labov's criterion for the function of the abstract on account that the clauses combined, succeeded in suggesting what the story will be about. The initial introductory question sets forth the *genre* of Karen's story is related to physical activity and movement, and "invites her to imagine", or enter an imaginary world that is neither mine, nor solely hers now. Then, Karen's reply to the initial probe signals the beginning of her story and provides us, the audience, with more substance for the sequence of events to be revealed. Specifically, Karen declaration, "I'm not the keenest (laughs)—never have been", is a competently set up clause that clearly indicates: (1) a story about an adverse effect or feelings of disinterest towards physical activity and (2) continued feelings of a general lack of enthusiasm for physical activity. The composition of these two narrative clauses essentially encapsulates the entirety of Karen's story about her overall dislike and disengagement from physical activity over the life course.

Figure 7. Labov's model of personal narratives (adapted)



Amended from (Labov 1972) and some content from De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2011, pp.28-29)

Table 2. Plot diagram: Structural narrative analysis of a segment of Karen's story

	Narrative clauses	*Narrative elements*
	Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences of movement and physical activity?	Abstract
1	Okay, um, I'm not the keenest (laughs)—never have been.	Abstract
2	As a child, I wasn't very keen on...	Orientation
3	well, I was as a young child,	Orientation
4	I was very keen on exercise and movement and activity,	Orientation
5	but I was quite badly bullied at school.	Complicating Action
6	And that put me off sport, for life, really.	Evaluation
7	So, by the time I was in secondary school,	Orientation
8	I avoided PE.	Orientation
9	I was constantly "ill"	Orientation
10	so as not to engage in any movement at all.	Evaluation
11	As an adult, I am a walker really.	Orientation
12	I do things that aren't formal exercise	Evaluation
13	because I'm still uncomfortable in formal exercise situations.	Evaluation
14	But I do, I walk a lot.	Orientation
15	We've got dogs, so I go walking quite a lot,	Orientation
16	so more informal movement has been down my street.	Resolution
17	So, I totally get children who don't enjoy organised exercise	Coda
18	because it can be a very uncomfortable situation for children.	Coda

Amended from Labov (1972)

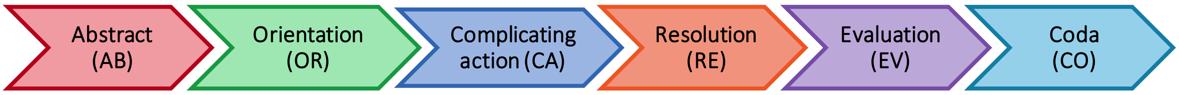
I coded clauses two to four as the orientation because it orients us to the setting in her story by partially answering our inquiry of "who, what, where?" and the fifth clause "I was quite badly bullied at school" as the complicating action, which leaves us wondering "then what happened?", like their intended narrative functions (see Figure 7). However, even though I assigned these clauses and the subsequent thirteen clauses after to each remaining structural element in Labov's model (see Table 2), I treat the segmented narrative text (in Transcription 1) in full as the abstract of Karen's story—not just the initial one or two clauses. I understand and classify this as the abstract element of Karen's whole narrative text because organising these clauses together as one unit or abstract, better summarises the main point of her story, provides a gist of the type of chronologically connected events she is about to narrate (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2011), and prepares the audience for the plethora of possibilities or events to ensue. Owing to the overriding importance of appreciating the complexities in Karen's narrative, I assign these clauses as constituent clauses to the abstract of Karen's *whole* narrative, which not only conventionally conform to the category and functions but permit a greater interpretation of the lengthy narrative.

Namely, while Karen's story is temporally ordered and topic-centred around specific past events, it requires attention to discursive and suggests a strand of main themes (as detailed below) that influence her perception of sports and PE. Therefore, I parse the opening stream of speech into a stanza that consists of the abstract and functions better as a whole to understand the complexities of Karen's narrative. Karen has a *good* story to tell, one she considers worthy of our time. This demonstrates Karen is a *good* or skilled storyteller and the meanings and effects of sports for her are shaped by the language and professional practices of teachers. The skilfully organised opening clauses serve as an abstract with the sequences of acts and narrative elements displaying a familiar beginning, middle, and end story format which commands the audience's attention through a simple, yet effective summary of her story.

As mentioned, the first speech act (see Transcription 1) possesses the quality of a prologue and thus, I categorised it as the abstract to Karen's elaborated and persuasive narrative. Karen's highly ritualised narrative skills are illustrated in Transcription 1, in particular, her use of all six story elements to justify her *tellability* (Labov and Waletzky 1967), pursuant to the *point* of a story (Polanyi 1979), which in Karen's case, enabled her to claim interactive space and attention as she found her story's plot worth telling (Labov 1972; Norrick 2005). She engages our interest by employing a classic syntax that conveys the emotionally painful theme and importance of her story: *Karen will disclose something troubling that happened to her and led to her ongoing aversion of PE and sports*. This is because Karen, as a storyteller, felt compelled to convince me (someone who was not physically there) that her childhood and adolescent experiences of being bullied in school PE settings really happened and are *reportable* (Labov 1982), or worth my time and attention for a more in-depth conversation (Simpson 2004; Riessman 2008). Labov's analytic method served valuable in illuminating how different storytellers solve what Dennie Wolf described, and as cited by Riessman (2008, p.86), the "teller's problem", which simply put, means the storyteller persuades their listener that their story is not merely fabricated for attention or entertainment, but in fact, factual. It is evident in the abstract, Karen achieved this by prefacing her personal narrative using a sequence of narrative clauses that in functional terms, answered hypothetical questions (see Table 3) and helped contextualise her past experiences of bullying, as well as her actions for PE avoidance. Specifically, the long abstract section suggested: *Karen's negative experiences of childhood PE shaped her personal behaviours* (e.g., faking sickness to avoid PE class, long-term disengagement from sports, dislike of athletes) *and professional teaching practices* (e.g., awareness of social power dynamics in PE settings and unconscious bias as empathetic practices towards non-athletic students). Below, in Table 3, I present a plot diagram of combined narrative findings of a structural analysis (Labov 1972) (adapted from Table 2) and a thematic analysis (Riessman 2008) of Karen's segmented text. I incorporate this additional method of analysis to pay attention to both the *hows* and *whats* of Karen's segmented narrative text. I highlight these themes here because although they emerge in the beginning of her story, particularly the abstract, they continue to be key facets of her story as it progresses.

Table 3. Plot diagram: Structural and thematic narrative analysis of a segment of Karen's story

Narrative clauses and elements	Narrative themes
Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences of movement and physical activity? AB Okay, um, I'm not the keenest (laughs)—never have been. AB	***P****rolonged negative perspective of movement and physical activity*
As a child, I wasn't very keen on... OR well, I was as a young child, OR I was very keen on exercise and movement and activity, OR	***P****ositive relationship with movement during early childhood*
but I was quite badly bullied at school. CA	***C****hildhood bullying/victimisation in sports — experiences not being in control and the body in an unfamiliar way*
And that put me off sport, for life, really. EV	***C****onscious of pain/anxiety associated childhood sports impacting self-regulation in adulthood: long-term sports disengagement*
So, by the time I was in secondary school, OR I avoided PE. OR I was constantly "ill" OR	***E****mbodied disengagement from PE via constructions of a familiar "ill" identity physical removing the body from sports and PE classes*
so as not to engage in any movement at all. EV As an adult, I am a walker, really. OR	***C****onscious decision to engage in informal leisure out-of-school activities*
I do things that aren't formal exercise EV because I'm still uncomfortable in formal exercise situations. EV	***C****onscious avoidance of formal exercise and aware of the negative emotions attached to childhood PE and sports experiences*
But I do, I walk a lot. OR We've got dogs, so I go walking quite a lot, OR	***M****etanarrative of progress—remaking of positive/happy self or socially accepted body* ***M****ovement motivation: happiness, not health*
so more informal movement has been down my street. RE	***R****estored, more communicative body-self relationship*



Key

Karen's abstract exemplifies her personal narrative corresponds to a progressive narrative of childhood, early adulthood, and later adulthood, yet wasted no time in setting the stage for how she wished to be understood. Karen immediately seized the first opportunity in our interview interaction to recall several memories that allowed her to create a positive representation of her selves and identities at the onset. For instance, she successfully persuaded me as the listener of her transformative roles as the victim, hero, or survivor-activist (evaluated in more detail later), which she constructed through the social interactions and sociocultural factors in her narrative (Smith and Sparkes 2008b). As described by Riessman, this is "because a narrator must persuade a listener that particular actions were justified, especially if they go against the grain" (Riessman 2008). In Karen's case, her dislike for fitness and athletic people, goes against the dominant narrative of British culture: *physical activity is good for you*. Therefore, Karen made sense of her negative PE experiences in the past using narrative forms, where she narrated conceptualised positive identities and selves through an invitation to dialogue (Smith and Sparkes 2008b). Ultimately, recounting a storied perspective with emphasis on specific social accounts, selves, and identities to structurally develop a persuasive counternarrative of physical activity.

6.4.3 Second narrative element: orientation

In this section, I provide a longer extract from Karen's narrative as representation of its *orientation*, or information about the setting that may include: "time, place, persons and their activity or situation" (Labov 1972, p.364). I recognise this was already provided to a smaller degree in the abstract, but there, I focused on the abstract category with an emphasis on the genre. Here, I focus more on the imaginative settings in Karen's storytelling orienting past events, which includes evaluation elements, and the notion of performance and the dynamic social interaction between Karen and I during the research interview in present-day. This lines up with Labov's view of orientation as a "free clause" (Labov 1972, p.361), which like the element of evaluation, is not temporally restricted or a separate sequence in a narrative, so even orientation material can be evaluative in nature with the temporal ordering often weaved into descriptions of longer time spans such as the complicating action. Although there is text that can be characterised as orientation in the complicating action of Karen's narrative, I do not present it here in the orientation section with the intention of showing how effectively Karen orients us to her experiences of school bullying even before describing occurrences of the actual events. I focus on the intricacies of Karen's childhood bullying trauma in the succeeding section, which includes more orientation clauses interspersed throughout the complicating action of Karen's narrative. Plum's (1988) storytelling genres in personal stories placed Labov's components of the abstract and orientation into the beginning part of a story, whereas the complicating action, evaluation, and resolution fell in the middle, and the coda at the end. In line with this, the segments of orientation-coded text presented above (in Table 2 and Table 3), and to follow below, are constituted of clauses from the earlier part of Karen's story with the text coded to the evaluation element interspersed throughout the narrative. For instance, it offers more insight through contextual markers describing a certain time and setting, where the complicating action of her bullying is not separated from the rest of the world or the meanings that she ascribed to them. Thus, the orientation of Karen's story accounts for the personal and social influences that shaped her perceptions of sports. For an even deeper understanding of the narrative components of Karen's orientation in particular, I draw on Dell Hymes's (1974) "SPEAKING model" (see Table 4).

Table 4. Hymes's SPEAKING model

Setting and scene	Time and place of a speech act, and overall *setting* of the event The psychological setting or cultural definition of a *scene*
Participants	Speaker and audience
Ends	Purposes, goals, and outcomes
Act sequence	Form and order of the events
Key	Tone, manner of spirit of the speech act
Instrumentalities	Forms and styles of speech
Norms	Social roles governing the event and participants' action and reaction
Genres	Kinds of speech act or event

Adapted from (Hymes 1974, pp.55-62)

In his speaking model, Hymes (1974) provides specific definitions for the context of a speech act through more definitive conceptualisations for the setting and scene of stories. He defines the setting, as "the time and place of a speech act and, in general, to the physical circumstances" (Hymes 1974, p.55), and the *scene,* as the "psychological setting" or "cultural definition" of the scene (Hymes 1974, pp.55-56), which is told in accordance with the physical location where the speech act in a narrative takes place. In the current research, at times, Karen set the characteristic of a scene as serious, but at other times, shifted between a range of expressions that displayed seriousness and formality, and a sense of informality and humour as she oriented me as the listener into the diverse settings in her narrative. The text from our interview presented in Transcription 1 shows this performance of her skilful communication and competence as a storyteller once assuming the responsibility of storytelling (Bauman 1975). Further, it is reflective of our interview context, in which, I played the role of an interviewer, who took responsibility and purposefully asked her a question to elicit her narrative and by extending an invitation to her to respond to my research probe, by shifting the responsibility over to her (Chase 1995). Karen's emphasised response to my question asking her about her experiences is in Labov's terms, the "narrative proper", which as Patterson (2013) described, implies that Karen *invited* me to *imagine*, to enter into her social world and share her subjective experiences of physical activity. As for the physical location of the interview, I offered Karen the option of meeting in the familiar environment of her classroom, conventional for conducting qualitative interviews in hopes of inviting stories and not brief reports (Chase 1995), which she willingly accepted. I make note of this interaction because it further supports the impact of culture in the context of our interview from the embryonic stage. In other words, although Karen primarily situates her personal narrative in the past, both due to my set of questions and her personal motivation of showcasing the reason behind her negative perception of sports, she also connected it to her current physical environment, her classroom setting, and in turn, teaching identity and self.

I present the analysis of my interview with Karen, particularly an interpretation of the extensively orientation-coded text in her personal narrative, in two parts. In this structure presentation, I first discuss Karen's orientation of her physical activity settings (e.g., PE classrooms) and then, altering the orientation to parallel her storytelling, I explore illustrations of narrative text for purposes of highlighting mental health aspects.

6.4.3.1 Orientation: Karen's experiences of physical activity

The interview text supplied below provides an orientation of Karen's narrative with an emphasis on experiences of physical activity.

> "Um, it's all about the way people are, often exercise and movement is seen as quite a pressurised thing, it's seen as quite a status symbol, um, it's very achievement-oriented and... it's a very easy way to stand out if you find it more difficult, um... or even just, for me it was just a particular group of people who did a lot of sport, weren't particularly kind, so it was those who, the children who opted to take sport, that weren't very nice to me so my experience was all quite negative, so it was all quite.... being left out, being excluded from groups, it was quite an exclusive experience, so generally speaking from the age of about 8 upwards, 9 upwards, I avoided any form of exercise as much as I could, it's probably as far as it'd go. Yeah, I don't have very clear memories of it, to be honest,

> but I just remember hating it and hating anything to do with organised sport and organised movement." (Karen)

First, Karen frames the narrative with a setting that inextricably links childhood and adolescence experiences of sport and PE to her sport-related trauma as an adult. She begins her story by using descriptors such as "pressurised", "horrible", and "forced" to describe settings of sports or to orient us to the environments of her childhood PE classes. She also self-evaluates her past experiences of being bullied and victimised in school sports settings, with specific descriptions of how much she hated PE and only recalls "hating it". Karen's orientation or setting details including descriptions of the *time, main characters, place, and situation* lends past interactions for better understanding her long-term embodied trauma. Further, through her storytelling, Karen proves experiencing sports in such a traumatic manner to the extent that she has disassociated with any "clear memories of it" over time. This point of disassociation from memories will be elaborated in the section exploring the narrative element of orientation in relation to Karen's mental health. Here, I showcase how Karen's initial orientation for sports and past settings of sports develops as her story unravels, ultimately, sharing more descriptive and detailed accounts to exemplify her embodied experiences of sports.

> "Hockey games, football games, athletics, trampolining, swimming lengths, and techniques, um and long cross country, which I just never went to. It was always organised sports, always time-pressured based, always winning or losing. That was pretty much it. It was always an organised sport. Never anything skills based. It was always in the pursuit of a, of game, of a formalised team game, pretty much." (Karen)

Precisely, Karen is reluctant to share details about her past experiences of sports at first and instead gives a generic account of her orientation using terminology, like "very achievement-oriented", "formalised", and "*always* time pressured", to dramatically portray the negative ethos of sports and the sports. In an attempt to support the blanket statement that she has made about sports environments and sporty people, for which she even offers a long list of organised sports. Initially, Karen grapples with diving into the personal and sensitive details of her trauma right at the start, thus, she refers to the innately exclusive and competitive nature of sports and sports culture, without any specific mention of her own exclusion in sports. This avoidance of the self or use of "I" is visible in the next segment of text, where she recreates past settings of PE as harmful environments for the well-being of young children—instead of harmful to her younger self.

> "They would usually choose two children to pick, to choose other children, who would then choose other children, who then choose other children, and then you wouldn't be chosen, and then you'd be given to a group and would go—ugh. Yeah, not a great way of doing it." (Karen)

It is clear from the descriptions above that Karen has been a victim of such circumstances; to the degree that she remembers the step-by-step process of its exclusion and has feelings attached to certain stages. For instance, noting that children can be overlooked when picking teams or groups in PE classrooms, she expressed, "and you would go—ugh". Despite demonstrating that these words resonated with her, Karen's lack of using a personal voice influenced me to ask further about her personal experiences of exclusive sports cultures. I remember wanting to know more about whether she was left out due to this selection process and if her expression of disgust or horror—in specific, use of "ugh" was actually once her emotional response in the past. Nevertheless, Karen did not outright confirm experiencing this certain type of event, alternatively, as seen in the text below, she presumes having done so, and shifts the focus on the consequences or what ensued as a result and why.

> "Probably right back when I was very young, yes, and then when my relationship with PE had deteriorated, no, no, very rarely. Year 4 onwards, year 3 or 4 onwards it started to deteriorate. It was terrible by about year 6, by about the age my girls are now…because up until that point, I was quite sporty, I was very active, um I loved running, swimming, I'm a very keen swimmer, but as soon as that was done, in a schooling and formal environment, it destroyed any interest I had it engaging with movement at all really." (Karen)

Karen positions her childhood self as sporty, in a manner that implies she constructs it as a positive identity, despite just a moment ago stating that sports essentially require zero skills. This can be seen as a means of validating her current behaviour or conscious effort of dissociating from sports despite once having a positive relationship with movement during early childhood, which from the viewpoint of Karen involved predispositions of her as child, who was "quite sporty", "very active", and enjoyed participating in a range of sports. However, once that relationship "deteriorated" due to her experiences of bullying, she began internalising all aspects of sports as detrimental, or as she said verbatim, "never anything skills based". Understanding sports as a simple activity requiring no special skills or aptitude allows her to disengage from sports and sports behaviour, and more importantly, reconstruct a new body-self relationship and identity that she feels good about. Karen's shift in selves, from the sense of self as "sporty" to "academic", which is seen more clearly in the text offered below where she compares the frequency of the PE classes schools in the UK offered in the past to now.

> "I imagine it's similar to what we have now, which should be about 2 to 3 hours a week so two or three times a week, it's not a lot but it's enough to put you off it quite considerably and then stop you wanting to seek any other opportunities. I was not active in secondary schools, I wouldn't say I was active at all, I was academic rather than active, I think." (Karen)

It is evident that Karen considers sports harmful and insignificant only in descriptions of after her relationship with sports became volatile, but up until then, Karen uses strong language to show the degree to which she had favoured or "loved" certain sports. The excerpt above illustrates this as she shares how views on how PE, which is only taught twice a week to children, is enough to "put you off", and prevents people from continuing it, like herself, into adulthood. She further justifies her stance through her current position of power or authority, specifically classified as her achievement in adulthood as a teacher, which she accredits to her academic-not- "active at all" sense of the self that is created from being bullying in sports during childhood.

Further, Karen strategically interspersed self-evaluations throughout the narrative to effectively display the type of setting that she imagined and, in a sense, still fears, despite previously even mentioning instances where certain teachers have made PE less gruelling. She also included general tendencies of the self, others, and emotionally charged situations of PE and sports that successfully positioned her as the protagonist and other characters in her story as the antagonists. For instance, Karen highlighted her feelings of embarrassment and vulnerability when she described her victimization was generally from bullies or "the children who opted to take sport" during the educational trajectories of middle and secondary school, when simultaneously, PE teachers failed to fulfil the moral obligations of teaching and protect her from emotional harm in PE settings.

> "It was safer in primary school. It got worse in middle school but that's because in primary school you're with one teacher who knows you all really well, and you're younger, and children are more difficult as they get older. Adults are more difficult as they get older. And in a secondary school, the teacher doesn't know you as well because they teach you

> for three hours a week rather than all the time, so yes, less safe at secondary school. Middle and secondary gets less safe as you get older because it's less supervised." (Karen)

To orient school settings for PE, Karen reported that as you progress through the school system, PE settings become "less safe as you get older because it's less supervised". She sets this scene through narrative constructions of sporting bodies and PE teachers in relation to their professional failure as they failed to safeguard children's mental health and well-being in unsafe sports settings. This picture she paints of unsafe and unsupervised settings to orient the listener is easier to visualize after her detailed descriptions of how children engaged in sports involving toxic processes that excluded certain students. Then, to further support her orientation of the negativity experienced in PE, she recounted memories of one PE teacher or a particular character who is constructed as an antagonist in her personal narrative:

> "I remember one of them being terrifying. Um the male ones at middle school, I just remember [them] not caring really. I just remember them kind of standing and watching us, and not really stepping in and um by secondary school, I remember the teachers just didn't care whether you participated or not, they would just let you sit at the side. I sat at the side a lot during secondary school and just didn't participate or left my kit at home." (Karen)

Almost in a cyclical fashion, Karen goes on to make her narrative constructions of an indifferent male PE teacher seem more plausible or real. She lays the groundwork for the identities of the main characters, PE teachers in particular, to explicitly display animations of their indifference and lack of aid.

> "No. No, not the PE ones, never. But I never had a relationship with them in the way I had relationships with other teachers because they didn't manage the behaviour of the other children as much. And a lot of it [bullying] has happened in places, like changing rooms, which weren't supervised, and because I didn't have that relationship in the same way I did with the other teachers, I don't think they ever noticed. I don't think they cared, really. Don't think they were bothered." (Karen)

Although Karen bashes her PE teacher for never protecting her from instances of bullying or not caring about the bullying that ensued. As a teacher herself now, claiming an identity which is shared with her past PE teachers whom she has painted in such a negative light, makes her purposefully differentiate between PE teachers and “other teachers” – *regular* teachers. Specifically, she tells of having had a different relationship with other teachers, regular teachers like herself now, who were not burdened with the responsibilities that were specifically designated to PE teachers that taught in toxic sporting environments. Karen’s capacity to identify and contrast teachers by distinguishing between two types of teachers is a feature of a sense of teaching identity. She judges teachers based on the subject they teach, specifically, holding a negative judgement for PE teachers, and making sure to clarify that not all teachers are in a sense, *bad*, since her own identity as a Year 6 teacher falls under the opposite category of *good* teachers.

6.4.3.2 Orientation: Karen’s experiences of mental health

The interview texts supplied here provides an orientation of Karen’s narrative with focus on components of mental health. In this instance, I purposefully exhibit fragments of lengthy and perhaps unwieldly text as it is useful for making sense of the speech corresponding to this particular sub-section (Riessman 2008). Accordingly, the somewhat extended text segmentation offered below relates to Karen’s childhood experiences of mental health and well-being.

> “I don’t quite have particularly clear memories of my life as a child because I had quite a lot of mental health issues when I was a child. I was quite severely depressed and quite mentally unwell. I spent quite a lot of time in CAMHS [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services] when I was a child and I think sometimes one of the side effects of being mentally unwell is you do block out certain memories. So, my memories of sort of middle school to secondary school are quite vague. They’re indistinct, I don’t have too many very specific memories of that time, just not feeling happy, so I don’t have that, it’s hard to talk about it in terms of experiences because they’re not that, they’re not that explicit and vivid like a lot of peoples are. Mine really aren’t. I don’t have that many memories of my childhood because I think I’ve blocked them out when I was unwell. It's a tricky one. Yeah, um CAMHS is tricky, isn’t it? Cause it still is now, today, but getting through CAMHS is quite hard. I have memories of going to a lot of appointments and having to sit and be talked at for quite a lot of time. I remember my mum crying after appointments because she felt that it was her fault. Um, and a lot of it does link back to the sport when I was younger because that’s when a lot of it started, when I was in sport, younger, so for me sport has always been associated with really horrible experiences, and really horrible...feeling out of control and slightly afraid, I think for me, I think for me. And that’s kind of fear, is the

> overarching memory I think and emotion I have with movement as a child, it would be, fear and anxiety." (Karen)

Karen explicitly correlated negative effects of childhood experiences of PE and sports to a string of long-lasting mental health issues that included a severe depressive state, especially disruptive of her life at home. For instance, illustrating her personal mental health and the familial concerns related to it, she conveyed, "I was quite severely depressed and quite mentally unwell" which then, resulted in her "mum crying after [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services] appointments because she felt that it was her fault". In the telling of this, Karen struggled to describe her childhood memories of CAMHS in detail because as she explained, "I think sometimes one of the side effects of being mentally unwell is you do block out certain memories". Karen demonstrated this as her defence mechanism to avoid revisiting embodied experiences of sports that evoke a visceral response, or as she presumed in specific, "sport has always been associated with really horrible experiences, and really horrible...feeling out of control and slightly afraid, I think for me, I think for me. And that's kind of fear, is the overarching memory I think and emotion I have with movement as a child, it would be, fear and anxiety". This shows how Karen adeptly organizes her story to display the various negative impacts of "really horrible experiences" of childhood PE and sports that left her traumatised and disrupted her daily (personal and social) life. Thus, Karen has constructed a valid argument for her sporting behaviour, a conscious decision to not carry this burden by detaching from the emotions associated to her memories of PE and disengagement in sports altogether. Importantly, Karen's dissociation from past sports experiences to endure her trauma and have coping mechanisms in response to similarly stressful social situations illustrates her improved mental health knowledge and awareness, such as, Karen having the capacity to draw on her mental health literacy which provides her a framework for engaging in mental health and well-being conversations.

The aforementioned mental health literacy is further confirmed in the next excerpt of text from Karen's personal narrative in which she negotiates the sense of self as situated within mental health settings of the past.

> "I think I was in CAMHS for a range of reasons. I think I always had a predisposition to suffering anxiety when I went to school because I was very achievement oriented. I was a very high achiever, and if I didn't achieve highly, as far as I was concerned, I had failed [at PE]. If I didn't get full marks, I failed, that sort of mentality, so I was always going to be a risk. I was always going to be a risk with mental health issues because I wanted to be

> the best and I saw my worth. I still do to some extent, it's connected to how well I do, um but I think the experiences around movement and sport, because in school at that time it was just PE, it was the only movement you did really, probably, were the cause of my low self-esteem and the fact that I don't like myself very much and the way I look and the way I am, and that was definitely what made it more likely. So yeah, I'd definitely say my experiences in sport, in sporting context had a significant impact on the fact that I had mental health issues as I went on through school. So, yeah. I spoke about it with a doctor when I was University, I did a bit of counselling when I was at university, and I spoke about it with them. Um but apart from that, I haven't. I've spoken to people who know me well and care about me but it's not something I talk about much because it's not something that affects my life substantially on a day-by-day basis, it does every so often but now, I've kind of got it managed so it affects me sometimes, not all the time but yeah, it's just tough, it's difficult, but yeah, not a natural movement advocate (laughs)." (Karen)

Karen provided context of her past that was seamlessly designed to portray her as a victim of bullying, the protagonist or main character of her story, whose victimization in sports is not a random event as that type of bullying can be connected to settings of sports and people with sporty characteristics. This also reveals Karen's view of former athletic peers and PE teachers in no certain age range as a group of perpetrators, or the essential characters that oppose the main character in the story— antagonists, given that they literally antagonised her. Resulting in Karen's multifaceted and long-term difficulties with—mental health, body image, personal relationships, social interactions. The extremity of these features with particular focus on what is delineated as a psychiatric diagnosis and treatment of a major depressive disorder is pinpointed through the psychological evidence presented as symptoms of depression, self-harming, and suicidal ideations by Karen. Notably, Karen illustrates her depressive state throughout, but only in the following chunk of text below in which she better orients the individual self, her negative mental health in social settings of higher education during late adolescence, does she indicate that her depression resulted in the use of psychoactive drugs.

> "Yeah, um, obviously mine has been questionable. As I've been growing up, I had very severe depression. I think I was first diagnosed with depression...I was first medicated for depression at the age of 19. I think it was first mentioned when I was 13. Um, I was a self-harmer through school. A serious self-harmer, hence, why I ended up in CAMHS and I was suicidal for quite a lot of my schooling. I never really found a way to manage that when I was younger. I just kind of found a way to survive that. I went through periods where I

> was extremely anxious and extremely unwell and periods where I was functioning but still anxious. Um, it got better as I got into my sort of late teens when I made friends who weren't, who were more like I was but then when I went off to university that was challenging. Well, I went to University in Yorkshire so it's a long way from home, so totally up in the North, and it's very separate from everybody else and there were periods when the depression and anxiety were really difficult when I was living up North. Um, it was when I was, think I was on antidepressants. I don't think I was on antidepressants before I was in university. When I was in University, I was put on antidepressants for quite a substantial time, I think several years. Um, I went through quite a few different ones until they found one that worked, Sertraline, I think it was. I don't remember which one, so I was quite medicated for a long time, so my way of...at school, I kind of just coped, not very well but I just coped. (Laughs.) At University, I was medicated. It was when I, it was probably when I got a job after university, was really good at it, I was fascinated by the mental health hospital and all the things around it. That's probably why I did a psychology degree and all of those things. I've always been fascinated by mental health because of my being so poor. Um, I struggled with being a long way from home, I struggled with having no social group, which obviously you have when you're at university. Um and I struggled with not enjoying the job very much because you're on the management side." (Karen)

This account illustrates Karen's complex journey of mental health with and through depression. She spoke openly about her deteriorating health and long-term illness with mental health problems despite the added social stigma around mental illness. Describing her recurrent depression at university that was both isolating and challenging, Karen emphasised, "it's very separate from everybody else and there were periods when the depression and anxiety were really difficult when I was living up North." Then, Karen explicitly explained that she "struggled with being a long way from home" and had "no social group" or support system of friends and family to help manage her emotional turmoil. To the degree that she "was quite medicated for a long time", then, pointing to her remarkable resilience during the most challenging of times, she observed, "I kind of just coped, not very well but I just coped". To conclude, Karen demonstrated her self-reflexive process of storytelling, as she conveyed, "I was fascinated by the mental health hospital and all the things around it. That's probably why I did a psychology degree and all of those things. I've always been fascinated by mental health because of my being so poor.; which shows she has the capacity to examine her own feelings, motives behind her actions, and how all these aspects helped in a positive way on her path to recovery.

Against this backdrop, Karen draws on her childhood and adolescence experiences with mental health professionals, (e.g., CAMHS, mental health counselling service at university), educational background (degree in psychology), and job experience (at a mental health hospital) to construct her personal narrative, sense of selves, and identities. Specifically, recognising how these events over the life course affected her mental health, to the extent that they have been converted to a story from which she extensively draws on for meaning and reveals herself as the protagonist, who suffered but "found a way to survive". Overall, Karen's self-awareness of mental health through lived experiences and formal education enables her to express the effects of mental health in an informed way, using language that only someone with mental health literacy and living with mental illness can describe a mental health condition or past trauma. This is because Karen's story shows that she understands the sense of self or what it felt like living with an illness, so she educates herself on mental health issues to overcome her own mental disorder as it enables her to get better and supports both personal and professional growth. It is through understanding of the self and what is important to her that ultimately becomes the foundation for constructions of future, positive selves, and identities, which is seen at current through her position as a teacher and teaching achievements. This is considered in greater detail in a later section in this chapter, where I attend to the narrative element of resolution, observing how Karen's struggling relationships with sports and mental health—individual vulnerability is resolved via a continued self-reflexive process or narrative construction; essentially, leading to her existing professional and personal identities and selves.

6.4.3.3 Construction of identities and selves to orient a counternarrative of physical activity

As an extended analytical reference point, I examined Karen's narrative of the various typologies of dominant narratives to classify the pre-existing socio-cultural stories that were drawn upon. Following this, and drawing sustenance from the conceptualisations of Smith and Sparkes (2008b), offered a psychosocial lens for narrative inquiry and contributed to understanding the ways Karen used narrative as a storied resource. In particular, Smith and Sparkes (2008b) described a storied resource perspective, suggesting that narratives are shaped by sociocultural factors and not simply a window into a person's "authentic" personal experience. In the present research, Karen as the storyteller positioned herself and the characters in her story by drawing on culturally familiar narratives to negotiate feelings of discomfort associated with corporeal activities and changing body-self relationships. For the aforementioned understanding of dominant cultural narratives, I draw, again, from the analytic viewpoints of Smith and Sparkes

(2008a) to connect embodiment to dominant cultural narratives, identity construction, and the "tellability" of embodied experiences, those deemed acceptable according to the plot and structure of the stories. Employing an eclectic method provided a starting point for understanding Karen's narrative ability of telling an embodied story of her physical activity relationship that attended to the presence of the body as well as cultural and local discourses.

In the telling of her story, Karen constructs her teacher identity by drawing on different educational strands to reinforce her professional self and competency. Indeed, Karen's linguistic performance in the research interview embodies Hymes's (1972) notion of "communicative competence", a quality that is illuminated through her starting repertoire of speech acts as she strategically portrayed past body-self relationships in past social interactions. Her emphasis on childhood performances of successfully feigning illness to avoid physical activity, and by inference a negative body image within sports participation. Subsequently, Karen's competence of language is further accounted for as she provides a respective analysis, where she evaluates those past experiences and integral attitudes. Karen's linguistic performance extends to offer (me as the listener) an understanding of her world, illustrated as her conscious reflection of a troubled relationship with sports and implicit learning. Specifically, Karen communicates how she has harnessed the feelings of vulnerability (e.g., "feeling out of control and slightly afraid" and "that feeling of just wanting to hide") that she associates with her "really, really horrible", "vile" and overall traumatic childhood sports and PE experiences into her most powerful teaching tool—empathy. Karen perceives her ability to empathise with her students is not only a product from her childhood experiences of sports but also because of the mental health literacy she has acquired through a bachelor's degree in psychology.

> "I know quite a lot because of my degree, and that's been so useful because, in here, I have a lot of children in the year group with emotional issues. That is really common. I've often ended up with them because I know what to do with them because of my degree, not because of my teacher training, they teach you nothing during teacher training on mental health at all. Very minimal. Tiny bit–really small amount. Um, very little, and mine did more than most. Sport, you get training, an hour, an afternoon maybe if you're looking, which for someone like me, is not enough to overcome the fear." (Karen)

While Karen feels that she can be a teacher-advocate for children in settings of sport, especially for students who share similar feelings of fear in relation to sports participation, she does not consider herself a prime candidate for teaching sports practices on the sole basis of her emotional intelligence. In fact, Karen shares how her childhood experiences of sport resulted in a traumatic relationship with sport long-term that had a negative impact on her mental health and overall well-being.

> “It’s just my experience of it at school, I’m scared of sport and I’m scared of the social side of sport and I think because my experience were so bad when I was younger, even saying, I have to go – If you told me I had to go play netball, I would probably have a panic attack because I am that frightened of sport and sport related context but I can see the value because actually for other people, it’s a completely different relationship and doesn’t make it wrong.” (Karen)

Karen is still not comfortable engaging in sports to the extent that she envisions her sports participation resulting in physiological symptoms, specifically, feelings of fear from just the thought of playing sports manifesting as panic attacks. To show how deeply rooted her fear of sports is, Karen described her relationship with a teacher at school who tried supporting her anxiety in sports.

> “Various people I’ve worked with over the years, Aidan [a pseudonym for Karen’s colleague], probably knows more than most people, he’s sport leader, he’s trying to teach me not to be scared of PE but it’s a long journey and I don’t envy him in it because I think it’s going to be quite hard work, because it’s such a deep psychological feeling, psychological fear where I feel like I have this really powerful trauma complex associated to sport and I can’t get over that. It’s taken me a long time to reduce it and manage it. I'm managing it now because I can teach it and it doesn’t cause me as much distress as it used to. It used to cause me a lot of distress, even just teaching it. It used to cause me a lot of distress.” (Karen)

Despite Karen opening up to the possibility of overcoming her fear and anxiety in sports, or what was described in her exact words as “such a such a deep psychological feeling, psychological fear” because of “this really powerful trauma complex associated to sport” which she still “can’t get over.” Karen makes a conscious decision to draw on her sports trauma’s irreversible damage to the sense of self to construct meanings of value. In that, Karen suggests that although she suffered from symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), such as severe anxiety caused by the mere thought about past experiences of sports, she attributes these traumatic experiences as valuable for her personal growth since they influenced her to become an empathetic teacher. She does this by drawing on the dominant narrative of resilience. Resilience is a signature concept in the promotion of mental health and wellbeing, and it is defined as one's capacity to *bounce back* from adverse experiences or trauma (Hart et al. 2007; Masten and Cicchetti 2016; Cheetham-Blake et al. 2019; Den Hartigh et al. 2024). The dominant narrative of resilience is recognised as the construction of one's story of adversity via individual embodied understanding and sociocultural scripts of mental health promotion and well-being to give positive meaning to past experiences (Galli and Vealey 2008; Aranda et al. 2012; Eames et al. 2016).

As such, Karen was able to nurture a positive view of the self and construct a positive professional identity, despite past adversities. A teaching identity that she claims and hopes to reinforce in stark opposition of her former teachers, who she asserted, "didn't really care" or "don't think they were bothered" whether students like Karen participated in sports and "never noticed" instances of bullying in PE classes. Eventually, this led to Karen's understanding of school sports settings as unsafe playing environments, an important spatial component of several contextual factors that created Karen's fundamental sense of the self as fearful of sports—and the idea of sports participation.

The emotional pain that Karen endured during her childhood is made visible within her narrative. She intentionally selects memories that construct her sense of selfhood and identity as vulnerable and hurt from traumatic experiences to provide structure for her narrative constructions and reconstructions of selves and identities. For instance, emphasising an emotional vulnerability from negative experiences reinforces Karen's constructions of a traumatised self and developing self, who grew up to be a passionate, compassionate, and devoted teacher. Especially supporting those students who feel impaired by the "horrible" and "forced" environments of sports and PE classes, as that continue to resonate with her. Karen renegotiated her body-self relationships from troubling experiences of PE in the past as she storied herself into current primary school education and PE. She envisions her future self and professional success through engagement with reflective teaching practices aimed to support her students'—as opposed to her own sports practices and engagement within more inclusive school physical activity cultures than the one she experienced. Her mindfulness for purposefully engaging with past emotional experiences to empower her current identity as a good teacher is expressed in the excerpt below that demonstrates how Karen positioned herself as an empathetic, good teacher.

> "I think my experiences with it helps me understand those children who actually for some teachers are just frustrating because they just don't participate, they just don't try, I have

> a little girl who's a lot like that. I get it, I give them more space probably. I do a lot with them so sometimes if there's partner work, actually working with another child, is sometimes the worst thing and sometimes it's the most traumatic thing. I often let my child choose a partner and then out them into groups because actually that's a lot less scary than being given a group of people you might really hate, especially if it's a tense thing. But I feel a lot of empathy for them, I don't think I manage it correctly all the time because of my feelings around it because it's something I find really difficult." (Karen)

As mentioned, when narrating about the empathetic nature of her professional identity, Karen positioned the self as good or improved by creating a social world through descriptions of her reflective teaching practices in which she is conscious of past trauma associated with feelings of empathy. In addition to how this implicit bias can often hinder her performance of teaching given that emotional responses present challenges. Yet, Karen's bias is not understood as negative, it is characterised as a strength of her teaching pedagogy. Given that, she is empathetic teacher who fosters autonomy, safety, and diversity and inclusion in the context of school PE and sports participation. Frankly, Karen strives to be a better teacher than her former PE teachers, so she develops a teaching identity that is unlike them through a sense of connectedness, competence, and commitment to care about students' well-being and safety to prevent them from enduring similar pain, the long-lasting harmful consequence of bullying typically occurring in poorly supervised PE settings that is all too familiar. Karen's counternarrative of PE captures the problematic nature of school sports and PE teachers. Specifically, shedding light on how recent guidance to increase physical activity amongst children fails to prioritise independent social factors that children may face today, specifically, the rarity of PE teachers that can empathise and show self-awareness situated in school settings of PE and sports. Although Karen's understanding that modern-day children are better off than the children belonging to her generation, as they are immersed in safer, more diverse, and inclusive school environments, lacking exposure to the indifferent PE teachers she encountered. Villainous constructions of the main characters in her personal narrative skilfully reinforces Karen's constructions of her own past, current, and future selves, and identities. The story reveals a meaningful transition from grief to influence (coded as the narrative element: Resolution and evaluated in more detail later), whereabouts Karen once a student and a victim of primary (and secondary) school sports bullying purposefully becomes a primary school teacher-activist—embodying identities in multiple such as that of a protector, hero, and survivor—turned activist of sorts. For example, Karen' teaching practices for PE comprise of a safeguarding technique that exemplifies an innate desire to care and support children's' emotional well-being. (This practice is mentioned in the section to follow in the context of social control.) Here, Karen's teaching practice, seen specifically as mode of child protection in school PE settings is assessed in terms of its function. This is shown in the text below, where drawing upon her past experiences, Karen reported:

> "They change in silence, and if you change in silence, you can't say anything nasty... prevents any of those horrible social gossipy moments which is when it does happen with girls particularly, it's when they're given those free moments to talk...but a lot of teachers do [use it] because it's actually one of the most effective ways of just removing that whole... horrible dynamic because it can be horrible, the changing room dynamic. By this age, they're starting to get..."(Karen)

The segment of text above illuminates that Karen finds this simple, contemporary technique invaluable, despite being uncertain as to whether all teachers incorporate it routinely. This is mainly because Karen understands the social power dynamics of how girls are especially vulnerable to harassment, threats, and verbal abuse in locker rooms based on her personal experiences. Telling about her own disturbing "memories of being called really horrible things" when she was changing for PE, especially, instances where her victimization went undetected. The following excerpt depicts Karen's understanding of why PE teachers were not aware of the bullying that occurred in their classrooms.

> "It was never obvious, they never punched me, therefore, it wasn't a problem, or it was just 'girls being girls', whereas it does happen here, and you just have to maintain that attitude of it does happen and it could happen." (Karen)

Karen conceptualises her successful teaching identity by presenting the teachers she had in the past as naïve and in a sense, oblivious to the realities of physical activity culture. Thus, as a teacher herself now, Karen strongly advocates for her girls to change in silence as less conspicuous forms of victimization are equally damaging for children's mental well-being. She described the past horrors of PE classes that showcased the short-term and long-term effects of verbal bullying.

> "And even though it's just a group of girls, it's horrendous, and not wanting to change, not having– we don't have the facilities for them to have their own changing room–that's not a facility we've got, there is no private space for them to change, there isn't any, um so watching them, sometimes I get triggers of and reminders of how it was, although, obviously, I'm here so I carefully supervise it." (Karen)

In the creation of Karen's multifaceted identities and selves, as well as other characters in her personal narrative, she draws on three core character tropes—*villain, victim,* and *hero* (Bergstrand and Jasper 2018). Specifically, she characterizes teachers and students who were connected to sports or sporting identities into villainous (negative) roles, her past self as a child who was bullied in school sports to embody the victim (positive) trope, and her current self as an adult to be the heroic (positive) figure of the story. Through these constructions she evokes powerful emotions to strategically reinforce her negative feelings towards sporty students who bullied her and PE teachers that failed to protect her emotional well-being during childhood. This casting of main characters like athletic students and PE teachers into negative roles unequivocally reflects Karen's adverse opinion of sports and explains why Karen clearly distinguishes herself from social interactions of sports and consciously attempts to dissociate from engaging in sports behaviours.

For instance, for constructions of the self at present, she uses the common narrative archetype of a hero and protector—or survivor-activist who was subjected to traumatic victimization and stress in sports but returns to the scene of the trauma, in this case the institution of education, which by employing dramaticism and narrative elements of genre and characters Karen portrayed comprised of inadequate and oppressive PE and sports environments to emphasise her existing influences on reforming teacher education and the cruel school settings of sports. More so, drawing on familiar character scripts enabled Karen to enact a heroic (positive) archetype in her story and have the rather therapeutic opportunity to voice past injustices through current position and power. In Karen's quest, childhood sports bullying is identified as a power play in which she appears to be the good person lacking power or the victim of the situation, evolving into the role of teacher identity, becoming a survivor of bullying in sports. Long-held beliefs of sports practices through early notions of the personal self and identity, influence future actions and motivational purposes of becoming a teacher-activist. Finding a sense of purpose as a teacher who is motivated to promote children's emotional health and well-being. Finally, claiming a position of power to support struggling children, especially vulnerable to sports bullying and victimization, and concomitantly, the opportunity to reconcile with past embodied events, notions of the selves and identities, and in a sense, save her younger self.

6.4.3.4 PE teachers, social control, and dominant narratives of physical activity

As Karen recreated her past identities and body-self relationships in childhood sports through the act of storytelling, she revealed several important facets of her personal and professional identities and body-self relationships at present that can be interpreted in diverse ways. For instance, in describing the oppressive PE culture at school, an early form of social control where she had no autonomy, and subsequently felt compelled to make frequent excuses to not partake in school sports. Karen expressed how her younger self, at one point, even went to the extreme of taking on highly challenging academic classes, all in attempt of avoiding sports:

> "I took so many A levels that I could get away with saying I don't have time on my timetable, I literally took an extra A level, so I didn't have to do sport, so rather than doing the normal … I took 5 A levels, so I didn't have to do sport." (Karen)

Further describing her long-term sports behaviours, Karen explained her past experiences of avoiding PE classes by drawing upon a master narrative of physical activity culture. A cultural inference that she assumed would resonate with me, (and it did) given my current position as a researcher in the field of sports and physical activity in the UK, past experiences of and PE and school sports curricula in the US, and an overall awareness of Western physical activity culture. Thus, by drawing on a wider cultural narrative of sports Karen helps me make sense of her past experiences and why she repeatedly sought any excuse to free herself from the horrors of PE and school sports. She does this by first, orienting me as the listener, to her childhood settings of PE providing context such as her pretences of illness and misplacing her gym uniform, and as a young adult (as seen in the previous quote) subscribing to an additional academic workload. After establishing the scene and setting in detail, Karen used a dominant cultural narrative of physical activity that equates movement to healthy lifestyle. The extract below demonstrates this through Karen's attempt to help me comprehend the cultural consequences for her autonomous decision.

> "I think by the end of secondary school because obviously I took the option, as you can probably imagine, where the kind of 'we don't really want to do it' option—they quit healthy lifestyles." (Karen)

In this account, Karen portrays the sense of self as autonomous, as she considers making a point of having more control over her choices and specifically, choosing to opt out of participating in school PE and sports during her late adolescence and early adulthood. This is because she feels that society has ascribed people like herself who do not desire to engage with sports and subsequently make a conscious effort to disengage from sports activities, to unequivocally demonstrate that they have then, "quit healthy lifestyles". First, this showcases the problematic dominant narrative of physical activity that further oppresses individuals who may choose to opt out of sports as they are made to feel their non-normative behaviour in sports equates to them embodying an unhealthy—or wrong way of living. In this case, Karen draws on a wider cultural narrative as a script that instructed her past (and continued) decision of disengaging from sports and PE. Specifically, the script equates a lack of physical activity to living in a state of unwellness and since Karen continues to detest and avoid participating in physical activity or sports, according to her understanding then, her existence in society has been and is still “unhealthy”. Second, Karen’s use of a collective “we” voice as opposed to her individual “I” voice is noteworthy as it symbolises that she does not consider herself as the only one who lacked autonomy when it came to engagement with school sports and PE. However, for Karen the notion of control in relation to sports and PE is conflicted since her views on choice and autonomy (touched upon briefly in the section above in reference to autonomous school environments) vary throughout her personal narrative.

Karen’s conflicting views of autonomy in sports and PE are visible in the excerpt below, in which she recounted her childhood experiences and described a “terrible” and “strict” teacher, who “forced” students, including Karen, to engage with the primary school PE curriculum.

> “She didn’t let anybody get away with anything, so if you weren’t doing the sport, you weren’t talking kind of in her lessons. She was so controlling; it was so much easier. She was probably the only one I got positive memories of. The rest of them I don't really have distinct memories of but that’s probably because I avoided doing it a lot of the time. My memories are of avoidance than actually doing. I remember thinking some of them were just useless because they couldn’t control children at all… she was probably the only one I got positive memories of. The rest of them I don't really have distinct memories of but that’s probably because I avoided doing it a lot of the time. My memories are of avoidance than actually doing. I remember thinking some of them were just useless because they couldn’t control children at all.” (Karen)

She illustrated this “controlling” PE teacher in a positive light but clustered her “relaxed” PE teacher and indifferent male PE who generally accepted her choice to not participate in sports and make daisy chains during PE instead, into the group of teachers who she understood to be incompetent or “useless because they couldn’t control children at all”. This conflicts with other inferences where Karen correlates her positive feelings towards sport or movement as an adult with having autonomy:

> "Less organised; so walking, where there's no pressure, you can choose the group you're with, there's no being forced to interact with people that you aren't comfortable with, that's absolutely fine, and they're positive experiences, but that's my choice as an adult, not as a child." (Karen)

Initially, referring to her walking habits as an adult, Karen appreciates how movement is less pressurised and more autonomous compared to her childhood sports experiences to the extent that she feels comfortable around certain types of people who are physically active, whereas in the past Karen would never have been able to appreciate social situations in any context of movement. Further describing her current relationship with movement, where she now has a responsibility to walk her dog, Karen asserted:

> "Getting into movements of a completely different context and actually going [walking], this isn't awful and this kind of helps. It's been a slow, slow process. Getting a puppy helps as well. There's not much choice when you get a puppy, you have to walk." (Karen)

Karen describes her walking during adulthood to be "of a completely different context" based on the rarity that she now has the privilege of autonomy where she can choose whether to partake in physical activities. (This is a key point in relation to Karen's engagement with Stormbreak and will be explained in detail in the complicating action section to follow.) Further, she surprises herself by walking or engaging in a form of movement that ultimately, as ascribed through the dominant narrative, equates to a *healthy* lifestyle. While Karen views this situation in stark contrast to her past experiences, she reconstructs her "positive" childhood experiences of sports through interactions where she lacked autonomy and had no choice but to participate in sports due to the expectations of her PE teacher. Consequently, and perhaps subconsciously, Karen advocates for equally strict teaching practices in PE classes, particularly to safeguard her female students from verbal bullying, which she herself once endured.

> "My girls change in complete silence and actually they're really good at that and they do it really quickly. But that is controlled…we told them to change in silence and that is any expectation that we set up in September because they change quicker…but it also prevents any of those horrible social gossipy moments which is when it does happen with girls particularly, it's when they're given those free moments to talk." (Karen)

As seen above, Karen views this "controlled" system of students changing in silence for PE classes to be valuable since she was deprived of any similar safeguarding mechanisms being in place at school during her childhood. Sharing her reflections, comparing PE culture for children today to that of her past, there is sense that there is more social control.

> "I watched that and thought how different it was from my experiences of sport and exercise because they were not positive or pleasant…I think people control it better now. Schools are definitely hotter on bullying now than they were when I was in school." (Karen)

It is clear Karen appreciates social control in the context of school sports and PE and views that at present there is more controlled—effective management for preventing bullying in schools. This is because her own self-confidence was negatively impacted from a lack of social control in past PE settings. In an attempt to show the difference in sports culture between the past and present, Karen shares a recent event at school during one of the sports days for students.

> "Watching them, things like sports days, bless her, there's a little girl in my class last year who was also quite overweight, like a lot of children nowadays are, um not particularly good at sport but put herself up for the 600-meter run and she did it, I mean it took her 10 minutes more than everybody else but she did the whole run and if somebody had done that while I was at school, they would have been laughed at, but the girl who won the race, actually went and ran it again with her. And it was watching things like that, completely different to my experiences of PE would have been–if I would have been her–somebody would have laughed at me—and it would not have been pleasant, and I probably would have been asked to stop because I was holding up the race! That was the kind of PE experience I would have had, whereas she finished her race, and everybody waited for her to finish the race, cheering her on and she actually won the PE award that year because she won the bloody race despite two of the girls going and running it with her, once they finished in their place which was amazing, but I watched that and thought how different it was from my experiences of sport and exercise because they were not positive or pleasant." (Karen)

This story of a "quite overweight" little girl is told by Karen to portray the contemporary social culture of sports and sporting bodies—connecting the similarities and differences between the growth in sports culture ideals from Karen's time as a little girl to more recent years. In a way, it is a good *underdog* story sitting within a counternarrative, in which Karen tells us about a little girl who was “not particularly good at sport but put herself up for the 600-meter run” and that “it took her 10 minutes more than everybody else, but she did the whole run”. She showcases how this girl, who did not have an athletic-looking body achieved a sports victory regardless of bodily disadvantages and was admired and praised for her efforts in the race, as fellow peers rooted on her persistence and determination—the underdog effect. Unsurprisingly, Karen compares the scenario of the little girl that succeeded despite being an underdog to her past self. Specifically, describing how this race would have ensued during her childhood, Karen asserted, “if somebody had done that while I was at school, they would have been laughed at”, and then described the little girl’s overall success relative to the initial race, “she actually won the PE award that year because she won the bloody race despite two of the girls going and running it with her.”

Finally, Karen specifies her motivation for reporting this particular event was merely to show the positive change in sports culture in comparison to her childhood and “experiences of sport and exercise because they were not positive or pleasant”. It is clear against this backdrop that she successfully illustrates the stark difference and growth in sports participation and socialisation into sporting cultures in the context of English culture. This is done purposefully, as she draws on a compelling dominant narrative of the underdog storyline, or the classic rags to riches script, to emphasise her own underdog status, as a “not really thin” little girl too but deprived of an equally optimistic ending despite their relatively similar starting points. Given that Karen’s personal story of sports does not have a positive, feel-good ending, she sets the scene to this recent “sports day” at school where students showed empathy to the little non-athletic girl who defies the odds because Karen is drawn to this dominant narrative where someone like her is socially accepted. Ultimately, Karen’s personal narrative is multidimensional, complex, and deeply rooted in her own feelings of her past misfortune in sports and the reason she shared this meaningful interaction is two-fold.

First, the one (briefly described above) that she is conscious of: the image of the wider sports culture valuing athletic abilities and bodies has changed for the better; to the great extent that today children, especially those who do not conform to social and sporting norms concerning body weight and behaviour are not subjected to the same level of sports related bullying—if at all, like Karen was a victim of growing up. This seems logical, as she evidences the underdog effect for her view, yet Karen’s descriptions of the little girl, who did not come across as particularly athletic, highlight her own unconscious biases conforming to the larger body image perceptions of athletes. For example, the beginning text demonstrates the influence of early internalised experiences of school sports and PE, as Karen commented, “bless her, there’s a little girl in my class last year who was also quite overweight" to express her empathy and affection for the little girl. This is because given her own sports interactions, Karen understands pro-social and anti-social behaviours, particularly self-aware that overweight bodies are not considered favourable and especially difficult in social setting of sports, so her automatic emotional response is to feel concerned for the little girl whose appearance mirrors that of Karen as a little girl and subsequently, materialises an embodied response.

Second, and relatedly, the logic of the subconscious: Karen's sense of self-worth is still conditional on some level of achievement or performance, and she especially desires to be celebrated in sports because unlike this girl, Karen never had others "cheering her on" or the respect of her peers despite having athletic abilities in early childhood. However, Karen does not explicitly compare her past self, body, or identity to the little girl, instead she makes an indirect connection through her comparison of their diverse experiences in similar social dimensions. In doing so, initially, she uses a socially constructed public identity (i.e., "somebody") in her first reference to a hypothetical (imagined) scenario: "if somebody had done that while I was at school, they would have been laughed at". Then, Karen shifts from the use of "somebody" to "I" when referring to her personal context of sports that were "not positive or pleasant" during her childhood and adolescence. For instance, she explicitly said: "if I would have been her–somebody would have laughed at me—and it would not have been pleasant, and I probably would have been asked to stop because I was holding up the race!", and uses "I" in her orientation of this imagined event that relies on constructions of her past-self body relationship and identity in a social situation where her agency in sports is invalidated. This exemplifies her sense of self and identity formation, even hypothetically, are shaped by her past sports participation in which she lacks autonomy. This supports her construction of the past selves and identities throughout her personal narrative, clearly positioning the sense self as someone who was bullied out of the option to participate in sports early on and subsequently, was deterred from finding it enjoyable. In broad strokes, Karen's bullying experiences in PE resulted in her low sense of self-worth and robbed her from any chance of excelling in "very achievement-oriented" or organised sports and fuelled her need to succeed and be accepted by others in a different context—unrelated to physical activity. However, there is a sense of desire for this now.

Specifically, despite Karen being in a better position now (teacher), seeing the little girl's triumph in sports evoked negative feelings of insecurity and desire for her since it depicted the type of social success and popularity that she could have achieved in sports, if not for the toxic physical activity culture of the past. A major example of this is that Karen never attributes personal categories of the self (past and present) to the little girl's "overweight" body or sense of self, yet and despite this, she still explicitly compares their social dimensions. This is because it is easier to show the larger sociocultural impact for her negative relationship with sports over the life course without bringing attention to her body, and so, Karen's body is not made visible, but instead experienced for brief moments via the importance that she places on the little girl's body. Additionally, it is easier to ignore personal attributes and place blame on the social dimensions in relation to undesirable events, which is seen through Karen's position as a teacher or recognition of the sense of self that is more desirable and socially accepted. Nevertheless, despite Karen's constructions of new selves, bodies, and identities, she has not completely detached from her past body-self relationships and identities, as her story reveals that they are still the source of her sense of insecurity and low confidence and she one desires to be restored given her emotional response and attention to the little girl's body and behaviour in sports. Thus, Karen reports an event where someone like her was able to excel in sports—not only to frame her own imagined self and identity in the past as a victim of sports bullying, but also, to validate her creations of the negative settings and people in sports. In the next section, I illustrate how Karen's past interactions in school sports still proves to be the source of her "low self-esteem" and self-worth to this day.

6.4.4 Third narrative element: complicating action(s)

Pinpointing the *complicating action* or most reportable event of Karen's story seemed rather straightforward, as she repeatedly provided descriptive self-evaluations of past traumatic experiences of PE and sports. For example, I present a transcription of extracted text from Karen's story, below, which refers to a particularly life-altering sequence of events. However, drawing on Vonnegut's shapes of stories (see Figure 4) in conjunction with Labov's structural analysis (see Figure 6) to closely examine Karen's story, I come to learn that Karen's story is more complex and has an additional complicating action to its narrative structure. Specifically, aside from these past instances of victimization in school sports, which Karen consciously and clearly emphasises herself, there is an unresolved but equally noteworthy and more recent reportable event—Stormbreak. Therefore, I explore how both events prove to be interpreted as the complicating action elements of her narrative and synchronize with the lows of her story, emotional arcs that correspond to the emotional arcs in the story of Oedipus (Reagan et al. 2016) (see Figure 5).

6.4.5 First complicating action: Karen's experiences of bullying in PE

The first complicating action of Karen's story is identified as her past experiences of being bulling in school sports. The set of texts provided in this section are the accounts of Karen, who recapitulated events she thought had led to her negative mental health and well-being and ultimately, changed the course of her life. For example, as Karen reflects upon memories of being bullied, her body is made visible.

> "I've got memories of being called really horrible things during a PE lesson at primary school… and I've got memories of someone hitting someone in response to that, which is quite amusing. (laughs) Um it was kind of a slow one, the bullying. I got memories of changing for PE and being laughed at because I had hair on my arms and then not wanting to change for PE ever again. Um yeah, I've got memories of being out in PE wearing shorts in the winter, and I'm very pale and dark haired, so obviously when you're 13 you start to get hair on your legs, and I've got memories of being laughed at for that. And it's all to do with appearance, it's all appearance-related bullying whilst in the context of sport because I was alright at sport. It wasn't because I couldn't do it, it was because of the way I looked...I think I was called a 'man' on more than one occasion. (laughs) That's the problem, I can't really remember. I genuinely blocked so much of it out. I can't really remember other than that feeling that comes with it all because I think you move on, and one of my ways is that it's kind of in the past, so I'm just not gonna think about it. So, yeah… yeah, it's hard. I can't think of many specific names, it's a long time ago. What 20-15 years ago, so yeah, it's a very long time ago." (Karen)

Being bullied in school sports during childhood and adolescence is the turning point of Karen's story, a major negative narrative shift or complicating action that takes place and alters the rest of the story. In this case, Karen's story of "appearance-related bullying whilst in the context of sport" is embodied, as she tells her story through the body and of the body and self (Frank 2013)—yet the body mainly remained *absent* or forgotten (Leder 1990) and was made visible only in recapitulations of negative feelings and social situations. For example, referring to an instance of being victimised when wearing shorts for an outdoor PE class, Karen noted, "I'm very pale and dark haired, so obviously when you're 13 you start to get hair on your legs, and I've got memories of being laughed at for that". This shows how focus upon the body temporarily appears for certain instances in the narrative such as during recollections of traumatic childhood experiences of bullying, which she explicitly suggested, were followed by "that feeling that comes with it all", and implicitly describes feelings of embarrassment, personal vulnerability, and suffering. It is against a Western backdrop that the body "seizes our attention most strongly at times of dysfunction"

(Leder 1990, p.4). Accordingly, Karen recognises the corporeal presence spatial and temporal dimensions of interactions (e.g., PE classes), in such a way that the absent body is directly made present or delegated to a primary role, solely when she experiences it as disruptive.

Additionally, Karen's storytelling of experiences of bullying in school sports also sets forth the terms on which it requests to be understood. This point is illustrated by the structure of Karen's causal narrative with narrative elements of evaluation interspersed throughout. To be specific, Karen weaves self-evaluations into her story, and to a great extent, directs the interpretation of the victimization she endured at a young age—telling us how to understand her experiences. Recounting her past "memories of being called really horrible things during a PE lesson at primary school", Karen embedded a plethora of evaluative elements including recurrent utterances of "so" and "because", using each word precisely five times just within the brief segment of narrative text above. She does this because she wants the few lingering memories of being victimised by her peers in sports to be understood as "really horrible" or traumatic experiences that started from early childhood. As illustrated in the segmented narrative text above, she also tenaciously incorporated clauses such as "I genuinely blocked so much of it out", "one of my ways is that it's kind of in the past, so I'm just not gonna think about it", and "I can't really remember" (repeated twice) in her recapitulation that demonstrate how she has repressed memories of her childhood sports trauma. These heightened repressed are readily apparent in her story as they point to the effects of personal mental health suffering long-term and subsequently, place attention on the larger sociocultural discourses shaping it.

For instance, Karen recalls the vivid memories of bullying in PE were "all appearance-related" and by inference, informed by Western culture ideologies of female bodies, where her appearance as a young girl did not fit in with the socially accepted image of the female body. Consequently, these bodily experiences of bullying and victimisation in PE led to Karen's negative body-self relationships over the life course. However, while Karen's low self-esteem and self-worth are primarily indicated to be a result of her socially unaccepted body in sports, Karen also briefly touches upon maternal expectations concerning her body image.

> "I was never happy with the way I looked. I was almost deliberate in trying to make it look like I didn't care but only because I never fitted up to the way I expected myself to look, and I never have. I was too fat. Um I don't like my face. My mom used to tell me that I had a face like a horse when I was young. Just kind of hurt, um…" (Karen)

To help us better understand the “teller’s problem” (Riessman 2008), Karen chooses to mainly direct our focus to her experiences of “appearance-related bullying” and victimisation in school sports. This is because she associates her relational identity with societal expectations, fundamentally through her sports experiences of not fitting in with the other girls and their socially accepted bodies. As shown in the brief text above, Karen briefly mentions her mother, and then stops providing further details, until I probe her relationship with her mother further. That is, shocked by what I heard, or what I thought I had heard, I asked Karen who it was that had said that.

> “My mum (laughs) — *helpful* mother [said] my hands are too big, like, just, just nothing quite fit. You kind of expect to have... my hairs fly away, I got really, really thick hair. I always wanted hair like my cousin which is manageable and does what it’s told, mine doesn’t. So, I just–nothing about me looked like the way I wanted it to look–my eyes were boring, I was too pale, too much hair, just nothing, nothing quite how I wanted it to be. I’m still like that to be honest.” (Karen)

Exploring the maternal influence shaping Karen’s body-self relationships shows the layers of complexities or multiple factors involved in the complicating action of her story. One that is not simply tied to social occurrences of sports related bullying, as she initially made it seem, but are mixed with personal experiences of her life at home. Yet, Karen chooses to primarily link her childhood sports and PE experiences of being bullied to her long-term negative body-self relationship. This is interesting given the relational identity she constructs with her mother throughout the story, which is discussed in the earlier section of this chapter, where Karen is sad to see her mother crying during her appointments with mental health services. Her mother’s embodied character symbolises familial support and understanding that is meaningful and constructed based on her sense of the self and identity. Perhaps then, Karen wishes to preserve merely positive aspects of this mother-daughter relationship by adding any hurtful memories of her mother to the bank of memories she has repressed and, in this case, focusing her story on the negative events of school sports. This can be seen through the text presented below in which Karen describes experiences of being bullied between middle school and secondary education.

> “Middle school for me, it was done in changing rooms which were unsupervised, and they had like a shower block and shower unit, so just horrible space, dingy horrible spaces which weren’t supervised. Not pleasant at all… the girls were upstairs up some concrete steps, and it was grey, and it was dark, and it had units down the wall, units down the

> middle and it has a shower block at the end. Secondary school, it was on the ground floor, next to the boys' ones and you walked into it, there was a wall, the teacher stood outside down an L shape so there was no line of sight at all. Um and it was kind of a U shape of changing with a shower block as well, they're just grey, dismal, dingy concrete rooms. I just remember trying to just get in and then out as quickly as I could or be late so that everybody had changed by the time I would change. My memories of being late on purpose so that everyone had gone or being early, really quick to get out of there before everyone else had come. Or pretend to be on my period for weeks at a time, I did that a lot. Male teachers were never comfortable challenging that, so I was 'on my period' for weeks when we had swimming with a male teacher, and I just sat on the side." (Karen)

Karen recalls the impact of her school settings of victimisation in detail, yet only touches upon her mother's expectations of her physical appearance despite it also playing a huge role in constructing her negative selves, bodies, and identities. In addition to shedding light on certain familial influences, Karen highlighted the larger social, cultural, and historical discourses at play that influenced her to develop body image issues.

> "I mean a mixture, some are self, some of the expectations are from the people around me and what women were supposed to look like when I was growing up and in school obviously when I was going through the school system it was the super thin period, the wave kinda like look was in vogue, whatever her name is, the terrifying supermodel, she's stick thin, she was in Vogue when I was in school, Kate Moss is it? Yeah, really stick thin, like anorexically thin. That was kind of what was attractive when I was in school, and I would never be that, even when I was really, really thin, and I was really thin for my build at one point, I was still, I was still quite heavy, I mean even when I was, I was not, I was not fat, I was not really thin but – I look at pictures now – healthfully thin but I was still a lot bigger than she would have been because that's not my build, I'm not sly and I will never be sly because that's not how I'm built, so yeah, it's societal. To some extent, family because my mom was always slender growing up and she is very tall and very willowy and it's just not my build, I've got dad's physique, dad who's got a rugby forward player build." (Karen)

This presents an image of the unrealistic expectations of beauty from society and Karen's mother that make her self-conscious of her body. In fact, she constructs her negative identity during childhood and adolescence based on people's perceptions of her appearance, especially those who bullied her in school sports. In the telling of her story, Karen speaks about the severe negative impact of “horrible” memories of bullying in PE, where she “was called a man on more than one occasion” by bullies. Then, shortly after, she compares her body to an athletic male body, her “dad’s physique”, who is described as having “a rugby forward player build”. This exemplifies how Karen’s internalised expectations of an ideal female body are shaped by both school (social) and home (personal) settings, although she primarily blames institutional environments and society or social media culture for her long-term low self-esteem and body image issues.

> “Yeah, because in PE you were in less clothes, school uniforms, you can hide in them if you buy the size up, you kinda drowned in them and nobody can tell. You can make it; you can show or hide as much as you want in a school uniform. You can’t in PE can you, you’re wearing shorts and a t-shirt and running around, it’s kinda obvious so yeah, it does show and it’s probably the clothing of PE that makes it more obvious what you look like.” (Karen)

Karen’s telling of the complicating action of her story, focused on negative experiences of school sports and PE, revealed diverse components in the past that played a role in shaping her negative sense of selves and bodies. She specifically chose to direct attention to the long-term consequences of school sports bullying, illustrating how she was victimised because of her physical appearance, as opposed to offering a greater account of the appearance related bullying from her mother that exacerbated the emotional pain from school sports bullying. Thus, although the maternal influence or events at home which impacted her body-self relationships are linked causally to how Karen experienced bullying at school or “the nasty comments and unkings things being said” to her about her body, she found the negative experiences of school sports and PE to be the most reportable.

Further, while Karen shows self-awareness of her physical appearance, recollecting how she fixated over how she looked in school PE uniforms or how nasty comments about her body image made her feel terrible, she still considers herself to be better off than the children of this generation.

> “If anything, children these days are more appearance obsessed, and in some ways it’s worse because they all expect to look like supermodels because that’s all they see.” (Karen)

The short text above exemplifies Karen's attempt to reconstruct a positive identity in adulthood, as a teacher or protector of students, who are subject to more detrimental pressures than she was in the past. Additionally, using Labov's narrative model shows how Karen begins to prepare us for the next narrative element, the resolution or how the major problem in her story is potentially resolved. This will be discussed further in the section designated to the fourth narrative element of resolution to follow, but briefly referred to here for exploring the emotional arc of Karen's narrative structure.

6.4.5.1 Narrative emplotment of the complication action(s) combined with the emotional arcs

I emplotted the emotional arcs (highs and lows of events) of Karen's embodied story to gain a better understanding of her emotional and physical well-being and dynamic relationships with physical activity and mental health. In reviewing these emotional arcs and text coded to the complicating action of Karen's story, the Oedipus story arc proved especially helpful for interpreting the casual narrative – and revealing the dual role of the complicating action element. As mentioned briefly at the start of this chapter, the emotional trajectory of Karen's story corresponds to the Oedipus (fall-rise-fall) emotional arc (see Figure 8). This is because, Karen starts her story by recalling positive memories of sports and the self:

> "I was a sprinter, really good sprinter, I was really athletic, and I was really quick, nobody could catch me, I was really, really good but when it all started, I just stopped doing it and I wouldn't do it and then obviously you lose your fitness." (Karen)

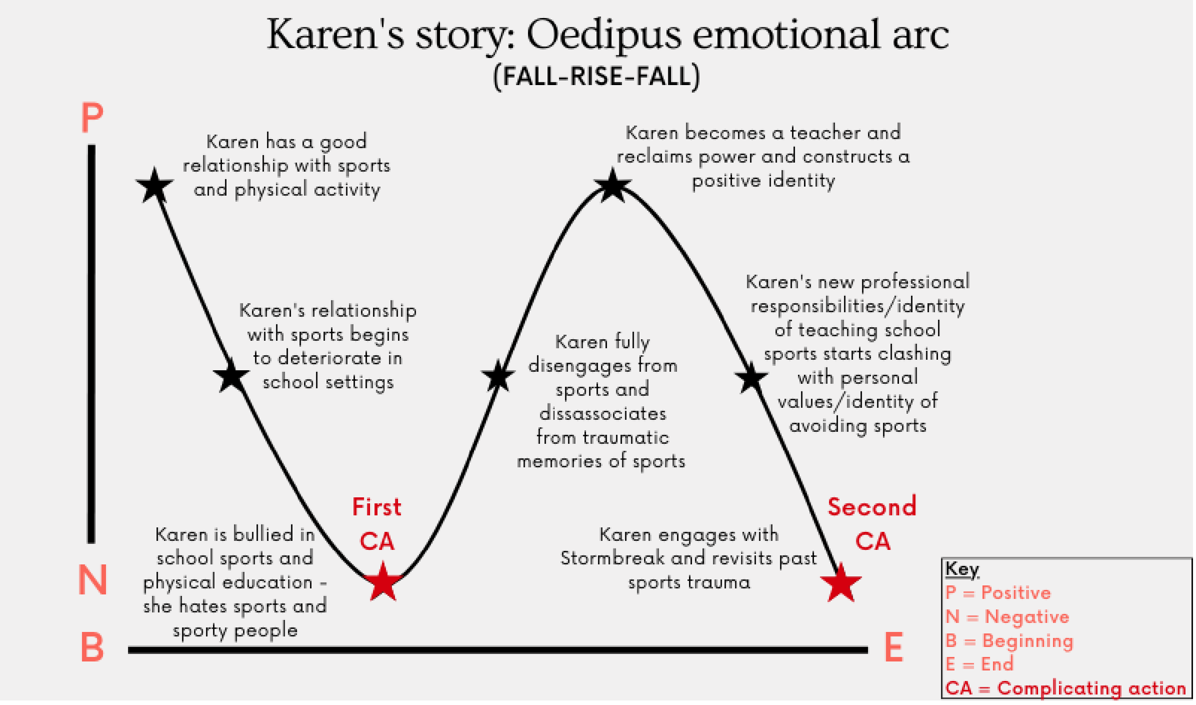
Then, experiencing bullying and victimization within school sports cultures that was multifaceted in nature led to Karen's negative body-self relationship and emotional decline, which is identified as the *first* complicating action of her narrative. The following comment reflects how Karen came to "lose" her fitness or sporting identity, where she no longer viewed sports and school sport culture favourably.

> "I just stopped trying and I hid. It was easier to hide and not be noticed than it was to be good at it. And then eventually, if you hide long enough, you become bad at it, (laughs) then you don't have to hide anymore because you're genuinely bad at it…and I think it can go both ways as well, so obviously it can go positively and it can go negatively but the negative stuff isn't from the actual exercise itself, it's from the social stuff around the

> exercise and that's all to do with cultures, and that's all to do with the people, and that's to do with the culture of movement and the culture of mental health in schools." (Karen)

Following this, Karen eradicates all connection to sports and physical activity culture from her life, which places less focus on the body and returns to a positive narrative shift—by reconstructing a positive body-self relationship and personal and professional identities. These new constructions allow her to escape from her personal past trauma and lesser sense of self, until she encounters Stormbreak, a mental health and movement intervention, involving her participation in sports again.

Figure 8. Plot diagram: Karen's narrative structure and the Oedipus emotional arc (fall-rise-fall)


Karen's story: Oedipus emotional arc
(FALL-RISE-FALL)
P
N
B
E
Karen has a good relationship with sports and physical activity
Karen's relationship with sports begins to deteriorate in school settings
Karen is bullied in school sports and physical education - she hates sports and sporty people
First CA
Karen fully disengages from sports and dissassociates from traumatic memories of sports
Karen becomes a teacher and reclaims power and constructs a positive identity
Karen's new professional responsibilities/identity of teaching school sports starts clashing with personal values/identity of avoiding sports
Karen engages with Stormbreak and revisits past sports trauma
Second CA
Key
P = Positive
N = Negative
B = Beginning
E = End
CA = Complicating action

(Adapted)

6.4.5.2 Second complicating action: Karen's engagement with Stormbreak

Karen's freedom is short-lived as Stormbreak causes her to revisit past traumatic memories of sports, retraumatising, to the extent that she is once again self-conscious of her body. This is because she begins to recontextualise her past childhood experiences of bullying that were related to her physical appearance, events that made her self-conscious about her body image with diminished self-confidence. In addition to renegotiating her bodily self-worth, Karen is conflicted between her professional and personal identities as her personal values to avoid sports clash with new teaching expectations for her to deliver movement practices to students. Thus, the emotional trajectory of fall, then rise, then fall in the story of Oedipus illustrates the sentiments of Karen's story (see Figure 8) and enables a better understanding of the role of Stormbreak.

Stormbreak aims to improve children's mental health through physical activity culture. This mental health and movement intervention is specifically delivered by primary school teachers in classroom settings, ideally four times a day for approximately 15 minutes. In Karen's case, teaching Stormbreak or re-engaging with formal exercise situations in school settings is problematic and disruptive to her life as she has begun to re-story the self and develop a more communicative body over time (Sparkes and Smith 2005). Therefore, Karen's construction of new body-self relationships and identities is threatened by her professional responsibility to deliver sports in school settings—Stormbreak is then seen as the cause of her negative emotional decline and the second complicating action of her story. I present the text below showing how Karen struggles with her mental health once again as she attempts to uphold both personal and professional identities despite the conflicted emotions brought on by Stormbreak.

> "I still find the idea of sport difficult, and it's the one subject, I still hate teaching, is PE. I can't stand teaching PE and part of that is because I've still got a lot of anxiety around the context of PE and it's my own anxiety, um which I'm fully aware of. Um, movement, is okay. Movement, I can kind of see as separate now. Sport still causes me a lot of anxiety. I know academically it's really important, I know academically it's really valuable, it's still something that causes me a large amount of anxiety and it's still something that will take me a really long time to get over. You can't like every aspect of your job, can you? …I always knew it was going to be an area of the job I found more difficult. Um it is an area of the job I find more difficult; it will probably always be an area of the job I find difficult. I don't find teaching English and Maths hard at all. That's– I enjoy teaching English and Maths, I enjoy teaching pretty much anything apart from PE but it's just something that you have to do, every job has bits that you don't enjoy. For some people teaching music is awful because they're anxious around music but it's just, you have to do it…Yeah, sick, it's just anxiety, standard anxiety, feel sick and shaky every time I teach it, but you hide it because you become a very good actor when you're teaching, it's probably because when you're first teaching you don't really know what you're doing and you're sitting in front of a class of 30 children – you learn, you learn to hide anxiety really quickly because if children pick up on it you don't stand a chance. You have to seem really confident even

> when you're not, so yeah, physically sick, always exhausted when I teach PE. I go home to sleep on PE days. It's just that, because it's so emotionally draining for me, I'm really tired. I just go home and sleep because it takes a lot out of me to hide the anxiety that I feel around sport." (Karen)

Karen's story tells of her long journey of recovery and disassociation from the traumatic and embodied experiences of childhood sports and PE; however, her past trauma is manifested as anxiety and panic attacks in her daily life given school expectations for her to deliver Stormbreak. As a result, Karen is forced to re-story her positive sense of self and identity as she engages with an intervention that does not align or reflect her personal beliefs, who she is and what she considers important in her life versus social expectations of finding ways to fit and "cope" with the situation. Additionally, having to manage her emotions in a work context—an added responsibility of emotional labour that feels necessary to do. Thus, Karen must re-story her life in a way that represents her—re-negotiating the self and identities as she integrates her story of PE and sports with her story of Stormbreak, experienced as extreme "emotionally draining, physically debilitating exhaustion. Therefore, seeing Stormbreak as the second complicating action in Karen's narrative that corresponds to the Oedipus emotional arc can prove useful for understanding other teachers' stories of Stormbreak. Especially, regular teachers like Karen, for whom Stormbreak's embodied practices may disproportionately burden with the daily, added responsibility of emotion work and re-storying of their body-self relationships and identities. In the section that follows, I delve into how Karen's disengagement from sports and focus on academic achievements helps her create a positive change in the self and identity, as teaching is held to the highest importance and her teaching identity becomes her strongest source of self-worth.

6.4.6 Fourth narrative element: resolution

I return to Labov's model and focus on the primary complicating action of Karen's story for interpreting the resolution narrative element, how the plot resolves in her personal narrative about physical activity and mental health. As shown throughout her story, Karen's body is made present during situations that are disruptive, which she draws on as meaningful events to position herself as the protagonist—or a *survivor* of harassment and psychological abuse in sports (Margo et al. 2022). This is a revealing account of Karen's embodiment as a survivor of verbal harassment and psychological abuse in sports, one that she is certain left her emotionally scarred. In that, Karen's lived experiences in sports or trauma-informed knowledge impacted her engagement with sports, with the resulting damage prompting disengagement altogether, yet shunning sports, a microcosm of Western society, turned out to be particularly challenging as a primary school teacher who was deeply embedded in a school system promoting physical activity. Thus, Karen selected certain forms of movement to engage in. Specifically, opting for lighter or less vigorous forms of physical activity that she understood as “different” from sports (e.g., walking) as this allowed her to claim an active resistance where she felt that she was rejecting the socially ascribed cultural norms to value sports competition, and at the same time, prescribe to what is acceptable in society. Finally, even if unconsciously, Karen adapted to sporting behaviours that were influenced by dominant narratives of physical activity culture on account that her past identities and body-self relationships, failed to take on the new meanings she desired for reclaiming a sense of individual autonomy.

Throughout the story, Karen helps us understand how her negative relationship with sports starting from primary school onwards negatively impacted upon her mental health. In essence, and as illustrated above (in Figure 8), Karen’s story is organised temporally and presents a clear plot that resolves—before her engagement with Stormbreak. For doing this, in the telling of her personal narrative, Karen highlighted certain experiences through her educational trajectory of primary school, middle school, high school, and university. In other words, she purposefully oriented us to several of the negative events of sports and mental health in the beginning of her story to ensure that she ended her life story on a more positive note with accounts upholding specific constructions of the selves and identities. Intentionally avoiding long utterances of speech about her recent engagement with Stormbreak because she understood it as a negative experience that disrupted the type of storyline she wished to tell—and hoped to live. An inspirational story of a girl who is a survivor of sports bullying and advocate for safer school settings. Thus, Karen endeavoured to set forth a linear narrative from the survivor’s experience, as traumatising but instrumental in reinforcing the importance of her role as a teacher—and protector. Identities that she views to be synonymous, given her view that teachers are obligated to safeguard their students, even though she was unable to experience this for herself, it served as a motivator for Karen’s intentions to safeguard children from suffering similar bullying and harassment in the context of sports. This is evident through the significant amount of self-evaluations Karen interspersed throughout her story (some of which are mentioned in greater detail in the sections above while some are explained in depth below), which exposed some of her contradictory beliefs and the vast complexities entrenched in her counternarrative of sports.

In this section, I offer multiple fragments of resolution-coded text from Karen's personal narrative to demonstrate how the main conflict of her story began to resolve once Karen exited educational settings and ascribed more importance to social bonds and responsibilities which she felt promoted her individual autonomy. The narrative element of resolution starts emerging in the excerpt presented directly below that illustrates Karen's relationships with mental health and movement after she completed her undergraduate studies and began working in a mental health setting.

> "Um, my kind of mental health issues...continued, to be honest, it wasn't, they weren't restricted to school, CAMHS didn't sort it out. Um I had quite serious mental health issues in university, and I, actually, after I finished, I was very unwell at university. I worked in a mental hospital for a year, obviously it was a psychiatric hospital, a private psychiatric hospital with various units but a lot of things they did were movement based, which creates that kind of 'maybe I should give it a go'. Um I made friends with a couple people, who, one of my best friends loves walking. He also had quite serious mental health issues, has had recently due to personal things, and one of the reasons he's managed that is by doing a lot of walking and because I was supporting him, I ended up doing a lot of that walking with him to talk through things with him to support him. I ended up doing a lot of that walking and stuff to help him and actually, it had a positive impact on me as well, so it's kind of been a slow process. Um of kind of going, getting into movements of a completely different context and actually going, this isn't awful and this kind of helps. It's been a slow, slow process. Getting a puppy helps as well. There's not much choice when you get a puppy, you have to walk." (Karen)

This highlights that Karen still struggled with negative health even after leaving school settings because, as she described, her mental health issues "weren't restricted to school". Specifically, engaging with the features of movement in the text above, allowed for a deeper understanding of how Karen's body narrative changed. For example, describing an atypical friendship that was built through social practices of physical activity to support a friend who "had quite serious mental health issues", and to Karen's disbelief "actually, had a positive impact" on her personal mental health, showed how Karen, despite experiencing mental health illness because of childhood sports participation was able to create different meanings for sports and physical activity over time. In that, Karen conceptualised the performance of walking through psychological and social aspects by way of supporting and caring for a friend. Similarly, Karen felt her social responsibility as a pet owner of a puppy requiring regular walks, permitted her re-engagement with physical activities in a positive way. The reason for this mainly being that walking promoted personal autonomy and building deeper social relationships (e.g., friends, pet animal, etc) and equally, excluded the societal demands accompanying peer pressure and authority figures with expectations and control of movement related behaviours.

Accordingly, Karen's attitude and behaviour shift for physical activity occurred once she realised that encounters with physical activities in adulthood were able to be correlated with the production of positive feelings. Walking, for instance, provides Karen with the possibilities of achieving a sense of autonomy and social bonds of friendship which she was never accustomed to in childhood sports and PE. Then, Karen's embodied knowledge in which past events of sports environments were "pressurised", "elusive" and sports participation was linked to her "being left out", by contrast sees walking as an opportunity to engage with a lower intensity of physical activity. Thus, Karen's participation in less intense forms of movement (i.e., recreational walking outdoors as an adult) is understood as a sort of resolution to the main conflict of her story that empowered her to re-engage with physical activity in a positive way for the first time because this new behaviour provided outcomes that intertwined previous stages of her life, so that her childhood sports trauma and then what she came to consider important later in adulthood were recognised. The resolution, then is regarded as Karen's performance of walking that connotes a sense of agency at present and a cautious reconciliation with the past, or as conveyed by Karen, "so walking, where there's no pressure, you can choose the group you're with, there's no forced to interact with people that you aren't comfortable with, that's absolutely fine, and they're positive experiences, but that's my choice as an adult, not as a child." This demonstrated how Karen sets forth both an orientation to the specific style of walking that she engages with, leisure or recreational, and an evaluation of the reason it is her preference. Moreover, it displayed Karen's inherent self-awareness of the effects of her past sports trauma and how she consciously draws on past interactions to avoid re-traumatisation or interactions with sports practices that she views to embody elements of pressure and competition. Thus, Karen's participation in low levels of physical activity via walking, with recognised benefits for mental health and well-being, permit a shift to a positive body-self relationship that offers her positive experiences. The main advantages of walking are two-fold; Karen is provided with (1) a sense of autonomy and (2) belonging that helped contest the typically negative feelings of loneliness and humiliation produced through continuous social rejection in past sports settings. This transformation of the body-self relationship in the context of physical activity, negotiated between the past and present worlds, is explored in more detail in the evaluation of the part of text below.

> "Yeah, for me now, it's a less negative experience. I'm still not the world's sportiest person. I would still never choose to engage in sport, I would, that's probably, that ship has sailed a long time ago. I have no interest in organised sport at all in any description. As I've got older, I've done things that, I've gone through phases of doing different kinds of movement. I've gone through phases of going to the gym quite regularly, swimming quite regularly, um of walking with a dog quite regularly. And there are mental health benefits of movement and actually just walking in terms of the process and notice, and being outside, that's really good for you. Um so that is actually something I really like doing and I really enjoyed doing, and I would say something I genuinely enjoy is movement. Swimming, I've always enjoyed and do enjoy, I've always loved being in the ocean. I love the sensory nurse of being in the ocean and the movement of being in the ocean. Um and the gym has always been good in terms of a frustration and getting rid of anxiety through physical movement, so yeah, it's more positive now but I would never be in a sporting context, it's taking me what, 'til 27, to get back to that stage where I can even see exercises that I want to do or movement as something I want to do." (Karen)

First, and as Karen appropriately illustrated in her narrative, the loss of her sporting body and sense of an autonomous self during childhood and adolescence was more of an emotional loss given that, past experiences of sports were highly exclusive and harmful for her well-being. However, by shifting to a master narrative of walking, she was able to ascribe meaning to movement as positive. For instance, Karen asserted, "as I've got older, I've done things that, I've gone through phases of doing different kinds of movement", explaining how that meaning has changed as she now participates in a form of physical activity for the specific purpose of feeling "good in terms of a frustration and getting rid of anxiety through physical movement". Karen's distinction between physical activities from one form of embodiment to another (e.g., sports and walking) is made increasingly clear in new constructions of her body-self relationship during adulthood which encompasses her understanding of movement as more than just the inherent socialisation or "negative experiences" of "organised sports" in the past. Karen explained, "there are mental health benefits of movement and actually just walking in terms of the process and notice, and being outside, that's really good for you. Um so that is actually something I really like doing and I really enjoyed doing, and I would say something I genuinely enjoy is movement." This shows how Karen ascribed environmental and psychological meaning to the physical act of walking as she emphasised her personal ability to positive body-self relationship between leisure walking in the natural environment and improved psychological well-being. Thus, leisure walking in outdoor spaces allows Karen to escape from the stressors associated with indoor school sports settings and change her body narrative over time. Yet in another exemplar of text offered next, Karen introduced an instance where she cultivated a friendship through movement and perceived it to be highly unorthodox.

> "I do have a friendship with somebody I met at the gym actually who's quite similar to me in the sense that she isn't a typical mover. She started going to the gym because she'd been told she had to by a doctor. Um and she's just a nice person and she's probably the one I've got going. Our relationship is not movement based anymore because I've moved away so I don't go to the same gym anymore but she's probably the one relationship I've built through movement. I'd say all my other friendships have absolutely nothing to do with moving. Um they're not people I've met through movement, they're people I met in other situations. But possibly because I don't put myself in situations where I have to move very often, especially not socially because it's not something I'm comfortable doing as part of a social group." (Karen)

This excerpt encapsulates that despite Karen's attribution of new meaning of physical activity positive social bonds and movement related interactions as an adult, her experience of the body and self in relation to movement is complex and often has an ambiguous quality. This is because Karen's experience of the body involves mental illness, and while she may desire to fit into the socially accepted dominant narrative of movement later in life, she cannot completely disconnect from the embodied experiences of past sports trauma. This is because, "we are relational beings, and narratives and meanings are achieved within relationships" (p.3). Thus, recognising Karen's embodiment, she is seen as reconstructing a positive body-self relationship with sports as she recreates the self and the body in specific new social events of movement in relation to her subjective lived experiences in sports. However, while the performance of walking and identity as a survivor of sports allows Karen to change in her understanding of the self over time, one that is more confident. Karen makes it clear that she is still *not* comfortable with experiencing her body in this way—and others' embodied state of being while emersed in social settings related to physical activity. This is because Karen achieves reclaiming the past self through this friendship, which can be seen at this point where she described, "I do have a friendship with somebody I met at the gym actually who's quite similar to me in the sense that she, isn't a typical mover. She started going to the gym because she'd been told she had to by a doctor. Um and she's just a nice person." It is evident that Karen avoids narrative reconstruction of the self as a "typical mover" or sporty individual, so she regards the telling of a friendship with "someone similar" to herself and based on the foundation of movement as a threat to that sense of self. This dilemma emerges when Karen, who still retains an unconscious bias towards athletes and views sports practices as toxic (e.g., bullies from past sporting events), draws on a positive relationship in the context of physical activity, as she fears that I may assume she is contradicting her *point*. So, while Karen presented a situation in which walking with a friend was a positive occurrence, she clarified that was a disparate friendship, not to be confused with friendships that revolve around physical activity. Thus, she felt compelled to explain how this particular friend was not even "a typical mover"—and "just a nice person". Added to that, the friend in question was depicted as deprived of control in relation to her health-related behaviours, specifically, solely engaging with exercise following orders from a medical health professional; thus, making their friendship acceptable and Karen's storytelling of their social relationship worth telling.

Karen adopted beliefs of the Cartesian mind-body dualism that influenced her understanding of health and health-related behaviour where she privileges outcomes of the mind over the body. To illustrate, Karen attributes more importance to emotions in the context of physical activity, whereby thinking in the way of feelings such as loneliness and embarrassment associated to negative sporting practices in the past and valuing her feelings of satisfaction associated with walking in adulthood to reframe new movement interactions. In addition to, she explicitly disconnected an individual who is "a nice person" from a person partaking in behaviours of movement, "a typical mover". This exemplifies that although Karen's personal narrative is a counternarrative of British sports culture, there is a degree of conformity to the wider master narrative of physical activity that perpetuates the health benefits of walking and shapes Karen's health behaviour. A dominate socio-cultural narrative that Karen consciously drew on or as she reported, "that kind of 'maybe I should give it a go'", so that her personal attitudes ascribed to culturally popularised values and socially integrated behaviours of health and physical activity. In traditional Western culture, the "fit" or "healthy" body is romanticised and participation in leisure walking is confirmed to improve overall health despite being a simple physical activity. Karen's recent shift in attitude, a positive disposition toward physical activity as an adult, shows how the socio-cultural expectations of sport and physical activity were internalised over time, influencing interest and decision-making for her re-engagement with physical activity. This is primarily because, for Karen, walking is significantly different from her previous interactions of organised sports in competitive settings of PE. In the sense that, while she once focused heavily on aspects of the corporeal body, fixating on her body weight and overall appearance as she was made to feel insecure about her body within such spaces, to the point that the emotional turmoil disrupted her body-self relationship withing sports and physical activity for years, walking offered her a safe space. Thus, Karen's narrative shift to a positive body-self relationship through walking, where she does not feel threatened, is viewed as an conscious reinforcement of the contemporary dominant narrative in the Western world that promotes *walking as good for well-being* (Zurawik 2020). However, although she attempts to construct a positive body-self relationship, she creates boundaries informed through her traumatic childhood.

Accordingly, for Karen, walking outdoors served as an opportunity for her to "actually"—or finally, relate to widely adopted stereotypical attitudes of movement as advantageous and reap its culturally idolised benefits. Yet, this is done by restorying what movement looks like later in life. Further, evidence of Karen's distinction between the mind and body is emphasised through the way she described walking; "movements of a completely different context" given the "positive impact" on her mental health. In other words, Karen now sees the performance of physical activity a new way, where the mind is still separate and privileged over the body, despite walking being a bodily practice, the corporeal body is not made directly visible. Essentially, Karen suffered from appearance-based bullying in childhood sports and came to identify the sense of self as "academic rather than active", with the defined selves and identities associated with components of the mind—not body. Therefore, given that Karen perceived walking positively impacts her psychological health, and in turn, reinforces her sense of the self as academic, she feels that it is less detrimental or "awful" in comparison to other, more physically active, bodily practices.

The changing importance that Karen ascribed to her *feelings* in relation to social interactions of bodily practices serves as a social accomplishment as it is now in accordance with socially accepted behaviours. This subjective experience was understood through her story, given that, stories can "connect the individual self to the society in which they are formed" (Stewart et al. 2011, p.583). In this regard, her narrative is seen as valuable for revealing her emotional selves and bodies in relation to her embodied experiences over time. In this case, shown through Karen's construction of a certain body type that was inherent to her traumatic socialisation into sports. Despite movement being both social and corporeal, Karen expressed and constituted the selves and social realities negotiated over time in narratives of sports and physical activity, in a manner that was mainly deprived of any mention of her physical body, yet, her narrative was deeply embodied. Telling her story in a way in which she can prioritise her sense of self as a teacher, one that privileges the mind over the body, and is "academic rather than active".

Frank (2013) suggested that while people tell personal stories, the stories that they tell are innately social since people have learned how to tell stories from others (e.g., family, friends, etc.); thus, people as storytellers, know the formal structures of a story and, what is or is not appropriate to say. Given this, Karen's application of metaphorical language to describe the self and the long-term psychological impact of traumatic childhood sports experiences revealed her cultural competence of the social practice of storytelling. Specifically, Karen is familiar with the art of storytelling, in that, she uses metaphorical language to describe her *negative* body-self relationship in sports because she is aware of how her story opposes the dominant cultural narrative of sports. Drawing on metaphorical language, allowed Karen to claim the sense of the self and body: "I'm still not the world's sportiest person. I would still never choose to engage in sport, I would, that's probably, that ship has sailed a long time ago." Karen's performance of the constructed selves and identities in relation to past experiences of sports were appropriately dramatised through her use of the metaphor, to the degree that the meaning Karen ascribed to the social practices of sports evidently differed from the wider cultural narrative, she told a persuasive counternarrative. This shows that Karen has learned how to elicit a good story of how she survived the psychologically harmful effects of her Western socialisation into sports, using socio-culturally shared conventions of storytelling (e.g., metaphors) to emphasise her fear, yet, attempts to overcome that fear by conforming to dominant socio-cultural narratives of contemporary sport and physical activity. Those which are widely accepted and available.

Considering all this, Karen's ability to achieve a socially acceptable relationship with sports, her specific use of the metaphor, "that ship has sailed" is interesting since it reveals that Karen structured her narrative in a way that highlighted personal past sports trauma and displayed the bigger picture or wider cultural issues in sports. Specifically, a story structure that allows rapidly identifying aspects of significant importance to Karen while also framing her personal narrative as tellable. By drawing on specific cultural metaphors, revealed how she truly felt about sports through the stages of long-term mental illness related to past sports trauma. Specifically, this metaphorical language shows how Karen works to resolve her conflict with sports but feels her opportunity to be sporty or enjoy social settings of sports is no longer a possibility, given that the consequences of past negative sports experiences cannot be changed. Further, it is a conventional metaphor or resource that Karen draws on to align her story with others' stories by offering reflections that illuminates how Karen still views her body and sense of self as impaired because of sports, and although she has learned to re-engage with a form of movement, the past psychological hurt and pain that she endured in setting of sports can never be undone. Karen's changing narrative of movement, as she attempts creating a new, more positive meaning for movement, still retains the consequences of past experiences of sports on her body, which as Karen expressed, "it's more positive now but I would never be in a sporting context". Analysing features of resolution in the spoken narrative emphasised that Karen eventually learned to survive the psychological trauma onset from childhood sports but had no desire to intentionally place the self and body in school sports settings.

6.4.7 Fifth narrative element: Coda

Coda, the final narrative element in Labov's model of structural analysis is seen as the conclusion of a narrative which connects the beginning to the end of the story. Seeing this, this section repeats aspects of the sections above in the final examination of Karen's personal narrative. Finally, an exploration into Karen's life story of sports provided an individual teacher's counternarrative of embodied trauma of sports, in which a negative body-self relationship developed over time, beginning in childhood school PE, and leading into adulthood, where recent engagement with Stormbreak required revisiting childhood trauma and re-storying her body narrative. This narrative then illuminated how Karen's narrative construction of body-self relationships—changed body narrative enabled her to resolve childhood sports trauma, whereby changing to a different form of movement as an adult, walking served as a means of addressing biographical disruption for sport-related chronic mental illness. Ultimately, Karen placed past sports trauma in the context of dominant 21st century cultural narratives of physical activity, in which *walking is healthy*; thus, adapting to the cultural bodily practice of walking, which allowed her to engage in a *safe physical activity* while still recognising people and settings of childhood PE and sports as unsafe. Further, Karen associated this narrative reconstruction of a positive sense of self (as a survivor) and the body (through experiences of recovery) not only with a singular form of movement, walking, but also (as mentioned before) with teaching, which permitted Karen to reconstruct her identity as professional. For instance, Karen reported how teaching was beneficial for her recovery as it helped in the reclaiming of her identity and improved her mental health.

> "So, I moved home because I wasn't very well, then decided to train to be a teacher and it's probably, actually being a teacher that's best for my mental health, which is so weird because it's a high-pressure job and it's never finished but it's really hard to be miserable when you're around children all day, really difficult to be miserable. So that's probably been the turning point in my mental health is actually being a teacher." (Karen)

This demonstrated the process of identity construction, whereby the negative impact of Karen's experiences of childhood sports disrupted her positive body-self relationship. Specifically, Karen spoke of an oppressive and dehumanising experience of childhood sports, which led to a major depressive state even into adulthood framing her understanding of sports as detrimental. Yet, in hopes of improving her—physical, social, and emotional health, Karen reframed her unique story of physical activity and mental health by constructing her professional identity as a teacher who safeguards children in school sports.

> “Sometimes I see things with the children, and I go ‘Oh’, and it’s kind of that feeling that ‘I’ve experienced that’, or ‘mine (experience) was different to that’, it’s that familiarity, that’s kind of the only way that I remember what my experiences with sport were like because I blocked them out so effectively *laughs* because I’m quite good at that. I don’t know, for my own mental well-being probably because it was so horrible. Um yeah. It’s mainly the positive ones I look at and go, for the ones that struggle and have positive ones, I look at and go, ‘I never had that’ or ‘it wouldn’t have been like that’. It is better now; I think people control it better now. Schools are definitely hotter on bullying now than they were when I was in school.” (Karen)

By re-positioning her disrupted identity and encumbered body-self relationship to a professional identity, Karen reported the value of her past sports experiences as it facilitated the repurposing of past sports related trauma for constructing a new identity as an empathetic teacher or protector of children. Specifically, Karen turns to the cultural narrative of a survivor in the construction of her autobiographical narrative (Sparkes 1999), in which she can re-story the body-self relationship after suffering from the disability of mental illness on account of past sporting events, ultimately, giving past body narrative purpose as the motivation for the future self that becomes an activist advocating for safeguarding initiatives in school sports (Margo et al. 2022). For example, Karen narrated how past sports experiences were meaningful as they impacted on her current teaching practices.

> “I know, when you teach children, there are children in my class for who sport is the only thing they're good at and being active and moving is the only time they shine, it’s the only time they feel confident or feel like they are of value and for those children its massively valuable and if they didn't have sport, they would probably feel like I did, do, around sport all of the time, but I’m also fully aware that for people like me, it is not something comfortable, it’s not something enjoyable, it can actually be something quite frightening because my feelings were all around fear. It’s all fear, I’m scared of it.” (Karen)

This excerpt of text exemplified how Karen rendered an explanation that connects the beginning actions of the story to the present, conceptualised as a coda. Concomitantly, demonstrating that

Karen finds her past sports trauma valuable for pedagogical practices, even though she has not fully recovered from childhood experiences of bullying and harassment in sports given that she is still fearful of sports. For example, Karen explicitly explained the nature of her feelings in the context of sports, “It’s all fear, I’m scared of it.” This represents her rejection of the common Western cultural narrative that physical activity is good for your well-being. However, Karen’s story is interspersed with sporadic excerpts of contradictory texts. As she makes sense of life through adverse sports experiences during childhood and adolescence, as an adult, she shifts to narratives of resilience and growth, in which she uses dominant cultural constructions of mental and physical health and well-being associated with sports and physical activity for engaging with sports in a different context.

Western discourse interpretations are further applied to reframe Karen’s negative experiences of adversity, to more positive outcomes of a professional identity, where she becomes a professional advocate for positive mental health as a survivor of abuse in childhood sports. This is identified as Karen adopting a range of narrative resources to re-story her counternarrative, including the story template of a survivor’s journey of bullying in sports since it provided her with a way to understand the body-self relationship as positive. In that, Karen’s identity as a teacher-advocate with trauma-informed expertise, allowed initial trauma and vulnerability to be recontextualised as beneficial for children’s safety in sports. Specifically, Karen’s ability to be a better teacher as a result of negative events of sports that resulted in not only her awareness of social power dynamics in school sport settings, but enhanced learning of empathy towards non-athletic students. Although, this is understood as the benefits of a survivor turned teacher-advocate, in a privileged position where she can deeply connect and empathise with children, especially to empower those who present similar feelings of fear in sports, Karen’s inherent fear of sports is still present and disruptive to her daily life. Thus, narrative inquiry into Karen’s life story in the context of sports and mental health revealed that resolving the body’s painful body narrative resulted in external and internal conflicts, where Karen often purposely diminished feelings of discomfort, fear, and sometimes even the debilitating effects of her body's physiological response associated with a suffering sense of self and retraumatising narrative from revisiting tragic memories of childhood sports. Consequently, the telling of Karen’s subjective trauma-related sports experiences, seen as embodied performances, is constructed using multiple, diverse body narratives, taking in to account the dilemmas of personal and professional identities when she is forced to redefine the body, selves and identities given recent her involvement with Stormbreak that is associated with post-traumatic symptoms and past adversities.

As previously noted in this chapter, people like to hear stories about success and happy endings, or as Vonnegut (1985) put it, “Somebody gets into trouble, then gets out of it again. People love that story. They never get tired of it.” Likewise, not all stories hold the same weight or status, precisely, “some are more acceptable than others. Some are heard and some are ignored or silenced” (Smith and Sparkes 2008a, p.218). In line with this, Karen attempts to resolve the conflict in her story, a negative relationship with sports, by drawing on a positive storyline that allows her make sense of her past experiences in a meaningful and engaging way. She begins by setting forth the scene of childhood PE and sport settings as detrimental to her mental health (the plot), and in conclusion, offers more positive experiences of recovery which she conceptualises through the embodied act of walking as a positive resolution to the story. Importantly, in shifting her experiences to into a socio-cultural storyline that is more positive, and accordingly, seen to be more “tellable”, Karen draws on her understanding of the stigmatisation of different bodies in the 21st century and literary knowledge of narrative structures. For instance, Karen consciously worked towards creating a positive body-self relationship and identity by resolving the conflict of her story; therefore, in her attempt to re-story a counternarrative of physical activity to one that is more positive Karen drew upon dominant cultural narratives of physical activity linked to well-being and popular forms of storytelling in Western culture. Specifically, Karen’s efforts to uphold a positive identity through narrative constructions of repairment in adulthood is demonstrated further in the excerpt of coda-coded text offered below.

> “So that’s probably been the turning point in my mental health is actually being a teacher. I struggled more during my first two years but in my recent two years, how long have I been medicated now, for 4 years, and I’m fine. I’m absolutely fine. Probably for the first time in my life, I would say that I’m absolutely fine which is amazing considering I have a friend who has been suicidal over the last year and has not been fine. Um, it’s been amazing being fine, actually for the first time in my life, and actually feeling adjusted. So that’s kind of my journey through mental health and well-being. From awful to kind of okay, I just have to keep an eye on it because I still got that overworking, overanxious tendency.” (Karen)

In this regard, Karen draws attention to her professional identity as a teacher, which she explicitly pronounced in her words as “the turning point in my mental health is actually being a teacher” and associated with the positive ending or resolution to her story of disturbing sports experiences. Yet, in the self-identification of a narrative resolution situated in the context of sports or embodied acts, Karen forgoes mentioning her re-engagement with sports in a school context due to recent expectations for regular teachers to deliver *Stormbreak*. Showing that, Karen has adopted a master Western cultural narrative of the hero or survivor to end the narrative re-construction of the selves and identities, and overall structure of her personal narrative, on a high note. One that may not be possible if the impact of Stormbreak was highlighted towards the end. Karen's approach of concluding her story on a positive note was learned through a Western socialisation into storytelling, which views counternarratives like her singular story about trauma from childhood PE and sports, to lack features that may be socially acceptable and orientated to "the upper boundary of tellability" (Norrick 2005, p.323). Therefore, this story is seen as highly tellable, according to Labovian standards, as she dialectically constituted for all six of Labov's narrative elements and additional complex processes involved in the formation of her narrative.

For instance, she appropriately drew on a dominant narrative that permeates most storylines today as it positioned her to be the hero or protagonist of the story. Further, Karen's story of embodied experiences of sports fits the cultural norms that classify a story as unique, or a counternarrative that challenges the dominant narrative of sports, so in consideration of presenting it as an acceptable narrative, she ends it in a way that is familiar and accepted in the socialisation process of storytelling—within the form of a positive ending. This is illustrated in the segment of text above where Karen constructs her new identity, as a teacher who can empathise with students, constructed to demonstrate a shift of the body narrative that contributes to the overall effect of her story. Ultimately, and as described throughout the narrative analysis in this chapter, Karen renders a story of sports and mental health that is moving, meaningful, and valuable. Show shows a self-awareness of social power dynamics in PE settings and the ability to empathise with non-athletic students as a result of her traumatic experiences in PE and school sports.

Thus, in the immersive, inductive exploration of Karen's personal narrative, I interpreted Labov's narrative element of coda, as Karen's long-term sports trauma that manifests as anxiety and panic attacks in her daily life as she is expected to deliver a mental health and movement intervention, Stormbreak. Further, Karen is forced to re-story her sense of self and identity as she engages with an intervention that does not align with her beliefs; therefore, she must do the work (e.g., emotional labour) of re-storying her life in a way that represents her, by re-negotiating the self and identities as she integrates her story of PE with her story of Stormbreak. While she shows cultural competence in storytelling, she may be familiar with how stories like hers, small stories that go against the grain are often silenced, and hence, tries to draw on a dominant narrative, widely accepted, and positive narrative. Particularly, because it recognises past sports adversities and how such troubling experiences can retraumatise and disrupt lives, which as Karen demonstrated was still a possibility despite the reconstruction of a professional identity through social interactions of sports later in life.

6.5 Summary

I explicitly adapted Labov's (1972) structural coding as a general framework for analysis of Karen's narrative. This broad treatment of the text, drawn upon from a pre-existing model of structural analysis without conforming to its narrow assumptions, was suitable for an understanding that focused on form and content. Additionally, a flexible approach to narrative structure enabled theorisation in the interplay between narrative and culture, allowing Karen's personal narrative to serve as a pedagogical resource that was examined as more than just temporally connected clauses, constrained from developing into a fully articulated narrative, with greater coherence, context, rather than, a sense of finality (Mishler 1986). Specifically, an exploration into Karen's story of childhood sports trauma produced a counternarrative of sports that signifies teachers' perceptions of movement and mental health should be better understood as they can have troubling experiences with deep-rooted emotions which can resurface and disrupt their lives. Consequently, Karen's counternarrative of sports can work to ensure that others do not endure similar trauma in sports, and that teachers should not be considered vehicles to deliver, free of emotions, selves, memories – or personal experiences, rather, they are seen as *embodied* pedagogues, inhabiting *real* bodies that can change over time (Sparkes and Smith 2011). Their past experiences matter for intervention efficacy *and* importantly, for them and their mental health as their stories, *told out of* and *through* their bodies (Smith and Sparkes 2008a, 2008b, 2012), serve to reinforce personal and professional identities embedded in the culture of teaching. With special emphasis placed on attending to teachers' small stories (Vásquez 2011), shifting *stories to live by* (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) around PE (Casey and Schaefer 2016), and even the *middle* and *small* stories about physical activity in narrative analysis to recognise the dynamic nature of identities within their socially situated contexts (Griffin and Phoenix 2016), and concomitantly, provide a greater understanding of the factors influencing their pedagogical practices. Especially, seen as useful for teacher-led interventions like Stormbreak to address barriers in relation to positive relationships with physical activity and sports.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The current research explored how teachers' perceptions of mental health and movement impacted a whole-school primary education mental health and movement intervention over time. As part of an charity-university collaborative project evaluation on the effectiveness of Stormbreak, the study focused on the perspectives of six primary school teachers responsible for piloting the Stormbreak programme in five schools across Southwest England. This chapter discusses significant findings as related to the literature on broader characteristics of Stormbreak across contexts of physical activity, mental health, and education. In this study, there is a specific focus on teachers' embodied experiences in this study connected to embodiment theories and narrative approaches. The broader implications of the research, which are especially valuable for stakeholders who want to effectively implement whole-school mental health and movement interventions that involve teachers, are then discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion of the study's limitations, recommendations for future research, and a brief conclusion.

Stormbreak (2024a) is a teacher-delivered intervention that adopts a holistic approach to enhance children's mental health and well-being by promoting a positive culture of physical activity. It adopts a whole-school approach that engages all school members, thus providing an alternative to existing policies and practices within UK primary schools. Teachers play a pivotal role in evidence-based frameworks that use a whole-school approach for promoting mental health and physical activity in schools. Numerous school-based programs in the UK have embraced a whole-school model to foster children's social and emotional health (Goldberg et al. 2019), and physical activity levels (Tibbitts et al. 2021). However, despite the evidence connecting physical activity to improved mental health in children (Biddle et al. 2019), most whole-school interventions are centred around a single element – physical activity or mental health provision. In this sense, Stormbreak is novel as it incorporates both mental health *and* physical activity as integral components of its whole-school model that uses specific forms of movement to inform specific concepts of mental health – known as *mentally healthy movement*. This unique approach, therefore, offers diverse opportunities for primary school children to reap the demonstrated benefits in both domains if implemented effectively by all school members.

This narrative inquiry aimed to explore teachers’ relationships with their bodies, selves, and identities through stories about mental health and sports/physical activity to understand how their experiential, embodied knowledge impacts their implementation of Stormbreak. This critical phenomenon remains unexplored in current research, with a limited investigation into how teachers' perspectives on physical activity and mental health influence their engagement in school-based programmes using physically active lessons to inform mental health. Specifically, the subjective meanings and perceived significance that teachers attribute to the concepts of mental health and movement from their embodied experiences of sports and health remain understudied. Consequently, the impact of these meanings on teachers' professional practices and the implementation of teacher-delivered interventions like Stormbreak remains unclear, requiring further study and elucidation. As a result, the existing research at this time is inadequate for evaluating interventions parallel to Stormbreak, in which teachers are primarily seen as vehicles of delivery for embedding mentally healthy movement in educational settings and, thus, can find themselves disembodied from the process and ill-equipped in terms of possessing the essential knowledge and skills to teach pedagogic processes of mental health and movement effectively.

Acknowledging a conspicuous absence in the UK by research on the practical and theoretical importance of teachers’ embodiment in mental health promotion interventions, this study suggests considerations towards the bodies involved in the processes of interventions. It invites further exploration and discussion to understand teachers responsible for the delivery of interventions, mainly when dealing with experiences that disrupt, exclude, and alienate the body. Inevitably, pedagogy evolves as new ways of teaching continue to emerge in the form of ever-increasing health and sport interventions, and as the recent global pandemic has shown, so do crises that directly impact teachers’ lives, personally and professionally. Embodied approaches that explicitly focus on the *body* and experiences for understanding teachers’ subjectivities and the postmodern world as connected, and the connection between the two as directly related to their delivery of physical activities, offer meaningful ways to accomplish the purpose of improving children’s mental health.

Against this backdrop, and to address the purpose and aim of the study, this chapter discusses on how the present study provides a meaningful basis for understanding teachers in school interventions and how analytical findings directly addressed two distinct research objectives.

1. To explore teachers’ experiences of mental health and movement over time.

2. To explore how teachers' stories about mental health and movement influence engagement with Stormbreak.

Guided by these objectives, a social constructionist stance was adopted to delve into the situated accounts of teachers' past and present interactions with physical activity and mental health. Through this, qualitative, inductive, and narrative approaches towards embodiment revealed a tapestry of teachers' stories, encompassing their lives personal and social dimensions of their lives before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before moving towards the summation of teachers' stories here, I will briefly describe how the term 'teachers' will be used in this chapter to avoid any later confusion.

The term 'teachers' refers to the original group of six teachers who partook in the study unless –

1. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it refers to the subset of three teachers from the original group of six teachers.
2. Specified in England, in the UK, or globally.
3. Within the two previous contexts, it is prefixed by 'other', 'most', 'some', or 'most'.

Making this distinction is essential for the discussion because only half of the teachers participated in the second half of the study. Thus, narrative data during COVID-19 will be limited to these three teachers (see section 7.2.3). Equally importantly, as all stories are fluid and nuanced, and when referring to the differences or shared meanings amongst them, then 'other teachers' or 'most teachers' is either used between all six of the teachers (in phase one pre-pandemic) or between the three teachers (in phase two post-pandemic)(see Table 1 for a summary of data collection and sample).

Returning to the section summary, teachers told predominantly structured and selected stories of their lived experiences to claim their bodies, identities, and selves, as influenced by the complex fabric of their cultural scripts. Specifically, paying close attention to the body as a site of analysis revealed the gendered bodies narratively constructed in childhood experiences, where mental health and movement were interwoven and connected to the Western dualism of the mind and body. Most teachers constructed inspiring stories with narrative constructions of resilience associated to their masculine and feminine athletic identities that conform to the dominant notions of masculinity and femininity in Western culture. These learned and internalised gendered views and practices during childhood shaped their views on mental health and movement as adults and, concomitantly, their delivery of Stormbreak practices. However, one female teacher provided a counternarrative that depicts physical activity culture as detrimental and emphasises its exclusion of individuals with larger bodies who challenged societal norms of masculinity and femininity in sports. Notably, her engagement with a school-based movement and mental health programme compelled her to confront and renegotiate her relationship with physical activity. Meanwhile, other teachers drew on more vulnerable narratives of mental health and movement amidst the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The present findings show how these dimensions of embodiment and the emergence of teachers' different selves, identities, and bodies inform their perspectives on mental health and movement and influence their professional engagement with Stormbreak. Understanding their body-self relationships, which can drive engagement or resistance to such interventions, is valuable for holistic teacher-led education and well-being programmes. In this respect, this study addresses the constraints of previous research to consider the core connection between the embodiment of teachers and narrative methods of inquiry to support an evaluation project on the efficacy of multidimensional school-based interventions.

7.2 Key findings

A narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly 2000; Riessman 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2009b) was used to explore six primary school teachers' perceptions of mental health and movement in a collaborative project evaluation of *Stormbreak*. Analysis of teachers' narratives, framed by the historical and sociocultural contexts of sports, health, and education, spanned before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. In phase one, a thematic narrative analysis was adopted to study the narratively constructed and communicated realities of six teachers that shaped their selves, bodies, and identities in relation to mental health and movement over time. Additionally, a structural narrative analysis was applied to delve deeper into one teacher's story that diverged from the norm and signified different meanings for mental health and movement. In phase two, the thematic narrative analysis was extended to reflect the continuities and changes within three teachers' stories in the wider contemporary context of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting how the disruption caused by the pandemic influenced the way in which teachers told stories of mental health and movement. These narratives of experience are studied in a variety of ways, with regard to content, context, and structure for a deeper understanding of teachers' diverse relationships with mental health and movement. In this way, agreeing with narrative scholars that believe narrative data should be subject to a plurality of narrative analyses to capture the complex and multifaceted nature of the data, the messiness and contradictions embedded in stories that are structured in diverse ways, and the continuities and changes within stories that reflect different views of the social world (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Smith and Sparkes 2009a; Dowling and Garrett 2016; Griffin and Phoenix 2016; Denzin 2018).

For example, I draw on teachers' *stories to live by* (Clandinin and Connelly 1990; Connelly and Clandinin 1990; Clandinin and Connelly 1998, 2000) to explore the complexities of teacher knowledge in relation to Stormbreak. In terms of how teachers have individually and collectively come to understand movement and mental health and how their understanding is shaped by their personal and professional settings, the wider social context in which they came to understand mental health and movement and currently experience (and teach) mental health and movement. From this standpoint, teachers' narratives are embodied, teachers' identities are narratively constructed, and teacher knowledge is context-dependent, and as such, their stories to live by as constantly evolving and shifting (Clandinin and Connelly 1999; Connelly and Clandinin 1999; Clandinin et al. 2009; Clandinin 2015; Casey and Schaefer 2016). Also, I consider the *body narratives* (Sparkes 1999) of teachers to understand their stories "about, through, and with the body" (Griffin and Phoenix 2016, p.11) and the diverse ways in which they narratively constructed certain types of body-self relationships by telling about their bodies and selves within the context of mental health and movement. In this way, acknowledging that "individuals draw from a cultural repertoire of stories that they then assemble into personal stories" (Phoenix and Sparkes 2006, p.109). These narrative, embodied ways of knowing teachers' subjective experiences, with attention to how their bodies and selves interact to form their identities, facilitated understanding on the political, social, and cultural factors associated to what and how teachers know about physical activity and mental health, which shapes their personal and professional practices, and the effective implementation of Stormbreak.

Analyses of the data within two phases of in-depth interviews with teachers in the context of mental health and movement is represented in the three major discussion areas: (a) dominant narratives of movement and mental health, (b) a counternarrative of movement and mental health, and (c) shifting stories to the dominant narrative of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.2.1 Dominant narratives of movement and mental health: reinforcing discourses of privilege

Recalling narratives of movement and mental health, teachers narratively constructed their bodies, selves, and identities within negative and positive experiences of learning about sports and mental health both in and out of school settings. These narrative constructions in the past and present provide a reflection on their process of socialisation for mental health and movement. Most teachers recounted childhood stories of PE and school sport that highlighted positive occurrences in their personal and social lives in relation to their gender and class. Furthermore, teachers with such positive experiences continued to construct positive attitudes and relationships to movement and mental health, with increased engagement in physical activities into adulthood. That is, most teachers embodied dominant narratives of physical activity and mental health, valuing physical activities as primarily positive for mental health, and so, they constructed their healthy, athletic bodies by considering the positioning of their gender and class when portraying their performances of health through active lifestyle choices. Given this, most teachers welcomed the implementation of Stormbreak and emphasised their alignment to its underpinning notions that movement always positively affects the mental health and well-being of children.

7.2.1.1 Past and present participation in sport: the intergenerational reproduction of gender and class

The dominant narratives that arose from most teachers' stories to live by of physical activity illustrate the intergenerational transmission and reproduction of gender and class-based privileges related to their childhood socialisation into sports. Fathers were noticeably influential in introducing sports to male teachers, while female teachers had more mixed-gender influences. That is, most teachers developed ongoing positive relationships with sports primarily through parent-child relationships with paternal influences or a male role model that characterised male bodies in the context of physical cultures as natural. However, many of the female teachers also told stories about strong women in sports in ways to claim their current behaviours and certain types of bodies in the context of sports. These teachers who learned, observed, and assimilated sports behaviours while growing up, aligning with the dominant narratives of masculinity and femininity in sports, went on to construct and embody cultural ideals of gender even as adults.

Male teachers constructed body narratives that drew on the dominant narrative of *hegemonic masculinity* (Connell 1987; Connell 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005) or male domination in sports to create specific hegemonic masculinities, specifically, competitive, aggressive, powerful masculine bodies in hypercompetitive, organised sports performances that reinforced dominant notions of masculinity, like football, rugby, and golf (Messner 1988). Most female teachers, on the other hand, emphasised their femininity by constructing body narratives that positioned their bodies and body-related behaviours with traditionally feminine sports, such as dance and aerobics. They also pointed to other women's sports participation in their stories about sports to reinforce their own sporting identities and behaviours. While most female teachers opposed dominant views of hegemonic masculinity that traditionally oppress women by constructing strong feminine bodies in sports, their internalization of thin, athletic body ideals affirms dominant narratives around the female body in sports and popular media that privileges toned, lean, and slender bodies for female athletes (Carty 2005). In this way, sports served as empowering for most teachers who socially constructed control of their own bodies by framing their body-self stories in sports to specific dominant narratives in sports that constituted their versions of athleticism, strength, and power and that helped structure their sporting lives.

In addition to the intergenerational reproduction of gender dominance and negotiation of stereotypical masculinities and femininities, teachers' current sports participation was associated to their class-based opportunities in childhood. Most teachers who developed an ongoing positive relationship with sports into adulthood were from middle/upper-class backgrounds and had spent most of their childhoods participating in leisure activities within environments that represented a social hierarchy and class-based privileges. Specifically, using Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) theory of cultural capital and social reproduction to analyse teachers' childhood experiences, such as having access to stables and often going horse riding or holidays across the UK to go swimming in different seas, lakes, and rivers, revealed the dominant social status and cultural capital that teachers inherited from their parents at an early age. Taking this view highlighted how teachers constructed stories about their sporting bodies, interweaving gender and class structures that represented their powers and privileges, those that were intergenerationally reproduced and maintained over the life course through their sports behaviours.

7.2.1.2 Past and present awareness of mental health: the intergenerational reproduction of resilience and the mind-body dualism

Most teachers adopted the dominant narrative of "Get on with it" within British culture to construct their stories to live by of mental health. This narrative underpins the intergenerational reproduction of resilience as a coping response learned, observed, and assimilated by teachers during childhood. Specifically, as passed on from parents and older generation adults who used "Get on with it" as a natural response to dismiss children's display of negative emotions. Studying teachers' intergenerational stories of resilience established key factors underpinning these notions, such as family and culture, and the dynamic nature of these stories about mental health and well-being (Merrill and Fivush 2016). The latter functions to illuminate the prevailing narratives teachers adopted from parents during childhood and adolescence, family stories that they easily restoried and through which the self, parent and family identities and different values were revealed (Merrill et al. 2019). Accordingly, family stories defined the mind-body dualism within a culture before the recent calls for mental health promotion and well-being that expose resilience in a multidisciplinary, relational, and embodied way, which teachers responded to in ways that comforted their subjectivities (McLean 2016).

From a sociological perspective, narratives reveal our social lives since people naturally tell about their lives; thus, "culture speaks itself" (Riessman 1993). The nature play is validated then, as most teachers embraced "Get on with it" to narrate family stories of mental health in ways that illustrated the prevailing narrative socioculturally and historically ascribed to the British context. This dominant cultural narrative, representing how teachers came to learn about mental health from parents who promoted cultural resilience as a powerful and positive practice, influences the construction of their resilient identities and practices in teaching. For example, teachers articulated past instances of adopting this coping response, drawing on "Get on with it" to handle disruptive student behaviour in school spaces. In this way, teachers reproduced "Get on with it" as a pedagogical tool – promoting a resilient mindset for positive mental health and validating their individual family identities and collective national identities.

Overall, teachers' stories of mental health reveal the deeply embedded Cartesian mind-body dualism that prioritises the mind over the body and how teachers reproduced the British culture of mental health using resilience was a coping mechanism through their pedagogy. Furthermore, some teachers adopted this dominant narrative of "Get on with it" to tell their stories of physical activity and as a strategy for building a resilient mindset in competitive sports. Therefore, while teachers connected mental health and movement to emotional control and regulation, specifically, their abilities to control negative emotions and thought processes by shifting negative feelings and thoughts in positive ways, they still viewed the mind and body dualistically. Significantly, this dualistic understanding of mental health by teachers will shape the way children learn to prioritise their mind over the body and suppress negative thoughts and emotions to be resilient.

7.2.2 Counternarrative of movement and mental health: disrupting the dominant narratives

As briefly indicated above, not all teachers narratively constructed experiences that embraced dominantly accepted views and aligned with broader sociocultural understandings of physical activity or Stormbreak. Specifically, one teacher shared a counternarrative of movement and mental health, telling about her deeply traumatic childhood experiences in physical activity culture and how she had to renegotiate her body-self relationship with movement through her recent engagement with Stormbreak. She connects her embodied trauma from memories of being bullied and victimised in school settings of PE and sport to any situation related to movement and exceedingly PE and organised school sports. Experiencing trauma in youth PE, physical activity, and sport affects her health, mentally, emotionally, and physically, even into adulthood (Etherington 2003). Participating in Stormbreak as an adult, then, is incredibly triggering for her since it produces visceral memories and responses, those she had learned to dissociate from and suppress. This teachers' counternarrative of traumatic childhood events in physical activity is particularly powerful as it opposes the dominant sociocultural narrative that movement is good for mental health and reflects how institutional expectations for *regular* teachers – not experts of mental health or PE to incorporate daily physical activities in their classrooms, such as Stormbreak, can counterintuitively exacerbate mental health issues among teachers. That is, other teachers may experience similar reactions to this teacher, an inherently repressed fear of sports that manifests as unexpected anxiety and panic attacks on the days that she is required to teach physical activity. Thus, engaging with critical narratives that go against the grain and are frequently silenced for challenging sociocultural and institutional narratives, widely reproduced and perpetuated through dominant discourses in sports and health education, is vital. Equally, Stormbreak needs to engage with counternarratives that reject the dominant narrative of "mentally healthy movement", particularly teachers who feel disrupted – the counter effects of their physical activity culture that aims to enhance mental health for *all* school members.

7.2.3 Shifting stories to the dominant narrative of the COVID-19 pandemic: from resilience to empathy

The emergent and flexible nature of the qualitative research design and narrative inquiry, allowed for exploring teachers' stories during a time of social disruption and changing professional knowledge landscapes. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted teachers' professional and personal lives significantly, influencing their stories of physical activity and mental health to shift from the dominant narratives from their childhood and adolescence to the dominant narrative of the pandemic more recently. At this time, teachers started to adopt alternative dominant narratives as a way of viewing and understanding their world against the crisis of the pandemic and its direct impact on their personal and social well-being. Understanding teachers' experiences of disruption during the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the collective and individual challenges and uncertainties faced by UK teachers fit with the COVID-19 literature within educational research (Allen et al. 2020; Kim and Asbury 2020; Johnson and Coleman 2021; Boyd et al. 2023; Forde et al. 2023; Marsh-Davies and Burnett 2023). Professionally, teachers faced increased workloads and emotional demands due to pandemic-related changes in teaching practices and responsibilities, such as transitioning to online/hybrid modes of teaching, away from their familiar school settings. Personally, teachers missed social connections in relation with family and friends due to pandemic-related travel restrictions and social isolation that drastically altered their individual family dynamics and social interactions with friends, other teachers, and students. Shifting professional landscapes with the need for teachers to support children's pandemic-related mental health struggles also notably affected teachers' personal psychological well-being even though most of them perceived caring responsibilities for their students (vulnerable children) to be an essential part of their teaching identity. As such, most teachers found this concern for students' mental health particularly stressful as it presented a new set of challenges in relation with their teaching identities, but simultaneously, they perceived this work-related stress in a positive light and as a way of gaining a new perspective on the priorities in their lives. Those that they predominantly connected to friends, family, and health. In this way, teachers' stories of their relationships with loved ones in times of the COVID-19 crisis shed light on how teachers shaped greater levels of vulnerability and empathy through personal and professional identities in contexts of sport and health. Specifically, how their sporting and teaching identities and bodies, as located within the prevailing discourses of health promotion and well-being, led teachers to collectively and individually construct more empathetic selves in and out of professional landscapes. English teachers restoried notions of care are closely tied to friends, family and students, and even social measures in the UK of walking to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic. Thus, the current study shows that teachers' stories shifted to the dominant cultural narratives of the post-pandemic world, in which positive mental health was conceptualised around greater levels of empathy, physical activity/movement, and well-being.

This shift in teachers' narratives was revealed through the ways their understanding of health and sports evolved, conforming to the wider sociocultural priority of health and well-being during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, where social isolation restricted their long-term sports behaviours and the dominant cultural narrative of "Get on with it" or resilience as a coping strategy was less accepted. Importantly, physical activity and teaching provided teachers with a sense of normalcy and mental health benefits during the pandemic. While most teachers still desired their regular forms of sports in settings (e.g., the gym, football fields) that were closed, they emphasised the importance of movement in their personal lives in diverse ways. Such as, their way of socialising with friends and family in accordance with the pandemic designed measures and as an escape from their pandemic-related work stresses. While movement was also highlighted in relation to teaching and seen as a crucial support mechanism for students, many teachers still expressed greater concerns over students' academic outcomes. In this way, reflecting the nuances surrounding their personal and professional lives in relation to mental health and movement, as influenced by cultural frames (personal, social, political, etc.) within this context of the pandemic, and as evidenced by their diverse ways of adopting contemporary understandings of mental health and movement more closely in their personal lives.

Overall, the disruption caused by the pandemic led the subset of three teachers to experience negative feelings of stress and uncertainty, however, it also provided some of them opportunities for positive change in perspectives on mental health and physical activity. These teachers adopted 21st-century grand narratives of mental health and promotion in the context of the pandemic, in ways being forced to make sense of the new sociocultural landscape in the face of adversity. Doing so by accepting prevailing public discourses of movement, health, social responsibility, empathy/vulnerability – *taking care of each other during these unprecedented times*, and consequently, contesting past dominant intergenerational narratives of resilience that permeated British culture for years until they were masked and locked down.

surrounding their childhood experiences of sports and mental health, to make sense of their new personal and professional realities while attempting to maintain normalcy in their lives. Importantly, teachers' understandings of mental health and movement were seen as evolving due to this period of dramatic social change that disrupted their traditional teaching and learning of culturally structured practices of sports and health. What has yet to be explicated adequately, however, is the embodied ways in which teachers adopted these new alternative narratives upon returning to face-to-face interactions and Stormbreak processes within school settings as the pandemic became more distal. Future research may engage with insights into how teachers' alternative narratives of mental health and movement, evolving and existing in the context of the pandemic and their experiences associated with social and cultural transformation in the UK, are prioritised, transmitted, and reproduced in their bodily experiences and practices in current mental health interventions akin to Stormbreak. That is, this study offers a theoretical understanding of how teachers' thinking of mental health and movement evolved because of the pandemic and the different embodied outcomes of Stormbreak processes. Thus, supplementing this work with further explorations related to the long-term impact of the pandemic can be particularly valuable for Stormbreak, to demonstrate the real-world benefits of their mentally healthy movement for teachers.

7.3 Implications

I draw in a small story to start and frame how this thesis unveils deeper insight into a shared narrative across professions. A bioethicist recently described three types of stories about receiving ethics consultation in hospitals. He pointed out how these stories about bioethics consultations are told in a certain way – with the ethicists themselves noticeably absent. By substituting *teachers* for bioethicists and *school health initiatives* for hospital ethics consultations, I ask, who oversees *this* story?

> "The most vivid characters in the stories—the characters I find myself visualizing or whose tones of voice I imagine hearing—are the narrators themselves" (Frank 2024, p.39).

An interdisciplinary and embodied approach to studying lives leaves space for vast considerations – politics, culture, and history. However, that boundless space shrinks in size when the nuances, subjectivities, and lives as *lived* unravel. When the individuals – real people, corporeal bodies, choose not to be bystanders in their story as it unfolds. Instead, they want to *own* their story. Impossible, as the author reminds us: Taking an interdisciplinary and embodied approach to studying lives leaves space for vast considerations – politics, culture, history. However, that boundless space shrinks in size when the nuances, subjectivities, and lives as *lived* unravel. When the individuals – real people, corporeal bodies, choose not to be bystanders in their story as it unfolds. Rather, they want to *own* their story. Impossible, as the author reminds us: "Stories rehearse future events as much as they recollect what is past" (Frank 2024). *Rehearsing* in this way, where stories determine which narrative frames will help us shape future events so that we know how to face–and survive them.

This is one of the first studies that draws on narrative forms to generate new insights into the relationship between teachers and interventions promoting mental health through physical activity. While previous research in the UK has focused on the key role of teachers in school-based programmes in the context of mental health or physical activity, the current findings demonstrate teachers as key components influencing the effectiveness of a whole-school approach that specifically encompasses both contexts of physical activity and mental health. Further, this interdisciplinary study draws attention to both the contexts of mental health and movement from a sociological perspective that builds on existing evidence of the critical role of teachers in whole-school approaches for promoting health.

By way of the interdisciplinary nature of the larger research project, this narrative research turns to health (Riessman 2008; Greenhalgh 2016; Frank 2018; World Health Organization 2023), psychology of sport and exercise (Carless and Douglas 2008; Smith and Sparkes 2009b, 2009a; Smith 2010; Collard and Marlow 2016), teacher education within the context of PE and sports pedagogy (Sparkes 1994b; Wellard 2013; Dowling et al. 2015; Casey and Schaefer 2016; Dowling and Garrett 2016; Coleman et al. 2022; Hennig et al.; Walters et al. 2023), and physical activity culture (Brown 2019; Stewart et al. 2020) and mental health (Carless and Douglas 2008, 2010, 2012) to understand teachers' lives as embodied.

The interdisciplinary study meaningfully contributes to educational intervention research through the pluralistic lens of sport, health, and PE. Specifically, understanding teachers' views of mental health and movement in delivering a multidimensional health promotion programme recognises the embodied nature of teachers' participation in such interventions. In addition, it responds to recent calls for a greater understanding of teacher engagement in school health promotion programmes, alongside meaningful engagement with teachers in evaluating school health promoting frameworks to understand better the diverse needs (Langford et al. 2017; O'Reilly et al. 2018a).

Significantly, the data contributes to a clearer understanding of how teachers' lived, embodied experiences impact a whole-school intervention in PE and mental health in the UK. In particular, the contextual insights shed light on the intrinsic connection between teachers' embodied knowledge of mental health and movement, as told and lived through their bodies, and as influencing their pedagogical practices in movement and mental health programmes within primary schools. This analysis of teachers' diverse personal and professional experiences and meanings associated with mental health and physical activity, those shaped by dominant social discourses and power relations in sports and health, supports their better delivery of interventions like Stormbreak. In this regard, this study is inherently valuable, offering theoretical contexts of how teachers came to know and view mental health and movement through their bodily experiences and how these embodied views then informed their involvement in a whole-school mental health and movement intervention. Especially for pragmatic use in designing and enhancing the processes of intervention research and, specifically, to support intervention stakeholders and teachers in effectively implementing interventions within similar contexts. In large part in addressing ongoing and complex issues surrounding children's mental health within educational settings and governmental policies in the UK.

Identifying this knowledge base can help intervention stakeholders develop an in-depth understanding of the practical adaptation of components in interventions like Stormbreak.
In terms of the teachers implicated in such processes, it prominently implies all ways of experiencing their bodies and telling about it to claim their multiple authentic identities or who they are important and *worthy* of being told – and applied. The findings support the crucial role of teachers in supporting children's mental health and movement and indicate that their personal experiences with movement and mental health affect their teaching dispositions and practices. Teachers' personal narratives reveal their shifting bodies, selves, and identities over time in ways that demonstrate how these aspects are embodied in their perceptions of mental health and movement in different ways.

This illustration of teachers as embodied pedagogues who integrate and reject cultural views and practices in their processes of Stormbreak supports the importance of their embodiments – physical, mental, social, and contextual – in multi-dimensional interventions requiring them to reconstruct their identities, bodies, and selves in contemporary contexts of mental health and movement. In doing so, accounting for the disembodied voices of teachers who differently embody the dominant cultural practices and views in interventions akin to Stormbreak. This misalignment in beliefs, principles, and aims, that is, their rejection of mentally healthy movement, limits teacher engagement with these approaches and indicates the broader challenges of exclusivity in teacher-led whole-school approaches. Narratives, therefore, are valuable educational resources that identify the different embodiments of teachers, especially those with counternarratives of sports and health, highlighting direct influences on their intervention engagement and the need for intervention stakeholders to enhance intervention design. Specifically, cultural differences in views and practices of mental health and movement, informed by teachers' embodied experiences, should be included to enhance collaborative mental health practices in diverse and inclusive ways towards the shared vision of increasing knowledge about mental health and movement.

Regarding children, the intergenerational cultural assumptions about resilience not only inform teachers' personal views of mental health but also influence how they teach about mental health. While research supports that schools "can create mentally healthy environments" (Glazzard 2019, p.262), parallel to Stormbreak's aims for children to thrive and be resilient in the face of challenges, how teachers convey and reproduce their knowledge of mental health or resilience to students produce diverse educational outcomes for young people. Expressly, teachers in whole-school approaches promoting health need to be understood–if they *feel like* being the *front-line* stakeholders, which they are expected to be in society. Embodied forms of knowing can facilitate this.

These embodied learnings, explicating teachers' relationships with mental health and movement, can enable theoretically informed processes for school-based programmes involving teacher-led practices. Further, these contextual insights into how teachers have constructed mental health and movement in their lives in parallel to the pilot implementation of Stormbreak meaningfully contribute to the larger project aims of this research and existing knowledge in sport, health, and education. Finally, narrative forms of understanding the knowledge and pedagogy of primary school teachers play a vital role in bridging the gap between research and practice for implementing practical whole-school approaches that focus on mental health and movement.

Key insights (knowledge and barriers):

- The majority of teachers aligned their personal identities and positive perceptions of mental health and movement (mental health benefits of being physically active outside of school) with positive attitudes of teaching *Stormbreak* — due to a range of benefits for students.
- Teachers often felt pressured or conflicted between systemic constraints, such as schools valuing academic subjects (e.g., math, science, etc.) over *Stormbreak*, and time/schedule restrictions in that *Stormbreak* was not delivered as frequently.
- Teachers shared concerns or feelings of inadequacy for teaching mental health concepts of physical activities, which they did not feel fully informed or experienced with due to a lack of professional training or "official" education on either of the subjects in the context of the 21st century – besides the brief, flexible notion of modern day "mentally healthy movement".
- Teachers did not necessarily consider Stormbreak as part of their responsibilities, but more of a supplemental activity that was useful for several reasons, such as keeping students focused when displaying disruptive behaviour, allowing students additionally time for going outside and getting fresh air, and permitting students to openly speak about their mental health with words that may not have been a part of their lexis before.

7.4 Methodological considerations

> “Collaborative research may be conceptualized as a research effort done by research groups from different disciplines (interdisciplinary collaboration), either belonging to the same country (national) or to more than one country (international) or it may be a parallel research effort by groups from different countries applying the same protocol across various locations or a combination of the above” (Katsouyanni 2008, p.1).

As pointed out in the introduction to this thesis (see section 1.4), this study is part of a collaborative research project evaluation of Stormbreak. As such, the work addresses UK government priorities towards initiatives to address children’s mental health needs. The collaboration between Stormbreak and Bournemouth University involved multiple external stakeholders and internal academic experts. I reflect on the collaborative nature of this project to offer further insights into how it influenced different aspects of the current research design and process.

7.4.1 Collaborative research project: capabilities and challenges

As a researcher new to the UK and English school settings, the decision to join a collaborative interdisciplinary research project was a strategic one. The project, fully funded and involving several academics and professionals across a range of disciplines and fields, offered unique advantages. These included the support of a gatekeeper who facilitated access to schools (see section 3.3.5) and, consequently, teacher participants. However, it's important to note that there were also additional implications to consider.

As indicated in the thesis, teachers have more than one story to live by. Dominant cultural narratives of mental health and movement often silence alternative or counternarratives that go against the grain. In turn, these narratives cultivate the reproduction of healthy bodies within teachers' *stories to live by* (Connelly and Clandinin 1990) in a limited way that equates positive mental health to specific physical activity performances. Therefore, failing to acknowledge the diverse ways teachers can embody their storylines of mental health and movement while teaching in social settings. This culture of encouraging dominant narratives, consciously or subconsciously, is considered in the context of the collaborative research processes linked to the current study and extends outside academia. To the extent that selective insights are proactively encouraged and disseminated for leverage in achieving intervention aims.

Alongside the strengths, the multiple collaboration challenges are widely (Ross et al. 2010; Bansal et al. 2019). Here, I consider the privileging of certain narratives, particularly the dominant cultural narrative connecting positive mental health and well-being to physical activity, in the research processes of a collaborative research project. This involved Bournemouth University researchers and the Stormbreak intervention stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and agendas. The complexity of undertaking a research, practice, and policy-driven study within the area of health and education due to its position intersecting with different fields and disciplines. I acknowledge the challenges around collaborative efforts. As a novice qualitative researcher who aimed to resist dominant cultural narratives as more powerful or worthy of being told than others while working with charity partners with different theoretical perspectives, I insisted on other priorities.

For example, partners outside of academia often fixated on their aims of validating the positive aspects of movement for mental health – or the efficacy of Stormbreak, thereby sometimes discrediting and unwilling to recognise different understandings from their perspectives about health, sports, and education. These competing agendas between research and the Stormbreak intervention were crucial to the challenges I faced throughout various stages of the qualitative study. Confronted early in the process, for instance, when generating research questions that would provide further insights into the multiple experiences of teachers and later, when conveying the significance of their diverse and embodied experiences. Despite these challenges, the narrative approach was helpful in theorising teachers' embodiments of mental health and movement across several stories – in and beyond the context of the pandemic. The findings can be action points for enhancing teachers' professional development and learning to improve physical engagement and mental health literacy in interventions incorporating the same elements as Stormbreak.

These collaboration challenges were due to many reasons, from agreeing on priorities about what areas to focus on for this study to when I needed to focus on research or programme tasks. For example, I did not publish according to intervention partner expectations and due to the discontent regarding the appropriate sample size by intervention partners who questioned the sampling technique of recruiting only a few research participants as acceptable or scientifically sound. Few intervention partners favoured the research methodology as it engaged with teachers' diverse views on mental health and movement, even if it opposed their interests and dominating understandings. While their aversion to the qualitative research methods and narrative analysis did not impact the quality of the research findings or the ability to effectively engage in the collective agenda that addresses a major health issue, they influenced several stages of the research project via input.

The research findings illuminated conflicting views and concerns about teachers' understandings of mental health and movement that intervention stakeholders were not anticipating, nor truly willing to accept. This was evident from the pushback I repeatedly received for research findings (e.g., one teacher's counternarrative) that supported the larger project goal but diverged from their specific intervention aims; I was encouraged to provide, present, and disseminate research data that directly reinforced Stormbreak's narrative of bettering mental health through movement. However, such differences of perspective between funder and researcher are not unusual in social science or health research and the contrast can help to evaluate and elucidate the meaning of the findings. The emphasis shifts to the acknowledgement of *how* the research was influenced by different perspectives, interests, and aims, which indicates the serious challenges involved in contemporary collaborative work between research and a charity organisation.

7.4.2 Pandemic-related disruption

The COVID-19 pandemic and the tensions of collaboration brought on a new set of unprecedented challenges that disrupted the research design. It required shifting face-to-face interviews online and extending the initial research timeline of three years. This shift involved addressing ethical considerations for online qualitative interviews and re-submitting the amended research proposal for a formal ethics review and approval process. However, adapting the data collection methods to virtual qualitative research interviews during COVID-19 also allowed access to teachers' personal lives in more intimate settings, such as their homes and the presence of their families or loved ones, primarily as the individual online interviews were conducted for the second round of research interviews after I had successfully established rapport in the last set of face-to-face interviews and over the past two years during Stormbreak teacher training sessions.

Finally, while acknowledging the practical challenges of the pandemic, moving from traditional research methods to virtual methods of communication also provided unique advantages of understanding teachers' views about mental health during a period of increased interest in positive mental health. Moreover, crucially, answering the research questions of what mental health meant to teachers individually and during the pandemic. How they constructed new stories of mental health from the confines of their homes during social isolation, and whether they linked positive mental health to movement and embodied it in their personal lives in a different way or fitted to the dominant narratives of mental health and movement in COVID-19-related contexts.

7.4.3 Researcher-participant relationships: transparency, trust, and therapy

At the start of the research project, during Stormbreak training sessions, and before commencing the research interviews, I noticed that some teachers automatically assumed I was a Stormbreak advocate. This is a dilemma regarding transparency and how they may approach the research interviews. Thus, for transparency and understanding of their embodiment of Stormbreak beyond the classroom through their stories as socioculturally and historically situated, I made it clear in many ways that I was a researcher, separate from the Stormbreak team, but on the more extensive project evaluation. As such, I was looking to explore their perspective around mental health and movement – with no expectations of coming across specific viewpoints or responses – but to better grasp how they understand and engage with Stormbreak, if at all, based on their lived experiences. In hindsight, I consider the assumptions shared by teachers to be twofold: influenced by the inclusion of the gatekeeper (see section 3.3.5) and my subjectivities as a slim, athletic female.

In light of this, I sought to establish rapport and build trust and empathy by sharing the ways that I had come to engage with this research and my interest in exploring their individual stories. I made it clear that their stories were not just data points, but integral to the research process. In light of this, I sought to establish rapport and build trust and empathy by sharing how I had engaged with this research and my interest in exploring their individual stories. I clarified that their stories were not just data points but integral to the research process. As suggested by (Sparkes and Smith 2013), this approach positively influenced the dynamics of the researcher-participant relationships. Accordingly, I received lengthy accounts of their past experiences with mental health and movement through the stories they told me, including an evocative counternarrative that suggests that establishing rapport and engaging in dialogue with the participants before starting data collection was meaningful on both ends. In this sense, I built a trusting and valuable relationship with teachers by opening up about my life, talking about *who I am* in ways that emphasised my positionality as a researcher, and as such, giving them access to my past and present in relation to the project, research settings, and them. This is shown through the meaningful ways that teachers trusted me, even as an *outsider* (Hellawell 2006; Bridges 2017; Finefter-Rosenbluh 2017), to the extent that they not only shared their deeply sensitive and personal stories with me in professional spaces of school but also from more intimate settings of their homes during the global COVID-19 pandemic, despite it shouldering them with additional pressures (Boyd et al. 2023).

As Sparkes and Smith (2013) pointed out, this can be observed as *research as therapy* within narrative studies, along with other forms of qualitative work that have extended accounts of one-to-one interactions between the researcher and participant, where the researcher is active, non-judgmental, and attentive while listening to participants tell their stories in their own way. They continue as follows:

> “This is particularly so when, over time, rapport and trust are built up between the researcher and the participant who may venture to explore deeply personal and emotional issues during the interview that can lead to a range of outcomes for the interviewee that can include greater self-understanding and opportunities for personal growth” (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.224).

Set against this, all the teachers in this study found themselves in positions of teaching from home due to the disruption caused by the pandemic and UK teachers shifting to virtual modes of teaching and learning during the initial lockdown. For most of them, and for me, engaging in virtual forms of telling during that point in time with limited social interactions offered a sense of connectedness. This was pointed out by all the teachers that I interviewed for a second time during our Zoom interviews for phase two of the research, especially when I profusely thanked them for giving me their precious time and insights despite their increased pressures of teaching. In this case, I was once again an empathetic listener for the teachers in different ways, as Bondi emphasises:

> “When research participants tell their stories to attentive listeners, the act of narration in the presence of sympathetic witnesses is likely to enable participants to hear themselves anew in ways that make their stories freshly meaningful to themselves as well as for the researchers listening to them” (Bondi 2013, p.11).

Indeed, most of these teachers found the online interviews meaningful; not only did they articulate as much, but they were also interested in continuing the conversation afterwards to explore my experiences. This was also meaningful for me as a novice qualitative researcher because, at some point, some of us had developed a friendship. By contrast, in the next section, I return to the topic of qualitative/narrative interviews to highlight the dynamic nature and ethical considerations, notably different kinds of outcomes that may be seen as the negative consequences of telling a story about important life events.

7.5 Ethical considerations

In this section, I revisit some of the points made in the previous section regarding collaborative research interactions and relationships with participants to highlight the connected nature of methodological and ethical considerations within narrative studies. The positioning of this second part to the dual ethical considerations within the thesis is intentional. First, to account for the ethical checklist considerations (pre-determined) and subsequently, here I seek to explicate and contextualise the ethical considerations that extend beyond conventional practice as embodied in this study (moral). Drawing on literature in bioethics for this to describe different forms of care and ethical engagement. Specifically, I reflect on the important ethical considerations that arose from seizing an opportunity through external stakeholders who acted as the gatekeeper of the study. Engaging with methods of recruiting participants for better understanding notions of power dynamics in qualitative research via fieldwork and participant well-being, especially, where dealing with questions in the context of mental health to inform dominant narratives and counternarratives.

In terms of participant recruitment and representation, I focus on how gaining access and establishing rapport with participants by means of the gatekeeper of the study is conceptualised from outside the narrow conception of engaging with six teachers or “information rich” cases (Sparkes and Smith 2013, p.70). While this was helpful for the preliminary purposes of the *purposeful sampling strategy* adopted that was adopted (see section 3.3.5), I later confronted the ethical issues with this in terms of power dynamics. Again, the research sample was geographically bound to the teaching communities within five primary schools across the Southwest of England where Stormbreak was piloted, and more precisely, to teachers who were responsible for delivering Stormbreak in their classrooms. This did not present as a problem of sample size, confidentiality/anonymity, or informed consent. Instead, it presented as a moral dilemma by undertaking responsibilities to external stakeholders and having more profound implications for considering multiple subjectivities and accounting for the embodiments of teachers connected to the research via external partners and involved in our triangular relationship via self-constructed identities. Teachers were mainly informed by larger dominant narratives and discourses of mental health in Western societies promoting sport as positive for mental health until dealing with one that contextualised within sociocultural narratives related to mental health and movement separate from the interpretations of Stormbreak. Bodies that presented in similar ways but experienced differently, and in one case, traumatically.

Informed by the ideas of Sparkes and Smith (2013), I base this representation on demographic information, such as location, ethnicity, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, and nationality, with similarities persisting across the situatedness of power relations associated with *heterosexuality*, *ability*, and *British Caucasian* identities and connected to teaching communities in Southwest, England. As such, this affects how the research was conducted and interpreted. Although this did not shape how I *selected* participants, personally, reflexively speaking, it shaped how I viewed and interpreted their experiences of mental health and movement from a more critical lens.

> "Critical researchers see much qualitative research as suffering from 'macro blindness' in that it tends to ignore the unequal power relationships within which people operate when their realities are constructed in terms of social class, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, race, ethnicity and religion, and so tells us little about how individual and group behaviour is influenced by the way that society is organised. Thus, the central line of tension between critical, participatory, action-orientated researchers, and other forms of critical inquiry, is in the call to action, whether this is in terms of internal (individual) transformation or external social transformation" (Sparkes and Smith 2013, pp.50-51).

Against this backdrop, and as a qualitative researcher on a collaborative project that aims to influence social change, it is important to consider my relationships with – Stormbreak *and* teachers. This is because "stories as acts of telling *are* relationships" (Frank 2000a, p.354), thus, my affiliation with an intervention underpinning the wider public health goals and discourses in the UK impacts the researcher-participant relationship and researcher well-being. For instance, teachers who do not align with the underlying dominant narratives are open to feeling disruption in their lives because of trusting a researcher who is a part of the story that empowers privileged voices and bodies in physical cultures opposing their own (Carless 2010). n consciously maintaining an ethical relationship with teachers, especially commitments to the deeply embodied experiences that defy the norm, I accept and maintain an open and empathetic engagement based on trust – the *internal* and *external* ethical engagement (Floyd and Arthur 2012). As such, I attempted to represent their multiple realities and identities in an authentic, truthful, and ethical way that is meaningful to them.

I wonder: is it dispelling the notion of *macro blindness* or the alleviation of moral distress (Morley et al. 2019), as I commit an entire chapter towards a case study of one teacher's counternarrative in sport. It addresses her past embodied experiences and consequences of taking up Stormbreak that is underpinned by dominant discourses, contradictory to her views and experiences. Specifically, how engaging with Stormbreak compelled her to (re)negotiate her identities as a female teacher in the context of physical activity and sports while situated in a culture that promotes dominant narratives of physical activity and *healthy* bodies. This story is intentionally emphasised as it goes against the grain and as such can often go unheard (Holloway and Freshwater 2007). Ultimately, then, I appreciate that all narratives are valuable, meaningful, and influential, as people draw on dominant stories and meaning to make sense of their personal lives, and thus, I focus on their meanings, and as Halloway and Freshwater (2007) explained:

> "The master narrative is rooted in the ideology of privileged groups. These types of narrative show the dual character of narrative and counter-narrative, one seemingly objective, the other often seen as subjective as resistance to the master narrative" (Holloway and Freshwater 2007, p.708).

In terms of the duality between counternarratives and dominant narratives, and moving on to the second point here, I pull forward this teacher's counternarrative to discuss the nature of qualitative research and ethical considerations in relation to talk-based qualitative forms of individual interviews about significant and sensitive life events. As indicated in the previous section, I will engage with the sensitive and personal nature of storytelling here in the context of the ethical implications related to Karen's counternarratives (see section 6.4). Specifically, reflecting on the ethical vulnerabilities of one teacher who told a deeply embodied counternarrative that evoked traumatic experiences of her childhood in school sports. One that I prepared for when developing an ethically sound checklist but felt uncertain about once it emerged.

In the telling of her story in this narrative inquiry, I was confident that this teacher was able to construct her own bodies, identities and selves in the re-telling of her experiences in her own way, that is, in a way that allowed her to control her narrative and offer new understandings on mental health and movement. I found her narrative to be powerful, engaging, and insightful since her personal concepts and beliefs conflicted with the dominant narratives that I had come to know and frequently heard. The research interaction in that instance seemed cathartic as she unloaded her past trauma, and I empathetically listened and engaged. It was because of this meaningful interaction that I was surprised not to hear back from her during round two of the research interviews. This is when I began understanding narrative research's complexities through personal fieldwork experiences.

For instance, as a novice researcher, I may have been naïve to think that the storytelling of her traumatic experiences was cathartic and empowering in the way that it had appeared to me. However, after receiving no response from this teacher regarding the second set of research interviews, I began thinking about the negative impact that this may have had on her. Why did she not want to participate in a second interview? Was it the pressure of the pandemic, and if so, why did she not simply say as much? These were some of the questions that I had at that time. As Atkinson and Silverman advised, this is consistent with one of the inherent risks in narratives that “rests on a confessional mode of discourse and has as its goal the revelation of private experience” (Atkinson and Silverman 1997, p.310), thus, unintentionally, perhaps I was grounded in the naive view of the interview and the data it produces. However, in this case, instead of hoping to dig deeper into this teacher’s life to reveal secrets about her emotional well-being and sporting body, I respected her decision not to respond to my email. I only heard back from three out of the original group of six, yet I was worried about her. Accepting the lack of reply for another interview as a reply to move away from the research, and still sought to celebrate, empower, and support this teacher’s viewpoints, those that she entrusted me with.

7.6 Recommendations

In considering the ways to support the role of teachers in school interventions (e.g. Stormbreak), narratives are valuable resources in education that can advance understanding central to the ways teachers’ experiential knowledge is embodied in their classroom practices – or their *stories to live by* (Clandinin and Connelly 2000). Stories can show how teachers have come to accept, if at all, interventions promoting mental health and movement, and if not, then why. Counternarratives can uncover the harsh consequences of PE trauma that some teachers endured. Learning how teachers may view school-based interventions as disruptive to their lives can serve to ‘give voice’ to marginalised teachers instead of leaving them to feel isolated while burdened by the emotional labour of having to renegotiate their body-self relationships and professional identities. On the other hand, positive experiences of teachers in movement and mental health can offer a greater understanding of the privileges underlying their motivations. Understanding teachers’ diverse experiences of mental health and movement about their identities, selves, and bodies offers essential information about contextual influences that enable intervention stakeholders to develop their professional learning and development or teacher training courses to include teachers throughout and enhance practices. Thus, addressing the challenges in implementing a whole-school teacher-led intervention should include research efforts encompassing more comprehensive methodologies that fit education, mental health, and movement contexts.

In line with many of the research-practice partnerships, I provided Stormbreak stakeholders with recommendations (see Appendix B), key insights (see section 7.3), and ethical and practical considerations (see Appendix C) throughout the research process until the funded collaborative project concluded. First, while most teachers in this study valued Stormbreak and its perceived benefits of mental health and well-being due to their positive relationships with mental health and movement, teachers did not prioritise Stormbreak activities or physical activities in the same way as other subjects (e.g., maths, science, etc.). This supports previous research that suggests mental health provision can be neglected due to an emphasis on children's academic achievements, where "a culture of performativity maximising academic attainment is the key priority for schools" (Glazzard 2019, p.261). The focus on increasing academic standards is seen in this study as the barriers to implementation, which prevented teachers from delivering Stormbreak adequately and frequently, were linked to a lack of organisational support for systemic constraints, like balancing their busy schedules and pressures to ensure students' academic success. This is important as it highlights that even though teachers may believe in the benefits of movement for mental health in their personal lives, they still may not actively join in a whole-school approach for promoting mental health and movement interventions within cultures that pay greater attention to student academic outcomes.

Given that a whole school approach requires all members, including teachers, to work together for the intervention to be effective, it is crucial to know more about how teachers who have accepted the responsibilities of implementing mental health promotion initiatives in their classrooms. Specifically, how teachers conceptualise mental health and movement in their own lives and why they may or may not implement it in school settings. For example, teachers who have not officially entered teaching for reasons related to mental health and movement and do not consider themselves athletic must feel represented in Stormbreak practices for them to be motivated to deliver intervention practices and the implementation process to be effective.

This thesis has noted teachers' gendered and class-based experiences of mental health and movement in relation to their identities, selves, and bodies in sociohistorical contexts and cultures of sports, health, and education specific to the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings highlight the need to develop processes that support teachers in teaching physical activities for positive mental health in a way that makes them feel included by having their stories heard and understood. As such, a narrative inquiry can offer intervention partners diverse points of view in an informative and detailed way that can help facilitate improved teacher engagement in processes of implementation work. Further research might explore in depth the stories of teachers in the contexts of mental health and movement and compare, for example, the quality of engagement by teachers who are averse to physical activity in their personal lives.

7.7 Conclusion

In summary, this qualitative strand of research offers powerful insights into the context of physical activity and mental health through critical narrative inquiry work. Specifically, findings of a thematic narrative analysis (across multiple narratives) and structural and thematic narrative analysis (individual narrative case study) highlighted a range of complexities. These include unanticipated embodied experiences, producing feelings of inadequacy or general lack of confidence in teaching physical activities, conflicting personal values (aversion to sports) and professional pressures (systemic time constraints and overwhelming schedules), and deeper assumptions around mental health and movement (a generational gap in understanding). In this manner, the work has unravelled the nuances and complexities of the personal and professional factors that can impact on teachers' delivery of Stormbreak. Further, consideration is given to more than a singular perspective for ethical and practical suggestions aimed at teacher-led mental health initiatives to effectively enact positive school ethos — with an intentional inclusion of teachers and promotion of teachers' emotional health and well-being, rather than exclusively targeting children's well-being in whole-school approaches. Importantly, it is of value to Stormbreak to empower teachers to negotiate better the chaotic bricolage of sociocultural, institutional, familial, linguistic, and political narratives, brought to the fore from its emotionally charged intervention process. That is, when teachers feel their '*stories to live by'* are not upheld, perceptions of what it means to be a teacher are separate from teaching mental health and movement, they may then shift to *'stories to leave by'* and disengage from teaching entirely (Schaefer et al. 2014; Schaefer et al. 2019).

Against this backdrop, stakeholders from Stormbreak can use these interdisciplinary, embodied, and narrative findings, revealing teachers' identities, selves, and bodies within and outside of educational settings, to ensure their notion of *mentally healthy movement* represents teachers' disparate embodiments in the contexts of mental health and movement. In so doing, attending to the different ways of thinking and experiential knowledge expressed in teachers' stories, bringing them to the same professional world– without mental health and movement in mind, and shaping their teaching identities prior to their engagement with Stormbreak, to understand how the institutional changes in education with new responsibilities for teachers to support children's mental health in schools via Stormbreak impacted their individual and social lives. This research therefore brings forward pivotal insights into teachers' evolving understandings and behaviours of mental health and movement in their everyday lives and contemporary settings of primary schools in the UK, even when altered profoundly in the wake of the pandemic. In the framework of Stormbreak, underpinned by the different backgrounds and motivations, these research findings play a seminal part in at least two distinct ways.

First, the interdisciplinary research findings build on past works, bringing together concepts, theories and approaches in different disciplines and fields in a new way, to capture the contextual influences related to teachers' involvement in multidimensional programmes in contexts of sports, health, and education. Teachers' stories of mental health and movement in this study, interweaving the nuances of gender, class, and culture in their past lived experiences, along with their altered experiences in the wider post-pandemic world, highlight the importance of considering the body and sociological approaches towards embodiment for understanding the ways in which teachers' bodily experiences directly influence their knowledge and practice within Stormbreak. To avoid overlooking the critical role and influence of teachers' relationships with the different concepts that frame the intervention and are relevant to the implementation effectiveness, the findings suggest expanding the theoretical frameworks of programmes like Stormbreak to include narrative or alternative approaches that can describe the ways that teachers came to learn about these concepts over time. Second, the results can help to inform the processes of design and implementation for interventions akin to Stormbreak. In trying to adapt, changing intervention processes to allow for linking teachers' embodiments of mental health and movement with future transformations and implementations. This requires whole-school mental health and movement interventions to deviate from their mechanistic views and practices, and to accept change that comes directly from teachers and their embodied learnings. Ultimately, including teachers in holistic approaches and more overtly involving the physical bodies that will be teaching the bodily practice interventions will more effectively improve mental health in children and young people.

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Appendices

Appendix A : Reflexive piece on the approach used to strategically review the literature

I offer a more detailed explanation of how I applied the four objectives within Chenail et al.'s (2010) pragmatic approach for systematically reviewing the research literature in qualitative research, particularly, designed to guide novice qualitative researchers like me. In addressing these various areas of the approach, the content generated (and presented below) is also seen as highly relevant to the research methodology, as it highlights the way the approach was used to support the methodological choices of the research. Thus, although adopted in the initial stages of the literature review, I share this reflexive piece as an appendix to the thesis, which provides detailed insights into processes relevant to the literature review, methodology, and discussion in this qualitative research.

In considering the first functional objective for defining the phenomenon of the study, it is imperative to understand the general orientation and context of the charity-university collaborative project that facilitated the undertaking of the doctoral study. A preliminary review of the literature provided background in the context of the collaborative work, major issues, or broader characteristics relevant to the interdisciplinary nature of the larger research project, that posited the course of the study and the phenomenon in question. Simultaneously, during the early stages of the research process, a series of discussions with academic experts and the external project stakeholders helped narrow down the research topic. For example, giving me a better idea of what I can realistically accomplish based on the research timeline and some prompting, so I consider the areas that can meaningfully contribute to the overall aims of the collaborative project. Therefore, the explicit goal of the collaboration between the research team at Bournemouth University and the stakeholders of Stormbreak, to evaluate the effectiveness of a primary school-based mental health and movement intervention – Stormbreak, plays an important role in the way I conducted the initial literature review. Stormbreak, more specifically, is an intervention aimed at improving children's mental health via physical activity practices that are delivered by teachers within primary school settings in England. From this starting process, understanding the shared goals and priorities between research and the charity organisation, and reviewing pertinent literature in the context of multidimensional school-based interventions similar to Stormbreak, proved valuable for developing an interdisciplinary understanding of the dominant terms, issues, discourses, approaches, and outcomes to shape the study. This understanding of the bigger picture early on led me to focus on an underexplored phenomenon that fits into the existing work on the topic.

The search strategy in the initial literature review categorically focused on concepts and terms related to the context, implementation, and maintenance of the Stormbreak (see section 1.3) intervention. This includes the following search terms: ‘mental health’, ‘well-being’, ‘sport’, ‘physical activity’ ‘movement’, ‘children’, ‘primary schools’, ‘England’, ‘UK’, ‘effective interventions’, ‘school-based programmes’, ‘whole-school approach’, and ‘teachers’. In addition, I reviewed the current practices and policies for improving children’s mental health and well-being via whole school-based mental health and movement interventions. Reviewing the literature in this way, to contextualise primary school-based mental health and physical activity interventions in the UK – or gain insight into the interaction processes of Stormbreak, generated key issues relevant to the development of effective and sustainable interventions. This broad knowledge highlighted several candidate elements that are recognised to influence the implementation of complex, multidimensional interventions like Stormbreak, and pointed out what is unknown or areas that have been less studied. Thereby, familiarising myself with past research in the wider context of Stormbreak was useful for extending my understanding of the contextual factors that contribute to its design, implementation, and evaluation, and accordingly, for building the focus and rationale of the current study. Given that, systematically undertaking the initial review to inform the larger project in the evaluation of Stormbreak, based on understanding the views of teachers who are responsible for its delivery, I was guided by the broad research question: *How do English primary school teachers’ perception of mental health and movement impact on Stormbreak*? In the literature related to school-based interventions and teachers, particularly in the qualitative work attached to experiences, teachers’ personal views of mental health and movement are especially limited. Although the larger project goals and research question guided the inquiry and helped me narrow down the scope of the study to learn more about teachers participating in Stormbreak, I developed an understanding in a way that motivated me. Specifically, incorporating the insights of experts in the area, and taking an embodied narrative inquiry in qualitative research to explore teachers’ past and present relationships between movement and mental health in their personal and professional lives – through narratives of their bodies, identities, and selves, and ultimately, to understand how the embodied beliefs of these teachers impact upon their engagement in Stormbreak.

The second functional objective, to identify the research gap in which the study is situated, involved an emergent process of continuously reviewing the literature until learning what gaps exist in the research literature concerning the phenomenon in question. The purpose of the review, much like in considering the first functional objective, was to understand the intellectual contexts in which the development and implementation of Stormbreak take place. However, in this case, further exploration of previous work in relevant disciplines and fields, such as sport, physical activity, and health was systematically undertaken to situate the research foci in the local and global context. This research orientation, emphasising the lack of information on addressing the phenomenon and the critical gap between research and practice, helped establish the importance of the study and its specific contribution to existing knowledge. Thus, drawing on previously studied research through an iterative review of the literature, helped identify the gap to which this study contributes. In that, the research is driven by the local importance of supporting children's mental health via school-based mental health promotion programmes, where less is known about the specific topic or my phenomena of interest. That is, teachers' embodied experiences of mental health and movement over time – and how their diverse understandings impact their embodied practices and the efficacy of implementing whole-school primary education mental health and movement interventions in England.

Concerning the third functional objective, to support the methodological choices of the study, reviewing the literature made it clear that a qualitative design is the appropriate methodological choice for addressing the problem. This type of design is especially needed to make sense of the dynamic aspects, given the development and that the way Stormbreak and similar interventions are implemented in context, fails to understand the individual experiences of key participants (teachers) around key concepts (mental health and physical activity). Additionally, adopting an iterative process for reviewing the literature, which began by engaging with a broad research question before the purpose of the study was distinctly defined, exemplifies the funnel metaphor in qualitative inquiry, and closely aligns this review of the literature to qualitative research (Tracy 2019). The alternative methodologies adopted in previous work related to this area of research are assessed in this chapter to showcase the significance and usefulness of adopting a qualitative inquiry with embodied and narrative approaches, rooted in the interpretive paradigm of constructionism (Smith and Sparkes 2020). Hence, discussing how these qualitative research methods served as a pathway for understanding teachers' stories of mental well-being and physical activity, inclusive of their embodied constructions of multiple identities, bodies, and selves, connects to larger or dominant social narratives of sport and mental well-being existing in the literature. The methodological choices used to examine interpretations across disciplines, reviewed in the literature but beyond the scope of this chapter, are justified in greater detail in the Methodology chapter of the thesis.

The fourth functional objective, comparing and contrasting what I learned via this qualitative study with what was previously known and unknown about the phenomenon, helped make sense of the current findings. Thus, attempting to capture an in-depth understanding of what is unknown in a qualitative inquiry, simultaneously highlighting what little is already known through an extensive literature review, shows how the local findings of the study may influence positive social change. Specifically, contributing to the development and implementation of multi-dimensional mental health promotion programmes in England, and potentially, further understanding of the important global concern for children's mental health. Importantly, then, employing the collective knowledge within diverse fields to emphasise what is already known on the phenomenon and how this study offers to further help understanding on this crucial universal concern (Chenail 2009). A detailed account of this is offered in the Discussion chapter of the thesis.

Appendix B: Example of recommendations for Stormbreak

Including teachers in *teacher*-led “mentally healthy movement” promotion in schools

Using narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly 2000) to explore teachers’ experiences of mental health and movement in the evaluation of a mental health and movement intervention, *Stormbreak*, revealed that teachers’ diverse narratives shaped and informed both personal and professional practices. Six primary school teachers’ *‘stories to live by’* (Clandinin and Connelly 1999) illustrate how their past physical education and sport experiences strongly influences their present relationships with movement and mental health, and thus, engagement with *Stormbreak*. Differences in childhood experiences of physical education and sports in and outside of schools were found in relation to perceptions and behaviours of movement in the personal and social lives of teachers. Most teachers told positive stories about childhood experiences of physical education and sports in schools (social) and at home (personal) and continued to construct positive attitudes and relationships with increased adulthood physical activity engagement, as part of embodying a dominant sociocultural narrative of the healthy lifestyle and thus, welcomed the implementation of *Stormbreak* and emphasised its positive effects on students’ mental health and well-being. However, not all the stories were as coherent and aligned alongside the grand sociocultural and institutional narrative of physical activity being beneficial for physical and mental health. One teacher’s counternarrative of movement and mental health illustrated the renegotiating of a deeply embodied trauma from negative memories of childhood victimization and bullying in school sports and physical education that was triggered by engaging with *Stormbreak.* Particularly, institutional expectations for *regular* teachers to incorporate daily physical activities in the classroom — *Stormbreak* exacerbated one teacher’s inherently repressed fear of sports that manifested as unexpected anxiety and panic attacks. It is important to engage with critical narratives that go against the grain and are often made silenced for challenging the larger sociocultural and institutional narratives (i.e., *Stormbreak’s* narrative of “mentally healthy movement”) for several reasons. First, teachers *matter* and deserve equal attention in efforts to promote *whole*-school mental health and well-being, therefore; it is imperative to ensure teachers’ well-being is not neglected by developing adequate provisions to support teachers coping with severe emotional distress and conflict, especially when tasked with new responsibilities which they perceived to be beyond the scope of existing professional teaching practice. Second, narratives are valuable resources in education that can advance understandings of teachers’ work and lives, particularly counternarratives uncovering the harsh consequences of physical education trauma can serve to give voice to and empower marginalised teachers who are burdened with the emotional labour of suffering from disruptive live events to feel less isolated. Third, while the majority of teachers valued *Stormbreak,* namely, the beneficial effects on their students, teachers did not prioritize teaching physical activities over subjects like maths, science, etc., as they felt a lack of organisational support for systemic constraints (jam-packed timetables), which prevented them from delivering Stormbreak adequately and frequently. Overall, this qualitative strand of research offers powerful insights in the context of physical education through critical narrative inquiry work. Specifically, findings of a thematic narrative analysis (across multiple narratives) and structural and thematic narrative analysis (individual narrative case study) highlighted a range of complexities such as unanticipated embodied experiences producing feelings of inadequacy or general lack of confidence for teaching physical activities, conflicting personal values (aversion to sports) and professional pressures (systemic time constraints and overwhelming schedules), and deeper assumptions and around mental health and movement (a generational gap in understanding) influencing teachers' delivery of *Stormbreak.* Further, consideration is given to more than a singular perspective for ethical and practical suggestions aimed at teacher-led mental health initiatives to effectively enact positive school ethos — with an intentional inclusion of teachers and promotion of teachers' emotional health and well-being, rather than exclusively targeting children's well-being. Finally, it is of value to *Stormbreak* to empower teachers to better negotiate the chaotic bricolage of sociocultural, institutional, familial, linguistic, and political narratives, brought to the fore from its emotionally charged intervention process on account of when teachers feel their '*stories to live by'* are not upheld, for becoming educators in particular, they can shift to *'stories to leave by'* (Schaefer and Clandinin 2019) — and disengage from these teachings entirely.

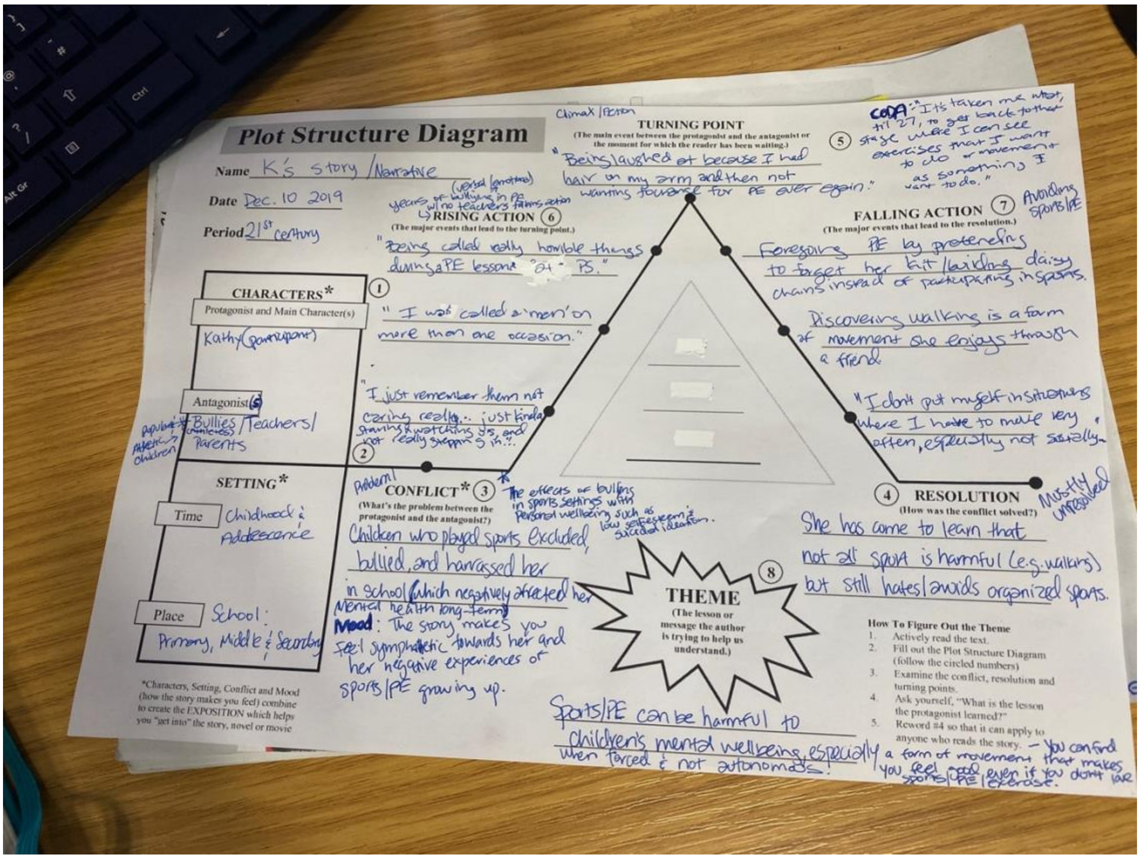
Appendix C: Example of ethical and practical considerations for Stormbreak

Ethical considerations/ practical suggestions:

- Teachers matter and their emotional health and well-being should be supported adequately, with special considerations in place for vulnerable teachers coping with adverse or disruptive effects due to engaging with *Stormbreak*.
- Teachers' diverse stories and complex perceptions of movement and mental health should be better understood as they can have troubling past experiences with deep-rooted emotions which can resurface and disrupt their lives; future research exploring neglected narratives of physical education.
- Recognizing teachers are embodied pedagogues in the co-construction of knowledge — not emotion-free vehicles for delivery.
- Providing teacher trainings for adequate knowledge and positive experiences of movement that can influence '*stories to live by'* (Clandinin and Connelly 1999)— ethically shift attitudes towards movement, in which teachers' stories that shaped their perceptions are heard and understood with meaningful support and representation of teachers with vulnerabilities and fears who are often silenced.
- Providing teacher trainings for adequate knowledge of mental health literacy in the 21st century.
- Ensuring teachers are adequately supported by their institutions so they do not feel pressured and conflicted between the values underpinning schools (prioritization of academic achievement) and *Stormbreak* (prioritization of children's mental health).

Appendix D: Depiction of the messy realities of structural narrative analysis

Figure 9. Photograph of Plot Structure Diagram used in Karen's counternarrative



Plot Structure Diagram

Name K's story /Narrative

Date Dec. 10 2019

Period 21st century

CHARACTERS* ①

Protagonist and Main Character(s)

Kathy (participant)

Antagonist(s)

Bullies (athletes) /Teachers/ Parents

popular athletic children

SETTING*

Time Childhood & Adolescence

Place School: Primary, Middle & Secondary

*Characters, Setting, Conflict and Mood (how the story makes you feel) combine to create the EXPOSITION which helps you "get into" the story, novel or movie

problem!

CONFLICT* ③

(What's the problem between the protagonist and the antagonist?)

Children who played sports Excluded, bullied, and harrassed her in school (which negatively affected her mental health long-term)

* The effects of bullying in sports settings with personal wellbeing such as low self-esteem & suicidal ideation.

Mood: The story makes you feel symphathetic towards her and her negative experiences of sports/PE growing up.

②

"I just remember them not caring really.. just kinda staring & watching us, and not really stepping in.."

"I was called a 'man' on more than one occasion."

years of bullying (verbal/emotional) in PE w/ no teachers taking action

RISING ACTION ⑥

(The major events that lead to the turning point.)

"Being called really horrible things during a PE lesson [redacted] 24 - PS."

Climax / Action

TURNING POINT

(The main event between the protagonist and the antagonist or the moment for which the reader has been waiting.)

"Being laughed at because I had hair on my arm and then not wanting to change for PE ever again."

⑤ CODA: "It's taken me what, til 27, to get back to that stage where I can see exercises that I want to do or movement as something I want to do."

FALLING ACTION ⑦ Avoiding sports/PE

(The major events that lead to the resolution.)

Foregoing PE by pretending to forget her kit / building daisy chains instead of participating in sports.

Discovering walking is a form of movement she enjoys through a friend.

"I don't put myself in situations where I have to move very often, especially not socially."

④ **RESOLUTION** Mostly unresolved

(How was the conflict solved?)

She has come to learn that not all sport is harmful (e.g. walking) but still hates/avoids organized sports.

THEME ⑧

(The lesson or message the author is trying to help us understand.)

Sports/PE can be harmful to children's mental wellbeing, especially when forced & not autonomous!

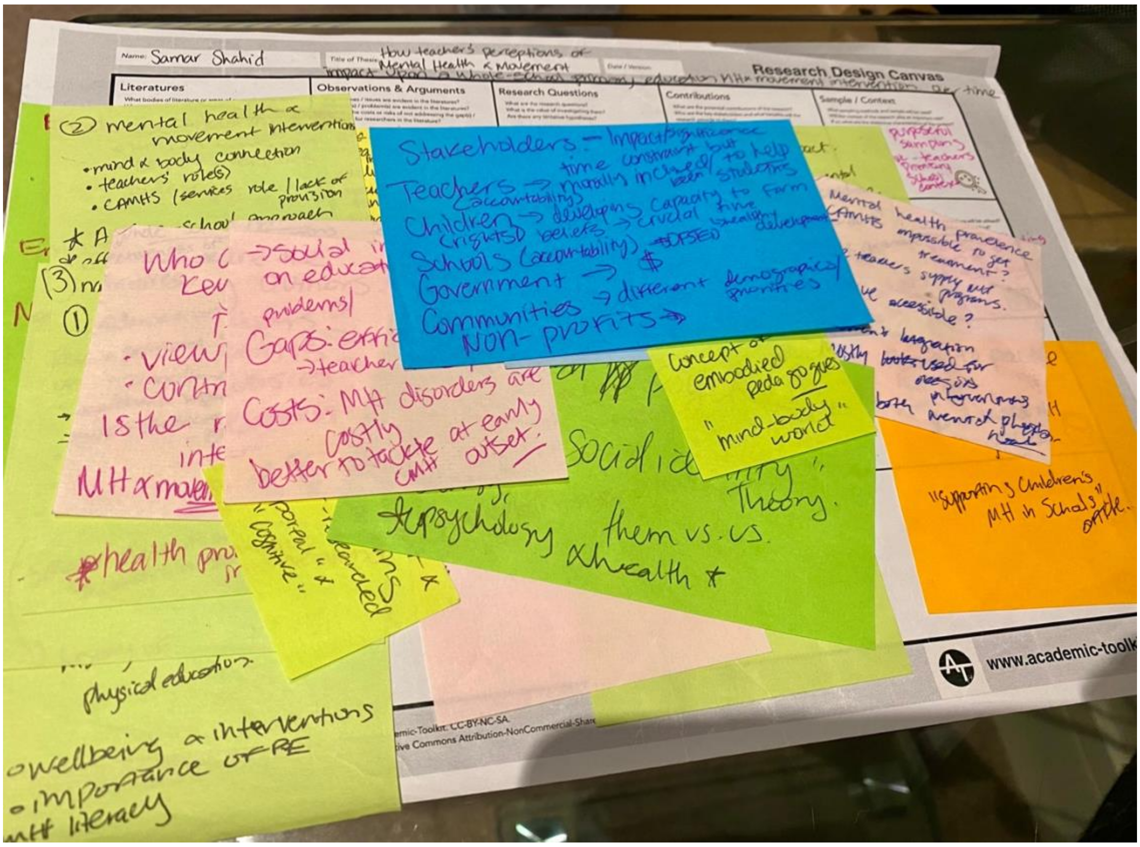
How To Figure Out the Theme

1. Actively read the text.
2. Fill out the Plot Structure Diagram (follow the circled numbers)
3. Examine the conflict, resolution and turning points.
4. Ask yourself, "What is the lesson the protagonist learned?"
5. Reword #4 so that it can apply to anyone who reads the story. – You can find a form of movement that makes you feel good even if you don't like sports/PE/exercise.

Amended from an online template (Template.Net 2024)

Appendix E: Depiction of the complexities of a collaborative research project

Figure 10. Photograph of Research Design Canvas


Name: Samar Shahid
Title of Thesis: How teacher's perceptions of Mental Health & Movement impact upon a whole-school primary education MH movement intervention over time
Date / Version
Research Design Canvas
Literatures
Observations & Arguments
Research Questions
Contributions
Sample / Context
② mental health & movement interventions
• mind & body connection
• teachers' role(s)
• CAMHS (services role / lack of provision
③
①
Who
→ social
on educat
problems/
Gaps: effi
→ teacher
Costs: MH disorders are costly
better to tackle at early outset.
CMH
• view
• contri
Is the
inte
MH & move
health pr
Stakeholders: — Impact/significance
Teachers → morally inclined/ to help but time constraint been students
(accountability)
Children → developing capacity to form (rights) beliefs → crucial time healthy development
Schools (accountability) → OFSTED
Government → $
Communities → different demographics/ priorities
Non-profits →
purposeful sampling
- teachers
primary school context
Mental health prevalence
CAMHS impossible to get treatment?
teachers supply our programs.
accessible?
integration
used for decisions
both mental physical health
Concept of embodied pedagogues
"mind-body world"
Social identity theory
them vs. us
psychology
& health ★
"Supporting Children's MH in Schools" article.
physical education
• wellbeing & interventions
• importance of PE
MH literacy
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Amended from www.academic-toolkit.com (Ellway 2024)